

Ashford Local Development Framework Landscape Character Study

for Ashford Borough Council & English Partnerships

ASSESSMENT & DATA SET : Brabourne Vale

November 2005

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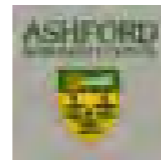
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Ashford Local Development Framework

Landscape Character Study

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Studio Engleback
8a London Road
Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN1 2EJ

Tel: 01892 538 537
Fax: 01892 538 438
email info@studioengleback.com
web: www.studioengleback.com

studio**engleback**

The survey team included:

Luke Engleback MLI Chartered Landscape Architect
Louise Hooper MLI Chartered Landscape Architect
Gary Grant MIEEM Ecologist
Mark Goddard Ecologist
Alex Morse Ecologist
Andrea Kenworthy MLI Chartered Landscape Architect
Hans Martin Aambo Assistant Landscape Assistant
Jacinta Faithfull Assistant Landscape Assistant
Katrin Pfeiffer Senior Landscape Architect
Katie Davis MLI Chartered Landscape Architect

The phase 1 study period ran from late August to November 2004 the phase 2 study ran from June to October 2005

The assessment team included:

Luke Engleback MLI Chartered Landscape Architect
Professor Michael Ellison Past President of the Landscape Institute
Gary Grant MIEEM Ecologist
Andrea Kenworthy MLI Chartered Landscape Architect

The reports were compiled with the above plus:

Paul Mamo
Roger Cooper
Shinshiro Ito
Lukas Boras

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Preface

The Landscape Character Study was carried out following guidelines set out by the Countryside Agency. The landscape was divided into Landscape Description Units (LDUs), based on the Historic landscape characterisation study for Kent 2001. The Study Area was divided up into sectors from A - G the order was the priority at the time for looking at areas concerned with GADF to feed into the planing of those areas - F and G being landscapes that would not be considered for development.

Each LDU parcel was assessed from an average of 3 points - larger LDUs had more reference points than smaller ones - by two surveyors. Landscape Description Units were based on the Kent Historic Landscape Character Study 2002; Landscape Character Areas of Kent were taken from the Babbie/KCC report 2004.

All sites were viewed from public rights of way using a combination of transport by car and walking footpaths and bridleways. Site notes were recorded on a two-sided A4 record sheet by hand and later transferred to the word documents contained in this data set.

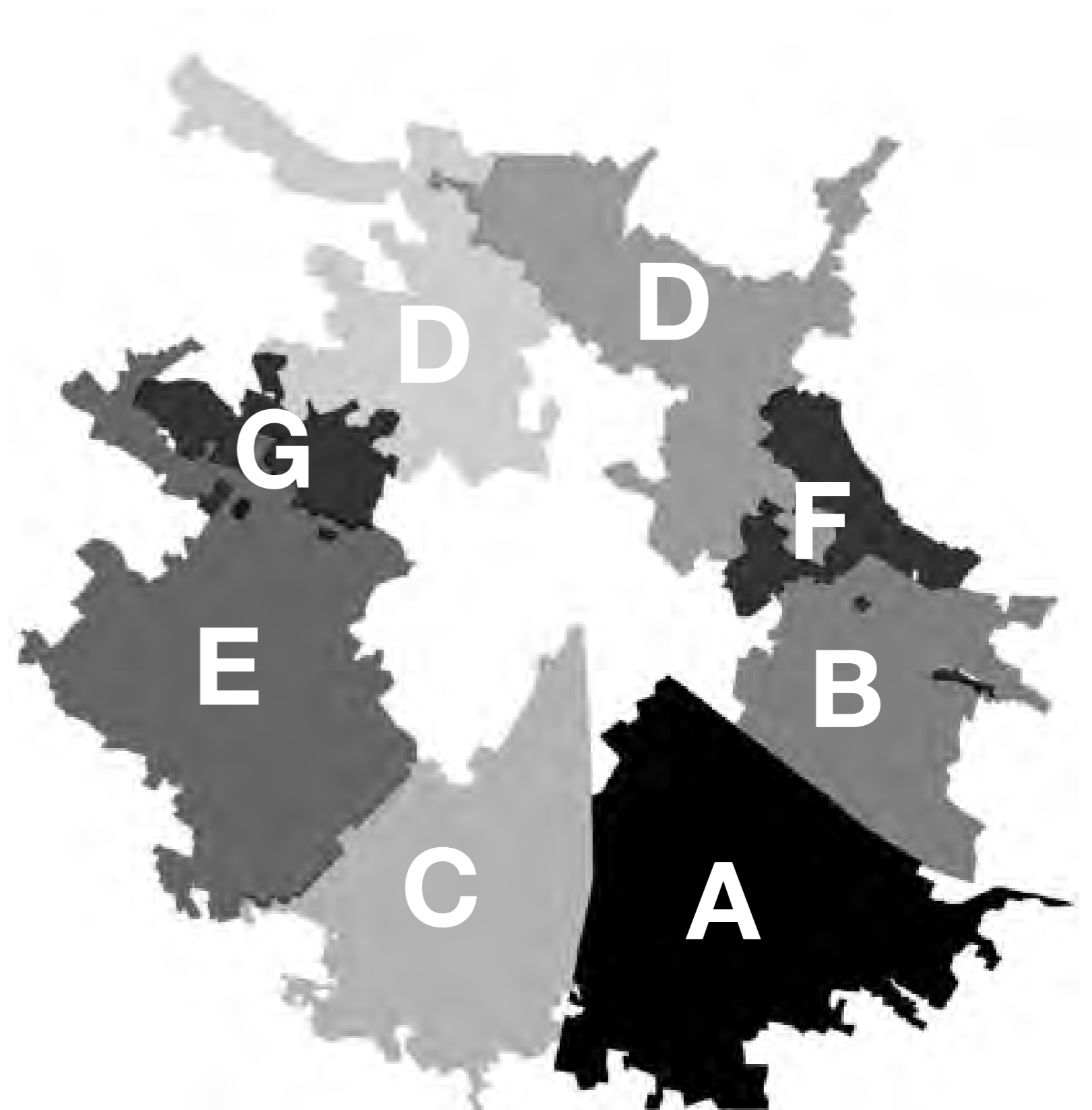
Each LDU is numbered, each filed photograph carries the LDU reference and a photograph location number reference - e.g. D1.3 for LDU D1, third photograph location. The photographs have been saved as jpegs and were generally taken at 1Gb resolution. This data set includes the location maps for the key photographs taken of each LDU. The photographs plus a digital set of the data sheets are contained in a CD bound into the back cover of the data set.

Ordnance Survey maps have been used as a base for hand-drawn plans and scanned for location of photographs etc are reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO Ashford Borough Council License No LA077038 © Crown copyright. All rights reserved.

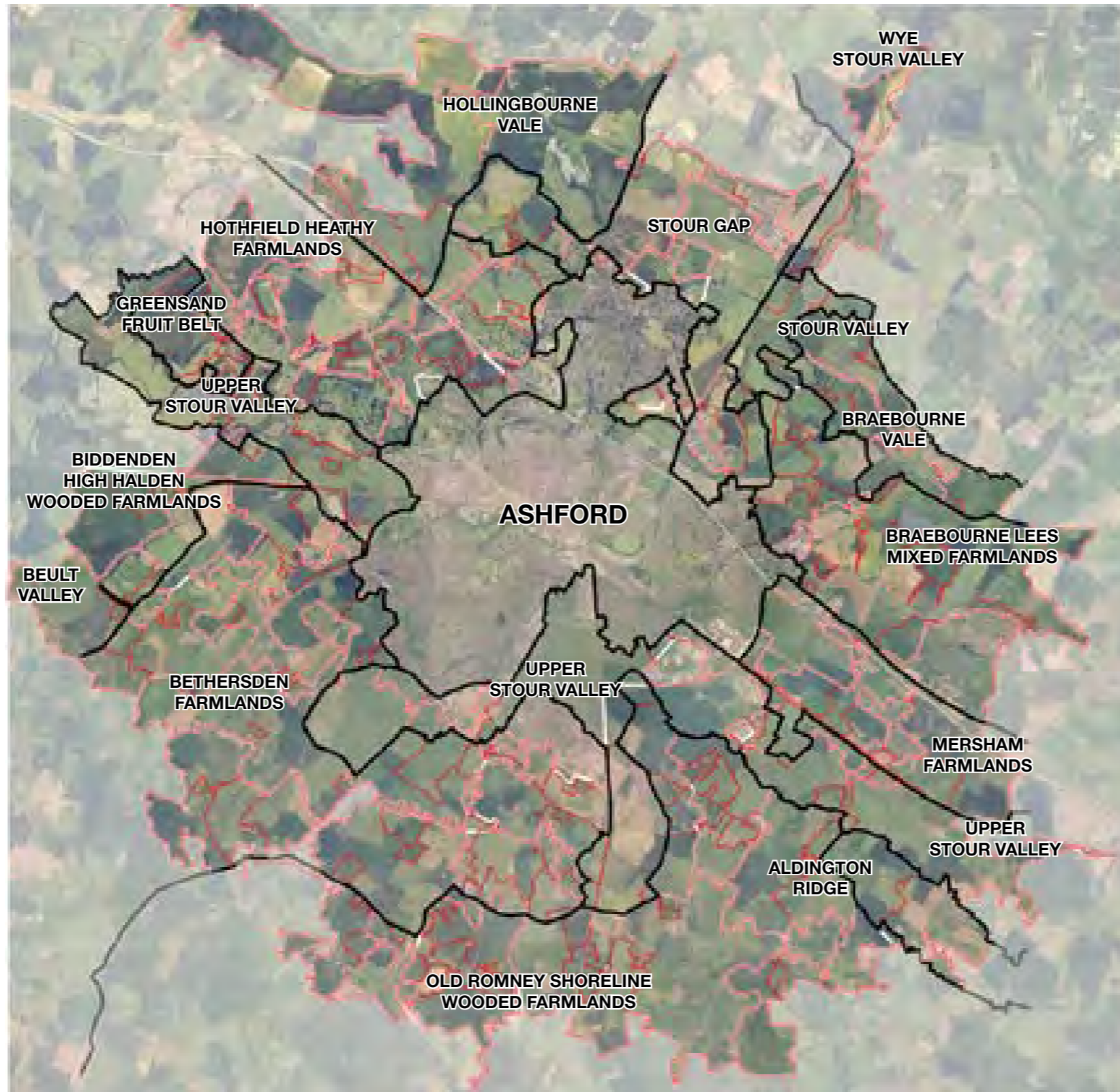
For the assessments the LDUs were grouped by similarity into large blocks we have called District Landscape types (DLT). The 58 DLTs were assessed to fall into one of nine categories used by the County Landscape Character Study. A team of four senior landscape architects and ecologists visited each area as a travelling collegium over a period of four days making on site assessments and checking these by return to specific areas. These first thoughts were then tested by the same team in the studio a few days later to check for consistency of appraisal. Then each area was checked against the field sheets. This work has been presented in these documents as tables.

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Study Area Fieldwork Sectors



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The Ashford Character Study Area

Black line shows Kent County Landscape Character Areas
 Red fine lines show Historic Landscape Character Parcels used as a basis for the Landscape Description Units (LDUs) in this study
 White lines show District Areas as defined in the assessment



Section 1 Introduction

Introduction

The Kent Landscape Character Study

The Brabourne Vale is a long narrow, gently sloping character area lies on the Gault Clays east of Ashford and forms a continuation of the Hampton and Wye character areas described in The Kent Downs Landscape. The landscape is contained by the Great Stour's alluvial valley, west of Naccolt and to the north-east by the AONB boundary.

Characterised by clayey or loamy soils subject to waterlogging the traditional crops of the area are winter cereals and short term grasslands. Small woodlands and larger plantations are also locally characteristic and with the sometime bushy hedgerows, give parts of the area a feel similar to the Low Weald. Settlement is restricted to farmsteads and small hamlets.

The land between Naccolt and Nackholt Wood is significantly wet, necessitating a series of dykes and drains to allow its use as pasture. It is significant that this area has remained under grass whilst over the past thirty years the better drained land round about has been converted to arable. Further east beyond Fords Water, the landscape becomes more open with a mix of pasture and arable.

The most significant woodlands are those north of Naccolt Farm that form a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). These include Nackholt, Foreland and Hampton Woods. Although managed in very different ways, all these woods retain many of the features of very damp ancient woods, with oak standards and mixed coppice of hornbeam, ash, field maple, hazel and alder. Also present is a rich ground flora and many species of butterfly and moth. Elsewhere these woods have been replanted with conifers, poplars or chestnut coppice.

The Ashford Landscape Character Study

- Approximately 40% of this County Landscape Character Area (CLA)
- There are 5 Landscape Description Units (LDUs) in this CLA lying within the study area
- The LDUs are based on the Historic Landscape Character map for Kent, there are 2 Historic landscape character types in this study area:
 - HLT 1 - Field Patterns
 - HLT 4 - Woodlands
 - HLT 9 - Settlements
- We have grouped these into 3 District Landscape Types (DLTs)
- There are no settlements, as opposed to homesteads and cottages in this CLA; although Hinxhill Court (F10) falls in this CLA, but we feel that this should be read as an extension to the old settlement of Hinxhill (F9)

In carrying out the survey and discussing the results we find that there are no adjustments to be made to the County Landscape Character Area Boundary.

Assessment

Many of the judgements made about landscape are subjective but the process of landscape assessment provides a robust methodology based on current best practice.

The physical attributes of the landscape are considered in conjunction with the historical and cultural influences, nature conservation interests and landuse. These factors are analysed further in the field to determine the key characteristics, aesthetics, visual unity, ecological integrity, condition of heritage features and impact of built development. The condition and sensitivity of each character area is then determined.

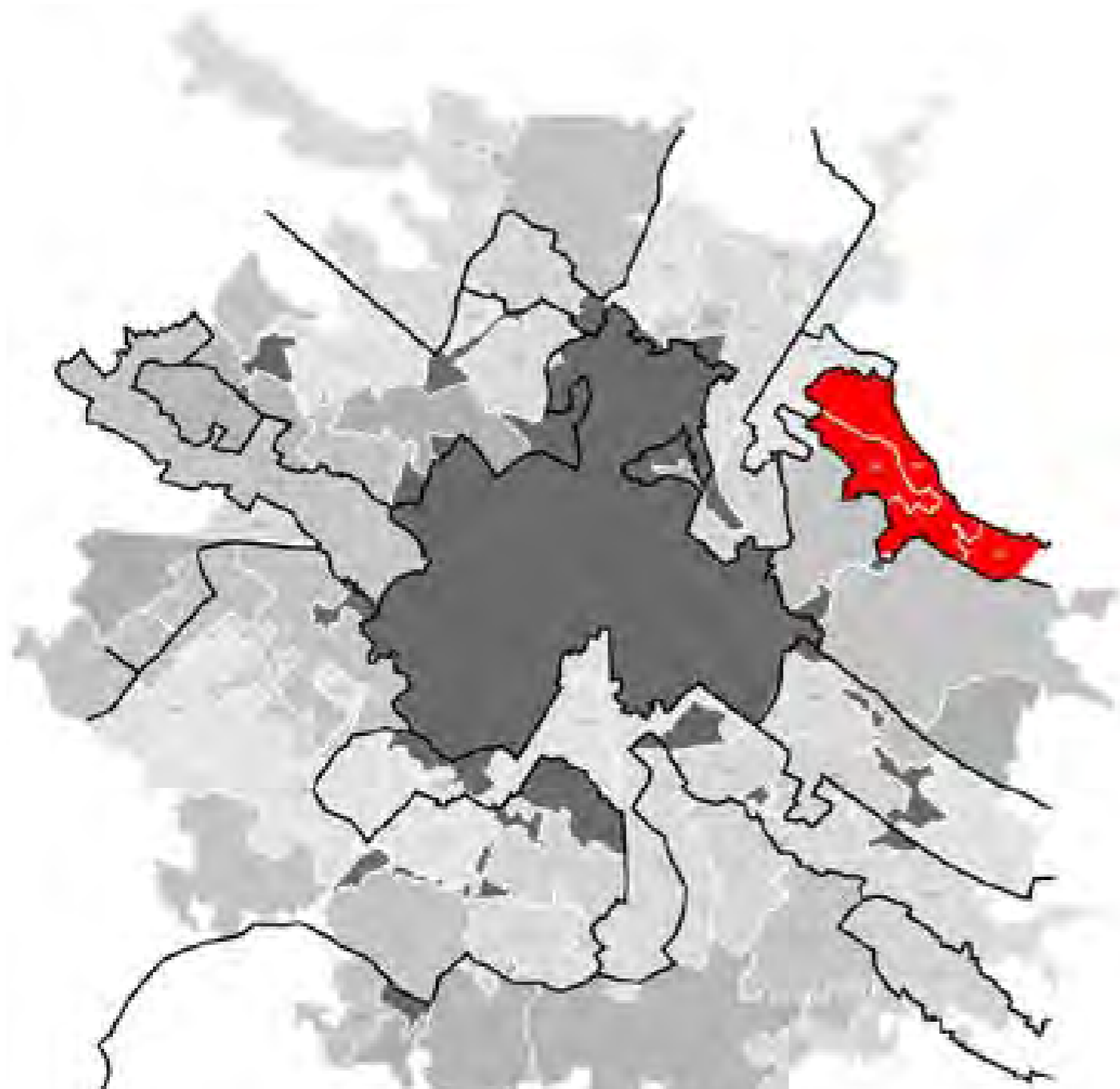
Condition describes the integrity and unity of the landscape such as its functional integrity and visual unity - for example an urban fringe with many detracting elements and loss of unifying features will be of poor condition.

Sensitivity of the landscape refers to its overall character and quality and the extent to which these factors will be tolerant of change in general.

Capacity determines the ability of the landscape to accommodate change without causing loss of the essential character and local distinctiveness. Capacity will vary according to the type and nature of change being proposed.

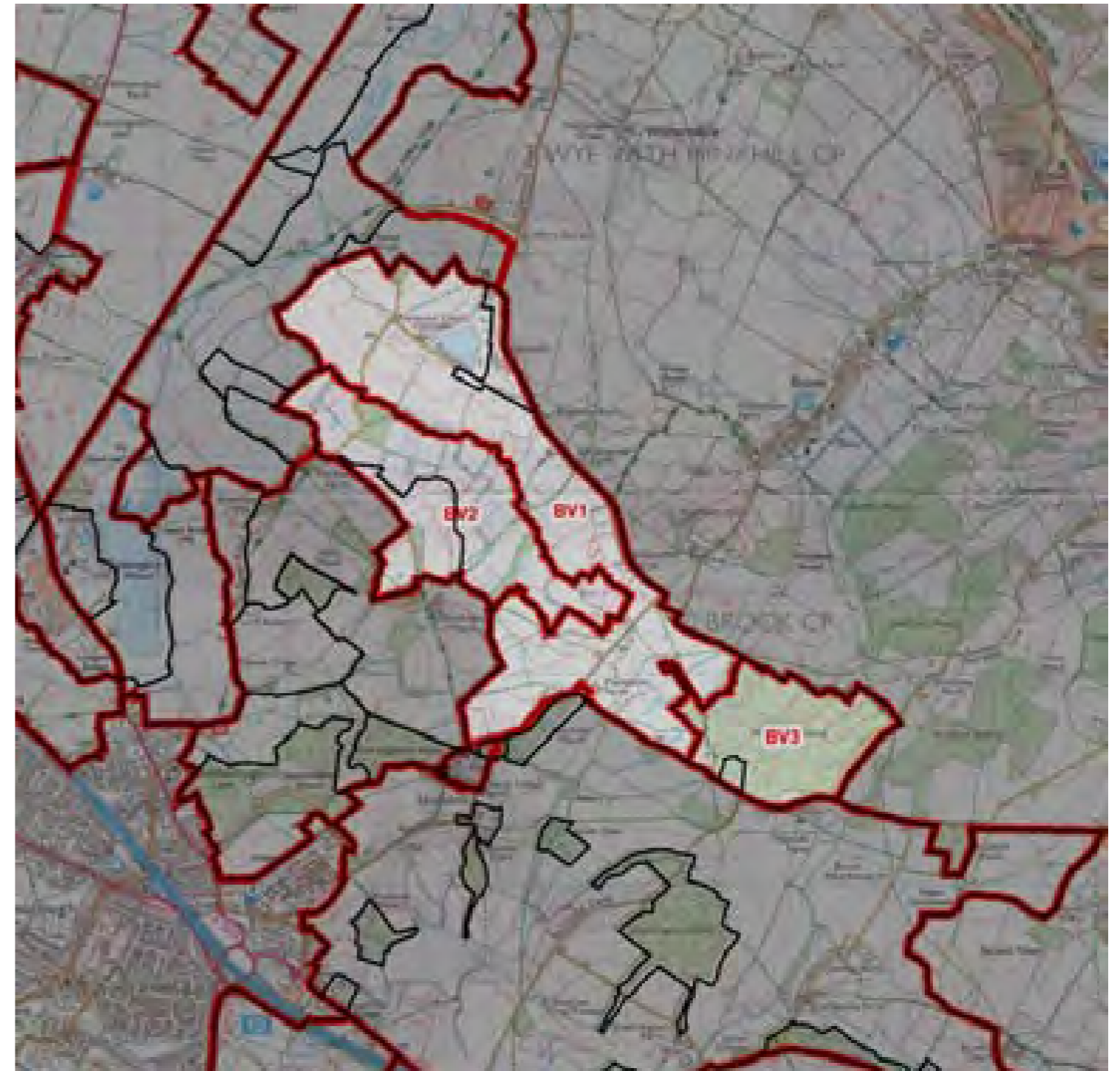
The matrix combines condition and sensitivity which indicates the area's ability to accommodate change and the appropriate land management or use, and will assist in the overall policies or development that might be appropriate to a particular area.

condition	good	reinforce	conserve & reinforce	conserve
	moderate	create & reinforce	conserve & create	conserve & restore
	poor	create	restore & create	restore
		low	moderate	high
		sensitivity		



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Location of Braebourne Vale Landscape Character within the study area



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Location of Braebourne Vale District Areas

Landscape context



Geology

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Flooding



Heritage

Geology

The Landscape Area lies over impervious Gault Clay with the exception of a small incursion of Wealden Greensand from the neighbouring Brabourne Lees Mixed Farmland.

Flooding

The lower area to the west borders the Stour flood plain. Here wet grazing, willow carr/wet woodland, and mire with ponds and flooded drains provide a lush vegetation. Iron seeping from the sand stone colours the water orange in places.

Heritage

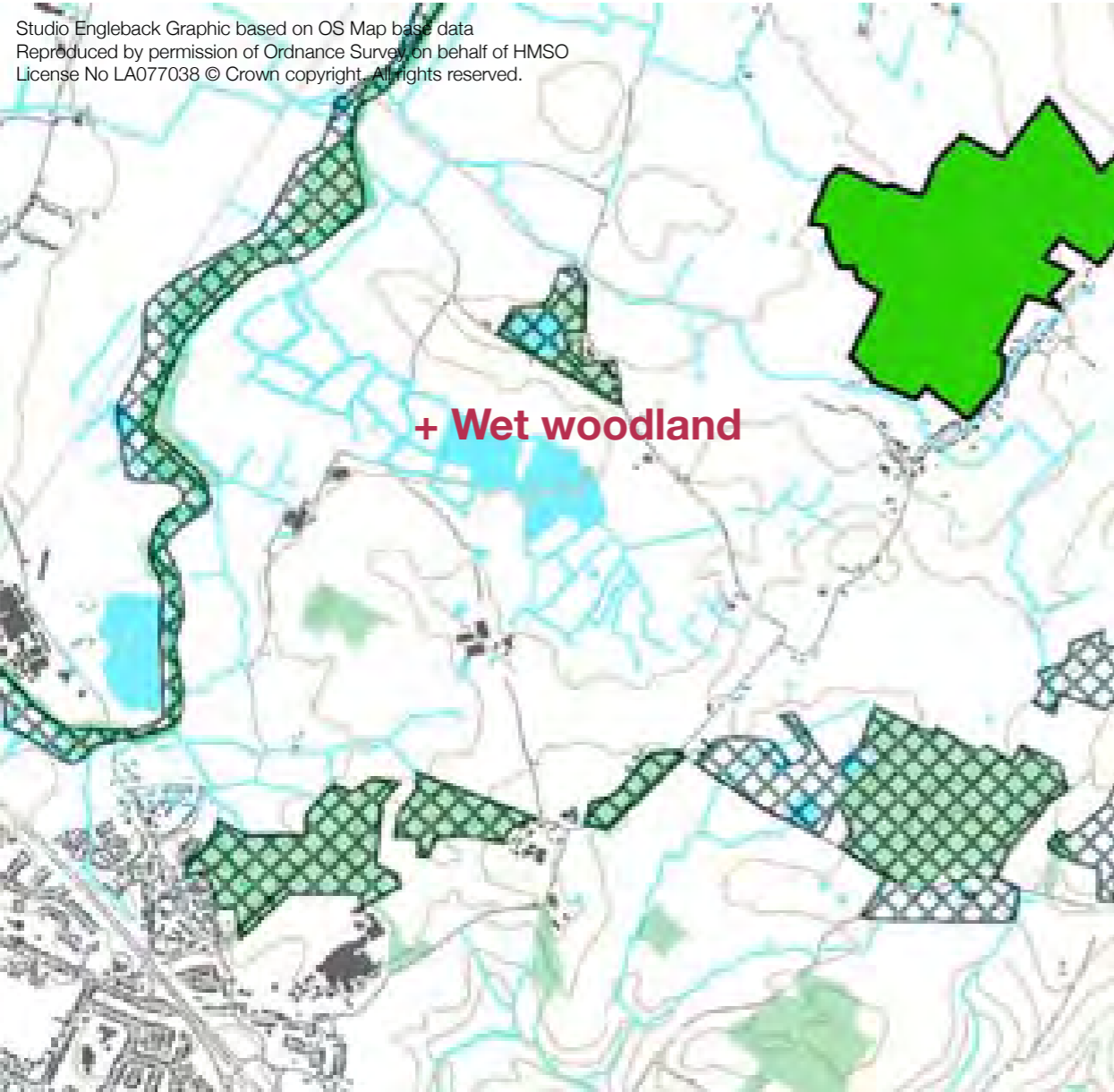
The North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) abuts the border to the north.

Ecology

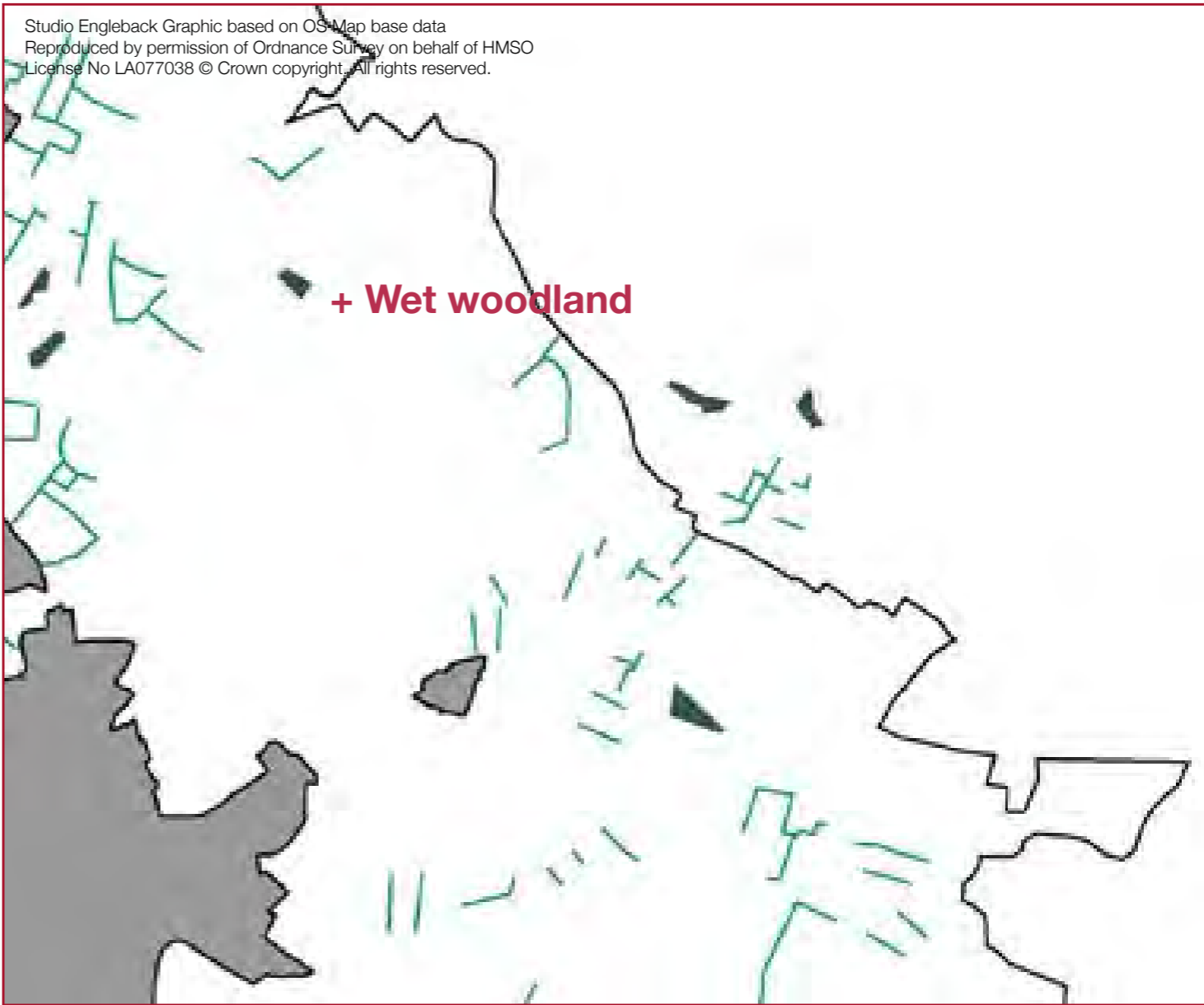
The wet gaszinf and area of wet woodland and mire are a Site of Nature Conservation Interest..

Features lost since the 1870s

There appears to be little chane in field boundaries since the first edition Ordnance Survey mapping in 1871.



Ecology



Features lost since 1870's



Section 2 Assessment

Assessment Summary

This county area sits to the north of Hinxhill extending from Naccolt on the edge of the Great Stour floodplain to Nackholt Wood in the south.

We have made no changes to the Kent CLA boundary.

The land gently falls to the floodplain and lies on Gault Clay. The soils are easily waterlogged and have been drained by a series of dykes creating large fields predominantly for sheep pasture but with some arable. The dykes are marked by flushes of crack willow and ash with a good network of hedges to lanes. Blocks of wet willow woodland are linked to surrounding network of wetland habitats and species rich wet meadows. The wetwoodlands and species rich wet meadows give a feeling of continuity over time and strong sense of place. There are fine views across the Wye Valley and towards the North Downs and glimpsed framed views to south.

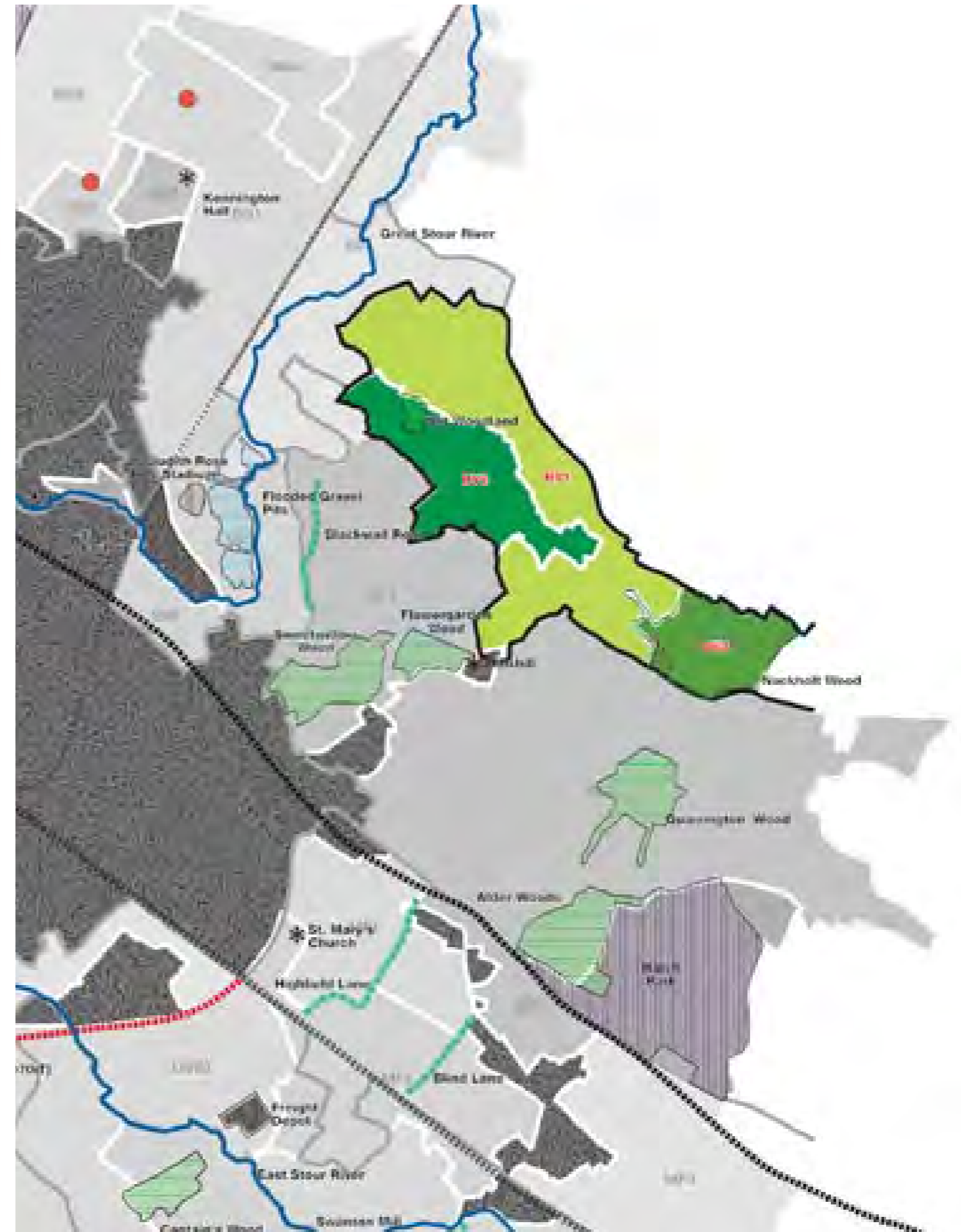
Nackholt Wood, designated SNCI comprises mixed use woodland with tall stands of poplars and pond to west, mature wet woodland with ditches and dense hazel coppice. Veteran oaks adjoin the lane to south and open wet flower meadows. The conifer plantation within is well screened with good hedgerow corridors to north west and southern boundaries.



Location of Braebourne Vale

reinforce	conserve & reinforce	conserve
create & reinforce	conserve & create	conserve & restore
create	restore & create	restore

Policy recommendation





Views across Naccolt farmlands towards North Downs (F7.20am)



Wet woods with species rich grasslands near Bourne Dyke (F5.1am)













Nackholt Wood (F13.23am)

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES	BV1	BV2	BV3
Landuse			
Farming	○	○	
Recreation			
Parkland			
Woodland		○	○
Business Park			
Industry			
Topography			
Flat			
Gently undulating	○	○	○
Rolling			
Steeply sloping			
Lakes/ ponds			
Streams/ dykes	○	○	
Vegetation cover			
Intact hedgerows	○	○	
Hedgerow trees			
Feature trees	○		
Evidence of hedgerow clearance			
Evidence of woodland loss			
Farming type			
Predominantly arable			
Mixed farming			
Mainly pasture	○	○	
Wet meadows		○	○
Local vernacular			
Ragstone, pegtiles, ship lap			
Oast house			
Visibility			
Open long distance	○		
Intermittent		○	
Restricted			○

Distinctive Elements



Key

 Church	 Green Lane
 Historic Building	 Roman Road
 Oast House	 Woods
 Hilltop/ Scenic Views	 Parks
 River Stour	 Flooded Gravel Pits



Wet Woodland (F5.1am & F5.2am)

Wet willow woodland linked to a surrounding network of wetland habitats providing an important wildlife habitat. The surrounding pasture is dominated by species rich wet meadows with rushes.



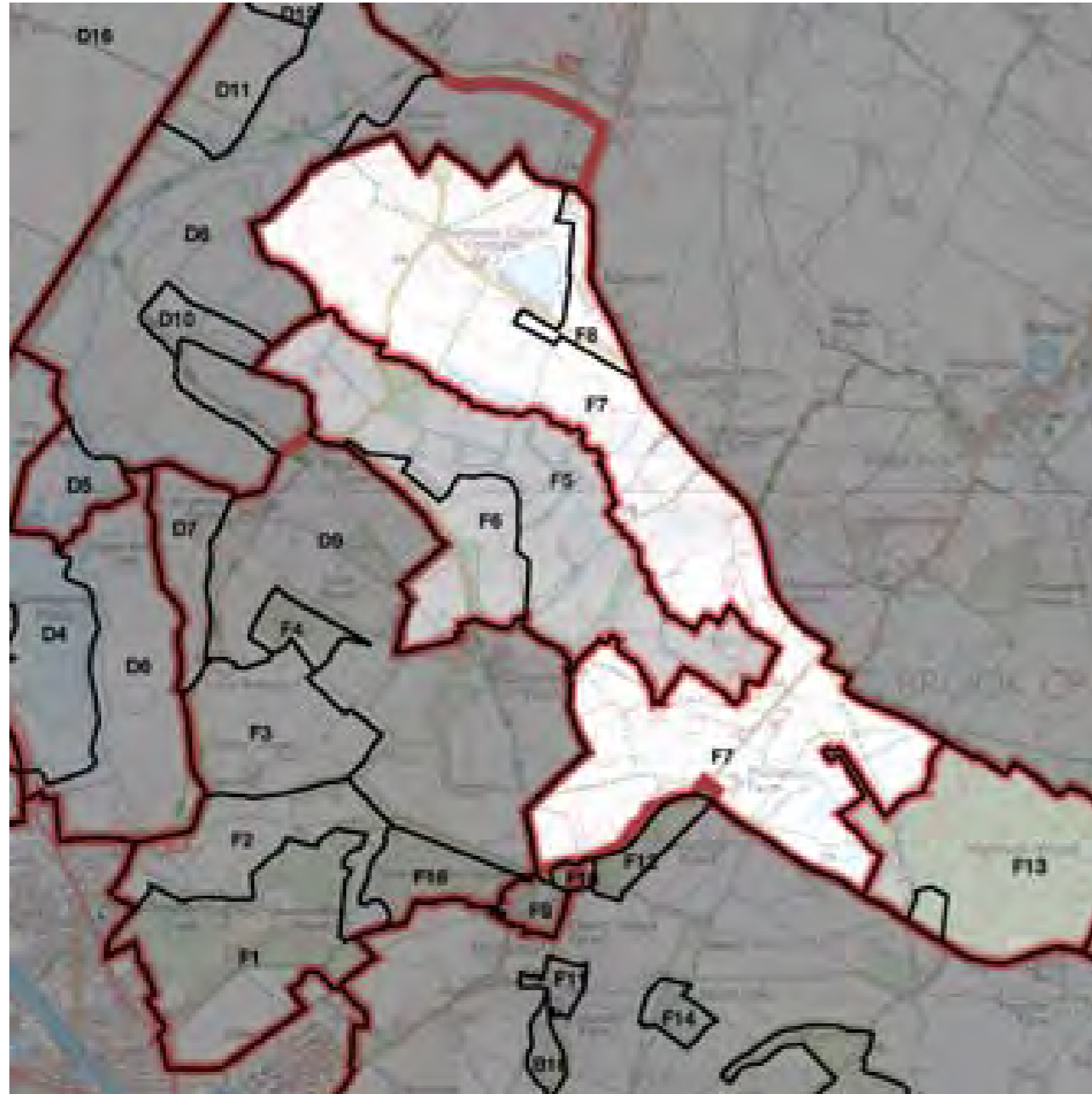
Nackholt Wood (F13.26 & F13.27)

A medium sized square parcel of mixed use woodland. To the west side is open airy stands of tall poplars and a large pond surrounded by willows giving a 'forest swamp' character. The wide poplar planting allows glimpses out to arable fields to W. A tranquil spot. Further south there is wet woodland with ditches and dense hazel coppice with sedges. A good number of veteran oaks form a tall canopy visible on the south boundary, which joins a local lane. This boundary has a strong diverse hedgerow plus an open wet flower meadow. The conifer plantation is well screened from public view. High ecological integrity.



Section 3 Field Work & Data Sheets

BV 1 Naccolt Higher Fields



Location of BV 1 within Braebourne Vale

District Landscape Type: BV 1 Naccolt Higher Fields

Comprising: F7, F8

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- The land gently falls to the floodplain and lies on Gault Clay. The soils are easily waterlogged and have been drained by a series of dykes creating large fields predominantly for sheep pasture but with some arable. The dykes are marked by flushes of crack willow and ash.
- There is a good network of hedges to lanes.
- Old brick works at Naccolt with lake.
- Long views to north across the Wye Valley and to east to North Downs.

ANALYSIS

Condition

Pattern of elements:	moderate
Detracting features:	low
Distinctiveness:	moderate
Cultural heritage:	moderate
Ecology:	moderate
Functionality:	moderate

A coherent pattern of large fields of pasture divided by lanes and dykes, which are good wildlife corridors.

Sensitivity

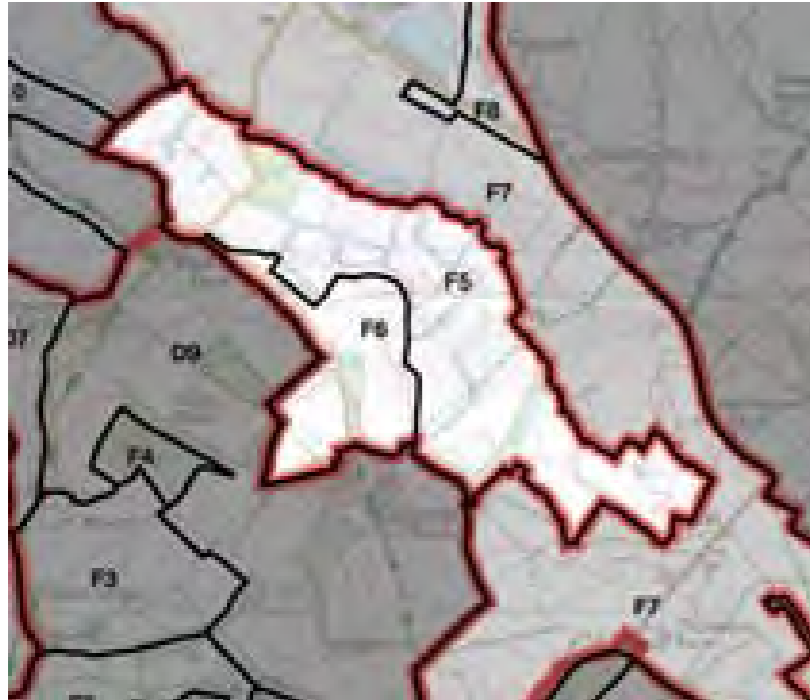
Sense of place:	moderate
Landform:	moderate
Extent of tree cover:	moderate
Visibility:	moderate

Apparent sense of place and generally good visibility with views across the Wye Valley and towards the North Downs.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

conserve & create
- plant new hedgerows

BV 2 Bourne Dyke Wet Pastures



Location of BV 2 within Braebourne Vale

District Landscape Type: BV 2 Bourne Dyke Wet Pastures

Comprising: F5, F6

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- Valley floor with series of sheep pastures enclosed by good network of dykes, streams and ditches with mature hedgerows and scrub.
- Blocks of wet willow woodland are linked to surrounding network of wetland habitats and species rich wet meadows.

ANALYSIS

Condition

Pattern of elements:	moderate
Detracting features:	low
Distinctiveness:	high
Cultural heritage:	high
Ecology:	high
Functionality:	high

A coherent pattern of wet woodlands with pasture, with valued wetland habitats linked by dykes and hedges.

Sensitivity

Sense of place:	high
Landform:	low
Extent of tree cover:	high
Visibility:	moderate

The wetwoodlands and species rich wet meadows give a feeling of continuity over time and strong sense of place. There are fine views to North Downs and glimpsed framed views to south.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

conserve & reinforce

- conserve the wet woodlands/ meadows and watercourses (possible impact of fertiliser runoff)
- reinforce hedgerows

BV 3 Nackholt Wood



Location of BV 3 within Braebourne Vale

District Landscape Type: BV 3 Nackholt Wood

Comprising: F13

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- A mixed use woodland with tall stand of poplars and pond to west, mature wet woodland with ditches and dense hazel coppice, veteran oaks adjoining lane to south and open wet flower meadows. Designated SNCI.
- The conifer plantation within is well screened.
- Good hedgerow corridors to north west and southern boundaries.

ANALYSIS

Condition

Pattern of elements:	low
Detracting features:	low
Distinctiveness:	moderate
Cultural heritage:	moderate
Ecology:	high
Functionality:	high

A mixed woodland of variable character with high diversity of semi-natural habitats.

Sensitivity

Sense of place:	moderate
Landform:	low
Extent of tree cover:	high
Visibility:	low

Some loss of original woodland character to conifer plantation and poplars. Restricted visibility.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

conserve & restore

Brabourne Vale

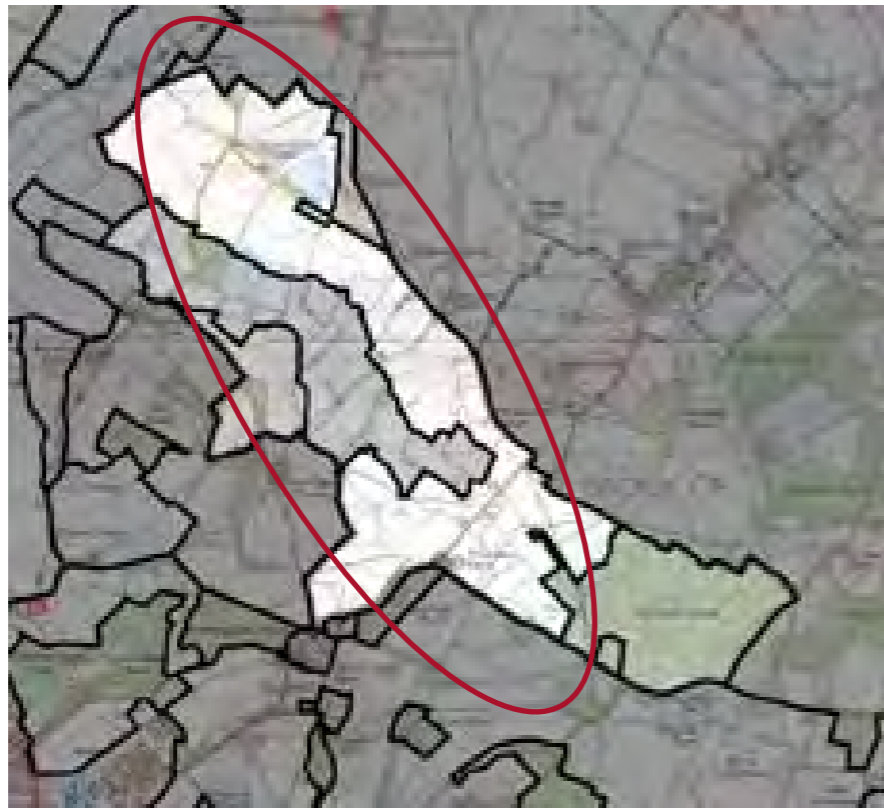
BV1: Naccolt Higher Fields

Survey Date: 20.07.05 Reference: F7 Location: Naccolt Farmland Surveyors: AM/HA

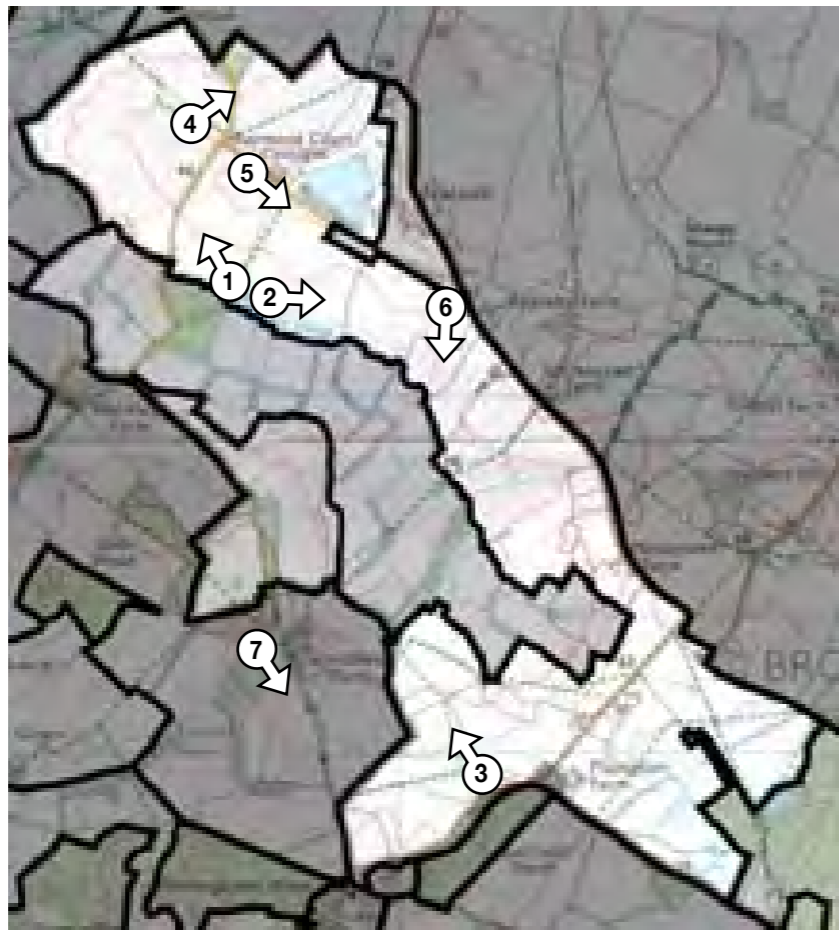
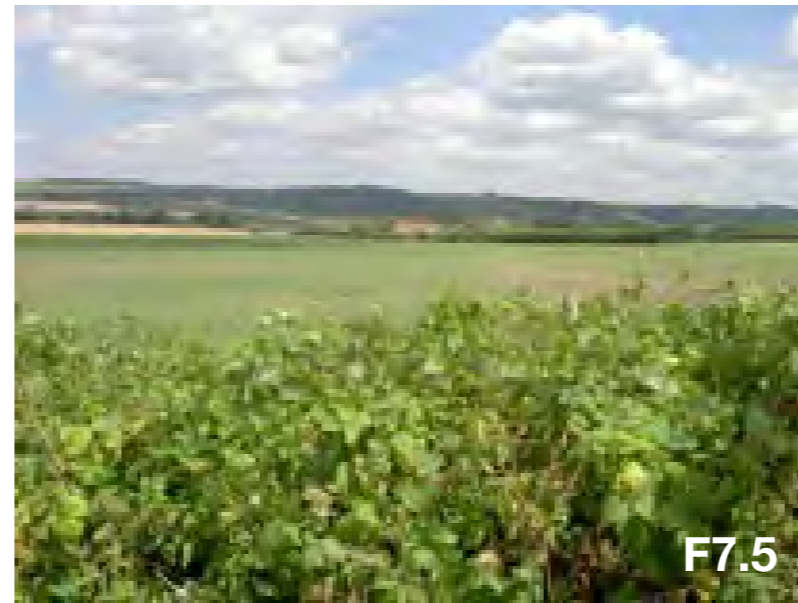
Study Sector:		Hinxhill (Map ref: TR051440)	
County Landscape Character Area:		Brabourne Vale	
Historic Landscape Type:		1.6	
Boundaries:		F5 and D9 in S; D8 in N; F13 and F12 in E	
TOPOGRAPHY	Apparent +	Landform Slope to S. Eastern part slopes E	Views out (long/short/restricted) Long views to N and across the valley
TREE COVER	Insignificant	Key visual elements Some few scattered mature trees	Views within (filtered/framed/open/restricted) Mostly open within. Some hedges frames view.
ENCLOSURE PATTERN	Apparent	Key visual elements Hedgerows	Pattern and scale Along roads and streams
SETTLEMENT & BUILT FEATURES	Insignificant	Key visual elements Scattered houses along lanes	Pattern Hedgerows and ornamental vegetation used for screening.
LANDUSE	Dominant	Key visual elements Arable and sheep-grazing	Seasonal variation Yes
KEY CHARACTERISTICS – in what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?			
Natural features	Rivers/ knolls/ ponds Drainage ditches lead water to flood plain in S.	Species associations	
Landuse/farm type	Primary	Other	
Woodlands	Coppice/plantation	Species	
Tree cover	Groups/linear/hedgerow/scattered/shelterbelt Scattered in fields. Other ornamental at houses	Species Oak, cypress, willow, ash	
Field boundaries	Hedges/ditches/stock fence/electric Rich and sometimes vey tall hedgrows, wide verges.	Species Hawthorn, bramble, maple, sycamore, ash, blackthorn, dogrose, hazel, plum, buckthorn, dogwood, willow	
Highways and footpaths	Major road/railway/local road/footpath/no public access Some footpaths and local roads cross the parcel.	Other features (such as tree-lined lanes)	
Built features	Villages/settlements/farms/churches/oasts Farms along lane in N. boundary	Urban edge/pylons/masts/new housing	
Other features (such as moats)			

Reference: F7

Brief summary description: A long irregular shaped parcel of mainly arable land and some grazing pastures. Sited N of valley. Rich hedges along lanes and boundaries. Lowest part, part of floodplain.				
Visual context and unity – assess the views, outlook, adjacent landuses and overall unity of the landscape and note any detracting features and their significance Mostly farmland. Part of larger farm area to the downs. <i>Intact</i>				
Ecological integrity – how well does this area of countryside function as a habitat for wildlife? <i>Moderate</i>				
Extent of semi-natural habitat and patches Water basin to W, but no access. Wetland in S. part.	Ecological corridors and networks Good strong hedgerows all over. Some streams and ditches.			
Intensity of land use and habitat trend High arable				
Condition of heritage features – assess current condition and make note of vulnerability to change				
Tree Cover	Age structure Mature	<i>Good (but few trees)</i>		
Field Boundaries	Survival of historic field pattern and condition Hedgerows and ditch pattern intact.	<i>Good</i>		
Other features	Water basin in NW. no access.	?		
Impact of built development – how well does modern development respect local vernacular, character and sense of place				
Type Houses	Siting Scattered along lane	Design Traditional	Extent	<i>Moderate - low</i>



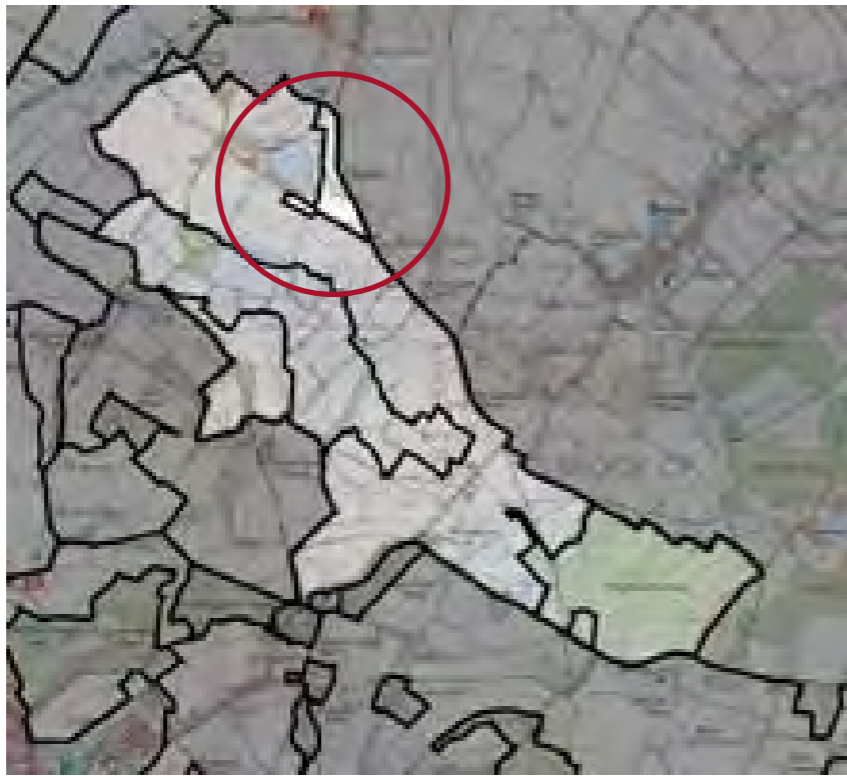
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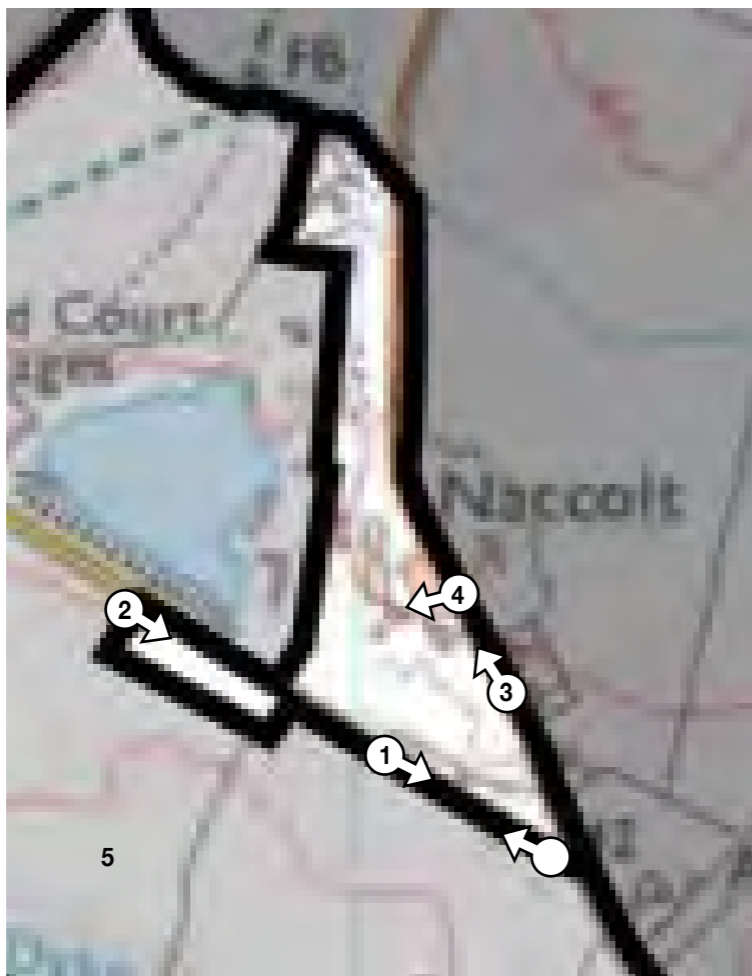
Photograph locations/ direction

Study Sector:		Hinxhill (Map ref: TR050445)
County Landscape Character Area:		Brabourne Vale
Historic Landscape Type:		9.2 Scattered settlement with paddocks (post –1800 extent)
Boundaries:		F7 to W & S
SETTLEMENT & BUILT FEATURES	Insignificant	Key visual elements old brick works, now recycling depo with private fishing lake Pre-19 th century cottage Isolated house with paddocks
TOPOGRAPHY	Apparent	Landform Gentle slope
TREE COVER	Dominant	Key visual elements mature willows, mature scrub
FORM & LAYOUT	Linear	
AGE & CONDITION	Pre-war Post-war 1960-70's 1980-1990's Recent	Mix of pre 19 th century, Victorian and post war
KEY FEATURES – in what way do the following contribute to the local distinctiveness of the settlement?		
Building style	Roof & materials/ scale White rendered cottage House undergoing extension/ conversion Brick with old sheds and dilapidated interwar barns	
Street Scene	Frontage/ verge/ boundaries/ materials Narrow lane to southern edge with mown grass and ditch to both sides and native mix hedge to field side and clipped hawthorn hedge adjacent to property. Main road with scrubby hedge and garden fences.	Planting/ signage/ lighting
Edge condition	New housing N/A	
Other features (include detractors)	-	
PERCEPTION of the place – is it tranquil/ safe/ pleasant/ legible/ accessible? Discordant character around former brick works site		

Brief summary description of settlement/ edge conditions and its siting within the wider landscape: Located on a local minor spur in the topography, above what is now a small lake at the foot of a steep scrubby bank. Isolated cottages to the south and derelict small industrial buildings to the north. Flooded pit possibly for clay and buildings linked to this – bricks/ tiles? Significant area of scrub hides most buildings. Houses to south with neat gardens fronted by thorn hedge and mown grassy swale to lane.				
Visual context and unity – assess the views, outlook, adjacent landuses and overall unity of the settlement and note any detracting features and their significance				
Views south over the Bourne Dyke valley, views to north obscured by scrub.				Intact Interrupted Fragmented
Settlement integrity/ edge condition – how well does the settlement hold together				
Extent of settlement	Collection of buildings held together visually by the scrublands that form a backdrop.		High Moderate Low	
Intensity of built form and trend Low, isolated rural settlement				
Condition of heritage features – assess current condition and make note of vulnerability to change				
Local vernacular	Survival of features and condition Two cottages, one in good order the other undergoing major extension/ renovation. Low rise Victorian industrial sheds in brick and tile, in disrepair, iron frame shell of larger shed in what is now a recycling plant.			Good Variable Poor
Tree Cover	Age structure some young mature oaks, rest a mix of willow scrub with thorns, bullace, field maple. Thick vegetation.			Good Variable Poor
Field Boundaries	Survival of historic field pattern and condition Hedges in hawthorn, some blackthorn and wild rose mixed. Neatly maintained in front of cottage			Good Variable Poor
Other features	Paddock adjoining cottage to south of lane			Good Variable Poor
Impact of built development – how well does modern development respect local vernacular, character and sense of place Not applicable				
Type	Siting	Design	Extent	High Moderate Low



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Photograph locations/ direction



Brabourne Vale

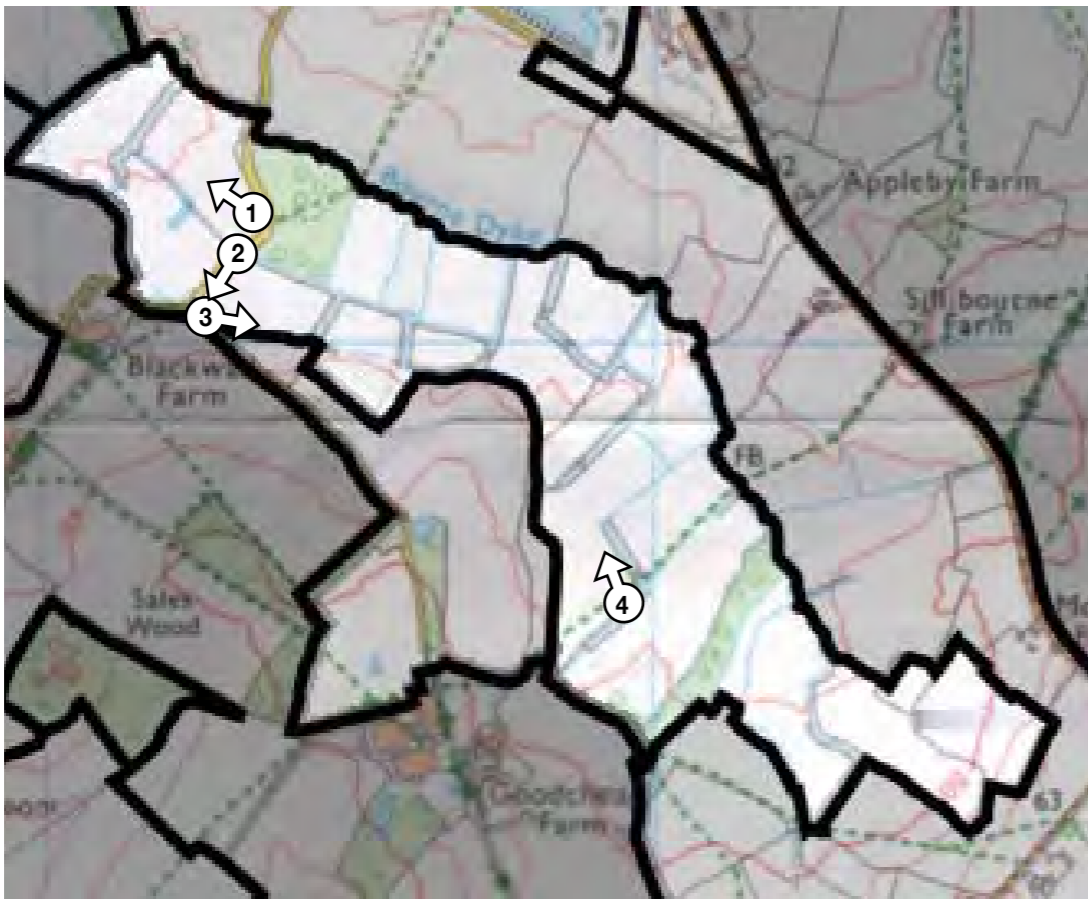
BV2: Bourne Dyke Wet Pastures

Study Sector:		Hinxhill (Map ref: TR049440)	
County Landscape Character Area:		Brabourne Vale	
Historic Landscape Type:		7.1 Miscellaneous Valley Bottom Paddocks and pastures	
Boundaries:			
TOPOGRAPHY	Dominant	Landform Valley floor flat	Views out (long/short/restricted) surrounding slopes on all sides
TREE COVER	Apparent	Key visual elements 2 separate small wet woods to E & W	Views within (filtered/framed/open/restricted) topography and hedges restrict views
ENCLOSURE PATTERN	Apparent	Key visual elements Tall verges & rushes block views of fences	Pattern and scale A series of sheep pastures.
SETTLEMENT & BUILT FEATURES	Unsettled	Key visual elements	Pattern
LANDUSE	Dominant	Key visual elements Woods to W Path for recreation	Seasonal variation Shooting Wet rough pasture/ rushes & sheep grazing
KEY CHARACTERISTICS – in what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?			
Natural features	Rivers/ knolls/ ponds Good stream to north of woods – full even in July after no rain. Good ditches elsewhere.		Species associations
Landuse/farm type	Primary Rushes & marsh (pasture) to west of lane. Rushes to south section. Woods to N & S.		Other Sheep grazing, floodplain
Woodlands	Coppice/plantation Wet woods		Species Mainly birch, alder & goat willow with bracken, bramble, meadowsweet, birdsfoot trefoil, willowherb, ivy & some oak.
Tree cover	Groups/linear/hedgerow/scattered/shelterbelt Mature willow/ alder carr woods – one open glade to east edge - on west side of F5.		Species Elder, hawthorn, oak, willow & birch
Field boundaries	Hedges/ditches/stock fence/electric Good hedgerow & stream boundaries to NW area (W of lane). Bourne Dyke stream border to N.		Species
Highways and footpaths	Major road/railway/local road/footpath/no public access Lane bisects to N/S near W side. Public access poorly maintained.		Other features (such as tree-lined lanes)
Built features	Villages/settlements/farms/churches/oasts		Urban edge/pylons/masts/new housing
Other features (such as moats)	W.end bisected by local lane with tunnel-effect canopy.		

Brief summary description: A long curved parcel characterised by valley floor landscape – a series of sheep pasture enclosures divided by a good network of dykes, streams & ditches with well vegetated hedgerows and scrub. There are 2 separate blocks of wet willow woodland to the E & W. These are linked to a surrounding network of wetland habitats providing an important wildlife habitat. The pasture is dominated by species rich wet meadows with rushes. Paths are blocked in places by vegetation. A local lane bisects the W section.				
Visual context and unity – assess the views, outlook, adjacent landuses and overall unity of the landscape and note any detracting features and their significance				
Valley bottom with intact short views framed by trees, hedges & topography. Fine long views to North Downs in the distance.				Intact
Ecological integrity – how well does this area of countryside function as a habitat for wildlife?				
Extent of semi-natural habitat and patches Wet meadow/ marshes. Good mix of raised earth stream banks of varying topography with side vegetation and important habitat types. Possible risk of fertiliser impact to streams.	Ecological corridors and networks Bourne Dyke Stream links to NW. Good network of streams & hedgerows.	High Good for plant species- ragged robin, several rushes, marsh thistle, trefoils, timothy & sweet vernal grass, bedstraw. Possibly bats, aquatic mammals & reptiles, birds & invertebrates.		
Intensity of land use and habitat trend low				
Condition of heritage features – assess current condition and make note of vulnerability to change				
Tree Cover	Age structure Small pockets of willow/ birch carr & scrub. Few scattered veterans.			Variable
Field Boundaries	Survival of historic field pattern and condition Mainly stock fences or ditches engulfed in tall herbs or scrub.			Good
Other features	Species rich habitat – molehills Rough wet meadow – vulnerable to water table changes & runoff & water table drainage.			Variable
Impact of built development – how well does modern development respect local vernacular, character and sense of place				
Type	Siting	Design	Extent	High
				Moderate
				Low



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Photograph locations/ direction

Study Sector:		Hinxhill (Map ref: TR047437)	
County Landscape Character Area:		Brabourne Vale	
Historic Landscape Type:		1.15 small rectilinear with wavy boundaries	
Boundaries:		D9 W&S/ F5 to N&E	
TOPOGRAPHY	Insignificant	Landform slight slope to N	Views out (long/short/restricted) Framed in places by the woods. Blocked along sunken path by high crop.
TREE COVER	Apparent	Key visual elements woods in L shape	Views within (filtered/framed/open/restricted) Dense coppice prevents views. Fine views across parcel of farmland framed by hedgerows and trees. Long fine views to North Downs in places.
ENCLOSURE PATTERN	Apparent	Key visual elements Stock fences & hedgerows	Pattern and scale
SETTLEMENT & BUILT FEATURES	Insignificant	Key visual elements None within. Views out to isolated surrounding farmhouses in distance and large farm shed visible on S boundary.	Pattern
LANDUSE	Apparent	Key visual elements Fallow- ex-arable to west – screened by tall verge along road. Woods to east of road block view into F6. Arable crop to N section.	Seasonal variation
KEY CHARACTERISTICS – in what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?			
Natural features	Rivers/ knolls/ ponds Stream links to several dykes & stream. Large vegetated pond to east of lane bordering woods.		Species associations Mammals, invertebrates, birds Reeds, willow, oak, hazel.
Landuse/farm type	Primary Arable & woods in keeping with surrounding countryside.		Other
Woodlands	Coppice/plantation coppice		Species Field maple, hawthorn, hornbeam, ash, oak, hazel, bryony
Tree cover	Groups/linear/hedgerow/scattered/shelterbelt L-shaped linear wood		Species Oak, ash, elder, hazel, hornbeam
Field boundaries	Hedges/ditches/stock fence/electric Tall verges to west side of lane. Good hedgerows elsewhere.		Species Oak, hazel, elder, hornbeam, veteran ash pollard.
Highways and footpaths	Major road/railway/local road/footpath/no public access bisects N-S		Other features (such as tree-lined lanes)
Built features	Villages/settlements/farms/churches/oasts		Urban edge/pylons/masts/new housing
Other features (such as moats)			

F6 East of Sales Wood

Brief summary description: An irregular shaped parcel of farmland with a subtle slope, surrounded on all sides by a gently rolling farmed countryside, offering fine long views north to the North Downs and glimpses of long framed views S to farmland. There are a few isolated houses in the surrounding landscape with low impact, but one large imposing complex of farm sheds visible to the south. The parcel itself is a mix of one large arable crop field to E of the lane, an L-shaped mature coppice woodland, plus a fallow field to the west of the lane. Important ecological links via stream to dykes in F5 from the boundaries of F6. Most hedgerows and boundaries intact.				
Visual context and unity – assess the views, outlook, adjacent landuses and overall unity of the landscape and note any detracting features and their significance				
View out to south along lane shows screened views of large farm buildings. Fine panoramic view to N. Downs and N tip along E of woods. Pockets of farmhouses in landscape surround it but low impact.				<i>Interrupted</i>
Ecological integrity – how well does this area of countryside function as a habitat for wildlife?				
Extent of semi-natural habitat and patches Woods in centre and N links to woods in W in D9. Good coppice & glades and good pond beside woods. Good verges. Indication of ditches – dry in July.	Ecological corridors and networks Good stream to N with links to important dykes (to the north in F6.)	<i>Moderate</i>		
Intensity of land use and habitat trend moderate				
Condition of heritage features – assess current condition and make note of vulnerability to change				
Tree Cover	Age structure Good mix in woods Old ash pollard on lane Few mature scattered veteran trees in hedge (oak, ash)			<i>Variable</i>
Field Boundaries	Survival of historic field pattern and condition Mainly intact – mix of stock fences and hedges, but a large open arable field E of lane.			<i>Variable</i>
Other features	Lane running N/W is framed by wood canopy and tall herbs			<i>Good</i>
Impact of built development – how well does modern development respect local vernacular, character and sense of place				
Type Farm sheds and barns Farm house	Siting south of F6	Design huge modern	Extent Visible at boundary	<i>Moderate</i>



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Photograph locations/ direction



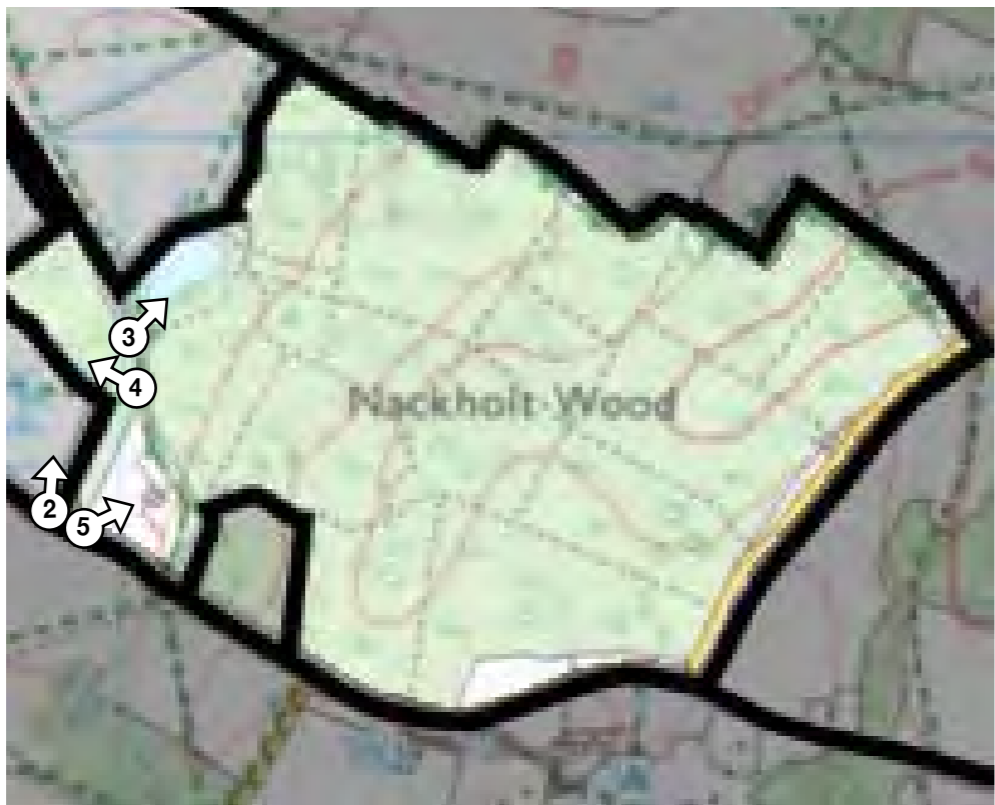
Brabourne Vale

BV3: Nackholt Wood

Study Sector:		Hinxhill (Map ref: TR065426)	
County Landscape Character Area:		Brabourne Vale	
Historic Landscape Type:		4.3/4.4/4.9 various woodland	
Boundaries:		F7 to W/ B16 to S Brabourne Vale open countryside to N & E (beyond development area)	
TOPOGRAPHY	Insignificant	Landform gentle slope from east towards west	Views out (long/short/restricted)
TREE COVER	Dominant	Key visual elements light & airy feel on west due to wide spacing of poplar plantation & light canopy. Darker more dense scrubby coppice to south mature oaks & tall canopy to SE.	Views within (filtered/framed/open/restricted) Some conifer plantation screens within.
ENCLOSURE PATTERN	Insignificant	Key visual elements Some stock fence to west. Good dense hedgerow to south along lane. Several stock fences to enclosure parcels within.	Pattern and scale
SETTLEMENT & BUILT FEATURES	Insignificant	Key visual elements one house in a clearing to SW	Pattern
LANDUSE	Apparent	Key visual elements Plantations in separate areas- poplar & conifer, plus native mature woodland throughout with coppice hazel areas especially SW & S.	Seasonal variation
KEY CHARACTERISTICS – in what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?			
Natural features	Rivers/ knolls/ ponds West side has a forest swamp feel around pond. Some ditches and marshy wet woodland areas.	Species associations Pendulous sedge, ducks, mammals & invertebrates.	
Landuse/farm type	Primary Woodland – coppice & plantations. Residential house insignificant.	Other Evidence of shooting paths for recreation along N & W edges.	
Woodlands	Coppice/plantation N- poplar plantation S-some blackthorn & hazel in coppice stools in pine plantation. Evidence of deer preventing regeneration of field layer.	Species Poplar & aspen, willow, hawthorn, bramble, oak, elder, a few spruce, dogs mercury.	
Tree cover	Groups/linear/hedgerow/scattered/shelterbelt Some glades/ rides, some mature natives. Mix of open airy, dense coppice and tall plantations.	Species	
Field boundaries	Hedges/ditches/stock fence/electric Stock fence to W edge. Good dense hedge to S of lane with veteran oaks near S. boundary	Species Maple, ash, dogrose, hawthorn, hazel, dogwood, hornbeam, honeysuckle, black bryony.	
Highways and footpaths	Major road/railway/local road/footpath/no public access Footpath along west edge. Local lane along southern edge.	Other features (such as tree-lined lanes)	
Built features	Villages/settlements/farms/churches/oasts An isolated house to the SW corner in a clearing.	Urban edge/pylons/masts/new housing	
Other features (such as moats)	Flower meadow in SE corner with lots of species including rushes.		

F13 Nackholt Wood

Brief summary description: A medium sized square parcel of mixed use woodland. To the west side is open airy stands of tall poplars and a large pond surrounded by willows giving a 'forest swamp' character. The wide poplar planting allows glimpses out to arable fields to W. A tranquil spot. Further south there is wet woodland with ditches and dense hazel coppice with sedges. A good number of veteran oaks form a tall canopy visible on the south boundary, which joins a local lane. This boundary has a strong diverse hedgerow plus an open wet flower meadow. The conifer plantation is well screened from public view. High ecological integrity.				
Visual context and unity – assess the views, outlook, adjacent landuses and overall unity of the landscape and note any detracting features and their significance Light airy widely spaced plantation offering glimpses out to arable fields and hedges to the west. <i>Intact</i>				
Ecological integrity – how well does this area of countryside function as a habitat for wildlife? Extent of semi-natural habitat and patches Large pond with many bankside trees (willow, hawthorn) & scrub to west. Several small marshy/ wet wood areas within. Good number of veteran oaks. Ecological corridors and networks Good hedge corridor to north-west and southern boundaries. Hedgerows have high species count. <i>High</i>				
Intensity of land use and habitat trend Plantation evident in only a few places – mainly screened by native trees from public viewpoints.				
Condition of heritage features – assess current condition and make note of vulnerability to change Tree Cover Conifers screened from view. Poplar plantation to west – tall mature, wide open stands. Water table may be affected if the plantation is felled. Coppice is dense to SW & S. Mature structure to south. <i>Variable</i>				
Field Boundaries Survival of historic field pattern and condition Stock fence in places only, on W edge. Good hedgerow to lane boundary at S. <i>Variable</i>				
Other features Woodland pond to W edge has a forest & swamp feel. Crustose & Foliose lichens on poplar bark. <i>Variable</i>				
Impact of built development – how well does modern development respect local vernacular, character and sense of place				
Type house	Siting isolated in SW clearing	Design old	Extent Low-moderate as screened	<i>Low</i>



Photograph locations/ direction

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Studio Engleback
8a London Road
Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN1 2EJ

Tel: 01892 538 537
Fax: 01892 538 438
email info@studioengleback.com
web: www.studioengleback.com

studioengleback