

CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES  
environment landscape planning



Eastbourne Borough Council

**EASTBOURNE  
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**

March 2010



Eastbourne Borough Council

**EASTBOURNE  
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Watkins', enclosed within a circular scribble.

Dominic Watkins

Position

Director

Date

29<sup>th</sup> March 2010

Revision

Revised Final

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## PREFACE

This Technical Study was commissioned by Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC) and provides a baseline inventory of the landscape character in the Borough, and also sets out recommendations for the application of the Study for consideration and action as appropriate by the Borough. The need to protect and enhance landscape character is recognised by Government planning policy on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. To ensure that full account is given to landscape character in planning decisions, this Study is commended to Eastbourne Borough Council for use as an evidence base for informing the preparation of the Local Development Framework Plans and in development control.

We are grateful for the advice and guidance provided by the Steering Group, namely:

- Miss Tondra Thom - Planning Officer (EBC)
- Martin Small - South Downs Joint Committee
- Andrew Beatty - South Downs Joint Committee
- Elliott Cairnes - Environmental Policy Officer (EBC)
- Mike Smith - Downland Trees and Woodland Manager (EBC)
- Gareth Williams - Parks and Gardens Manager (EBC)

In addition, we appreciate the help of individuals from other organisations who willingly assisted in the provision of data and information for the Study. We would also like to acknowledge the representatives of the various Stakeholders who contributed to the consultation stage of the Study (see Appendix B for details). The information gained from these stakeholders provided an important input to the Study.

The Stakeholder Consultation Group comprised:

- Adam Wallace - Natural England
- Andrew Beatty – South Downs Joint Committee
- Angela Marlow - Sussex Wildlife Trust
- Casper Johnson - County Archaeologist East Sussex County Council
- Charles Davis-Gilbert
- Chris Hannington - Wealden District Council
- Henri Brocklebank - Sussex Wildlife Trust
- Janyis Watson - Sussex Wildlife Trust
- Martin Small - South Downs Joint Committee
- Mike Smith - Eastbourne Borough Council
- Rick Newman - Leisure and Communities Manager (EBC)
- Sarah Warriss - Environment Agency
- Steve Williams - English Heritage
- Tom Richardson - Strutt and Parker

The Consultant Team comprised:

- Dominic Watkins
- Stephen Kirkpatrick

- Flora Wehl
- Alison MacDonald
- Christopher Osbourne

Chris Blandford Associates

March 2010

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

In May 2007 Eastbourne Borough Council commissioned Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) to undertake a Landscape Character Assessment of the Borough.

The aim of the Study is to provide an integrated assessment of the landscape character of the Borough at 1:25,000 scale. This will serve as a baseline inventory and will enable a better understanding of Eastbourne's landscapes. The Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) will be used as a technical evidence base to inform the Local Development Framework (LDF) currently being prepared by the Council.

The overall aim of landscape planning, design and management should be to achieve 'sustainable landscapes' that are as visually and culturally rich and as biodiverse as possible to meet all of society's social, economic and environmental needs. A better understanding of landscapes provided by Landscape Character Assessments – their diversity, character and distinctiveness, evolution, sensitivity to change and their management needs – is essential to help to work towards this goal.

### Approach and Methodology

The overall approach for undertaking the Landscape Character Assessment was based on the latest guidance published by the Countryside Agency, taking into account current best practice. Landscape Character Assessment addresses both the relatively objective process of landscape characterisation, which involves identifying, mapping, classifying and describing 'landscape character', and the more subjective process of evaluating landscape character to inform planning and land management decisions.

An important principle of good practice in landscape character assessment is that studies should make a clear distinction between:-

- **characterisation**, which is relatively value-free and is concerned with identifying, classifying and describing areas of distinctive character; and
- **making judgements** to inform particular decisions, which may use one or a combination of approaches depending on the purpose of the exercise

The Study was accordingly separated into three separate stages - Stage 1: Characterisation; Stage 2: Evaluation and Stage 3: Final Report and Deliverables.

The characterisation stage involved the combination of the desk study research and field survey analysis to identify and map generic Landscape Character Types and geographically unique Landscape Character Areas at 1:25,000 scale.

Consultation with key Stakeholder organisations was an important and integral element of the Study. The purpose of the Stakeholder consultation was to strengthen the evidence base by gathering opinions about landscape character from the key Stakeholders, and to promote the value of the Study as a tool for informing planning and land management decisions in rural areas.

The evaluation stage involved making the following judgements about each Landscape Character Area:

- Inherent Landscape Sensitivities
- Landscape Strategies
- Indicative Capacity for Change
- Land Management Guidelines
- Landscape Planning Guidelines

The sensitivity and change analysis, together with the proposed landscape strategies and land management guidelines for each Landscape Character Area, can be used to inform:

- the identification of spatial development options within the Local Development Framework.
- sustainability appraisal/strategic environmental assessment of Local Development Framework site allocations.
- the highlighting of landscape issues that may need to be considered in greater detail in relation to development control decisions.
- the application of criteria-based landscape protection and enhancement policies within the Local Development Framework.

### **Stakeholder Consultation**

Consultation with key stakeholder organisations via a workshop was an important and integral element of the Study and this was held during the characterisation stage. The purpose of the stakeholder consultation was to strengthen the evidence base by gathering opinions about landscape character from the key stakeholders, and to promote the value of the Study as a tool for informing planning and land management decisions in rural areas.

A Draft Stage 1 Characterisation Report was issued to the Steering Group for comment and approval before commencing the evaluation stage of the study. This Final Report incorporates both the Stage 1 Characterisation Report and the Stage 2 Evaluation work.

### **Structure of the Report**

Section 1.0 of the report sets out the context for the Study. It explains the background to the Study, its purpose and objectives, and highlights the importance of landscape character. It also describes the planning policy framework for the Study, and outlines the approach and process behind the assessment methodology.

Section 2.0 provides an overview of the Eastbourne landscape, describing the physical and historical influences on the landscape and highlighting past and current perceptions of the landscape.

Section 3.0 of the report provides detailed 'profiles' of the Landscape Character Units identified in the Borough. These comprise six Landscape Character Types and 24 Landscape Character Areas that reflect distinctive generic and geographically specific variations in local character. The profiles describe the character of each Landscape Character Area, and set out a management strategy and objectives for informing land use planning decisions and environmental land management initiatives.

Section 4.0 sets out the main conclusions of the Study, and provides recommendations to the Council for its consideration and action as appropriate. Recommendations are provided for the application of the Landscape Character Assessment, and in relation to landscape policy advice for the Local Development Framework. Recommendations for further work required to enhance the evidence base on the landscape character of the Borough, and in relation to monitoring of policies, are also provided.



## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background to the Study**

1.1.1 In May 2007 Eastbourne Borough Council commissioned Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) to undertake a Landscape Character Assessment of the Borough.

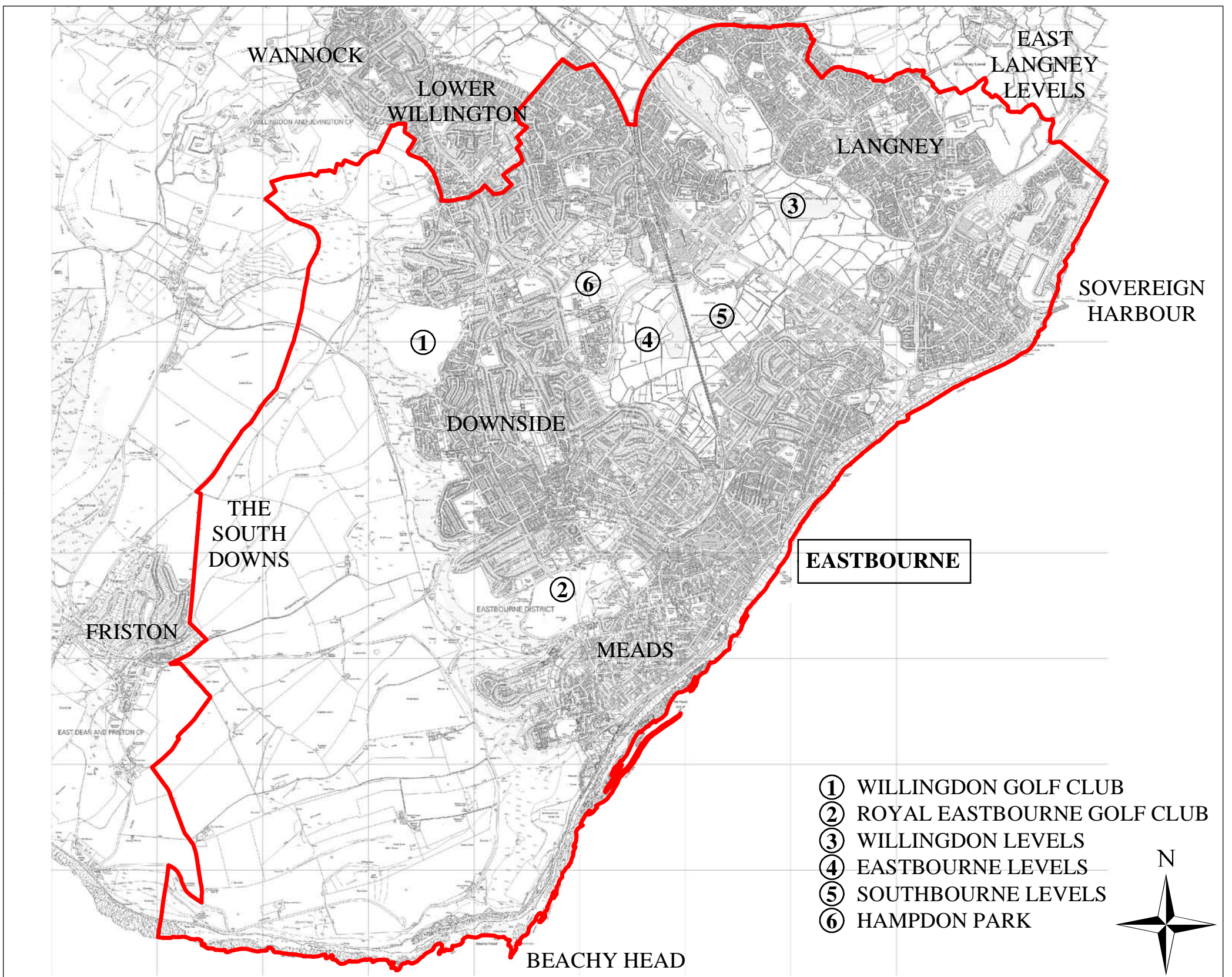
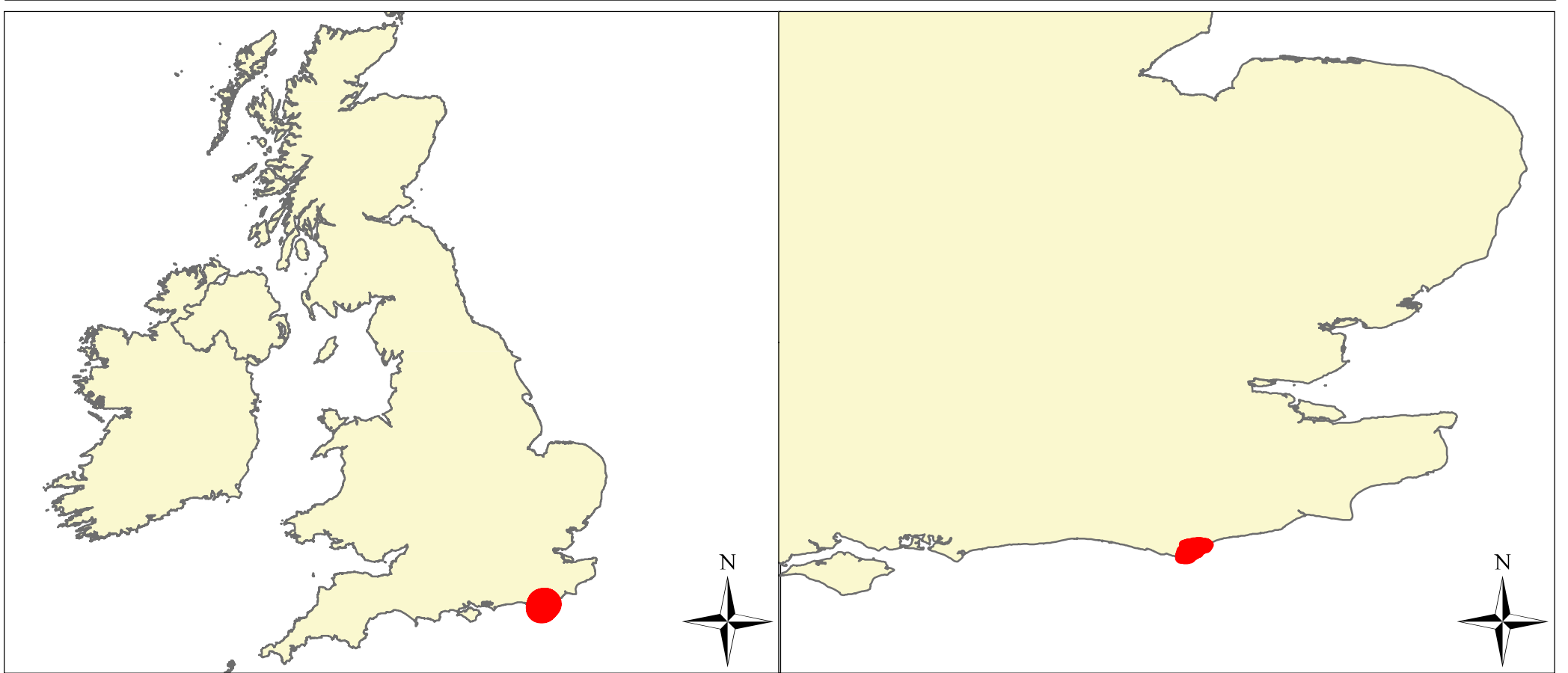
1.1.2 Eastbourne Borough has an administrative area of 44 square kilometres and is one of five local government districts within the county of East Sussex.

1.1.3 Eastbourne is a seaside town on the South coast built on geologically recent alluvial drift, resulting from the silting up of a bay. The town sits at the foot of the South Downs, which is a sweep of chalk downland that stretches 160 kilometres westwards from Eastbourne to Winchester in Hampshire. The Borough is predominantly urban but is bounded on the west by the South Downs (see Figure 1), by the Low Weald to the north and by the East Langney Levels to the east. Most of the urban area is built on low-lying land (see Figure 2). Eastbourne Park is where the open countryside of the Low Weald flows into the centre of Eastbourne, providing a green 'heart' to the town. Eastbourne Park contains Eastbourne Levels (also known as Broadwater), the Southbourne Levels, the Willingdon Levels and the West Langley Levels. The settlements of Friston and East Dean are located on the South Downs, just outside the boundary of Eastbourne Borough.

1.1.4 The attractiveness of Eastbourne's downland landscape is reflected in the fact that the entire 4000 acres of it is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (see Figure 3). The area has been protected by this designation since 1965. Elsewhere within the borough, there are two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), nineteen Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and twelve Conservation Areas.

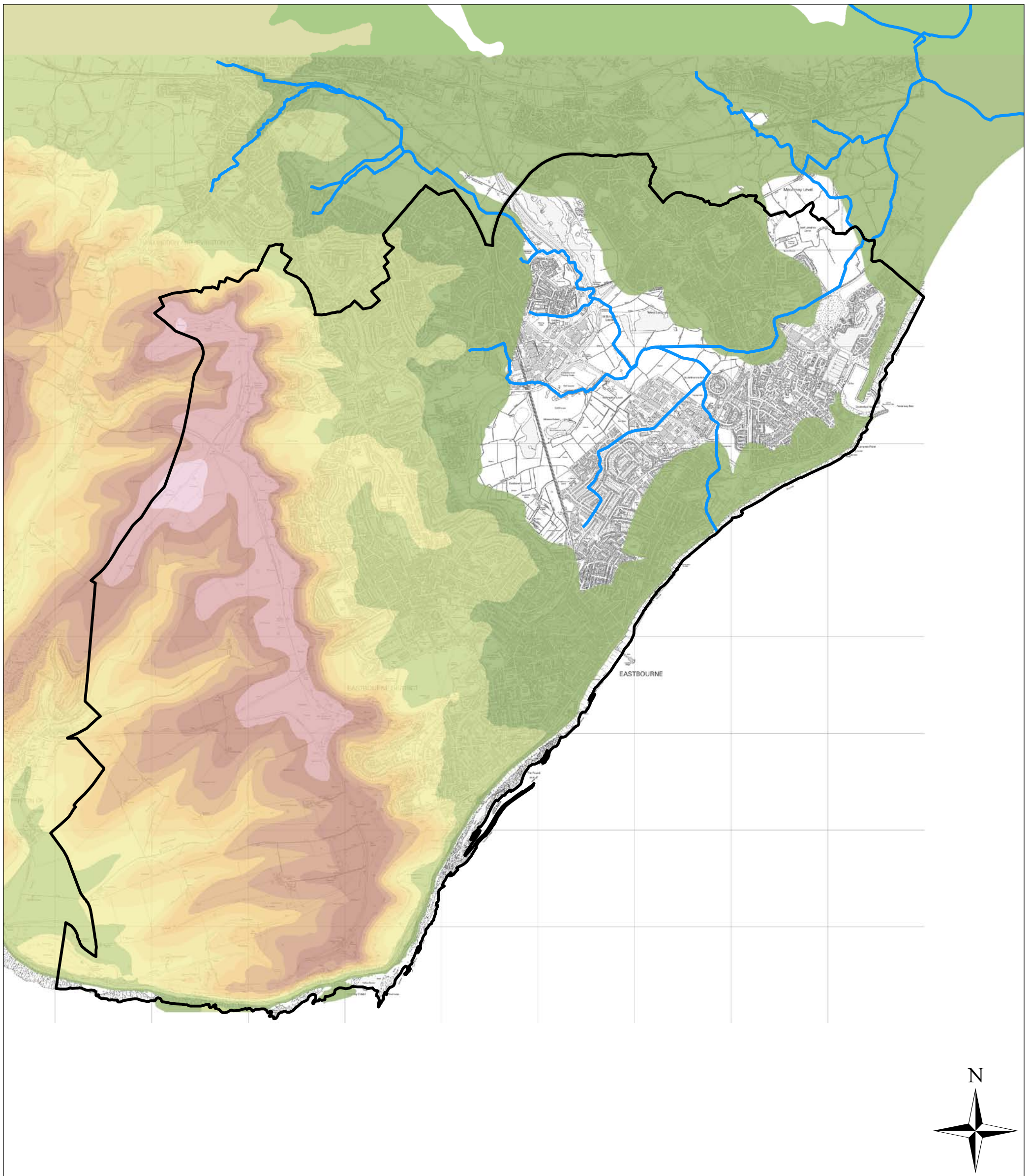
### **1.2 Study Purpose and Objectives**

1.2.1 The aim of the Study is to provide an integrated assessment of the landscape character of the Borough at 1:25,000 scale. This will serve as a baseline inventory and will enable a better understanding of Eastbourne's landscapes. The Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) will be used as a technical evidence base to inform the Local Development Framework (LDF) currently being prepared by the Council.







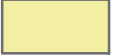





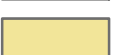

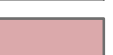


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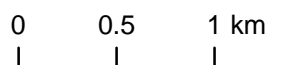


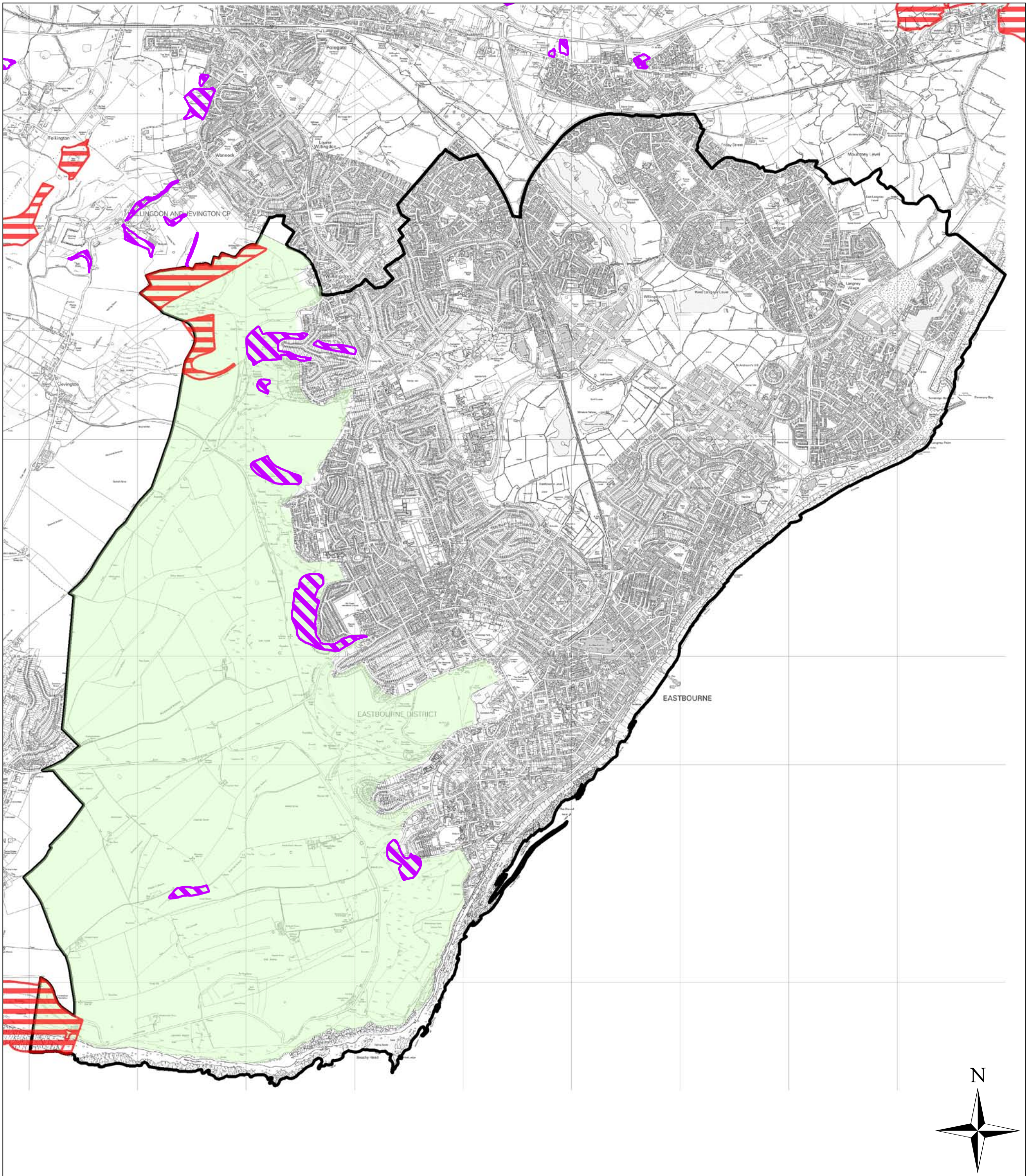
**KEY**

Indicative Elevation (m)	 15 - 45	 75 - 90	 120 - 135	 165 - 180	 Rivers
 < 3	 45 - 60	 90 - 105	 135 - 150	 180 - 195	 Study Area
 3 - 15	 60 - 75	 105 - 120	 150 - 165		

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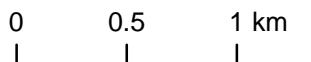




**KEY**

- Ancient Woodlands
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Study Area

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**Figure 3**

Landscape Planning Designation

1.2.2 The key objectives of the Study are to:

- Describe and classify the landscape of Eastbourne, including an understanding of landscape evolution and the factors that have influenced that evolution;
- Promote an appreciation of landscape issues within Eastbourne;
- Guide and inform policy development, principally landscape protection policies, through preparation of the LDF and to guide land-use allocations;
- Inform development control decisions relating to the design, integration and mitigation of new development;
- Produce a detailed description and analysis of the varying landscape of the study area;
- Identify priorities for specific landscape initiatives;
- Identify the most important characteristics that contribute to the Boroughs unique and distinctive character;
- Consider the likely pressures and opportunities for landscape change;
- Identify the 'countryside gaps' of undeveloped land between surrounding settlements which need to be preserved;
- Assess the sensitivity of the landscape to change;
- Report on the setting of the downland and assess the potential impact of development within the town on this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
- Assess the connectivity and interdependency between individual landscape character areas and the landscape as a whole;
- Develop guidelines on how to conserve, enhance, improve or restructure the differing landscapes as appropriate;
- Provide guidance on the capacity of each area to accommodate new development or other forms of environmental change, along with advice on the characteristics that new development would need to successfully integrate with its location; and
- Produce a concise and robust final report which can be readily understood and used by officers, Members, Stakeholders and the public to inform land use decisions and the LDF process.

1.2.3 The area of study characterised by this assessment includes all of the rural area within Eastbourne Borough, up to and including the urban edge. Although the study area excludes the urban area, it includes some individual buildings or small groups of buildings that are separate from the urban area. It includes green corridors (i.e. continuous belts of open space) that extend into the urban area from the open countryside but excludes urban parks that have a strong visual and physical relationship with the urban area and are wholly or partially separated from these green corridors by significant lines or clusters of buildings. Examples of green corridors include Eastbourne Park and the golf courses on the scarp footslope on the western edge of the town.

1.2.4 In the case of the coastal strip along the south-eastern edge of Eastbourne, the study boundary generally extends from the low water line to the edge of the waterfront road. However, in areas where the road leaves the shoreline and groups of buildings have been developed between the road the shoreline, then the study area extends only up to the upper edge of the foreshore.

1.2.5 A glossary of terms is provided in **Appendix A** to this report.

### 1.3 The Importance of Landscape Character

1.3.1 The UK Government signed the European Landscape Convention<sup>1</sup> on the 24 February 2006. The Convention aims to encourage public authorities within member states to adopt exemplary and long lasting policies and measures for the protection, management and planning of all landscapes, both outstanding and ordinary, that determine the quality of people's living environment.

1.3.2 The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as:

*'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.'*

1.3.3 The term landscape is typically synonymous with the countryside; however, landscape is everywhere and may comprise rural landscapes, urban landscapes or townscapes, urban fringe landscapes, coastal landscapes or seascapes, etc.

1.3.4 The European Landscape Convention defines 'landscape character' as:

*'a distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape.'*

1.3.5 In England and Scotland, Landscape Character Assessment<sup>2</sup> is a tool that allows landscape character to be understood, explained and described in a transparent and robust way. It does this by mapping and describing the variations in physical, natural and cultural attributes and experiential characteristics that make one area distinctive from another at a range of spatial scales. Landscape Character Assessment also recognises how landscapes have changed over time, and acknowledges the changing influences of human activities and the impacts of economic development.

1.3.6 The overall aim of landscape planning, design and management should be to achieve sustainable landscapes that are as visually, biodiverse and culturally rich as possible to meet society's social, economic and environmental needs. A better understanding of landscapes provided by Landscape Character Assessments – their diversity, character and distinctiveness, evolution, sensitivity to change and their management needs – is essential in helping to work towards this goal.

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<sup>1</sup> The European Landscape Convention opened for signature in Florence on 20 October 2000. Jim Knight, Minister for Rural Affairs, Landscape and Biodiversity announced the UK signing of the European Landscape Convention on 24 February 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002).

## 1.4 Planning Policy Context

1.4.1 National Planning Policy relating to landscape character is contained in PPS1<sup>3</sup> and PPS7<sup>4</sup>.

### **Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development**

1.4.2 PPS1 sets out the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. It states that one of the Government's objectives for the planning system is that planning should facilitate and promote sustainable urban and rural development by protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment and the quality and character of the countryside (para 5). In its key principles, PPS1 states that '*a spatial planning approach should be at the heart of planning for sustainable development*' (para 13.iii) and '*design which fails to take the opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted*' (para 13.iv). When preparing development plans '*planning authorities should seek to enhance as well as protect biodiversity, natural habitats, the historic environment and landscape and townscape character*' (para 27). PPS1 also requires new design to be integrated into the existing urban form and natural and built environments (para 35).

### **Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas**

1.4.3 Landscape Character Assessment, along with Village or Town Design Statements and Village or Parish Plans, is recommended by PPS7 as a tool to assist Local Authorities in the preparation of policies and guidance that encourages good quality design throughout rural areas (para 13). Landscape Character Assessment is also recommended by PPS7 as a tool for creating carefully drafted, criteria-based policies in Local Development Documents to protect valued landscapes outside nationally designated areas without the need for rigid local designations, which may restrict sustainable development and the economic vitality of rural areas. PPS7 advises that local landscape designations should only be maintained or, exceptionally, extended where it can be clearly shown that criteria-based policies cannot provide the necessary protection (paras 24 and 25).

### **The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East (or South East Plan)**

1.4.4 The Draft Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South East was published by the Regional Assembly for consultation in early 2005<sup>5</sup>, and is referred to as the South East Plan.

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<sup>3</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (ODPM, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> The South East Plan: Draft Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (2005)

Part 1 of the Plan covering regional policies was approved by the Assembly and handed to Government in July 2005. The region's county and unitary councils then consulted locally on sub-regional details for Part 2 of the Plan in autumn 2005. The full Plan was approved by the Assembly on 1 March 2006 and was submitted to Government on 31 March 2006. Further public consultation ran from 31 March - 23 June 2006, and was followed by an examination in public looking at our proposals. It is expected that the final Plan will receive Government approval in 2008.

1.4.5 The South East Plan is based on the principles of sustainable development. It specifically identifies the need to protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the Region's natural environment and resources (including landscape) as a key consideration in managing the spatial development in the South East.

1.4.6 Policy C3- Landscape and Countryside Management- states:

*'Outside nationally designated landscapes, positive and high quality management of the region's open countryside should be encouraged and supported by local authorities and other organisations, agencies, land managers, the private sector and local communities, through a combination of planning policies, grant aid and other measures, in order to:*

*i Protect and enhance its distinctive qualities*

*ii Encourage the sustainable management of land and habitats in ways which contribute to landscape conservation and renewal, avoiding fragmentation of landscapes and habitats and encouraging the linking of habitats*

*iii Support local economies and social wellbeing of communities through small scale development proposals to meet local needs.*

*Landscape Character Assessments should be used to contribute to the framing of development policies and sustainable agri-environment, and other land management regimes.'*

1.4.6 The South East Plan identifies the quality and variety of the environment as one of the region's defining characteristics, and is reflected by the large proportion of the South East recognised to be of international and national importance in terms of nature conservation and landscape value. Sustainable natural resource management is a key theme of the Plan and is evident by the individual policy statements geared towards managing the many individual natural resources in the South East.



- Policy NRM4: Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity
- Policy NRM5: Woodlands
- Policy NRM6: Coastal Management
- Policy NRM8: Noise
- Policy NRM7: Air Quality

1.4.7 There is widespread and growing recognition of the importance of the historic environment that contributes so much to regional and local character and distinctiveness. The Government recognises the importance of the historic environment in contributing to sustainable development in terms of its potential to support regeneration, tourism and social inclusion as well as conservation. The South East Plan reflects this in Policy BE7: Management of The Historic Environment- it states:

*'In developing and implementing plans and strategies, local authorities and other bodies should adopt policies and proposals which support the conservation and, where appropriate, the enhancement of the historic environment and the contribution it makes to local and regional distinctiveness and sense of place. Proposals that make sensitive use of historic assets through regeneration, particularly where these bring redundant or under-used buildings and areas into appropriate use, should be encouraged.'*

#### **East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan 1991–2011**

1.4.8 The approved East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan<sup>6</sup> was adopted in 1999. Under the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*, the Structure Plan and its policies are saved until September 2007 – or until superseded by the published South East Plan (whichever is sooner).

1.4.9 The Structure Plan contains four pieces of policy related to landscape protection: Policy EN2, EN3 and EN5 all relate to the protection and enhancement of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and Policy EN4 Open Downland/Ashdown Forest gives specific protection to this area. When the South East Plan is approved and issued, these policies will be replaced.

#### **Local Planning Context**

1.4.10 Eastbourne Borough Council has prepared and adopted a Local Borough Plan<sup>7</sup> to guide and to protect and enhance the environment. The Plan contains a number of policies concerned with the protection of different aspects of landscape, including in particular:

- Policy D1: Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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<sup>6</sup> East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Structure Plan Structure Plan, Adopted 1999, East Sussex County Council.

<sup>7</sup> Eastbourne Borough Plan (Adopted 2003)

- Policy D2: Heritage Coast
- Policy D3: Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Policy NE3: Conserving Water Resources
- Policy NE19: Local Nature Reserves
- Policy NE20: Sites of Nature Conservation Importance
- Policy NE21: Nature Conservation in Eastbourne Park
- Policy NE22: Wildlife Habitats

1.4.11 The Local Borough Plan will eventually be replaced by the LDF under the arrangements set out in the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*. The LDF comprises a series of Local Development Documents (LDD's) that will set out proposals for the future development, use and conservation of land and buildings.

1.4.12 The identification of future LDD's and the timetable for their production is set out in the Borough Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS). Documents listed in the LDS will provide the basis for considering future planning applications. It is intended that this LCA will be used as part of the evidence base to inform the preparation of LDD's.

## 1.5 Approach and Methodology

1.5.1 The overall approach for undertaking the Landscape Character Assessment was based on the latest guidance published by the Countryside Agency<sup>8</sup>, taking into account current best practice. Landscape Character Assessment addresses both the relatively objective process of landscape characterisation, which involves identifying, mapping, classifying and describing 'landscape character', and the more subjective process of evaluating landscape character to inform planning and land management decisions.

1.5.2 An important principle of good practice in landscape character assessment is that studies should make a clear distinction between:-

- **characterisation**, which is relatively value-free and is concerned with identifying, classifying and describing areas of distinctive character; and
- **making judgements** to inform particular decisions, which may use one or a combination of approaches depending on the purpose of the exercise

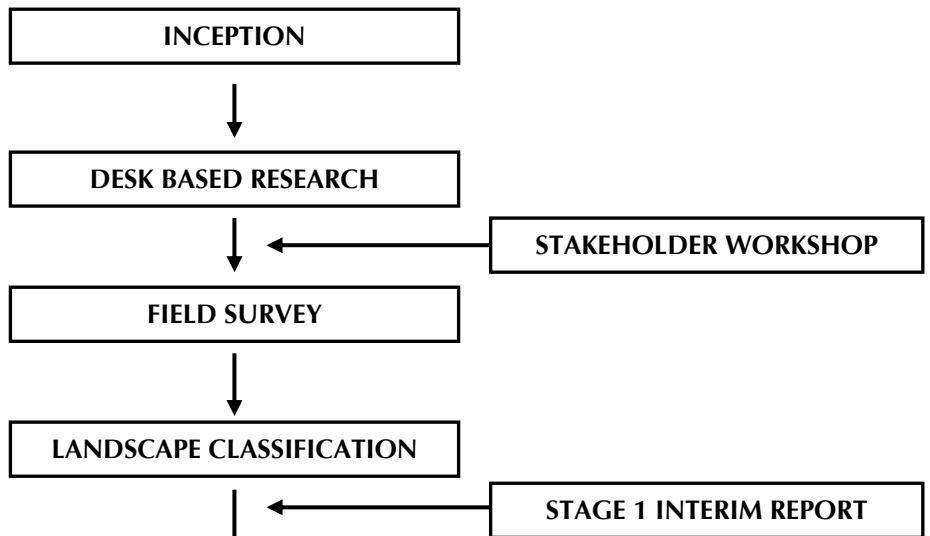
1.5.3 The Study was accordingly separated into three separate stages - Stage 1: Characterisation; Stage 2: Evaluation (Making Judgements) and Stage 3: Final Report and Deliverables. The Study process is set out on the following page.

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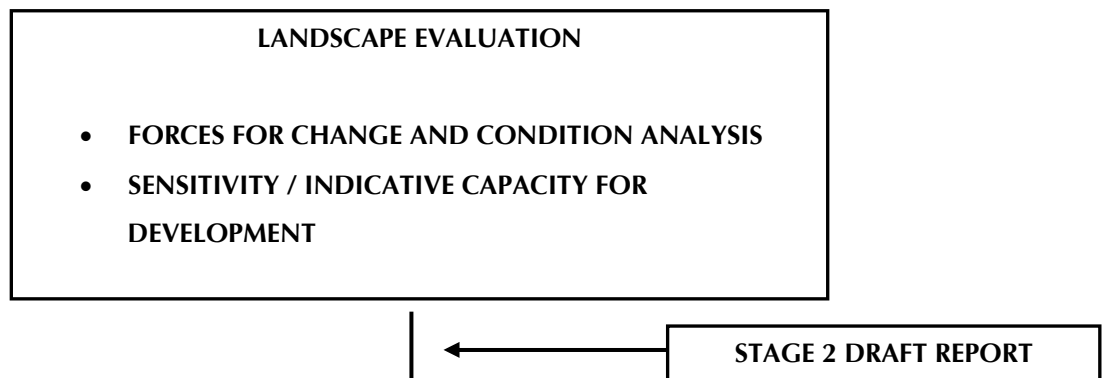
<sup>8</sup> Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland (Countryside Agency/Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002).  
March 2010

## Landscape Character Assessment Process

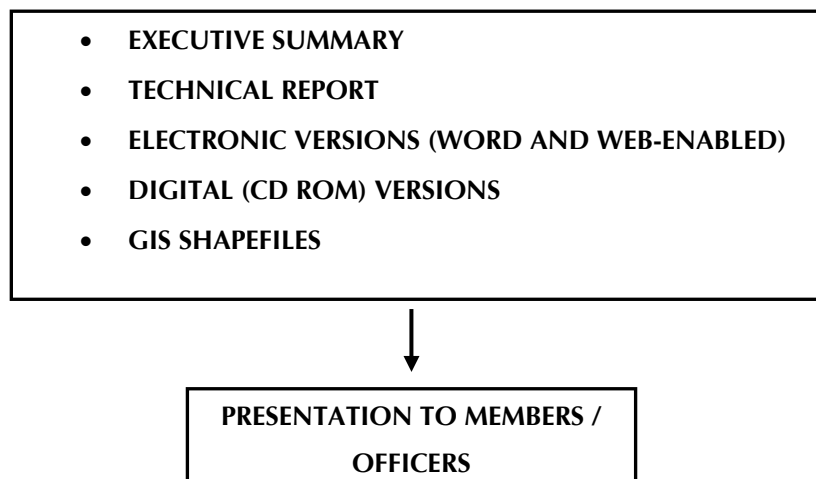
### STAGE 1 – CHARACTERISATION



### STAGE 2 – MAKING JUDGEMENTS



### STAGE 3 – FINAL REPORT AND DELIVERABLES



## **Information Scoping**

1.5.4 This preliminary stage involved the following main tasks:

- An inception meeting with the Study Steering Group to confirm the scope and approach to the study.
- Obtain landscape character assessment information and data for incorporation into the landscape character assessment.
- Identify any shortfalls in coverage of landscape character assessment, and determine further work required where necessary to provide an appropriate level of information for incorporation into the Borough landscape assessment.

## **Desk Study Information**

1.5.5 This stage involved desk-based research to identify the physical and historical factors that have influenced the shape and use of the landscape. This work drew on a variety of documents and maps that describe the physical geography and cultural history of the Borough (including geology, soils, hydrology, vegetation and topography). The desk research also considered past and current perceptions of the landscape, and identified the forces for change affecting the character of the Borough's landscape.

1.5.6 In Summary, the desk work involved:

- Review of existing national, county and local landscape character assessment classifications, including the Countryside Agency's Character Map of England, the East Sussex County Landscape Character Assessment and the South Downs: Integrated Landscape Character Assessment.
- Production and analysis of map overlays of physical and cultural components of the landscape.
- Identification of draft Landscape Character Types and draft Landscape Character Areas for verification through field survey work.

## **Field Surveys**

1.5.7 Field surveys were undertaken before late Spring and early Summer 2007. The aim of the surveys was to undertake a visual analysis of how different features and elements combine to create distinctive patterns in the landscape. The surveys were undertaken from key viewpoints within each draft Landscape Character Area by a team of field assessors using a structured checklist. The checklist included:

- Landform
- Rivers/drainage
- Land cover
- Field pattern and field boundaries
- Communication routes
- Settlement form/pattern

- Building styles
- Scale
- Texture
- Enclosure
- Stimuli
- Sense of tranquillity
- Movement
- View types and composition
- Landmarks

1.5.8 The survey information (including photographs) was used to (i) inform the descriptions of landscape character and (ii) to test and refine the boundaries of the draft Landscape Character Types and Areas.

### **Characterisation**

1.5.9 The characterisation stage involved the combination of the desk study research and field survey analysis to identify and map generic Landscape Character Types and geographically unique Landscape Character Areas at 1:25,000 scale.

1.5.10 The process of characterisation drew together the information outlined above to develop a draft classification at a scale of 1:25,000 of:

- Landscape Character Types: which are generic and share combinations of geology, topography, vegetation, settlement pattern etc;
- Landscape Character Areas: which are unique geographically specific areas of the landscape type/s.

1.5.11 For each generic Landscape Character Type, its boundaries were mapped and its key characteristics described. For each unique Landscape Character Area, its boundaries were mapped and characterisation information recorded under the headings:

- Key Characteristics
- Overall Character Description
- Key Views
- Historic Features
- Key Ecological Features

1.5.12 Completion of the characterisation exercise represented the end of Stage I of Landscape Character Assessment Study.

### **Key Stakeholder Consultation**

1.5.13 Consultation with key Stakeholder organisations was an important and integral element of the Study. The purpose of the Stakeholder consultation was to strengthen the evidence base by

gathering opinions about landscape character from the key Stakeholders, and to promote the value of the Study as a tool for informing planning and land management decisions in rural areas.

1.5.14 The boundaries of each generic Landscape Character Type and each unique Landscape Character Area were mapped and comments invited from Stakeholder groups on the names, boundaries and key characteristics of each Landscape Type and each Landscape Character Area. The Stakeholder groups and individuals that were consulted were as follows: -

- Senior Conservation Officer -Sussex Wildlife Trust
- Sussex Environment Partnership Officer – Sussex Wildlife Trust
- Officer - Sussex Biodiversity Partnership
- Manager – Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
- Technical Officer – Fisheries, Recreation and Biodiversity Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Regional Planner – English Heritage
- South Downs Joint Committee
- Parks and Gardens Manager - Eastbourne Borough Council
- Trees and Woodland Manager – Eastbourne Borough Council
- Environmental Policy Officer – Eastbourne Borough Council
- Leisure and Communities Manager – Eastbourne Borough Council
- Duke of Devonshire’s Estate Manager
- Landscape and Biodiversity Officer – Wealden District Council
- East Sussex County Archaeologist
- Eastbourne Society
- East Dean Landowner

1.5.15 Comments received by Stakeholders, and the consultant responses to those comments, are set out in Appendix B to this report.

1.5.16 The draft classifications of landscape character types and areas were refined following comments received from Stakeholders and further field survey work. These refined classifications are incorporated into this report.

## **Evaluation**

1.5.17 This stage involved making the following judgements about each Landscape Character Area:

- Inherent Landscape Sensitivities
- Landscape Strategies
- Indicative Capacity for Change
- Land Management Guidelines
- Landscape Planning Guidelines

1.5.18 Landscape sensitivities are analysed in terms of the key landscape character and visual sensitivities of the defined landscape character areas. These sensitivities landscape are

irrespective of the type of change being considered (i.e. the inherent landscape sensitivities of the landscape).

1.5.19 Consideration is given to the capacity of each landscape character area to accommodate new built development. Landscape capacity is the indicative ability of the landscape to accommodate different amounts of change or development of a specific type without significant adverse impacts. The judgements of landscape capacity use information collected about the sensitivity of landscape character and visual characteristics. The judgements made are indicative only and the findings of the study are only intended to inform consideration of broad built development options. Further studies at more detailed scales of assessment will be needed to examine site-specific sensitivities and development capacity issues.

1.5.20 The judgements of landscape capacity are assessed in terms of the criteria set out in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Degrees of Landscape Capacity for Change**

<b>Very Limited capacity</b> – Key characteristics of the landscape would be adversely affected by any significant amount of built development and would result in a significant change in character. The landscape is assessed as having very limited ability to absorb this scale of built development without significant change in character.
<b>Limited capacity</b> – Landscapes in which any significant amount of built development would generally adversely affect the character of the landscape. The landscape is assessed as having limited ability to absorb this development without significant change in character.
<b>Some / Medium capacity</b> – Key characteristics of the landscape are relatively robust, though would potentially be adversely affected by any significant amount of built development. The landscape is assessed as having some ability to absorb this scale of built development without significant change in character.
<b>Medium-high capacity</b> – Landscapes in which a significant amount of built development would generally not adversely affect the character of the landscape. The landscape is assessed as having a relatively greater ability to absorb this scale of built development without significant change in character.
<b>High capacity</b> – Key characteristics of the landscape are robust and would not be adversely affected by a significant amount of built development. The landscape is assessed as being able to accommodate this scale of built development without a significant change in character.

1.5.21 The sensitivity and change analysis, together with the proposed landscape priorities and land management guidelines for each Landscape Character Area, can be used to inform:

- the identification of spatial development options within the Local Development Framework.
- sustainability appraisal/strategic environmental assessment of Local Development Framework site allocations.
- the highlighting of landscape issues that may need to be considered in greater detail in relation to development control decisions.

- the application of criteria-based landscape protection and enhancement policies within the Local Development Framework.

## **1.6 Structure of the Report**

1.6.1 The Study report is structured as follows:

1.6.2 *Section 1.0* sets out the context for the Study. It explains the background to the Study, its purpose and objectives, and highlights the importance of landscape character. It also describes the planning policy framework for the Study, and outlines the approach and process behind the assessment methodology.

1.6.3 *Section 2.0* provides an overview of the Eastbourne landscape, describing the physical and historical influences on the landscape and highlighting past and current perceptions of the landscape.

1.6.4 *Section 3.0* of the report provides detailed 'profiles' of the Landscape Character Units identified in the Borough. These comprise six Landscape Character Types and 24 Landscape Character Areas that reflect distinctive generic and geographically specific variations in local character. The profiles describe the character of each Landscape Character Area, and set out a management strategy and objectives for informing land use planning decisions and environmental land management initiatives.

1.6.5 *Section 4.0* sets out the main conclusions of the Study, and provides recommendations to the Council for its consideration and action as appropriate. Recommendations are provided for the application of the Landscape Character Assessment, and in relation to landscape policy advice for the Local Development Framework. Recommendations for further work required to enhance the evidence base on the landscape character of the Borough, and in relation to monitoring of policies, are also provided.



## **2.0 THE SHAPING OF THE LANDSCAPE**

### **2.1 General**

2.1.1 This section provides an overview of the Borough. It describes the physical and historical influences on the landscape.

2.1.2 The geology and geomorphology of Eastbourne are inextricably linked to the cultural landscape. They are manifested in the present appearance of the county, which is the result of interaction between man and landscape since Mesolithic times. To understand the development of its distinctive and diverse character, it is important to understand the past physical and historic influences over time, whilst identifying the key forces for change affecting the landscape character today.

### **2.2 Physical Influences on the Landscape**

2.2.1 The basic structure of the landscape is fundamentally influenced by its underlying rocks and relief. Geology and the processes of weathering, erosion and deposition influence the shape and form of the landscape and its drainage and soils. In turn, these influence patterns of vegetation and land use.

#### **Geology, Landform and Drainage**

2.2.2 The sedimentary rocks of Sussex help to define its topographic and landscape character. The more resistant rocks form the higher ground, while the weaker rocks have undergone greater weathering and erosion and form lowlands.

2.2.3 The vast majority of Eastbourne is formed from a solid geology of undivided Upper and Middle Chalk. It is situated on the southern flank of a giant upfold known as the Wealden Anticline, which forms a range of moderate chalk hills. It is the consistent physical qualities of this chalk that gives rise to an area of gently undulating dip slope chalk descending from a prominent escarpment ridge.

2.2.4 There are extensive branching dry valley systems that furrow at the surface of the chalk slope. These were most likely early natural drainage patterns that retreated as the level of the water table in the chalk fell. Eastbourne sits in the most easterly point of the South Downs, where these dry valleys meet the sea and the result is a dramatic undulating cliff line. Here, the cliffs provide a cross-section through the chalk of Lower, Middle and Upper Chalk formations.

2.2.5 The coastline of Eastbourne as with the rest of Sussex has been protected by various engineering structures since the 18th century. A groyne field along the coastline, which consists of 94 timber groynes, has been installed to control the constant west to east littoral drift. Before the coastline benefited from any engineering structure it was in a constant state of change. During the Roman period, the Sussex coastline was far more indented than it is today, with rivers reaching the sea in tidal estuaries which penetrated several kilometres inland. The mouth of the Cuckmere River (lying 10 km west of Eastbourne) is now shaped by the deposits of shingle, which form a narrow channel; considerably different to the gaping estuary of 2000 years ago.

### **Soils**

2.2.6 Soils of significantly different character occur in belts across Sussex from west to east mirroring the outcrops of different geological parent materials, with variations in slope and drainage as well as past and present land use, producing more complex mosaics of interrelated soils<sup>9</sup>.

2.2.7 Stagnogleys are poor-heavily drained soils, which have developed over the impermeable Gault and Weald Clays of the Low Weald. They are dominant in northern Eastbourne. Further to the north, beyond the Borough boundary, the soils develop up onto the steep slopes of the High Weald featuring in deeply-dissected areas of countryside. The soils are known as difficult to cultivate with large areas traditionally under grass. Waterlogged throughout most of the winter and early spring, when excess rainfall can not rapidly evaporate nor quickly percolate down through the dense clay subsoil, these soils are less favourable for arable farming.

2.2.8 Argillic brown earths are the dominant soils of the Coastal Plains of East Sussex where they developed from a variety of parent materials, including extensive spreads of re-worked wind-blown silt known as brickearth, large fans of frost-shattered flint and chalk derived from the Downs, and areas of loamy and pebbly marine deposits. The Argillic soils feature only as small fragmented bands in Eastbourne and are scattered on the most southerly point of the Downs. All these soils are inherently fertile and produce high quality agricultural land.

2.2.9 Surrounding the fragmented Argillic soils are the dominant soils of the South Downs. Rendzinas and brown calcareous soils typically exceed 300mm in depth, contain abundant fragments of chalk and flint and are highly calcareous. The Redzinas soils in Eastbourne are predominantly under grassland where the soils are humose and dark brown or black. Their

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<sup>9</sup> A Historical Atlas of Sussex, K. Leslie and B. Short, 1999  
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thinness and lack of soil moisture during dry summers restrict their agricultural value. Most of the Eastbourne Downs is kept under grass for grazing.

- 2.2.10 On the higher ridges of the South Downs accumulations of clay and embedded flints are located and give rise to the more clayey Paleo- argillic brown earths. The landscape is currently characterised by vast, pasture fields plus a few areas of arable, resonance that the soils in the area generally have good agricultural land capability. In the valley bottoms, rendzinas thicken and grade into brown calcareous earths which are deeper, more moisture retentive and less calcareous.

## 2.3 Historical Influences on the Landscape

### Palaeolithic to Mesolithic (c. 500,000 to c. 4,500 BC)

- 2.3.1 People have transformed the landscape of Eastbourne into the present day rich tapestry since their emergence in the Palaeolithic. Prior to the Anglian Glaciations, which began around 478,000 years ago, the coastline of Sussex comprised an almost continuous line of chalk cliffs, running from the land bridge in northern France to the enlarged Solent river estuary in the west<sup>10</sup>.
- 2.3.2 Much of the interior of the area at this time was probably quite heavily forested, with access being gained via south-flowing river systems.
- 2.3.3 During the latter stages of the Anglian Glaciation (about 460,000 years ago), the variations in climate affected the distribution of flora as well as the locations of settlement. Living as hunter-gatherers, inhabitants would have led a nomadic lifestyle and since they built no substantial structures, their presence is only normally detected through finds (mainly flint). In Sussex, the majority of archaeological evidence from the Palaeolithic comes from the production and utilisation of flint tools, principally handaxes and the waste associated with their manufacture such as the Palaeolithic handaxes found at Ratton (SMR TQ50 SE28 – MES529) or Black Robin Farm (TV59 NE245 – MES742). Other sites include the concentration of Palaeolithic animal bone that was excavated during the building of Eastbourne Train Station (Johnson pers. com. 2007).
- 2.3.4 The Mesolithic period experienced an increase in temperature and this caused sea levels to rise to levels near that of today. By 6,500 BC, Britain was an island, and the Eastbourne Coastline

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<sup>10</sup> Prehistoric Sussex, Miles Russell, 2002  
March 2010  
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was little different to what we see today. The Siberian-style tundra landscape of what is now the Sussex Downs was gradually replaced by one of thick deciduous woodland.

- 2.3.5 Like the Palaeolithic predecessors, these post-ice age hunter-gatherers did leave one particular type of archaeological durable artefact behind, namely the flint tool, as evidenced by finds such as the axe found at Willingdon (SMR TQ50 SE126 – MES5092). However, their influence on the landscape is recorded in other ways as well; as the hunting strategies developed in the Later Mesolithic, it is clear that human communities began the first steps towards land modification. This took the form of tree clearance, either through burning or from widespread use of the flint axe.
- 2.3.6 The removal of forest cover in Mesolithic led in some areas to the first instances of major soil degeneration and thus to heather and gorse dominating the lowland heaths of Sussex. These periods of extensive human interference ultimately lead to loss of topsoil and failure of trees to regenerate.
- 2.3.7 Evidence of Mesolithic habitation can be found in the village of Selmeston (10km northwest of Eastbourne) where a pit dating from this period has been recorded. Although it is not fully known whether it was a 'pit dwelling' or whether it had been originally excavated as quarry pits (for flint) or for the storage of food or other essentials, it remains as a landscape feature from this period.

### **Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age (c.4,500 BC to c.43 AD)**

- 2.3.8 The Neolithic Age was the most fundamental period of change to affect human social development. It heralded a new age of food production and farming, which in turn saw the most significant changes to the appearance of the landscape to date. The period was characterised by large phases of land clearance, boundary definition and monument building.
- 2.3.9 The earliest monuments recorded from the study area, are best categorised as enclosures. The majority of the monuments concentrate upon the chalk hills of the Downs. Combe Hill causewayed enclosure (SMR TQ50 SE12 MES545) on the northern escarpment of the downs at Chalk Farm, located 5km northwest of Eastbourne town centre, is constructed on a saddle of land where once it would have commanded views north over wide expanses of the forested Weald. Roughly circular in shape – it is bounded by several ditch segments and is one of the best examples of a Neolithic enclosure in the south east. Excavations have found pottery and flint work dating from the period as well as artefacts from the Bronze Age and the Roman-British periods.

- 2.3.10 A focus for settlement during the Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age is thought to have been in the dry river valleys. Evidence of domestic activity is substantiated by the Belle Tout settlement located east of Birling Gap, immediately west of Eastbourne. The timber-constructed longhouse looks southeast forming part of a larger settlement, set within an earlier dry valley enclosure.
- 2.3.11 The introduction of metals was a pivotal stage in the development of prehistoric technology. The rarity of Early Bronze Age metal supports the contention that conversions from stone to bronze occurred over many centuries.
- 2.3.12 The remains of Early Bronze Age archaeology in Sussex are dominated by Round Barrows. There are over 1,100 barrows located mainly on the Downs and Lower Greensands<sup>11</sup>. They display a range of structural forms with one barrow comprising a flint mound with a diameter of 14m excavated at Crowlink (3km northwest of Beachy Head). This cairn incorporated thousands of worked flints and covered eight cremations and a disarticulated skeleton<sup>12</sup>. There is a good assemblage of Bronze Age barrows at Chalk Farm on Combe Hill and nearby Cold Crouch, including a scarce saucer barrow.
- 2.3.13 From c.1770BC pressure on the best land in Sussex led to a gradual shift from ritual landscapes dominated by barrows to an evolved and efficient agricultural system. Areas of Downland were cleared of vegetation and were brought under the management of organised farmsteads.
- 2.3.14 The Middle Bronze Age in Sussex developed from a period characterised by barrows into one dominated by settlements, fields, trackways and boundaries. Food production is by now the most archaeologically visible reflection of Bronze Age society. The most famous Bronze Age site in Eastbourne is Shinewater on the Willingdon Levels, where large quantities of late Bronze Age (800-600BC) artifacts were revealed in the landscaping work at Shinewater Park. Further investigation identified at least one timber platform and a wooden trackway. The platform was built of large oak posts associated with horizontal oak timbers forming the base of the platform. Above this were horizontal rods and layers of brushwood. Pottery, animal bone, struck and fire-cracked flints were also found. Other nearby finds included copper-alloy axes, a chisel, a bracelet, a sickle with an intact wooden handle, at least two human skeletons, a horse cheek-piece made of antler and four amber beads. The trackway runs approximately east to west across the Park and is the first of its type to be found in southeast England. The discovery of these remains changed the design of the lake and provided a name for the new secondary school in the area (Causeway School).

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<sup>11</sup> A Historical Atlas of Sussex, K. Leslie and B. Short, 1999

<sup>12</sup> A Historical Atlas of Sussex, K. Leslie and B. Short, 1999

- 2.3.15 Other landscape evidence for Bronze Age life within Eastbourne comes in the form of cross dykes, such as those seen running across the crest of a ridge of the Sussex Downs at Pashley Down (SMR TV59 NE29 MES564 and SMR TV59 NE52 MES585)
- 2.3.16 Advances into the Early and Middle Iron Age commenced with a gradual reorganisation of settlement and ritual traditions. Ceramic records show an emergence of very marked regional patterns; landmark hill forts became larger and fewer and correspondingly there were fewer settlements in the landscape. However, within the landscape Iron Age remains in the form of remnant field systems and agricultural activity such as the lynchets at Willingdon Bottom (SMR TQ50 SE110 – MES802) that have been dated by association with Iron Age pottery; the cultivation terrace of Mill Fields, Willingdon Hill (SMR TQ50 SE26 – MES527); or the field systems of East Dean Down (SMR TV59 NE66 MES595), which at some places survive to a height of 1.5m.
- 2.3.17 Nearing the end of prehistory, during the early 1st century BC, there is a conspicuous reconfiguration of the settlement and economic pattern in Sussex. With the disappearance of Hill Forts, the appearance of ritual centres such as cemeteries and a noticeable change in the production and distribution of both pottery and metal items; it is considered that this period was the start of Britain emerging out of the darkness of prehistory.

#### **Romano-British (c.43 AD to 4<sup>th</sup> century AD)**

- 2.3.18 It was the southern counties of England that felt the first influences of Roman rule. Everything, from the trade in foreign goods to the use of new farming practices and general living improvements, was adopted by the Late Iron Age communities in Sussex. Throughout much of southern Sussex, the majority of Roman sites were associated with farming, with the richer establishments being located upon the most productive soils: the fertile Coastal Plains, the southern margins of the Downs, and the Upper Greensands, and/or where there were good communication and access to markets. Eastbourne Roman Villa was discovered in 1712 when a bathhouse was uncovered with tessellated floors (NMR TW69 NW9), and an additional Roman villa has been tentatively identified at the Eastbourne General Hospital site. Evidence of a Romano-British settlement and salt working has also been recorded (SMR MES7287) during the construction of Cross Levels Way/A2280 in the far western part of the Eastbourne Levels.
- 2.3.19 The early iron industry was greatly expanded by the Romans in the 2nd century, but really only lasted for 100 years with it going into decline by the middle of the 3rd century. Other rural industries included farming, the manufacture of pottery, tiles and salt, forestry and the quarrying of stone. Surface evidence of Roman field systems still remain on the Downs, namely

in the fields around the parishes of Ripe and Chalvington (24 km northwest of Eastbourne), where the area was primarily concerned with the growing of cereals and the keeping of sheep.

- 2.3.20 Romano-British culture developed, evolved, changed and mutated quite happily in southern Britain until influences of culture and trade from northern Europe and Scandinavia permeated through Roman-Britain. Immigrants were now arriving, ones who would stamp their mark on the culture of the island.

### **Early Medieval (4<sup>th</sup> century to 1066 AD)**

- 2.3.21 There are few historical sources which provide sufficient information on Anglo-Saxon occupation of Sussex let alone Eastbourne. The Anglo-Saxons built in wood, which has left little archaeological information to augment the picture of Anglo-Saxon lifestyle. Most of the archaeological finds from this period are in the form of pottery, glass and weapons, and jewellery, which were buried as grave-goods in pagan Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. In 1980, an archaeological excavation discovered an Anglo-Saxon cemetery holding twenty-six skeletons (mostly without grave goods) and six knives on Ocklynge Hill, Eastbourne.
- 2.3.22 This paucity of evidence means the transition from Romano-British to an Anglo-Saxon population is relatively unclear. The Roman administration and economy were in decline well before the 'official' end of Roman Britain in c.410 AD. In the lead up to and during this period of change the Anglo-Saxons and their culture became the dominant force within the Eastbourne area.
- 2.3.23 The capture of the Roman Shore Fort at Pevensey (8km East of Eastbourne) towards the end of the 5th century enabled Anglo-Saxons to break free of Romano-British control. The distribution of cemeteries in Sussex demonstrates that Anglo-Saxon settlement in the area spread west as far as the Downs to the north-west of Chichester, and east as far as the area around modern Eastbourne.
- 2.3.24 In the 7th century, there were no recognisable towns or centres of importance in Sussex, and where present, settlements were no bigger than a hamlet. By the 11th century, a network of towns and other centres had appeared with the emergence of a hierarchy of settlements, both acting as central places and performing specialist roles; this was a reflection of the developing commercial and administrative complexity of English society<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> A Historical Atlas of Sussex, K. Leslie and B. Short, 1999  
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2.3.25 Commercial activity grew in Sussex from the early 10th century onwards, aided by the emergence of active ports. Although recognised as having a port, Eastbourne had not emerged as a first rank town by the 11th century, in contrast to more central places in the county. The settlement hierarchy of eastern Sussex developed much more slowly, with relatively few commercial centres.

### **Medieval (1066 to 16<sup>th</sup> century AD)**

2.3.26 During the Norman period, the towns of Sussex attained their greatest importance in relation to other English counties. With strong relations to the conquest itself, they also stood for 150 years as the main highway from England to the Continent - a bridge connecting the estates of the Norman nobility in England and Normandy.

2.3.27 In 1066, when William Duke of Normandy invaded England, he brought with him technology and designs from the continent including fortified castles. At first, these castles were to appear mainly from Hastings to London as a defence route back to the coast from London. However, after William became King of England, 1066, land was to be distributed out to the men that came with him from Normandy. On all areas of land provided by the King, a castle was built. Nothing like this had ever been seen on the landscape before the Norman Conquest and it completely changed the landscape especially when the wood from these defences was replaced with stone creating lasting structures<sup>14</sup>.

2.3.28 The movement of population between settlements was thought to be quite considerable between c.1066 and c.1500. Desertion of settlements then occurred and this was concentrated in the downlands and coastal regions, possibly due to a number of reasons. The Black Death was severe in Sussex in 1348-9, and after the plague there may have been a retreat from the downlands to the coastal areas. Environmental changes associated with the climate and rise in sea levels as well as economic reasons could have contributed to the pattern of desertion. One such Deserted Medieval Settlement, which has subsequently been developed, is Hydneye village (SMR TQ60 SW5 – MES517). However, there is still a lot of evidence for settlement and industry within Eastbourne during this period. A large number of 12th century, archaeomagnetically dated to c.1175, lime burning pits have been found within the Star Brewery site, within Eastbourne itself and also the chalk or marling pits, found at Tas Combe (SMR TW50 SE108 – MES800), which survive today as hollows within the landscape.

2.3.29 King Henry I visited Eastbourne during the Middle Ages; later followed by King Edward II, in 1324. The town was granted the right to hold a market in 1315, three years after a comparable

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<sup>14</sup> A History of Sussex, J.R Armstrong (1995)



grant awarded in Brighton. Evidence of Eastbourne's medieval past can be seen at the 12th century Church of St Mary's and Bourne Place.

### **Post Medieval (16<sup>th</sup> century to 1900)**

- 2.3.30 The most significantly documented activity and change that occurred in the earlier centuries of the Post-Medieval landscape was that of the building of furnaces. Originally, they were constructed to burn wood to produce charcoal that provided fuel for the iron industry but were later used by glass-workers. Ultimately, the rapid expansion of the iron industry ensured its equally speedy extinction. The available forests of the Weald were literally burnt in the furnaces. In 1809, the last furnace drew its fires for the last time at Ashburnham (25km north-east of Eastbourne)<sup>15</sup>. Another landscape feature associated with this industry are the marl or chalk pits (e.g. SMR TV59 NE185 – MES681, TV59 NE192 - MES688 or TV59 NE179 – MES675) which survive as slight depressions throughout today's landscape, which are sometimes also associated with buildings and trackways (SMR TV59 NE225 – MES723).
- 2.3.31 The clearing of much of the Weald's woodland happened on a spectacular scale, nothing compared to that had occurred during medieval times. The system of 'coppice and standard', by which selected oaks were encouraged to grow by adequate spacing, had ensured timber for the building of both houses and ships. There had been continual trade with London and larger English towns, as well as a valuable export trade with the continent. Instead of the carefully husbanded forests of the Weald, there was now a barren wilderness. Quick and immediate profits had led to a lack of concern for the future<sup>16</sup>.
- 2.3.32 The manor of Eastbourne was partitioned into three quasi-manors in 1574. The 16th century part-timbered house (SMR TV69 NW13 MES632) adopted by Nicholas Gildredge and which remains the manor-house of Eastbourne-Gildredge until c.1800 is still in existence and is outstanding for the suburbs of Eastbourne. In landscape terms it is significant as it now substantiates the name of the adjoining park.
- 2.3.33 The Sussex landscape as with the rest of the country underwent enforced change, through the Parliamentary Enclosure Acts. Over large areas, the Acts tidied up the abandonment of open-field agriculture, which had been ongoing for some centuries, with the result that common people could no longer graze their stock on free land. The open expanses of land away from the eastern downs were enclosed with the large scale planting of hedgerows.

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<sup>15</sup> A History of Sussex, J.R Armstrong (1995)

<sup>16</sup> A History of Sussex, J.R Armstrong (1995)

- 2.3.34 Minor settlements began to grow and start to dominate the landscape. By the 17th and 18th century, stately homes were coming into fashion. Land that was owned by these stately homes was to be fashioned around the building. Large parks at Compton Park and Hampden Park were enclosed and cultivated for pleasure. 'Compton Place' (SMR TV69 NE5 MES624), formerly known as 'Bourne Place', is located within Compton Park. This prominent manor house was remodelled in early Georgian era when it was renamed. The Duke of Devonshire now owns the house.
- 2.3.35 Eastbourne has been described as one 'planned by gentlemen for gentlemen'<sup>17</sup>. The charm and elegance engendered by that concept remains evident today in Eastbourne's wide boulevards and tree-lined streets. From the early 19th century, development in Eastbourne was extensive. Two principal landowners accounted for the town: William Cavendish, who became the seventh Duke of Devonshire, and John Davies Gilbert. 'Both were young men, and encouraged by the rising prosperity of the Industrial Revolution, they planned to develop the natural beauties of Eastbourne regardless of expense'. The Duke of Devonshire was responsible for building Eastbourne's three-tiered promenade to Holywell, under Beachy Head. Other facilities linked with expanding settlements were also built including a number of hospitals such as All Saints Convalescent Hospital, Darley Hospital Road, Meads (SMR TV69 NW55 – MES 819), which was the first public convalescent hospital, built in 1867-9 to designs by H Woodyer.
- 2.3.36 Other Post-Medieval landscape features that can still be seen in today's landscape are mills. One such site is the 18th century horizontal Pashley Down Mill and bolting house (SMR TV 59 NE34 MES569), built as a grinding mill the site today consists of masonry remains, a pit 1.5m deep and an irregular mound.
- 2.3.37 In 1793, following a survey of coastal defences in the southeast of England, approval was given for the positioning of infantry and artillery to defend the bay between Beachy Head and Hastings from attack by the French. Fourteen Martello Towers were constructed along the western shore of Pevensey Bay, continuing as far as Tower 73, the Wish Tower of Eastbourne (SMR TV69 NW27 - MES636; SAM 32262), which is still in existence. Between 1805 and 1807, the construction of a fortress known as 'Eastbourne Redoubt' (SMR TV 69 NW28 - MES637; SAM 32263) took place along Eastbourne sea front. The fortress was built as a barracks and storage depot, armed with ten cannons. The fortress and several Martello Towers (No. 73 SAM 32262; No. 66 now used as a HM Coastguard Station SMR TQ60 SW22 – MES505; No. 64 now used as a store house TQ60 SW27 – MES508) form an important part of the town's seafront. When viewed as part of a wider defence network, they provide visual

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<sup>17</sup> A Short History of Eastbourne, Stevens, L. (2004)  
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markers to Eastbourne's military history and a significant insight into the strategic integration of the Martello Tower system in the defence of Britain during the 19th century.

- 2.3.38 Until the 19th century, Eastbourne remained an area of small rural settlements. Four villages or hamlets occupied the site of the modern day town, including Bourne, Meads, South Bourne and the fishing village known simply as Sea Houses, which was located east of the present pier. Lawrence Stevens reveals in his book: 'A Short History of Eastbourne' that:-

*'In 1849 the railway arrived, the Terminus Road was constructed from the Railway Station to the sea. This was the first new road to be laid down. Soon broad, tree-lined roads began to spread across the fields under the Downs, and those retiring from high positions in the country and overseas built large houses in the Meads. In 1851, the sea wall in front of the Sea Houses was developed westwards, and houses, which became hotels, were built along Grand Parade. Many private schools were established, and Eastbourne College, a public school, was founded in 1867. In that year a fire engine was purchased and a Volunteer Fire Brigade was formed. The Pier was opened in 1872, and parades eastward of Sea Houses were completed by 1844, and as early as 1882 the seafront was illuminated by electric lamps.*

*In 1883 Eastbourne was incorporated as a Municipal Borough. In 1894 a bandstand was opened on the seafront, a Municipal Orchestra was formed in 1899. Parks and gardens were laid out to add to the natural attractiveness of a fashionable holiday resort, and Hampden Park was purchased in 1901.'*

- 2.3.39 Landscape features which one would associate with a seaside landscape are also historically significant along the Eastbourne Coast. The Belle Tout Lighthouse (now disused) (SMR TV59 NE94 MES618) was built, with granite in 1831 on top of the cliffs. It was replaced in 1902 by Beachy Head Lighthouse and is now a private residence. Due to cliff erosion, it was moved 50m away from the cliff edge in 1999.
- 2.3.40 In 1905, a disused chalk pit at Holywell, was laid out as an Italian Garden. The name originates from a small fishing hamlet further west of the site.

### **Modern Period (1901 to present day)**

- 2.3.41 On the 1st of April 1911, Eastbourne became a County Borough, boasting a population of 52,542. However, further development was brought to a standstill by the outbreak of World War I in August 1914.
- 2.3.42 The call-up for war service depleted the county's workforce, thereby slowing development. The years following saw Sussex's traditional isolation slowly disappear, with the improvement of roads and infrastructure. The Council purchased some 16.59 square kilometres of Downland around Beachy Head in 1926, in order to protect the area from indiscriminate building.
- 2.3.43 In the years leading up to World War II, agriculture remained dominant, and land that had remained untouched for 1,500 years was cultivated remorselessly. Conifer plantations alien to the chalk landscape, such as Friston Forest just to the west of the Borough, were planted in tracts unsuitable for plough land. The increase in agricultural production was made possible by mechanisation and the development of chemicals<sup>18</sup>.
- 2.3.44 During World War II, Eastbourne welcomed evacuees into the town. Later however, Eastbourne was forced to evacuate. Nearly 700 high explosive and 4,000 incendiary bombs fell on the town and the pride of the seafront, including its carpet gardens, was given over to the production of onions. Remnant World War II features within the landscape of Eastbourne today include bunkers, such as those on Willingdon Hill (SMR TQ50 SE65 – MES 654 and TQ50 SE65 – MES 655); and possible bomb craters (SMR TQ50 SE104 – MES796 or SMR TW50 SE105 MES797).
- 2.3.45 During the 20th century, and particularly after World War I, the conditions of life, the distribution and density of population and the character of the landscape all changed more rapidly than in any previous period of similar duration. After both World Wars, development continued, including the growth of Bourne (Old Town) up the hillside and the housing estates of Hampden Park, Willingdon Trees and Langney.
- 2.3.46 During the latter half of the 20th century, there were controversies over the loss of historic landmarks or natural features, and over particular buildings. This issue was later exacerbated in 1963 by the construction of a nineteen-storey seafront building (South Cliff Tower), followed by the glass-plated Transport and General Workers Union headquarters in 1976. The completion of these buildings caused a storm of protest amongst Eastbourne residents. The demolition of a fifteenth century manor house at Rodmill resulted in the founding of The Eastbourne

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<sup>18</sup> A History of Sussex, J.R Armstrong (1995)  
March 2010  
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Preservation Society in 1961, which seeks to safeguard the local environment by preserving its character and influencing good development for the future.

2.3.47 Most of Eastbourne's urban expansion has taken place on the northern and eastern margins of the town, gradually merging with surrounding villages, such as Willingdon. Western urban areas have largely been contained by the steep scarp slopes, which form the edge of the Downs.

2.3.48 In 1981, the indoor shops of the Arndale Centre replaced a large section of the town centre. In the 1990s, both growth and controversy accelerated rapidly as a new plan was launched to develop the area known as the Crumbles, a shingle bank on the coast, located northeast of the town centre. In 1993 the Sovereign Harbour retail and residential complex was opened.

2.3.49 The Levels are a feature within the Eastbourne landscape, forming a prominent green wedge within the town. The Levels form part of an ancient landscape. Much of the area being a tidal inlet used for salt production, however during the medieval period, the levels were reclaimed and largely drained to use as fertile grazing marsh. For centuries a pattern of summer grazing and winter flooding was maintained, the drainage ditches forming green fences. Today, the levels are used as grazing marsh and for recreational purposes, and provide considerable flood storage capacity for the town.

## **2.4 Ecological Character**

2.4.1 The Borough of Eastbourne has a number of different landscapes, each offering ecological interest and potential. The town has little of the industrial wasteland that is characteristic of many urban areas. The wildlife habitats are therefore closer to semi-natural vegetation than would be the case in many towns and are described below.

***Wet ditches, wet and dry pasture within Eastbourne Park and the remains of the levels to the east.***

2.4.2 Eastbourne Park contains an ancient landscape that was formerly marshland interconnected with Pevensey Levels to the east. An intensive drainage system has converted most of the former marsh into grassland, but marshland remnants persist along the drainage ditch system and within West Langney Level, the lowest lying area of Eastbourne Park. Uncommon wetland plants and invertebrates such as Fen Pondweed and Shining Rams Horn snail can still be found in West Langley Level and some western parts of Eastbourne Park.

***1,200 acres of Chalk grassland on the western side of the Borough, which forms the 'Open Downland' on the South Downs.***

- 2.4.3 The Open Downland in the Borough of Eastbourne is open access land along the coastal clifftop and eastern escarpment, forming part of the triangular shaped landholding at the easternmost end of the South Downs where a rare chalk grassland cover provides one of Britain's richest wildlife habitats with up to 40 plant species growing in one square metre of turf. The downland supports a wide variety of plants which can only survive in chalky soils and the butterflies and other insects that these plants attract.

***Fragments of shingle along the foreshore with chalk cliffs descending from the edge of the urban area.***

- 2.4.4 At the eastern end of the shore, which is in front of the Sovereign Harbour complex at Eastbourne, there is a strip of shingle immediately behind the foreshore, which supports a rich flora including several that are characteristic of shingle dunes. The area immediately west of the houses on the foreshore, at the eastern end of the shore, continues to support important shingle flora with species not found elsewhere. The habitat turns into unvegetated shingle about 100m before the Martello Tower. This entire area of shingle, from the harbour to the tower, is the best shingle habitat remaining of the former Crumbles shingle ridge system within Eastbourne.

***Urban habitats of Elm trees, and the flora and fauna of older brick-coped walls.***

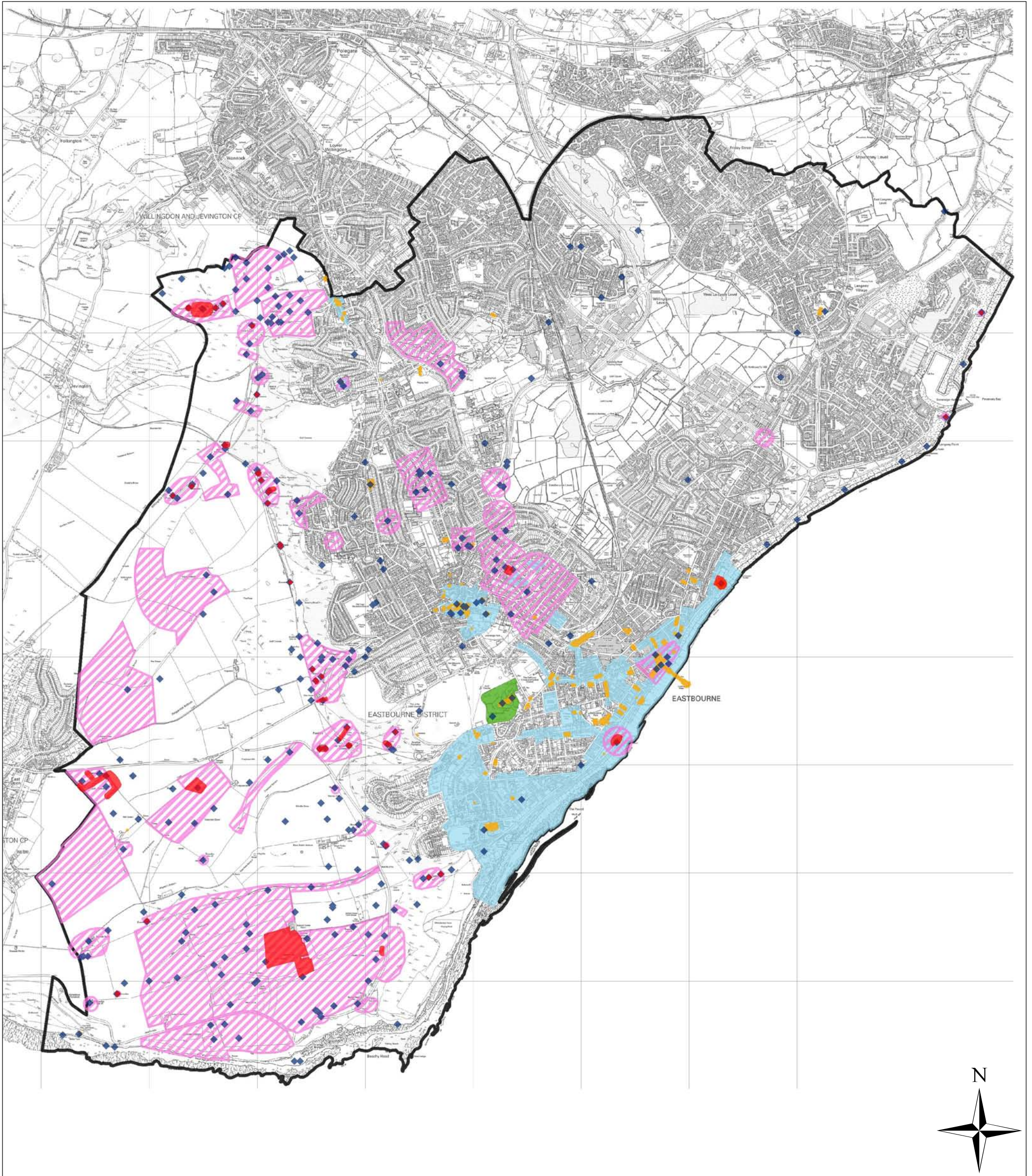
- 2.4.5 The elm tree population that grows in this area is unique in character and attracts a wealth of wildlife deep into the urban area, providing nesting for birds as well as habitats for invertebrate and epiphyte communities.

***2,800 acres of productive farmland with public access on rights of way***

- 2.4.6 The downland above Eastbourne has four tenant farms, used for a mixture of pastoral and arable farming. Grazing stock has a vital role in maintaining the historic landscape as chalk grassland. On the open downland (2.4.3 above), under licence agreements, cattle and sheep are grazing for conservation reasons in temporary enclosures using electric fencing and with gates for public access. This traditional grazing management is to enhance the concentrations of wild flowers, butterflies and other invertebrates found on chalk grassland.

## **2.5 Historic Environment Designations**

- 2.5.1 Eastbourne owes as much to human intervention as it does to natural processes for the shaping of its landscape. A variety of historic environmental features within the Borough are protected by both formal and informal designations and legislation in recognition of their historical and archaeological value, both local and national (see Figure 4). These include:



**KEY**

- |  |                                |   |                  |   |                              |   |            |
|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------|---|------------------------------|---|------------|
|  | Archaeological Sensitive Areas |  | Listed Buildings |  | Registered Parks and Gardens |  | Study Area |
|  | Conservation Areas             |  | Monuments        |  | Scheduled Ancient Monuments  |   |            |

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**Figure 4**

Historic Landscape Designation

### **Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

- 2.5.2 There are 38 nationally important archaeological sites within Eastbourne Borough. These are protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979).

### **Conservation Areas**

- 2.5.3 There are 12 historical areas of towns and villages in Eastbourne of special architectural or historical interest protected under the listed Building and Conservation Areas Act (1990). This is compared to 108 areas in East Sussex as a whole.

### **Listed Buildings**

- 2.5.4 There are 2 Grade I, 12 Grade II\* and 109 Grade II listed buildings in Eastbourne of architectural merit, that are protected under the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act (1990). This is compared to 127 Grade I, 274 Grade II\*, and 5947 Grade II Listed Buildings in East Sussex as a whole.

### **Registered Historic Parks and Gardens**

- 2.5.5 There are two historically designed landscapes within Eastbourne Borough that are included on the English Heritage register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest. These are the grounds at Compton Place and part of The Hoo in Willingdon. In addition, Eastbourne Council considers that Manor Gardens, Motcombe Gardens, the Seafront Gardens, Upperton Gardens, Hartfield Gardens, Hampden Park, the Helen Gardens, Holywell Retreat and Princes Park are also of special interest and should be included in the register or regarded, at least, as being of local interest.

### **Areas of High Townscape Value**

- 2.5.6 There are four areas of high townscape value within Eastbourne. This is a local designation without statutory recognition that relates to areas considered as being of merit. The four areas are Ratton, Meads, Devonshire Park and Hyde Road. Details are available in the Eastbourne Townscape Guide.

## **2.6 Past and Current Perceptions**

- 2.6.1 The Downs have captured the imagination of many artists and writers and have been described through literary writings and poetry.



## Artistic Associations

- 2.6.2 Many painters have been inspired by the dramatic landscape including Copley Fielding, who painted atmospheric watercolours of the Downs in the 19th century, Philip Wilson Steer, who painted his watercolour 'Sussex Downs' in 1914, and Eric Ravilious, whose 20th century paintings depict the chalk Downlands and agricultural landscapes.

## Descriptive Writings and Literary Associations

- 2.6.3 The dramatic landscape of the *Open Downs* has been a source of literary inspiration throughout the centuries, but the perception of their aesthetic value has changed significantly. As early as 1772, the naturalist Gilbert White described the '*broad backs*' and '*shapely figured aspect*' of the open rolling Downs. Vast flocks of sheep once roamed the Downs and these inspired many writers. In 1813, the Reverend Arthur Young wrote '*the whole tract of the Downs in their full extent, is stocked with sheep, and the amazing number they keep, is one of the most singular circumstances in the husbandry of England*'.
- 2.6.4 In the 19th century, the open chalk landscapes were often described unfavorably. William Gilpin described the landscape of the Downs as '*ugly*', Cobbett found the Downs '*all high, hard, dry, fox-hunting country*' and Samuel Johnson described the landscape as being '*so desolate that if a man had a mind to hang himself in desperation he would be hard put to find a tree on which to fix a rope*'.
- 2.6.5 The Open Downs stirred Kipling to write his poem '*Sussex*' in 1902 in which he describes the '*blunt, bow-headed, whale-backed Downs*'. He also described the intangible elements of the Downs such as the voice of the shepherd, the cries of sheep, clamour of sheep bells, jingling of harnesses, sounds of the sea and absence of mechanical noise. This image is now hard to find and illustrates how the Downs have changed since the turn of the last century.
- 2.6.6 Moutray Read noted the '*clear, clean, wholesome, invigorating*' nature of the Downs that exhibited '*a perfection of curve and outline*'. Virginia Woolf seemed rendered speechless by the beauty of the Downs, writing: '*One is overcome by beauty more extravagantly than one could expect...I cannot express this.*'

## 2.7 Nature Conservation Designations and Habitats

- 2.7.1 Eastbourne Borough has a number of ecological designations, including:-

- Two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - at Willingdon Down and at Seaford to Beachy Head (which includes Bullingdean and Kiln Combe SSSI)
- Nineteen Sites of Nature Conservation Importance

2.7.2 The open downland within Eastbourne forms part of the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

2.7.3 The Countryside Agency – now Natural England – began the process of designating the South Downs as a National Park in April 2000. It made a Designation Order in December 2002 showing the area that it believed merited designation as a National Park. The proposed boundary was considered in detail at a Public Inquiry that ran between 10 November 2003 and 18 March 2005. The Designation Order remains to be confirmed by the Minister in light of the findings of this Inquiry. This decision has been delayed by several legal complications which effectively forced a halt to the designation process in November 2005. In the light of comments and representations received, the Minister may decide to reopen the South Downs public inquiry in late 2007.

## **2.8 Forces for Change in the Landscape**

2.8.1 The landscape, ecological and historic character of Eastbourne Borough is dynamic, and is constantly changing in response to human activity and natural processes. Historically changes in agriculture, the socio-economic structure of local communities, and industrialisation has all had important impacts. The pace of change today is far greater than ever before. Development and other environmental changes are having increasingly visible, cumulative and far-reaching effects on landscape character. These include increasing demands for road transport, new infrastructure and high rates of residential and commercial development. The landscape is also undergoing significant change from new patterns of agricultural land use in response to changing climatic and market conditions.

### **Agriculture and Land Management**

2.8.2 The reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, and Government policy to reduce production subsidies in favour of environmental subsidies, provides significant opportunities safeguard and restore characteristic features of the agricultural landscape through Environmental Stewardship schemes.

2.8.3 Key changes include:

- Agricultural improvement has resulted in rationalisation of an early field system of small fields into larger field units and continues to threaten the remaining medieval field patterns and traditional pastoral landscape
- Damage to ancient monuments from intensive arable cultivation

- Decline in species rich grasslands with intensification of agricultural practices
- Elm loss from the 1970s
- Encroachment of scrub into grassland due to changes in farming practices leading to change in balance of grassland/scrub mix
- Growing intensity of farming practices, including the shift from spring sown to autumn sown crops, has resulted in a change in landscape character and decline in farmland birds and a loss of biodiversity on chalk grassland
- Loss of hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees plus poor management of remaining hedgerows
- Intensification in farming leading to drainage and improvement of permanent pasture and marshland on the floodplain and loss of riparian vegetation
- Invasion of exotic species from gardens and parkland landscapes into the native habitats is evident in some areas, for example cotoneaster on chalk grassland on the downland
- Loss of semi-natural woodland plus the introduction of conifers has resulted in a change in visual and ecological character
- Need for sustainable woodland management including traditional maintenance techniques where appropriate to conserve ancient woodlands and particularly surviving areas of wood pasture and coppice
- Nutrient pollution from riverside arable land plus road and urban run off affecting the high water quality of the streams and rivers
- Over maturity and non-replacement of old tree stock within hedgerows has resulted in the loss of trees as landscape features

### **Built Development**

2.8.4 As elsewhere in the country, housing development represents a significant pressure for change in Eastbourne Borough. Continued urban development around the town has had its impact on local landscape character. The challenge for the future is to accommodate housing development without eroding local character and distinctiveness.

2.8.5 Key forces for change are:

- Development pressures, particularly for new housing which could affect the character of the urban edges
- Isolated development such as new single dwellings that might compromise rural character
- Loss of vernacular architectural features
- Modern residential developments in more open locations, some close to the floodplain, have weakened the pattern of tight knit villages in the past
- Pressure for development on main road corridors such as services which are highly visible in more open landscape types

### **Transport and Traffic**

2.8.6 Reflecting the national trend, the Borough has seen increasing levels of car usage. This is leading to major congestion, pollution problems, and pressures for new road schemes out towards the surrounding countryside and these road improvements are likely to significantly affect landscape character.

2.8.7 Key forces for change are:

- Increased traffic on the road network, plus improvements to country lanes including kerbing, widening and signing, which, in places create a more 'urban' character and further diminish the tranquillity of the landscape
- Pressure to build new roads
- The presence of major transport corridors particularly the trunk roads has brought pressures for development
- Upgrading of the rail network may create new types of pressure and the building of new multi-modal transport interchanges.

#### **Access, Recreation and Leisure**

2.8.8 In recent years there has been a substantial increase in the number and proportion of people taking part in outdoor recreational activities. Tourism, leisure and the boating industry make an important contribution to local employment. In addition the many buildings and places within Eastbourne are tourist attractions in their own right.

2.8.9 Key forces for change are:

- Recreational pressure on the open downland eastern escarpment and clifftop.
- Managing high visitor numbers to key sites with potential adverse effects on historic landscapes, archaeological sites and nature reserves, and need for supporting infrastructure.

#### **Climate Change**

2.8.10 Climate change is a global issue, and evidence of it is growing in the UK with trends towards increased temperatures, wetter winters, and more extreme weather events in the last ten years already identified. The scenarios produced by the UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP02) suggests that the UK could experience by 2080:

- An increase of current average temperatures by 2 to 3.5°C
- More frequent summer droughts, and more frequent flooding
- A rise in the average level of the sea.

2.8.11 Whilst there are still uncertainties regarding exact changes at regional and local levels, it is clear there could be both direct and indirect impacts on landscape character. The potential implications for landscape character in Eastbourne include changes in habitats and species composition, habitat fragmentation, water resources, soils, agricultural land use, recreation and tourism and cultural heritage. Rises in river levels, more frequent flooding, more frequent summer droughts and the potential drying out of winter bournes, due to lower water tables, are also anticipated changes in the landscape as a result of climate change.

## **Energy Generation and Supply**

- 2.8.12 Changes in the way in which energy is generated are evident throughout the country. The need for renewable energy may impact on the landscape through the potential impact of tall structures - communications masts and transmitters plus future renewable energy developments (wind turbines) that will be particularly intrusive on the skylines and could have a major impact on the sense of remoteness. The planting of biomass crops is also a potential change to the character of the landscape, as large-scale monocultures of these crops may prejudice landscape patterns.

## **3.0 THE CHARACTER OF THE EASTBOURNE LANDSCAPE**

### **3.1 General**

3.1.1 This section provides a detailed inventory and description of Landscape Character Types and Areas within Eastbourne Borough.

### **3.2 Landscape Character Types**

3.2.1 The Landscape Character Assessment for the South Downs AONB provides the framework for more detailed assessment of landscape units within Eastbourne Borough at 1:25,000 scale.

3.2.2 Each of the generic Landscape Character Types has a distinct and relatively homogenous character with similar physical and cultural attributes, including geology, landform, land cover, biodiversity and historical evolution.

3.2.3 Six Landscape Character Types have been defined within the Borough and are as follows:

- Open Downlands (Type A)
- Major Scarps (Type B)
- Scarp Footslopes (Type C)
- The Levels (Type D)
- Rugged Coast (Type E)
- Smooth Coastal Strip (Type F)

3.2.4 The location and extent of each of these landscape character types are illustrated on the plan provided in Appendix C to this report.

3.2.5 The key characteristics of these six Landscape Types are summarised below.

#### **Open Downlands (Type A)**

- Elevated and expansive rolling chalk downland with dry valleys and scarp slopes.
- Predominantly solid chalk geology with occasional surface clay capping.
- The wooded dry valleys at Wigdens Bottom and Willingdon Bottom are a special feature.
- Excluding the ephemeral winterbournes and distinctive dew ponds; there is a general absence of water.
- Chalk downland turf and rare chalk heath, together with associated scrub and occasional belts of woodland habitat are confined to steep slopes where land is less congenial to arable cultivation and pasture grazing.
- Large scale, irregular but straight-sided field patterns, subtly defined by post and wire boundaries. Remnants of hedgerows and clumps of mature beech trees at Paradise Drive, Belle Tout and Butts Brow are important features, surviving from the earlier manorial downland landscape.

- Simple and smooth texture with a relatively strong sense of tranquillity.
- An exposed, windswept character in southern areas with prominent views to the sea and spectacular chalk cliffs.
- Remote feel in places, accentuated by large open skies and distant panoramic views – strongly influenced by varying and sometimes dramatic coastal weather conditions.
- Elevated views over the scarp slopes to Eastbourne and its smooth coastal strip, which are most apparent from the eastern edges of the Downs.
- Sparse settlement pattern, with occasional isolated farmsteads that interrupt the open landscape.
- Traditional flint barns and low stone walls are an important features.
- Public open access opportunities, mainly associated with ridgelines, allowing prominent views across the downland to nearby settlements including Friston, Eastbourne and Willingdon, the Low Weald and distant coastline views.
- An ancient chalkland track, the South Downs Way National Trail, follows two routes, firstly along Eastbourne’s western ridgeline to Jevington and secondly to Beachy Head and along the chalk cliff top. Both routes join at Alfriston in the Cuckmere valley, outside the Borough Boundary.
- Forms part of Sussex Heritage Coast and South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

### **Major Scarps (Type B)**

- Dramatic steep north and east facing chalk escarpment forming a distinctive edge to the chalk downlands
- Presents a unique linear landscape with a mixture of convex and concave slopes and steep scarp faces.
- A remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, creating a dramatic change in topography and a strong skyline.
- Extensive panoramic views may be obtained from some areas across Eastbourne, Polegate and the Low Weald towards Ashdown Forest.
- The escarpment slopes immediately above Eastbourne are generally covered in dense woodland, providing a well-wooded scenic edge to the town.
- Some scarp slopes contain areas of extensive chalk grassland habitat, i.e. within Willingdon Down SSSI.
- The former agricultural lime-burning industry has left a number of small, but visually prominent exposed chalk pits at Tas Combe near Chalk Farm.
- Deeply sunken tracks and lanes are prominent features, cutting into the escarpment to link the lower scarp footslopes with the chalk uplands.
- Major vehicular routes pass over the scarp ridgelines through openings in the woodland on the scarp.
- General absence of buildings on the slope itself, but in some places, Eastbourne’s residential fringes encroach onto the scarp.
- Recreational areas are commonly associated with upland historic monuments and panoramic viewpoints e.g. Combe Hill, Cold Crouch, Beachy Brow, Pashley Down, Beachy Head.
- Forms part of Sussex Heritage Coast and South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

### **Scarp Footslopes (Type C)**

- Smooth, visually prominent, generally convex chalk outcrops at the base of the steep scarp where the slope has been eroded.
- Underlain by a complex geology comprising bands of lower chalk, mudstones and sandstones.
- Well defined and enclosed by steep scarp slopes to the west, forming a transition between the scarp and the urban area.
- Some scattered buildings associated with Chalk Farm to the northwest of the town.

- Golf courses are key features of these types, in addition to the fields of pasture to the northwest of the town. These fields, close to the scarp foot, include a largely intact late medieval landscape and are bounded by a relatively strong network of mature hedgerows and woodland.

### **The Levels (Type D)**

- Flat, low-lying landscape of grazed marsh, lakes and wet meadows, woven by reed filled ditches and channels.
- Medium sized predominantly irregular field pattern fringed with reeds and permeable post and wire fencing.
- Fragments of hedgerows and isolated trees defining some field boundaries, predominantly in peripheral areas.
- A general lack of tree cover – only small areas of wet woodland, scrub and belts of mature poplar trees adjacent to residential areas.
- Some areas of recreational parkland and sporting fields.
- A highly visible urban edge in most areas – mixture of residential and industrial.
- Panoramic views towards major scarp slopes on western and north-western edges of Eastbourne.
- An open, windswept feel in places.
- Railway, major roads and powerlines that cross the levels are visually dominating structures in this open, flat landscape.

### **Rugged Coast (Type E)**

- Rugged indented and varied coastline.
- Dramatic chalk cliffs with an inter-tidal shoreline.
- Chalk cliffs form an abrupt boundary between the flint shingle beaches and the pastoral clifftop chalk grassland of the open downland.
- Significant deposits of chalk rubble resulting from cliff falls along the shoreline, forming spits that extend into the sea.
- Series of concave, densely vegetated, indents into the coast dissect stretches of steep cliff.
- An exposed and dynamic landscape whose character is evolving through weather conditions and constant erosion.
- Open and expansive views across the sea to the horizon.
- Wooden groynes and concrete retaining structures are prominent features, where this type converges with the smooth coastal strip to the south of Eastbourne.
- Beachy Head cliffs, Belle Tout and Beachy Head Lighthouse serve as local landmarks.

### **Smooth Coastal Strip (Type F)**

- 
- Stretches of gently graded flint shingle beaches.
- Wooden groynes and concrete retaining structures are prominent features on the beach.
- Military defence structures are visually prominent and common coastal features e.g. Martello Towers.
- Some steeply-graded shoreline embankments are well vegetated and are traversed by pathways.
- Intact Victorian – Edwardian architectural edge along some sections of seafront.
- Some formal parks overlooking the shoreline.
- Wide seaside boulevard from Holywell to Langney Point.
- Eastbourne Pier is a visually prominent feature protruding out into the sea.
- Sovereign Harbour, the Marina and associated artificial breakwater is a special feature along the coastline.
- Numerous car parks and tourist attractions adjacent to the shoreline.
- Extensive views out across the sea to the horizon.



### 3.3 Landscape Character Areas

3.3.1 'Landscape Character Areas' are geographically unique areas with a recognisable pattern of landscape characteristics, both physical and experiential, that combine to create a distinct sense of place.

3.3.2 A total of 24 Landscape Character Areas have been defined within the Borough. The location and extent of each of these landscape character areas are illustrated on the plan provided in Appendix C to this report.

3.3.3 For each Landscape Character Area, a detailed 'profile' has been prepared. These profiles are structured as follows:

**Title:** Name of the Character Area as shown on Landscape Character Areas Plan;

**Key Characteristics:** Summary of key attributes that make the area distinctive;

**Overall Character:** Description of the area's general character;

**Key Views:** Brief description of views;

**Historic Features:** Brief description of visible historic features that contribute to landscape character;

**Key Ecological Features:** Brief description of the ecological attributes that contribute to the landscape character of the area.

**Inherent Landscape Sensitivities:** Brief description of the key sensitivities of the character area, based on an evaluation of each key element or characteristic of the landscape likely to be affected by change, irrespective of the type of change that may be under consideration. The evaluation of landscape sensitivities may be used to inform decisions concerning the design and integration of development within the landscape and the identification of appropriate mitigation measures.

**Indicative Capacity for Change:** An indication of the likely degree to which a particular character area can accommodate change.

**Landscape Priorities:** These deal with the issues in each particular landscape character area and identify the most appropriate approach to either restoring, conserving or enhancing the landscape.

**Land Management Guidelines:** *These deal with guidance on how best to manage individual landscapes (e.g. woodland enhancement measures).*

**Landscape Planning Guidelines:** *These deal with guidance on how best to plan for the protection and enhancement of individual landscapes (e.g. resisting any development on visually prominent slopes).*

- 3.3.4 It should be noted that whilst the above planning guidelines identify landscape and visual constraints to new built development, they do not consider other constraints to built development, such as the risk of flooding in low-lying areas.
- 3.3.5 The character areas are listed below under each of the landscape types within which they occur. Photographs are provided to illustrate the appearance and characteristics of each character area, together with a location map for each character area.
- 3.3.6 As acknowledged by current best practice guidelines, landscape is a continuum and character does not in general change abruptly on the ground. More commonly, the character of the landscape will change gradually rather than suddenly, and therefore boundaries drawn between Landscape Character Types and Areas should be considered to reflect zones of transition in many cases. In addition, the boundaries drawn around Landscape Character Types and Areas has been defined and mapped at a scale of 1:25,000, and the assessment is therefore only suitable for use at this scale. This should be taken into consideration when the assessment is being used to inform decision-making in relation to development and land management proposals.
- 3.3.7 Eastbourne Borough Council also commissioned a Borough-wide biodiversity study in May 2007 with the intention that this would be used to inform this landscape character assessment study. However, the results of this biodiversity study were not available at the time of finalising this landscape character study.

# A1 - EASTBOURNE DOWNS



## A – OPEN DOWNLANDS

### A1 – EASTBOURNE DOWNS

#### Key Characteristics

- Elevated and expansive rolling chalk downland with extensive network of dry valleys.
- Predominantly solid chalk geology with occasional surface clay capping.
- Wooded dry valleys at Wigdens Bottom and Willingdon Bottom are a special feature.
- Other than the ephemeral winterbournes and distinctive dewponds, there is a general absence of water.
- Chalk downland turf and rare chalk heath, together with associated scrub and occasional belts of woodland habitat, are confined to steep slopes where land is less congenial to arable cultivation and pasture grazing. Grassland habitat protected for its ecological value i.e. Willingdon Down SSSI.
- Mosaic of arable and permanent pasture with associated livestock.
- Large scale, irregular but straight-sided field patterns subtly defined by post and wire boundaries can have some remnant hedgerows.
- Simple and smooth textured landscape with a relatively strong sense of tranquillity.
- An exposed, windswept character in southern part of area with prominent views to the sea and spectacular chalk coastal cliffs.
- Remote feel in places, accentuated by large open skies and distant panoramic views – strongly influenced by varying and sometimes dramatic coastal weather conditions.
- Elevated views over the scarp slopes to Eastbourne and its smooth coastal strip, from the eastern part of the area.
- Sparse settlement pattern, with occasional isolated farmsteads that interrupt the open landscape.
- Traditional flint barns, low stonewalls and hilltop clumps of mature beech trees are important features.
- Panoramic views from ridgelines, across the downland to nearby settlements including Friston, Eastbourne and Willingdon, to the Low Weald and to distant coastline.
- The South Downs Way National Trail (an ancient chalkland track) has two routes on the downland at Eastbourne. A footpath ascends from the seafront to Beachy Head and then along the chalk cliffs. Secondly, a bridleway ascends at Paradise Drive and follows Eastbourne's western ridgeline to Jevington. Both routes join at Alfriston in the Cuckmere valley, outside the Borough. There is also the start of the Wealdway between Eastbourne and Gravesend.
- Forms part of Sussex Heritage Coast and South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

#### Overall Character Description

The area is predominantly characterised by rolling chalk downland with pronounced dry valleys. Land use is mainly pastoral farmland, with large-scale fields, subtly defined by post and wire fencing. Occasional arable fields. Areas of open access land dominate along the coastline and escarpment above Eastbourne. Remnants of hedgerows and clumps of mature beech trees at Paradise Drive, Horseshoe Plantation at Belle Tout and Beehive Plantation at Butts Brow are important features, surviving from the earlier manorial downland landscape.

A network of bridleways and footpaths follow the ridgelines, allowing panoramic views over the scarp slopes to Eastbourne. Numerous public rights of way criss-cross the downland. Road corridors and trackways form the only linear features in an otherwise continuous and monotone landscape. Away from the roads, there is a strong sense of tranquillity and a remote feel in places, accentuated by large open skies and distant panoramic views – strongly influenced by varying and sometimes dramatic coastal weather conditions. Settlement pattern is sparse on the Downs within Eastbourne and is largely restricted to occasional isolated farmsteads that interrupt the open landscape. However, the settlements of Friston and East Dean are located on the South Downs and abut the boundary of Eastbourne Borough. Traditional flint barns and low stonewalls are locally distinctive features.

Open access land is concentrated along the coastline in the far southern and south-eastern parts of the area and along the eastern escarpment above Eastbourne. A Countryside Centre, with associated car parking facilities, is located on the open access land near Beachy Head and is well used by visitors.

There are extensive branching dry valley systems that are distinctive landscape features upon the surface of the chalk slope. Some are well wooded and provide a special feature within the area. Where these dry valleys meet the sea, the result is a dramatic undulating cliff line. Patches of low wind-swept chalk heath can be found along coastline area at Belle Tout, providing contrast with the simple and smooth texture of the downland pasture fields. There is an exposed, windswept character in southern areas with prominent views to the sea and spectacular chalk cliffs.

The area forms part of Sussex Heritage Coast, and sits within the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The most prominent historic features comprise Belle Tout Lighthouse, ancient field systems and numerous barrow burial sites, including a significant Neolithic Causeway Enclosure on Combe Hill.

### **Key Views**

- Open and expansive views across the downland, particularly from Beachy Head and Belle Tout, towards Windover Hill and Firle Beacon.
- Panoramic views over the eastern escarpment slope to Eastbourne and beyond to Hastings and Dungeness.
- Panoramic views southwards over the coastal chalk cliffs and out to the sea.
- Panoramic clifftop views along the coastal cliffs between Beachy Head and Belle Tout
- Panoramic views northwards from the northern escarpment to the Low Weald towards Ashdown Forest.

### **Historic Features**

The area comprises a low level of settlement, with signs of earlier settlements existing as earthworks/archaeological sites, including:

- Scheduled Ancient Monuments, including over 25 Bronze Age round and saucer barrows and cross dykes located along the ridgeline above the scarp slopes, an isolated Neolithic Causeway Enclosure monument on Combe Hill and the Belle Tout earthworks and hill fort.
- Iron Age and early medieval field systems of Bullock Down and East Dean Down.
- Listed Buildings, including Belle Tout Lighthouse.
- The area forms part of the Sussex Heritage Coast, which stretches for some 9.5 kilometres between Eastbourne and Seaford seafronts including Beachy Head and Seaford Head.
- A wide range of areas of high archaeological potential including 26 Archaeologically Sensitive Areas.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Seaford to Beachy Head (including Bullingdean and Kiln Combe) SSSI habitat including herb-rich chalk grassland, chalk heath and maritime grassland.
- Willingdon Down SSSI comprising species-rich chalk grassland on steep slopes at the northern end of the Eastbourne Downs.
- Coastal, Alluvial and Terrestrial chalk habitats.
- Hedgerows of biodiversity value.
- Small patches of deciduous and mixed woodland are scattered across the area, (none are ancient).
- Dry, occasionally wooded chalk valleys.
- Actively managed scrub habitat on some steeper slopes of the open access downland i.e. Whitebread Hole (Whitbread Hollow)

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Forms part of an AONB and within the South Downs National Park.
- Chalk landscape forms part of Sussex Heritage Coast.

- Sense of tranquillity and remoteness.
- Exposed, windswept character in southern part of area with prominent views out to the sea and to coastal chalk cliffs.
- Vast and open, undeveloped character with expansive and panoramic views, particularly those from Beachy Head.
- Smooth, predominantly uninterrupted skyline.
- Areas of unimproved chalk grassland, chalk heath and pasture are vulnerable to changes in management and require consistent grazing regimes.
- Mosaic of habitats, which could be adversely affected by further intensification of farming methods and changes in farming management practices.
- High number of historic monuments and earthworks that form significant landmarks and provide a strong sense of time depth within the landscape.
- Visible cultural heritage, including field systems, farmsteads, a Shepherd's cottage and a lighthouse.
- Sparse settlement in the form of isolated farms. Their cohesive building materials are vulnerable to unsympathetic additions, extensions or conversions, which would disrupt the intact built character.
- Subtle features of the historic landscape, such as hedgerows and tracks, ancient field systems and barrows, which are not protected and are vulnerable to change and loss.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The open downland landscape has a large number of sensitive natural, cultural and aesthetic/perceptual features that are vulnerable to change. Of particular sensitivity is the skyline of the Downs, which is most often viewed against an open sky. The landscape is of national importance; valued for its landscape quality (AONB), chalk grassland habitat (SSSI), and geological and ecological value of the cliffs (SSSI). The area is part of the Sussex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and, if confirmed, the area would be designated as part of a National Park. Overall, there is very limited capacity for this area to accommodate any new development without significant effect on the area's openness, its rural and undeveloped character, its unique grassland habitats, its wealth of cultural heritage features and its strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness. Small-scale development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

### **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the rolling chalk downland; its uninterrupted skyline and panoramic views; its sense of tranquillity and remoteness and its wealth of cultural heritage features.

### **Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve and enhance the species-rich chalk grassland habitat at Willingdon Down, managing scrub to prevent encroachment.
- Conserve and enhance the ecologically sensitive SSSI habitats from Seaford to Beachy Head.
- Extend and link chalk grassland habitats to create unified swathes of open grazed grassland, which enhance the texture and ecological value of the smooth rolling downland.
- Maintain the open and exposed character of the area by minimising the amount of permanent structures.
- Manage scrub blocks with some clearance and introduce coppicing to create an uneven age structure to improve biodiversity and extend life of scrub habitat. See the Council's Scrub Management Action Plan for further guidance.
- Confine any new tree or hedge planting to valleys and lower areas to avoid intrusion on views and the diminishment of the open and expansive character of the area.
- Seek to manage recreational use, particularly the areas of open access land near the coastline and around the countryside centre at Beachy Head.
- Provide sensitively designed and clearly marked signage along rights of way to encourage access and maintain the remote, rural character.
- Conserve the rural character of the area by considering how best to maintain the viability of agriculture.

- Conserve and enhance flint walls, shepherds cottage, field barns, remnants of hedgerows and other historic landscape features surviving from the earlier manorial downland landscapes that contribute to the distinct sense of place and time-depth within the area.
- Conserve earthworks and other sites of archaeological importance, including the Belle Tout earthworks, barrows (burial sites), and cross dykes, and manage any scrub encroachment on them.

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist new development that would result in any diminution of the sparsely settled nature of the area or in any reduction in the tranquillity, remoteness or openness of the area, which is largely devoid of built structures.
- Resist development of telecommunication towers and other visually prominent vertical elements within the area, unless absolutely essential.
- Any new buildings should be located in less visually prominent locations, preferably clustering them around existing buildings and, where appropriate, using vernacular materials and design.
- Avoid development on the ridgeline above adjacent scarp slopes, which would intrude upon panoramic views out over Eastbourne and views back from the urban area to the prominent and uninterrupted skyline along the ridge.
- Consider the effect of any new development outside this area on views to and from the Eastbourne Downs.
- Integrate new farm buildings and associated structures into the landscape by locating them on the lower slopes and clustering them around existing buildings where appropriate.
- Minimise walls, hedges, impermeable fences and crash barriers that would enclose the downland roads and emphasise linearity of the road corridors in an otherwise smooth and uninterrupted landscape.
- Concentrate tourist facilities and other recreational amenities such as parking and toilets in identified areas.
- Conserve features of cultural heritage and their setting, such as East Dean Down field system and farmstead.

# B1 - COLD CROUCH SCARP





## **B – MAJOR SCARPS**

### ***B1 – COLD CROUCH SCARP***

#### **Key Characteristics**

- Dramatic steep chalk escarpment, with a mixture of convex and concave slopes, forming a distinctive edge to the chalk downland.
- Vegetation dominated by chalk grassland, with some scattered scrub and a belt of woodland along Butts Lane and along some lower north-facing scarp slopes. Grassland habitat protected for its ecological value on Willingdon Down SSSI.
- Small regular fields of pasture, extending up into the concave scarp slopes from the footslopes below, represent a largely intact late medieval landscape.
- The northernmost scarp slope in the Borough, providing a simple, strong skyline and a visually prominent backdrop to Willingdon, which has a strong influence on the character of this area and contributes to the setting of the South Downs.
- Extensive views across the Low Weald and across the northern parts of Eastbourne.
- The former agricultural lime-burning industry has left a number of small, but visually prominent exposed chalk pits in Tas Combe upslope from Chalk Farm
- Butts Lane is a prominent feature, cut into the escarpment to link the lower scarp footslopes with the chalk uplands.
- Tracks and narrow trails traverse the scarp, mostly running parallel to the contours.
- Absence of buildings on the slope itself.
- Serves as a recreational area, with its panoramic viewpoints and its footpaths.

#### **Overall Character Description**

The scarp slopes wrap tightly around the Eastbourne Downs in a winding manner and include a mixture of concave and convex slopes. Predominantly covered with chalk grassland and some scattered scrub, the escarpment forms a distinctive edge to the chalk downland. Prominent in views from Willingdon, the scarp provides a scenic rim to the town. The chalk escarpment provides extensive views across the Low Weald landscape and northern parts of Eastbourne. Typically harsh views to the urban edge below.

The overall open character of most of the slopes contrasts with the enclosed character of dense woodland on some relatively low-lying areas near Butts Lane and on some north-facing slopes. Land use is generally grazed grassland with recreational use, and small rectangular fields of pasture extending up into the concave scarp slopes from the footslopes below. The fields are medieval in origin and enhance the sense of time-depth in the landscape. There are a number of small, but visually prominent, exposed chalk pits located at Tas Combe upslope from Chalk Farm, which are a legacy of the former agricultural lime-burning industry.

There is a general absence of buildings on the slope itself. Historic tracks and narrow trails traverse the scarp, most of which run parallel to the contours or along ridgelines. Butts Lane provides primary vehicular access to the area, linking the lower scarp footslopes with the chalk uplands. Sunken in character and generally well enclosed by dense belts of woodland, the lane is a prominent feature.

#### **Key Views**

- Extensive views across the Low Weald landscape towards Ashdown Forest and west to the Folkington escarpment, Wannock and northern parts of Eastbourne.
- Open, near distance views of the medieval fields on the edge of the town.
- Grass slopes are a prominent feature in views from the northern parts of Eastbourne, including the Levels.
- Views down to the abrupt urban edge of Willingdon.

## Historic Features

- Exposed chalk pits on the lower scarp slope at Tas Combe, which are a legacy of the former agricultural lime-burning industry.
- Ancient, sunken terraced trackways – known as ‘bostal tracks’ are an integral part of former agricultural system, linking downland pasture with agricultural fields at the scarp footslopes.
- A group of late medieval fields in the northern part of the area.
- Two Archaeologically Sensitive Areas.
- The scarp slopes form an integral part of the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: - a landscape of national significance, which is valued for its natural beauty and cultural heritage resources.

## Key Ecological Features

- Extensive chalk grassland habitat at Willingdon Down SSSI.
- Some scrub blocks and mature deciduous woodland on lower north-facing scarp slopes.

## Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- Forms part of South Downs AONB and within the South Downs National Park.
- Areas of ecological importance including remnant chalk grassland habitat at Willingdon Down SSSI and significant blocks of mature woodland
- Steep, exposed chalk grass slopes, which form a consistent and visually prominent backdrop to many views from Willingdon and northern areas of Eastbourne, including the Levels.
- Ridgeline of the undeveloped scarp slopes is particularly sensitive, as it is viewed against the skyline.
- Scarp slopes vulnerable to erosion in some areas.
- Expansive and panoramic views from the scarp across adjacent landscapes, such as Low Weald, are vulnerable to change, which may adversely affect the remote character of the scarp slopes.
- Sense of tranquillity and peace.
- Visible cultural heritage in the form of sunken terraced trackways (‘bostal tracks’) and exposed chalk pits on the lower scarp slopes (a legacy of the former agricultural lime-burning industry).
- The remaining medieval field patterns on the lower scarp slopes in the northern part of the area.

## Indicative Capacity for Change

The steep scarps are visually sensitive as they are very prominent in views from Eastbourne, the Levels and beyond. The skyline of the scarp is of particular sensitivity as it is most often viewed against an open sky. Much of the area is part of the Sussex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and, if confirmed, the area would be designated as part of a National Park. Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area’s undeveloped character, its uninterrupted skyline, its unique grassland habitats and its strong sense of tranquillity and peace. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

## Landscape Priorities

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the scarp slopes with its significant chalk grassland habitat and low-lying blocks of mature woodland, its expansive and panoramic views, its sense of tranquillity and its variety of cultural heritage features. Opportunities should be taken to promote enhanced management of chalk grassland habitats and to control scrub invasion.

## Land Management Guidelines

- Continue to manage species-rich chalk grassland habitat at Willingdon Down for its ecological value.
- Conserve and enhance the chalk grassland habitat at Willingdon Down, managing scrub to prevent encroachment.

- Extend and link chalk grassland habitats to create unified swathes of open grazed grassland, which would enhance ecological value.
- Seek opportunities to regenerate and reinstate native woodland habitat to improve woodland structure and ecological value of Eastbourne's visually consistent wooded escarpment.
- Monitor and control presence of exotic species in woodland.
- Confine any new tree planting below the chalk downland ridgeline to avoid intrusion on views from the Eastbourne Downs.
- Maintain the largely undeveloped character of the scarp slopes by avoiding all unnecessary new built structures.
- Where boundary enclosure is necessary, promote the use of visually permeable boundaries, such as post and wire fencing, to maintain a smooth and continuous scarp profile.
- Sensitive designed signage to encourage access along rights of way and maintain the rural character.
- Conserve and enhance remnants of medieval fields and other cultural heritage features that contribute to the distinct sense of place of the area.
- Conserve the exposed chalk pits on the lower scarp slopes and their setting, to help maintain the sense of time depth in the area.
- Resist new woodland planting that would enclose views from the Eastbourne Downs.

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist any new development that would adversely affect the open, undeveloped nature of the scarp slopes and its skyline.
- Resist new development that would result in any reduction in the area's tranquillity.
- Resist development of telecommunication towers and other visually prominent vertical elements within the area, unless absolutely essential.
- Maintain and protect features of cultural heritage and their setting, such as the medieval fields on lower scarp slopes.
- Consider the effects of any new development outside this area on views to and from the scarp slopes.
- Consider opportunities for new tree/shrub planting to visually soften the existing urban edge.

## B2 - BABYLON DOWN SCARP



## **B2 – BABYLON DOWN SCARP**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Dramatic steep chalk escarpment, with a mixture of convex and concave slopes, forming a distinctive edge to the chalk downland.
- Scarp faces dominated by dense woodland cover but with relatively small areas of grassland in northern and southern parts of the area.
- Part of a remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, creating a dramatic change in topography and a strong skyline.
- Absence of buildings on the slope itself.
- Numerous footpaths pass through the woodland, linking the Downs with the Willingdon and Ratton residential areas, which have extended up into the concave scarp slopes from the footslopes below.
- Provides a well-wooded backdrop to Willingdon and Ratton.
- Barrows burial site located within Beehive Plantation, surrounded by bank and ditch earthworks.
- Two dewponds

### **Overall Character Description**

The character area comprises steep chalk escarpment with a mixture of convex and concave slopes, which form a distinctive edge to the chalk downland upslope. The scarp faces are softened and dominated by dense mature woodland and provide a strong contrast in relief and cover to the scarp footslopes below. The slopes form part of a remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, creating a dramatic change in topography and a strong scenic rim to Eastbourne.

There is a general absence of buildings on the slope itself. However, some residential areas have extended up into the concave scarp slopes from the footslopes below, and these form an abrupt urban edge. The slopes provide a well-wooded backdrop to the residential areas of Willingdon and Ratton, the houses of which impose a strong influence on the character of the area and form part of the setting of the South Downs. The well-wooded, enclosed character of the slopes is in contrast with an elevated stretch of open chalk grassland. Woodland has a strong urban character on account of its close proximity urban areas and a belt of this woodland protrudes deep into the housing area to the south of Butts Lane, which includes two distinctive dewponds. Tracks and narrow trails pass through the woodland, linking the Downs with residential areas at the footslopes. The woodland provides an intimate, enclosed space for visitors using the pathways. One barrow burial site is located within the woodland in Beehive Plantation to the west of Babylon Down, adjacent to Butts Brow car park.

### **Key Views**

- Views from woodland are heavily restricted, allowing only occasional glimpses through trees to urban areas and beyond.
- Open, elevated views from chalk grassland south of Butts Lane to the urban area and the Eastbourne / West Langney Levels.
- Scarp slopes are prominent in views from many parts of northern Eastbourne.

### **Historic Features**

- The scarp slopes form an integral part of the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; a landscape of national significance, which is valued for its natural beauty and cultural heritage resources.
- Bronze Age Round Barrow in Beehive Plantation.
- Two Archaeologically Sensitive Areas.
- Dewpond

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Mature deciduous woodland
- Chalk grassland with invertebrates south of Butts Lane.

## **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Forms part of an AONB and within the South Downs National Park.
- The scarp slopes form a consistent and visually prominent backdrop to views from many parts of northern Eastbourne.
- Ridgeline of the scarp slopes is particularly sensitive as it is uninterrupted and often viewed against the skyline.
- Forms part of a densely wooded scenic rim to Eastbourne.
- Barrow (burial site) in Beehive Plantation woodland.
- Narrow belt of woodland that protrudes deep into the housing area to the north of Old Mansion Close.
- A distinctive dew pond, set amongst open chalk grassland south of Butts Lane.

## **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The steep scarps are visually sensitive as they are very prominent in views from Eastbourne, the Levels and beyond. The skyline of the scarp is of particular sensitivity as it is most often viewed against an open sky. Much of the area is part of the Sussex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and, if confirmed, the area would be designated as part of a National Park. Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area's undeveloped character, its uninterrupted skyline, its unique grassland habitats and its strong sense of tranquillity and peace. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

## **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the well-wooded scarp slopes that form a valuable scenic rim to Eastbourne; to conserve and enhance its sense of intimacy and enclosure; and to conserve and enhance important cultural heritage features and their setting.

## **Land Management Guidelines**

- Seek opportunities to regenerate and reinstate native woodland habitat to improve woodland structure and habitat diversity and to extend Eastbourne's visually prominent and consistent wooded escarpment.
- Soften appearance of abrupt, linear woodland edges that are visually intrusive on the lower scarp slopes.
- Manage to ensure a varied species and age structure is achieved by light thinning, clearance of some of the scrub, coppicing and replanting as necessary. Remove ornamental and exotic species from woodland.
- Confine any new tree planting below the chalk downland ridgeline to avoid intrusion on views from the Eastbourne Downs.
- Conserve and enhance the open chalk grassland habitats and control scrub encroachment.
- Provide sensitively designed and clearly marked signage on footpaths to maintain the recreational value of the area and help reduce soil erosion.

## **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist new development that would result in any reduction in the well-wooded nature of the area or in any reduction in the remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, which is devoid of any built structures.
- Resist development of telecommunication towers and other visually prominent vertical elements within the area, unless absolutely essential.
- Maintain the largely undeveloped character of the scarp slopes by resisting the development of any new built structures.
- Ensure built development on the edge of Eastbourne does not encroach up the scarp face.

- Review the quality of urban/rural interface and consider opportunities for introduction of tree/shrub planting to visually soften harsh built edges and help integrate the course into the surrounding landscape.
- Maintain and protect features of cultural heritage and their setting, such as the dewpond and the barrow within Beehive Plantation. Resist new planting or any built development that would enclose views of the dewpond and reduce the integrity of an otherwise smooth and uninterrupted landscape setting.
- Consider the effect of any new development outside this area on views to and from the scarp slopes.
- Ensure that built development does not extend up the scarp face from the edge of Eastbourne.

# B3 - WILLINGDON GOLF COURSE SCARP





## **B3 – WILLINGDON GOLF COURSE SCARP**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Dramatic steep chalk escarpment, with a mixture of convex and concave slopes, forming a distinctive edge to the chalk downland.
- Scarp faces dominated by dense woodland cover, with clearings which reveal significant areas of chalk grassland.
- Part of a remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, creating a dramatic change in topography and a strong skyline.
- Absence of buildings on the slope itself.
- Several trackways and footpaths pass through the woodland, linking the Downs with the residential areas, which in places have extended up into the concave scarp slopes from the footslopes below.
- Extensive views obtained across the western parts of Eastbourne from clearings in the woodland.
- Provides a well-wooded backdrop to Willingdon Golf Course, which has a strong influence on the character of this area.

### **Overall Character Description**

The scarp slopes, wrap tightly around the Eastbourne Downs in a winding manner and include a mixture of concave and convex slopes. Predominantly covered with dense, mature woodland, the escarpment forms a distinctive edge to the chalk downland upslope and a well-wooded backdrop to Eastbourne. Occasional, filtered views may be obtained from the escarpment to the northern parts of Eastbourne. Conversely, near and long-range views to the scarp slopes are also significant from several places in north Eastbourne. The escarpment relief and texture of its land cover seemingly exaggerate the magnitude of this landscape. There is a sense of uniformity or consistency of character that provides a strong sense of visual unity and intactness. Occasionally, the overall enclosed character of the slopes is contrasted with linear clearings that reveal significant areas of chalk grassland with scattered scrub. In such clearings, open extensive views are obtained across the western parts of Eastbourne. The strong physical and visual relationship between the scarp slope and Willingdon Golf Course contributes to the well-wooded, steeply sloping recreational character of this woodland.

The slopes form part of a remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, creating a dramatic change in topography and a strong scenic rim to Eastbourne. At a more local level, the slopes provide a well-wooded backdrop to Willingdon Golf Course, which in turn has a strong influence on this character area and forms part of the setting of the South Downs. There is an abrupt interface between the well-groomed grass fairways and the adjacent densely wooded scarp slopes. In the northern point of the character area, the fairways have extended up into the concave scarp slopes. There is a general absence of buildings on the slope itself. Several ancient trackways and footpaths pass through the woodland, linking the Downs with the residential areas, which have extended up into the northern concave scarp slopes from the footslopes below. In both cases, the woodland provides an intimate, enclosed, well-vegetated series of spaces for visitors using the pathways.

### **Key Views**

- Filtered near distant views through woodland to Willingdon Golf Course.
- Open, elevated views from ridgeline tracks, over woodland Willingdon Golf Course and beyond to the northern suburbs of Eastbourne.
- Glimpsed views up wooded slopes to surrounding chalk uplands.

### **Historic Features**

- The scarp slopes form an integral part of the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; a landscape of national significance, which is valued for its natural beauty and cultural heritage resources.
- Significant blocks of pre-1800 woodland in Further Plantation.
- Two Archaeologically Sensitive Areas.
- Ancient sunken trackways

## **Key Ecological Features**

- Mature deciduous woodland in Further Plantation
- Chalk grassland with invertebrates on scarp slope.

## **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Forms part of South Downs AONB and, within the South Downs National Park.
- Significant remnants of chalk grassland with associated invertebrates
- Steep, undeveloped wooded slopes that form a visually prominent backdrop to views from many parts of Eastbourne.
- Sense of uniformity and consistency in character.
- Ridgeline of the scarp slopes is particularly sensitive, as it is uninterrupted and often viewed against the skyline.
- Extensive views from woodland clearings across adjacent landscapes (such as Willingdon Golf Course) that are vulnerable to change that may affect the character of the scarp slopes.
- Sensitive archaeological areas

## **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The steep scarps are visually sensitive as they are very prominent in views from Willingdon Golf Course, Eastbourne, the Levels and beyond. The skyline of the scarp is of particular sensitivity to change as it is most often viewed against an open sky. Much of the area is part of the Sussex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and, if confirmed, the area would be designated as part of a National Park. Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area's mature woodland, its undeveloped character, its uninterrupted skyline, its sensitive archaeological areas and its strong sense of visual unity and intactness. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

## **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area is to conserve and enhance the character and quality of this generally intact semi-natural woodland landscape. There are opportunities to enhance character by improving the quality of the woodland cover.

## **Land Management Guidelines**

- Seek opportunities to regenerate and reinstate native woodland habitat to improve woodland structure and habitat diversity and enhance Eastbourne's visually prominent and consistent wooded escarpment. Carry out new planting to improve woodland structure and diversity. Remove ornamental and exotic species from woodland.
- Soften appearance of abrupt, linear woodland edges that are visually intrusive on the lower scarp slopes.
- Confine any new tree planting below the chalk downland ridgeline to avoid intrusion on views from the Eastbourne Downs.
- Provide sensitively designed and clearly marked signage on footpaths to maintain the recreational value of the area and help reduce soil erosion.
- Conserve and enhance the open chalk grassland habitats and control scrub encroachment.

## **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist any new built development from the edge of Eastbourne that would encroach up the scarp face.
- Resist any new woodland planting that would obstruct views from the Eastbourne Downs.
- Resist any new development that would result in diminution of the tranquil, intimate and well-wooded character of the area.
- Resist any new development in the area that would adversely affect the scenic and well-wooded backdrop to the Golf Course and Eastbourne.

- Maintain the open undeveloped skyline of the escarpment by resisting the development of new buildings, telecommunications masts, power lines, or any other vertical elements near the ridgeline.
- Consider the effect of any new development outside this area on views to and from the scarp slopes.
- Review the quality of escarpment/golf course interface and consider opportunities for tree/shrub management to enhance remnant chalk grassland habitat within the golf course fairways (outside the line of play) to help integrate the course into the local landscape.

# B4 - BEACHY BROW SCARP



## **B4 – BEACHY BROW SCARP**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Dramatic steep chalk escarpment, with a mixture of convex and concave slopes, forming a distinctive edge to the chalk downland
- Scarp faces dominated by woodland cover, which open up in places to reveal small areas of chalk grassland.
- Part of a remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, creating a dramatic change in topography and a strong skyline.
- Provides a well-wooded backdrop to the grid-like arrangement of housing at Downside and Cherry Gardens, which has a strong influence on the character of this area.
- Extensive views across the western parts of Eastbourne from clearings in the woodland.
- Absence of buildings on the slope itself.
- Sunken tracks and lanes are prominent features, which cut into the escarpment to link the Downs with the residential areas below.
- Beachy Brow serves as a popular recreational area with its footpath network and panoramic views.

### **Overall Character Description**

The area is characterised by steep chalk escarpment with a mixture of convex and concave slopes, forming a distinctive edge to the chalk downland upslope. The scarp faces are softened and dominated by dense mature woodland and provide a strong contrast in relief and cover to the scarp footslopes below. The slopes form part of a remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, creating a dramatic change in topography and a strong scenic rim to Eastbourne.

Dominated by mature woodland, there is a sense of uniformity and consistency of character that provides a strong sense of visual unity and intactness. Woodland has a strong urban character on account of its close proximity to the urban areas, particularly with the grid-like arrangement of housing at Downside and Cherry Gardens. These urban areas form part of the setting of the South Downs. A variety of near and long distant views to the scarp slopes may be obtained from the northern and western parts of Eastbourne.

The well-wooded character of the slopes is in contrast with openings of chalk grassland along the ridgeline that separates Cherry Gardens and Downside residential areas and patches of low wind-swept scrub. In clearings, filtered views may be obtained across the western parts of Eastbourne.

Beachy Brow serves as a popular recreational area with its footpath network and filtered elevated views. Tracks and narrow trails weave through the woodland, linking the Downs with the residential areas, which have slightly extended up into the northern concave scarp slopes from the footslopes below. In both cases, the woodland provides an intimate, enclosed, well-vegetated series of spaces for visitors using the pathways. Although there is a general absence of buildings on the slope itself, there is little sense of remoteness due to nearby residential areas on the scarp footslopes.

### **Key Views**

- Filtered views across the Eastbourne urban area.
- Open, elevated views from areas of grassland over woodland to Willingdon Golf Course and beyond to the northern suburbs of Eastbourne.
- Glimpsed views up over wooded slopes to the downlands areas.

### **Historic Features**

- The scarp slopes form an integral part of the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; a landscape of national significance, which is valued for its natural beauty and cultural heritage resources.
- Covered reservoir, near Fox Holes.

- Three Archaeologically Sensitive Areas.
- Cherry Garden Plantation.
- Survival of significant blocks of pre-1800 woodland.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Mature deciduous woodland.
- Chalk grassland with associated invertebrates habitat.

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Forms part of the South Downs AONB and within the South Downs National Park.
- Sense of uniformity and consistency in character.
- Steep, undeveloped wooded slopes, which form a visually prominent backdrop to views from many parts of Eastbourne.
- Strong visual relationship between the wooded scarp slopes and adjacent residential areas.
- Ridgeline of the scarp slopes is particularly sensitive, as it is uninterrupted and often viewed against the skyline.
- Extensive views from woodland clearings across adjacent landscapes.
- Visible cultural heritage in the form of sunken terraced trackways ('bostal tracks').
- Sensitive archaeological areas.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The steep scarps are visually sensitive as they are very prominent in views from Eastbourne, the Levels and beyond. The skyline of the scarp is of particular sensitivity as it is most often viewed against an open sky. Much of the area is part of the Sussex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and, if confirmed, the area would be designated as part of a National Park. Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area's mature woodland, its undeveloped character, its uninterrupted skyline, its cultural heritage features, its secluded character and its strong sense of visual unity and intactness. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

### **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area is to conserve and enhance the generally intact semi-natural woodland landscape with its undeveloped, well-wooded character and its uninterrupted skyline. There are opportunities to enhance the character and quality of this landscape by the removal of ornamental species their replacement by native species.

### **Land Management Guidelines**

- Seek opportunities to regenerate and reinstate native woodland habitat to improve woodland structure and habitat diversity and enhance Eastbourne's visually prominent and consistent wooded escarpment.
- Confine any new tree planting below the chalk downland ridgeline to avoid intrusion on views from the Eastbourne Downs.
- Provide sensitively designed and clearly marked signage on footpaths to manage the recreational use of the area and help reduce soil erosion.
- Conserve and enhance the open chalk grassland habitats and control scrub encroachment.
- Manage recreational use and control access within the area to help avoid erosion and other potential impacts to the woodland and grassland habitats.
- Provide additional tree cover in and around adjacent residential areas to soften the existing visually harsh urban edge.

## **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist any new development that would enclose views from the Eastbourne Downs or would result in the loss of trees from the scarp slope.
- Resist new development that would result in any diminution of the undeveloped nature of the area, any reduction in its tranquillity, or any adverse effects on the scenic and well-wooded backdrop to the town.
- Maintain the open undeveloped skyline of the escarpment, by resisting development of new buildings, telecommunications masts, power lines, or any other vertical elements near the ridgeline.
- Consider the effect of any new development outside this area on views to and from the scarp slopes.

# B5 - ROYAL EASTBOURNE GOLF COURSE SCARP





## **B5 – ROYAL EASTBOURNE GOLF COURSE SCARP**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Dramatic steep chalk escarpment, with a mixture of convex and concave slopes, forming a distinctive edge to the chalk downland.
- Scarp faces dominated by dense woodland cover with large areas of chalk grassland.
- Part of a remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, creating a dramatic change in topography and a strong skyline.
- Extensive views obtained across the western parts of Eastbourne from areas outside the woodland.
- Provides a well-wooded backdrop to the Royal Eastbourne Golf Course and housing at Summerdown, which has a strong influence on the character of this area and forms part of the setting of the South Downs.
- Absence of buildings on the slope itself.
- Several footpaths pass through the woodland, linking the Downs with the golf course and adjacent residential areas.
- Several barrows (burial sites) adjacent to woodland.

### **Overall Character Description**

The scarp slopes, wrap tightly around the Eastbourne Downs in a winding manner and include a mixture of concave and convex slopes. The scarp faces are softened by dense woodland cover and provide a strong contrast in relief and cover to the scarp footslopes. The enclosed woodland character of the concave slopes is in contrast with higher areas of open grassland, particularly following ridgelines in the south. In such clearings, open extensive views are obtained over Royal Eastbourne Golf Club and beyond to the Eastbourne shoreline.

The slopes form part of a remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, creating a dramatic change in topography and a memorable scenic rim to Eastbourne. At a more local level, the slopes provide a well-wooded backdrop to Royal Eastbourne Golf Club, which in turn has a strong influence on this character area. There is an abrupt interface between the well-groomed grass fairways and the adjacent densely wooded scarp slopes.

There is a general absence of buildings on the slope itself. Several footpaths pass through the woodland, linking the Downs with the golf course and adjacent residential areas. Tracks and narrow trails traverse the scarp, most of which run parallel to the contours or along ridgelines. East Dean Road provides primary vehicular access the area, linking the lower scarp footslopes with the chalk uplands. The road is a prominent feature that cuts through dense woodland, following a pronounced ridgeline. There is a general absence of buildings on the scarp slopes. Views to the urban edge at Summerdown tend to be visually harsh.

### **Key Views**

- Open expansive views over wooded slopes to Royal Eastbourne Golf Club and beyond to the Eastbourne shoreline.
- Distant views to the sea and horizon.
- Views from woodland heavily restricted, allowing only occasional glimpses through trees to Royal Eastbourne Golf Club and urban areas beyond.

### **Historic Features**

- Scheduled Ancient Monuments, including two cross dykes and four Bronze Age Bowl Barrows located along the ridgeline adjoining the South Downs Way at Pashley Down.
- Foundations of a horizontal windmill, post mill and dewpond
- Survival of significant blocks of pre-1800 woodland in Paradise Plantation.
- Covered reservoir south of the Paradise Plantation.

- The scarp slopes form an integral part of the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; a landscape of national significance, long recognised for its distinctive and highly valued character.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Mature deciduous woodland
- Chalk Grassland with associated invertebrates.

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Forms part of the South Downs AONB and within the South Downs National Park.
- Steep, undeveloped wooded slopes, which form a consistent and visually prominent backdrop to many views from Eastbourne.
- Ridgeline of the scarp slopes is particularly sensitive, as it is often viewed against the skyline.
- Sense of enclosure provided by tall mature woodland.
- Sense of uniformity and consistency in character along the slopes.
- Strong visual relationship between the wooded scarp slopes and Royal Eastbourne Golf Club.
- Extensive views from woodland clearings across adjacent landscapes.
- Sites of archaeological importance.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The steep scarps are visually sensitive as they are very prominent in views from Royal Eastbourne Golf Course, Eastbourne, the Levels and beyond. The skyline of the scarp is of particular sensitivity as it is most often viewed against an open sky. Much of the area is part of the Sussex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and, if confirmed, the area would be designated as part of a National Park. Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area's mature woodland, its undeveloped character, its uninterrupted skyline, its sensitive archaeological areas and its remote character. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

### **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area is to conserve and enhance the generally intact semi-natural woodland landscape with its undeveloped, well-wooded character and its uninterrupted skyline. There are opportunities to enhance the character and quality of this landscape by the removal of ornamental species then replacement by native species.

### **Land Management Guidelines**

- Seek opportunities to enhance woodland structure and habitats using native woodland species.
- Conserve and enhance Eastbourne's visually prominent and consistent wooded escarpment.
- Confine any new tree planting below the chalk downland ridgeline to avoid intrusion on views from the Eastbourne Downs.
- Review the quality of escarpment/golf course interface and consider further opportunities for tree/shrub planting within the golf course fairways (outside the line of play) to help integrate the course into the surrounding landscape.
- Provide sensitively designed and clearly marked signage on footpaths to maintain the recreational value of the area.
- Manage recreational use and control access within the area to help avoid erosion and other potential impacts on the woodland and grassland habitats.
- Conserve and enhance sites of archaeological importance and other cultural heritage features and their setting that contribute to the area's time-depth and distinct sense of place.
- Conserve and enhance chalk grassland, managing scrub to prevent encroachment.

## **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist new development that would result in any diminution of the undeveloped nature of the area, any reduction in the area's tranquillity, or any adverse effects on the undeveloped skyline or on the scenic and generally well-wooded backdrop to the town and the golf course.
- Resist development of telecommunication towers and other visually prominent vertical elements within the area, unless absolutely essential.
- Resist new woodland planting that would obstruct views from the Eastbourne Downs.
- Consider the effect of any new development outside this area on views to and from the scarp slopes.
- Maintain and protect features of cultural heritage and their setting, such as the barrows and other sites of archaeological importance located along the ridgelines.

# B6 - WHITEBREAD HOLE SCARP



## **B6 – WHITEBREAD HOLE SCARP**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Dramatic steep south and east facing chalk escarpment forming a distinctive edge to the chalk downlands.
- A remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, marking a dramatic change in topography at the top of scarp.
- The southernmost scarp slopes in the Borough, providing a simple, strong skyline and a visually prominent backdrop to the Meads area of the town.
- The slopes above the university and Meads housing area are generally covered in dense woodland, providing a well-wooded scenic rim to the town.
- Forms part of a unique linear scarp landscape comprising a mixture of convex and concave slopes, with steep scarp faces that are softened by areas of dense woodland cover.
- Extensive chalk grassland and scrub blocks in the southern part of the area, which is a SSSI.
- Sunken tracks and lanes are prominent features, cutting into the escarpment to link the lower scarp footslopes with the chalk uplands.
- Beachy Head Road passes along the scarp ridgeline.
- Absence of buildings on the slope itself, but some recreational/educational buildings on the upper edge of the area.
- Beachy Head, on the south-western edge of the area, serves as a popular recreational area with its lighthouse, a countryside centre, panoramic viewpoints, South Downs Way and other footpaths to the headland.
- Whitebread Hole (also known as Whitbread Hollow) playing field, set amongst areas of grassland and thorn scrub, provides a relatively flat area for sports pitches.
- Forms part of Sussex Heritage Coast and South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Several barrow burial sites.

### **Overall Character Description**

The scarp slopes wrap tightly around the Eastbourne Downs in a winding manner and include a mixture of deep concave and shallow convex slopes. They form part of a unique linear scarp landscape, providing a distinctive edge to the chalk downland. The convex slopes and ridgelines are predominantly covered with chalk grassland and patches of wind-swept scrub. Open, extensive views may be obtained from these areas out across Eastbourne and out past the Eastbourne shoreline to sea. Conversely, concave slopes are dominated and softened by dense scrub and woodland cover, allowing only filtered views to urban areas and the sea. Views to the urban edge from northern parts of the area are often visually harsh.

The slopes form part of a remarkably consistent and visually prominent ridgeline, creating a dramatic change in topography and a memorable scenic backdrop to Eastbourne. At a more local level, the southern slopes provide a chalk grassland backdrop for the Meads Conservation Area, which in turn has a strong influence on this character area. The area is prominent in views from the university and the Meads residential area.

The area forms part of Sussex Heritage Coast, and sits within the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with the southern slopes part of the Seaford to Beachy Head SSSI. Land use in southern areas leading to Beachy Head is predominantly recreational grassland, which includes the South Downs Way and Wealdway footpaths. Whitebread Hole (Whitbread Hollow) playing field is a prominent feature, which was once allotment gardens in the nineteenth century. Set amongst areas of grassland and windswept scrub, it provides a relatively flat area for sports pitches. Nearby is access to Cow Gap and beach. Extensive chalk grassland lie on the lower slopes in the southern part of the area, which has an exposed, windswept character with prominent views out to sea and the jagged chalk sea cliffs that extend from Holywell to Beachy Head.

There is a general absence of buildings on the slope itself. Tracks and narrow trails traverse the scarp, many of which run parallel to the contours or along ridgelines, including the South Downs Way leading to Beachy Head cliff top. Road corridors and footpaths form the only linear features in an otherwise

textured but unified landscape. Away from the roads and residential areas to the east, there is a remote, tranquil feel, accentuated by large open skies and distant panoramic views, which are strongly influenced by varying and sometimes dramatic coastal weather conditions.

### **Key Views**

- Panoramic views southwards out to sea and to coastal chalk cliffs.
- Open views to the north-east over Meads Conservation Area, and out to the Eastbourne shoreline and beyond towards Hastings.
- Views from northern woodland areas are heavily restricted, allowing only occasional glimpses through trees to the urban areas and beyond.
- Channelled views from lower scarp slopes to chalk downland ridgeline.

### **Historic Features**

- Scheduled Ancient Monuments; including two Bronze Age Bowl Barrows, south of Well Combe.
- Whitebread Hole playing fields – former 19th century allotments.
- Sunken terraced trackways – known as ‘bostal tracks’ - are an integral part of former agricultural system, linking downland pasture with agricultural fields at the scarp footslopes.
- The scarp slopes form an integral part of the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; a landscape of national significance, long recognised for its natural beauty and its cultural heritage resources.
- The area forms part of Sussex Heritage Coast, which stretches for some 9.5 kilometres from Beachy Head to Seaford and the Seaford to Beachy Head SSSI.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Mature deciduous scrub blocks and woodland
- Significant areas of chalk grassland with associated invertebrates (SSSI)

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Forms part of the Seaford to Beachy Head SSSI and the South Downs AONB and within the South Downs National Park.
- Expansive and panoramic views from the scarp slopes, across adjacent landscapes such as the scarp footslopes and low-lying Eastbourne.
- Sense of tranquillity and remoteness in places.
- Ridgeline of the scarp slopes is particularly sensitive, as it is often viewed against the skyline.
- Visually prominent backdrop to the Meads Conservation Area and other parts of Eastbourne.
- High degree of intervisibility and long views created by a combination of the flat landform and sparse tree cover in southern part of the area.
- Numerous sites of archaeological importance.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The steep scarps are visually sensitive as they are very prominent in views from Eastbourne, the Levels and beyond. The skyline of the scarp is of particular sensitivity as it is most often viewed against an open sky. Much of the area is part of the Sussex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and, if confirmed, the area would be designated as part of a National Park. Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area's distinctive mosaic of mature woodland and chalk grassland, its undeveloped character, its uninterrupted skyline, its sensitive archaeological areas, its panoramic views, and its sense of tranquillity and remoteness. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

## **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the scarp slopes with its significant chalk grassland habitat and dense pockets of scrub and mature woodland, its expansive and panoramic views, its sense of tranquillity and remoteness and its variety of cultural heritage features.

## **Land Management Guidelines**

- Extend and link chalk grassland habitats to create unified swathes of open grassland, which would enhance ecological value.
- Seek opportunities to regenerate and reinstate native mature scrub and woodland habitat to improve structure and ecological value. The Council has a proactive Scrub Management Action Plan for the management of the area between Dukes Drive and Beachy Head
- Soften appearance of abrupt, linear woodland edges that are visually intrusive on the lower scarp slopes. Remove any exotic and ornamental species from chalk grassland and woodland, i.e. cotoneaster.
- Confine any new tree planting below the chalk downland ridgeline to avoid intrusion on views between Eastbourne and Beachy Head.
- Conserve the open character of flat, low-lying areas of chalk grassland around the lower slopes, to sustain their biodiversity, recreational value and visual connections with the coastline.
- Whenever boundary enclosure is necessary for future grazing objectives, promote the use of visually permeable boundaries, such as post and wire fencing to maintain a smooth and continuous scarp profile.
- Protect and enhance the historic legacy of the area, including important archaeological remains and ancient routeways, that contribute to the area's time depth.

## **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist new development that would interrupt views between Eastbourne and Beachy Head as well as panoramic views southwards out to sea and to coastal chalk cliffs.
- Resist new development that would result in any diminution of the area's tranquillity and remoteness or the open undeveloped skyline of the chalk escarpment.
- Resist development of telecommunication towers and other visually prominent vertical elements within the area, unless absolutely essential.
- Maintain and protect features of cultural heritage and their setting, such as the ancient trackways and barrows.
- Consider the effect of any new development outside this area on views to and from the scarp slopes.
- Conserve the tranquillity of the scarp and resist further development of roads.
- Consider opportunities for new tree/shrub planting to visually soften the existing urban edge.

# C1 - CHALK FARM SCARP FOOTSLOPES





## **C – THE SCARP FOOTSLOPES**

### ***C1 – CHALK FARM SCARP FOOTSLOPES***

#### **Key Characteristics**

- Smooth, visually prominent, convex and concave chalk slopes at the base of the steep scarp where the slope has been eroded by periglacial and post glacial processes.
- Pasture fields, which vary from small to large in size. Small fields, close to the scarp foot, represent a largely intact late medieval landscape and are bounded by a relatively intact network of thick hedgerows and scrub/woodland.
- Some smaller areas of scrub/woodland and a network of robust, mature hedgerows near the scarp foot.
- Extensive, panoramic views obtained from the upper parts across northern Eastbourne and the Low Weald.
- Rising land, pasture and scarcity of trees provide an overall open, rural character to the area, but with sense of enclosure in small scale fields adjacent to urban area.

#### **Overall Character Description**

The area comprises a relatively smooth and gently sloping landscape, nestled in the escarpment footslopes. Here, the landscape is underlain by a complex geology comprising bands of lower chalk, mudstones and sandstones. Land use is predominantly grazing pasture. There are a number of visually prominent, convex and concave chalk outcrops at the base of the steep scarp where the slope has been eroded by periglacial and post glacial processes. Pasture fields vary from small to large size. The smaller fields in Tas Combe, close to the farmstead, represent a largely intact late medieval landscape and are bounded by a relatively intact network of robust hedgerows and scrub/woodland. A narrow medieval field system that protrudes up onto the escarpment above, with its distinctive flat rectangular fields, is a prominent feature that enhances the sense of time depth in the landscape.

Area is strongly influenced by scarp slopes to west and the urban area to the east. Rising land and scarcity of trees provide an overall open character but with sense of enclosure in small scale fields adjacent to urban area. The enclosed character is enhanced in the lower parts, where small-scale fields, woodland blocks and hedgerow trees combine to create a small-scale intimate character. Post and wire fences also define some of the small-scale fields south of Chalk Farm. A strong sense of tranquillity and a moderate sense of seclusion in most of the area.

There is a general absence of buildings, with the exception of scattered buildings associated with Chalk Farm near the edge of Willingdon.

#### **Key Views**

- Open views to steeply sloping chalk escarpment.
- Open views to exposed chalk pits at the base of the steep scarp.
- Filtered views through hedgerow trees eastward to Willingdon residential areas.

#### **Historic Features**

- The scarp footslopes form an integral part of the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; a landscape of national significance, long recognised for its natural beauty and its cultural heritage resources.
- Intact medieval field pattern at Tas Combe.
- One designated Archaeologically Sensitive Area.
- Adjacent to Grade II Listed buildings within Chalk Farm.
- Small areas of chalk grassland at the foot of the scarp slopes.

## **Key Ecological Features**

- Network of hedgerows and mature trees containing biodiversity.
- Small areas of chalk grassland at the foot of the scarp slopes.

## **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Forms part of the South Downs AONB and within the South Downs National Park.
- Essentially a very open and uniform landscape, which forms a visually prominent backdrop to many views from northern Eastbourne and its Low Weald.
- The ridgeline of the largely undeveloped scarp slope is particularly sensitive as it is viewed against the skyline.
- Pattern of small irregular fields of pasture, which represent a largely intact late medieval landscape, and would be vulnerable to field expansion or boundary loss.
- Relatively intact network of thick hedgerows and mature trees, which create a sense of seclusion as well as being of high biodiversity.
- Clustered farm-related buildings in a rural setting with architectural value.
- Largely rural character and intact visual structure of the area could be vulnerable to incremental change.
- The Chalk quarry at the base of the steep scarp in Tas Combe is a striking visual feature.
- The generally flat open landscape has a high degree of intervisibility within which any tall structure would be visually prominent.
- Extensive panoramic views obtained across northern Eastbourne and the Low Weald.

## **Indicative Capacity for Change**

These scarp footslopes are visually sensitive as they are prominent in views from Eastbourne and the Low Weald. The skyline of the scarp is of particular sensitivity as it is most often viewed against an open sky. Much of the area is part of the Sussex Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and, if confirmed, the area would be designated as part of a National Park. Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area's distinctive mosaic of mature woodland and chalk grassland, its undeveloped character, its uninterrupted skyline, its sensitive archaeological areas, its intact medieval field pattern, its panoramic views, and its sense of tranquillity and remoteness. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

## **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the deeply rural, secluded character of the intact medieval landscape, and conserve and enhance the areas of chalk grasslands at the base of the scarp slopes.

## **Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve and manage the existing medieval field pattern by supporting initiatives for grassland management and re-planting of hedges and infilling of gaps.
- Encourage the planting of hedgerows and trees to enhance the landscape structure and help enclose views of urban edges and road corridors.
- Maintain the undeveloped character of the area by minimising the amount of permanent structures.
- Conserve the rural character of the area by considering how best to maintain the viability of agriculture.

## **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist new built development to help maintain the undeveloped, tranquil character of the area.

- Resist development of telecommunication towers or other visually prominent vertical elements that would impact on the visibility of the scarp slopes from the urban area and reduce the sense of scale associated with the scarp slopes.
- Integrate any new farm buildings and associated structures into the landscape by locating them on the lower slopes and clustering them around existing buildings where appropriate.
- Any new buildings should be located in less visually prominent locations, preferably clustering them around existing buildings and, where appropriate, using vernacular materials and design.
- Encourage sensitive integration of any new fencing, tracks, hardstanding, equestrian equipment and any other developments associated with small private farms that fall outside planning control.
- Consider the effect of any new development outside this area on views to and from the footslopes.
- Maintain and protect features of cultural heritage and their setting.

# C2 - WILLINGDON GOLF COURSE SCARP FOOTSLOPES



## **C2 – WILLINGDON GOLF COURSE SCARP FOOTSLOPES**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Smooth, visually prominent, convex and concave chalk slopes at the base of the steep scarp where the slope has been eroded.
- Land cover is dominated by golf course with its amenity and chalk grassland, and its intensely managed fairways, greens and tees.
- A much modified landscape with undulating fairways, artificial mounding, bunkers, level tees and rolling greens.
- Rising land and scarcity of trees on the golf course provide a largely open character to the area.
- Extensive, panoramic, sweeping views across Eastbourne obtained from the upper parts of the area.

### **Overall Character Description**

The area comprises a low-lying landscape with gentle mounds, undulating fairways and rolling greens in association with Willingdon Golf Course. Land cover is dominated by well-groomed fairways, greens and tees with areas of tall amenity grassland and tree/shrub groups. Nestled amongst the winding escarpment, the golf course provides a dramatic contrast in colour and texture to the adjacent wooded scarp slopes. Rising land and scarcity of trees on the golf course provide an open character to the area, which contrasts with the scarp slopes to west. The area contributes to a local setting of steep chalk scarp to the west and edge of the Downside residential area to the east. It also forms part of the setting of the South Downs and provides a visual break between the residential areas that extend up to the foot of the scarp to the north and south. Due to the private tenure of the land, there are no public rights of way.

Mature hedgerow trees define the north and south boundary fences, providing a moderate sense of enclosure and a buffer to nearby residential areas. Occasional belts of woodland and scattered mature trees between fairways provide some visual connection with the surrounding wooded escarpment, and contribute to a strongly recognisable sense of place. There are a number of small but visually prominent convex and concave chalk slopes at the base of the steep scarp where the slope has been eroded away from residential areas. Overall, there is a moderate sense of tranquillity.

### **Key Views**

- Open near distance views to steeply sloping wooded escarpment.
- Filtered near distance views to chalk outcrops at the base of the steep scarp.
- Filtered views through wooded boundary to Downside residential areas.

### **Historic Features**

- The scarp footslopes form an integral part of the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; a landscape of national significance, long recognised for its natural beauty and cultural heritage resources. However, there are no historic features of note within this area.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Hedgerows and hedgerow trees with biodiversity value.
- Chalk grassland with associated invertebrates

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Forms part of the South Downs AONB and within the south Downs National Park.
- High level of inter-visibility between the area and the adjacent scarp and edge of the Downs to the west.
- Tree/shrub belts along northern and eastern perimeters of golf course, which provide visual separation between the scarp slopes/golf course and the urban area

## **Indicative Capacity for Change**

Much of the area is part of the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and designated as part of the South Downs National Park. The golf course has several landscape and visual sensitivities that are vulnerable to change. However, there is some capacity for the area to accommodate new development providing that existing mature trees and woodland areas are retained, new development does not extend up onto the higher-lying parts of the area and that substantial landscape mitigation planting is provided to help integrate the development into the local landscape. Any such development must be sensitively designed and adequately mitigated for it to be successfully integrated into this area and for it to be successfully accommodated within the setting to the South Downs.

## **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the well-vegetated character of the golf course, which provides the local setting to the scarp slopes and nearby residential areas.

## **Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve and manage existing mature trees and gradually replace ornamental trees with native species that are characteristic of the area.
- Restore and enhance woodland structure within the golf course to help integrate the course to the wooded character of the adjacent escarpment.
- Encourage management of the golf course chalk grassland areas to maximise the potential for biodiversity through the creation of a more diverse habitat resource.
- Enhance tree/shrub belt to provide a better visual enclosure between the course and adjacent Ratton and Downside residential areas.
- Seek opportunities to enclose views of the golf course car parking area.

## **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist new development that would result in any diminution in the undeveloped tranquil character of the area.
- Resist development of telecommunication towers or other visually prominent vertical elements that would impact on the visibility of the adjacent scarp slopes from the urban area and reduce the sense of scale associated with the scarp slopes.
- Resist any further encroachment of built development onto the scarp slopes.
- Any new golf course buildings should be clustered around existing buildings and, where appropriate, using vernacular materials and design.
- Retain the open and/or well-vegetated character of the area, which provides a visual break between densely developed residential areas to the north and south and which contributes to the setting of Ratton and Downside residential areas.
- Concentrate visitor facilities and other recreational amenities such as parking and toilets in identified areas.
- Consider the effect of any new development outside this area on views from the footslopes.

# C3 - ROYAL EASTBOURNE GOLF COURSE SCARP FOOTSLOPES



## **C3 – ROYAL EASTBOURNE GOLF COURSE SCARP FOOTSLOPES**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Elevated nature of the land with scarcity of trees provides an open character, which is strongly influenced by well-wooded scarp slopes to west and the urban area to east.
- Land cover is dominated by golf course with its amenity grassland, some mature tree growth and a modified landscape with undulating fairways, artificial mounding, bunkers, level tees and rolling greens.
- Mature woodland within Compton Park, east of the area, provides a notable wooded backdrop to the golf course and enhances the sense of time-depth in the landscape.
- Golf course has a mature parkland feel forming a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the west and the Meads and Downside housing areas to the south and north respectively.
- Paradise Drive dissects the area and detracts from the sense of tranquillity and remoteness in the area.
- Filtered distant views across Eastbourne towards the sea from elevated parts of the area.

### **Overall Character Description**

The area comprises an elevated landscape with gentle mounds, undulating fairways, well-groomed fairways and rolling greens associated with Royal Eastbourne Golf Course. The area sits at the footslopes of the winding chalk escarpment, which provide a visually prominent well-wooded backdrop to the golf course. The mature woodland within the historic Compton Park, east of the area, provides a notable wooded backdrop and enhances the sense of time-depth in the landscape.

The elevated nature of the land and scarcity of trees on the golf course provide an open character to much of the area, which is strongly influenced by scarp slopes to west and the Meads and Downside residential areas to the south and north, which in turn, influence the character of the area. The golf course and adjacent residential areas form part of the setting of the South Downs. Filtered distant views across the central parts of Eastbourne are significant from elevated places.

The well-groomed fairways and greens provide a dramatic contrast in colour and texture to the wooded scarp slopes. Woodland on the scarp slopes and the mature trees within the golf course contribute to a well-vegetated character. The sense of tranquillity and remoteness throughout the character area is somewhat distracted by adjacent residential areas and roads, particularly Paradise Drive. Roads form the only linear features in an otherwise unified and muted landscape. Due to the private tenure of the landscape, access is limited to those playing golf. However, two public rights of way traverse the eastern parts of the course, providing connections between the university and nearby playing fields. There are a number of small but visually prominent convex and concave chalk slopes at the base of the steep scarp where the slope has been eroded by past geomorphologic processes.

### **Key Views**

- Filtered distant views across the central parts of Eastbourne from elevated places.
- Open near distance views to mature woodland within Compton Park.
- Filtered views to the Meads and Downside housing areas.

### **Historic Features**

- The scarp footslopes form an integral part of the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; a landscape of national significance, long recognised for its natural beauty and cultural heritage resources.
- Grade II Listed Building (Gazebo), Paradise Belvedere, Paradise Drive.
- Royal Eastbourne Golf Course and associated clubhouse.
- One designated Archaeologically Sensitive Area.



- The trackway from the Old Golf Club House to East Dean Road is conjectured to be a Roman Road (SMR TV59 NE267 – MES764).

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Some chalk grassland habitat.
- Some mature deciduous woodland habitat extending down to the scarp footslopes from the escarpment.

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Forms part of the South Downs AONB and within for the South Downs National Park.
- Contributes to the setting of historic Compton Park.
- High level of inter-visibility between this area and the adjacent major scarp and Downs.
- Some areas of ecologically sensitive chalk grassland habitat.
- The Gazebo as a listed building, with its vernacular features constructed of local flint with red brick and stone dressings.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The scarp footslope landscape has several landscape and cultural features and characteristics that are vulnerable to change. Much of the area is part of the South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and, if confirmed, the area would be designated as part of a National Park. Overall, there is only limited capacity for the area to accommodate any new development without significant effect on the area's archaeological, landscape and cultural heritage resources. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

### **Landscape Priorities**

The overall Priorities for the area should be to conserve and enhance the well-vegetated character of the area, which provides a mature parkland setting for Compton Park, the scarp slopes and nearby residential areas.

### **Land Management Guidelines**

- Encourage management of the golf course to maximise the potential for biodiversity through the creation of a more diverse habitat resource.
- Conserve and manage existing mature trees and gradually replace ornamental trees with native trees that are characteristic of the area.
- Seek opportunities link the woodland structure within the golf course to the wooded character of the adjacent escarpment.
- Enhance woodland to provide a better screen between the course and adjacent Summerdown residential area.
- Seek opportunities to enclose views of the golf course car parking area.

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist new development that would result in any diminution in the tranquil, undeveloped character of the area.
- Resist development of the telecommunication towers or other visually prominent vertical elements that would impact on the visibility of the adjacent scarp slopes from the urban area and reduce the sense of scale associated with the scarp slopes.
- Resist any further encroachment of built development onto the scarp slopes.
- Retain the open and/or well-vegetated character of the area, which provides a visual break between densely developed residential areas to the north and south which contributes to the setting of the Meads, Saffrons and Summerdown residential areas.

- Any new golf course buildings should be clustered around existing buildings and, where appropriate, using vernacular materials and design.
- Conserve and enhance the setting of the Grade II Listed Building (Gazebo).
- Maintain and enhance the integrity of the landscape as a valuable setting between Compton Park and the scarp slopes.
- Concentrate visitor facilities and other recreational amenities such as parking and toilets in identified areas.
- Consider the effect of any new development outside this area on the views from the footslopes.

# C4 - HOLYWELL RETREAT SCARP FOOTSLOPES



## **C4 – HOLYWELL RETREAT SCARP FOOTSLOPES**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Narrow elongated belt of visually prominent chalk outcrop at the base of the steep scarp, extending alongside the coastline.
- Scrub woodland in some concave outcrops and some ecologically sensitive chalk grassland habitat.
- Supports a variety of buildings and playing fields in the upper part of the area.
- Seaside huts on the lower eastern edge of the area.
- Amenity planting alongside roads and in open spaces, which include 'Holywell Retreat' a former quarry and a pleasure park of local historic interest.
- Area traversed by roads and pathways, some leading down to the beach
- Some exposed chalk pathways, mainly in elevated park areas.

### **Overall Character Description**

Holywell scarp footslopes have a varied topography, dominated by a mixture of convex and concave slopes, with areas of level elevated land. The area provides a transition between the jagged chalk sea cliffs and the scarp slopes that wrap round the Eastbourne Downs. To the west, the landscape slopes steeply up to the edge of the Eastbourne Downs and the Whitebread Hole escarpment, whilst further to the east, topography falls (quite steeply in places) towards the sea. The dramatic rising escarpment to the west, provides a strong sense of enclosure in parts, whilst open views of the open sea and wide skyline may be obtained to the east. There are a number of visually prominent chalk outcrops near the base of the steep scarp where the slope has been eroded, providing strong contrast with heavily vegetated surroundings.

Relatively steep, sealed paths traverse the area, connecting scarp slope areas with the Holywell shoreline. Duke's Drive provides primary access to the area and leads westwards up the scarp slopes onto the Eastbourne Downs, and eastwards towards Eastbourne seafront. A network of minor sealed tracks provide further access to landscape within the area. These minor tracks are often defined by low stone retaining walls or balustrades and planted embankments. There are a few informal, exposed chalk pathways, mainly in elevated park areas. The area supports several unobtrusive buildings. In places, visually intrusive red tiled roofs of seaside huts associated with the seaside promenade contrast with the surrounding generally muted landscape. The area is visually prominent in views from the viewing positions along Eastbourne Promenade towards Beachy Head.

There is generally a strong sense of tranquillity throughout the character area, particularly within Holywell Retreat, where the scale is intimate, vegetation provides good enclosure and the sound of water rolling into the flint shoreline evokes a strong recognisable sense of place. A sense of history is also evoked by Holywell Retreat and Helen Gardens and buildings within the adjacent Meads Conservation Area.

### **Key Views**

- Near distant views to dramatic, chalk grassland and wooded backdrop of rising scarp slopes to the west.
- Prominent views to the steep chalk sea cliffs towards Beachy Head.
- Panoramic views out to sea and beyond to the horizon.
- Channelled views east along the shoreline, with distant views to King Edward's Parade, Wish Tower (Martello Tower) and beyond to Eastbourne Pier.

### **Historic Features**

- Historic environment of the adjacent Meads Conservation Area.
- Helen Gardens which comprise lawns and cliff edge vegetation.
- Holywell Retreat – a former quarry area, now a Pleasure Park with lawns and amenity planting.

- Seaside huts.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Mature semi-natural woodland.
- Chalk grassland.
- Helen Gardens (Site of Nature Conservation Interest).

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Strong sense of intimacy, seclusion and tranquillity.
- Significant pockets of mature woodland in some concave outcrops, vulnerable to loss and change.
- Some ecologically sensitive grassland habitat.
- Historic Pleasure Gardens.
- Areas in close proximity to the scarp slopes are highly sensitive to the development of any vertical structure, due to the potential to reduce the associated sense of scale and contrast of the escarpment.
- Presence of designed parkland landscapes, which are a legacy of the former changes to the economic and social conditions of the later Victorian period.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The scarp footslope landscape has many sensitive natural, cultural and aesthetic/perceptual features that are vulnerable to change. Overall, there is limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area's sensitive grassland habitat, its mature woodland, its sensitive historic features, its uninterrupted skyline and strong sense of intimacy, seclusion and tranquillity. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

### **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the rich character of the area, which includes historic parkland, formal lawns, mature woodland, and unobtrusive buildings. The priority should also conserve and enhance the area's prominent sea views, its tranquil qualities, its intimate scale and its wealth of cultural heritage features.

### **Land Management Guidelines**

- Continue to conserve, manage and enhance the pleasure gardens to a high standard.
- Conserve and manage mature woodland pockets and vegetated embankments for their scenic, nature conservation and recreational purposes.
- Conserve and enhance the open chalk grassland habitats and control scrub encroachment.

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist any development that would adversely affect views from Eastbourne Promenade towards Beachy Head.
- Resist development within open and elevated areas and particularly those that would intrude upon views out to the Eastbourne Promenade, the scarp slopes or the sea views.
- Resist any development that may adversely affect the character and quality of Meads Conservation Area and the tranquil, largely undeveloped character of the area.
- Avoid further development within the area that would interrupt or sever views to Eastbourne's seafront conservation area as well as views out to sea and beyond to the horizon.
- Any new buildings should be located in less visually prominent locations, preferably clustering them around existing buildings and, where appropriate, using vernacular materials and design.
- Consider the effect of any new development outside this area on views from the footslopes.

# D1 - BEACHY HEAD RUGGED COAST



## **D – RUGGED COAST**

### ***D1 – BEACHY HEAD RUGGED COAST***

#### **Key Characteristics**

- An exposed and dynamic landscape whose character changes through varying weather conditions and constant erosion.
- Steep chalk sea cliffs, forming an abrupt boundary between the flint shingle beaches and the pastoral chalk grassland clifftop of the Eastbourne Downs.
- An inter-tidal shoreline with significant deposits of chalk rubble resulting from cliff falls along the shoreline, forming spits that extend into the sea.
- Colour and movement of the sea contrasts with the sheer chalk cliffs, which combine to create a very dramatic landscape.
- Open and expansive views across the sea to the horizon.
- Strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity.
- Beachy Head and Belle Tout Lighthouses are visually prominent features.
- No settlement or roads.

#### **Overall Character Description**

The shoreline is a rocky platform that slopes steeply away to the base of the cliff. Sheer at some points along the coastline, the rugged coastline forms an abrupt boundary between the flint shingle beaches and the pastoral fields of the Eastbourne Downs. The area is dominated by an inter-tidal shoreline with significant deposits of chalk rubble resulting from cliff falls. These form visually prominent stacks and spits that extend into the sea.

The area forms part of the Sussex Heritage Coast, and has an open and exposed character with expansive views out to the sea and horizon. Due to the exposed nature of the landscape, the character of the shoreline is highly dependent upon the weather, and changes through varying weather conditions. Standing proud of the surrounding landscape, the steep chalk cliffs provide a memorable feature. The colour and movement of the sea contrasts with the sheer chalk cliffs, and combine to create a very dramatic landscape.

The shoreline retains little evidence of human exploitation or activity, other than the presence of coastal navigation devices. There is a strong sense of exposure, remoteness and tranquillity along this stretch of coastline, with no settlement along the cliff edge except for the disused lighthouse at Belle Tout, in close proximity to the coastal path. This path, the South Downs Way, provides continuous cliff top access with panoramic views. The distinctive red and white striped Beachy Head lighthouse, standing at the base of the cliffs, is a visually prominent feature that forms a distinctive landmark. There is a general absence of roads within the area, resulting in a rugged, wild and fairly isolated character, which is reduced to an extent by nearby traffic on Beachy Head Road.

#### **Key Views**

- Long distance, scenic views along the coastline to the dramatic white chalk cliffs.
- Open and expansive views across the sea to the horizon.
- Prominent near distance views to Beachy Head Lighthouse and Belle Tout Lighthouse.
- Open panoramic views to surrounding chalk downland from cliff tops.
- Distant elevated views to Eastbourne smooth coastal strip.

#### **Historic Features**

- The rugged chalk coastline forms part of the Sussex Heritage Coast.
- Belle Tout Lighthouse, 1831 ( now a private dwelling).
- Beachy Head Lighthouse, 1902, at the foot of the chalk cliffs.

## **Key Ecological Features**

- Seaford to Beachy Head SSSI, comprises a diverse range of habitats including herb-rich chalk grasslands, chalk heath, maritime grassland, associated invertebrates and birds, foreshore and chalk cliffs.
- Beachy Head is of national importance for its chalk stratigraphy.
- Coastal habitat, comprising sea cliff and partly vegetated shingle that support cliff nesting birds and rare plant communities.
- Inter-tidal zone with numerous habitats.

## **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Forms part of the Sussex Heritage Coast.
- The cliffs are of national importance and highly valued for their geological, biological and landscape interest.
- Ecologically sensitive SSSI habitat from Seaford to Beachy Head, including herb-rich chalk grassland, chalk heath, maritime grassland, foreshore, chalk cliffs, and river meanders (outside the Borough).
- Sensitive shingle vegetation community at Cow Gap, which is highly susceptible to trampling.
- Steep chalk cliffs, which are vulnerable to erosion, often resulting in significant cliff collapses that deposit chalk rubble on the beach.
- Flint shingle beaches, which are vulnerable to erosion.
- The open, wild and dramatic nature of the shoreline makes it particularly sensitive visually.
- The high visibility of this landscape from popular viewing areas at Beachy Head, Belle Tout, Birling Gap and Cuckmere Haven.

## **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The steep chalk cliffs are visually sensitive as they are very prominent in views from the Downs, Eastbourne and from other areas along the coast. Of particular sensitivity is the skyline of the cliffs, which is most often viewed against an open sky. In addition, the landscape is a nationally important landmark area, valued for its landscape quality (AONB and Heritage Coast) and geological and ecological value of the cliffs (SSSI). Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area's exposed, wild character, its visual sensitivity, its ecologically sensitive habitats, its undeveloped nature and its strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

## **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve the character, quality and distinctiveness of this nationally important coastline with its dramatic chalk cliffs and inter-tidal shoreline; its valued geological formations; its ecologically important habitats; its uninterrupted skyline and panoramic views; its strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness and numerous cultural heritage features.

## **Land Management Guidelines**

- Consider sensitive approaches to manage change related to coastal erosion.
- Conserve and manage the ecologically sensitive SSSI habitats from Seaford to Beachy Head.
- Manage and control recreational access within the area to avoid any additional erosion or damage to habitats.
- Prepare a Shoreline Management Plan to provide strategic management objectives and policies for the coastline.

## **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist any built development that may adversely affect the wild and remote character of the coastline.



- Conserve the distinctive red and white striped lighthouse at Beachy Head, which forms a prominent and distinctive landmark.
- Consider effects on views from popular viewing areas at Beachy Head, Belle Tout and Birling Gap when planning any change to the area.

## D2 - HOLYWELL LEDGE RUGGED COAST



## **D2 – HOLYWELL LEDGE RUGGED COAST**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Jagged chalk sea cliffs, with some indented pockets of trees and shrubs.
- Greensand ledge visible at low tide
- Open and expansive views out across the sea and along the Eastbourne smooth coastal strip.
- Gently graded flint beach with visually prominent timber groynes.
- Significant deposits of chalk rubble at the base of chalk cliffs
- Smooth textures of the flint beach contrast with the rugged chalk cliffs, and combine to create a varied landscape character.
- Steeply graded vegetated embankments along the shore, which are traversed by pathways, staircases and other routes down to the shoreline.
- Open and exposed character with moderate sense of tranquillity.
- Forms part of Sussex Heritage Coast.

### **Overall Character Description**

The shoreline character is dominated by jagged chalk sea cliffs with some indented pockets of trees and scrub blocks. A gently graded foreshore, composed of flint, is exposed at low tide with visually prominent timber groynes. The smooth textures of the flint beach contrast with the rugged chalk cliffs, and combine to create a varied landscape character.

The area is contained by Beachy Head to the southwest, which forms a visually prominent headland with chalk grassland that grows on the steeper slopes above the cliffs. There are a significant number of chalk rubble deposits at the base of chalk cliffs. Between Beachy Head and Holywell Retreat, there are a series of steeply graded vegetated embankments along the shore, which are traversed by pathways and steps down to the shoreline at Cow Gap and Pinnacle Point.

There is cliff top access to the south of the area along the coastal path that passes Holywell and Cow Gap, which connects to the South Downs Way. The cliff top coastal paths define the inland boundary in this part of the area. South west of Holywell Retreat, the ground rises steeply past jagged chalk cliffs and up grassy slopes to the Whitebread Hole Scarp. There is no settlement in the area, resulting in a rugged and fairly isolated character.

There is a moderate feeling of tranquillity along this stretch of coastline with no settlement along the cliff edge and only clusters of buildings in close proximity to the area (e.g. near to Holywell Retreat). The area forms part of the Sussex Heritage Coast, and has an open and exposed character with expansive views across the sea to the horizon.

### **Key Views**

- Open expansive views from the coastline, out across the sea to the horizon.
- Views north-eastwards along the jagged coastline to Eastbourne's smooth coastal shoreline, with distance views to Eastbourne Pier.
- Southwest views along the coast towards Beachy Head.

### **Historic Features**

- The rugged chalk coastline forms part of the Sussex Heritage Coast.
- Introduction of sea and coastal erosion defences including groins and retaining walls (built circa 1900-1930).
- Replacement of timber groynes (between 1995 and 1999).
- Part of this Character Area is within the Meads Conservation Area.

## **Key Ecological Features**

- Inter-tidal zone with numerous habitats e.g. vegetated shingle habitat
- Chalk grassland and scrub with associated invertebrates.
- Marine Habitats.
- Sea cliff nesting sites for sea birds.
- Cow Gap is of particular value for its chalk and periglacial geomorphology.
- Head Ledge and Holywell Ledge greensand coastal formations
- Marine fossils on the foreshore.

## **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Forms part of the Sussex Heritage Coast.
- The cliffs are of national importance and highly valued for their geological, biological and landscape interest.
- Flint shingle beaches, which are vulnerable to erosion.
- Ecologically sensitive inter-tidal zone with numerous habitats, including vegetated shingle, which is highly susceptible to trampling.
- Open and exposed character with moderate sense of tranquillity.
- The open nature and visual prominence of the shoreline makes it particularly sensitive visually.
- Chalk cliffs are vulnerable to erosion, often resulting in significant cliff collapses that deposit chalk rubble on the beach.

## **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The steep chalk cliffs are visually sensitive as they are very prominent in views from adjacent landscapes and Eastbourne. Of particular sensitivity is the skyline of the jagged cliffs, which is most often viewed against an open sky. In addition, the landscape is a nationally important landmark area, valued for its heritage value (Heritage Coast) and its geological and ecological values (SSSI). Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area's panoramic views, its valued habitats, its cultural heritage values, its uninterrupted skyline and its sense of tranquillity and remoteness. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

## **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the coastline with its jagged chalk cliffs and indented pockets of vegetation; its uninterrupted skyline and panoramic views; its sense of tranquillity and its cultural heritage features.

## **Land Management Guidelines**

- Continue to seek opportunities for sensitive solutions to coastal erosion management whilst maintaining the recreational value of this much-valued coastline.
- Prepare a Shoreline Management Plan to provide strategic management objectives and policies for the coastline.
- Manage and control recreational access within the area to avoid any additional erosion or damage to habitats.
- Conserve and manage the ecologically sensitive inter-tidal zone with numerous habitats, including vegetated shingle and marine habitats.
- Conserve and manage the geologically sensitive formation of Cow Gap and its setting through controlled recreational access.

## **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist any development that may adversely affect the wild and remote character of the coastline.
- Resist any earthworks or development that would erode the tranquil character of the shoreline.
- Consider effects on views from popular viewing areas at Beachy Head and Eastbourne promenade when planning any change to the area.
- Manage and control recreational access within the area to avoid erosion and damage to shingle vegetation communities.

# E1 - EASTBOURNE LEVELS



## **E – THE LEVELS**

### ***E1 – EASTBOURNE LEVELS***

#### **Key Characteristics**

- Flat low-lying and open landscape generally with long distance views to surrounding areas, including prominent wooded scarp downland slopes to the west.
- Predominantly grazing marsh with medium sized irregular field pattern.
- The large, artificial Broadwater Lake is a special feature.
- The skyline is very prominent in most areas, due to the large expanses of open, uninterrupted landscape.
- Major roads that traverse the area at a higher grade are highly visible and, in some cases, form an abrupt boundary to the area
- Belts of trees and isolated trees punctuate skyline, mainly in peripheral areas. Some of these isolated trees are all that remain of former hedgerows.
- Prominent views between the area and Cross Levels Way (A2280) and associated roundabouts.

#### **Overall Character Description**

Also known as the Eastbourne Park Broadwater sector, the area is characterised by a flat, low-lying landscape of grazing marsh. Eastbourne Upperton residential area and hospital in the north primarily surround the Levels. The Eastbourne rail corridor and major roads that traverse the area at a higher grade are highly visible and in some case form an abrupt boundary to the area.

The levels have an open, semi-rural and generally undeveloped character, especially in the central parts, away from roads and urban areas. The area is criss-crossed by a variety of rectilinear drainage ditches with riparian vegetation growing along the banks. Fields are irregular and vary in size, but are mostly medium and typically rectilinear, forming a mosaic around the two main water bodies in the area. Field boundaries are generally defined either by drainage ditches and sewers or by post and wire fencing, with a general absence of mature trees. Land use is dominated by grazing marshlands, with occasional isolated trees and belts of wet woodland. These trees punctuate the skyline and are generally located in peripheral areas alongside roads and residential areas.

Long distance views across the levels are a unique feature within the Borough of Eastbourne. The area is visually prominent in views from the Eastbourne Downs and adjacent scarp slopes. The levels, together with the adjacent urban areas, form part of the setting of the South Downs. Within the area, there are prominent views to Cross Levels Way (A2280) and associated roundabouts, due to their elevated nature. The railway corridor dissects the area, forming an elevated visual barrier that introduces considerable amounts of movement and noise. The artificial lake is a special feature within the landscape, and provides an important visual focus for surrounding urban areas. There is a general absence of transmission towers within the area. Within the area, there are filtered views to the hospital and Upperton urban edge. The skyline is very prominent in most areas, due to the large expanses of open, uninterrupted landscape.

There are two archaeologically sensitive areas defined within the area, suggesting the potential for discoveries similar to those found at Shinewater Lake Marshes (Landscape Character Area E6).

#### **Key Views**

- Prominent views to Cross Levels Way (A2280) and associated roundabouts.
- Filtered views to the hospital and Upperton residential area.
- Prominent skyline views.
- Long distance views across the levels and out westward to the scarp slopes of the Eastbourne Downs.
- Filtered views to the hospital and visually prominent chimney.

- Prominent distant views north to the Cross Levels Way (A2280) viaduct/bridge east of the Broadwater Way roundabout.
- Prominent views to the Eastbourne Railways and power lines that traverse the area.

### **Historic Features**

- Former area of historic marshland with remains former marshland in the low-lying western reaches.
- An intensive drainage system, comprising drainage ditches and sewers (channels, or canalised streams).
- Three designated Archaeologically Sensitive Areas in the south-west corner.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Former marshland habitat with remnant marshland in the low-lying western reaches.
- Reed filled drainage ditches.
- Drainage channels with marginal plant habitat.
- Wet and dry pasture areas.
- Aquatic and waterside habitats

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Moderate level of perceived naturalness and a rural quality, especially in the central parts, away from roads and railway corridor.
- The area is highly prominent in views from the Eastbourne Downs and scarp slopes.
- Pockets of remnant marshland are vulnerable to loss and change.
- Ecologically sensitive habitats associated with the drainage ditches, sewers and channels.
- Loss and fragmentation of hedgerows has occurred associated with changes in management and modern farming techniques.
- The area is highly exposed to views from nearby roads and urban areas, with resultant enhanced sensitivity to any new development.
- Expansive and panoramic views with an open, largely uninterrupted skyline.
- Subtle features remaining of the historic landscape, such as hedgerows, field systems and drainage ditches, which are not protected and are vulnerable to change and loss.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

This levels landscape has many sensitive landscape, cultural and aesthetic/perceptual features and characteristics that are vulnerable to change. The area is prominent in views from the major scarp, as well as from adjacent roads and urban areas. However, the levels are surrounded by built development that generally presents a visually harsh urban edge. In this context, there is some capacity, in landscape and visual terms, for this visually prominent area to accommodate new development without significant effect on the area's open and predominantly uninterrupted skyline, its sensitive ecological habitats and archaeological areas and its expansive views. Any such development must be sensitively designed and adequately mitigated for it to be successfully integrated into this area. A substantial new native tree and shrub planting scheme alongside the peripheral urban edge would help integrate new development into the local landscape and would help soften the existing visually harsh urban/rural interface.

### **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the semi-rural Levels, with its marshland habitat; its open, largely uninterrupted skyline and panoramic views and its sensitive archaeological areas.

### **Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve and enhance the open, undeveloped character and rural qualities within the Levels



- Conserve and restore the historic pattern of the agricultural landscape including irregular patterns of medium sized fields.
- Conserve and enhance drainage channel systems to maintain their drainage function and to enhance their ecological and visual amenity value (e.g. clearance/thinning of over-vigorous aquatic/marginal species, diversification of aquatic/marginal species, removal of scrub, etc).
- Conserve, strengthen and manage any remnant hedgerows and hedgerow trees that define field patterns found adjacent to the former marshland area, and replant hedgerows that have been degraded or lost.
- Plan for long-term restoration to low-lying marshland areas and to improve the biodiversity of the associated freshwater habitats.
- Promote a native planting strategy on embankments beside busy road corridors and urban areas to reduce the effects of movement and noise across the landscape and to soften visually harsh urban edges.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage isolated trees and belts of wet woodland.
- Develop and manage Broadwater lake and its margins for landscape amenity and biodiversity values.
- Conserve the rural character of the area by considering how best to maintain the viability of agriculture.

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist the development of any additional telecommunication masts or other vertical structures in this open landscape, unless absolutely essential.
- Resist development of further transportation corridors and any other visually prominent linear elements that traverse and dissect the landscape, unless absolutely essential.
- Resist any new development that may adversely affect the character of the area or views to and from the levels.
- Ensure that any new development is well integrated with the landscape and existing harsh urban edges are softened by new native tree and shrub planting.
- Any new buildings should be located in less visually prominent locations, preferably clustering them around existing buildings and / or in peripheral parts.
- Minimise the affects of adverse incremental change by restricting new development to that which is of high quality, which is well integrated with the local landscape and where reflects local distinctiveness.
- Seek opportunities for enhancing public access and developing high-quality recreational pathways with associated planting strategies. Ensure that these routes do not conflict with agricultural practices within the landscape.
- Consider recreational opportunities associated with the lake and requirements for parking and visitor facilities.
- Seek opportunities to soften areas of visually harsh urban edge and road and rail routes through provision of additional tree/shrub planting along embankments in the periphery of area.
- Seek opportunities to improve the rural urban fringe through provision of high quality boundary treatments and a planting strategy that reflects the local distinctiveness.
- Where earth works are required, these should be sympathetic to the surrounding flat, low-lying landform.
- Conserve sites of archaeological importance and resist any further development or tree/scrub encroachment that would disrupt their integrity.
- Consider the effect of any change in the area on views to and from the Eastbourne Downs and its scarp slopes.

# E2 - WEST LANGNEY LEVELS / WILLINGDON LEVELS



## **E2 – WEST LANGNEY / WILLINGDON LEVELS**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Flat low-lying grazing marsh, with drainage channels.
- Medium-sized irregular field pattern, defined by water channels, mature hedgerows and reed-filled drainage ditches.
- Large, artificial water storage lake, the West Langney Deep Water Lake
- Large expanses of this area have a relatively open, flat character.
- Prominent views to large buildings within Hampden Park and Highfield industrial estates, power transmission towers and a gas holder station.
- Prominent views of major downland scarp slopes to the west.
- Skyline punctuated by various belts of small trees, copses of wet woodland in peripheral areas, and isolated shrubs, some of which are remnants of former hedgerows.
- Visually prominent belt of trees alongside Hawthorn and Birch Road industrial estates.
- Remains of old cattle yards and holding pens evoke a sense of past agricultural activities within the area.

### **Overall Character Description**

The area is characterised by a flat, low-lying landscape of pasture fields and grazing marshland dissected by numerous drainage channels. The West Langney Levels have a high water table and are liable to flooding. The area collects water from a larger basin known as the Willingdon Levels catchment area, as part of the Willingdon Levels Flood Storage Compensatory Scheme. Residential areas in Western Eastbourne and new industrial estates to the south and west of the area provide a visually prominent urban backdrop and setting to the levels. Major roads that traverse the area at a higher grade are highly visible and in some case form an abrupt boundary to the area. Large expanses of this area have a relatively open character with prominent views of wooded downland scarp slopes to the west. The openness of the area allows prominent views to the urban edge of St. Anthony's Hill residential estate, power transmission towers and a gas holder station.

The levels sit within an ancient landscape that was formally marshland and is interconnected to the Pevensey Levels to the east. An intensive drainage system has converted most of the former marsh into grassland for grazing, but marshland remnants persist along the drainage ditch systems and in the western lower lying areas. Langney Sewer is a prominent linear feature and connects the West Langney Levels with the East Langney Levels. The Willingdon Levels have been designated by East Sussex County Council as an Archaeologically Sensitive Area on the basis of its potential to yield Bronze Age and Medieval remains. Such discoveries were made during the construction of the flood storage lakes at Shinewater Park, northeast of the area.

Generally comprising a semi-rural character, the levels are traversed by a variety of drainage ditches with riparian vegetation growing along the banks. Fields are irregular and vary in size, but are mostly medium and typically rectilinear, forming a mosaic around the two main water bodies in the area. Water channels, mature hedgerows and reed-filled drainage ditches generally define field boundaries. Land use is dominated by grazing marshlands, with various belts of small trees, copses of wet woodland, and isolated shrubs, some of which are remnants of former hedgerows. The levels, together with the adjacent urban areas, form part of the setting of the South Downs.

### **Key Views**

- Distant views of wooded scarp slopes to the west.
- Prominent views to belt of Poplar trees in front of St Anthony's Hill Birch Road industrial estate.
- Prominent views to large buildings within Highfield industrial estate, the urban edge of St. Anthony's Hill residential estate, power transmission towers and a gas holder station.

## Historic Features

- Remains of old cattle yards and holding pens evoke a sense of past agricultural activities within the area.
- An intensive drainage system.
- Remains former marshland in the low-lying western reaches.
- An Archaeologically Sensitive Area.

## Key Ecological Features

- Reed-filled drainage ditches.
- Mature hedgerows.
- West Langney Deep Water Lake and water channels (sewers) with marginal planting.
- Wet and dry pasture areas.

## Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- Isolated trees and belts of wet woodland are vulnerable to change and loss.
- Pockets of remnant marshland are vulnerable to loss and change.
- Ecologically sensitive aquatic and waterside habitats associated with the lakes.
- Ecologically sensitive habitats associated with the drainage ditches, sewers and channels.
- The area is highly exposed to views from nearby roads and urban areas, with resultant enhanced sensitivity to any new development.
- The area is highly prominent in views from the Eastbourne Downs and scarp slopes.
- Loss and fragmentation of hedgerows has occurred associated with changes in management and modern farming techniques.
- Expansive and panoramic views, with an open and predominantly uninterrupted skyline.
- Subtle features remaining of the historic landscape, such as marshland, hedgerows, field systems and drainage ditches, which are not protected and are vulnerable to change and loss.
- Archaeologically sensitive areas.
- Moderate level of perceived naturalness and other urban areas.

## Indicative Capacity for Change

This Levels landscape has many sensitive landscape, cultural and aesthetic/perceptual features and characteristics that are vulnerable to change. The area is prominent in views from the major scarp, as well as from adjacent roads and urban areas. However, the Levels are surrounded by built development that generally presents a visually harsh urban edge. In this context, there is some capacity, in landscape and visual terms, for this visually prominent area to accommodate new development without significant effect on the area's open and predominantly uninterrupted skyline, its sensitive ecological habitats and archaeological areas and its expansive views. Any such development must be sensitively designed and adequately mitigated for it to be successfully integrated into this area. A substantial new tree and shrub planting scheme adjacent to the urban edge on raised embankments to prevent moisture loss from the grazing marsh would help integrate new development into the local landscape and would help soften the existing visually harsh urban/rural interface.

## Landscape Priorities

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the semi-rural levels with its valued marshland habitat; its general openness; its uninterrupted skyline and panoramic views; and its sensitive archaeological areas.

## Land Management Guidelines

- Conserve and enhance the open, undeveloped character and rural qualities within the levels.

- Conserve and restore the historic pattern of the agricultural landscape including irregular patterns of medium sized fields.
- Conserve and enhance the drainage channel systems to maintain their drainage function and enhance their ecological and visual amenity qualities (e.g. clearance/thinning of over-vigorous aquatic/marginal species, diversification of aquatic/marginal species etc).
- Conserve, strengthen and manage remnant hedgerows and hedgerow trees that define the field patterns, and replant any hedgerows that have been degraded or lost.
- Plan for long-term restoration to low-lying marshland areas and to improve the biodiversity of the associated freshwater habitats.
- Promote a native planting strategy on raised embankments along busy road corridors and urban areas to reduce the effects of movement and noise across the landscape and to soften visually harsh urban edges.
- Conserve and enhance planting adjacent to Hawthorn and Birch Road and Hampden Park and Highfield industrial estates to reduce visual dominance of the built form on the open, low-lying character of the West Langney Levels.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage any isolated trees and belts of wet woodland.
- Develop and manage the Deep Water Lake and its margins for landscape amenity and biodiversity values.
- Conserve the rural character of the area by considering how best to maintain the viability of agriculture.

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist development of further transportation corridors and any other visually prominent linear elements that traverse and dissect the landscape, unless absolutely essential.
- Resist the development of any additional telecommunication masts or any other vertical structures in this open landscape, unless absolutely essential. Seek opportunities to locate existing and any proposed power transmission towers underground where feasible.
- Resist any new development that may adversely affect the character of the area or views to and from the levels.
- Ensure that any new development is well integrated within the landscape and existing harsh edges are softened by the introduction of new native tree and shrub planting.
- Any new buildings should be located in less visually prominent locations, preferably clustering them around existing buildings and / or in peripheral parts.
- Seek opportunities for enhancing public access and developing high-quality recreational pathways with associated planting strategies. Ensure that these routes do not conflict with agricultural practices within the landscape.
- Seek opportunities for the development of recreational routes throughout the area to link nearby residential areas and connect to the Shinewater Park footpath / cycleway network.
- Consider recreational opportunities associated with the lake and requirements for parking and visitor facilities.
- Where earth works are required, these should be sympathetic to the surrounding flat, low-lying landform.
- Seek opportunities to soften areas of visually harsh urban edge through provision of additional tree/shrub planting along periphery of area.
- Seek opportunities to improve the rural urban fringe through provision of high quality boundary treatments and a planting strategy that reflects the local distinctiveness.
- Conserve sites of archaeological importance and resist any further development or tree/scrub encroachment that would disrupt their integrity.
- Consider the effect of any change in the area on views to and from the Eastbourne Downs and its scarp slopes.

# E3 - EAST LANGNEY LEVELS



## **E3 – EAST LANGNEY LEVELS**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Open, flat character with long distance views to major downland wooded scarp slopes.
- Land use is predominantly grazing marsh, with mature unimproved pasture, and some arable fields in drier areas.
- Medium to large sized fields defined by grassed drainage channels, reed-filled ditches and some hedgerows.
- East Langney Sewer is a prominent feature within the landscape.
- Prominent features on the horizon include power transmission lines and the urban edge to Langney.
- Pevensey Bay Road is well concealed by dense, mature hedgerows.
- The overall character of the landscape is predominantly rural, with a good sense of tranquillity and enclosure

### **Overall Character Description**

The area is characterised by a flat, low-lying landscape that falls away towards drainage channels and areas of marshland. The East Langney Levels have a high water table and are liable to flooding. The area sits within an ancient landscape that was formally marshland interconnected to the Pevensey Levels to the east. An intensive drainage system has converted most of the former marsh into grassland, but marshland remnants persist along the drainage ditch systems and in southern low lying areas. Langney Sewer is a prominent linear feature and connects the East Langney Levels with the West Langney Levels. The Levels sit on the western edge of Eastbourne Borough. Langney residential areas and, to an extent, Sovereign harbour-side development to the south, provide a visually prominent urban backdrop and setting to the Levels. Major roads that traverse the perimeter of the levels are well concealed through dense, mature hedgerows.

The Levels comprise a semi-rural character. Composed of former marshland, the Levels were reclaimed in medieval times to facilitate grazing. Fields are irregular and vary in size, but are mostly medium to large and typically rectilinear, forming a mosaic around the two main drainage channels. Grassed drainage channels, reed-filled ditches and some hedgerows generally define field boundaries. Land use is dominated by grazing marshlands, with various belts of small trees, copses of wet woodland, and isolated shrubs, some of which are possibly remnants of former hedgerows. Tree cover is generally poor. There are some arable fields in drier, elevated areas.

Pevensey Bay Road provides an abrupt but well concealed edge. Away from the built-up area and Pevensey Bay Road, the sense of tranquillity is relatively strong throughout the character area. Prominent features on the horizon include the highly visible urban edge to Langney, power transmission lines and distant views to Sovereign Harbour.

There is a general sense of openness across the levels. Views are often channelled along the drainage ditches, as a result of their linear character and open nature. Langney and East Langney Sewers are prominent features within the landscape. Long distant open views to the major scarps of the downs, which may be obtained westward, provide a remote, yet prominent, scenic backdrop to the levels. The levels, together with the adjacent urban areas, form part of the setting of the South Downs.

### **Key Views**

- Long distant open views west to the major downland scarp slopes.
- Near distant open views to Langney residential urban edges.
- Distant filtered views to Sovereign Harbour.

### **Historic Features**

- An intensive drainage system.
- Remains of former marshland in the low-lying southern reaches.

## Key Ecological Features

- Grassland and wetland (Sites of Nature Conservation Interest)
- Remnants of former marshland habitat.
- Drainage ditches with waterside and aquatic plants.
- Mature hedgerows.
- Wet and dry pasture areas.

## Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- Moderate level of perceived naturalness and a rural quality.
- Distinctive and ecologically sensitive network of drainage ditches and channels, containing waterside and aquatic plants.
- Pockets of remnant marshland are vulnerable to loss and change.
- The area is prominent in long distant views from the Eastbourne Downs and scarp slopes.
- Panoramic views west to the major downland scarp slopes.
- Loss and fragmentation of hedgerows has occurred associated with changes in management and modern farming techniques.
- Panoramic views with an open landscape with wide open skies.
- The area is visually exposed to views from some nearby roads and urban areas, with resultant enhanced sensitivity to any new development.
- Subtle features remaining of the historic landscape, such as hedgerows, field systems and drainage ditches, which are not protected and are vulnerable to change and loss.

## Indicative Capacity for Change

This levels landscape has many sensitive landscape, cultural and aesthetic/perceptual features and characteristics that are vulnerable to change. The area is prominent in views from the major scarp, as well as from adjacent roads and urban areas. However, the levels are surrounded by built development that generally presents a visually harsh urban edge. In this context, there is some capacity, in landscape and visual terms, for this visually prominent area to accommodate new development without significant effect on the area's open and predominantly uninterrupted skyline, its sensitive ecological habitats and archaeological areas and its expansive views. Any such development must be sensitively designed and adequately mitigated for it to be successfully integrated into this area. A substantial new tree and shrub planting scheme adjacent to the urban edge would help integrate new development into the local landscape and would help soften the existing visually harsh urban/rural interface.

## Landscape Priorities

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the semi-rural levels with its intricate drainage system, its remains of former marshland, its general openness, its uninterrupted skyline and its panoramic views.

## Land Management Guidelines

- Ensure that any new development does not adversely affect the open, undeveloped character and rural qualities within the levels.
- Conserve and enhance the drainage channel systems to maintain their drainage function and to enhance their ecological and visual amenity value (e.g. clearance/thinning of over-vigorous aquatic/marginal species, diversification of aquatic/marginal species etc).
- Conserve and restore the historic pattern of the agricultural landscape including irregular patterns of medium to large sized fields.
- Ensure a grazing regime on the pastures is maintained, but prevent over-grazing. Avoid use of fertilisers to prevent any disruption to the ecological integrity of the drainage channel systems.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage any remnant hedgerows and hedgerow trees that define the field patterns, and replant hedgerows that have been degraded or lost.



- Plan for long-term restoration to low-lying marshland areas and to improve the biodiversity of the associated freshwater habitats.
- Promote a native planting strategy along busy road corridors and urban areas to reduce the effects of movement and noise across the landscape and to soften visually harsh urban edges.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage isolated trees and belts of wet woodland.
- Where boundaries are necessary, promote the use of visually permeable boundaries such as post and wire fencing.
- Manage recreational use within the area and divert visitors away from vulnerable habitats, such as the former marshland areas.

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist development of transportation corridors and any other visually prominent linear elements that traverse and dissect the landscape, unless absolutely essential.
- Resist any development that would adversely affect the character of the area or the amenity of views obtained from the South Downs AONB.
- Resist the development of any additional telecommunication masts or any other vertical structures in this open landscape unless absolutely essential.
- Resist any new development that may adversely affect views to and from the levels.
- Ensure that any new development is well integrated with the landscape and existing harsh urban edges are softened.
- Seek opportunities for enhancing public access and developing high-quality recreational pathways with associated planting strategy in appropriate areas. Ensure that these routes do not conflict with agricultural practices and ecological conservation areas within the landscape.
- Seek opportunities to improve access and connectivity to other areas of open space within the Borough.
- Minimise the affects of adverse incremental change by restricting new development to that which is of high quality, which is well integrated into the landscape and which reflects local distinctiveness.
- Seek opportunities to soften areas of visually harsh urban edge through provision of additional tree/shrub planting along periphery.
- Seek opportunities to improve the rural urban fringe through provision of high quality boundary treatments and a planting strategy that reflects the local distinctiveness.
- Where earth works are required, these should be sympathetic to the surrounding flat, low-lying landform.
- Consider the effect of any change in the area on views to and from the Eastbourne Downs and its scarp slopes.

# E4 - UPPERTON RURAL FRINGE



## **E4 – UPPERTON RURAL FRINGE**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Relatively flat, low-lying areas with a varied landscape character.
- Community allotments and nursery contribute to a locally distinctive and textured landscape.
- Buildings associated with the allotments are small in scale and scattered, with a varied architectural character.
- Area is strongly influenced by its urban setting.
- Prominent views to the chimney within Eastbourne District General Hospital.
- Fields defined by a combination of hedgerows, timber and post fencing, with some temporary electric wire fences.
- Distinctive tree belts, isolated trees and shrubs, some of which are remnants of former hedgerows, provide enclosure to the small to medium sized fields.
- Moderate sense of tranquillity in semi-rural areas associated with Upperton Farm.
- Strong visual connection with the Eastbourne Levels.
- Electrical substation and railway are well concealed from much of the area by dense, mature trees and shrubs lining a drain.
- Tutts Barn Lane comprises a semi-rural, informal character.
- Prominent views to Upperton Residential Area.
- Prominent views across the Eastbourne Levels and beyond to the major downland scarp slopes.

### **Overall Character Description**

The topography of the area is relatively flat, yet slightly elevated above the Eastbourne levels. Triangular in form, the area sits directly south of the Eastbourne Levels, nestled between Upperton and Roselands residential areas. The Levels, together with the adjacent urban areas, form part of the setting of the South Downs. The area mainly has a semi-rural character, however some places near to Upperton are more strongly influenced by its urban setting, comprising an urban fringe character. Tutts Barn Lane provides primary access to and defines part of the northern boundary to the area.

Land use includes community garden allotments and grazing pasture/ "horsiculture," generally in association with Upperton Farm. The allotments provide a locally distinctive landscape with a mosaic of textures. Buildings are small in scale and scattered, varying in architectural character. Fields surrounding the allotments vary in size, but most are small and typically rectilinear. The area is criss-crossed by a variety of drains and tracks. Field boundaries are defined by combination of hedgerows and hedgerow trees with some timber post fences and few temporary electric 'wire tape' fences. The allotment gardens add a finer level of field boundary scale, comprising small individual gardens that form a varied and active landscape. There are distinctive tree belts, isolated trees and shrubs within the rural areas, some of which are remnants of former hedgerows. These provide good visual enclosure to the fields and conceal any views from the area to the electrical substation and railway. The area supports a variety of recreational uses for the local community, predominantly in association with the allotment gardens and nursery.

### **Key Views**

- Expansive views across the Eastbourne levels.
- Prominent views to the major downland scarp slopes.
- Prominent views to Upperton Residential Area.

### **Historic Features**

- Remnants of former hedgerows within Upperton Farm.
- Former area of marshland.
- An intensive drainage system e.g. Lottbridge Sewer.
- Tutts Barn Lane drovers track

## **Key Ecological Features**

- Reed-filled drainage ditches and sewer.
- Mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Dry grassland areas.

## **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Subtle features remaining of the historic landscape, such as hedgerows, treebelts, field systems and drainage ditches, which are not protected and are vulnerable to change and loss.
- Loss of agricultural viability associated with small farms such as Upperton Farm, leading to farm-based recreation and other forms of diversification, which may have important implications for the rural landscape and environmental features, as they are vulnerable to change and loss.
- Mature trees and vegetation lining drains and sewers.
- Ecologically sensitive habitats associated with the drainage ditches, sewers and channels.
- The area is highly prominent when viewed from the scarp slopes.
- The area is highly exposed to views from nearby roads and urban areas, with resultant enhanced sensitivity to any new development.
- Allotment gardens and nursery, with associated high biodiversity and amenity values.

## **Indicative Capacity for Change**

This Levels landscape has many sensitive landscape, cultural and aesthetic/perceptual features and characteristics that are vulnerable to change. The area is prominent in views from the major scarp, as well as from adjacent and urban areas. However, the Levels are surrounded by built development that generally presents a visually harsh urban edge. In this context, there is some capacity, in landscape and visual terms, for this visually prominent area to accommodate new development without significant effect on the area's open and predominantly uninterrupted skyline, its sensitive ecological habitats and archaeological areas and its expansive views. Any such development must be sensitively designed and adequately mitigated for it to be successfully integrated into this area. A substantial new tree and shrub planting scheme adjacent to the urban edge would help integrate any new development into the local landscape and would help soften the existing visually harsh urban/rural interface.

## **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character and quality of the semi-rural landscape with significant and valued allotment gardens. Ensure that any new development is well integrated within the landscape, existing and prospective harsh urban edges are softened and the development a long-term, sustainable management plan for the allotment gardens. The open views overlooking the adjacent Eastbourne Levels landscape are a key feature that should be retained and enhanced.

## **Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve and enhance the condition and visual amenity of existing garden allotments and seek opportunities for the development of an allotment management plan to guide their future management.
- Conserve and enhance the drainage channel systems to maintain their drainage function and to enhance their ecological and visual amenity value (e.g. clearance/thinning of over-vigorous aquatic/marginal species, diversification of aquatic/marginal species, management of scrub, etc).
- Conserve, strengthen and manage any remnant hedgerows and hedgerow trees that define the field patterns, and replant hedgerows that have been degraded or lost.
- Promote a native planting strategy along existing and prospective visually prominent road corridors and urban areas, to reduce the effects of movement and noise across the landscape and to soften visually harsh urban edges.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage hedgerows and hedgerow trees and tree belts, especially in peripheral parts and around fields.

## Landscape Planning Guidelines

- Resist development of any additional telecommunications masts or any other vertical structures in this open landscape, unless absolutely essential.
- Resist any development that may adversely affect views to and from the levels.
- Resist any development that would adversely affect the character of the area or the amenity of views obtained from the South Downs AONB.
- Minimise the affects of adverse incremental change by restricting new development to that which is of high quality, which is well integrated into the landscape and which reflects local distinctiveness.
- Where development is required to meet strategic objectives and local demands, avoid skyline development and ensure any new development has a minimal impact on views to and from the levels and is integrated within the existing landscape.
- Seek opportunities to soften areas of visually harsh urban edge through provision of additional tree/shrub planting along periphery of area.
- Seek opportunities to improve the rural urban fringe through provision of high quality boundary treatments and a planting strategy that reflects the local distinctiveness.
- Seek opportunities for enhanced public access and the developing high-quality recreational pathways with associated planting strategies in appropriate areas. Ensure that these routes do not conflict with existing recreational activities and future development proposals within the landscape.
- Where earth works are required, these should be sympathetic to the surrounding flat, low-lying landform.
- Any new buildings should be located in less visually prominent locations, preferably clustering them around existing buildings and/or in peripheral parts.
- Consider the effect of any new development in the area on views to and from Eastbourne Downs and its scarp slopes.

# E5 - SOUTHBOURNE RECREATION



## **E5 – SOUTHBOURNE RECREATION**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Relatively flat landscape with a variety of land uses and land cover.
- Partly elevated above the Eastbourne and West Langney Levels due to former landfill operations.
- Lottbridge sewer and associated vegetation is a prominent feature.
- Character strongly influenced by leisure / recreational land uses, including a golfing park and miniature railway.
- Southbourne Lake
- Bridgemere residential area forms a very abrupt urban edge, partially softened by copses of wet woodland, marshland, and isolated trees and shrubs.
- Railway and major roads form an elevated and visually prominent edge to much of the area (e.g. at Lottbridge Drove and Cross Levels Way).
- Allotment gardens located in the south-eastern pocket, adjacent to Bridgemere residential area.
- Relatively open landscape with filtered views to nearby road traffic, power transmission towers and a gas holding station.
- Open views across the golf course to wooded downland scarp slopes to the west.

### **Overall Character Description**

The topography of the area is relatively flat, yet slightly elevated above the Eastbourne and West Langney Levels due to former landfill operations. The area sits between the Eastbourne and West Langney Levels, comprising a relatively open landscape with a varied character. The A2290 Lott bridge Drove and railway line provide abrupt northeast and southwest boundaries. These corridors form visual barriers and introduce considerable movement and noise to the area. Similarly, Brampton Road Trading Estate and Bridgemere residential area form very abrupt urban edges to the northwest and southeast, respectively. However, these edges are partially softened by copses of wet woodland, marshland and isolated trees and shrubs.

Lottbridge Sewer is a significant feature within the area, which links the Eastbourne and West Langney Levels underneath the A2290 Lottbridge Drove and railway corridor. There is a major water pump located along the sewer, which controls the water levels within the Willingdon Levels to prevent flooding. Areas north of Lottbridge Sewer have a more recreational character; strongly influenced by leisure / recreational land uses, including a golfing park and miniature railway. The landscape is slightly elevated and slopes gently down to Langney Sewer. Areas south of the access road are characterised by a flat, low-lying landscape that falls away towards drainage channels and large areas of marshland. Elevated open views over the West Langney Levels from north-eastern parts of the area near the access road are significant.

Some places near to the Bridgemere residential area are strongly influenced by its urban setting. Allotment gardens are located in the south-eastern pocket, nestled between Bridgemere residential area and a depot, providing an urban fringe character to the area. The allotments consist of small individual gardens that form a varied and textured landscape within the area. Prominent views to electricity pylons and cables, and the nearby gas holding station diminish the visual quality of the area.

The area forms part of the Willingdon Levels, which have been designated by East Sussex County Council as an Archaeologically Sensitive Area on the basis of its potential to yield Bronze Age and Medieval remains. Such discoveries were made during the construction of the flood storage lakes at Shinewater Park, north of the area. Although there are no archaeologically sensitive areas defined within the area, nearby discoveries of Bronze Age and Medieval remains suggests the potential for similar discoveries throughout the rest of the Levels. The Levels, together with the adjacent urban areas, form part of the setting of the South Downs.

### **Key Views**

- Elevated views to the West Langney Levels.

- Prominent views over marshland to the nearby gas holding station.
- Prominent, open views across the golf course to the wooded downland major scarps.

### **Historic Features**

- Former area of marshland.
- An intensive drainage system i.e. Lottbridge Sewer.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Reed-filled drainage ditches and Lottbridge Sewer with waterside and aquatic plants.
- Southbourne Lake, ponds and water channels with marginal planting, aquatic and waterside habitats.
- Blocks and belts of mature wet woodland.
- Scrub and rough grassland habitat.
- Marshland habitat.

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Ecologically sensitive habitats associated with the drainage ditches, sewers and channels.
- Small areas of remnant marshland are vulnerable to loss and change.
- Significant copses of wet woodland and isolated trees and shrubs, which are not protected, and are vulnerable to change and loss.
- Mature trees and vegetation lining Lottbridge Sewer.
- Subtle features remaining of the historic landscape, such as hedgerows, treebelts, field systems and drainage ditches, which are not protected and are vulnerable to change and loss.
- The area is prominent in views from the upper scarp slopes.
- The area is visually exposed to views from nearby roads and urban areas, with a resultant enhanced sensitivity to any new development.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

This levels landscape has many sensitive landscape, cultural and aesthetic/perceptual features and characteristics that are vulnerable to change. The area is prominent in views from the major scarp, as well as from adjacent roads and urban areas. However, the levels are surrounded by built development that generally presents a visually harsh urban edge. In this context, there is some capacity, in landscape and visual terms, for this visually prominent area to accommodate new development without significant effect on the area's open and predominantly uninterrupted skyline, its sensitive ecologically habitats and archaeological areas and its expansive views. Any such development must be sensitively designed and adequately mitigated for it to be successfully integrated into this area. A substantial new tree and shrub planting structure would help integrate new development into the local landscape and would help soften the existing visually harsh urban/rural interface.

### **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character and quality of the open semi-rural landscape with its valued marshland habitat and to encourage landscape restoration and low-key recreational development.

### **Land Management Guidelines**

- Consider opportunities for the long-term restoration of land to low-lying marshland areas for the improvement of the biodiversity of the associated freshwater habitats.
- Manage the drainage channel systems to maintain their ecological and visual amenity qualities.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage isolated trees and belts of wet woodland.



- Conserve and enhance the condition and visual amenity of existing garden allotments and seek opportunities for the development of an allotment management plan to guide their future management.
- Promote a native planting strategy along visually prominent road corridors and urban areas to reduce the effects of movement and noise across the landscape and to soften visually harsh urban edges.
- Conserve the rural character of the area by considering how best to maintain the viability of agriculture.
- Conserve and enhance drainage channel systems to maintain their drainage function and to enhance their ecological and visual amenity value (e.g. clearance/thinning of over-vigorous aquatic/marginal species, diversification of aquatic/marginal species, scrub management, etc).

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist development of any additional telecommunications masts or any other vertical structures in this open landscape, unless absolutely essential.
- Resist any development that would adversely affect the character of the area or the amenity of views obtained from the South Downs AONB.
- Resist any new development that may adversely affect views to and from the levels.
- Conserve and enhance the open, mostly undeveloped character within the area.
- Consider opportunities for new planting within the golf course to encourage biodiversity and to help integrate the golf course into the surrounding landscape.
- Conserve and enhance the inherent drainage pattern within the areas and habitat associated with the reed-filled drainage ditches and channels.
- Seek opportunities for enhancing public access and developing high-quality recreational pathways with associated planting strategies in appropriate areas. Ensure that these routes do not conflict with existing recreational activities within the landscape.
- Enhance existing access for vehicles, parking and visitor facilities within the area and encourage planting to soften expansive areas of hardstanding.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by restricting new development to that which is of high quality, which is well integrated into the landscape and which reflects local distinctiveness.
- Any new buildings should be located in less visually prominent locations, preferably clustering them around existing buildings and / or in peripheral parts.
- Seek opportunities to soften areas of visually harsh urban edge through provision of additional tree/shrub planting along periphery of area.
- Seek opportunities to improve the rural urban fringe through provision of high quality boundary treatments and a planting strategy that reflects the local distinctiveness.
- Where earth works are required, these should be sympathetic to the surrounding flat, low-lying landform.
- Consider the effect of any new development in the area on views to and from Eastbourne Downs and its scarp slopes.
- Avoid new built development in close proximity to water bodies.

# E6 - SHINEWATER LAKE MARSHES



## **E6 – SHINEWATER LAKE MARSHES**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Relatively open flat landscape with shallow reed filled drainage ditches, channels, lakes and marshland.
- Integrated network of recreational routes traverse the area e.g. National Cycle Network Route 21.
- Golden Jubilee Way (A22) dual carriageway is highly visible, dissecting the area at a much higher grade.
- A landscape heavily influenced by surrounding urban development.
- Semi-rural character in places (e.g. southeast of Shinewater Lake).
- Urban edge to Langney is highly visible and well contained by Larkspur Drive.
- Prominent local landscape features include Shinewater Lake, tiled roofs of adjacent residential areas and power transmission towers.
- Allotments off Manor Road in the south west corner of area
- Prominent views to woodland and grassland downland scarp slopes to west.

### **Overall Character Description**

The area is characterised by a flat, low-lying landscape on the urban fringe of Eastbourne. This wide tract of linear open space has an important role in providing a 'green wedge' between the suburbs of Langney and Hampden Park, and provides an important visual setting to adjacent residential areas. Land use is dominated by grazing marshland and significant areas of low-key amenity grassland for recreational use. A network of recreational routes also traverses the area. The area comprises a series of shallow reed filled ponds, lakes, drainage ditches, channels and marshland, all of which combine to create a largely modified landscape. The two main lakes, Shinewater and Hydneye, were excavated as compensatory floodwater storage areas. Water levels are artificially maintained by the operation of various sluice gates, which may be raised or lowered to maintain desired water levels.

Shinewater Lake is a prominent landscape feature, which sits within former marsh farmland. Following extensive land formation works, the lake and its margins provide a variety of habitats, with certain areas designed to encourage natural flora and fauna to develop. Similar to the Eastbourne Levels, the former marshes were drained for agriculture, using a criss-crossed network of drainage ditches and channels. Some of these reed filled drainage ditches and water channels remain in south-eastern areas.

The area forms part of the Willingdon Levels, which have been designated by East Sussex County Council as an Archaeologically Sensitive Area on the basis of its potential to yield Bronze Age and Medieval remains. Such discoveries were made during the construction of the flood storage lakes at Shinewater Park. Large quantities of late Bronze Age (800-600BC) artefacts were revealed early on in the landscaping and further investigations in 1995 identified at least one timber platform and a wooden trackway.

The area sits within an urban setting and the landscape is heavily influenced by surrounding urban development. The urban edge to Langney is highly visible and well contained by Larkspur Drive. Prominent local landscape features include tiled roofs of adjacent residential areas and power transmission towers. Most places in the southeast of the area comprise a semi-rural character, where land use is dominated by grazing marshlands, with various belts of small trees, copses of wet woodland, and isolated shrubs, some of which are remnants of former hedgerows. Some areas have a high degree of enclosure due to copses of wet woodland and scrub, providing a more intimate scale.

The visual qualities of the area are impeded to an extent by electricity pylons and cables, borrow pits and roads. The Golden Jubilee Way (A22) dual carriageway dissects the area at a much higher grade, forming a major visual barrier and introduces considerable movement and noise to the area. However, the area benefits from long distant views of wooded scarp slopes of the downs to the west. The Levels, together with the adjacent urban areas, form part of the setting of the South Downs.

## Key Views

- Expansive, near distant views across Shinewater Lake and beyond to the Golden Jubilee Way (A22) dual carriageway.
- Panoramic, long distant views of the downland wooded and grassland scarp slopes to the west
- Prominent views to tiled roofs of adjacent residential areas and power transmission towers in and outside of the area.

## Historic Features

The Willingdon Levels, including land at Mornings Mill Farm near Polegate (outside the Borough), have been designated as an Archaeologically Sensitive Area on the basis of its potential to yield Bronze Age and Medieval remains, as large quantities of late Bronze Age (800-600BC) artefacts were revealed early on in the landscaping work at Shinewater Park. Investigation identified at least one timber platform and a wooden trackway. The platform was built of large oak posts associated with horizontal oak timbers forming the base of the platform. Above this were horizontal rods and layers of brushwood. Pottery, animal bone, struck and fire-cracked flints were found. Other nearby finds included copper-alloy axes, a chisel, a bracelet and sickle with an intact wooden handle. At least two human skeletons, a horse cheek-piece made of antler and four amber beads were also found. The trackway runs approximately east to west across the Park and is the first of its type to be found in South East England.

## Key Ecological Features

- Marshland habitats.
- Wet woodland and scrub.
- Aquatic and waterside habitat.
- Reed-filled drainage ditches and sewer.
- Wet and dry grassland areas.
- Reedbeds.
- Wet meadow.
- Allotments

## Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- Moderate level of perceived naturalness and a rural quality in the south eastern parts, away from roads and urban areas.
- Strong visual relationship between the levels and downland scarp slopes, with the area being highly exposed to views from the scarp slopes.
- Distinctive and ecologically sensitive system of shallow reed filled drainage ditches, channels, lakes and marshland.
- Archaeologically sensitive areas containing Bronze Age artefacts.
- Loss and fragmentation of hedgerows, resulting from changes in land use and management.
- The area is visually exposed to views from nearby roads and urban areas, with resultant enhanced sensitivity to any new development.
- Expansive and panoramic views across the Levels.

## Indicative Capacity for Change

This levels landscape has many sensitive landscape, cultural and aesthetic/perceptual features and characteristics that are vulnerable to change. The area is prominent in views from the major scarp, as well as from adjacent roads and urban areas. However, the levels are surrounded by built development that generally presents a visually harsh urban edge. In this context, there is some capacity, in landscape and visual terms, for this visually prominent area to accommodate new development without significant effect on the area's open and predominantly uninterrupted skyline, its sensitive ecologically habitats and archaeological areas and its expansive views. Any such development must be sensitively designed and adequately mitigated for it to be successfully integrated into this area. A substantial new tree and shrub

planting scheme adjacent to the urban edge would help integrate new development into the local landscape and would help soften the existing visually harsh urban/rural interface.

### **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the country park landscape with its valued and varied habitat; its general openness; its uninterrupted skyline and panoramic views; its variety of recreational opportunities; its sensitive archaeological areas.

### **Land Management Guidelines**

- Manage the lakes and wetland habitat to maintain their ecological and visual amenity qualities.
- Seek opportunities to zone recreational activities to ensure sensitive landscapes are protected from potentially damaging or intrusive activities.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage low-lying wetland areas to improve the biodiversity of the associated freshwater and marginal habitats.
- Maintain and manage the lake and its margins for landscape amenity and biodiversity values.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage isolated trees and fragmented wet woodland and plant new native trees/shrubs to help achieve a more unified woodland structure.
- Sensitive design of way-marking and signage on footpaths to help maintain the country park character.
- Conserve and enhance drainage channel systems to maintain their drainage function and to enhance their ecological and visual amenity value (e.g. clearance/thinning of over-vigorous aquatic/marginal species, diversification of aquatic/marginal species etc).
- Ensure recreational use and access through the area is controlled, particularly in areas of high pressure and sensitivity.
- Conserve and enhance wetland habitats through appropriate management and seek opportunities to extend the area of wetlands habitats through re-creation of wetlands (including wet meadows and wet woodland).
- Conserve the rural character of the area by considering how best to maintain the viability of agriculture.
- Conserve and enhance the condition and visual amenity of existing garden allotments and seek opportunities for the development of an allotment management plan to guide their future management.

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist development of any additional telecommunications masts or any other vertical structures in this open landscape, unless absolutely necessary.
- Resist any development that would adversely affect the character of the area or the amenity of views obtained from the South Downs AONB or from within this area.
- Ensure that any new development does not adversely affect the open, undeveloped character and rural qualities within the area.
- Maintain and enhance recreational opportunities associated with the lake. Concentrate tourist facilities and other recreational amenities such as parking and toilets sympathetically within the existing landscape.
- Restrict walls, hedges and impermeable fences that enclose the landscape and emphasise linearity in an otherwise sinuous landscape.
- Minimise the affects of adverse incremental change by restricting new development to that which is of high quality, which is well-integrated into the landscape and which contributes positively to local distinctiveness.
- Ensure that any new small-scale development is sensitively located, avoiding interruptions to skyline views.

- Any new buildings should be located in less visually prominent locations, preferably clustering them around existing buildings and / or in peripheral parts. Use materials and designs that help reinforce local distinctiveness.
- Seek opportunities to soften areas of visually harsh urban edge through provision of additional tree/shrub planting along periphery of area.
- Seek opportunities to improve the rural urban fringe through provision of high quality boundary treatments and a planting strategy that reflects the local distinctiveness.
- Where earth works are required, these should be sympathetic to the surrounding flat, low-lying landform.
- Provide a strong vegetated character to any new areas of development, using native species to the area to soften any anticipated harsh urban edges.
- Conserve sites of archaeological importance and ensure that any new development or scrub encroachment does not disrupt their integrity.
- Consider the effect of any new development in the area on views to and from Eastbourne Downs and its scarp slopes.

# E7 - HAMPDEN PARK



## **E7 – HAMPDEN PARK**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Relatively flat and unified landscape of historic parkland and significant areas of mature woodland.
- The 'decoy pond' is an attractive and prominent feature within the landscape.
- Good variety in scales of spaces (e.g. openings in woodland etc).
- Strong sense of enclosure provided by dense, mature woodland.
- Moderate sense of tranquillity.
- Some historic features and monuments, including timber entrance pillars.

### **Overall Character Description**

The overall landscape character of Hampden Park is that of a traditional country estate, including extensive woodland with a varied herb layer, an attractive pond, lawn areas and structural tree planting. The park is a significant historic resource and was once part of Ratton Estate, owned by Lord Willingdon. Ratton Estate was mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1087; its woodland and pond were an asset for attracting wild fowl for the estate kitchens. Sold to the Eastbourne Corporation at the end of the nineteenth century, the park was reopened as 'Hampden Park' in 1902 and was the first corporation-owned park in Eastbourne. Some historic features and monuments remain as important references of the park's heritage.

The general layout of the park is based around the 'decoy pond' with surrounding woodland and numerous recreational tracks. The parkland around the pond contains lawn areas and fine specimen trees, both deciduous and coniferous, including a Scarlet Oak near to the lake inlet. During the spring, crocuses and daffodils provide a striking backdrop to the western reaches of the lake. The park is dominated by dense mature woodland, consisting mainly of English Oak and Ash with a number of conifers and Beech near the tennis courts. The woodland comprises an underlayer of Field Maple, Hawthorn, Willow and Sloe. A ring road provides the main vehicular access to the park and links to Decoy Drive.

The area sits within an urban setting, although the dense, mature woodland provides robust enclosure from surrounding roads and residential areas. The park includes a variety of scales of space, and provides a valued place for informal recreation. Most places in Hampden Park and Ham Shaw comprise a semi-natural woodland character, with a great degree of enclosure and an intimate scale. Secluded woodland areas contrast with lawn openings near to the pond, providing an attractive landscape setting to formal recreational areas to the southeast.

The visual qualities of the area are slightly impeded by Hampden Park Drive, which introduces a minor amount of movement and noise to the area. Generally, the area comprises a unified, intimate landscape with a moderate sense of tranquillity.

### **Key Views**

- Views from woodland heavily restricted, allowing only occasional glimpses through trees to open recreational areas.
- Open views across the pond to fine specimen trees and beyond to woodland areas.
- Expansive views across adjacent playing fields.
- External views of the park are dominated by mature woodland.

### **Historic Features**

- Part of a country estate, recorded in the Domesday survey of 1087
- A number of fine specimen parkland trees, including a Scarlet Oak.
- Some historic features and monuments, including the park entrance gates.
- One designated Archaeologically Sensitive Areas in the south west corner.



## **Key Ecological Features**

- Significant, mature broad-leaved woodland, consisting mainly of English Oak and Ash with a number of conifers and Beech.
- Some ancient woodland.
- Significant epiphytic lichen and bryophyte flora.
- A varied herb layer within woodland areas.
- Woodland provides a valuable habitat for breeding birds, invertebrates and woodland fungi.
- Aquatic and waterside habitats.

## **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- High level of perceived naturalness in woodland areas.
- Ancient woodland and nationally scarce woodland species.
- Ecologically sensitive habitats associated with the woodland, including shade tolerant habitat for epiphytic lichen and bryophyte flora.
- Ecologically sensitive habitats associated with the decoy pond.
- Generally tranquil, intimate character.
- Historic features and monuments, including the park entrance gates.
- Archaeologically Sensitive Areas.

## **Indicative Capacity for Change**

Hampden Park has many sensitive landscape, cultural and aesthetic/perceptual features and characteristics that are vulnerable to change. Overall, there is very limited capacity for the area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area's valued historic parkland setting, its significant woodland, its ecologically sensitive habitats, its historic features and monuments, its sensitive archaeological areas and its tranquil, intimate character. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

## **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for Hampden Park should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of the parkland with its ecologically sensitive habitats; its historic parkland and valued 'decoy pond'; its tranquil, intimate character; its sensitive archaeological areas.

## **Land Management Guidelines**

- Maintain and manage the historic parkland and grounds at Hampden Park and Ham Shaw.
- Encourage the long-term management of the woodland for its historic and distinctive contribution to visual amenity and the wider landscape setting.
- Conserve and enhance the woodland biodiversity, including the protection of rare and uncommon plant communities associated with them.
- Conserve and maintain the 'decoy pond' for its historic and distinctive contribution to visual amenity and biodiversity values within the park.
- Manage and reinforce existing planting to provide separation and visual enclosure to the urban edge.
- Encourage conservation and rebuilding of the stonewall entrance and similar boundary treatments.
- Encourage management and restoration of the historic parkland landscape.

## **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist any new development that would adversely affect the character of this historic parkland.
- Resist further urbanisation of ring road through addition of road markings and concrete kerbs or excessive signage that detracts from the tranquil, historic character of the area.

- Minimise the affects of adverse incremental change by restricting new development to that which is of high quality, which is well-integrated into the landscape and which contributes positively to local distinctiveness.
- Any new buildings should be clustered around existing buildings, using materials and designs that reinforce local distinctiveness.
- Maintain the subtle variations that occur throughout the landscape, encouraging local distinctiveness, for instance, in the variation in woodland character between Hampden Park and Ham Shaw.
- Where earth works are required, these should be sympathetic to the surrounding flat, low-lying landform.
- Conserve sites of archaeological importance and restrict any new development or scrub encroachment that would disrupt their integrity.
- Consider the effect of any new development in the area on views to and from the Eastbourne Downs and its scarp slopes.

# E8 - HAMPDEN PARK RECREATION



## **E8 – HAMPDEN PARK RECREATION**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Open, flat, low-lying landscape of grassed playing fields and other areas of formal recreational use.
- A major hub for sporting facilities associated with Hampden Park Sports Centre and the adjacent Sussex Downs College.
- Linear, reed filled drainage channels and ditches adjacent to major roads.
- Dense woodland edge to Hampden Park provides some enclosure to the area.
- Rectilinear fields separated by mature hedgerow trees.
- Prominent middle distance views of wooded scarp slopes to the west and near distance views of Sussex Downs College buildings also to the west.
- Cross Levels Way (A2280) forms an abrupt edge.
- A variety of large-scale sports buildings and a scattering of small-scale pavilions.
- Recreational fields well concealed from nearby roads by mature tree belts and woodland.

### **Overall Character Description**

The area comprises an open, flat, low-lying landscape of grassed playing fields and other areas of formal recreational use. The area is a major hub for sporting facilities, associated with Hampden Park Sports Centre and Sussex Downs College. The general layout of the park is based around the provision of variety of playing fields and courts. Mature tree belts that separate the fields provide a well-defined landscape with good structure. A visually open landscape although a dense woodland edge to Hampden Park provides some enclosure to the area, especially to the tennis courts.

The area is separated from the Eastbourne levels through slight elevation in topography and the major road corridor of Cross Levels Way (A2280), which forms an abrupt edge to the area. A series of linear, reed filled drainage channels and ditches together with shrub planting and copses of woodland, soften the road edge to an extent.

There are virtually no known historic remains within the area. This absence may reflect subsequent intensification of land use, masking or removing evidence of prehistoric activity.

There is no significant pattern of settlement within this area. Several large-scale sports buildings lie in the southern and northern parts of area, together with a scattering of smaller buildings across the area. Although the area is within close proximity to the Brampton Road Trading Estate, its relatively harsh urban edge is concealed by significant blocks of woodland.

### **Key Views**

- Prominent long distance views of wooded scarp slopes to the west.
- Expansive views across the playing fields.
- Prominent views to the woodlands with Hampden Park.

### **Historic Features**

- No significant features.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Some grass and reed-filled drainage ditches and swales.
- Mature copses of deciduous woodland and native tree belts.

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Prominent views to the historic parkland and woodlands with Hampden Park and Ham Shaw.

- Areas of ecological value including mature deciduous woodland and tree belts.
- The open nature of the area makes it visually sensitive.
- The area is highly exposed to views from the scarp slopes to the west.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The Levels landscape has several visually sensitive features that are vulnerable to change. The area is prominent in views from the major scarp and Hampden Park, as well as from adjacent roads and some urban areas. Overall, there is some capacity for the area to accommodate new development without significant effect on the area's open character, its ecologically sensitive habitats and existing views of the area. Any such development must be sensitively designed and adequately mitigated for it to be successfully integrated into this area. A substantial new tree and shrub planting structure would help integrate new development into the local landscape.

### **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of this recreational landscape with its valued woodland habitat; its general openness; its uninterrupted skyline and expansive views. The priority should also encourage the development of more unified landscape structure through new tree and shrub planting.

### **Land Management Guidelines**

- Manage amenity grassland to maintain its integrity as a recreational resource and provide a high quality landscape setting in visual terms.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage isolated trees and belts of woodland, especially in peripheral parts. Conserve and reinforce existing planting to provide separation and visual enclosure to harsh urban edges.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage mature tree belts that define the field patterns, and replant where they have been degraded or lost.
- Promote a native planting strategy along busy road corridors to reduce the effects of traffic movement across the landscape and to soften visually harsh urban edges.
- Conserve and enhance drainage channel systems to maintain their drainage function and to enhance their ecological and visual amenity value (e.g. clearance/thinning of over-vigorous aquatic/marginal species, diversification of aquatic/marginal species etc).
- Conserve and enhance the setting of Hampden Park, Sussex Downs College campus and nearby residential area.
- Develop a more unified landscape structure through the introduction of new tree and shrub planting.

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist any new development that may adversely affect views to and from the levels, and in particular, any adverse affects on the visual amenity of views from the South Downs AONB.
- Minimise the affects of adverse incremental change by restricting new development to that which is of high quality, which is well integrated into the landscape and which reflects local distinctiveness.
- Ensure that any new development in and around the existing college buildings achieves a cohesive character of built form.
- Encourage extensions to or amalgamations of existing facilities and clubhouses to avoid a dispersed or 'ad-hoc' arrangement of buildings within the area.
- Seek opportunities to improve the character of the A2280 road corridor through provision of high quality boundary treatments and implementation of a planting strategy that reflects the local distinctiveness.
- Where earth works are required, these should be sympathetic to the surrounding flat, low-lying landform.
- Seek opportunities for enhancing public access and development of high-quality recreational pathways with associated planting strategies in appropriate areas. Ensure that these routes do not conflict with formal recreational activities within the landscape.

- Ensure that any additional flood-lighting poles that may be required are sensitively designed and located.
- Consider the effect of any new development in the area on views to and from Eastbourne Downs and its scarp slopes.

# F1 - WISH TOWER SMOOTH COASTAL STRIP



## **F – SMOOTH COASTAL STRIP**

### ***F1 – WISH TOWER SMOOTH COASTAL STRIP***

#### **Key Characteristics**

- Wide stretches of gently-graded flint shingle beaches extending north-eastwards from Holywell Ledge to the Redoubt Fort.
- Clusters of blue and white timber beach huts and timber groynes on the beach are locally distinctive features.
- Victorian – Edwardian esplanade, with metal railings and lighting stands, forms a distinctive feature upslope of the beach edge and defines the north-western edge of area.
- The Victorian – Edwardian pier is a visually prominent and locally distinctive architectural structure.
- Large Victorian hotel buildings form a dominating backdrop to most parts of the area.
- Wish Tower, Martello Tower 73, a Napoleonic military defence structure, is a visually prominent feature.
- Wish Tower restaurant and Lifeboat Museum
- Grand Parade Bandstand
- Level areas of formal parkland (Carpet Gardens) associated with the Wish Tower.
- Tree and shrub covered embankments abut beach in southern parts of the area.
- Expansive views out across the sea to the horizon.
- Moderate sense of tranquillity in southern parts of area, mainly due to physical and visual separation of area from seaside road by tree covered embankments.
- Tranquillity reduced in northern and central parts due to traffic along seafront road and crowds of people visiting pier.
- Colour and movement of the sea contrasts with the coastal strip and the backdrop of buildings along the urban edge.

#### **Overall Character Description**

Eastbourne Promenade Smooth Coastal Strip extends north-east from Holywell Ledge to the Redoubt Fort. Holywell Ledge lies below St. Bede's Preparatory School and is a wide platform of Greensand rocks that are exposed at low tide. The area is characterised by gently-graded, flint shingle beaches, which are smooth, consistent and visually prominent features, providing a strong visual contrast between the sea and the urban area. Clusters of blue and white timber beach huts and timber groynes on the beach are locally distinctive features, which contribute to a strongly recognisable sense of place. In the northern part of the area, boats from Eastbourne Sailing Club are stored on the beach and there are fewer beach huts.

The nature and character of the foreshore varies, depending upon tide levels and adjacent land uses. The character of the Eastbourne seafront is dominated by four to five storey, Victorian - Edwardian buildings that line the seafront road, and many of these buildings are used as hotels. An esplanade, with metal railings and lighting stands, provides a distinctive promenade along the upper edge of the beach, marking the north-western boundary of the area. Eastbourne Pier is Victorian - Edwardian and is a visually prominent and locally distinctive architectural feature. Level areas of formal parkland ('Carpet Gardens') are associated with the Wish Tower (a Martello Tower) and also with the Pavilion Tearooms and Redoubt Fort.

The seafront forms part of two conservation areas - the Meads Conservation Area and the Town Centre and Seafront Conservation Area - which include Holywell Lodge, the seafront buildings, the esplanade, Eastbourne Pier, the Carpet Gardens and the Wish Tower. Commercial tourist attractions and associated buildings (amusement rides, kiosks etc.) are locally distinctive features along the seafront and these contrast with the historic image of the seafront.

Throughout the area, there is a strong sense of openness and open, panoramic views may be obtained across the sea to the horizon. As a result, the character of the area is somewhat dependent upon the



weather. Distant views to Sovereign Harbour, northeast of the area, introduce a degree of relatively modern human influence on the character of the coast. To the south and south-west of the area, the rising chalk cliffs and downland wooded scarp slopes provide a degree of enclosure, whilst the built up areas of Eastbourne provide strong enclosure and a dominating backdrop further to the east. The sense of tranquility within the area varies greatly, depending on the proximity of the busy beachside drive and various tourist attractions.

### **Key Views**

- Prominent views to Eastbourne Pier and the Wish Tower.
- Panoramic views out across the sea to the horizon.
- Panoramic views north-eastwards along coast to Langney Point, with distant views beyond to Sovereign Harbour and Hastings.
- Prominent views to Holywell Ledge and the jagged chalk cliffs beyond.
- Distant views to scarp slopes above Whitebread Hole and Beachy Head skyline to southwest of area.
- Victorian and Edwardian buildings along waterfront provide backdrop to views.

### **Historic Features**

- Historic architectural backdrop of late-Victorian Italianate style and Edwardian Dutch gabled terraces along waterfront.
- Forms part of Eastbourne Town Centre and Seafront Conservation Area and the Meads Conservation Area.
- Archaeologically Sensitive Areas in proximity to the Wish Tower.
- Grand Parade Pier; built in 1872 (including Concert Hall and Pavilion of 1888).
- Grand Parade Bandstand; built in 1935.
- Wish Tower (Martello Tower No. 73, King Edward's Parade); built in 1806 and used for defence, is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- Statue of Spencer Compton: Eighth Duke of Devonshire, King Edward's Parade; erected in 1910.
- Coastal erosion defences, including groynes and retaining walls, built circa 1900-1930.
- Timber groynes replaced between 1995 and 1999.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Perennial vegetation along seafront walls and embankments.
- Marine habitats.

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- The open nature and visual prominence of the shoreline, make it particularly sensitive in visual terms.
- Wealth of cultural heritage features that contribute to the coastline's rich sense of history and place.
- Archaeologically Sensitive Areas in proximity to the Wish Tower.
- Important historic architectural backdrop of late-Victorian and Edwardian terraces along the waterfront, which contribute to the coastline's distinctive character.
- Victorian – Edwardian esplanade and 'Carpet Gardens' as historic features.
- Vulnerability of the coastline to coastal erosion.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The seafront is an important part of Eastbourne's historic environment, containing a wealth of sensitive landscape and cultural heritage features. These contribute to the town's identity and rich sense of place and are vulnerable to change. Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the setting of the Victorian – Edwardian esplanade and waterfront buildings, historic gardens, its wealth of cultural heritage features,

its archaeological areas, and its expansive views. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed and located.

### **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of Eastbourne's coastal strip, its habitats, its important recreational value and its historic environment.

### **Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve and enhance the perennial vegetation along seafront walls and embankments.
- Consider sensitive approaches to manage coastal erosion.
- Support appropriate shoreline management proposals, taking into account the dynamic nature of the coast as well as preserving important cultural coastline features.
- Conserve Victorian – Edwardian esplanade and associated features.

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist any new development that would result in any diminution of the value or character of the seafront and adjacent conservation area.
- Resist any development that would adversely affect views along the coastline, particularly to Langney Point, Holywell Ledge and the jagged chalk cliffs beyond or existing panoramic views out to sea from the urban edge.
- Resist development of telecommunication towers and other visually prominent vertical elements within the area, unless absolutely essential.
- Conserve and enhance Eastbourne's landscape and heritage features along the coastline, including the pier, promenade and seafront amenities. Consider the effect on views to and from these features when planning any change in or near the area.
- Consider views from popular viewing areas at Beachy Head when planning any change to the area.
- Any new buildings should be sensitively located in less visually prominent locations and, where appropriate, use vernacular materials and design in response to the local historic context.
- Concentrate tourist facilities and other recreational amenities such as parking and toilets in identified areas.
- Conserve the wealth of cultural heritage features along the foreshore and their setting, including Wish Tower, Carpet Gardens, Victorian – Edwardian esplanade, Pier and Bandstand.
- Avoid development that would disrupt views to cultural heritage features such as the Wish Tower, Eastbourne Pier and the Redoubt Fort to the north-east.

## F2 - THE REDOUBT SMOOTH COASTAL STRIP



## **F2 – THE REDOUBT SMOOTH COASTAL STRIP**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Stretches of gently-graded flint shingle beaches extending from the southern edge of the Redoubt Fort to Langney Point.
- Wide seaside esplanade, with metal railings and lighting stands, forms a distinctive promenade along the beach's edge towards the sewage works at Langney Point.
- Clusters of small timber boats and timber groynes on the beach are locally distinctive features.
- Three to four-storey buildings in southern part of area form a locally distinctive architectural backdrop to the area.
- Area extends inland from beach to include flat land that supports several grassed open spaces, Princes Park, Fort Fun, the Sovereign Leisure Centre, a bowling green and numerous sporting clubs, which together contribute to a seaside recreational character.
- Large expanses of hard paving (mainly car parking) in southern parts.
- Level area of formal parkland overlooking the shoreline in association with the Redoubt Fort.
- Prominent views to the Martello Towers and to the Redoubt Fort.
- The Redoubt Fort is a military defence structure and a visually prominent coastal feature.
- Expansive views out across the sea to the horizon.
- Little tranquillity in southern and central parts of area, mainly due to traffic on waterfront road and busy tourist attractions.
- Moderate levels of tranquillity in northern parts alongside Sovereign Park which contains shingle ridge habitat which is a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).

### **Overall Character Description**

The Redoubt Smooth Coastal Strip starts at the southern edge of the Redoubt Fort, near the Royal Parade/Firle Road junction and extends north-east to Langney Point. The area is characterised by gently-graded, flint shingle beaches, which are smooth, consistent and visually prominent features, providing a strong visual contrast between the sea and the urban area. Timber groynes, timber beach huts and clusters of small timber boats on the beach are locally distinctive features, which contribute to a strongly recognisable sense of place. An esplanade, with metal railings and lighting stands in southern and central parts, provides a distinctive promenade along the upper edge of the beach and partly defines the north-western boundary of the area. This esplanade, which runs along the length of the coastal strip, heads inland for a short distance within this character area and provides access to the beach.

The nature and character of the foreshore varies, depending upon tide levels and adjacent land uses. The character of the seafront in the southern part of the area is dominated by three to four-storey houses which line the seafront road, and by the Redoubt Fort, which is a prominent and historic military defence structure. Southern parts are protected as part of the Town Centre and Seafront Conservation Area, and include seafront houses as well as the Redoubt Fort and its surrounds. Central and northern parts of the character area have a more varied recreational character. The seafront road heads inland at the southern end of the character area, providing a flat area of land, upslope of the beach, that supports areas of grassed open space and a variety of recreational facilities, including Eastbourne Fisherman's Club, the Sea Cadets Unit, the Redoubt Fortress, the Sovereign Leisure Centre and the Natural Fitness Centre.

Sovereign Park is an informal seafront nature reserve located between the Sovereign Leisure Centre and Langney Point, and has been officially recognised as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) for its remnants of shingle habitat.

Throughout the area, there is a strong sense of openness and open, panoramic views may be obtained across the sea to the horizon. As a result, the character of the area is somewhat dependent upon the weather. Views to Sovereign Harbour, northeast of the area, introduce a degree of relatively modern human influence on the character of the coast.

The built up areas of Eastbourne provide strong enclosure and a dominating backdrop to the east. The sense of tranquillity within the area varies greatly, depending on the proximity of the busy waterfront

road and various tourist attractions. Northern parts of the area, near Sovereign Park, have a moderate sense of tranquillity.

### **Key Views**

- Panoramic views out across the sea to the horizon.
- Panoramic views north-eastwards along the length of the beach to the sewage works at Langney Point, with prominent views beyond to Sovereign Harbour.
- Distant views to Eastbourne Pier.
- Long distance views south-westwards to Holywell Ledge, the jagged chalk cliffs and downland skyline beyond.
- Victorian buildings along waterfront provide backdrop to views in southern part of area.

### **Historic Features**

- Part of Eastbourne Town Centre and Seafront Conservation Area.
- The Redoubt Fort; built in 1806 (as part of the same series of defences as the Martello Tower) is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- Archaeologically Sensitive Area in proximity to the Redoubt Fort.
- Coastal erosion defences include timber groynes and retaining walls, built circa 1900-1930, with groynes replaced between 1995 and 1999.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Shingle habitat (SSSI) within Sovereign Park is the main remnant of the extensive shingle bank system that was the Crumbles, before it was developed.
- Perennial vegetation within carpet gardens and along seaside embankments.
- Marine habitats.

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Shingle habitat at Sovereign Park is particularly sensitive (remnant part of the Crumbles shingle bank system).
- The open nature and visual prominence of the seafront nature reserve (SNCI) at Sovereign Park contributes to the coastline's distinctive character, and makes it particularly sensitive in visual terms.
- Cultural heritage features that contribute to the coastline's rich sense of history and place.
- Archaeologically Sensitive Area in proximity to the Redoubt Fort.
- Intact Victorian – Edwardian esplanade in southern parts of the area.
- Historic parklands that contribute to the variety and quality of the landscape, including the parkland overlooking the shoreline at the Redoubt Fort.
- Vulnerability of the coastline to coastal erosion.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The seafront is an important part of Eastbourne's historic environment, containing a wealth of sensitive landscape and cultural heritage features. These contribute to the town's identity and rich sense of place, and are vulnerable to change. Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the setting of the area's ecologically sensitive habitats, its historic parkland, its expansive views, its cultural heritage features and its sensitive archaeological areas. South western parts of the area have increased capacity for change, as development of tourist attractions and amusement parks have already affected the character of area. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed and located.

## **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to conserve and enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of this coastal strip, its vegetation communities and habitats, its important recreational values, its areas of archaeological sensitivity and its historic landscape comprising areas of cultural heritage features.

## **Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve and enhance the shingle habitat within Sovereign Park and along the foreshore.
- Conserve and enhance the perennial vegetation within carpet garden at Pavilion Tearooms and Redoubt Fort.
- Consider sensitive approaches to manage coastal erosion.
- Support appropriate shoreline management proposals, taking into account the dynamic nature of the coast as well as preserving important cultural coastline features.
- Conserve and enhance conservation area, including Victorian esplanade.

## **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist any development that would adversely affect the shingle habitat at Sovereign Park and along the foreshore.
- Resist any new development that would result in any diminution of the value or character of the Eastbourne seafront and adjacent conservation area.
- Resist any development that would adversely affect views along the coastline, particularly to Langney Point, Holywell Ledge and the jagged chalk cliffs beyond or existing panoramic views out to sea from the urban edge.
- Resist development of telecommunication towers and other visually prominent vertical elements within the area, unless absolutely essential.
- Conserve and enhance Eastbourne's landscape and heritage features along the coastline and their setting, including the Redoubt Fort and the historic esplanade. Consider the effect on views to and from these features when planning any change in or near the area.
- Consider views from popular viewing areas at Beachy Head when planning any change to the area.
- Any new buildings should be sensitively located in less visually prominent locations, preferably clustering them around existing buildings and, where appropriate, using vernacular materials and design to respect the local historic context.
- Concentrate tourist facilities and other recreational amenities such as parking and toilets in identified areas.
- Avoid development that would disrupt views to cultural heritage features such as the Redoubt Fort and Eastbourne Pier.

# F3 - SOVEREIGN HARBOUR SMOOTH COASTAL STRIP



## **F3 – SOVEREIGN HARBOUR SMOOTH COASTAL STRIP**

### **Key Characteristics**

- Stretches of gently graded flint shingle beaches broken up by an artificial spit.
- Sovereign Harbour spit and associated marina forms a distinctive and modified coastal landscape feature.
- The built up areas of Sovereign Harbour and adjacent medium density residential form a dominating backdrop to the area, and provide a strong visual contrast with the adjacent coastal strip.
- Within the harbour, the masts of yachts provide dominant vertical elements.
- The timber groynes are repeated and distinctive features along the coastline.
- Prominent views to Martello Towers.
- Open and exposed coastline with medium sense of tranquillity.
- Colour, movement and textures of the sea contrasts with the coastal landform and the backdrop of buildings along the urban edge, combining to create a striking landscape.

### **Overall Character Description**

Sovereign Harbour smooth coastal strip extends northeast from Langney Point. The area is characterised by wide gently graded flint shingle beaches, broken up by an artificial spit. Timber groynes on the beach are regular and distinctive features. The coastal footpath, which runs alongside the length of the coastal strip between Langney Point and Sovereign Harbour spit, provides access to the area, from nearby residential areas and from other buildings at Sovereign Harbour. The pathway is an extension to the coastal footpath leading to the Eastbourne esplanade and wraps around the harbour, linking to residential areas north of Langney Point.

The built up areas of Sovereign Harbour and associated residential tower blocks form a dominating backdrop to the area. The development is relatively new and provides a strong contrast in urban form to the surrounding low-density residential areas. The long rocky 'breakwater arm' extends east of the shoreline, opening up the beach to provide marine access to the harbour. The spit and associated marina, with its multiple yacht masts, together form a distinctive and modified coastal landscape feature and exert a strong human influence upon the surrounding landscape.

Along the length of the coastline, smooth wide flint beaches are highly visible and provide a transition zone between the sea and the urban area. The Martello Towers at Langney Point and north east of Sovereign Harbour are prominent and locally distinctive architectural features, providing a strong contrast in built form and character to surrounding residential areas and Harbour-side development.

Throughout the area, there is a medium sense of tranquillity, with open, panoramic views out across the sea to the horizon. As a result, the character of the area is somewhat dependent upon the weather. Colour and textures of the sea contrasts with coastal landforms, and combine to create a striking landscape.

### **Key Views**

- Prominent views to Sovereign Harbour-side development and residential towers.
- Panoramic views across the sea to the horizon, towards the Royal Sovereign Lighthouse.
- Panoramic views to Martello Towers.
- Expansive views north-east along the length of the beach, with long distance views to Bexhill and Hastings on a clear day.
- Expansive views south-westwards along the length of the beach from Langney Point sewage works to the central parts of the Eastbourne smooth coastal strip.

### **Historic Features**

- Sea and coastal erosion defences including groins and retaining walls.



- Two Martello Towers, used for defence purposes during the 1939/45 war, including Tower No 66, north of Langney Point and Tower No. 64, north east of Sovereign Harbour.

### **Key Ecological Features**

- Compacted and enriched vegetated shingle habitat on beaches east of Sovereign Harbour.
- Shingle beach at Pevensey Bay (Site of Nature Conservation Interest).
- Marine habitats.

### **Evaluation of Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Ecologically important vegetated shingle habitat.
- Archaeologically Sensitive Areas in proximity to the Martello Towers.
- Vulnerability of the coastline to coastal erosion and other ramifications associated with climate change.
- Sense of tranquillity along the coastline.

### **Indicative Capacity for Change**

The seafront is a very important part of Eastbourne's historic environment, containing a wealth of sensitive landscape, cultural and aesthetic/perceptual features and characteristics that contribute to the town's identity and rich sense of place and are vulnerable to change. Overall, there is very limited capacity for this visually prominent area to accommodate any urban development without significant effect on the area's ecologically sensitive habitats, its wealth of cultural heritage features, its sensitive archaeological areas and its panoramic views. A small amount of low-key development could potentially be accommodated if sensitively designed, adequately mitigated and successfully integrated.

### **Landscape Priorities**

The overall priority for the area should be to enhance the character, quality and distinctiveness of Sovereign harbour coastal strip with its associated tourism attractions and amenities; its vegetation communities and habitats and its important historic environment, including areas of archaeological sensitivity and cultural heritage features.

### **Land Management Guidelines**

- Conserve and enhance the ecologically sensitive SNCI habitat at Pevensey Bay, including shingle beach.
- Conserve and enhance the ecologically sensitive vegetated shingle communities in beaches east of Sovereign Harbour and any other existing communities.
- Consider sensitive approaches to manage coastal erosion.
- Maintain and support an evolving Shoreline Management Plan that seeks to embrace the dynamic nature of the coast as well as preserve important cultural features of the coastline.

### **Landscape Planning Guidelines**

- Resist development that would intrude on views along the coastline or on panoramic views out to sea from the urban edge.
- Resist development that would disrupt or sever views to the Martello Towers, and protect views between these features where possible.
- Resist development of telecommunication towers and other visually prominent vertical elements within the area, unless absolutely essential.
- Resist any new development that would result in any diminution of the landscape and architectural quality of the local area.
- Conserve and enhance existing landscape and heritage features along the coastline, including the breakwater arm, which provide an important contribution to the character and quality of the area.

- Conserve and enhance important cultural heritage features and their setting, including the Martello Towers.
- Consider the effects on views to such features when planning any change to the area.
- Ensure new development responds to and reinforces the local distinctiveness, including the architectural quality of Sovereign Harbour.
- Any new buildings should be clustered around existing buildings and, should respond to the local context in terms of materials and design.
- Concentrate tourist facilities and other recreational amenities such as parking and shops in identified areas.
- Consider views from popular viewing areas at Langney Point and Eastbourne promenade when planning any change to the area.
- Consider the effect of any change in adjacent areas on views to and from the smooth coastal strip.

## **4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **4.1 General**

- 4.1.1 This section sets out the main conclusions of the Study, and provides recommendations to Eastbourne Borough Council for its consideration and action as appropriate. Recommendations are provided for the application of the Landscape Character Assessment, and in relation to landscape policy advice for the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

### **4.2 Conclusions**

#### **Diversity of the Borough's Landscapes**

- 4.2.1 This assessment has confirmed the diversity of the Eastbourne's landscapes, identifying 6 different types of landscape within only 44 square kilometres. This diversity is largely influenced by the varied geology of the Borough (chalk outcrop, alluvial plain and shingle deposits) and its topographic variety (e.g. open downlands, major scarps, scarp footslopes, the Levels, smooth coastal strip, rugged coast). This assessment also confirms that the historical settlement, development and use of Eastbourne's landscape and its ecological character, reflect this diversity. Within the context of this diversity of landscape types, the assessment has identified 24 areas of distinctive landscape character. These areas reflect distinct and recognisable patterns of different natural and cultural elements that combine to create a particular experience or 'sense of place'.
- 4.2.2 The overall diversity and distinctiveness of Eastbourne's landscape are considered to be a major environmental asset, contributing significantly to the Borough's uniqueness and to the quality of life for Eastbourne's communities. Protecting features and patterns that contribute to landscape diversity, including enhancing their quality, character and function where necessary, should be a key aim for planning and land management policy within Eastbourne.

#### **Inherent Qualities and Sensitivities of the Borough's Landscapes**

- 4.2.3 The profiles set out in Section 3.0 identify, in broad terms, the current key sensitivities of each of the 24 landscape character areas. The profiles also highlight the main issues affecting the landscape character that need to be considered in decisions involving the development and use of land within a particular character area. In summary, the key issues in relation to development planning can be summarised as follows:

- **Built Development** – expansion of suburban character and pattern; use of standardised housing designs/inappropriate building methods/materials/details that do not respond to local vernacular; expansion of industrial, leisure and retail developments on settlement edges; pressure on open character of countryside gaps.
- **Infrastructure** – loss of tranquillity from road and development growth with associated widespread lighting and signage; increase in power lines, telecommunication masts and associated buildings.
- **Small-scale and incremental change** – gentrification, suburbanisation and extension of rural settlements, dwellings and gardens; planting of exotic species, urban style fencing and lighting; loss of locally distinctive features such as walls, fences, signs etc.; increased car use/erosion of narrow and rural lanes/adverse impact on landscape and settlement character/obtrusive road signage.
- **Agriculture** – general reduction in agricultural/rural jobs; increase in amenity value of agricultural downland; less crop rotation; user conflicts between farmers and public right of ways; changes to farming grants and funding schemes (e.g. introduction of Environmental Stewardship Scheme); removal of farm subsidies in 2012 (requiring EBC to consider the responsibility of supporting the management of 4,500 acres of farmland); farm diversification; farm fragmentation, leading to issues of economic viability of agricultural land and growing pressures for new buildings.
- **Settlements in their landscape settings** – relationship between settlement core and landscape severed by settlement expansion; new development unsympathetic to original settlement pattern and relationship with landscape; poor relationships between settlement and landscape/key views/landmarks/other important landscape features.
- **Recreation and tourism** – access infrastructure and management (access restrictions/controlled access); growing number of visitors and subsequent conflicts between interest groups; golf courses.
- **Climate change** – whilst there are still uncertainties regarding exact changes to the landscape at regional and local levels, it is clear that there could be both direct and indirect impacts on landscape character. The potential implications for landscape character in Eastbourne include changes in habitats and species composition, habitat fragmentation, water resources, soils, agricultural land use, sea levels, flood risk, recreation and tourism patterns and cultural heritage. Reducing the causes of climate change through energy conservation/efficiency and increased use of natural energy sources, in particular increasing demand for power generated from wind and biomass, have potential associated landscape and visual impacts.

### Landscape Management Needs

- 4.2.4 Taking into account the sensitivities and changes affecting the character of each landscape character area, the profiles in Section 3.0 also identify guidance in the form of an overall priority and set of objectives for managing landscape change. These reflect the specific needs of different character areas – ranging from protecting the most sensitive landscapes from adverse changes, to promoting positive management actions to strengthen specific characteristics.

## Indicative Capacity for Change

4.2.5 An indication of the degree to which each landscape character area is likely to be able to accommodate change is set out in the individual landscape character profiles and is summarised in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Summary of Indicative Capacity for Change**

<b>Character Area Reference</b>	<b>Character Area Name</b>	<b>Indicative Capacity for Change</b>
A1	Eastbourne Downs	Very limited
B1	Cold Croach Scarp	Very limited
B2	Babylon Down Scarp	Very limited
B3	Willingdon Golf Course Scarp	Very limited
B4	Beachy Brow Scarp	Very limited
B5	Royal Eastbourne Golf Course Scarp	Very limited
B6	Whitebread Hole Scarp	Very limited
C1	Chalk Farm Scarp Footslopes	Very limited
C2	Willingdon Golf Course Scarp Footslopes	Some
C3	Royal Eastbourne Golf Course Scarp Footslopes	Limited
C4	Holywell Retreat Scarp Footslopes	Limited
D1	Beachy Head Rugged Coast	Very Limited
D2	Holywell Ledge Rugged Coast	Very Limited
E1	Eastbourne Levels	Some
E2	West Langney / Willingdom Levels	Some
E3	East Langney Levels	Some
E4	Upperton Rural Fringe	Some
E5	Southbourne Recreation	Some
E6	Shinewater Lake Marshes	Some
E7	Hampden Park	Very Limited
E8	Hampden Park Recreation	Some
F1	Wish Tower Smooth Coastal Strip	Very Limited
F2	The Redoubt Smooth Coastal Strip	Very Limited
F3	Sovereign Harbour Smooth Coastal Strip	Very Limited

## **Landscape Planning Policy Framework**

4.2.6 The landscape planning policy framework in the Borough was outlined in Section 1.4. In summary, the focus of the current national and emerging regional planning policy framework in relation to the protection and enhancement of landscape can be concluded as:

- Sustainable development is the overarching objective and priority.
- The countryside is to be protected for its own sake but development that supports the rural economy should be considered.
- Landscape character should inform but not constrain development.
- Landscape character, settlement character and local distinctiveness should be taken into consideration in development.
- Core policies need to be clear, concise and criteria-based.
- A strong evidence base is required to support policies and any Supplementary Planning Documents.
- Local landscape designations and green wedge/strategic gaps, where these are to be retained, need justification based on a formal and robust assessment.
- Design policy is an important means for achieving landscape character objectives.

4.2.7 This assessment provides the evidence base required to support the Council's Local Development Framework in general, and to underpin the development of criteria-based policies in particular.

### **Synergy with Existing Landscape Character Assessments**

4.2.8 As demonstrated in Section 3.0, this 1:25,000 scale assessment of landscape character units has been undertaken to 'nest' within the framework provided by the 1:250,000 'national-scale' Character of England Map and the 1:50,000 'county-scale' assessment set out in the East Sussex County Landscape Character Assessment. This assessment also incorporates information from the South Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Character Assessment, with which it shares similar character area boundaries.

4.2.9 This assessment has sought to strongly reflect the relevant management strategies, objectives and guidelines defined in the existing County and AONB Landscape Character Assessments to ensure synergy between the documents wherever appropriate. Depending on the circumstances and scale of consideration, this assessment should be read in conjunction with the relevant assessments to inform decision-making processes.

### **Relationship with Landscape Designations**

4.2.10 Whilst recognising that a large tract of west Eastbourne is covered by statutory protected landscape (AONB) and impending future designation of the area as part of a National Park, this

study provides a seamless assessment of all the Borough's landscape irrespective of their quality of value.

### **4.3 Applications of the Landscape Character Assessment**

4.3.1 It is intended that this Landscape Character Assessment can be used by all those with an interest in landscape planning, design and management of Eastbourne.

4.3.2 In line with the aims and objectives set out in Section 1.2, the principal application of this Landscape Character Assessment is in relation to the Borough Council's development planning functions. Practical uses of the Landscape Character Assessment in this regard include:

- Raising the general awareness in the planning process of the importance of landscape character in contributing to quality of life in Eastbourne by recognising:
  - both the differences and similarities between places;
  - what gives different places their special local identity and distinctiveness;
  - the need to protect and enhance special and valued characteristics;
  - that development needs to be sympathetic to these special qualities;
  - the needs to actively improve the quality of places through good design.
- Informing the formulation of criteria-based landscape character policies in the Local Development Framework (see Section 4.4).
- Providing a spatial framework for considering the landscape character implications of options for different scales and patterns of strategic development in the Local Development Framework.
- Informing development control decisions about proposals for built development and other forms of land use change.
- Informing the evidence base of the Local Development Framework of the impact of new development on landscape character.
- Providing a framework for more detailed studies to enhance the evidence base, and for the targeting of landscape enhancements in concert with development schemes.
- Informing design guidance to promote high quality landscape design.
- Providing a baseline for monitoring the impact of new development on landscape character and quality.

4.3.3 Planners, developers, architects, urban designers, landscape architects and other professionals may also find the characterisation information and guidelines useful as a reference source for informing the site master planning and building design process for specific development schemes. Other applications of the Landscape Character Assessments include its use by those involved in the targeting and delivery of environmental land management schemes - e.g. environmental stewardship advisers, landowners and managers. Local communities and other stakeholders may also find the Study useful as a basis for guiding their responses to consultations by the planning authorities on plans, strategies and planning applications that may have significant implications for their local landscapes.

## 4.4 Landscape Policy Recommendations

### Gaps between Settlements

4.4.1 'Gaps' may be defined as 'open land, which provides physical or visual separation between distinct identified settlements'. This study has identified the following gaps on the periphery of the Borough:-

- Eastbourne – Friston
- Eastbourne – Polegate
- Eastbourne – Stone Cross
- Eastbourne – Pevensey

All of the open land associated with the Eastbourne – Friston 'Gap' and a small proportion of the Eastbourne – Pevensey 'Gap' lies with the administrative boundaries of Eastbourne Borough Council. All of the land associated with the other two 'Gaps' is located outside the Borough boundaries.

This Study clearly identifies the specific characteristics and features within a landscape character area that requires protection; it also highlights objectives that promote the enhancement of local character and distinctiveness within these areas. Taking this into account, it is recommended that the Council consider incorporating the concept of 'Gaps' within the landscape character areas approach, relying on an over-arching criteria-based landscape character policy to provide the necessary protection of these landscapes (see below). The retention of open land between the above settlements would help retain the separate identity and local distinctiveness of Eastbourne.

### Landscape Character Policy

4.4.2 It is recommended that Eastbourne Borough Council consider incorporating a criteria-based Landscape Character policy into the LDF to provide a spatial/character based approach to landscape protection and enhancement. It is recommended that the wording of the Landscape Character policy should include reference to the following main components:

- Landscape character and local distinctiveness will be conserved and, where possible, enhanced.
- Proposals for development will:
  - be considered in relation to their contribution to the management strategy and objectives of the relevant Landscape Character Area(s) identified by this Landscape Character Assessment;
  - take into account the key landscape characteristics, distinctive features and sensitivities of the relevant Landscape Character Area(s);
  - have regard to highways, access, scale, design, materials, location, siting, landscaping and other appropriate environmental considerations.



- Development to be permitted where it can protect, conserve and enhance:
  - landscape character and local distinctiveness of the area (including its historical, ecological and cultural character and its tranquility);
  - the distinctive setting of and relationship between, settlement and buildings and the landscape including important views;
  - the function of watercourses and drainage ditches, woodland, trees, field boundaries, vegetation and other landscape features as ecological corridors;
  - the special qualities of drainage ditches and channels, lakes, waterways, wetlands and their surroundings;
  - the distinctive topography of the area including sensitive skylines, scarp slopes and geological features.

4.4.3 It is recommended that the supporting explanatory text for the landscape character policy should include reference to the following:

- Landscape character is of fundamental importance to the quality of life for communities in all areas;
- High priority should be afforded to the protection, conservation and enhancement of landscape character in delivering sustainable development in line with Government policy;
- A clear definition of landscape character and local distinctiveness;
- Other existing and proposed character studies that provide part of the evidence base for landscape character in Eastbourne;
- Well-designed, high quality new development within rural areas that helps sustain and/or create landscapes with a strong sense of place and local identity to be encouraged;
- Encouragement for landscape enhancement schemes, submission of landscape design statements with planning applications and provision of landscape-scale management plan/strategies;
- The characteristics and qualities of Landscape Character Areas as set out in Eastbourne's LCA should inform the implementation of policy;
- A Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document (if considered necessary – see below) to provide guidance on how the overall character of each Landscape Character Area identified in the LCA can be protected, conserved and enhanced.

4.4.4 The purpose of a Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document would be to:

- Provide concise and process-based guidance for development control planners and applicants on the use of the Landscape Character Assessment and other characterisation information to inform the criteria-based planning policies and guidance in Local Development Documents (LDDs);
- Promote consistent approaches to development control practise with local planning authority;
- Provide a link between the Landscape Character Assessments that form the evidence base, and the LDD policies;
- Help integrate development planning with conservation and land management, in line with the requirements of PPS12, by making the link between planning policy work and landscape management guidance for landowners and managers.

4.4.5 An example of this type of guidance includes High Peak Borough Council's Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document.

4.4.6 Taking the above into consideration, a proposed landscape character policy is set out in **Appendix D**. The wording of the policy reflects:

- PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas requirements
- PPS12 Local Development Frameworks advice
- The South East of England Plan Policy C3 (Landscape and Countryside Management) requirements
- Good practice based on advice provided by CBA to other local authorities in England, and the former Countryside Agency's West Sussex Demonstration Project<sup>19</sup>.

## 4.5 Recommendations for Further Work

### Enhancing the Character Evidence Base

4.5.1 This Landscape Character Assessment provides information to help understand the distinctive character of the landscapes within Eastbourne, and it is expected that the evidence base will be treated as a material consideration in planning considerations. A variety of other character-based studies may be needed to more fully inform the LDF policies and any Supplementary Planning Document. It is therefore recommended that, over time, the Council give consideration to working with East Sussex County Council and other key partners to enhance the current character evidence base within the framework provided by this and other Landscape Character Assessments.

4.5.2 Options for enhancing the evidence base in relation to the character of the landscape within the Borough include:

- *Local Distinctive Studies* – these should complement and significantly expand upon the content of this Landscape Character Assessment to provide comprehensive illustrated information and analysis of distinctive settlement forms/patterns, building styles and materials, and countryside signage/furniture;
- *Landscape Design Guidance* – to promote sensitive and high quality landscape design, by providing guidance on how the settings of new development can be carried out in accordance with the design policies of the LDF in order to help retain local distinctiveness;
- *Settlement Studies* – including for example, Townscape/Urban Character Assessments, urban archaeological surveys, settlement-edge studies, Conservation Area Character Appraisals, Town and Village Design Statements, and Parish Plans.
- *Local Landscape Studies* – more detailed assessments of landscape character at the local scale, undertaken, to inform place-specific planning, design and management issues;
- *Historic Landscape/Environmental Characterisation Studies* – detailed assessments of built heritage, historic landscape features and archaeological potential (currently being undertaken in conjunction with East Sussex County Council);
- *Area-based Regeneration Initiatives* – detailed character appraisal studies to inform and underpin master plans and design frameworks for the renewal and reuse of brownfield sites in and around settlement edges;
- *Green Infrastructure Network Plans* – long-term plans to establish networks of multi-functional green infrastructure sites, corridors and areas within the countryside in and around Eastbourne;
- *Urban Green Space Strategies* – detailed strategies for delivering high quality parks and other public open spaces, based on PPG17 open space audits and needs assessments, prepared in line with CABE Space guidance;

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<sup>19</sup> Countryside Agency Demonstration Project - Criteria-based Landscape Policies and Guidance in Local Development Documents : an Approach in West Sussex, Report No.1 Policies (White Consultants, February 2006)

- *Water Corridor Environmental Strategies* – including a coherent vision, objectives and an action plan for the long-term conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of key water resources (rivers, drainage ditches, channels, lakes) within Eastbourne.

4.5.3 In line with the requirements of PPS12, there is a need to monitor the impacts of LDF policies over time. In order to measure the effectiveness of planning policies in protecting, conserving and enhancing landscape character, quality and local distinctiveness, it is recommended that the Council give consideration to working with East Sussex County Council and other key partners to develop a framework for monitoring change within Landscape Character Areas identified by this assessment, including the identification of suitable indicators.



**APPENDIX A**  
**GLOSSARY**



## **GLOSSARY**

### **Analysis**

The process of breaking the landscape down, usually in descriptive terms, into its component parts in order to understand how it is made up.

### **Ancient Woodland**

Land that has had continuous woodland cover since at least 1600AD and has only been cleared for underwood or timber production. It is an extremely valuable ecological resource, with an exceptionally high diversity of flora and fauna.

### **Ancient Semi-natural Woodland**

Ancient woodland sites that have retained the native tree and shrub cover and have not been planted, although they may have been managed by coppicing or felling and allowed to regenerate naturally.

### **Approach**

The step-wise process by which a landscape assessment is undertaken.

### **Assessment**

An umbrella term used to encompass all the many different ways of looking at, describing, analysing and evaluating landscape.

### **Cairn**

A mound of rough stones built as a monument or landmark, including funerary cairns covering graves or burial chambers.

### **Character**

A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

### **Character Area**

A unique geographic area with a consistent character and identity, which forms part of a landscape character type.

### **Character Type**

A generic term for landscape with a consistent, homogeneous character. Landscape character types may occur in different parts of the county, but wherever they occur, they will share common combinations of geology, topography, vegetation or human influences.

**Characterisation**

The process of identifying areas of similar character, classifying and mapping them and describing their character.

**Characteristics**

Elements, or combinations of elements, which make a particular contribution to a distinctive character.

**Classification**

A process of sorting the landscape into different types, each with a distinct, consistent and recognisable character.

**Coniferous**

A term used to describe trees that bear cones. They are usually evergreen and produce wood known commercially as “softwood”.

**Combe or Coombe**

Short deep valley or basin occurring on chalk downland usually on the scarp slope. A typical example is ‘Tas Combe’ on the edge of Willingdon.

**Coppice**

Woodland that is cut periodically. Trees regrow from the cut stumps, called stools. This produces numerous shoots or poles rather than one main stem. The stools can be coppiced indefinitely to provide a self-renewing source of wood.

**Description**

Verbal description of what a landscape looks like. This is usually carried out in a systematic manner, but it may also include personal reactions to the landscape.

**Dew Pond**

A man-made pond usually placed on the top of hills, built for watering livestock and used in areas where a natural supply of surface water may not be readily available.

**Dip Slope**

The dip slopes are the gentler longer slopes running southwards from the crest of the Downs to the sea.

**Diversity**

The number of landscape components and the way in which they inter-relate, creating complexity or uniformity in the landscape.



**Elements**

Individual components which make up the landscape, such as trees and hedges.

**Enclosure**

The density and arrangement of structural elements in the landscape (e.g. landform, trees, hedges, woods, walls) so that they enclose space and create visual and physical containment.

**Environmental Stewardship**

An agri-environment schemes administered by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). It seeks to support landowners and farmers in an environmental and sustainable approach to land management.

**Escarpment**

A distinctive whaleback-shaped hill or landform unit (typically of chalk) which comprises a steep face and gently sloping dip slope

**Evaluation**

The process of weighing up and attaching a nonmonetary, subjective value to landscape by reference to specified criteria.

**Experiential Characteristics**

Characteristics of the landscape covering aesthetic and perceptual dimensions of landscape character. These might include a sense of tranquility, a sense of security, the quality of light or scenic attractiveness.

**Features**

Particularly prominent or eye-catching elements, like tree clumps, church towers, or wooded skylines.

**Floodplain**

The very flat land adjacent to a river or watercourse, generally underlain by alluvium and which would be naturally prone to flooding without specific flood alleviation measures (NB this definition is broader than that used by the Environment Agency to define the Statutory Flood Plain).

**Heritage values**

Features of archaeological, cultural or ecological significance.

**Horsiculture**

The use of land for equestrian purposes. Structures and field patterns that are inappropriate and create a cluttered landscape often accompany this type of land use.

**Landcover**

Combinations of land use and vegetation that cover the land surface.

**Landform**

Combinations of slope and elevation that produce the shape and form of the land surface.

**Landscape**

The term refers primarily to the visual appearance of the land, including its shape, form and colours. However, the landscape is not a purely visual phenomenon; its character relies on a whole range of other dimensions, including geology, topography, soils, ecology, archaeology, landscape history, land use, architecture and cultural associations.

**Landscape Assessment**

An umbrella term used to encompass all the many different ways of looking at, describing and analysing landscape.

**Landscape Character Areas**

Unique individual geographical areas. They share general characteristics with other areas but have their own particular identity. Landscape types occur within these.

**Landscape Character Types**

Generic types which possess broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern in every area where they occur.

**Landscape Vernacular**

The combination of elements or components which are locally distinctive to a particular area of landscape.

**Linear Settlements**

Settlements where buildings are typically arranged in a linear form (e.g. along a road, ridgeline or valley bottom).

**Local Development Frameworks**

A folder of local development documents prepared by district councils, unitary authorities or national park authorities that outline the spatial planning strategy for the local areas.

**Local Distinctiveness**

The special character of a place or area which gives it a particular and recognisable identity.

**Marl Pit**

Small pit resulting from the extraction of marl (a calcareous clay or mudstone) which has often subsequently been filled with water to form a small field pond.

**Nucleated Settlements**

Settlements where buildings are typically arranged in a nucleated or clustered form around a central feature (e.g. around a village green, common, church, road junction etc.).

**Outcrop**

The emergence of a stratum, vein or rock at the surface, distinctive in character

**Remoteness and Tranquility**

The concepts of remoteness and tranquility are similar but not identical. Tranquil areas are defined by Natural England as 'Places which are sufficiently far away from the visual or noise intrusion of development or traffic to be considered unspoilt by urban influences'. Remoteness on the other hand implies an ability to experience a degree of solitude as well as separation from noise, visual disturbance and urban associated activity so is more affected by scattered development, and sometimes less affected by distant noise sources.

**Riparian**

Pertaining to rivers or of the riverbank.

**Rolling**

Landform which is characterised by pronounced topography of soft hills.

**Scale**

The typical size, scale or grain of elements and patterns within the landscape, which have a close bearing on such factors as balance, proportion and enclosure.

**Scarp Slope**

The steep, generally north facing slope of the South Downs. The Whitebread Hole to Frances Bottom slopes at Eastbourne are unusual in that they have south east facing scarp slopes.

**Scenic Quality**

A subjective judgment of the aesthetic appeal of different landscape types, influenced by such factors as balance, proportion, diversity, harmony, unspoilt character, cultural preferences etc.

**Semi-Natural Vegetation**

Any type of natural vegetation which has been influenced by human activities, either directly or indirectly.

**Sense of Place (or 'Genius Loci')**

The essential character and spirit of a landscape or area (Genius Loci means literally 'spirit of the place').

**Sensitivity to Change**

A subjective overall assessment of landscape sensitivity and vulnerability to change, based on a combination of factors including landscape quality and visual sensitivity.

**Settlement Pattern**

The typical pattern of settlement, e.g. scattered evenly across the countryside or concentrated within one area or along a particular line (eg. valley side).

**Shaws (Shaw woodland)**

A small wood or copse or a strip of wood forming the border of a field.

**Topography**

Is the study and description of the surface features of the land. It is the landform and the features upon it such as woodland.

**Undulating**

Landform which is characterized by gentle topography of shallow hills and valleys.

**Vernacular**

Buildings constructed in the local style, from local materials. Concerned with ordinary rather than monumental buildings.

**Visual Sensitivity**

The degree to which the landscape is open or enclosed by landform or vegetation and therefore exposed to views.

**Weald**

The word 'weald' literally means wood or wood pasture. The weald refers to the landscape of clay vales and sandstone ridges between the North and South Downs.

**Winterbourne**

A winterbourne is a stream or river that is dry through the summer months.

**APPENDIX B**  
**KEY STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**



## **KEY STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION: COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

### **B1.1 Key Stakeholder Consultation**

B1.1.1. Consultation with key stakeholder organisations is an important and integral element of the Eastbourne Landscape Character Assessment Study. The purpose of the initial stakeholder consultation was to strengthen the evidence base by gathering opinions about landscape character from the key stakeholders, and to promote the value of the Study as a tool for informing planning and land management decisions in rural areas.

B1.1.2 The boundaries of each generic Landscape Character Type and each unique Landscape Character Area were mapped and comments invited from Stakeholder groups on the names, boundaries and key characteristics of each Landscape Type and each Landscape Character Area.

### **B1.2 Key Stakeholders**

B1.2.1 The Stakeholder groups and individuals that were consulted were as follows:

- Senior Conservation Officer -Sussex Wildlife Trust
- Sussex Environment Partnership Officer – Sussex Wildlife Trust
- Sussex Biodiversity Partnership Officer
- Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre - Manager
- Environment Agency - Fisheries, Recreation and Biodiversity
- Natural England
- English Heritage
- South Downs Joint Committee
- Department of Parks and Gardens- Eastbourne Borough Council
- Trees and Woodland Manager – Eastbourne Borough Council
- Environmental Policy Officer – Eastbourne Borough Council
- Leisure and Communities Manager – Eastbourne Borough Council
- Landscape and Biodiversity Officer – Wealden District Council
- Duke of Devonshire’s Estate Manager
- East Sussex County Archaeologist
- Eastbourne Society
- Landowner at East Dean

### **B1.3 Responses to Stakeholder Consultation**

B1.3.1 The responses to comments from Stakeholders have been summarised in the table overleaf.

STAKEHOLDER	COMMENT	ACTION
Environment Agency (Fisheries, Recreation and Biodiversity)	The <i>[landscape character]</i> descriptions seemed appropriate and well named.	Noted.
Sussex Wildlife Trust	Include the location of streams / sewers within the levels on GIS figures or maps.	The existing drained landscape of the Levels is the result of nearly a thousand years of modification. Relevant streams, drains and sewers within the study area have been acknowledged within the description of applicable Landscape Character Types and Areas. Their location has been detailed as appropriate in figures or maps in the Final Report.
	The vegetative shingle habitat west of Sovereign Harbour will be in the Eastbourne promenade Smooth Coastal Strip.	Vegetative shingle habitat has been identified in the 'ecological features' section of Sovereign Harbour Smooth Coastal Strip Landscape Character Area (F2).
English Heritage	In terms of LDF preparation, you may be aware of advice in the draft regional spatial strategy (South East Plan), that advocates use of historic landscape characterisation as a tool (Policy BE7 & supporting text. Policy CC12 & text also relevant). I understand that work on the historic landscape characterisation of Sussex as a whole is well advanced, and may even be complete for the Eastbourne area. The HLC work is being undertaken by Nicola Bannister for Ed Dickenson's Historic Environment Team at WSCC. An integrated approach to landscape assessment has benefits. It is not clear from my quick look at your LCA what account has been taken of the historic environment.	The general project data collected, from Eastbourne Borough Council in relation to historic assets includes archaeological sites, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings. This data has been supplemented by a variety of other sources of information including local history books, relevant studies and reports. The presence of these historic resources has been recognised in Section 2.3 (Historical Influences on the Landscape) in the description of Landscape Types and Landscape Character Areas. The HLC study has yet to be completed and consequently has not been used to help inform this landscape character assessment study. This historic data has also been used to inform the relevant Landscape Management Strategies and Guidelines.
Eastbourne Borough Council (Trees and Woodland Manager)	On page 16 of section 2.0, Shaping of the landscape, number 2.3.4 <i>[Interim Report]</i> , it is mentioned that nearly all the downland is ploughed for cereal, which is not the case.	It is understood that in the late medieval period, arable farming gave way to pasture farming, as the work was less labour-intensive. The existing Eastbourne Downs



STAKEHOLDER	COMMENT	ACTION
	Apart from the odd field of fodder crops, nearly all the Eastbourne downland is under grass for grazing.	landscape is characterised by pastoral farmland, with large-scale fields for grazing (refer to 'Eastbourne Downs' in Section 3.3 of the Report).
	On page 28, section 2.9 Nature Conservation Designations and Habitats, should there be mention of the forthcoming South Downs National Park Designation, given that the public notice has gone out relating to new issues and hopefully following any further public enquiry, the designation will be announced?	The planned designation of the South Downs as a National Park now is referred to in Section 2.7 of this Final Report (Nature Conservation Designations and Habitats).
	In section B6 of appendix 2, the photo located in the bottom left hand corner is not of Whitbread Hollow, but of section B1, Cold Crouch Scarp.	This image has been deleted from Section B6 (Whitbread Hole Scarp), and placed in Section B1 (Cold Crouch Scarp).
East Sussex County Archaeologist	The landscape of Eastbourne is ancient and evidence for the antiquity and diversity of the landscape is present in many forms, not all of which are immediately apparent. For this reason the definition used in the European Landscape Convention is helpful when it states "landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'.	Noted. Reference will be made to the European Landscape Convention in the Final Report.
	<p>There are three main aspects to the 'perception' of landscape, which could be included in this assessment to reflect the above statement in the European Landscape Convention:-</p> <p>Recognition of how the present landscape has come into being through an understanding of past land use. To this end the Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) for Eastbourne by Dr Nicola Bannister has just been completed and should be available within the next weeks.</p> <p>Additionally, Dr Roland Harris is presently working on the Historic Character Assessment for the urban part of Eastbourne, and that should be available this summer.</p>	<p>The HLC study has yet to be completed and consequently has not been used to help inform this study.</p> <p>The Historic Character Assessment has yet to be completed and consequently has not been used to help inform this study.</p>

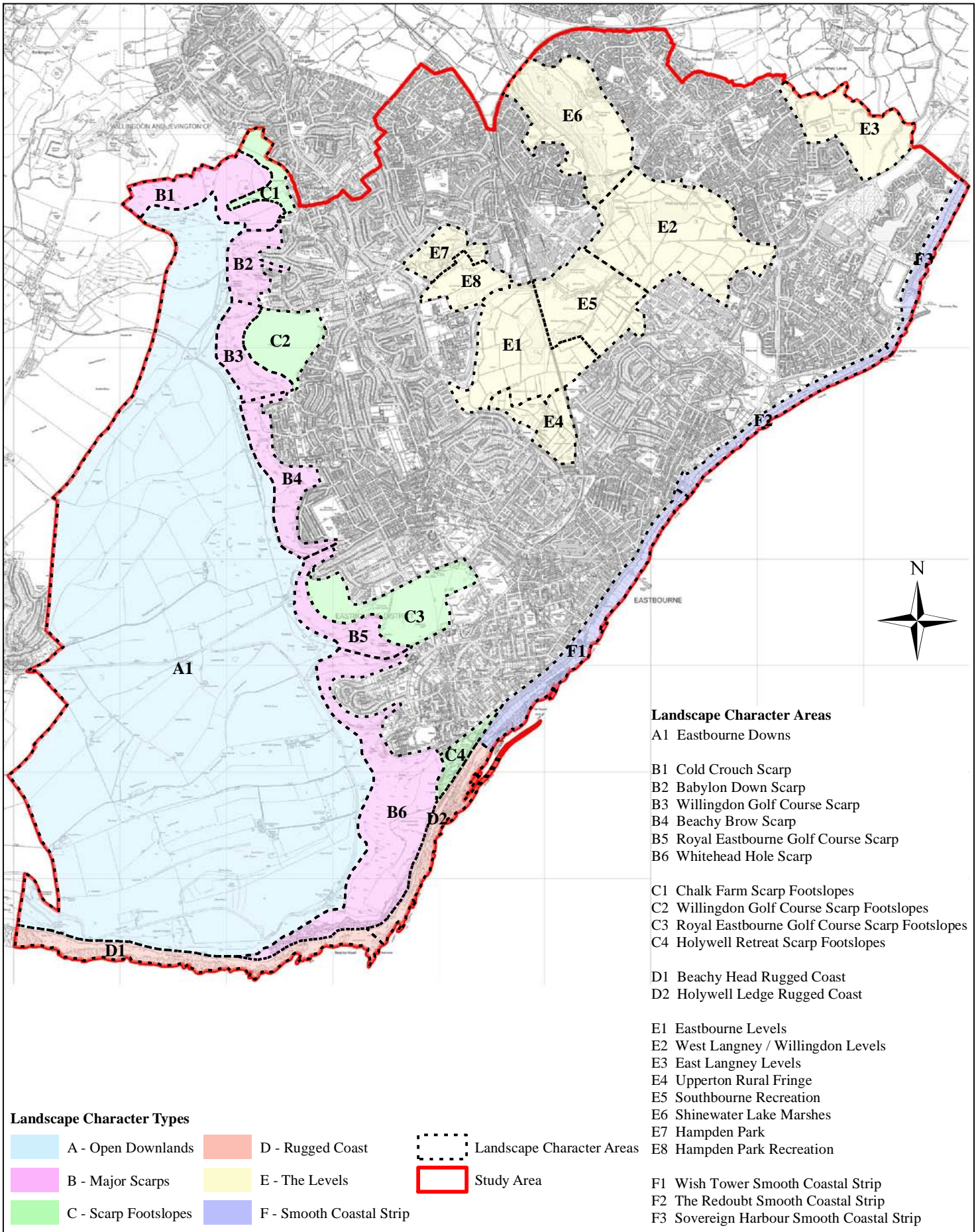
STAKEHOLDER	COMMENT	ACTION
	<p>Recognition of the presence of visible sites and monuments such as Bronze Age barrows on the Downs, but also earthworks, hedgerows, monuments and structures of all periods through to 20th century military features. Information on all the known historic assets and judgments about the areas of archaeological potential can be provided from the Historic Environment Record at East Sussex County Council.</p> <p>Recognition that an understanding of buried and very small-scale features can also provide an awareness of antiquity, complexity and change in the landscape. For example the internationally important buried Bronze Age landscape, comprising trackways and one known platform in the Willingdon Levels at and around Shinewater.</p> <p>Finally it is worth noting that landscape in this holistic sense is a wonderful free tool for education, particularly in these times of growing awareness about the fragility of our environment, the reality of change (e.g. sea level) and the need for sustainable choices to be made. An understanding of landscape with this deeper perspective of time can play an important role in allowing communities to discover a sense of identity and belonging. All of the landscape character areas that you have defined have fascinating stories to tell about past societies occupying the same space. A knowledge of these stories will enrich the perception of the present day landscape.</p>	<p>The Historic Environment Record at East Sussex County Council has been checked and has been used to further inform the historic baseline for this study.</p> <p>The importance of buried and very small-scale features is well understood.</p> <p>Agreed.</p>
	<p>There are factual errors and there is a great deal missing which is locally specific information about almost every period of human history and all of which it could be argued, provides a deeper understanding of present landscape character. It is difficult to know where to start but here are some examples of</p>	<p>A detailed review has been carried out to identify errors and omissions in the historic landscape section of the report. Further consultation has also been carried out, including reference to the Historic Environment Record.</p>

STAKEHOLDER	COMMENT	ACTION
	<p>errors/omissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* No mention of Palaeolithic animal bone when Eastbourne Station built</li> <li>* Willingdon Levels and Shinewater are not mentioned</li> <li>* Belle Tout EBA enclosures are at Bell Tout not Beachy Head</li> <li>* There is no mention of a range of important Iron Age sites</li> <li>* The early Eastbourne Roman villa as you say is very important</li> <li>* There is lots of recent Saxon information, for example from ECAT</li> <li>* there is plenty of medical and post-medieval archaeology, which is important</li> </ul> <p>There are too many problems to deal with here and the author needs to research all of this more thoroughly. [My colleague] would be happy to carry out an HER search and provide more bibliographic references. In addition it might well be worth the author speaking to Lawrence Stephens of the Eastbourne Natural History &amp; Archaeological Society.</p>	<p>It should be noted however that a deep understanding of the historic influences on landscape character does not require an exhaustive description of every period of human history.</p> <p>More detailed research has been carried out and its findings incorporated into the Final Report.</p>
Landowner at East Dean	<p>My only comment as a farmer would be the difference between Open Downland / Eastbourne Downland and that which is Farmland. I believe there is a difference between the open access coastline which is managed purely for open access and the areas of farmland, Chalk Farm, Black Robin, Cornish Farm, which is managed as part of a farming enterprise, albeit with an element of open access and environmental and wildlife enhancement. There is a clear landscape characteristic in that one is full of people, parked cars and the other has a mixture of farm buildings and livestock.</p> <p>With the massive changes taking place in the way agriculture, the environment and food production is managed and financed there will be pressure on farms to diversify or change. This of course requires</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p> <p>The pressures for farms to diversify or change is well understood. The important distinction between areas that are farmed and those that are regarded as open areas is acknowledged.</p>

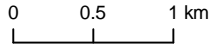
STAKEHOLDER	COMMENT	ACTION
	<p>Eastbourne Borough Council's and other stakeholders' consent. It is unlikely that the coastline or purely open access land will face such challenges and therefore when making a decision on policy for the future of Eastbourne Borough Council's farms, the council and public need to be able to distinguish those areas which are farmed and those which are regarded as open access.</p>	

**APPENDIX C**  
**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES AND AREA PLAN**





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**APPENDIX D**  
**PROPOSED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER POLICY**



## **POLICY X - PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

*PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE OF URBAN AREAS SHOULD BE INFORMED BY AND BE SYMPATHETIC TO THE DISTINCTIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS IDENTIFIED IN THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT, AND SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE PRIORITIES FOR ACTIVE CONSERVATION, ENHANCEMENT AND/OR RESTORATION OF THESE AREAS.*

*DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE IT CAN DEMONSTRATE THAT ITS LOCATION, SCALE AND DESIGN WILL PROTECT, CONSERVE AND/OR ENHANCE:*

- \* THE SPECIAL QUALITIES AND LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE AREA (INCLUDING ITS HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND ECOLOGICAL CHARACTER AND ITS TRANQUILLITY)*
- \* THE PATTERN OF DISTINCTIVE LANDSCAPE FEATURES, SUCH AS CHALK CLIFFS, SHINGLE BEACHES, VERNACULAR BUILDINGS, WATERCOURSES, WOODLAND, TREES AND FIELD BOUNDARIES, AND THEIR FUNCTION AS ECOLOGICAL CORRIDORS FOR DISPERSAL OF WILDLIFE*
- \* SCARP SLOPES, SEA CLIFFS, GEOLOGICAL FEATURES AND VISUALLY SENSITIVE SKYLINES SUCH AS THE SCARP SLOPES,*
- \* THE SETTING OF, AND VIEWS FROM, THE SUSSEX DOWNS AONB, CONSERVATION AREAS AND HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS*

### **Supporting Explanatory Text**

*The undeveloped countryside is part of the everyday surroundings for a large proportion of the population in the Borough, and the visual character of landscapes is a significant influence on the quality of life for communities in all areas. In line with Government policy, the Council affords high priority to the protection, conservation and enhancement of landscape character in delivering sustainable development within the Borough. The Council seeks to encourage well-designed, high quality new development and associated infrastructure that helps sustain and/or create landscapes with a strong sense of place and local identity.*

*The landscape character of the whole Borough has been identified by a Landscape Character Assessment, a technical study prepared in consultation with key stakeholder groups. A Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will provide process-based guidance on how the Landscape Character Assessment can be applied to help protect, conserve and enhance the landscape. The Landscape Character Assessment identifies and describes distinctive Landscape Character Areas throughout the Borough as a whole. Drawing on this assessment, the SPD will set out objectives and guidance for conserving, enhancing and restoring the character of the Landscape Character Areas. This information can be used, along with other studies that provide part of the evidence base about landscape character (e.g. the Eastbourne Borough Biodiversity Assessment and the Historic Landscape Characterisation of Sussex), to inform considerations about the effects of development proposals on the distinctive character, qualities and sensitivities of landscapes within the Borough'.*



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