Chilmington Green & Discovery Park | Urban Extension

Strategic Framework Capacity Study:
Landscape & Visual Impact Baseline for AAP

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Grontmij

CONTENTS

APPENDICES

CONTENTS

Grontmij

1.1.1 This report identifies, describes and evaluates the existing landscape and visual baseline conditions of the application site, and assesses the landscape and visual sensitivity of the application site to proposed development. It has been prepared by Grontmij Limited (formerly Whitelaw Turkington Landscape Architects) as a baseline study to inform the Area Action Plan (AAP) and masterplanning process for the Chilmington Green / Discovery Park Urban Extension. The report forms the basis for the development of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, which will be developed as part of an iterative Masterplanning process and informs the AAP process. The baseline study locates the site within the planning policy context. It goes on to methodically assess the landscape qualities, character and key site features, and determine the opportunities and constraints that will inform the AAP and Proposed Development.

1.1.2 The landscape and visual impact baseline study locates the site within the planning policy context. A series of desktop studies and site visits have been carried out to review the existing landscape context and features:

- Review of existing regional context
- Topography
- Urban grain and structure
- Existing vegetation at a regional and local scale, including pattern of historic hedges
- Existing drainage
- Locations of Listed buildings and Scheduled monuments

This information was collated to identify and assess:

- Zone of visual influence
- Key views
- Detailed review of previous Landscape Character Area Assessment
- Hedgerow Assessment
- Drainage Assessment
- Landscape Sensitivity Assessment
- Visual Signficance / Sensitivity Assessment

1.1.3 Particular care has been taken to ensure a transparent and accepted methodology has been utilised in assessing the value of landscape character areas, features and elements on the site. Whilst it is not possible to remove all subjectivity from the assessment of landscape features, the aim has been to structure the assessment clearly and identify the method of appraisal for each element or feature.

1.1.4 The Landscape Informants Diagram summarises the key landscape issues and features. These landscape informants, together with the Landscape Sensitivity Diagram, will inform the development of the scheme masterplan and AAP, and provide the baseline information for the Landscape and Visual Assessment.

The landscape informants summarised in the diagram represent the following:

- Great Chart Ridge

Great Chart Ridge

1.1.5 This was identified by the Core Strategy Inspector as a prominent and sensitive landscape feature that must be respected by the proposed development, particularly considering the potential impact of development on historic Great Chart further up on the ridge and visual prominence from the A28.

1.1.6 The Great Chart ridge primarily consists of farmland gently sloping up to the ridgeline, which is topped by areas of woodland ranging from the distinctive copse at Coleman's Kitchen Wood to bands of new woodland associated with a former landfill site and the newly planted Millennium Wood.

1.1.7 The extent and scale of development appropriate within the Great Chart Ridge zone, as indicated on the Landscape Informants diagram, depends on the specific context. For example, the ridgeline immediately south of the A28 has been compromised by new development at Singleton, and the masterplan should aim to soften and/or screen the ridgeline in keeping with this visible gateway into Ashford from the south.

Woodland

1.1.8 Small, distinctive blocks of ancient woodland typical of the High Weald landscape character area are located within and adjacent to the study area, and are assumed to have high historic and ecological value.

1.1.9 Coleman's Kitchen Wood, a historic coppiced woodland located on an outcrop of Greensand at the south-eastern tip of the Great Chart Ridge, is the most prominent within the site due to its higher elevation.

1.1.10 Long Length has a linear woodland associated with the route, which is a very distinctive landscape feature.

1.1.11 It is important that the masterplan respect the locations and settings of these woodlands. Links to woodlands beyond the site, including public rights of way, visual connections and ecological / habitat linkages need to be considered in the masterplan layout.

1.1.12 Consideration of the woodlands and their settings will inform the identification of the masterplan footprint and AAP boundary.

Standard Trees and Hedgerows

1.1.13 Large and distinctive standard trees have been identified within the site. Most occur within the existing or remnant hedgerows, and significant isolated standard trees generally lie along remnant or historic hedgerow and land boundaries. An arboricultural assessment of the trees will be undertaken once the scheme Masterplan footprint and AAP boundary have been identified.

1.1.14 Existing hedgerows have been identified and assessed in terms of their character and value as landscape features. They are ranked as high, medium and low value hedgerows, determining the relative degree to which they inform the design development of the scheme Masterplan.

Drainage Courses and Flood Areas

1.1.15 Drainage courses have been identified and assessed in terms of their character and value as landscape features. They have value as historic features of the rural landscape, which connect with the hydrological and ecological function and value, and historic character of the area. The assessment ranks the landscape value of the drainage courses from high to low, in terms of the degree to which they inform the design development of the scheme Masterplan.

1.1.16 Flood areas have been indicated as they directly impact on development footprint and land uses, as well as potential landscape character.

Designated Public Routes

1.1.17 Byways, public rights of way, National Trails and National cycle routes have been mapped as they indicate areas of greater sensitivity as well as important connections within and beyond the study area.

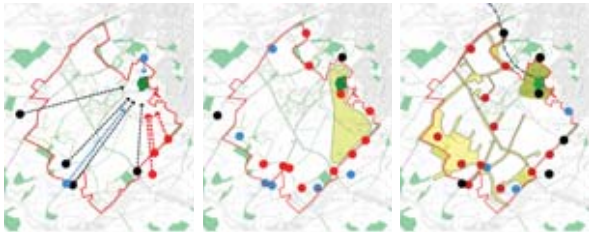
Heritage Features and Buildings

1.1.18 The locations of listed buildings and scheduled monuments have been indicated on the Landscape Informants diagram. Heritage buildings and monuments pose a constraint in terms of preserving and/or protecting their landscape setting, but also provide an opportunity to embed the historic character of the area into the proposed scheme Masterplan.

Co-ordination with other studies

1.1.19 The landscape elements and features have only been identified in terms of their landscape qualities and features. The Landscape Informants Diagram will be overlain and integrated with the results of the other baseline studies, such as Ecology, Drainage and Heritage, in order to inform the design development of the scheme Masterplan and AAP.

1.1.20 Regular liaison between the Design Team and the consultants carrying out the various studies and assessments enables the varied constraints and opportunities to be embedded into the development of the scheme Masterplan and AAP in an integrated manner.



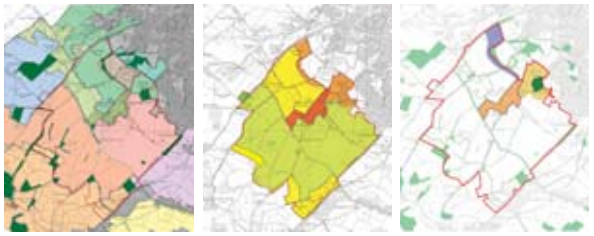
Key Views & Visual Sensitivity

1.1.18 23 key viewpoints were identified as characteristic views of the application site and/or of particular importance or sensitivity. The visual assessment was based on these selected representative view point.

1.1.19 The significance of the visual effect resulting from the proposed Development was derived through consideration of the potential sensitivity of change to the view, along with the magnitude of change to the view.

1.1.20 The sensitivity of the receptor relates to the amenity value of the view, and the level of its significance (International to Local). Views from public footpaths and residences where the view is key to its quality are considered more sensitive than transient views from roads or workplaces.

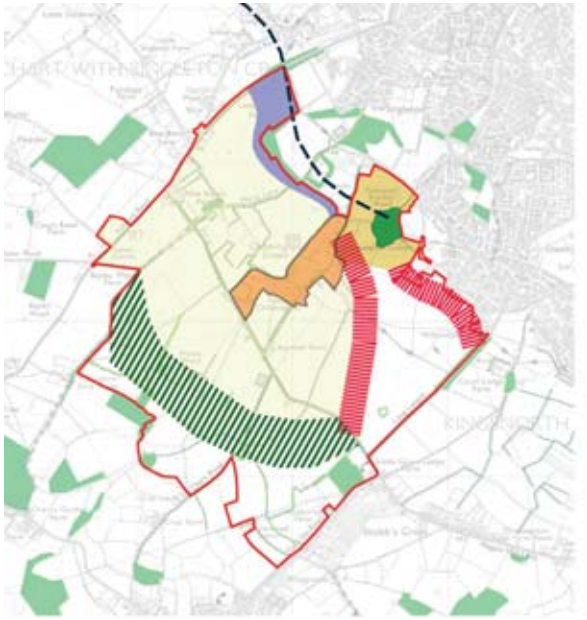
1.1.21 The sensitivity of the receptor is based on the visibility of important existing features. This is based on the visibility of features as assessed in the landscape informants diagram, with particular weight given to the views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood and the potential development edge.



Landscape Character Areas

1.1.21 The existing landscape character areas are identified and described in the baseline assessment, through an appraisal of physical, aesthetic and intangible attributes including the sense of place, rarity or uniformity, and unspoilt appearance.

1.1.22 The quality of the landscape character areas was determined and this informed the assessment of the sensitivity of the character area to change.



Masterplan Development

1.1.23 By combining the findings of the landscape and visual assessments, the key landscape and visual issues that should inform and guide the development of the Masterplan and AAP become apparent. Five key issues have been identified:

- Coleman's Kitchen Wood and setting
- Southern Boundary edge
- Discovery Park edges
- The Hamlet
- Great Chart Ridge edge

1.1.24 The report makes key recommendations to address the five key issues. Proposals for avoiding, reducing or compensating and enhancing for the landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development are provided, along with proposed advance planting for visual mitigation.

Introduction

1.1.1 This report identifies, describes and evaluates the existing landscape and visual baseline conditions of the application site, and assesses the landscape and visual sensitivity of the application site to proposed development. It has been prepared by Grontmij Limited (formerly Whitelaw Turkington Landscape Architects) as a baseline study to inform the masterplanning process for Chilmington Green / Discovery Park Urban Extension. The report forms the basis for the development of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, which will be developed as part of an iterative Masterplanning process and will also informs the Area Action Plan process.

1.1.2 The baseline study locates the site within the planning policy context. It goes on to methodically assess the landscape qualities, character and key site features, and determine the opportunities and constraints that will inform the AAP and Proposed Development.

Methodology

1.1.3 Particular care has been taken to ensure a transparent and accepted methodology has been utilised in assessing the value of landscape features and elements on the site. Whilst it is not possible to remove all subjectivity from the assessment of landscape features, the aim has been to structure the assessment clearly and identify the method of appraisal for each element or feature.

1.1.4 To this end, the Landscape and Visual Quality Assessment has been prepared according to the "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment" Second Edition (2002) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and "Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland" (2002) published by The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage.

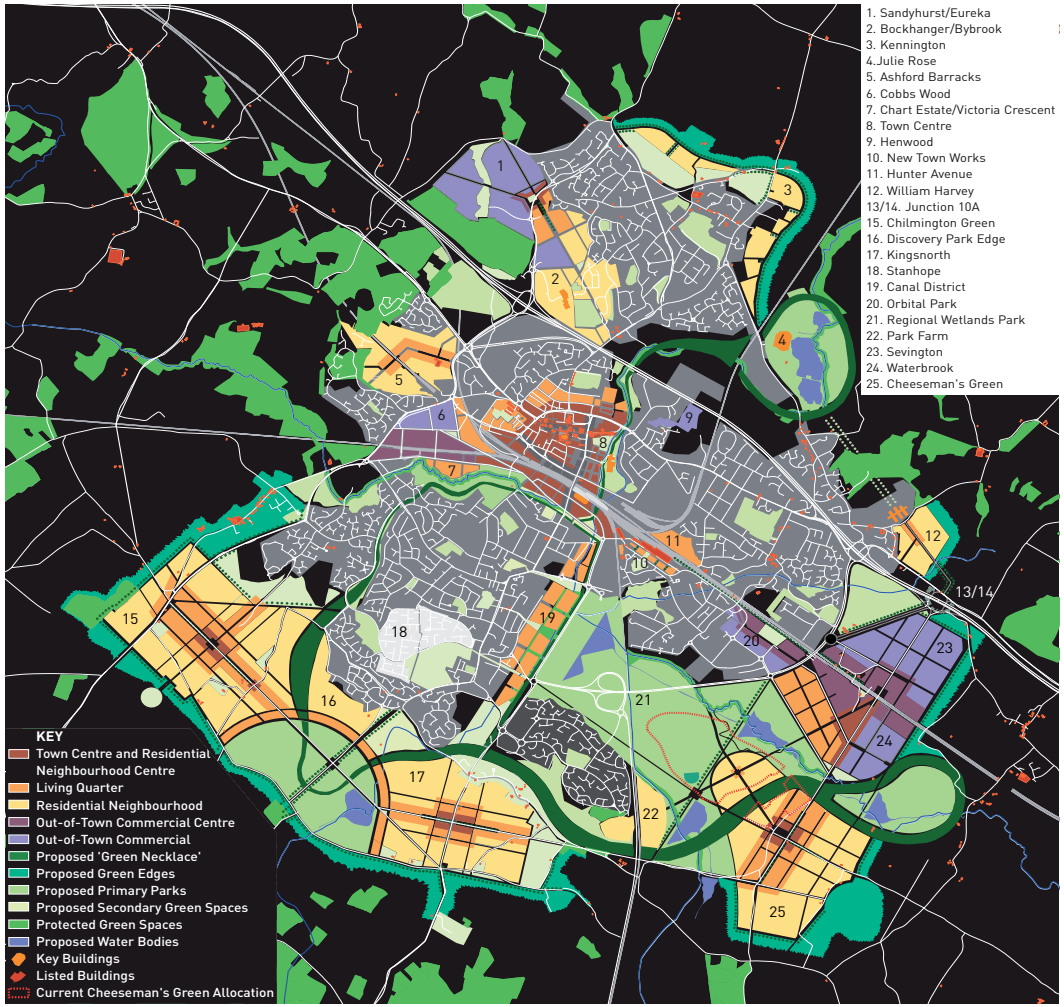


FIGURE: WT1 GREATER ASHFORD DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK MASTERPLAN

2.1.1 Whilst the Ashford Core Strategy is the strategic development plans document for the area, its evidence base and approach was underpinned by the Greater Ashford Development Framework (GADF). The GADF is the primary background document setting out the spatial strategy for Ashford. The report documents the masterplanning exercise undertaken in response to the Sustainable Communities Plan. The Sustainable Communities Plan identifies Ashford as a strategic growth area, which aims to expand the town by 31,000 homes and 28,000 jobs by 2031.

2.1.2 A masterplan was developed through a series of processes, which included a decision making and public consultation process, environmental assessment and technical studies. A visioning exercise developed strong vision for the future of Ashford, establishing a set of over arching themes.

2.1.3 Chilmington Green was identified as being a suitable location for a new urban neighbourhood. The Chilmington Green area forms an important anchor to a high quality bus public transport corridor which will also serve the existing communities of South Ashford and Singleton. It also forms the western portion of Orchard Way, a proposed strategic east-west route. Chilmington Green urban area also forms the western edge of Discovery Park, a proposed strategic park for arts, sports and entertainment within the Green Knecklace.

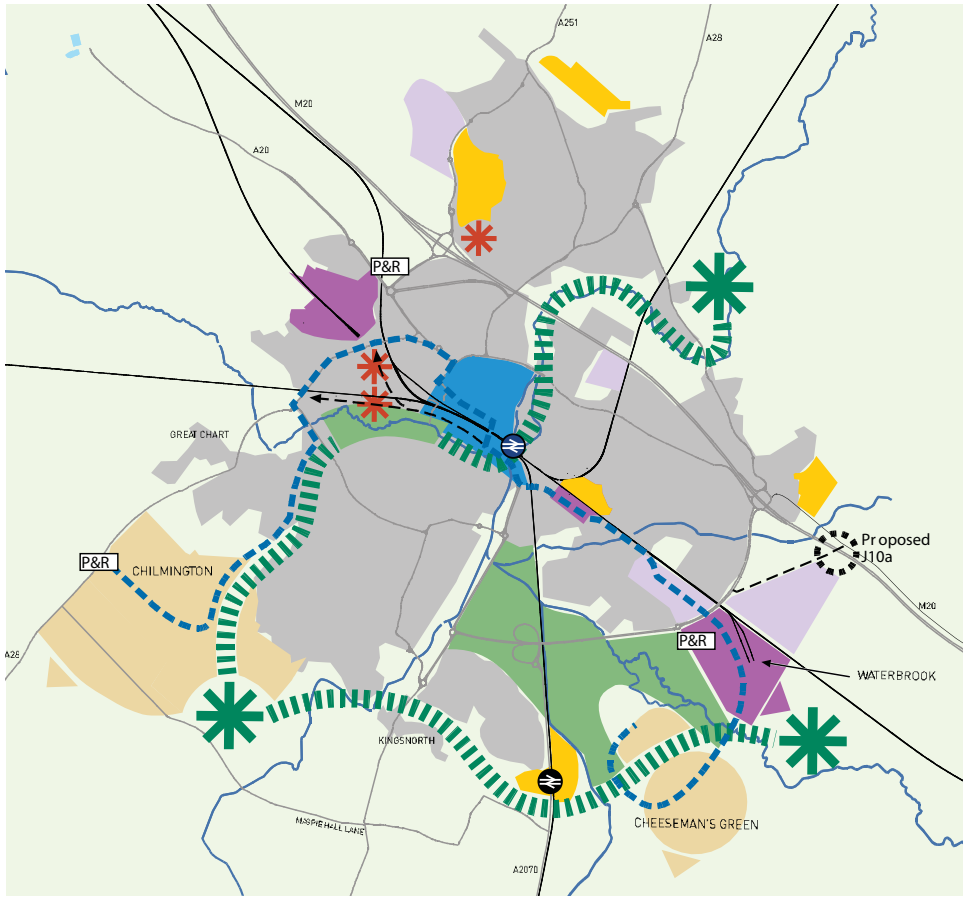


FIGURE: WT2 ASHFORD GROWTH AREA DIAGRAM

2.2.1 The Core Strategy is the primary LDF document and was adopted in 2008 following a public examination in front of an independent Inspector. It sets the strategic vision for development in the Borough between 2006 and 2021. The Core Strategy sets out:

- The Council's vision for the future of the Borough;
- The spatial strategy for the Borough, including the peripheral growth;
- Broad locations for housing and other strategic development needs such as employment, retail and transport development;
- How quality places with the highest possible standards of design and sustainability will be delivered;
- Core topic policies on a range of strategic issues needed to deliver the overall vision including housing, transport infrastructure, community infrastructure and flooding; and
- How the Council will monitor and deliver the Local Development Framework.

2.2.2 Policy CS5 sets out the parameters for Chilmington Green / Discovery Park. It should accommodate no less than 3,350 dwellings and 600 jobs by 2021, with the potential for over 7,000 dwellings and about 1,000 jobs in total.

2.2.3 The production of an Area Action Plan (AAP) will help to guide the detailed planning of Chilmington Green / Discovery Park to ensure that the development is planned and implemented in a comprehensive way. The AAP and supporting development briefs and/or design codes need to achieve the following core aims:

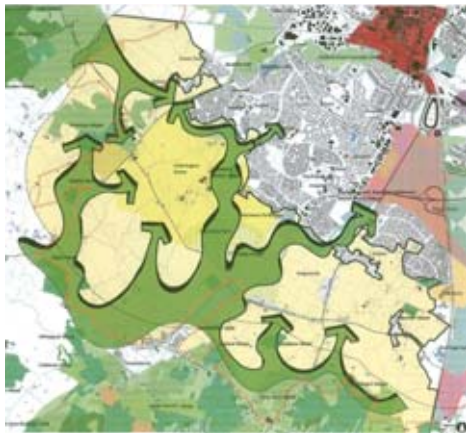
(a) create flexibly designed, mixed-use places of real character with well defined local centres. Overall layout must maximise potential use of public transport, walking and cycling;

(b) incorporate high quality building design, public spaces and landscaping to create strong character areas and overall sense of place. Innovative solutions for the future management and maintenance of public spaces and facilities and for community development initiatives;

(c) good relationship within rural landscape surroundings through well designed edge to development and transitions to countryside. Proposals to include plans for long term use and management of these areas, responding to landscape and heritage protection, nature conservation, ecology, flood mitigation and sustainable drainage, public access and agricultural uses;

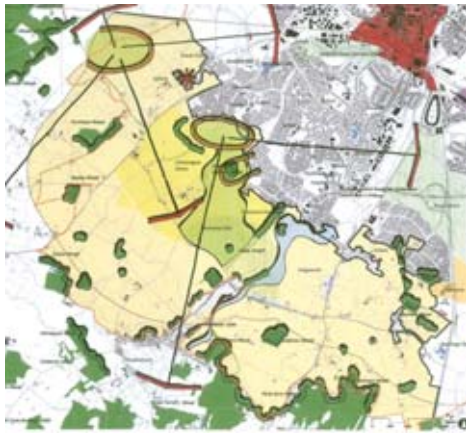
(d) phased development which is supported by delivery of infrastructure and elements required for balanced, mixed community.

LEGEND
- Town centre regeneration area
- Primarily employment development areas
- Primarily residential development areas
- Mixed use development areas
- Areas of search for mixed use (re)development opportunities
- Main urban extension areas (CS5)
- Possible direction of post 2021 urban extensions
- Proposed highway schemes
- Initial SMARTLINK route
- Strategic parks
- Strategic parks awaiting further clarification
- Green necklace

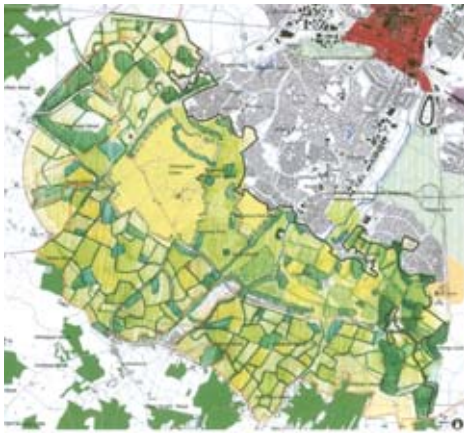


Biodiversity (Map 40b) - Ecological connections between ponds, damp meadow and woodlands provide a good network of semi-natural habitats and improved linkages to green open space.

Landscape Character (Map 40c) - The typical Wealden pattern of small fields set against a backdrop of woodland provides visual enclosure. Potential to create distinctive river and wetland, woodland / meadow and ridgeline character areas.



Legibility (Map 40e) - High points are prominent landmarks on the approaches to Ashford, and provides opportunity for panoramic views. Isolated coppice woodlands prominent features in open farmland. Steep, hedged lanes, pollarded willows and formal oak-ash avenue of Long Length are distinctive local features. River floodplains not always legible in wider landscape, but have potential for stronger presence.



Green & Blue Grid Sketch Vision (Map 40li) - Indicative plan suggesting how the area can be transformed based on the objectives of the Green and Blue Grid (see Action Points and Priority Projects opposite)

FIGURE WT3: ASHFORD GREEN & BLUE GRID STRATEGY BETHERSDEN FARMLANDS BIODIVERSITY MAPS 40b, 40c, 40e and 40li

2.3.1 The Ashford Green & Blue Grid Strategy sets out the agenda for environmental action across Ashford Borough, defining an integrated network of areas. The Strategy has been prepared as a key background document to guide the development of green and blue infrastructure within the Local Development Framework and fulfilling the basic requirements of a standard PPG 17 assessment, but more creative and ambitious in response to the need to deliver a sustainable Growth Area.

2.3.2 This report identifies a Green and Blue Grid as a multifunctional network of 'green infrastructure' with 'blue' title highlighting the prevalence and quality of 'blue infrastructure' within Ashford. The emphasis of the Green & Blue Grid is on linkages and the relationships between habitats, greenspaces and the wildlife/communities they serve. The key objectives of the Green & Blue Grid Strategy combine biodiversity and ecology concerns with recreation and amenity needs and aspirations, and promoting culture and heritage, sustainable transport and energy, food security and economic opportunity.

2.3.3 Green & Blue Grid Principles were developed for each of the components of Ashford, based on detailed mapping and analysis. The following Action Points and Priority Projects were identified for the Bethersden Farmlands component, within which Chilmington Green is located:

2.3.4 Bethersden Farmlands: Green & Blue Action Points

- Extend typical Wealden mosaic of woodland, wet woodland, pasture and damp meadow northwards from Shadoxhurst to fringes of Ashford - reinforce character, ecological value and opportunities for SUDS
- Conserve and enhance hedged rural lanes
- Conserve hill-top woodlands of Coleman's Kitchen Wood and on Singleton Hill, and their settings
- Conserve and extend remnant isolated woodlands - enhance by creating woodland edges and links to network of hedgerows

2.3.5 Bethersden Farmlands: Green & Blue Priority Projects

- Explore function, scale and boundaries of Discovery Park to link up hill to Coleman's Kitchen Wood, Millennium Community Woodland and the Environment Centre at Singleton - form physical link between Stanhope communities and new communities at Chilmington Green, and to countryside to the south. Key influences are:
  - prominent slope below Coleman's Kitchen Wood and link to valley floodplain
  - reinforce contrasts in character between floodplain, hill slope and wooded hill tops
  - provide open space buffer of sufficient scale to protect Coleman's Kitchen Wood and Singleton Hill woodland
  - extend landscape character and ecological value of Low Weald woodland landscapes by creating new woodlands and hedgerows to connect existing wet woodland habitats.

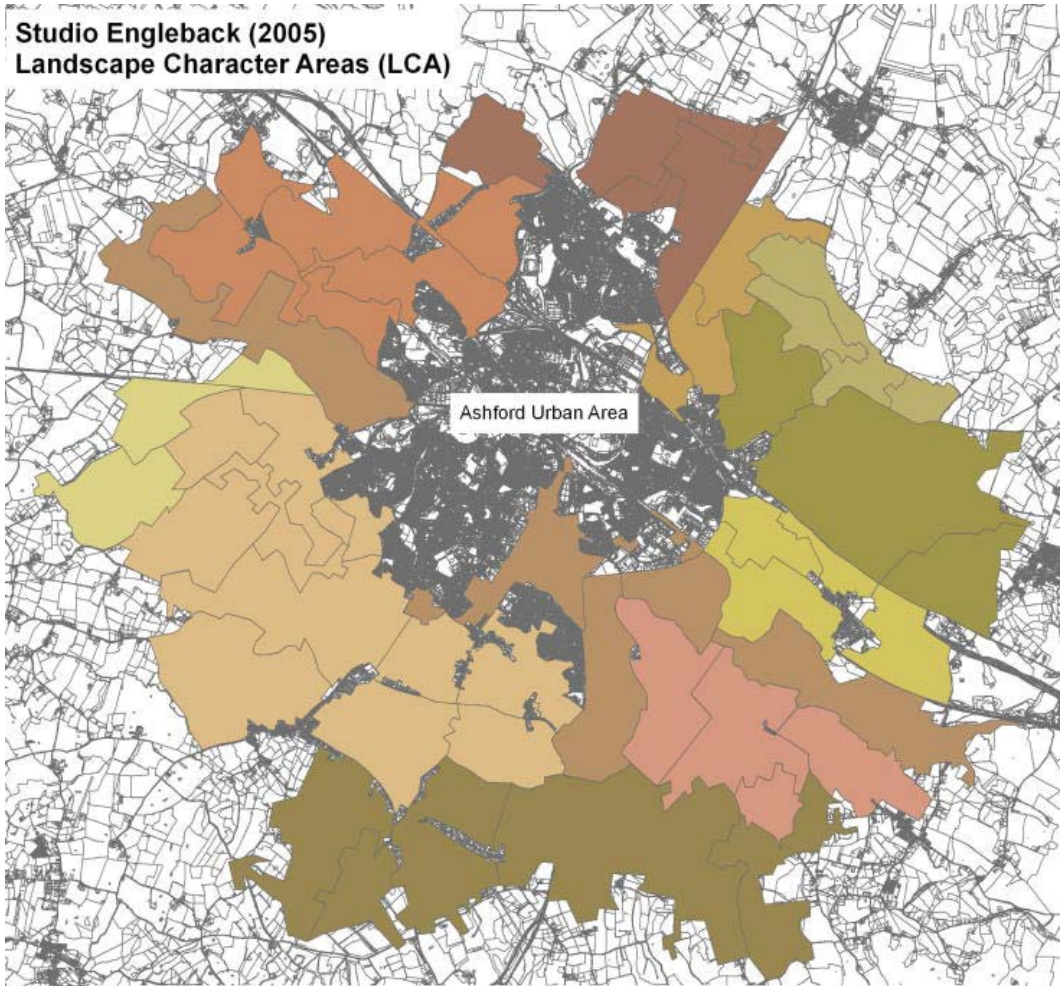


FIGURE WT4: DISTRICT CHARACTER AREAS IN BETHERSDEN FARMLANDS

2.4.1 Ashford Borough Council published the Landscape Character SPD in 2011 to promote regard for the landscape and ensure new development makes a positive contribution to the landscape.

2.4.2 Policy TRS17 - Landscape Character and Design
Development in the rural areas shall be designed in a way which protects and enhances the particular landscape character area within which it is located, and where relevant, any adjacent landscape character area. Proposals shall have particular regard to the following:

- landform, topography and natural patterns of drainage
- the pattern and composition of trees and woodlands
- the type and composition of wildlife habitats
- the pattern and composition of field boundaries
- the pattern and distribution of settlements, roads and footpaths
- the presence and pattern of historic landscape features
- the setting, scale, layout, design and detailing of vernacular buildings and other traditional man made features
- any relevant guidance given in an AONB Management Plan or in a Landscape Character SPD

2.4.3 Policy TRS18 - Important rural features
Development in the rural areas shall protect and where possible, enhance the following features:

- ancient woodland and semi-natural woodland;
- river corridors and tributaries;
- rural lanes which have a landscape, nature conservation or historic importance;
- public rights of way

2.4.4 Where detailed information or guidelines are required, the document refers to the two landscape character assessments that cover the Borough:

- Studio Engleback (2005) Ashford Landscape Character Study
- Jacobs (2009) Ashford Landscape Character Assessment

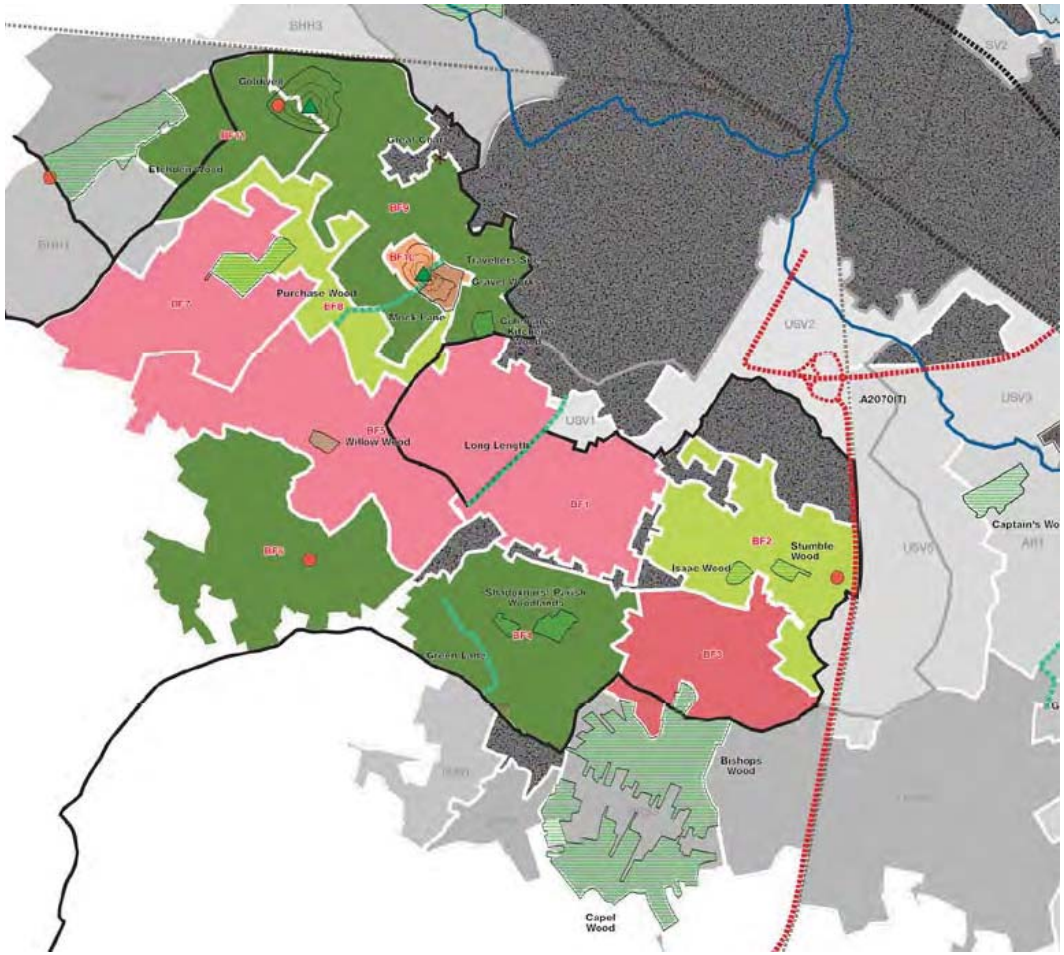


FIGURE WT5: DISTRICT CHARACTER AREAS IN BETHERSDEN FARMLANDS

2.5.1 The report was commissioned to produce a Landscape Character Assessment of the hinterland of Ashford. The study area was grouped into 58 District Landscape Types (DLT) based on similarity, for the assessment. Each DLT was subjectively assessed based on the assessors knowledge of the area and issues, applying a series of criteria, including: visual unity, ecological integrity, condition of heritage features (e.g. hedges) and impact of built development. A matrix was used to determine the condition and sensitivity of each character area.

2.5.2 The study area falls within the Bethersden Farmlands County Character Area, as identified by the "Landscape Assessment of Kent" (2004) by Jacobs Babtie. The Bethersden Farmlands are typified by a Wealden pattern of small fields and bushy hedgerows, which breaks down in the flatter areas due to the consolidation of fields for mechanisation.

2.5.3 Bethersden Farmlands Character Area was divided into the following DLTs which are within or adjacent to the study area:

- BF4 Stubbs Cross Woodlands
- BF5 Chilmington Open Arable
- BF6 North Shadoxhurst Bocage
- BF8 Goldwell Lane Farmsteads
- BF9 Great Chart Farmlands
- BF10 Mock Lane Knoll

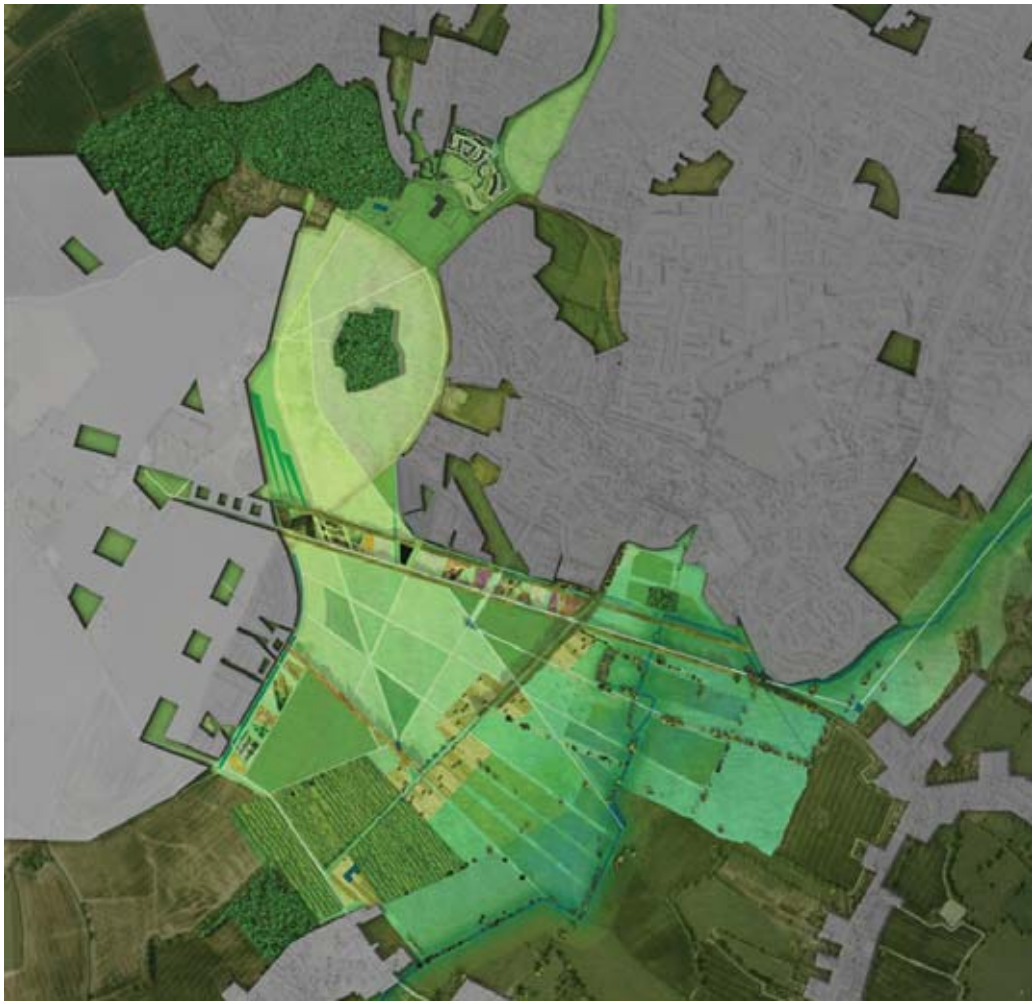


FIGURE WT6: DISCOVERY PARK LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK PLAN

2.6.1 Discovery Park is one of three new strategic parks that will be designed in response to the growth of Ashford. Core Strategy Policy CS18a sets out the requirement for the creation of the strategic open spaces, whilst the required size and boundaries will be determined by the relevant Development Plan Document (in this case, the Chilmington Green and Discovery Park AAP).

2.6.2 Gillespies' concept masterplan for Discovery Park sets out a template for the gradual creation and development of Discovery Park. The objectives of the Discovery Park concept stage are:

- The creation of a significant new strategic park to greatly enhance the quality of open spaces to the south of Ashford;
- To provide a significant new area of designed parkland as a setting for the new development in response to ABC's policy and open space requirements;
- To provide a valuable landscape asset for the town and surrounding catchment, including family destinations to appeal to a wider audience;
- To define an appropriate response to the character of the existing landscape;
- To define destinations and activity areas within the park which could provide compelling additions to the attractiveness of Ashford as a place to live and visit; and
- To define and economically sustainable parkland destination with a range of attractions with a family focus.

2.6.3 Gillespies' based the location of Discovery Park around an area of land which includes the southern residential fringes of Ashford, the landscape feature of Long Length and the winding course of the Whitewater Dyke. They proposed that it include the prominent local landmark of Coleman's Kitchen Wood on raised ground close to Singleton Environment Centre. A notional southern boundary is defined in the area of Magpie Hall Lane.

2.6.4 Gillespies envisaged that a portion of the park would provide a significant quantity of the formal open space required as part of the new mixed use development of Chilmington Green, as defined by the Draft Green Space and Water Environment SPD (ABC). However, at the time of the report it was not known how this would be distributed between the park and the development. The size of the strategic park would not be limited to the combined size of the open space requirements for Chilmington Green, in order to achieve a 'strategic' scale. It would include other areas of land, such as land not considered suitable for development, additional land to the east of Whitewater Dyke and potential open space provision contributed by the possible development of Kingsnorth.

2.6.5 Discovery Park will be used extensively by local users, but will also attract users from further afield. The masterplan treated the park as a "jigsaw", with pieces that can be added as plans for the wider area progress and funding becomes available. The four underlying objectives for the park are:

- To provide high quality accessible open space, in a cost-effective manner, that makes the area an excellent, and desirable place to live and work;
- To help achieve ABC's environmental and sustainability targets;
- To provide family-oriented leisure, culture and education of outstanding quality; and
- To provide outstanding facilities for formal and informal physical activity.

2.6 Discovery Park: concept design
continued

2.6.6 The landscape framework provides a network of connections within the park and with the surroundings. These connections include functional links between destinations as well as recreation routes within the development and the broader setting of South Ashford. The defined connections serve to create a wide range of route options within an open and accessible environment which can serve as a recreational resource for all.

2.6.7 Gillespies proposed two strategies to deliver the Park:

- The creation of 'Green infrastructure': marking out the ground with simple landscape markers to define the corners, mark entrances and key routes, locate elements and thus beginning the process of communicating the presence of the park as soon as possible, and helping to define the scale and form of the park.
- A range of 'Landmark Destinations' to be distributed around the park, located in key positions: A range of community play spaces, allotments and sports facilities in addition to a variety of commercial operations to raise revenue to support a sustainable future for the park.

2.6.8 Gillespies' envisaged that the Park will be developed and managed by a charitable trust with the funding coming from a wide range of sources. Ashford Borough Council would take the lead in establishing the Park in the early years and the Trust would take over management/development once it has the resources to do so.

FIGURE WT7: DISCOVERY PARK EMERGING PARK FRAMEWORK, WITH POTENTIAL CONNECTIONS DIAGRAM & ILLUSTRATIVE EAST-WEST CONNECTION INSETS

2.7 Discovery Park: ABC Councillor Presentation Design Sketchbook Rev 04
March 2011 | Gillespies

2.7.1 In March 2011 the Discovery Park proposals were developed further, in conjunction with the emerging masterplan for Chilmington Green, as presented to the ABC Councillors. Key developments proposed by Gillespies were:

- Notional Chilmington Green development footprint identified, including extension to Brisely Farm edge;
- Long Length determined as eastern boundary of Discovery Park;
- Proposed East-West link remains as strong feature, and proposed routes through Discovery Park indicated;
- Character zones proposed, including hill top & woodland; and
- Principle of locating open space and community facility requirements generated by Chilmington Green within Discovery Park indicatively shown in the form of a sports hubb and play area and pavillion, located off the Discovery Park spine.

FIGURE WT8: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - REGIONAL CONTEXT

3.1.1 The Chilmington Green / Discovery Park development area is located on the urban outskirts to the south-west of Ashford. The A28, a strategic route, connects the site directly into the centre of Ashford and defines the north-western edge of development.

3.1.2 Vehicular connections through the site into the south-western suburbs of Ashford - Singleton and Stanhope - are relatively limited. Mock Lane links up to Bucksford Lane, Singleton. Long Length provides access up into Stanhope, connecting with Coulter and the eastern end of Chart Road. Magpie Hall Road is the only east-west route.

3.1.3 The historic village of Great Chart lies immediately north of the study area, located on higher ground on the Great Chart Ridgeline. Stubbs Cross Hamlet is to the immediate south-east of the site, with Shadoxhurst further south.

3.1.4 An old land fill site, which is now used for grazing horses, working gravel / sand quarry and Traveller and Gypsy camp are located between Singleton and the study area on the Great Chart Ridgeline. Coleman's Kitchen Wood, is located prominently on the eastern extent of the ridgeline.

3.1.5 The study area itself consists predominantly of farmland, with a patchwork of arable fields. The finer grain pattern of small fields edged with hedgerows typical of the character area has been altered as a result of enlarging and consolidating fields, particularly towards Ashford's urban edge.

3.1.6 Chilmington Green, a hamlet with a number of Grade 2 listed buildings and a scheduled monument, lies within the centre of the study area. There are a number of farm houses, outbuildings and semi-industrial buildings concentrated around the Ashford Road / Magpie Hall Lane intersection.

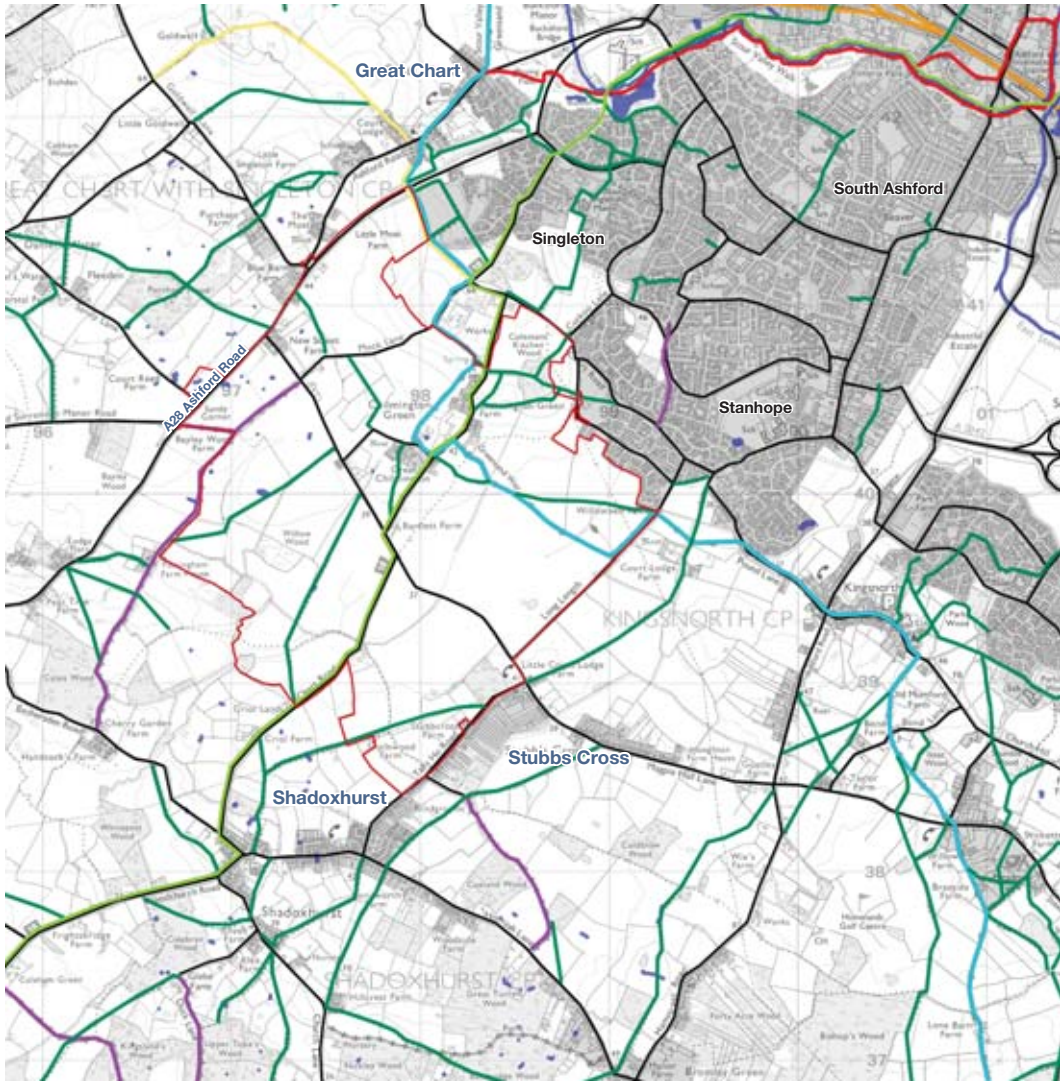


FIGURE WT9: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - REGIONAL CONTEXT

3.2.1 There are a significant number of public rights of way through the study area, these provide walking routes across the fields and farmland. The most notable of these is the long distance walkway and National Trail; the Greensand Way, which is part of a 108 mile route through Kent and Surrey. Most of this walk is through Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

3.2.2 National Cycle Route #18, which runs from Canterbury to Royal Tunbridge Wells via Ashford, passes through the study area. The route is predominantly on-road.

3.2.3 A byway extends south of Magpie Hall Road, extending south from Mock Lane.

- Urban Settlements
- Water bodies
- Railway line
- Road
- Public right of way: footpath
- Bridleway
- National Trail
- Byway
- Greensand Way
- National Cycle Route

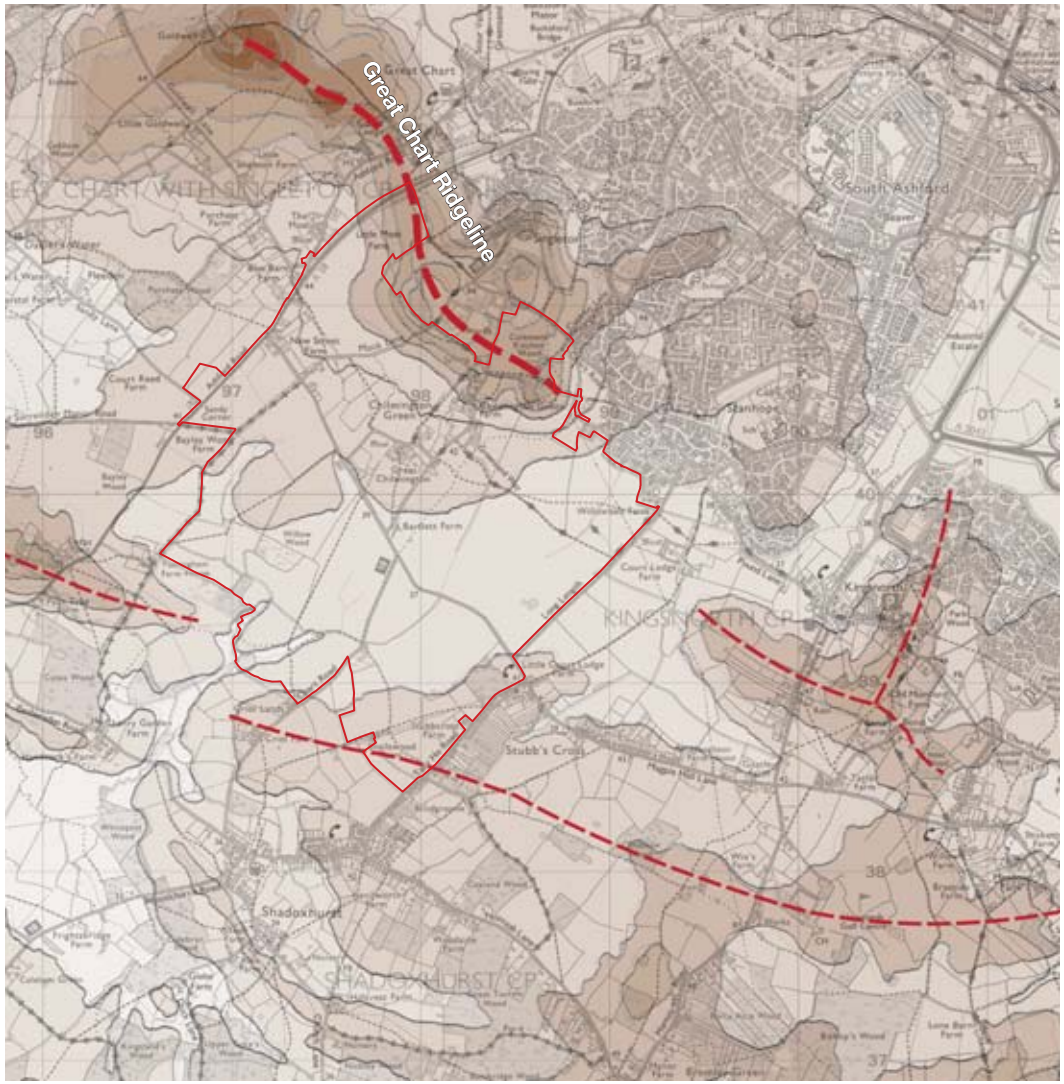


FIGURE WT10: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - TOPOGRAPHY

3.3.1 The topography is an important part of the character of the area on a number of levels. Visually, it defines the limits of the views of the site, as well as the opportunities for views out from the site, particularly elevated views.

3.3.2 The study area is located within the low-lying Low Weald, as if slopes away from the southern slopes of the Greensand Area to the north. The Great Chart Ridge is a southerly Greensand outcrop, and stands as the highest and most prominent feature within the study area of 60 to approximately 78m above sea level.

3.3.3 The relief of the study area broadly consists of southerly facing slopes, dropping away from the Great Chart Ridge down to the Low Weald, but at a detail level the landscape is a subtle yet convoluted scarp slope. The majority of the area undulates between 35 and 50m above sea level. Localised ridgelines to the south of the study area run in an east-west direction, characteristic of the broader geology of the area.

3.3.4 The soils are Wealden Clay across the majority of the site. They tend to be heavy and saturated, particularly in the lower areas of the site which are within flood areas, particularly east of Long Length and south of Magpie Hall Road. An outlying area of Greensand forms the Great Chart Ridge.

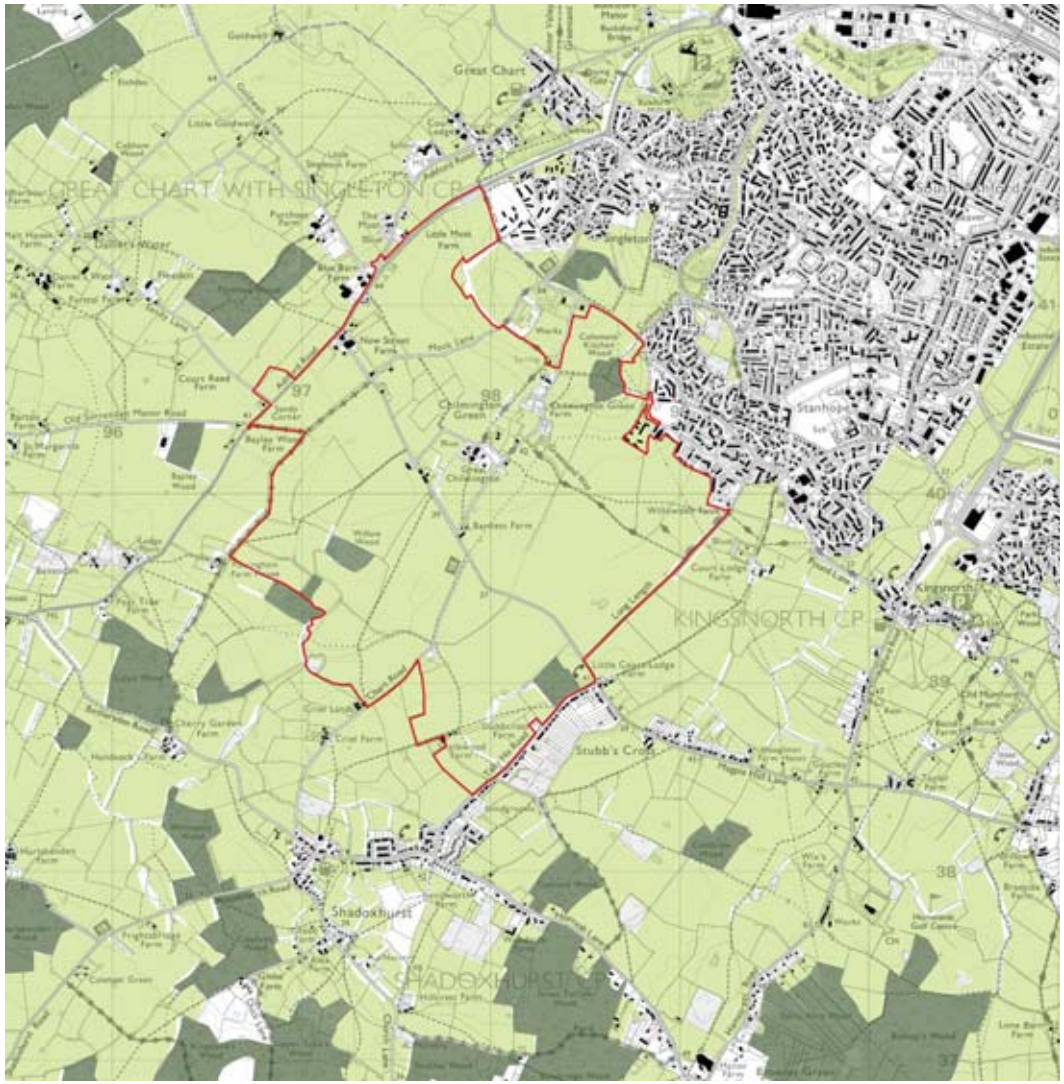


FIGURE WT11: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - EXISTING URBAN GRAIN / STRUCTURE

N

3.4.1 Chilmington Green development area lies outside the south-western edge of Ashford. Singleton and Stanhope are both predominantly residential areas, with relatively insular road layouts and a lack of access to facilities and amenities. The existing urban edge has been largely determined by land ownership boundaries. The Singleton development has encroached on the Great Chart Ridgeline and is subsequently prominent on the A28 approach to Ashford.

3.4.2 Great Chart village, located prominently on the Great Chart Ridge, dates back to approximately 1,100 years ago. The village street is a conservation area with most of the properties listed buildings, and the heritage and visual setting of this area is highly sensitive.

3.4.3 Chilmington Green hamlet dates back to the medieval period, and consists of a number of grade 2 listed buildings, Chilmington Green Manor, farmhouses and associated buildings, typically with a strongly defined setting of hedgerows and trees. The buildings are located on a subtle localised ridgeline, to the centre of the study area. A number of farm buildings and semi-industrial buildings are located at the junction of A28 and Magpie Hall Lane.

3.4.4 The hamlet of Stubb's Cross is located immediately south-east of the site, and the village of Shadoxhurst is slightly further away and partially beyond the localised ridgeline to the south. Shadoxhurst parish dates back to the 13th century, and the urban grain, particularly of Stubb's Cross reflects the historic farming pattern.

3.4.5 The historic settlement of Kingsnorth lies to the east of the site, beyond the Whitewater Dyke.

3.4.6 The majority of the proposed study area comprises of farm land, which historically had a fine grain of small fields edged with hedgerows and drainage ditches. This fine grain has been disrupted due to mechanisation of farming practices, which has led to fields being enlarged and hedgerows being removed, particularly on the flatter ground immediately south of Ashford.

3.4.7 Blocks of woodland are remnants of the once forested Low Weald and reflect the historic practice of coppicing and woodland management.

Built form

Open space

Woodland

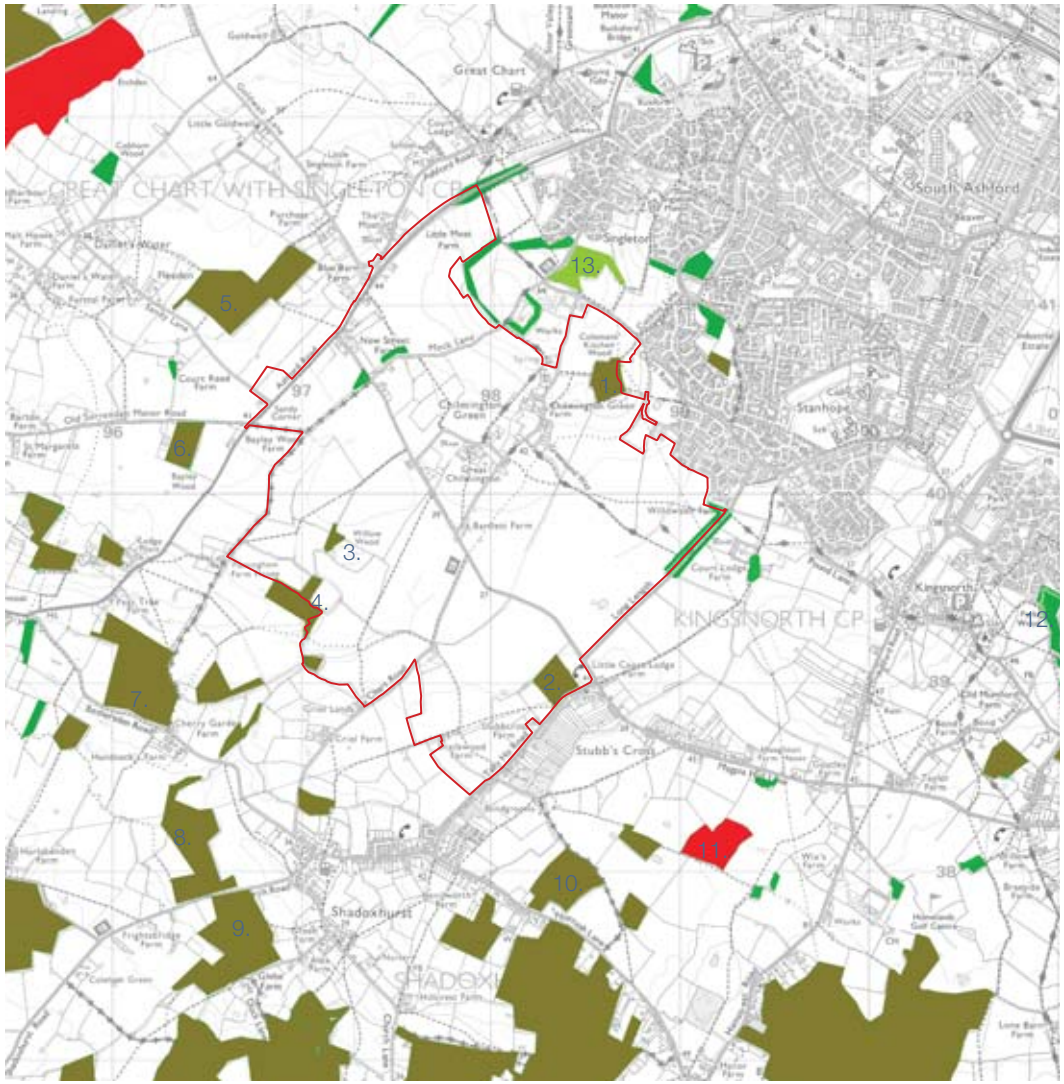


FIGURE WT12: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - EXISTING SIGNIFICANT VEGETATION

N

3.5.1 There is a mosaic of ancient woodland amongst the arable farmland, becoming increasingly substantial moving south of Ashford, beyond Shadoxhurst, and west of Ashford, past Great Chart.

3.5.2 Ancient Woodland within or immediately adjacent to the study area:

1. Coleman's Kitchen Wood
2. Stubbcross Wood
3. Willow Wood
4. Boyce Wood
5. Purchase Wood
6. Bayley Wood
7. Calais Wood
8. Whitepost Wood
9. Colebran Wood
10. Coxland Wood
11. Coldblow Wood
12. Park Wood

3.5.3 Recent Woodland within or immediately adjacent to the study area:

13. Millennium Wood

3.5.4 Coleman's Kitchen Wood is particularly prominent within the surrounding area due to its character and location as a distinct copse on the Great Chart Ridgeline. The recent woodland of Millennium Wood is also a prominent mass along the ridgeline.

3.5.5 The woodlands within the low, relatively flat landscape frame and terminate views and, together with the topography, create a sense of enclosure. Purchase Wood, Willow Wood, Bayley Wood and Coleman's Kitchen Wood were all former coppice woods, and remain prominent in the landscape.

- Ancient semi-natural woodland
- Ancient replanted woodland or plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites
- Recent woodland
- Other woodland

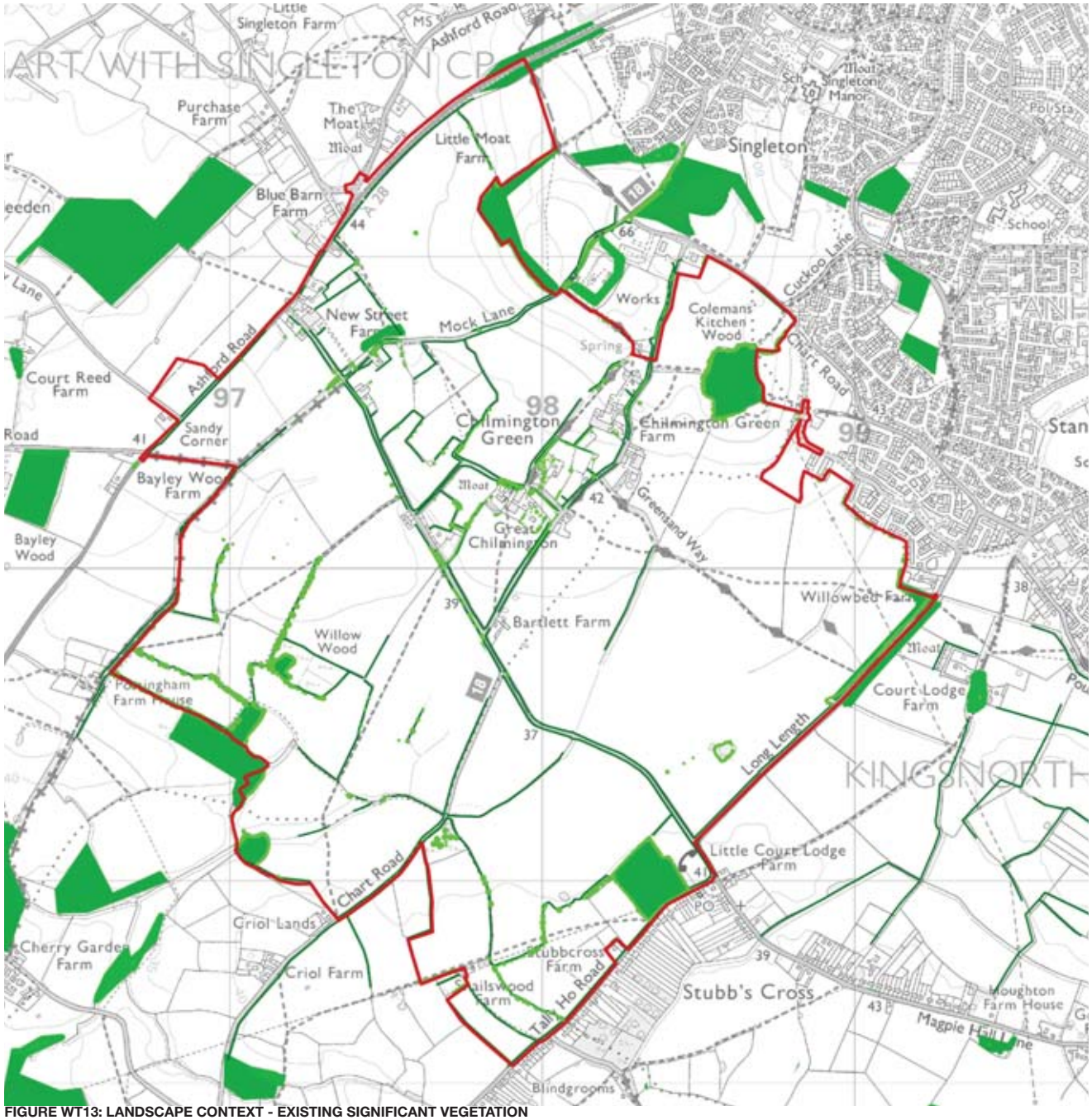


FIGURE WT13: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - EXISTING SIGNIFICANT VEGETATION

3.6.1 The vegetation within the area is characterised by a mosaic of woodland, hedgerow, wetland, grassland and arable crops.

3.6.2 Development pressure and mechanisation of farming has resulted in a loss of hedgerows and the finer grain of small and medium sized pasture and fields, particularly in the flatter areas closer to Ashford (for example to the north of Long Length).

3.6.3 Hedgerows typically consist of hedgerows with occasional large standard trees, predominantly Oak and Ash. Willow occurs in the floodplains, and a prominent line of pollarded Willows runs alongside a drainage ditch to the south of Magpie Hall Road.

3.6.4 Coleman's Kitchen Wood is the unmanaged remnant of a historic hornbeam and hazel coppice on greensand outcrop. The wood south of Singleton and surrounding the Environment Centre is a Millennium Wood, and is prominently located along the Great Chart Ridgeline, as is the tree planting surrounding the old landfill site.

3.6.5 A linear woodland runs along Long Length, consisting predominantly of Oak and Ash.

3.6.6 In addition Stubbcross Wood, Willow Wood and a part of Boyce Wood are also present within the study area. These are ancient woodland and former hornbeam coppice.

3.7 Historic Hedges: Study Area

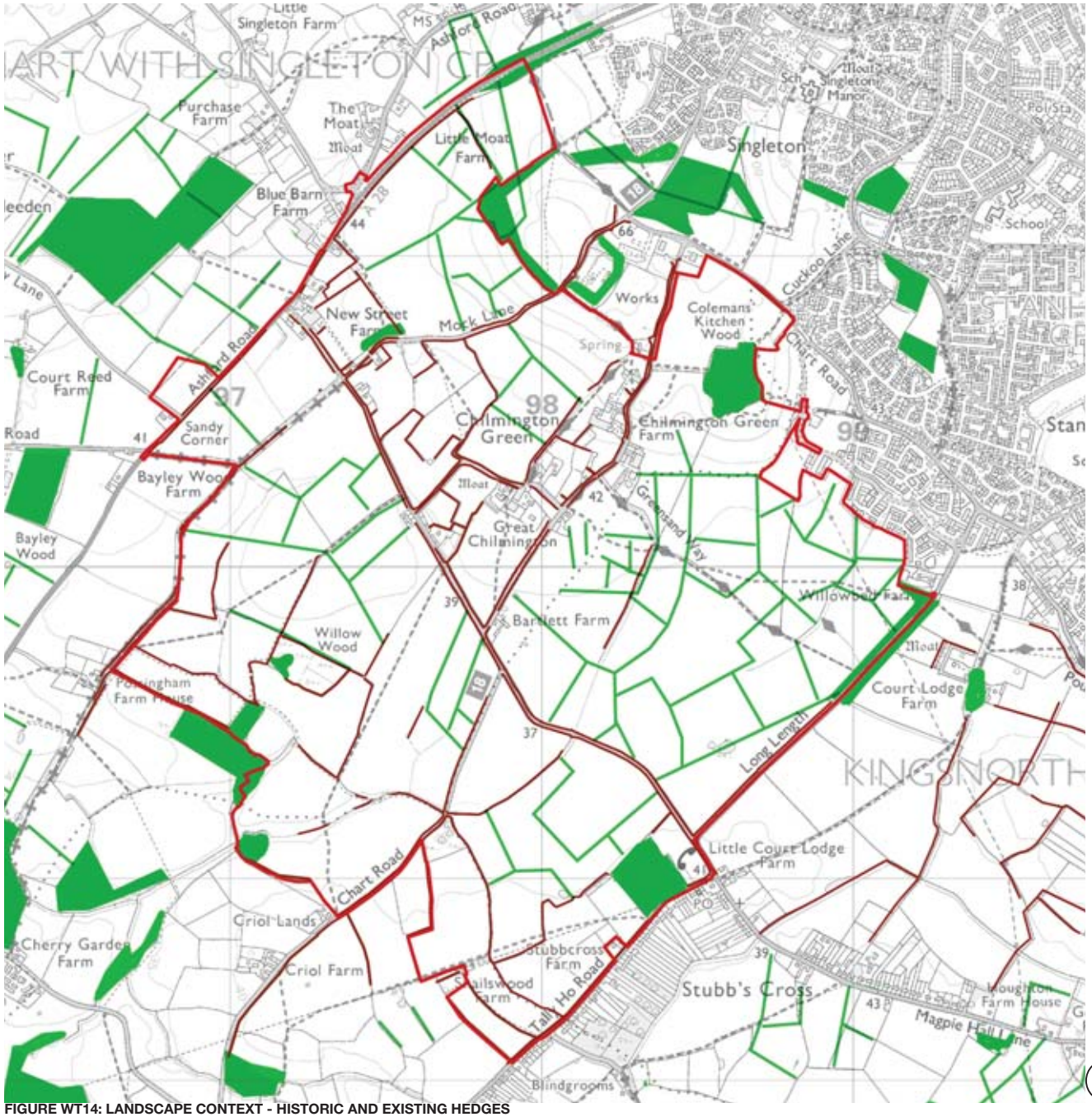


FIGURE WT14: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - HISTORIC AND EXISTING HEDGES

3.7.1 The lost hedges mapping reflects the original landscape character typical of the Low Weald farmland, which consisted of small scale fields defined by hedges and drainage ditches.

3.7.2 This pattern has been fragmented over time as mechanised farming methods led to the consolidation of fields and removal of hedgerows. The greatest loss of hedges has occurred in close proximity to Ashford urban area, particularly the large, flat area west of Long Length.

Existing Hedgerows

Hedgerows lost since 1870's

Woodland

3.8 Existing Drainage: Study Area

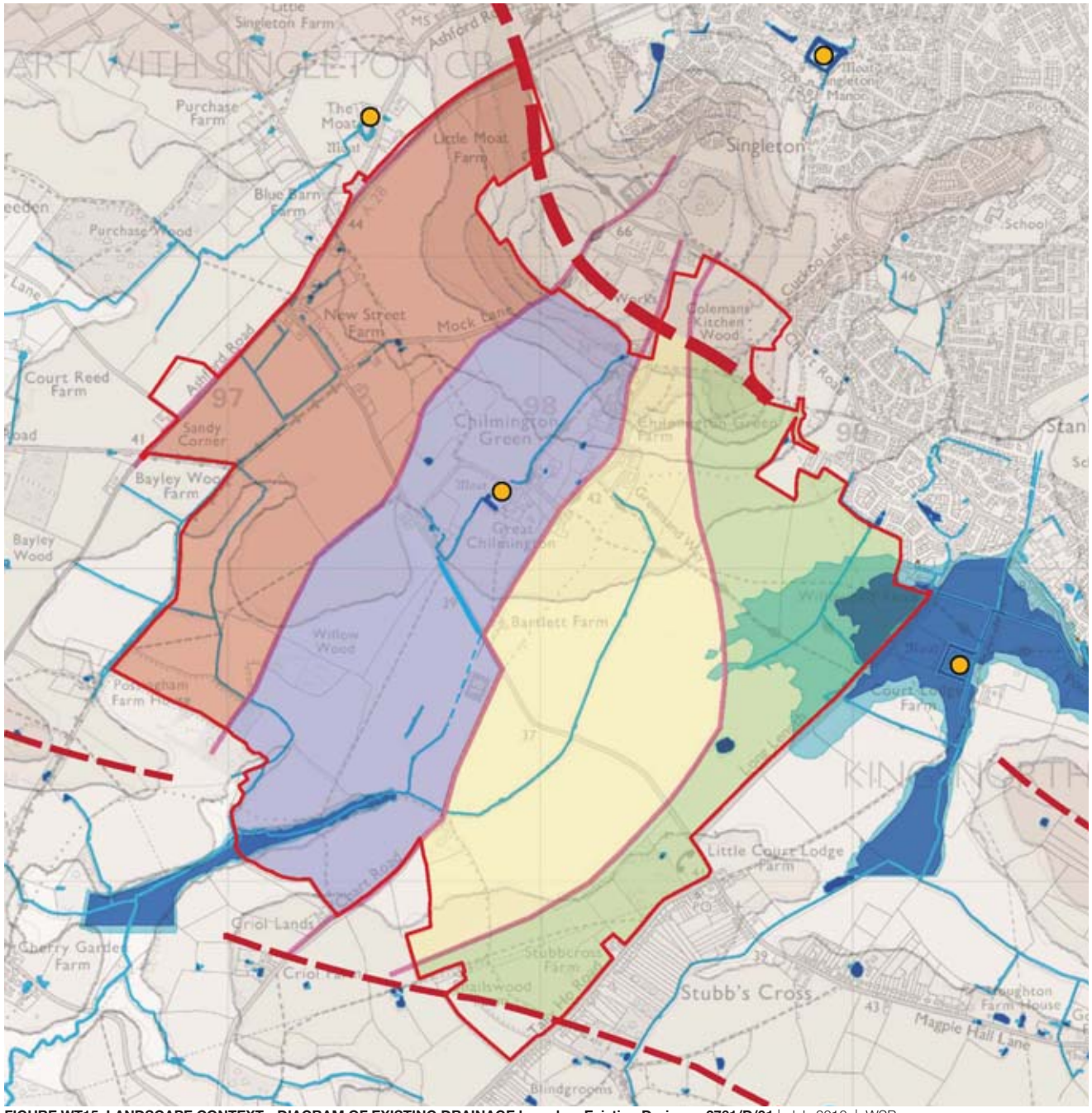


FIGURE WT15: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - DIAGRAM OF EXISTING DRAINAGE based on Existing Drainage 2761/D/01 | July 2010 | WSP

3.8.1 Aside from the clear falls across the study area away from the Great Chart Ridge, the area has a series of subtle undulations, ridgelines and falls. The network of different drainage systems reflects these different catchment areas.

3.8.2 The number of permanent water bodies, springs and rains, and fluctuating levels of water visible in the drainage ditches reveals the prevalence of water on the site and reflects the slowly permeable and seasonally wet characteristics of the loamy and clayey soils. The nature of the soils and terrain have meant that the historic development of an interconnected field drainage system has been important to open up the agricultural potential of saturated soils for farming.

3.8.3 The historic Wealden pattern of small, tile-drained fields demarcated with hedges and ditches is a typical element of the Low Weald landscape character area. Moated farmhouses in and adjacent to the study area further reflect the relationship between water and drainage, and historic landscape features.

3.8.4 The eastern part of site drains into the Stour system via the Whitewater Dyke. The remaining bulk of the site drains into the River Beult system to the south-west. Clay soils in the headwaters mean that the rivers have a 'flashy' response to rain events, and the flat areas result in wide flood areas. Potential 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 year flood zones are indicated, which have implications for the land use in these areas.

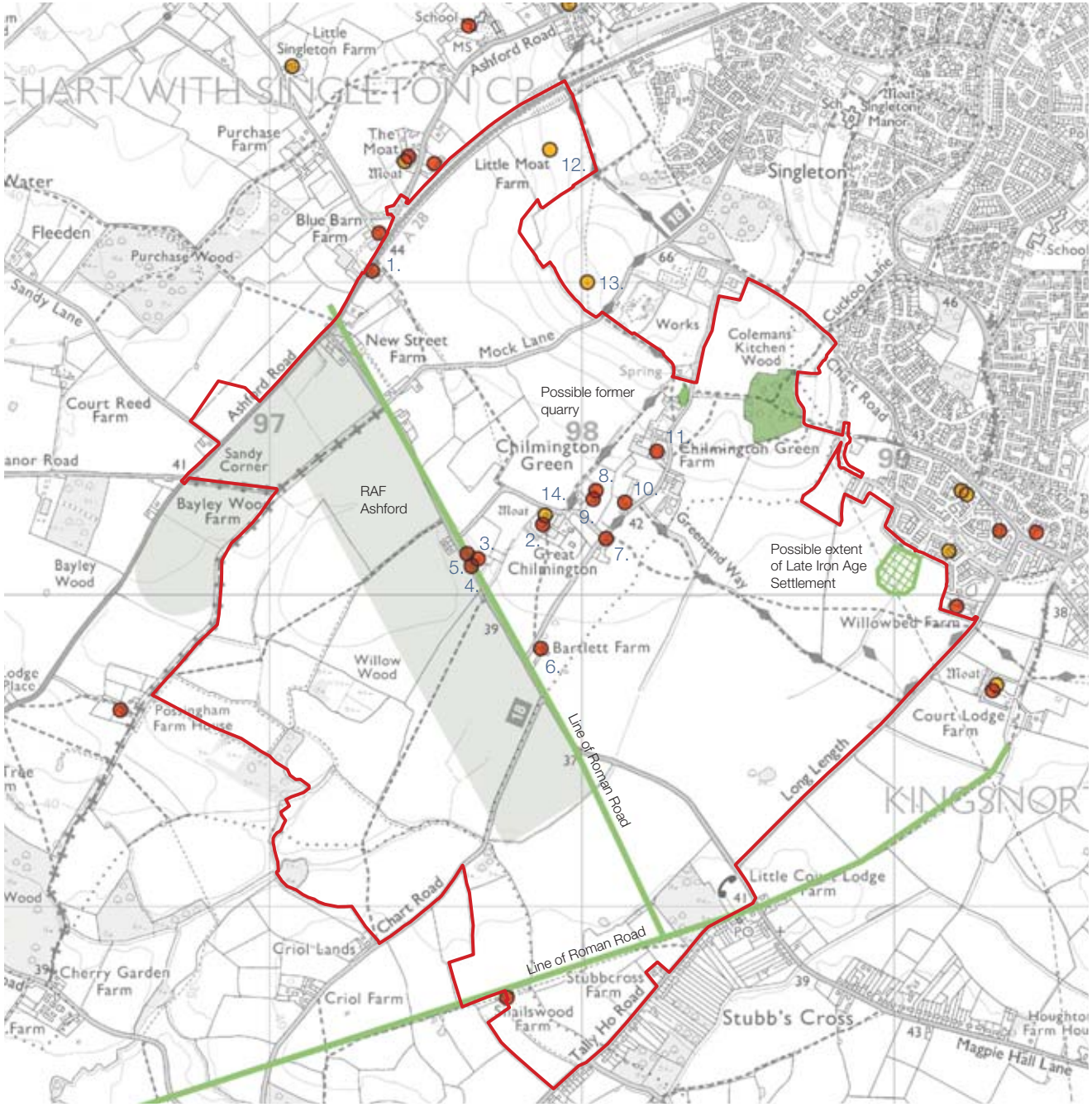


FIGURE WT16: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - PRELIMINARY HERITAGE OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS based on Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of Land at Chilmington Green, Ashford, Kent | July 2008 | WSP

3.9.1 An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of Land at Chilmington Green was undertaken in 2008. This identified the hamlet of Chilmington Green, established during the medieval period, and 11 Grade II Listed Buildings present within the study area.

3.9.2 Grade II Listed Buildings

1. 180894 The Pig & Whistle, Great Chart, Ashford Road
2. 180910 Great Chilmington Farm House
3. 180911 Little Chilmington
4. 180912 Garage to south-west of Little Chilmington
5. 180913 Storehouse to north-west of Little Chilmington
6. 180914 Bartlett Farmhouse Great Chart
7. 180915: Stone cottages Great Chart
8. 180916 Netters Farm House Great Chart
9. 180917 Barn to south of Nettlers Farmhouse
10. 180918 Chilmington Cottage
11. 180919 Chilmington Farmhouse

Kent Historic Environment Record Data Points:

12. TQ94 SE32 Possible location of the Old Bakehouse
13. TQ94 SE25 Old Chilmington & Twysden
14. TQ94 SE11 Great Chilmington Green Manor House and Moat

3.9.3 Two Roman Roads are known to run through the study area. Medieval remains include buildings in and around Chilmington Green and earthworks associated with the Great Chilmington Moat. Medieval field, paddock and plot boundaries also exist within the site, as well as surviving post-medieval field boundaries.

3.9.4 A temporary airfield was constructed during World War II, although no visible elements of the airfield survive.

3.9.5 Further to the 2008 Desk-Based Assessment an Historic Landscape and Built Heritage Appraisal was undertaken in 2011.

3.9.6 The appraisal consisted of a review of historical documents and cartographic sources and an extensive walkover survey. From this a series of 'Heritage Assets' were identified which, along with a detailed Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC), led to the study area being sub-divided into eight Character Areas. Sensitivity was considered for each of the Character Areas which in turn reflected the varying heritage assets and the key characteristics of each area.

RAF Ashford

Possible Archeological Potential

Grade II Listed Building

Kent Historic Environment Record Data Points

3.10 Hedgerow Assessment

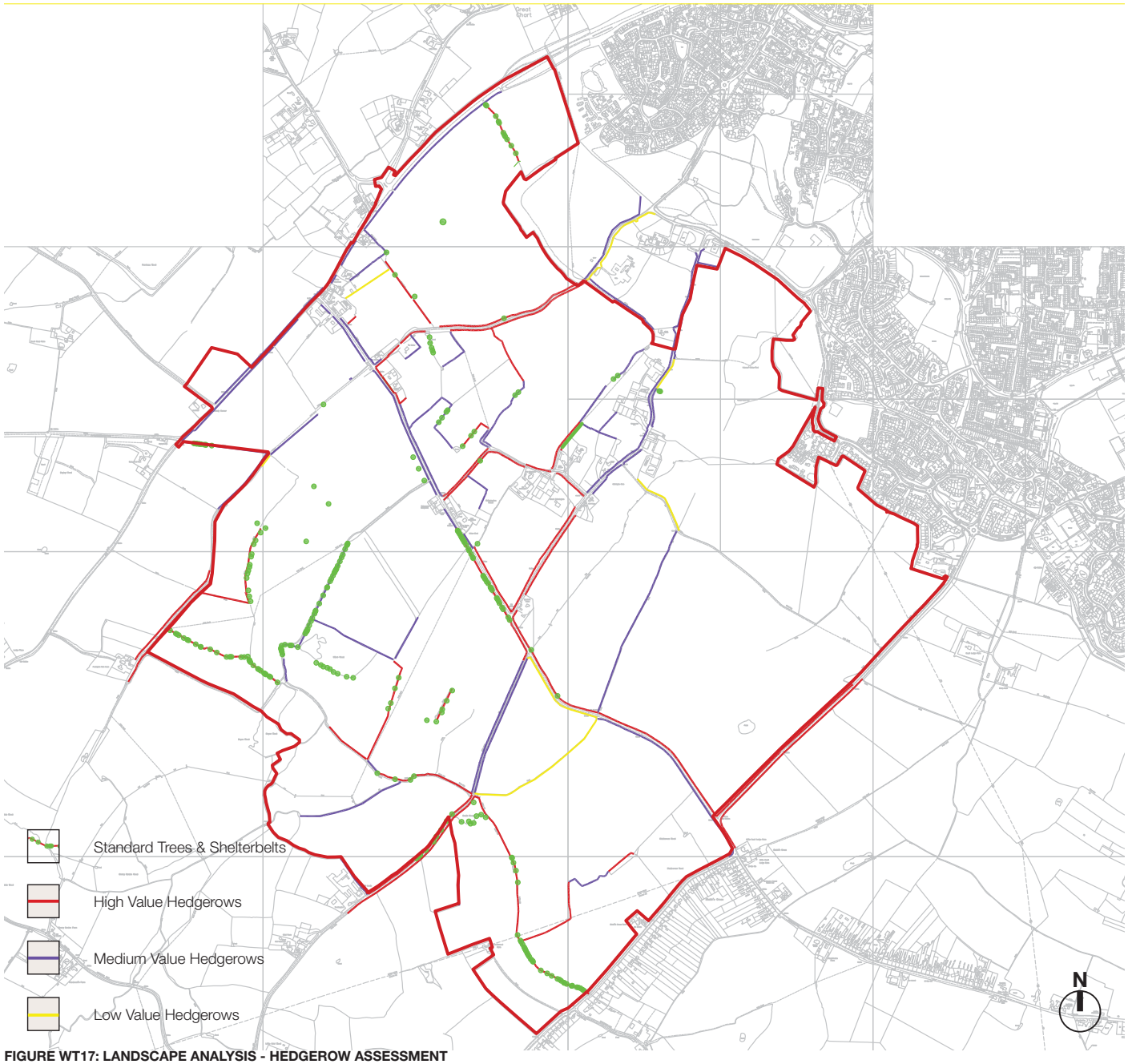


FIGURE WT17: LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS - HEDGEROW ASSESSMENT

3.10.1 A methodical site assessment of existing hedgerows within the broad study area was undertaken in a series of site visits between March and May 2010.

3.10.2 Field study sheets document their location, context and function to aid mapping the hedgerows spatially. Their continuity, height, condition and vegetation type were recorded, along with information about distinctive features and visual distinctiveness that applies to the hedgerow being assessed.

3.10.3 Distinctive features refers to features that are associated with the hedgerow which give it a more significant or distinctive character. Distinctive features include physical details such as drainage ditches and trees, as well as a relationship between the hedgerow and significant routes, such as a byway, National trail and National cycle route.

3.10.4 Visual distinctiveness refers to hedgerows that consist of or incorporate shelter belts, standard trees and/or enclosure. These are prominent features within the broader landscape, and were identified in the assessment of the views of the site.

3.10.5 The hedgerows were evaluated in terms of their value, into high, medium and low value hedgerows.

3.10.6 High value hedgerows are all hedges with Visual Distinctiveness, and / or hedges that are Continuous, Well-maintained and have a Distinctive Feature.

3.10.7 Medium value hedgerows are all hedges that have a Distinctive Feature, and / or any hedges that are Continuous / Continuous with some gaps, and Well-maintained / Maintained, but overgrown.

3.10.8 Low value hedgerows are hedges that are Intermittent / Remnants, and without Distinctive Features or Visual Distinctiveness.

3.10.9 Appendix A contains the full methodology and documentation of the hedgerow assessment.

3.11 Drainage Assessment

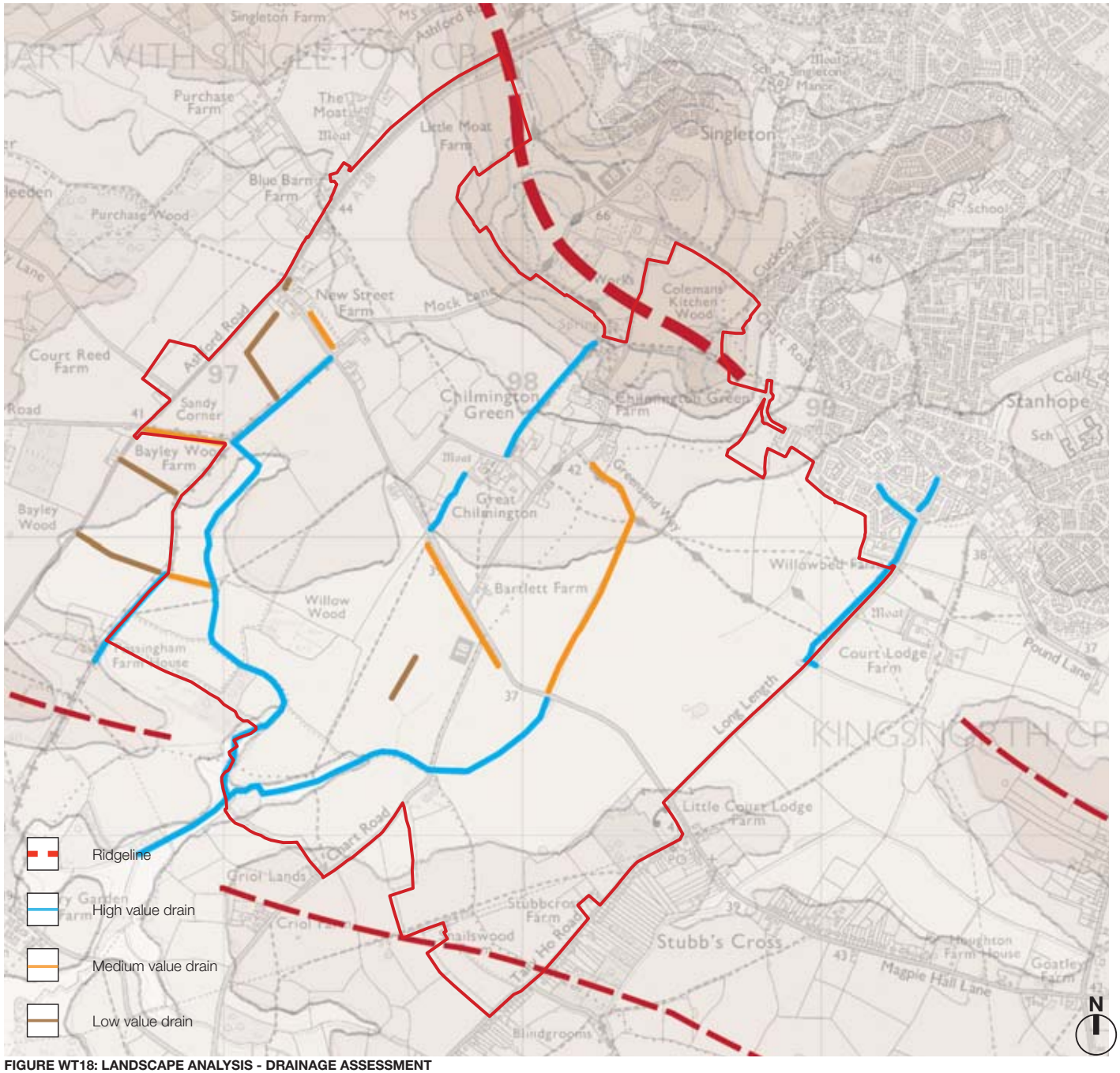


FIGURE WT18: LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS - DRAINAGE ASSESSMENT

3.11.1 The system of drainage channels and ditches is relatively inconspicuous in the wider landscape, and are not obvious features in themselves. Their value as landscape elements, over and above their hydrological role and ecological function, lies primarily in the way they enable one to understand and interpret the wider landscape.

3.11.2 A methodical assessment of the existing drainage channels with the broad study area was undertaken in a series of site visits between March and June 2010.

3.11.3 Field study sheets document their location, context and catchment to aid mapping the channels spatially. Their continuity, size, condition and associated vegetation type has been recorded, along with information about distinctive features and associated features / habitat linkages.

3.11.4 Distinctive features refers to drainage channels that are associated with public rights of way and national trails that makes them more significant within the landscape.

3.11.5 Associated Feature / Habitat Linkages refers to significant landscape features such as scheduled monument moats, copses and woodlands, ponds and floodplains. These typically mean an increased significance in terms of their heritage, hydrological and ecological value, which form part of the landscape character and inform the Masterplanning process.

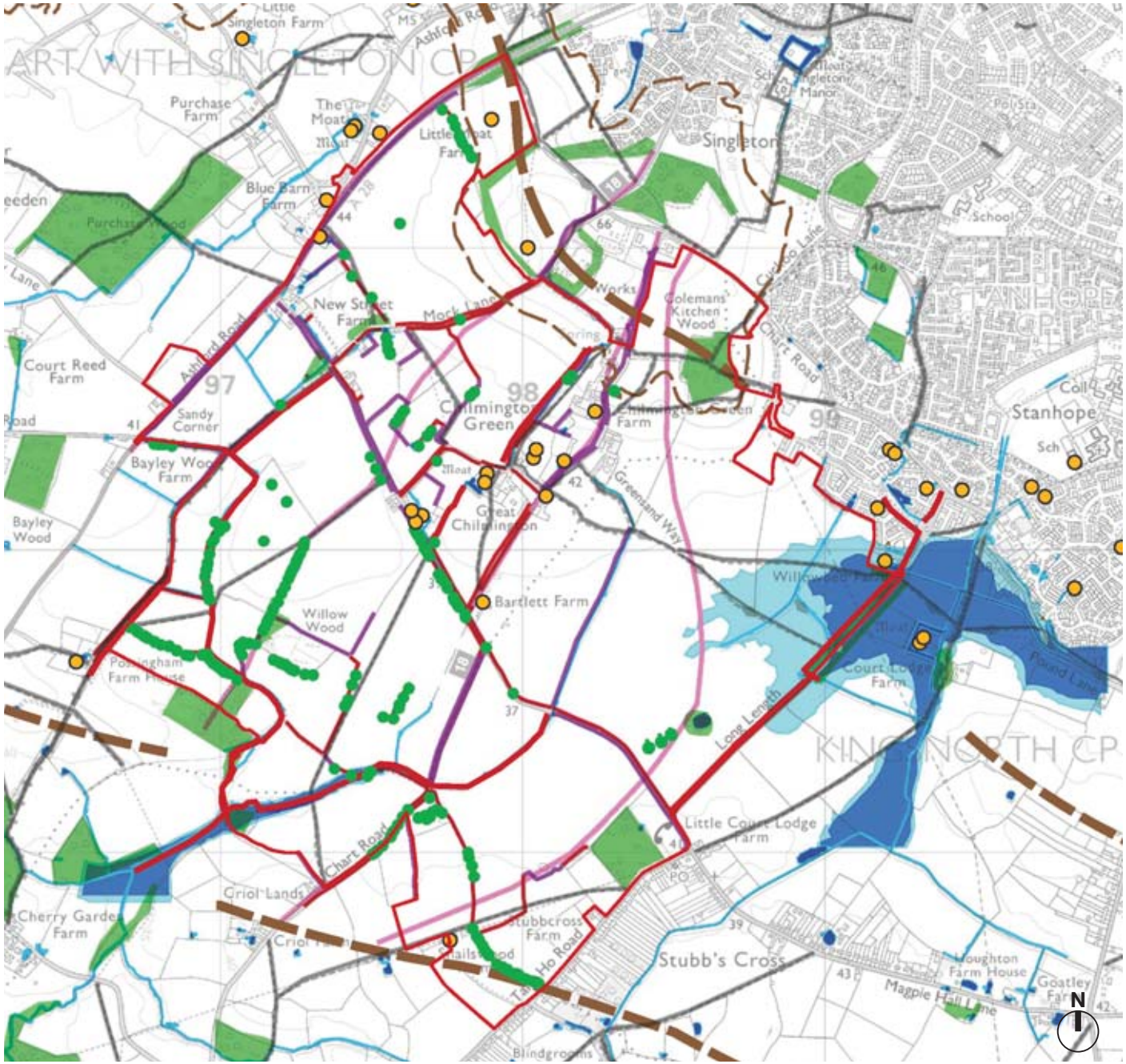
3.11.6 The drainage channels were evaluated in terms of their value: high, medium or low.

3.11.7 High value drainage channels are all channels with Associated Features / Habitat Linkages, and / or channels that are Continuous, have Associated Vegetation and Distinctive Feature.

3.11.8 Medium value drainage channels are all channels that have a Distinctive Feature, and / or are Continuous / Tributary / Field Drain; and Well maintained / Maintained, but overgrown and have Associated Vegetation.

3.11.9 Low value channels are channels that are intermittent or remnants, and don't have the characteristics listed above.

3.11.10 Appendix B contains the full methodology and documentation of the drainage assessment.



Ridgelines
Ridge and toe of slope

Woodland

Standard trees

High Value Hedgerows and Drainage

Medium Value Hedgerows and Drainage

Flood Areas
1:100 and 1:1,000 year

Designated public routes

Heritage features & buildings

3.12.1 A landscape informants diagram has been produced which summarises the key baseline information onto one informants diagram. The purpose is to guide and inform the development of the AAP footprint and masterplan design.

3.12.2 The drawing is based on desk top studies, site visits and reference to other assessments which relate to the landscape character and visual sensitivity of the site, such as the Heritage Landscape and Ecology.

3.12.3 The landscape informants diagram is based on their value as features within the landscape, as opposed to their ecological, heritage or hydrological role and function. Their value is assessed in the way they enable one to understand and interpret the wider landscape.

FIGURE WT19: LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS - LANDSCAPE INFORMANTS DIAGRAM

3.12.1 The Landscape Informants Diagram summarises the key landscape issues and features. These landscape informants, together with the Landscape Sensitivity Diagram, will inform the development of the Proposed Development masterplan and AAP, and provides the baseline information for the Landscape and Visual Assessment.

3.12.2 The landscape informants summarised in the diagram represent the following:

3.12.3 Great Chart Ridge
This was identified by the Planning Inspector as a prominent and sensitive landscape feature that must be respected by the proposed development, particularly considering the potential impact of development on historic Great Chart further up on the ridge.

3.12.4 The Great Chart ridge primarily consists of farmland gently sloping up to the ridgeline, which is topped by areas of woodland ranging from the distinctive copse at Coleman's Kitchen Wood to bands of new woodland associated with a former landfill site and the newly planted Millennium Wood.

3.12.5 The extent and scale of development appropriate within the Great Chart Ridge zone, as indicated on the Landscape Informants diagram, depends on the specific context. For example, the ridgeline immediately south of the A28 has been compromised by new development at Singleton, and the masterplan should aim to soften and/or screen the ridgeline in keeping with this visible gateway into Ashford from the south.

3.12.6 Woodland
Small, distinctive blocks of ancient woodland typical of the High Weald landscape character area are located within and adjacent to the study area, and are assumed to have high historic and ecological value as well as their landscape and visual amenity value. These include Stubbcross Wood, Willow Wood and part of Boyce Wood, which are all former hornbeam coppice.

3.12.7 Coleman's Kitchen Wood, an historic coppiced woodland located on an outcrop of Greensand at the south-eastern tip of the Great Chart Ridge, is the most prominent within the site due to its higher elevation.

3.12.8 Long Length has a linear woodland associated with the route, which is a very distinctive landscape feature.

3.12.9 It is important that the masterplan respect the locations and settings of these woodlands. Links to woodlands beyond the site, including public rights of way, visual connections and ecological / habitat linkages need to be considered in the masterplan layout.

3.12.10 Consideration of the woodlands and their settings will inform the identification of the AAP boundary and masterplan footprint.

3.13.11 Standard Trees and Hedgerows
Large and distinctive standard trees have been identified within the site. Most occur within the existing or remnant hedgerows, and significant isolated standard trees generally lie along remnant or historic hedgerow and land boundaries. Groupings of trees and trees associated with hedgerows are assessed in terms of their character and value as landscape features. They are ranked as high, medium and low value hedgerows, which determines the relative degree to which they inform the design development of the scheme Masterplan. Wherever possible, healthy, good specimens of isolated standard trees should be retained. Arboricultural assessments of the trees will be undertaken as part of the detailed planning applications.

3.13.12 Existing hedgerows have been identified and assessed in terms of their character and value as landscape features. They are ranked as high, medium and low value hedgerows, determining the relative degree to which they inform the design development of the scheme Masterplan.

3.13.13 Drainage Courses and Flood Areas
Drainage courses have been identified and assessed in terms of their character and value as landscape features. They have value as historic features of the rural landscape, which connect with the hydrological and ecological function and value, and historic character of the area. The assessment ranks the landscape value of the drainage courses from high to low, in terms of the degree to which they inform the design development of the scheme Masterplan.

3.13.14 Flood areas have been indicated as they directly impact on development footprint and land uses, as well as potential landscape character.

3.13.15 Designated Public Routes
Byways, public rights of way, National Trails and National cycle routes have been mapped as they indicate areas of greater sensitivity as well as important connections within and beyond the study area.

3.13.16 Heritage Features and Buildings
The locations of listed buildings and scheduled monuments have been indicated on the Landscape Informants diagram. Heritage buildings and monuments pose a constraint in terms of preserving and/or protecting their landscape setting, but also provide an opportunity to embed the historic character of the area into the proposed scheme Masterplan.

3.13.17 Co-ordination with other studies
The landscape elements and features have only been identified in terms of their landscape qualities and features. The Landscape Sensitivity and Informants Diagrams will be overlain and integrated with the results of the other baseline studies, such as Ecology, Drainage and Heritage, in order to inform the design development of the scheme Masterplan and AAP.

3.13.18 Regular liaison between the Design Team and the consultants carrying out the various studies and assessments enables the varied constraints and opportunities to be embedded into the development of the scheme Masterplan and AAP in an integrated manner.

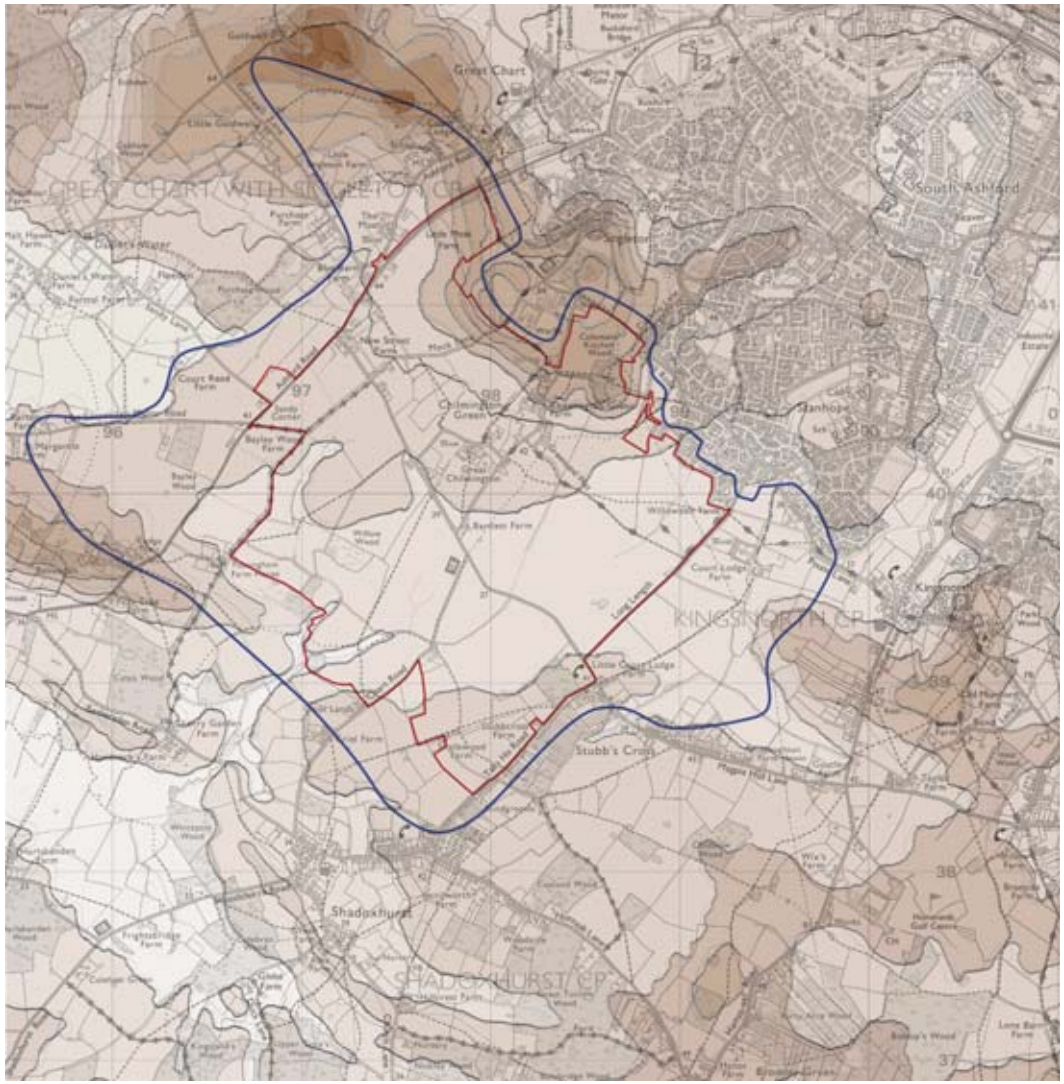


FIGURE WT20: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - PROPOSED ZONE OF VISUAL INFLUENCE

3.14.1 The Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) has been determined through a desk-top study of the topography of the study area and field tested through a series of field surveys. It is an approximate line that reflects the areas within which the study area itself is likely to be visible.

3.14.2 This would need to be tested and re-assessed in the process of developing the masterplan, to take into account the specific nature of the proposals (for example, any high building or prominent feature).

3.14.3 The northern boundary is determined by the Great Chart Ridge, which cuts off views into the site from Ashford to the north. The low-lying urban boundary of Stanhope forms the north-eastern ZVI boundary edge.

3.14.4 To the east and west, the gently undulating nature of the land together with layers of existing hedgerows and trees mean that views of the site are screened relatively quickly.

3.14.5 Subtle ridgelines together with blocks of woodland, hedgerows and residential buildings determine the southern ZVI boundary position.

Zone of Visual Influence

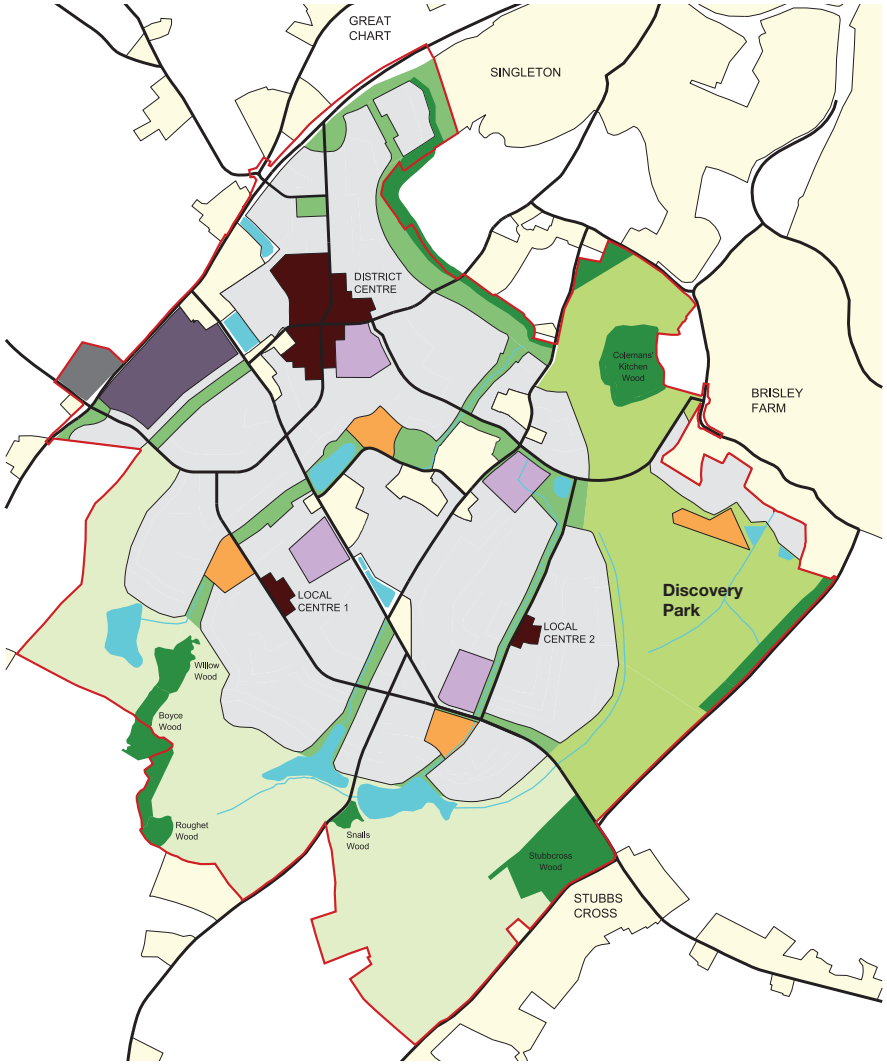


FIGURE WT21: AAP MASTERPLAN - Strategic Diagram 1

4.0.1 Development Description

The Local Development Framework Core Strategy for Ashford sets out the parameters and core aims for Chilmington Green / Discovery Park:

- No less than 3,350 dwellings and 600 jobs by 2021 with
- Potential for 7,000 dwellings and 1,000 jobs in total;
- Flexibly designed, mixed-use places of real character with well defined local centres;
- An overall layout that maximises the use of public transport, walking and cycling;
- High quality building design, public spaces and landscaping to create strong character areas and overall sense of place;
- Innovative solutions for future management and maintenance of public spaces and facilities;
- Good relationship with rural landscape surroundings through well designed edge to development and transitions to countryside; and
- Phased development which is supported by delivery of infrastructure and elements required for a balanced, mixed community.

The production of the Area Action Plan (AAP) and supporting documents will guide the detailed planning of Chilmington Green / Discovery Park and ensure that it is implemented in a comprehensive way and will achieve the key aims set out in the Core Strategy. The AAP process has refined the strategic development requirements to:

- Proposals for development at Chilmington Green will deliver up to 5,750 homes and at least 1,000 jobs.
- The built footprint of the development (with exception of any buildings in Discovery Park) will be contained within the 'extent of development' area shown on the Proposals Map.
- The development will be focused around a District Centre that will provide the majority of retail, employment and community-focused accommodation. The District Centre will become the focal point of the community and be delivered in the first phase of the development.
- The form of the District Centre will help to generate a critical mass to support public transport and local services and create a vibrant street-scene.
- Two Local Centres, serving the everyday needs of their respective neighbourhoods will also be provided to support the latter phases of the development.
- The density of residential development shall be consistent with the average density bands shown on Strategic Diagram 3.

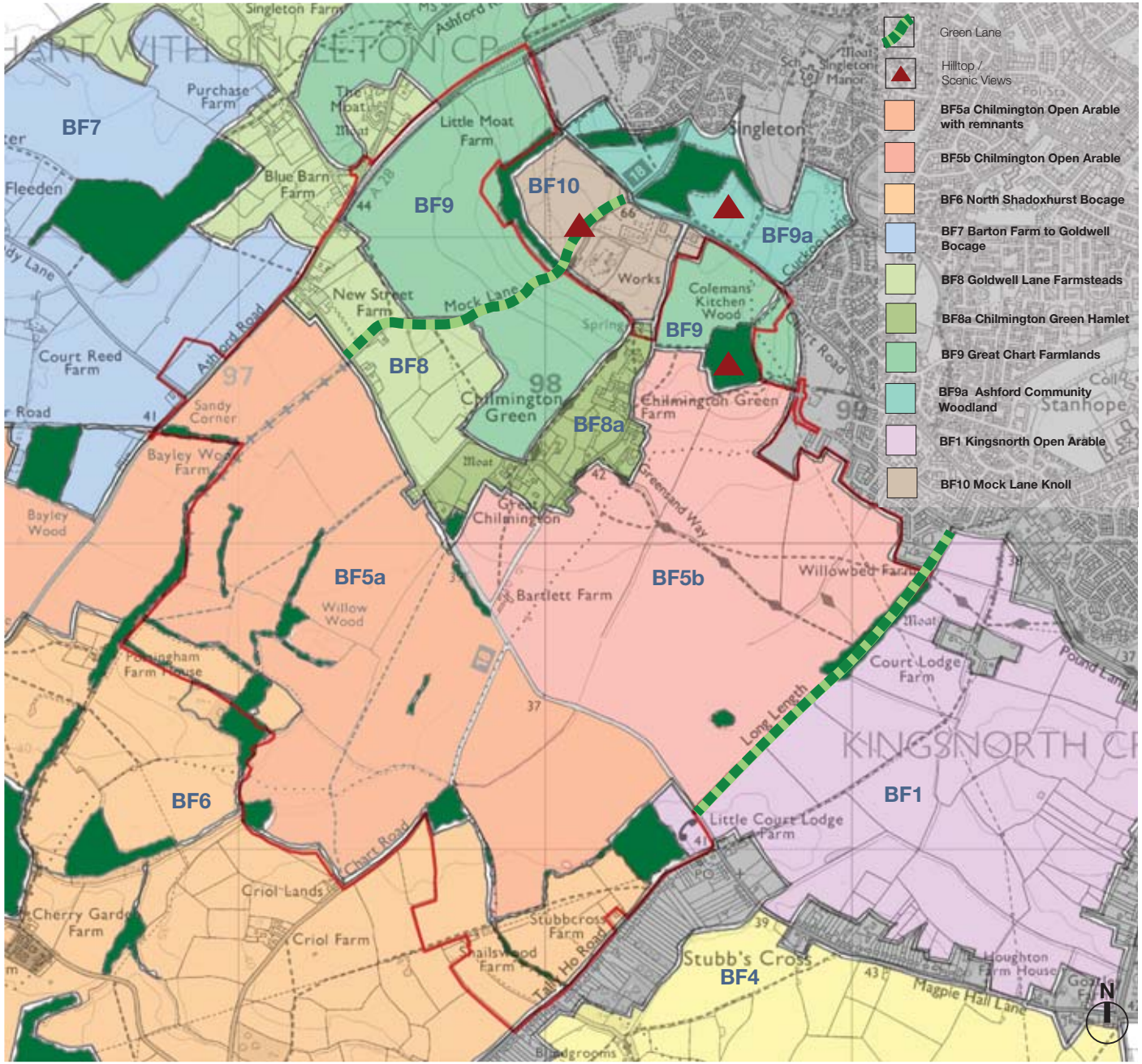


FIGURE WT22 LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS - EXISTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER based on Ashford Landscape Character Study Assessment & Data Set: Bethersden Farmlands
November 2005 | Studio Engleback

4.1.1 Landscape assessment encompasses the appraisal of physical, aesthetic and intangible attributes including sense of place, rarity or representativeness, and unspoilt appearance. The combination of landscape elements (trees, hedgerows, woodlands, settlement and buildings) and their arrangement give the different areas a unique sense of place, or 'character'. These aspects, together with scale and character of surrounding landscapes, patterns and scale of landform, land cover and built development, need to be taken into account when assessing landscape impact.

4.1.2 The landscape character of the study area comprises of a review of the landscape character areas set out in the Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document (2011) as well as the Chilmington Green & Discovery Park Area Action Plan Historic Landscape and Built Heritage Appraisal (2011); desk-top analysis and a number of site visits.

4.1.3 The Landscape Description Units and District Landscape Types identified in the previous studies have been reviewed both in light of new development and changes in land-use, as well as in terms of a finer grain of detail. (For ease of reference, the Landscape Description Units used in the report have been adopted in this assessment.)

4.1.4 Minor boundary adjustments include:

- Adjusting the urban edge along Singleton, Stanhope and Brisley Farm in light of the new developments affecting the boundaries of BF5 and BF9;
- Incorporating the property of light industrial uses into BF10;
- Adjusting the BF5 boundary up to New Street Farm self-storage as the hedgerows defining these fields have deteriorated; and
- Adjusting boundary of BF6 to include strongly defined field north of Stubb's Cross.

4.1.5 At a more detailed scale, certain District Landscape Types were considered sufficiently distinctive in character to be separately described and assessed. New District Landscape Types include:

- Subdividing BF5 into BF5a and BF5b to distinguish between the much more open nature of BF5b compared to the scattered remnants of hedges and woodland of BF5a;
- BF8a Chilmington Green Hamlet; and
- BF9a Ashford Community Woodland.

BF5a CHILMINGTON OPEN ARABLE WITH REMNANTS

4.1.6 BF5a Chilmington Open Arable

- This Landscape Character Area consists of relatively flat large open prairie style arable fields which gently slope south. The Site has suffered from excessive loss of hedgerows and fragmentation of woodlands, offering extensive long distance views across the area, particularly towards Chilmington Green Road. This is largely a result of World War II activity and the use as an airfield, which has left fragments of woodland, hedgerows, ditches and trees isolated in vast fields.
- This LCA is bounded by Chilmington Green Road, which has a line of pollarded willows. The area is criss-crossed by a network of public footpaths and byways and ditches. Willow Wood is an isolated remnant hornbeam coppice, connected by an overgrown hedgerow that connects with Boyce Wood to the south-west.
- The area has a distinctive character, but the sense of place and continuity is weakened as it extends north; and remnants of historic landscape character are largely degraded and disturbed: sinuous drainage, woodland, hedgerows / historic boundaries.

Operation Impacts

- A permanent loss of two-thirds of the agricultural landscape to the Proposed Development. New junction off the A28 and new east-west strategic route. Increase in public open space with tree, shrub and hedgerow planting; significant street planting; integration of SUDS into development layout; and early creation of new flooded meadow wetland park. Re-instatement of lost or remnant hedgerows with tree planting.

Landscape Quality:	Sensitivity of receptor:	Sensitivity to change:
Ordinary	Medium to low	Medium to low

SIGNIFICANCE: **LOW**

BF5b CHILMINGTON OPEN ARABLE

4.1.7 BF5b Chilmington Open Arable

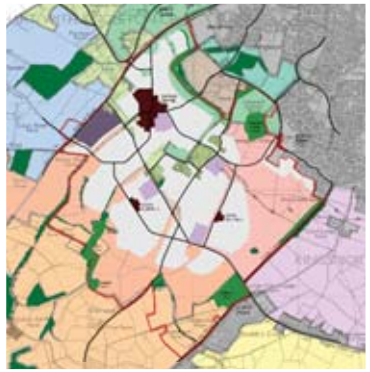
- This Landscape Character Area consists of large open prairie style arable fields, with gentle slopes rising to Coleman's Kitchen Wood. Modern farming techniques have resulted in a heavy loss of historic field boundaries and hedgerows, leaving a few remnant hedgerow trees isolated in the middle of vast fields, and a stand of trees around an existing pond.
- There are expansive views from around Coleman's Kitchen Wood, but these are contained in proximity to Long Length and the linear woodland. The area is crossed by a number of public footpaths, including Greensand Way.
- The area has a weak sense of place and continuity; and remnants of historic landscape character almost entirely lost.

Operation Impacts

- A permanent loss of half the agricultural landscape to the Proposed Development. New roads and pedestrian, cycle and bridal routes increases traffic movement. A new strategic park with new pedestrian footpaths increases connectivity and amenities in the LCA. A change from agricultural land to park landscape, with associated tree, shrub, hedgerow and meadow planting.

Landscape Quality:	Sensitivity of receptor:	Sensitivity to change:
Ordinary	Low	Low

SIGNIFICANCE: **LOW to NEGLIGIBLE**



LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS KEY PLAN
with AAP STRATEGIC DIAGRAM

- **BF5a Chilmington Open Arable with remnants**
- **BF5b Chilmington Open Arable**
- **BF6 North Shadoxhurst Bocage**
- **BF7 Barton Farm to Goldwell Bocage**
- **BF8 Goldwell Lane Farmsteads**
- **BF8a Chilmington Green Hamlet**
- **BF9 Great Chart Farmlands**
- **BF9a Ashford Community Woodland**
- **BF1 Kingsnorth Open Arable**
- **BF10 Mock Lane Knoll**

BF6 NORTH SHADOXHURST BOCAGE

4.1.8 BF6 North Shadoxhurst Bocage

- This Landscape Character Area consists of undulating mixed farming with pasture and arable in medium to small size fields. Fields are generally bounded by strong pattern of high hedgerows with mature trees interspersed with woodland blocks, streams and ditches. Windy lanes with wooded and intimate quality are found in the southern part of the LCA.
- There are some small scale enterprises such as the lorry park at Criol Lanes, and leylandii hedges which are localised detractors; and views are generally restricted views but have an intimate and timeless quality that creates a strong sense of place, and has many of the characteristics typical of the Low Weald character noted in the National Landscape Character Assessment.
- Woodland and hedgerow density typically restricts views, and creates an intimate character.

Operation Impacts

- No built development is proposed within LCA. Change to small portion of existing agricultural field to new recreational woodland, and ecological enhancements to existing agricultural practices to small portion of the LCA within the Site Boundary. Advanced woodland planting to Stubbscross Wood, a new footpath and enhancements to existing hedgerows improve landscape character quality.

Landscape Quality:	Sensitivity of receptor:	Sensitivity to change:
Good	Medium	Medium

SIGNIFICANCE: **MEDIUM to LOW**

BF7 BARTON FARM TO GOLDWELL BOCAGE

4.1.9 BF7 Barton Farm to Goldwell Bocage

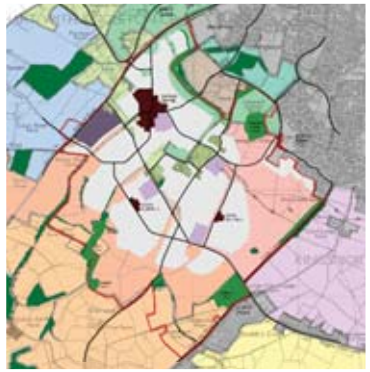
- This Landscape Character Area consists of large to medium sized arable fields, intensively farmed with hedgerows removed to make way for deep ditches. Some pasture and paddocks are enclosed by tall roadside hedges around Sandy Lane with a cluster of widely spaced bungalows in garden plots.
- Bayley Wood is a former hornbeam coppice with oak standards lies to the south of Old Surrenden Manor Road.
- The area contains an incoherent mix of intensively farmed open arable fields and small fields with unimproved pasture enclosed by tall hedges. Run-down industrial unit at Barton Farm and evergreen and poplar treebelts are local detractors; and bungalows have a suburban feel due to building styles and open layout.

Operation Impacts

- A Park and Ride facility is proposed off the intersection of Sandy Lane and the A28, with associated tree and hedgerow planting, resulting in a change of a portion of an existing agricultural field to a Park and Ride car park and coach stop. The Proposed Development will also result in increased connectivity to surrounding land use and resultant increase in pedestrian activity.

Landscape Quality:	Sensitivity of receptor:	Sensitivity to change:
Poor	Low	Medium to Low

SIGNIFICANCE: **LOW**



LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS KEY PLAN
with AAP STRATEGIC DIAGRAM

- **BF5a Chilmington Open Arable with remnants**
- **BF5b Chilmington Open Arable**
- **BF6 North Shadoxhurst Bocage**
- **BF7 Barton Farm to Goldwell Bocage**
- **BF8 Goldwell Lane Farmsteads**
- **BF8a Chilmington Green Hamlet**
- **BF9 Great Chart Farmlands**
- **BF9a Ashford Community Woodland**
- **BF1 Kingsnorth Open Arable**
- **BF10 Mock Lane Knoll**

BF8 GOLDWELL LANE FARMSTEADS

4.1.9 BF8 Goldwell Lane Farmsteads

- This Landscape Character Area consists of scattered pre-20th Century farmsteads and medieval houses along winding country lanes. Generally the properties have retained their local vernacular style, of garden, small field and paddock settings. Some buildings are now small businesses or have been converted into modern residential dwellings, particularly in proximity to the busy A28.
- A high number of historic hedgerows and historic boundaries are retained in this area, resulting in an intimate, historic landscape character, in contrast to some of the surrounding LCAs. Likely to have an historic link with the Hamlet.

Operation Impacts

- A permanent loss of agricultural land to the development. Significant extension of public realm and connectivity to surrounding land use. New planting within open space and roadways.

Landscape Quality:	Sensitivity of receptor:	Sensitivity to change:
Good	Medium	Medium to high

SIGNIFICANCE: **MEDIUM**

BF8a CHILMINGTON GREEN HAMLET

4.1.10 BF8a Chilmington Green Hamlet

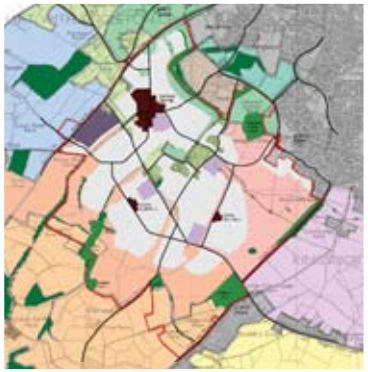
- This Landscape Character Area consists of a cluster of dispersed pre-20th Century farmsteads and medieval houses (some with moats) nestled into landscape along winding country lanes. Generally properties have retained their local vernacular style and have well defined and enclosed gardens, small fields and paddocks.
- Rural lanes are characterised by hedgerows and wide un-edged grass verges. The high, densely screened property boundaries result in a lack of internal views between properties and a sense of tranquillity. Buildings are typically internalised, with large plot to building ratio.
- Associated farm buildings and barns within the Hamlet are in varied condition and there is a random mix of memorable vernacular buildings on site of medieval hamlet.

Operation Impacts

- A permanent loss of half the LCA to the Proposed Development. Sense of openness and tranquillity affected for residents. New road and increased vehicle / pedestrian movements on roads and lanes and increase in general human activity.

Landscape Quality:	Sensitivity of receptor:	Sensitivity to change:
High	High	High

SIGNIFICANCE: **HIGH**



LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS KEY PLAN
with AAP STRATEGIC DIAGRAM

- **BF5a Chilmington Open Arable with remnants**
- **BF5b Chilmington Open Arable**
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- **BF8 Goldwell Lane Farmsteads**
- **BF8a Chilmington Green Hamlet**
- **BF9 Great Chart Farmlands**
- **BF9a Ashford Community Woodland**
- **BF1 Kingsnorth Open Arable**
- **BF10 Mock Lane Knoll**

BF9 GREAT CHART FARMLANDS

4.1.11 BF9 Great Chart Farmlands

- This Landscape Character Area consists of gently sloping large fields of predominantly arable land with some pasture and mixed use around Great Chart and Singleton with horse paddocks. Modern farming techniques have resulted in the heavy loss of historic field boundaries and hedgerows, particularly towards Hamlet.
- The land rises along Mock Lane which is well vegetated and sunken in places, and gives elevated views southwards towards Chilmington Green.
- Coleman's Kitchen Wood is a distinctive hornbeam/hazel coppice on an outlying knoll of greensand.

Operation Impacts

- A permanent loss of all agricultural land. New junction off the A28 and strategic route. Increase in vehicular and pedestrian movement and activity. Change in character of Mock Lane through the proposed local centre. Provision of significant new public open space and increased connectivity through the provision of new public routes through the Site and to adjacent areas.

Landscape Quality:	Sensitivity of receptor:	Sensitivity to change:
Good	Medium	Medium

SIGNIFICANCE: **MEDIUM to LOW**

BF9a ASHFORD COMMUNITY WOODLAND

4.1.12 BF9a Ashford Community Woodland

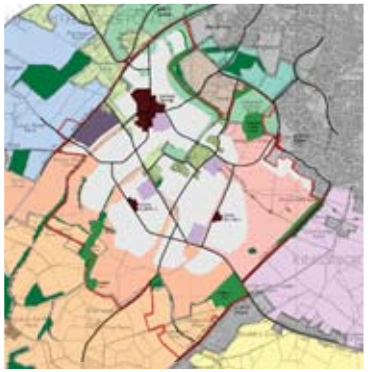
- This Landscape Character Area consists of open space and recreational areas comprising of broad-leaved woodland and rough grassland. The area is managed by the community and linked to Singleton Environment Centre. The Community Woodland is located along the crest of Great Chart ridgeline, with elevated views out towards Ashford and filtered views south across farmland. Views to the west are by the landfill site and associated trees and hedgerows.

Operation Impacts

- Minor sense of openness affected and increased activity of pedestrians.

Landscape Quality:	Sensitivity of receptor:	Sensitivity to change:
Good	Medium to high	Medium to low

SIGNIFICANCE: **MEDIUM to LOW**



LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS KEY PLAN with AAP STRATEGIC DIAGRAM

- **BF5a Chilmington Open Arable with remnants**
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- **BF9a Ashford Community Woodland**
- **BF1 Kingsnorth Open Arable**
- **BF10 Mock Lane Knoll**

BF1 KINGSNORTH OPEN ARABLE

4.1.11 BF1 Kingsnorth Open Arable

- This Landscape Character Area consists of open gently undulating mixed farmland of medium sized fields with sheep grazing and arable land. There are remnant hedges and intermittent hedgerow trees.
- The area has open views to north and west; to south and east are linear settlements along Magpie Hall Road and Ashford Road; and the vegetated lane of Long Length lies to the north west.

Operation Impacts

- Increased connectivity to surrounding land use and resultant increase in pedestrian activity.

Landscape Quality:	Sensitivity of receptor:	Sensitivity to change:
Good	Medium to High	Medium to High

SIGNIFICANCE: **MEDIUM**

BF10 MOCK LANE KNOLL

4.1.13 BF10 Mock Lane Knoll

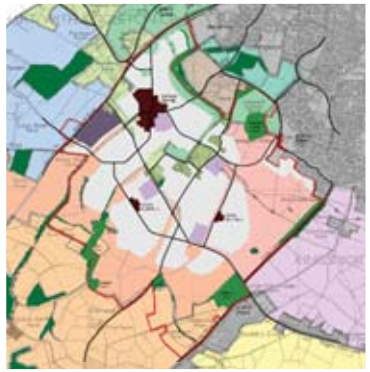
- This Landscape Character Area consists of a plateau comprising a working gravel / sand quarry, travellers' site (with associated dumping) and former landfill site (now grazed by horses), bisected by Mock Lane.
- There is fragmented land use with chaotic and neglected feel, and poor visual and physical integration with surrounding areas.

Operation Impacts

- Limited impact on landscape character, with increase in pedestrian, cycle and horse-riding activity.

Landscape Quality:	Sensitivity of receptor:	Sensitivity to change:
Poor	Low	Low

SIGNIFICANCE: **NEGLIGIBLE**



LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS KEY PLAN with AAP STRATEGIC DIAGRAM

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- **BF6 North Shadoxhurst Bocage**
- **BF7 Barton Farm to Goldwell Bocage**
- **BF8 Goldwell Lane Farmsteads**
- **BF8a Chilmington Green Hamlet**
- **BF9 Great Chart Farmlands**
- **BF9a Ashford Community Woodland**
- **BF1 Kingsnorth Open Arable**
- **BF10 Mock Lane Knoll**

4.1.14 Landscape Character Areas

The landscape character areas have been described and appraised as they provide the opportunity for different areas within the scheme Masterplan to have different identities and characteristics that create a sense of place linked to the existing landscape character of the site. This will enable the scheme Masterplan to be unique to Chilmington Green and embedded in the historic, cultural and physical landscape.

4.2 Landscape Sensitivity Diagram

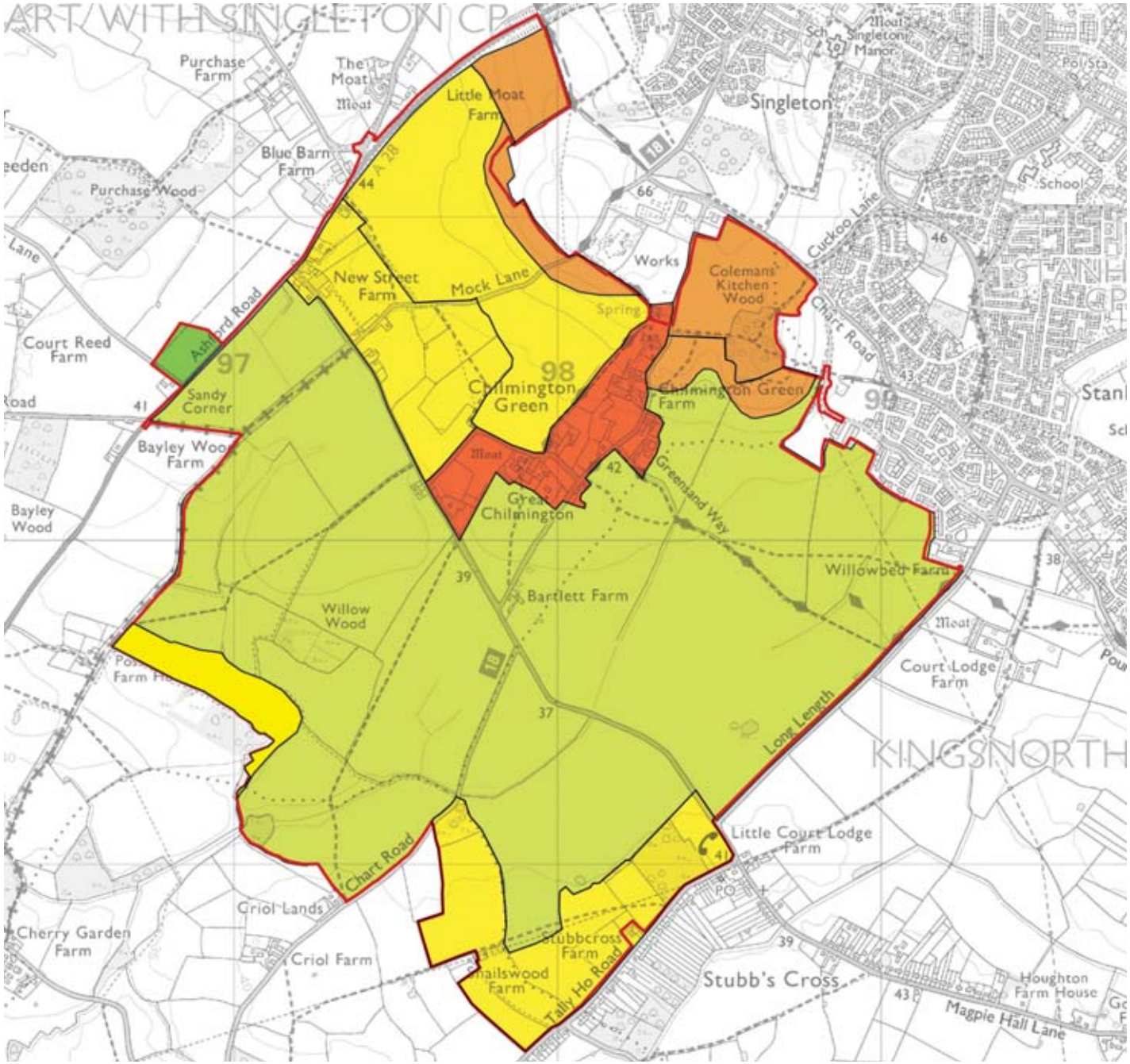


FIGURE WT27 LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS - LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY DIAGRAM

4.2.1 The quality of a character area is classified in terms of landscape quality according to a scale which measures landscape quality within the context of landscape at a national level, not in isolation. The table (see appendices A1) details the landscape character's sensitivity, which is directly linked to it's quality.

4.2.2 The sensitivity of a landscape character area is defined as it's ability to accept change, based on it's vulnerability to degradation through the introduction of new features.

4.2.3 The Landscape Sensitivity Diagram maps the sensitivity of the landscape character areas. Areas of greater sensitivity due to a distinctive change in slope or gradient or areas that are noticeably enclosed or separate from the surrounding landscape character area have been separately assessed.

4.2.4 Once the quality and sensitivity of the landscape character has been determined, it can inform the development of the masterplan in terms of it's ability to absorb different degrees of development and calculate the magnitude of change to test the masterplanning process.

4.2.5 Appendix C contains the full methodology and table used for this evaluation process.

- High
- Medium to High
- Medium
- Medium to Low
- Low

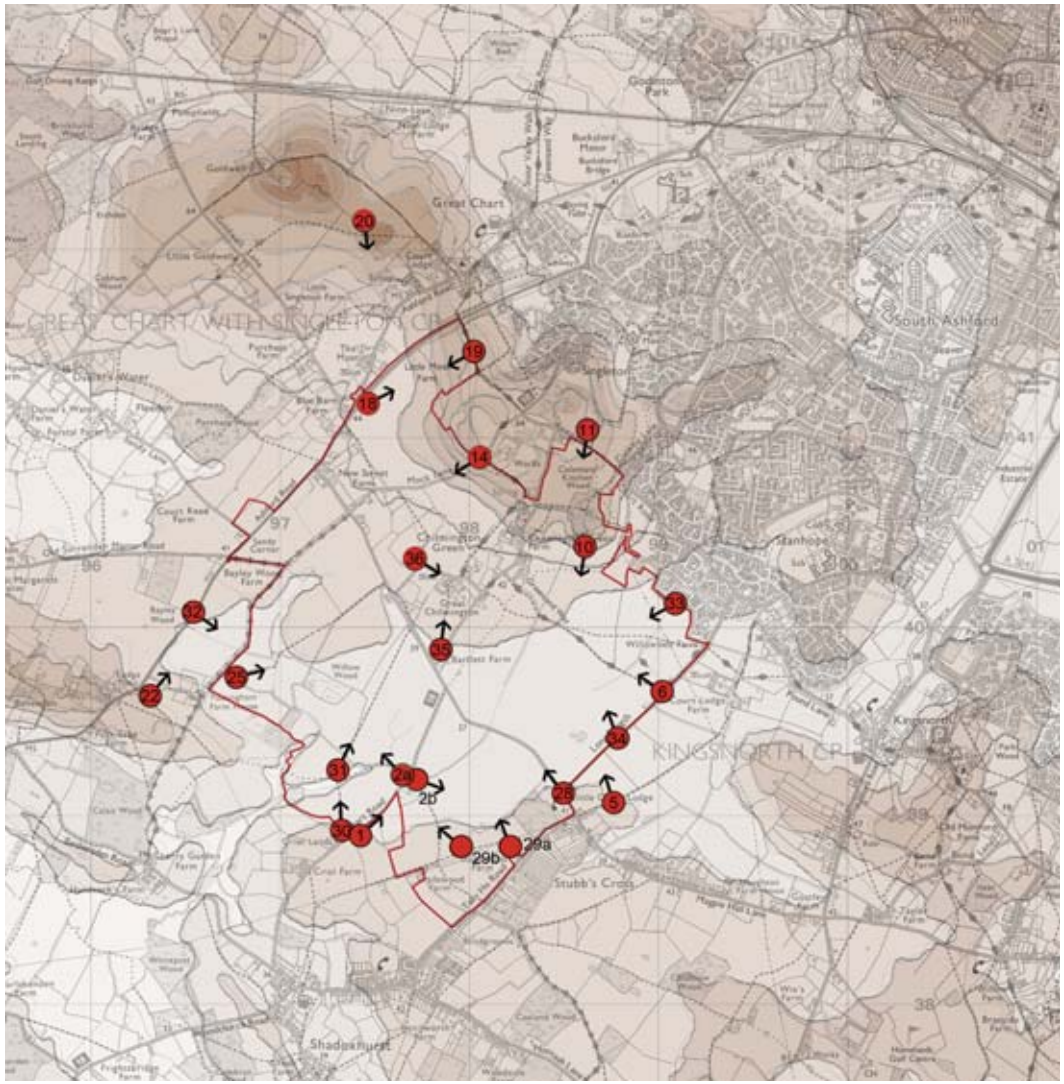


FIGURE WT28: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - KEY VIEWS

N

4.3.1 23 key views have been identified within the study area. These include views both within and outside the likely masterplan area. Key views have been agreed in liaison with Ashford Borough Council. Topography, public routes (roads, byways and public rights of way), significant features (ancient woods and public facilities) and the need for a representative range of views has informed the selection of key views.

4.3.2 The significance of the visual effect resulting from the Proposed Development has been derived through the consideration of the potential sensitivity of change to the view, in addition to the likely magnitude of change to the view.

4.3.3 The sensitivity of the visual receptors has been determined based on the amenity value and context of the view and the importance of the view. The amenity value and context of the view is dependent on the location and context of the viewpoint, the expectations and occupation of the receptor; and the importance of the view. Greater weight is given to receptors that are specifically associated with the experience and enjoyment of the landscape and public views, such as public rights of way. Recreational places and places of residence. People travelling at speed through landscapes in cars or based within their place of work are given less weight. The importance of the view is based on its popularity and numbers of users who would be likely to be affected.

4.3.4 The sensitivity to change of the view is evaluated based on the scale or magnitude of the visual effects according to the following considerations:

- the scale of change in the view in respect to the loss of significant features within the view or changes in its composition, particular weight is given to the visibility of Coleman's Kitchen Wood;
- the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics;
- the duration and nature of the effect;
- the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development and proportion of the proposed Development that would be visible from the viewpoints, with particular weight given to the visibility of the potential development edge; and
- the extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.

4.3.5 Based on the sensitivity of the visual receptors and the sensitivity of the view to change, the significance of the views has been described in terms of high, medium or low (refer to Figure WT29 for summary).

Key Views

4.3.1 Key Views: View 1

View 1 - View from Criol Lane

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 1

Location
Criol Lane

This view looks north-east along Criol Lane. The road is lined with well maintained, continuous hedgerows leading to long distant views of ridgeline on horizon. Long distance views are partially screened by individual mature trees and blocks of woodland.

Key receptors:
Users of the Local distributor road and national cycle route

Sensitivity of receptor:
Moderate to High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Moderate

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM

4.3.2 Key Views: View 2a

View 2a - Criol Lane (National Cycle Route 18)

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 2a

Location
Criol Lane

This view looks north west along the arable farmland. View dominated by arable fields and hedgerows in foreground; Boyce Wood and Willow Wood prominent on horizon; Occasional large standard tree prominent in landscape.

Key receptors:
Users of the Local distributor road and national cycle route

Sensitivity of receptor:
Moderate to High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
High

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM TO HIGH

4.3.3 Key Views: View 2b

View 2b - Criol Lane (National Cycle Route 18)

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 2b

Location
Criol Lane

This view looks north-east, across arable farmland towards Stanhope urban edge. View dominated by arable field and hedgerows in foreground; Stubbcross Wood prominent on horizon, with clear, distant views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood on hill on horizon.

Key receptors:
Users of the Local distributor road and national cycle route

Sensitivity of receptor:
Moderate to High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
High

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM TO HIGH

View 5 - Public Footpath at Little Court Lodge Farm

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 5

Location
Public footpath through Little Court Lodge Farm

This view looks north across Long Length and arable farmland, towards Coleman's Kitchen Wood. Foreground dominated by arable crop and hedgerows; Long Length linear woodland distinctive in middle-distance; Coleman's Kitchen Wood prominent on ridgeline in long distance views; Stanhope, Ashford, prominent building mass along horizon to north-east; Built development interspersed with woodland and trees in long distance views to north-west

Key receptors:
Users of the public rights of way

Sensitivity of receptor:
High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Medium

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM

View 6 - National Trail (Greensands Way) off Long Length

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 6

Location
National Trail (Greensands Way) on Long Length

This view looks west across arable farmland, from Long Length, along the Greensands Way National Trail. Foreground dominated by large, relatively level field of arable crop; Built development of Stanhope, Ashford, prominent in the middle distance views to the north-east; Pylons visible to north-east; Coleman's Kitchen Wood distinctive on ridgeline above residential development.

Key receptors:
Users of the National Trail (Greensands Way) and rural lane (Long Length)

Sensitivity of receptor:
Very high

Sensitivity of visual effect:
High

SIGNIFICANCE:
HIGH

4.3.6 Key Views: View 10

View 10 - Coleman's Kitchen Wood

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 10

Location
Coleman's Kitchen Wood and National Trail

This elevated view looks south across arable farmland, from a public footpath and elevated position in front of Coleman's Kitchen Wood. Foreground dominated by large, gently sloping field of arable crop; Built development of Stanhope, Ashford, in the middle distance partially screened by landform; Chilmington Green hamlet farm buildings and houses located in middle distance, visible against a backdrop of trees and vegetation

Key receptors:
Users of the public rights of way

Sensitivity of receptor:
High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
High

SIGNIFICANCE:
MAJOR

4.3.7 Key Views: View 11

View 11 - Singleton Environment Centre and Public Footpath

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 11

Location
Singleton Environment Centre

This largely enclosed view looks south from the Millenium Community Woodland through a gap towards Coleman's Kitchen Wood. The foreground Is dominated by grass parkland. A remnant hedgerow and level change screen foreground views of arable fields; Coleman's Kitchen Wood visible beyond hedgerow. Glimpsed long distance views out to fields and woodlands.

Key receptors:
Users of public rights of way

Sensitivity of receptor:
High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Medium

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM

4.3.8 Key Views: View 14

View 14 - Mock Lane

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 14

Location
Mock Lane

This elevated view looks south-west, along Mock Lane. Foreground dominated by continuous hedgerow to east and sloping edge of old landfill site to west; Long distance views over farmland with prominent hedgerows and windbreaks; Trees screen listed buildings of Chilmington Green hamlet; blocks of woodland form distinctive feature on horizon line

Key receptors:
Users of the National Trail (Greensands Way) and rural lane (Mock Lane)

Sensitivity of receptor:
Very high

Sensitivity of visual effect:
High

SIGNIFICANCE:
HIGH

4.3.9 Key Views: View 18

View 18 - A28 towards Ashford and Great Chart Ridge

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 18

Location
A28 close to Goldwell Lane intersection

This view looks north-east, from the A28 towards Great Chart Ridge and Singleton urban edge. A28 lined with ditches and hedgerows; Middle distance views of gently rising fields of arable crop; Large oak trees have significant presence along field boundary; Woodland planting along ridgeline and surrounding landfill site is prominent; Singleton houses exposed on ridgeline

Key receptors:
Users of the Strategic Route (A28)

Sensitivity of receptor:
Low

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Medium

SIGNIFICANCE:
LOW

4.3.10 Key Views: View 19

View 19 - National Trail (Greensand Way) from Singleton urban edge

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 19

Location
National Trail from Singleton urban edge

This view looks west from Singleton urban edge up on the Great Chart Ridgeline. Foreground dominated by arable field, which drops out of sight over ridgeline; Woodland to north and south along A28 and surrounding old landfill site; Oak trees along old field boundary are prominent in middle distance views; Long distance views across Bethersden farmlands, with distinctive blocks of woodland

Key receptors:
Users of the National Trail (Greensands Way) on elevated position

Sensitivity of receptor:
Very high

Sensitivity of visual effect:
High

SIGNIFICANCE:
HIGH

4.3.11 Key Views: View 20

View 20 -Public Footpath on Great Chart Ridge

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 20

Location
Public footpath, Goldwell Hill, Great Chart Ridge

This view looks south from a public footpath up on Great Chart Ridge. Panoramic views across rolling fields of arable crop, divided by hedgerows and blocks of woodland; Great Chart school and buildings partially visible beyond landform and vegetation in middle distance; woodland and arable fields beyond in long distance views

Key receptors:
Users of the public rights of way on Great Chart Ridgeline (elevated position)

Sensitivity of receptor:
High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Medium

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM

4.3.12 Key Views: View 22

View 22 - Public Footpath from A28 at Lodge Place

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 22

Location
Public footpath off A28 at Lodge Place

This view looks north across farmland, from a public footpath. Foreground dominated by arable field with electricity poles and cables to the right; Middle distance views of low-lying fields blocked by woodland; Fragmented long distance views of fields rising up to Great Chart Ridge visible between woodland and trees; woodland visible on top of Great Chart Ridge in far distance

Key receptors:
Users of the public rights of way and Strategic Route (A28)

Sensitivity of receptor:
Moderate to High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Medium to Low

SIGNIFICANCE:
LOW

4.3.13 Key Views: View 25

View 25 - Public Footpath off by-way near Possingham Farm House

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 25

Location
Intersection of Byway and public footpath

This view looks north across arable fields. Foreground dominated by views of arable fields, subdivided by hedgerows; Boyce and Willow Woods screen long distance views to the east; Mature oak trees associated with old hedgerows prominent elements in fields and create filtered long distance views to the north-east

Key receptors:
Users of the public rights of way and byway

Sensitivity of receptor:
High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Medium

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM

4.3.14 Key Views: View 28

View 28 - Magpie Hall Road near Stubb's Cross

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 28

Location
Magpie Hall Road near Stubb's Cross

Significance
Local distributor

This view looks north-west along Magpie Hall Road. Road lined with well maintained and continuous hedges; Panoramic views across large, level fields of arable crop; Stubbcross Wood dominant feature in landscape and screens views of Stubb's Cross to south; Single, mature trees prominent in open landscape; Coleman's Kitchen Wood prominent to north in long distance views; Landform and trees soften visibility of Chilmington Green hamlet buildings

Key receptors:
Users of the Local distributor (Magpie Hall Road)

Sensitivity of receptor:
Low

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Medium

SIGNIFICANCE:
LOW

View 29a - View From Public Footpath Adjacent to Stubbcross Farm

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 29a

Location
Public footpath adjacent to Stubbcross Farm

This view looks north across arable land, from a public footpath. Foreground dominated by arable field; distance views blocked by prominent mature trees and associated hedgerows.

Key receptors:
Users of the public rights of way

Sensitivity of receptor:
High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Medium

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM

4.3.16 Key Views: View 29b

View 29b - View From Public Footpath adjacent to Subbcross Fram

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 29b

Location
Public footpath adjacent to Subbcross Fram

This view looks north-west across arable land, from a public footpath. Foreground dominated by relatively level arable field framed by mature trees; middle distance view of Snails Wood; long distance views out to fields, woodlands and hedgerows.

Key receptors:
Users of the public rights of way

Sensitivity of receptor:
High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Moderate

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM

4.3.17 Key Views: View 30

View 30 - View From Public Footpath adjacent to Criol Lane

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 30

Location
Public Footpath adjacent to Criol Lane

This view looks north across arable land, from a public footpath. Long distance views of Great Chart ridgeline with Coleman's Kitchen Wood prominent on horizon; foreground dominated by large arable field with middle distance views partially screened by mature trees, blocks of woodland and hedgerows .

Key receptors:
Users of the public rights of way

Sensitivity of receptor:
High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Moderate

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM

View 31 - View From Public Footpath

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 31

Location
Public Footpath

This view looks north across arable land, from a public footpath. Foreground dominated by arable fields divided by remnant hedgerows; middle distance views of single mature trees and Willow Wood to the west; long distant views of the ridgeline with Coleman's Kitchen Wood visible on the horizon to the east.

Key receptors:
Users of the public rights of way

Sensitivity of receptor:
High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
High

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM

View 32 - View from A28 adjacent to Bayley Wood

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 32

Location
A28 adjacent to Bayley Wood

This view looks east across arable land, from the A28. Foreground dominated by large arable field; long distance views through to the ridgeline woodlands to the west; strong line of mature trees and hedgerow screen views to the east

Key receptors:
Users of the Strategic Route (A28)

Sensitivity of receptor:
Low

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Medium

SIGNIFICANCE:
LOW

View 33 - View from Urban Edge of Stanhope

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 33

Location
Urban edge of Stanhope

This view looks south-west across arable land, from Stanhope urban edge. Long distance views of Stubbcross Wood over large arable field; linear woodland and hedgerow lined road (Long Length) to the left; dominant hedgerow framing view in foreground.

Key receptors:
Residents of Stanhope, on the urban edge

Sensitivity of receptor:
Very high

Sensitivity of visual effect:
High

SIGNIFICANCE:
HIGH

4.3.21 Key Views: View 34

View 34 - View from Long Length

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 34

Location
Long Length

This view looks north across arable land, towards Coleman's Kitchen Wood from Long Length. Long distance views to ridgeline with Coleman's Kitchen Wood prominent to the centre of the view and the edge of Stanhope to the right; view partially screened by well maintained and continuous hedgerow in the foreground

Key receptors:
Users of the Local distributor and rural lane (Long Length)

Sensitivity of receptor:
Moderate

Sensitivity of visual effect:
Moderate

SIGNIFICANCE:
MEDIUM

View 35 - View from Public Footpath Adjacent to Bartletts Lane

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 35

Location
Public footpath adjacent to Bartletts Lane

This view looks north towards Great Chilmington from a public footpath. View dominated by arable field in foreground, with well maintained hedgerow lining Bartletts Lane to the right and middle distance views of Brain's Wood to the left; views through to Chilmington Green Hamlet are partially screened with mature trees and associated hedgerows.

Key receptors:
Users of the public rights of way

Sensitivity of receptor:
High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
High

SIGNIFICANCE:
HIGH

View 36 - View form Chilmington Green Lane

Existing View - Spring, April 2011

Existing View - Winter, January 2012

View 36

Location
Chilmington Green Lane

This view looks east towards Great Chilmington from a rural lane. Middle and long distance views partially screened by well maintained and continuous hedgerow lining road in foreground; views of Chilmington Green Hamlet rooftops visible in middle distance surrounded by large mature trees and associated hedgerows.

Key receptors:
Users of the rural lane including vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders

Sensitivity of receptor:
High

Sensitivity of visual effect:
High

SIGNIFICANCE:
HIGH

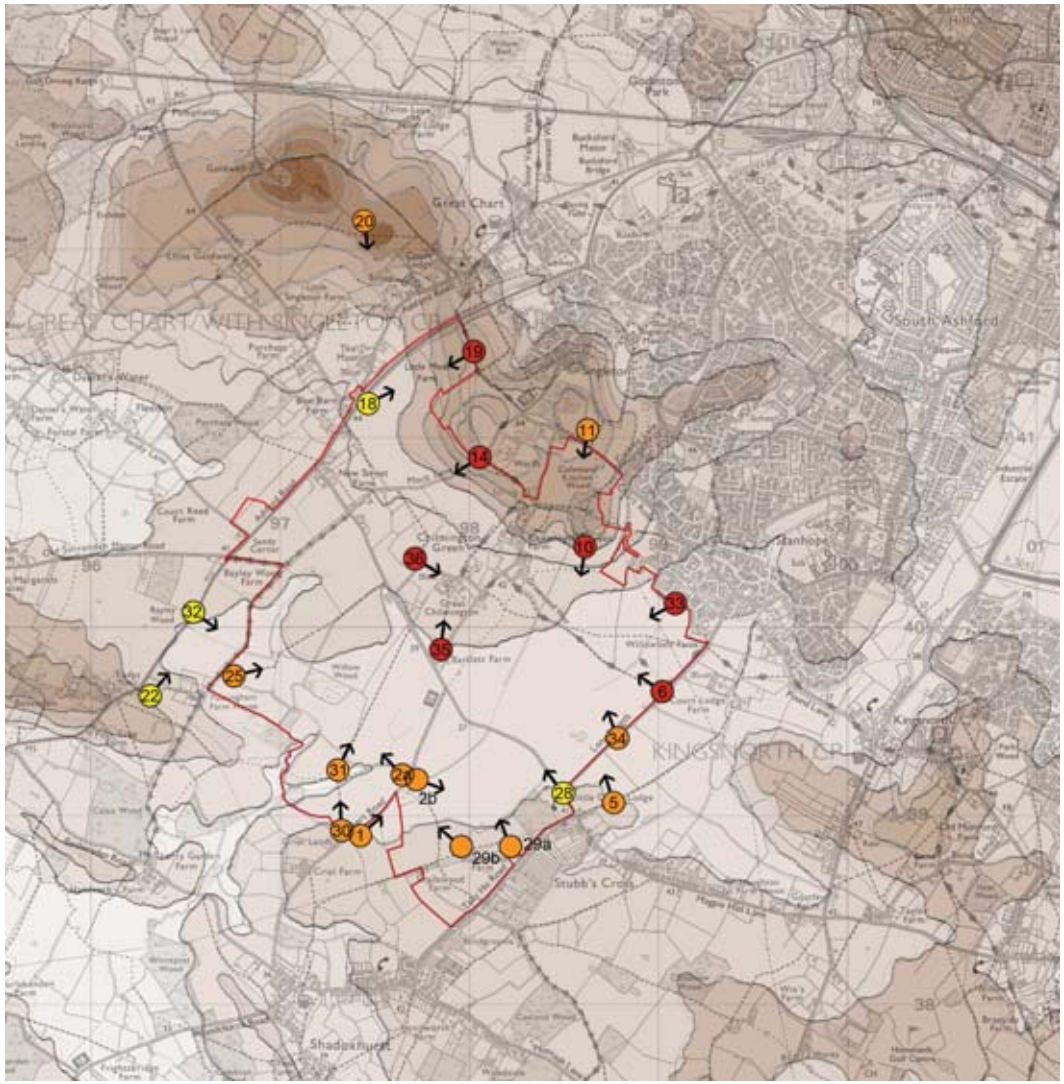


FIGURE WT29: LANDSCAPE CONTEXT - KEY VIEWS WITH SIGNIFICANCE / SENSITIVITY RATING

N

4.4.1 Based on the sensitivity of the visual receptors and the sensitivity of the view effect to change, the potential significance of the visual effects has been described in terms of high, medium or low. This is summarised in the diagram opposite.

4.4.2 There are 7 views rated with high significance. The greater sensitivity of these views is based on a number of factors. Some common elements include highly sensitive receptors, such as residential properties and users of the Greensands Way public footpath. Views from elevated positions, along the Great Chart Ridge, which offer broad views across the rural landscape also have a greater sensitivity. Finally, views within which development is likely to be highly prominent, particularly where existing features and sensitive views exist, have resulted in a high rating.

4.4.3 12 views are rated with medium significance. Almost all of these views are from public rights of way (aside from view 34 on Long Length rural lane) and have visual qualities that the masterplan development should respond to.

4.4.4 The 4 views that have been assessed as having low significance are generally due to the lower sensitivity of the receptors, such as users of major transport routes. View 22 has a low significance, in spite of the receptors sensitivity, due to the distance from the site and the existing vegetation which screens and filters views of the study area, ensuring that only a partial view of the Proposed Development is probable.

4.4.5 Refer to Appendix D for the matrix for determining the significance of landscape effects.

Key Views - high significance

Key Views - medium significance

Key Views - low significance

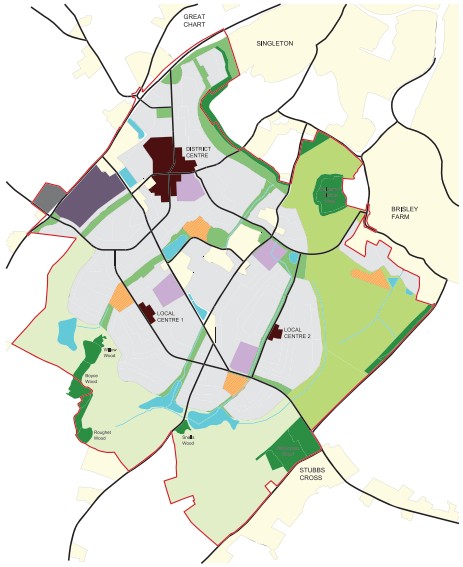


FIGURE WT30: AAP MASTERPLAN - Strategic Diagram

Key:
- AAP boundary
- Existing & Proposed roads
- Extent of built footprint
- Discovery Park
- Green space
- Ecological enhancement
- Existing & Proposed woodland
- Park & Ride
- Flood attenuation
- Mixed use area
- Primary school & community use
- Secondary School
- Strategic play space areas
- Existing properties (residential & commercial)

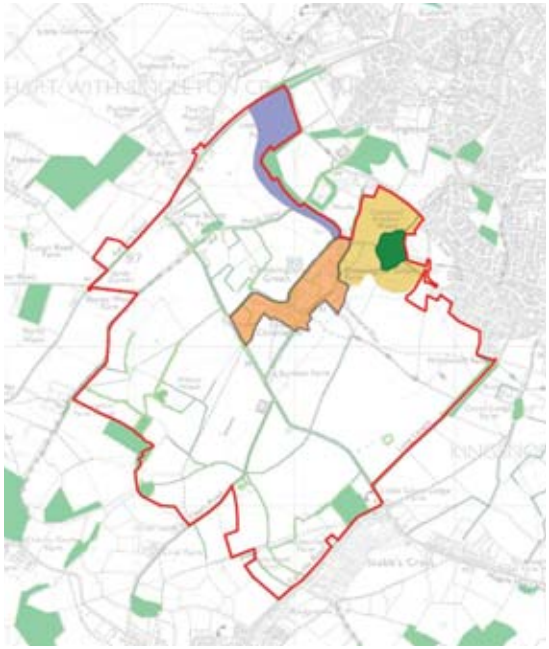


FIGURE WT31: VISUALLY SENSITIVE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

- The Hamlet
- Great Chart Farmlands Ridgeline
- Coleman's Kitchen Wood and setting

5.1.1 Introduction

The baseline studies and visual assessments have identified a number of attributes, landscape features and character areas that will inform the development of the masterplan proposals. These aspects inform the location of the proposed development footprint as well as identifying character areas, features and edge conditions that require specific design measures to address the visual impact of the proposed development.

5.1.2 Development Description

The Local Development Framework Core Strategy for Ashford sets out the parameters and core aims for Chilmington Green / Discovery Park:

- No less than 3,350 dwellings and 600 jobs by 2021 with potential for 7,000 dwellings and 1,000 jobs in total;
- Flexibly designed, mixed-use places of real character with well defined local centres;
- An overall layout that maximises the use of public transport, walking and cycling;
- High quality building design, public spaces and landscaping to create strong character areas and overall sense of place;
- Innovative solutions for future management and maintenance of public spaces and facilities;
- Good relationship with rural landscape surroundings through well designed edge to development and transitions to countryside; and
- Phased development which is supported by delivery of infrastructure and elements required for a balanced, mixed community.

The production of the Area Action Plan (AAP) and supporting documents will guide the detailed planning of Chilmington Green / Discovery Park and ensure that it is implemented in a comprehensive way and will achieve the key aims set out in the Core Strategy. The AAP process has refined the strategic development requirements to:

- Proposals for development at Chilmington Green will deliver up to 5,750 homes and at least 1,000 jobs.
- The built footprint of the development (with exception of any buildings in Discovery Park) will be contained within the 'extent of development' area shown on the Proposals Map.
- The development will be focused around a District Centre that will provide the majority of retail, employment and community-focused accommodation. The District Centre will become the focal point of the community and be delivered in the first phase of the development. The form of the District Centre will help to generate a critical mass to support public transport and local services and create a vibrant street-scene.
- Two Local Centres, serving the everyday needs of their respective neighbourhoods will also be provided to support the latter phases of the development.
- The density of residential development shall be consistent with the average density bands shown on Strategic Diagram 3.

5.1.3 Visually Sensitive Landscape Character Areas

Three key sensitive landscape character areas have been identified:

- The Hamlet: has high landscape sensitivity due to its distinctive character as a cluster of dispersed, informally placed farmsteads and medieval houses with well retained vernacular style and associated historic landscape character
- Coleman's Kitchen Wood and setting has a medium-high landscape sensitivity due to its elevated position, prominent historic woodland and ecological and heritage significance
- Great Chart Farmlands ridgeline has medium-high landscape sensitivity due to its elevated position within the landscape and prominent woodland

The development footprint, density, scale, character and built form need to ensure that these sensitive landscape character areas are respected, and enhanced.

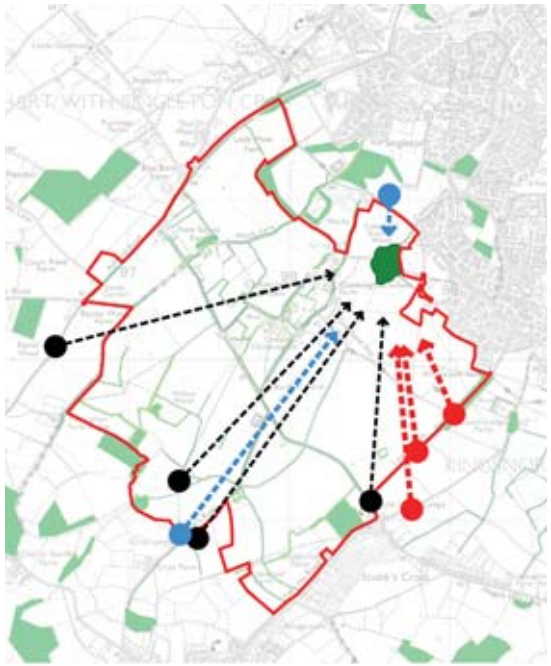


FIGURE WT32: KEY VIEWS OF COLEMAN'S KITCHEN WOOD

- Prominent views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood
- Views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood within panoramic
- Long distance / obscured views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood

5.2.1 The baseline assessment, field studies and consultation has identified views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood as a locally significant landscape feature.

5.2.2 Prominent views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood are regarded as significant and should be retained and enhanced within the Masterplan and AAP. Where possible, views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood within the panoramic should be respected by the proposed development edge, scale and form.

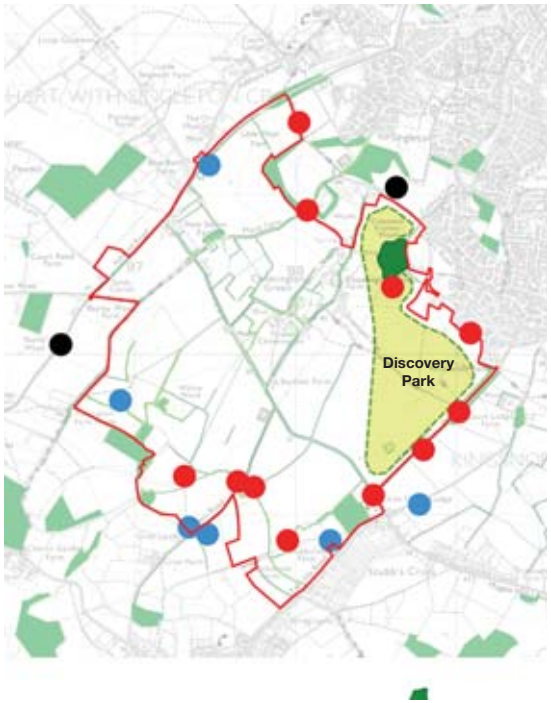


FIGURE WT33: KEY VIEWS OF DEVELOPMENT EDGE

- Prominent views of development edge
- Views of development edge within panoramic
- Long distance views / obscured views of development edge

5.2.3 The methodology baseline assessment, field studies and consultation has identified views of the development edge as visually sensitive, as they mark the transition from the proposed development with the surrounding countryside and existing landscape.

5.2.4 Prominent views of the development edge are regarded as significant and the development edge should be tested against these views to ensure they respect the landscape character within which they are located.

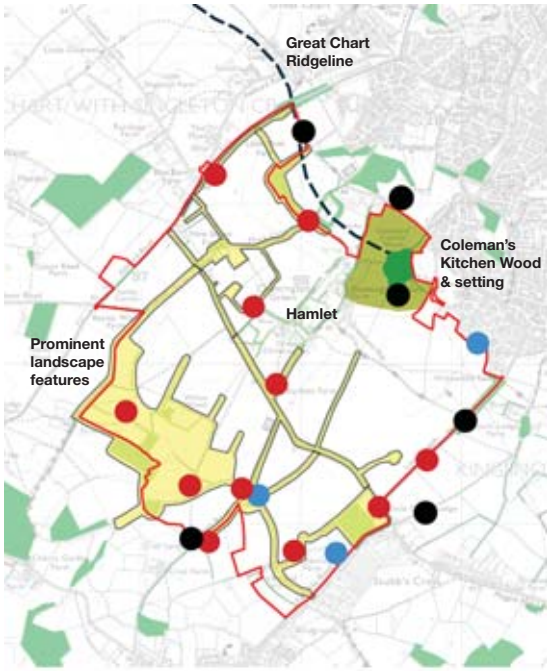


FIGURE WT34: KEY VIEWS OF LANDSCAPE FEATURES

- Views with many high quality landscape features prominent
- Views with good quality landscape features prominent and/or within the panoramic view
- Views with good quality landscape features within the panoramic or distant view

5.2.5 The baseline assessment, field studies and consultation has identified significant views of landscape features, such as woodland, hedgerows and trees, heritage features, and drainage channels. These views are significant as the Masterplan and AAP will be guided by the landscape informants, as per the summary of Section 3.12.

5.2.6 View points with greater visual exposure of landscape features and informants will inform the development of the development and AAP footprint, and the design development of these areas.

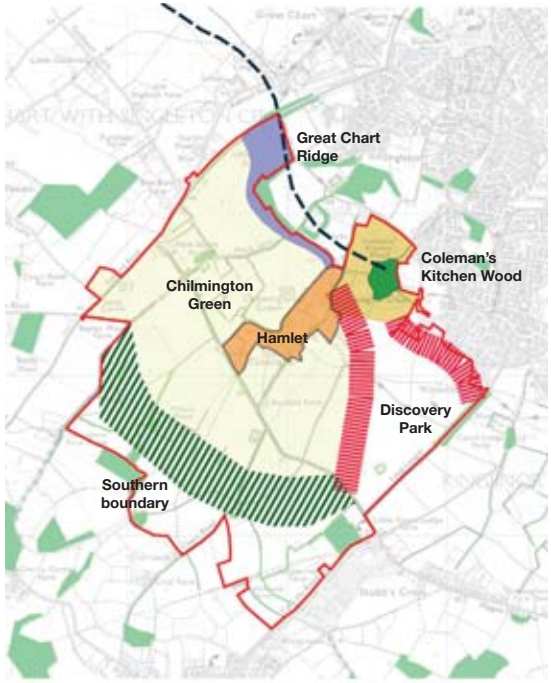


FIGURE WT35: SPECIAL CHARACTER AREAS

- Southern boundary edge
- Discovery Park edges
- The Hamlet
- Great Chart Ridge Edge
- Coleman's Kitchen Wood and setting

FIGURE WT36: ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF RURAL EDGE

FIGURE WT37: ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF DISCOVERY PARK EDGE

5.3.1 By combining the findings of the landscape and visual assessments, and through the process of Masterplan development and consultation, five key issues that should inform and guide the development of the Masterplan and AAP have been established. These issues are summarised as the following:

- Coleman's Kitchen Wood and setting
- Southern boundary edge
- Discovery Park edges
- The Hamlet
- Great Chart Ridge Edge

5.3.2 The masterplan proposals within these areas will be required to address issues of density, built form, scale, character and soft landscape treatments to ensure that the existing landscape features, important views and character is respected, retained and, wherever possible, enhanced.

The following key recommendations are made with respect to the five key issues:

5.3.3 Coleman's Kitchen Wood and setting

- Retain key view corridors;
- Enhance setting of Coleman's Kitchen Wood through appropriate design of Discovery Park and development edge; and
- Proposed Development scale, density and form to respond appropriately to land form, topography and character.

5.3.4 Southern Boundary Edge

- Retain and enhance existing woodlands;
- Retain existing high and medium value hedgerows as far as possible; and
- Existing features to inform the southern boundary development footprint, development edge location to be tested on site and agreed with ABC officers and councillors.

Figure WT36 shows an artists impression of how the southern boundary edge could be sensitively integrated into the surrounding countryside through the use of very low density, paddock-style plots and appropriate boundary treatments and planting of the surrounding open space.

5.3.5 Discovery Park Edges

- Create strong, positive built edges, with a scale appropriate for a strategic park;
- Articulate the long development edge, responding to local features and view corridors; and
- Enhance Brisley Farm edge to create frontage onto the park.

Figure WT37 opposite shows an artists impression of how the proposed development could potentially create a well defined edge to Discovery Park, through an articulated built edge with front doors facing onto the park.

FIGURE WT38: SECTIONAL STUDIES OF GREAT CHART RIDGE

FIGURE WT39: ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF HAMLET

5.3.6 Great Chart Ridge Edge

- Retain and enhance the existing woodland belt along the ridgeline / landfill site;
- Screen Singleton development;
- Respect Great Chart Ridgeline through the appropriate scale of low density development on the upper slopes;
- Retain long distance views of existing woodland by setting development back off ridgeline and maintaining appropriate building heights along this edge; and
- Respond to site constraints such as overhead cables and pylons and floodplain.

Figure WT38 shows sections exploring the development edge along the Great Chart Ridge, and how height, form and landscape design can respond to the context.

5.3.7 The Hamlet

- Respect the character of the Hamlet through appropriate scale and density of development;
- Use appropriate materials to tie in with the local context; and
- Establish set backs and buffers to retain setting of listed buildings.

Figure WT39 shows an artists impression of how new housing could potentially relate to the existing Hamlet, showing low density housing with appropriate built form and materials, and set backs established by means of a green corridor.

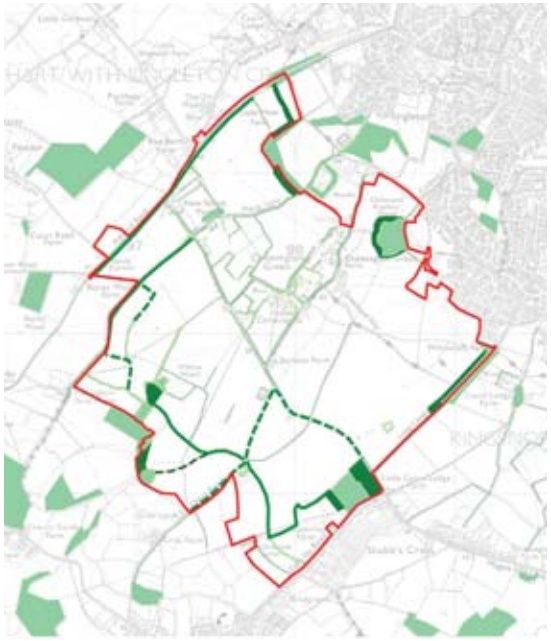


FIGURE WT40: ADVANCED LANDSCAPE MITIGATION

- Buffer planting and extensions to historic woodlands
- Enhanced hedgerows, including tree planting
- Re-instate hedgerows and/or drainage channels

FIGURE WT41: ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT AND LANDSCAPE MITIGATION AS SEEN FROM VIEW 10

FIGURE WT42: ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT AND LANDSCAPE MITIGATION AS SEEN FROM VIEW 25

5.4.1 Mitigation for both landscape and visual impacts needs to be considered in the design process of the AAP and Masterplan. Due to the scale of the Proposed Development it is important that mitigation measures are considered through the design development. This will include the avoidance or reduction of adverse effects, remediation and compensation, and enhancement.

5.4.2 A strategy of **avoidance of negative landscape and visual effects** should be followed as far as possible. The development should:

- Retain and enhance all ancient woodlands;
- Retain landscape features of high and medium value wherever possible;
- Retain and enhance sensitive landscape character areas and respect their unique features and identity; and
- Retain existing public footpaths where possible, and create a new, interconnected public footpath network; and
- Provide significant and enhanced green open space.

5.4.3 Measures to **reduce negative landscape and visual effects** that cannot be avoided should include:

- Creation of a green transition between adjacent land uses in the form of greenways, new tree, shrub and hedge planting, and private gardens;
- Reduce density and restrict building heights in relation to adjacent sensitive landscapes, such as the Hamlet, and along sensitive boundary edges, such as the southern boundary and Great Chart Ridge;
- Develop a lighting strategy that ensures that safety and security is not compromised within the development, but ensures that lighting is appropriate to the context; and ensure that light spillage and pollution is minimised and negative effects on ecology, recreation and the rural countryside are reduced;
- Ensure sensitive road design which promotes pedestrian and cycle use and serves as traffic calming measure; and
- Protect existing trees to be retained in accordance with BS5837:2005.

5.4.4 Measures to **remediate negative landscape and visual effects** will be an important part of an overall strategy to augment the reduction of negative effects:

- Screen planting that relates to the existing and historic landscape character of the area should be implemented as a landscape mitigation measure;
- A programme of advanced planting to address key views and sensitive landscape character areas should be developed in relation to the phasing programme of the Proposed Development; and
- Planting strategies should be integrated with the ecological enhancement strategy.

5.4.5 Measures to **compensate and enhance** should be implemented where impacts cannot be mitigated to an acceptable degree:

- Environmental improvements, new habitat creation and improved land management arising out of the Ecology Assessment compensates for impacts to existing habitats;
- A large portion of the site is retained as Discovery Park for active and passive recreation and amenity, which will be well connected to the wider open space, pedestrian and cycle network;
- Augment existing tree, hedge and shrub planting with new structural planting to create an enhanced green structure and increase the level of screening of adjacent properties and land uses;
- Improve management of trees and hedgerows;
- Provide a network of water attenuation features which integrate with the local water courses and existing ditches and attenuate surface water run-off; and
- Ensure the transition from urban to rural landscape with the introduction of a green structure, ecological and public open space within the development site.

Introduction

Hedgerows are identified as important elements within the Bethersden Farm district character area. They are also prominent and/or distinctive features within the key views that have been identified and described in this report. It is a strong design aspiration that significant and distinctive landscape features inform the development of the Masterplanning process. In order to achieve this, it was important that an assessment of the hedgerows be carried out. In order to meaningfully guide the Masterplanning process, the aim of the Hedgerow Assessment is to:

- Identify existing hedgerows;
- Describe the existing hedgerows; and
- Determine the value of the existing hedgerows.

Methodology

Care has been taken to ensure an accepted, rigorous methodology has been applied when identifying and describing the hedgerows, and particularly in assessing their relative value.

To this end, the Hedgerow Assessment has been prepared according to the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA).

Hedgerow Assessment

The Hedgerow Assessment was carried out primarily in the field, but also through desktop studies. Field work was carried out in April and May 2010. A Field Study Sheet has been completed for each hedgerow which captures the following information:

1. Each sheet is headed with the date of field survey, location and reference number assigned to hedgerow, context and function.

2. Continuity
   Hedgerows range from continuous through to remnant.

3. Height
   For clarity the height of the hedges were distinguished from the height of the trees within the hedgerow to give a clearer understanding of the character and structure of the hedgerow.

4. Condition
   Hedgerows vary from well maintained to overgrown and remnant.

5. Vegetation Type
   Hedgerows are differentiated based on native, mixed and nonnative species.

6. Distinctive Features
   Some hedgerows have associated features that make them more distinctive within the landscape, such as drainage courses, ditches, trees and/or designated routes and trails.

7. Visual Distinctiveness
   Visual Distinctiveness describes hedgerows that contain shelter belts, standard trees and/or provide enclosure. These features have been identified as having broader visual significance within the landscape than the Distinctive Features, as they are more visually prominent. Shelter belts are defined as hedgerows with a continuous line of trees of the same species. Standard trees are defined as mature, specimen trees within a hedgerow. Enclosure refers to a pair of continuous with gaps hedgerows that enclose a lane, road or trail.

Value of Hedgerows

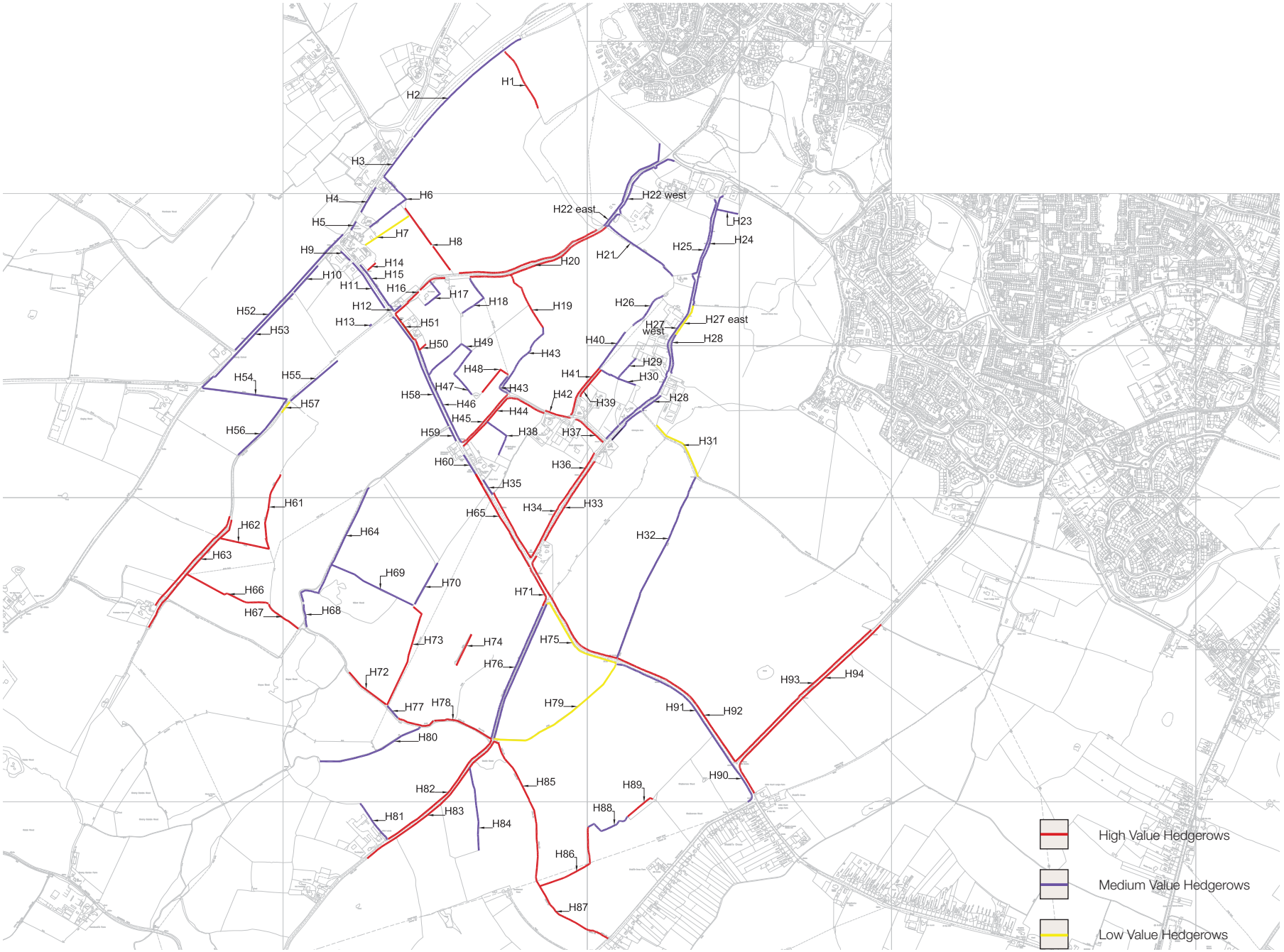
The proposed development of 7,000 dwellings in Chilmington Green mean that it will not be possible to retain all the existing hedgerows within the study area. In order to guide the development of the Masterplan, the hedgerows have been assigned a value based on the qualities of the hedgerows as documented in the Field Study Sheets. The table below shows how the values have been assigned and the recommendations for the Masterplanning process:

Value	Description	Recommendation
High	Visual Distinctiveness AND / OR Continuous; Well maintained and Distinctive Feature	Retain hedgerow
Medium	Distinctive Feature AND / OR Continuous with gaps; and Well maintained / Maintained, but overgrown	Attempt to retain and/or rehabilitate hedgerow, if feasible
Low	Intermittent / Remnant	If retained, hedgerow should be rehabilitated and/or reinstated

It is worth noting that the value attributed to the hedgerows is a relative value based only on the hedgerows' landscape qualities, and does not include other aspects, for example habitat and heritage value. The Ecology and Heritage Surveys should also inform the Masterplanning process, and may give different significance to hedgerows based on a different set of criteria.

Similarly, landscape assessment as a whole encompasses the appraisal of physical, aesthetic and intangible attributes which arise from a combination of landscape elements, and the way in which the hedgerow assessment is utilised to inform the Masterplan should be holistic.

Hedgerow Assessment Reference Plan



ASHFORD LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT — **FIELD STUDY SHEET**
Hedgerows

Date: 04.05.10 | Location: **Goddard's Field** | Reference: **H1**

Context: | **Function:** **Field boundary**

CONTINUITY	Continuous **Continuous with some gaps** Intermittent Remnant	
HEIGHT	Hedges 0.5 – 2m 2 – 5m **> 5m**	Trees 3 – 5m **6 – 15m** > 15m
CONDITION	Well maintained Maintained, but overgrown Overgrown Remnant	East and west, dense, well maintained hedge. Further west more overgrown.
VEGETATION TYPE	**Native** Mixed native & non-native Non-native	Oak, Ash, overgrown hawthorn, coppiced Hazel.
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES	Ditch and/or drainage Trees Byway National Trail National Cycle Route	
VISUAL DISTINCTIVENESS	Shelter belt **Standard trees** Enclosure	

Sensitivity / Value / Rating

HIGH
Visual Distinctiveness AND/OR
Continuous; Well maintained and Distinctive Feature

MEDIUM
Distinctive Feature AND/OR
Continuous / Continuous with some gaps,; and
Well maintained / Maintained, but overgrown

LOW
Intermittent / Remnant

ASHFORD LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT — **FIELD STUDY SHEET**
Hedgerows

Date: 04.05.10 | Location: **Judges' and Goddard's Field Boundary** | Reference: **H8**

Context: | **Function:** **Field boundary**

CONTINUITY	Continuous Continuous with some gaps **Intermittent** Remnant	
HEIGHT	Hedges 0.5 – 2m 2 – 5m > 5m	Trees **3 – 5m** **6 – 15m** > 15m
CONDITION	Well maintained Maintained, but overgrown Overgrown Remnant	
VEGETATION TYPE	Native Mixed native & non-native Non-native	
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES	Ditch and/or drainage Trees Byway National Trail National Cycle Route	
VISUAL DISTINCTIVENESS	**Shelter belt** Standard trees Enclosure	Line of closely spaced Alder. No understory. Fairly young trees up to 5-8m.

Sensitivity / Value / Rating

HIGH
Visual Distinctiveness AND/OR
Continuous; Well maintained and Distinctive Feature

MEDIUM
Distinctive Feature AND/OR
Continuous / Continuous with some gaps,; and
Well maintained / Maintained, but overgrown

LOW
Intermittent / Remnant

Introduction

The system of drainage channels and ditches within the study area are relatively inconspicuous in the wider landscape, and are not obvious features in themselves. Their value as landscape elements, over and above their hydrological role and ecological benefits, lies primarily in the way they enable one to understand and interpret the wider landscape.

In order to aid and direct the manner in which the existing drainage channels and ditches guide and inform the Masterplanning process, a landscape Drainage Assessment has been carried out. The aim of the Assessment is to:

- Identify the existing drainage channels;
- Describe the existing drainage channels; and
- Determine the value of the existing hedgerows.

It is important to note that this assessment has been carried out purely as a landscape quality assessment. It has been guided by early input from the Drainage and Ecology consultants, but no detailed Drainage or Ecology assessments were available at the time this report was compiled.

Methodology

Care has been taken to ensure an accepted, rigorous methodology has been applied when identifying and describing the drainage channels, and particularly in assessing their relative value. In the absence of a comprehensive drainage assessment of the site, there may be some omissions or inaccuracies.

The Drainage Assessment methodology has been prepared according to the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA).

Drainage Assessment

The Drainage Assessment was carried out both in the field and through desktop studies. Field work was carried out in April and May 2010. A Field Study Sheet has been completed for each drainage channel which captures the following information:

1. Each sheet is headed with the date of field survey, location and reference number assigned to the drainage channel, catchment number (as identified in desktop study by WSP) and direction of flow (where known).

2. Continuity
   Drainage channels range from continuous channels through to fragments / remnants.
   In the absence of a detailed drainage analysis of the existing channels, assumptions have been made about the continuity of channels based on observation in the field and desktop analysis.

3. Size
   The depth and width of the channels has been captured.

4. Condition
   Drainage channels vary from well maintained to overgrown and remnant.

5. Associated Vegetation
   Some drainage channels have associated vegetation that makes them both more visually distinctive and more likely to have increased amenity and habitat value.

6. Distinctive Features
   Some drainage channels are associated with public rights of way and national trails that make them more significant within the landscape.

7. Associated Feature / Habitat Linkages
   Associated Feature / Habitat Linkages describes the features that drainage channels may be associated with that give them greater significance within the landscape, and indicate that they are more likely to aid the interpretation and understanding of the landscape context, and support the development of an integrated, sustainable Masterplan.. Associated Features refers to historic features such as channels feeding or draining scheduled moats. Habitat linkages refers to the drainage channels association with ponds, woods, Whitewater Dyke and floodplains, which have ecological and leisure value.

Value of Drainage Channels

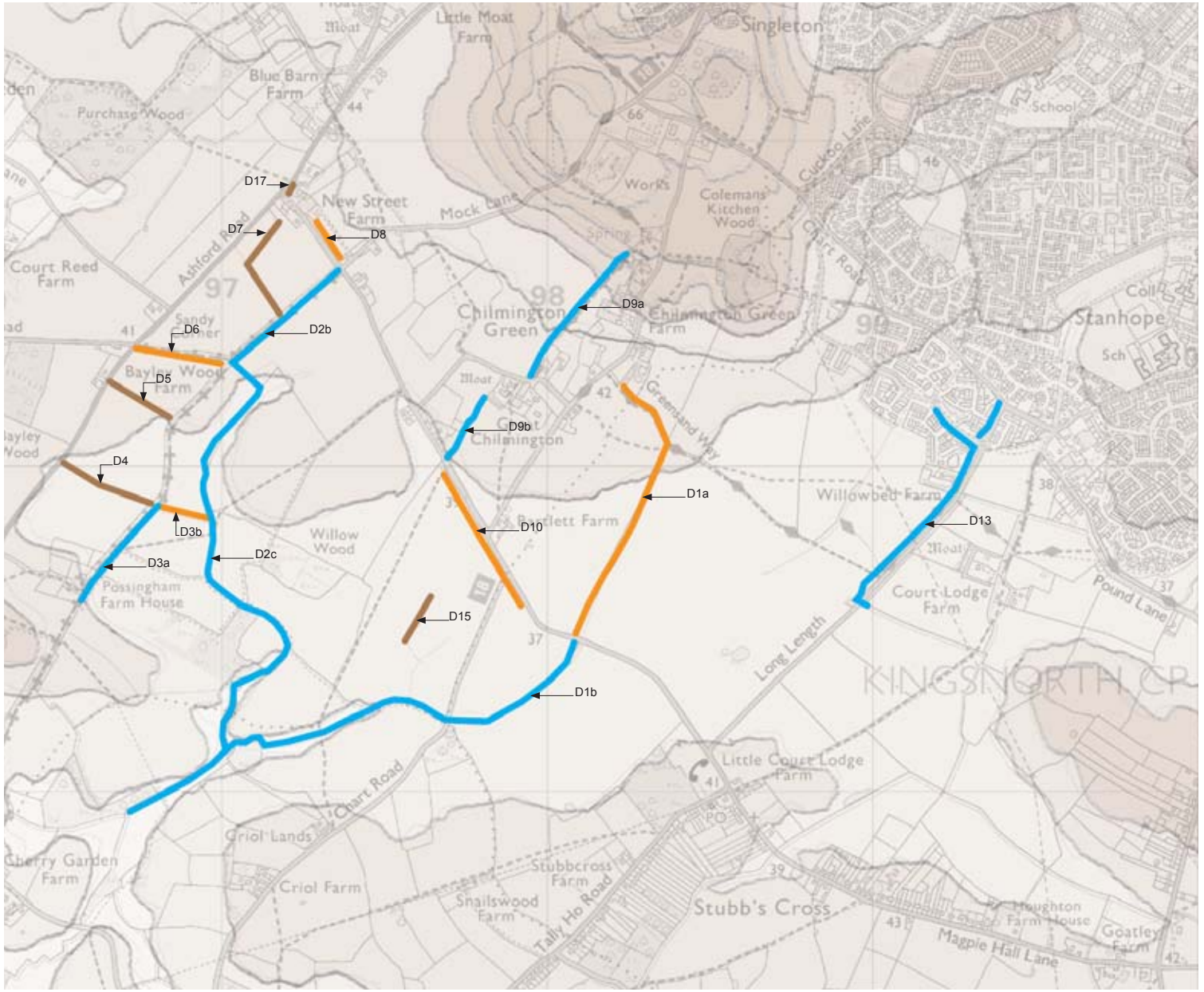
The proposed development of 7,000 dwellings in Chilmington Green mean that there will be a significant change to the drainage regimes of the site, and it will not be possible to retain all the existing drainage channels with their current hydrological flows. In order to guide the development of the Masterplan, the drainage channels have been assigned a value based on the qualities of the channels as documented in the Field Study Sheets. The table below shows how the values have been assigned and the recommendations for the Masterplanning process:

Value	Description	Recommendation
High	Associated Feature / Habitat Linkages AND / OR Continuous; Well maintained and Distinctive Feature	Retain channel
Medium	Distinctive Feature AND / OR Continuous / Tributary / Field Drain; and Well maintained / Maintained, but overgrown with Associated Vegetation	Attempt to retain and/or retain alignment of channel, if feasible
Low	Intermittent / Remnant	If retained, channel should be rehabilitated and/or reinstated

It is important to note that the value attributed to the drainage channels is a relative value based only on the channels' landscape qualities, and does not include other aspects, for example hydrological, habitat and heritage value. The Drainage, Ecology and Heritage Surveys currently underway should also inform the Masterplanning process, and may give different significance to water courses based on a different set of criteria.

The significant changes that the Chilmington Green development will bring to the hydrological systems in the study area need to be considered in the manner in which the existing channels are integrated and incorporated into the landscape masterplan, particularly when considering cumulative down-stream impacts outside the study area.

Finally, the value of the drainage channels needs to be overlain with the other physical, aesthetic and intangible attributes which combine to create landscape character when informing the development of the Masterplan.


D17
D7
D8
D6
D2b
D5
D4
D3b
D3a
D2c
D9a
D9b
D10
D1a
D15
D1b
D13
Little Moat Farm
Singleton
Blue Barn Farm
Purchase Wood
New Street Farm
Mock Lane
Works
Colemans Kitchen Wood
Cuckoo Lane
Chart Road
School
Court Reed Farm
Ashford Road
Chilmington Green
Chilmington Green Farm
Stanhope
Bayley Wood Farm
Greensand Way
Willowbed Farm
Bartlett Farm
Willow Wood
Possingham Farm House
Court Lodge Farm
Pound Lane
Long Length
KINGSNORTH CP
Little Court Lodge Farm
Griol Lands
Cherry Garden Farm
Griol Farm
Stubbcross Farm
Snailswood Farm
Tally Ho Road
Stubb's Cross
Houghton Farm House
Goatley Farm
Magpie Hall Lane
High value drain
Medium value drain
Low value drain

ASHFORD LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT — **FIELD STUDY SHEET**

Ditches

Date: 04.05.10 | Location: **Long Length** | Reference: **D13**

Catchment: Catchment 5 | Direction of flow: N to S

CONTINUITY	**Continuous channel (>300)** Tributary / Field Drain (151-300) Fragment / Remnant (<150m)	
SIZE	Depth < 0.5m 0.5 – 1m **> 1m**	Width 0.5 – 1m 1 – 2m **> 2m**
CONDITION	Well maintained **Maintained, but overgrown** Overgrown Remnant	
ASSOCIATED VEGETATION	Trees **Hedgerow** Unmown edges / meadow	Linear woodland to east and cultivated fields to western bank
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES	Byway **National Trail** National Cycle Route	National Trail crosses drainage channel at two locations
ASSOCIATED FEATURE / HABITAT LINKAGES	Pond **Copse / Wood** Whitewater Dyke Moat – Scheduled Monument **Flood plain**	Drainage channel runs along and within Long Length linear woodland; Within 1 in 1000 year flood plain

Value

HIGH
Associated Feature / Habitat Linkages AND/OR
Continuous; Associated Vegetation and Distinctive feature

MEDIUM
Distinctive Feature AND/OR
Continuous / Tributary / Field Drain; and Well maintained / Maintained, but overgrown with Associated Vegetation

LOW
Intermittent / Remnant

ASHFORD LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT — **FIELD STUDY SHEET**

Ditches

Date: 04.05.10 | Location: **Collier's Field** | Reference: **D3b**

Catchment: Catchment 2 | Direction of flow: NW to SE

CONTINUITY	**Continuous channel (>300)** Tributary / Field Drain (151-300) Fragment / Remnant (<150m)	
SIZE	Depth < 0.5m 0.5 – 1m > 1m	Width 0.5 – 1m 1 – 2m > 2m
CONDITION	**Well maintained** Maintained, but overgrown Overgrown Remnant	
ASSOCIATED VEGETATION	Trees **Hedgerow** Unmown edges / meadow	
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES	Byway National Trail National Cycle Route Lane / Road	
ASSOCIATED FEATURE / HABITAT LINKAGES	Pond Copse / Wood Whitewater Dyke Moat – Scheduled Monument Flood plain	

Value

HIGH
Associated Feature / Habitat Linkages AND/OR
Continuous; Associated Vegetation and Distinctive feature

MEDIUM
Distinctive Feature AND/OR
Continuous / Tributary / Field Drain; and Well maintained / Maintained, but overgrown with Associated Vegetation

LOW
Intermittent / Remnant

Introduction

Landscape assessment encompasses an appraisal of physical, aesthetic and intangible attributes including sense of place, rarity or representativeness, and unspoilt appearance. The combination of landscape elements (urban grain, scale, open space, topography, vegetation, land use, architecture and fabric, trees, hedgerows, woodlands, arable and pastureland) and their arrangement give the different areas a unique sense of place or character. These aspects need to be taken into account when developing the masterplan and AAP, and when assessing the landscape impact.

The Landscape Character Assessment undertook a review of the landscape assessment work carried out previously, to test, refine and update this information in order to understand the distinct landscape character areas within the study area at a more detailed level. This was carried out through desk top and field surveys, a review of existing documentation and reports, and an assessment of the landscape character areas' existing quality and sensitivity to development.

In order to better understand the views and their sensitivity, they have been assessed based on the sensitivity of the receptor and the sensitivity of the LCA to change. A matrix is then used to determine the overall significance of effects for these landscape character areas.

Methodology: Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

The sensitivity of the Landscape is determined based on its classification in terms of its landscape value and significance.

Landscape value is concerned with the relative value that is attached to different landscapes (ref. LCA Guidance). This is relates to the policy context, recognising landscape value based on national or local landscape designations, as well as the local value that different communities may place on the landscape.

The sensitivity of the landscape refers to the degree to which the landscape character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character or a change of its landscape character type, according to the following scale:

Value	Description	Sensitivity
Very high	Internationally designated feature or landscape character, with a strong structure, characteristic patterns and a possessing features of international value. Susceptible to relatively small changes.	High to Very high
High	Nationally or regionally recognised landscape with a strong structure, characteristic patterns and a balanced combination of landform and land cover; possesses features of national or regional value (may be nationally or regionally designated). Any detracting features are not sufficient to undermine the sense of place.	Medium to high
Good	Nationally, regionally or locally recognised landscape structure with characteristic patterns and land uses; possesses features of local value (may be locally designated). Any detracting features are not sufficient to undermine the sense of place.	Usually medium
Ordinary	A notable landscape structure and pattern, although the historic character may be masked by the current land use. Scope to improve the character through management of the area; some features worthy or conservation. Some detracting features are present and notable in the landscape.	Medium to low
Poor	Weak landscape structure and characteristic patterns are masked by land use. Lack of management has resulted in degradation; frequent detracting features are present which harm the sense of place.	Usually low

It is worth noting that the landscape quality is measured within the context of landscape at a national level, and not in isolation.

The third column of this table details the landscape character's sensitivity, which is directly linked to its quality as illustrated in the table.

The sensitivity of a landscape is defined as its ability to accept change, based on its vulnerability to degradation through the introduction of new features.

Methodology: Sensitivity of Landscape to Change

The effect of a development upon landscape can include physical effects on the existing landscape character, and potential changes in character, condition and value of the affected landscape. The significance of landscape effects is assesed by taking account of the sensitivity of the receptor (the ability of the lanscape to accommodate change) together with the nature, scale and/or magnitude and duration of change. Factors taken into account include:

- Scale / extent of loss or alteration to the key elements/features/characteristics of the Landscape Character Area (landform, land use, land cover and landscape structure);
- Changes to the visual appearance of the development area (proportion, scale, enclosure, texture, colour, views);
- Changes to the character of the Site, including the physical structure of the buildings and development patterns;
- Perceived changes to the surrounding buildings, street scenes, routes or open space resulting from any changes to context and setting; and
- The quality of the landscape character, at a local, regional and national level.

Methodology: Significance of Landscape Effects

The matrix below assesses the overall significance of all effects, which is a function of the sensitivity of the receptor to change and the sensitivity of the landscape character area to change:

			Sensitivity of Receptor to Change				
Sensitivity of View to Change			**Very High**	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
			Internationally designated feature or landscape character, susceptible to relatively small changes. Any detracting features are not sufficient to undermine the sense of place.	Nationally or regionally recognised landscape with a strong structure, characteristic patterns and distinctive character, susceptible to change.	Regionally or locally recognised landscape structure with notable landscape structure and pattern, although scope to improve the character. Some features worthy of conservation, detracting features present. Reasonably tolerant of change.	Locally valued components of landscape with weak structure and patterns, reasonably tolerant of change.	A non designated landscape character or features, the nature of which is potentially tolerant of sub-stantial change.
	Very High	At complete variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape.	Very High / High	High	High / Medium	Medium	Medium / Low
	High	A significant deterioration (or improvement) in the landscape character or loss of features over an extensive area.	High	High / Medium	Medium	Medium / Low	Low
	Medium	A noticable deterioration (or improvement) in landscape character and landscape elements.	High / Medium	Medium	Medium / Low	Low	Low / Negligible
	Low	A barely perceptible deterioration (or improvement) to elements or character.	Medium	Medium / Low	Low	Low / Negligible	Negligible
	No Change	No discernible change to any lansdcape elements or character.	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Effects are identified as being adverse or beneficial, direct or indirect, permanent or temporary; and short, medium or long-term.

Introduction

The first stage in the process of assessing the visual effects in relation to a particular development is to establish the area from which a proposal is likely to be visible. Following verification on Site, viewpoints that both characterise views of the Development and those which are of particular importance or potentially sensitive have been selected. The visual assessment has therefore been based on the 23 selected representative viewpoints against which the effects of the Development have been assessed.

In order to better understand the views and their sensitivity, they have been assessed based on the sensitivity of the receptor and the sensitivity of the visual effects to change. A matrix is then used to determine the overall significance of effects for these views.

Methodology: Determining Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

The sensitivity of the receptor relates to the amenity value of the view. As such, views from public paths or footpaths and residences where the view is key to its quality, are considered more sensitive than transient views from roads or views from workplaces, schools or retail areas where the view is not likely to be key to the quality of the activity. Account is also taken of the number of people affected and whether the view is from an important or elevated position.

The Visual Receptor Sensitivity Assessment was carried out through desktop studies, analysis of the baseline information gathered and in the field. In order to assess a relative sensitivity of each visual receptor, the following table was developed to categorise the significance and sensitivity between very high and negligible:

Very high	Including viewers with internationally designated landscapes, (National Parks, AONBs, the setting of scheduled Ancient Monuments or Grade I listed buildings) and views from residential properties.
High	Including viewers using public rights of way, regional designated landscapes or the setting of Grade II listed buildings. Tourists.
Medium	Including views from people engaged in outdoor sports or recreation, including people within cars and those driving on local roads.
Low	People using major transport corridors.
Negligible	Including people working inside for business or industry.

Methodology: Determining Sensitivity of View to Change

The LVIA assessment of the future proposed development will assess the magnitude of change to the view based on the following principles:

- The extent of the view that would be occupied by the Proposed Development (e.g. glimpsed, partial or full);
- The proportion of the Proposed Development that would be visible from viewpoints (e.g. all of the Development or part of the Development);
- The distance of the viewpoint from the Proposed Development;
- Whether the view would focus on the Proposed Development. For example, where a building would effectively create a landmark or the view is directed towards a building by the landscape framework, or the Proposed Development forms one element in a panoramic view; and
- Whether the Proposed Development contrasts by form or character with its surroundings and/ or whether the Proposed Development appears as an extensions or additions to the view's original context.

In light of the specific characteristics of the site identified in the baseline assessment, and the absence of a fixed, detailed development layout to assess, a methodology has been developed for describing the views and assessing their relative sensitivity to change. This is based on five factors:

- Extent of the view that would potentially be occupied by the Proposed Development, and portion of the Proposed Development that is visible.
- Whether the view would focus on or be dominated by the Proposed Development.
- The visibility of Coleman's Kitchen Wood - Coleman's Kitchen Wood has been identified as a key landscape feature due to its prominent elevated position on the Great Chart Ridge, ancient woodland status and heritage and ecological significance, as a result of desk top studies, field studies and steering group workshops and community consultation.
- The visibility of the edge of development - Views which are likely to incorporate the development edge are deemed significant as they will be required to address the transition from the existing landscape to the proposed development. These views will inform the position of the development boundary and inform the treatments of these edges. These views are identified as views from the edge/beyond the redline boundary, within the visual envelope.
- Visibility of landscape features (based on the landscape informants diagram) - The visibility of key landscape features is the third factor considered to render a view sensitive.

The View Sensitivity Assessment was carried out through desktop studies, analysis of the baseline information gathered and in the field. In order to assess a relative value to each view, the following table was developed to categorise the sensitivity of each view between very high and negligible:

Very high	Development is highly visible; significant views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood and potential development edge; elevated views across country-side; and significant landscape features prominent within view.
High	Development is evident; views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood or Development edge prominent; elevated view across country-side; and many landscape features prominent within the view or panoramic.
Medium	Development is noticeable; views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood or Development edge and landscape features.
Low	Development barely perceptible; no significant views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood or development edge; and few landscape features of note.
Negligible	Development barely discernible within view, no significant views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood, development edge or landscape features.

Methodology: Significance of Visual Effects

The matrix below assesses the overall significance of all effects, which is a function of the sensitivity of the rectpor to change and the sensitivity of the view to change:

			Sensitivity of Receptor to Change				
Sensitivity of View to Change			**Very High**	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
			Viewers with internationally designated landscapes (National Parks, AONBs, the setting of scheduled Ancient Monuments or Grade I listed buildings) and views from residential properties	Viewers using public rights of way, regional designated landscapes or the setting of Grade II listed buildings. Tourists.	Views from people engaged in outdoor sports or recreation, including people within cars and those driving on local roads.	People using major transport corridors.	People working inside for business or industry.
	Very High	Development is highly visible; significant views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood and potential development edge; elevated views across country-side; and significant landscape features prominent within view.	Very High / High	High	High / Medium	Medium	Medium / Low
	High	Development is evident; views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood or Development edge prominent; elevated view across country-side; and many landscape features prominent within the view or panoramic.	High	High / Medium	Medium	Medium / Low	Low
	Medium	Development is noticable; views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood or Development edge and landscape features.	High / Medium	Medium	Medium / Low	Low	Low / Negligible
	Low	Development barely perceptible; no significant views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood or development edge; and few landscape features of note.	Medium	Medium / Low	Low	Low / Negligible	Negligible
	Negligible	Development barely discernible within view, no significant views of Coleman's Kitchen Wood, development edge or landscape features.	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Effects are identified as being adverse or beneficial, direct or indirect, permanent or temporary; and short, medium or long-term.