1.0 Introduction

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Context

The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally important protected landscape, whose special characteristics include its dramatic landform and views, rich habitats, extensive ancient woodland, mixed farmland, rich historic and built heritage, and its tranquillity and remoteness. Within its bounds it shows a considerable variation in landscape character that encompasses open and wooded downs, broad river valleys, dry valleys, arable farmland vales, wooded greensand ridge, and open chalk cliff coastline. "The Kent Downs AONB is a capital resource that underpins much economic activity in Kent. Its high quality environment helps to attract businesses, contributes to the quality of life that people in the county value so highly and supports a substantial visitor economy". (South East England Development Agency)

1.2 Purpose of the Handbook

The purpose of the handbook is to provide practical, readily accessible design guidance to contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the special characteristics of the AONB as a whole, and the distinctiveness of its individual character areas. Whilst the special character and unique landscape quality of the AONB remains largely undiminished, the landscape is under commercial and development pressure which can result in poor location and design of new development, unsympathetic improvements to the boundaries of properties, creeping 'suburbanisation', growth in new uses for land such as equestrian management, decline in traditional land management and intensive farming practices. There is also pressure from traffic, noise and light pollution, as well as illegal activities such as flytipping and off-road activity by motorbikes and 4 x 4 vehicles. The guidelines are not meant to inhibit innovative design, but to provide a sound framework and information basis from which sympathetic design and management can be developed. Design should seek to encourage the use of materials which are conserving in their own right, for instance products from coppiced woods.

1.3 Duty of Regard

The status of AONBs has been enhanced through measures introduced in the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, which give greater support to their planning and management. These measures include a duty on relevant authorities, public bodies and statutory undertakers to take account of the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of AONB landscapes when carrying out their statutory functions.

1.4 Consultation

In preparing this document an initial consultation was undertaken in November 2003 with representatives of local authorities, parish councils, local farmers etc. to discuss the scope, content and look of the document. The views of the consultees have been sought with the intention that the handbook be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and be available from the AONB Unit. Further information can be found in the Statement of Consultation available from the AONB Unit.

1.5 Users

The handbook is intended to be used by the following audiences:

- Residents and community groups
- Local businesses, farmers and landowners
- Developers, architects, planners and designers
- Local planning authorities
- Highway engineers
- Elected members and officers of local and parish councils
- Public utilities
- Telecommunication and public service providers.
- Countryside management organisations.

1.6 Relationship to the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2004-2009 (April 2004)

The CROW Act requires management plans to be produced, published and regularly revised by local authorities. By providing landscape design guidance, this handbook contributes to the implementation of the management plan objectives and policies. A monitoring system has been set for the Management Plan objectives. Copies of the Management Plan are available from the Kent Downs AONB Unit.

1.7 Relationship to Kent and Medway Structure Plan (Deposit September 2003) and Local Plan Policies

Policies set out within the Kent and Medway Structure Plan (Deposit Plan, September 2003) and Local Plans for the area are designed to 'ensure

that Kent's AONBs are protected and enhanced'. The Structure Plan states that 'changes in the countryside which are necessary and inevitable should be managed in a way which, as far as possible, strengthens its pattern and diversity rather than eroding character and distinctiveness'. This document should be referred to alongside the policies set out in the Kent and Medway Structure Plan and other Local Plans for the area.

1.8 Relationship to the planning permission application process

This handbook provides advice on the particular qualities of the Kent Downs AONB and can be used in conjunction with other guidance as available.

Much of the guidance given in this document refers to works which are part of the design process, rather than those which specifically require planning permission; however, when considering works in the AONB, the applicant/s and/or their agent, should always contact the local planning authority (LPA – see useful contacts) to confirm whether any consents are needed. Some works will require building regulations consent or, possibly, consents under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act [as amended] 1990, etc.

Local Plans/Local Development Frameworks and Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents will be available to give local guidance and may even be site specific. A planning officer will let you know what documents are relevant and will be able to confirm if any consents are needed.

1.9 Updating and changes to guidance

It is likely that new products and guidance will emerge during the life of this publication. These will be sent to all recipients of the handbook. This document has a pouch at the back in which to insert updates and amendments.

Despite detailed consultation during the preparation of this handbook we are aware that there may be errors or omissions. We are always keen to receive further comments or observations and will forward these to other users of this handbook.

1.10 Relationship to Other Design Guidance

Kent Design Guide

Kent Design – a guide to sustainable development seeks to promote sustainability and good design throughout Kent. It identifies principles for environmentally sustainable development and high quality design illustrated with numerous best practice case studies. Whilst the Kent Downs AONB Landscape Design Guide provides more detailed landscape guidance within the AONB, the Kent Design Guide (published by Kent County Council) should also be followed in preparing development schemes.

Village Design Statements

A number of villages within the Kent Downs AONB (for example: Charing, Lynsted, Westerham, Wye, Boughton Aluph and Eastwell) have produced village design statements which describe the distinctive character of the village and the surrounding countryside and identify design principles based on local character. These should also be consulted where relevant. The Local Planning Authority/Parish Council or AONB Unit should be contacted for information on Village Design Statements.

1.11 Disability Discrimination Act

Since October 1999, service providers have had to consider making reasonable adjustments to the way they deliver their services so that disabled people can use them. From October 2004, service providers must ensure that the final stage of the duties within The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Part III) are put into practice. This requires service providers to make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access. Physical features external to buildings are also covered under the Act, for example paths and seating in a pub garden. Further information on the external features that commonly need attention in public buildings is provided by The Centre for Accessible Environments publication: 'Designing for Accessibility' (http://www.cae.org.uk/cae_publications/DFA2004.html).

Landscape Design within the AONB should adhere to advice set out within the Act. However, at the time of publication the precise application of the Act to the wider countryside (e.g. Public Rights of Way and associated furniture – stiles, gates etc) is unclear. Further information is provided by BT 'Countryside for All' within *A Good Practice Guide to Disabled People's Access in the Countryside* (www.fieldfare.org.uk/btcfa.htm). This document provides standards and guidelines on access to the countryside that takes all visitors' needs into account. These standards aim to help people who provide countryside services to make paths and trails more accessible and to help disabled people locate accessible paths and trails. Further good practice guidance in the form of an inclusive design toolkit will soon be available from Kent County Council's Access Development Team (produced in collaboration with the Sensory Trust). For more information contact: explorekent@kent.gov.uk. The Countryside Agency will also be publishing further guidance in early 2005, to supplement the 'Countryside for All' guide. (www.countryside.gov.uk/WiderWelcome/DiversityReview/disabledcountrysideaccess.asp)

1.12 Relationship to Kent Biodiversity Action Plan

The 1997 Kent BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) is currently being updated by a broad partnership of more than 35 organisations. Twenty-seven habitat action plans have been produced in 2004. Each sets out the action that partners will take to conserve each of the 27 habitats considered a priority for nature conservation in Kent. Priority habitats that are an integral part of the Kent Downs AONB landscape include lowland calcareous grassland, ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows, lowland beech & yew woodland, lowland mixed broadleaved woodland, wet woodland, chalk rivers and reedbeds. For more information on the Kent BAP or an individual habitat action plan, contact the Co-ordinator on 01622 221537 or e-mail info@kentbap.org.uk.
Alternatively, you can visit www.kentbap.org.uk

1.13 Using the Guidance

The guidance is structured as follows:

Section 2.0 AONB-wide Landscape Design Principles
These apply to schemes throughout the AONB. Some guidelines are inter-related and will overlap.

Section 3.0 Landscape Character Area Design Guidance
Users should follow the guidelines which apply to the area in which their site is located.

Section 4.0 Detailed Guidance
The aim of this section is to provide further information and guidance on the use, design and specification of materials and structures mentioned in previous sections.

In addition, the following information is provided in the Appendices:
1.0 Selected References
2.0 Useful Contacts and Background Information
3.0 Glossary of Terms
4.0 List of consultees

2.0 AONB-wide landscape design principles

2.0 AONB-wide landscape design principles

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section of the guidance is to provide generic design principles that are applicable to land management schemes and issues throughout the AONB. Users of the guide should follow the design principles that are relevant to their scheme. They should be read in conjunction with the Design Guidelines for the relevant Character Area or Local Character Area identified in Section 3.0 and the Detailed Guidance in Section 4.0.

The guidance in this section has been divided into:

- Issues – describes key issues which need to be addressed.
- Design Principles – a list of key design principles accompanied by photographs, sketches and sections showing a possible solution or solutions.

2.2 New Built Development

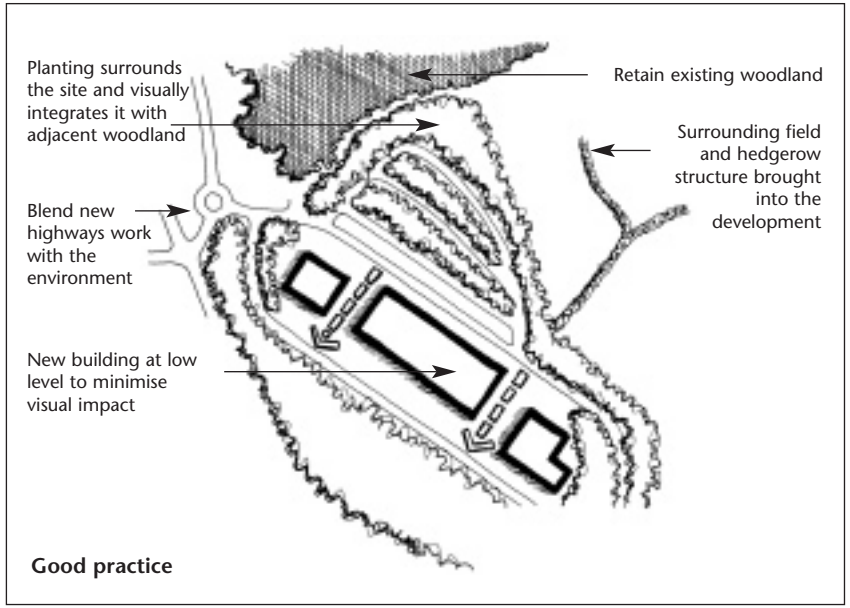
Urban Edge Housing and Commercial Development

Issue

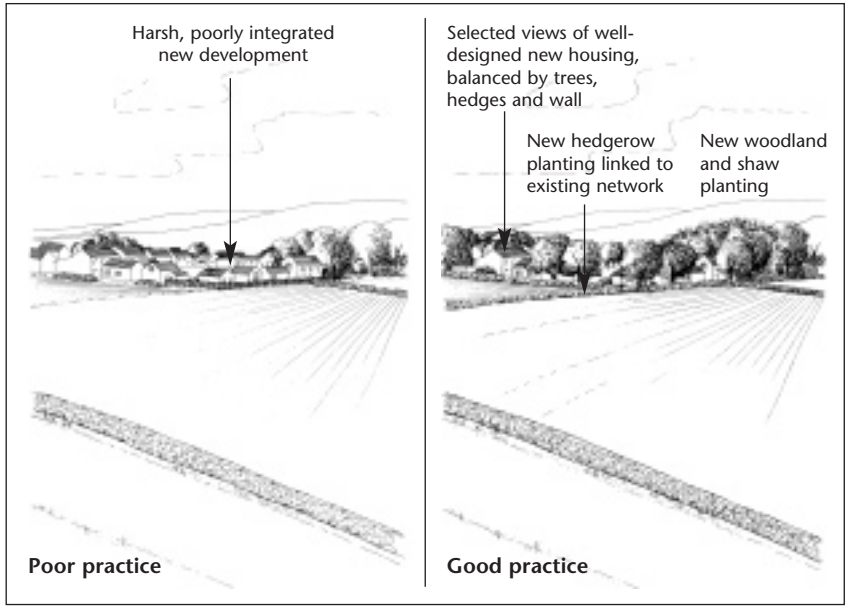
The siting, scale and design of much new housing and commercial development around urban edges can have an adverse impact on the AONB landscape through change in character of views in and out of the AONB, cumulative loss of landscape features, and erosion of character through use of standardised layouts and designs.

Design Principles

- The presumption should be against AONB edge developments where they impact upon views into and out of the AONB landscape.
- Where this is unavoidable ensure that buildings and infrastructure are located to avoid loss of important off-site views towards features such as church towers, fine buildings, or the wider landscape, as well as avoiding intrusion onto sensitive ridgelines, prominent slopes and damage to distinctive landscape settings.

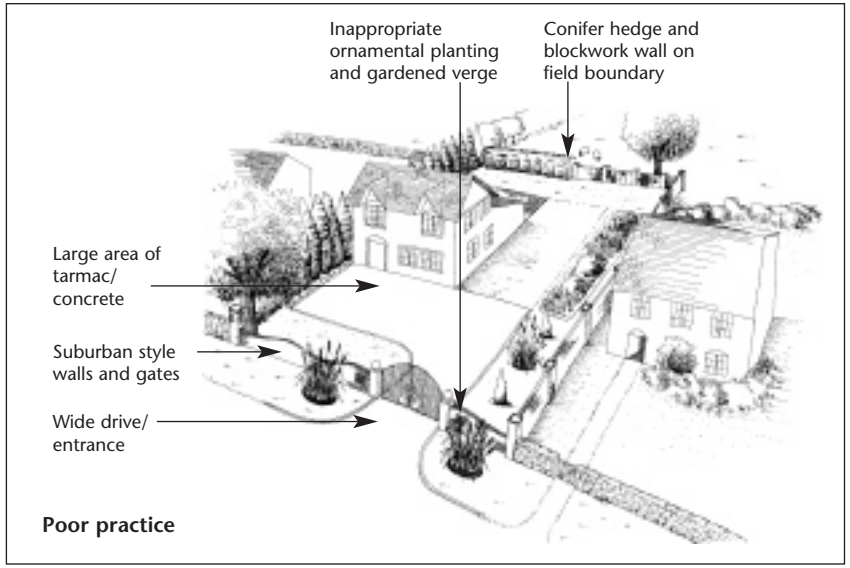


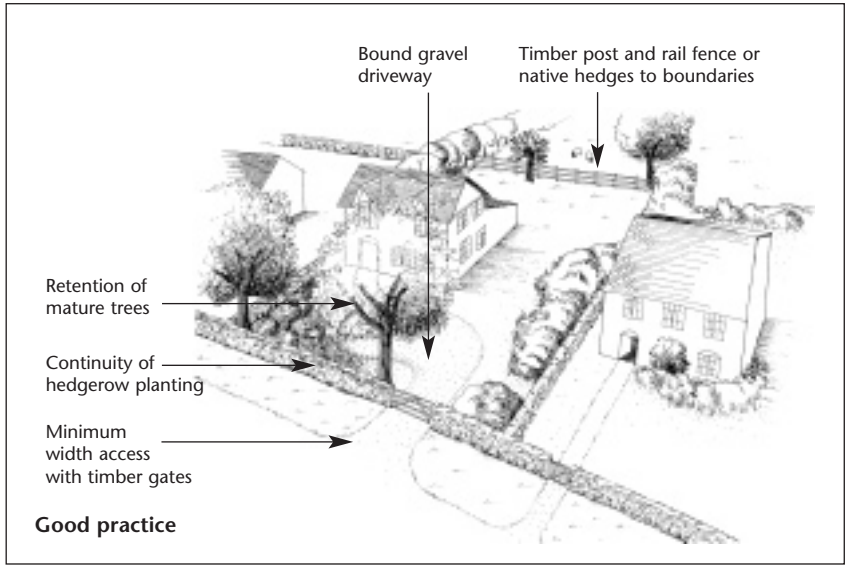
Far right: Urban edge housing



Right: Commercial urban edge development

- Seek to retain key landscape features on development sites – such as woodland, shaws (narrow belts of woodland), hedgerows, orchards, mature trees, watercourses and ponds as a basis for the new landscape structure and setting of the site.
- Avoid straight lines or regimented buildings on the settlement edge for new development.
- Integrate new development in keeping with local character, using open space and planting to provide a visual link to the countryside and an attractive backdrop/foil to development.
- Secure and manage native woodland, shaw, hedgerow and tree planting to integrate and/or screen new and existing developments. (Refer to suggestions for planting species within Landscape Character Areas).
- Consider massing, form, height and colour, texture of buildings and structures, taking account of local distinctiveness and characteristics.
- Seek the use of appropriate local materials.
- Co-ordinate building colour to secure a complementary effect between buildings and the surrounding landscape (e.g. use of matt neutral colours to minimise reflectivity).
- Ensure site entrances and approaches are designed to fit within the landscape and use discrete signage.
- Consider the need for lighting and where essential seek to minimise its impact in the landscape through choice of light source and control of light spillage. (Refer to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) – Lighting in the Countryside).
- Consider the need for fencing. Where security fencing is required use wooden posts and galvanised wire and screen with thorny hedges of native plants.
- Consider the impact of development on the Public Rights of Way network. Refer to Kent Public Rights of Way Reference Manual as a guide to standards, specifications and legislation.





Rural settlement boundaries

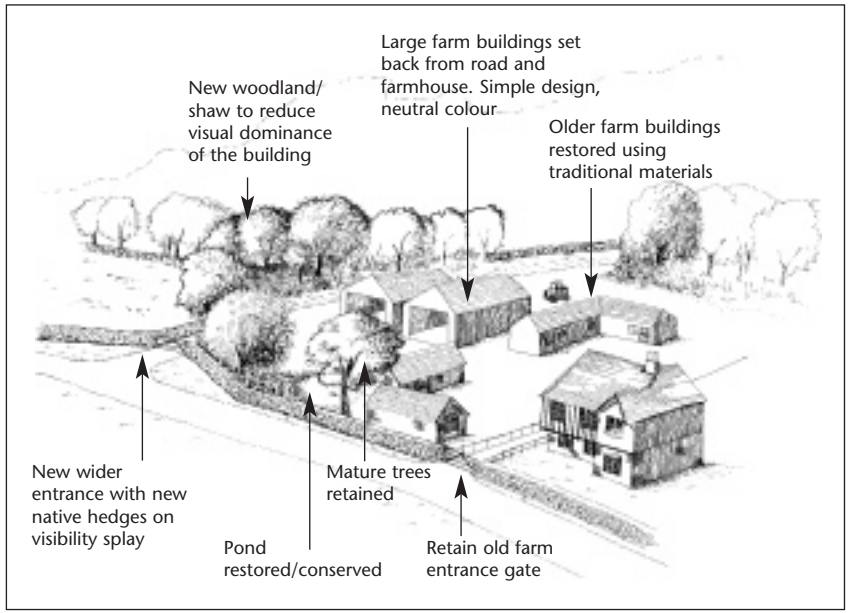
Rural Settlement Development

Issue

Development within and adjacent to rural settlements in the Kent Downs AONB including its villages, hamlets and farmsteads sometimes has not reflected the settlement character and form, and has not respected its relationship with the surrounding landscape. Both new built form, and associated residential boundaries and accesses, have tended to suburbanise character. Materials choice often does not reflect local distinctiveness, often using standardised bricks, tiles etc.

Design Principles

- Ensure new development respects and complements rural settlement form, pattern, character and its landscape setting, reinforcing local distinctiveness.
- Conserve sensitive parts of settlement settings. Maintain a direct relationship between the old settlement core and the surrounding landscape, allowing views in and out.



New Agricultural Development – good practice

- Use native woodland, shaw, hedgerow planting as appropriate to local character and open space to integrate new development. Use advance planting of native local trees and shrubs.
- Avoid the introduction of features such as close board fencing, suburban style walls and fast growing conifers, particularly on the boundaries with rural lanes or with the wider landscape (see Detailed Guidance for alternatives).
- Seek the use of appropriate local materials.
- Seek to minimise the impact of new residential accesses by retaining existing hedgerows or traditional walls where possible. Use new native hedge species and sympathetic grass mix verges where new sight lines are necessary. Where possible, use local provenance wildflower/grass-seed mixes. (Information available from Kent Downs AONB Unit).
- Avoid the introduction of urban bollards, concrete block paving and highly coloured signage.
- Use local stone, and 'conservation' kerbs and surface dressings to complement local materials for carriageways and pavements.
- Consider the need for lighting and minimise the impact, using high pressure sodium lights. Lighting should be mounted on buildings. (Refer to ODPM – Lighting in the Countryside).
- Refer to Village Design Statement if there is one available. (Contact AONB Unit, District or Borough Council for details).

Agricultural Buildings and Farm Accesses

Issue

Whilst planning legislation now controls the development of many farm buildings and accesses, the increase in size of farm units and machinery means modern farm buildings tend to be large and can have considerable impact on the surrounding landscape.

Design Principles

- Avoid siting new farm buildings on sensitive ridgelines, on very prominent slopes or where they could adversely affect the setting of historic farmsteads.
- Reflect where possible locally traditional layouts, groupings and frequency.
- Make maximum use of site contours without major earthworks. Avoid

the use of bunding unless essential to assist with screening.

- Seek to retain key landscape features such as woodland, shaws, hedgerows, orchards, mature trees and watercourses, as a basis for the new landscape structure and setting of the site.
- Ensure outdoor storage and parking areas are not prominent.
- Minimise the visual domination of large expanses of walls and roofs using changes of materials or colour and varied pitches and shapes for roofs.
- Seek the incorporation of appropriate, locally available building materials, and the use of neutral matt colours.
- Secure the use of native woodland, shaw, hedgerow planting as appropriate to local character to integrate and/or screen developments in the wider landscape (refer to Detailed Guidance). Conifers such as cypresses should be avoided.
- Seek to retain original farm entrances and site new ones to minimise tree and hedgerow loss, replacing any planting unavoidably lost.
- Avoid the use of chainlink, weldmesh, close board and other forms of fencing and gates normally associated with urban industrial sites. Preferably make use of timber gates (alternatives shown in Detailed Guidance).
- Avoid intrusive security fencing (alternatives shown in Detailed Guidance).

Far left:
Magpie Bottom

Left:
Henhouse, Fliston Farm, Shoreham

2.3 Infrastructure and Communications

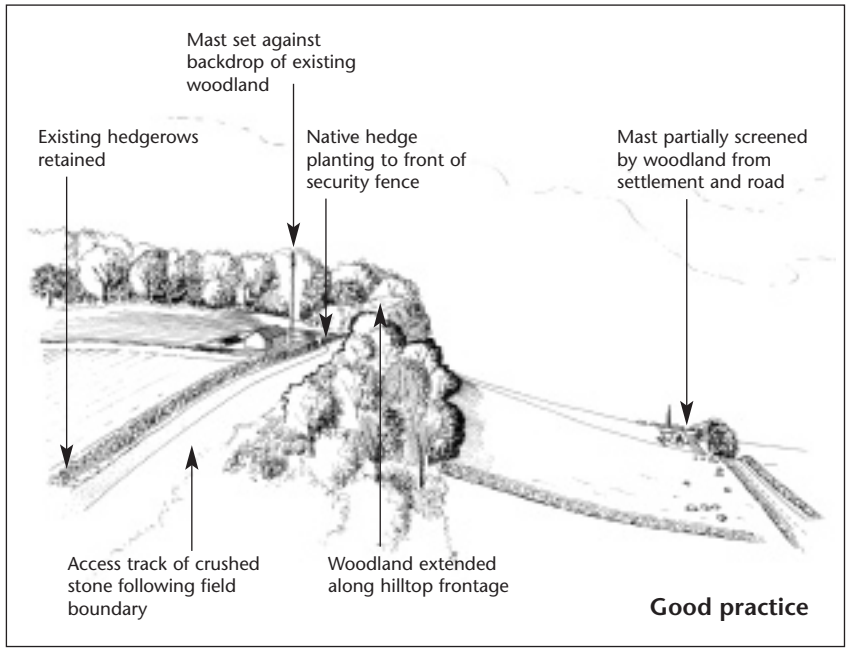
Telecommunications and Radiomasts

Issue

It is likely that the need for telecommunication and radiomasts will continue to increase. These tend to be required close to transport corridors, industry and settlements. They have often had an adverse visual impact in the landscape.

Design Principles

- There should be a strong presumption against siting telecommunications in or near the AONB. Refer to: Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)8, ODPM: *Telecommunications* – 'In AONBs proposals should be sensitively designed and sited and the developer must demonstrate that there are no suitable alternative locations. Discussions should involve the Countryside Agency' and Association of National Park Authorities/National Association for AONB/Mobile Phone Network Operators (*Joint Accord*)*:* 'The operators recognise their obligations to protect the special qualities of the National Parks and AONBs.'
- If there is no alternative, avoid siting masts where they would break open skylines or intrude on important views. Site lower down slopes or against a backdrop of trees and woodland to disguise and screen masts.
- Avoid siting masts in Ancient Woodlands or other sensitive habitats.
- Masts should be of simple elegant designs, finished in neutral matt colours to blend with the dominant colours of the background and designed to be able to accommodate additions.
- Promote the use of mast sharing by a number of telecommunications operators, where this reduces the landscape impact.
- Seek a minimum of associated buildings and fencing and screen any necessary development using existing or new hedges or woodland of native tree and shrub species local to the area.
- Use existing roads and tracks where possible to gain access to installation.
- Where unavoidable, new access roads, hardstandings and highway features should avoid prominent locations (such as open hillside), follow field boundaries and be surfaced as trackways with crushed stone and grass verges. Access tracks should, where possible, follow field boundaries and be surfaced as trackways.
- Avoid dumping excavated materials, except where they will not be harmful to the landscape.
- There should be a presumption for removal as technology changes, not replacement or further development.
- Use existing structures where appropriate for siting of masts.



Telecommunications and radio masts

Statutory Undertakers Infrastructure

Issue

High voltage overhead powerlines/pylons, water pumping stations, gas stations and electricity substations have often had significant localised visual impacts and underground pipelines/cables can cause major disturbance to landscape features without very careful planning and design.

Design Principles

- There should be a strong presumption against further installation of High Voltage cables.
- Seek the burying of any new high voltage transmission routes where there would not be significant adverse landscape character and visual impacts.
- Avoid wherever possible setting pylons in elevated positions, particularly where they would break sensitive ridgelines.
- Break down the linearity of new and existing transmission routes. Use carefully placed new small woodlands, shaws and hedgerow trees to soften their impact whilst maintaining safety clearances and maintenance access.
- Minimise the loss of landscape features in the construction of underground pipelines. Where losses are unavoidable ensure their replacement with equivalent areas of new planting.
- Whenever possible mitigate the impact of existing pylons.
- Integrate new water-pumping, gas and electricity substations with appropriate structural landscaping and screen planting in keeping with local landscape character.
- Both temporary and permanent projects should have regard for the high quality of the AONB and avoid prominent highly visible and/or sensitive locations.
- Maintenance and improvement works to existing infrastructure works should seek to maintain and enhance the landscape associated with the scheme providing additional planting where appropriate.
- Minor and ancillary works associated with the infrastructure projects such as sub stations should be treated with the same care and consideration as the primary project.
- External and more visible control cabins or monitoring stations should also be carefully sited, constructed of appropriate local materials, and painted dark green or black and screened using natural planting.
- Special care should be exercised with placing new structures in the landscape to minimise visual intrusion and maximise the screening potential of existing features.

Far left:
Poorly sited telecommunications mast

Left:
Poorly sited ancillary structures

2.4 Minor Road Improvements

Rural Lanes

Issue

The character of many rural lanes is being eroded through the loss of characteristic elements such as verges, hedgebanks, ditches, hedgerows and the introduction of intrusive signage, lighting, and kerbing. Whilst there is a need to take account of safety standards, their slavish application does not automatically make the roads safer. The diversity of rural lanes is such that an individual approach is needed for each situation, taking into account the existing character and the needs of all road users. The AONB Unit will be preparing a detailed Highway Design Guide.

Design Principles

- Make use of existing natural traffic calming features of the lanes, such as narrowness, bends and banks.
- Any highway improvements should respect the traditional geometry and narrowness of rural lanes.
- Where possible reduce widths and tighten curves to restore rural character.
- Consider planned but informal passing places to help control erosion.
- Where larger radius bends are unavoidable for large vehicles, seek to maintain a restricted road width using applied aggregates, or granite setts.
- Conserve historic and ecologically important hedge/woodland banks and road verges.
- Manage hedgerows with sympathetic trimming, practice the laying of hedges and conserve hedgerow trees.
- Generally avoid the use of kerbs, especially concrete.
- Make restrained use of coloured surfacing and road markings, seeking to mark changes with setts/changes in surfacing, rather than bright colours.
- Conserve traditional features such as fords and brick bridges.
- Avoid street lighting between and within settlements. Where it is considered necessary on safety grounds, keep lighting provision to a minimum and follow best practice provided in: 'Lighting in the Countryside:Towards Better Practice' (ODPM).
- Avoid the introduction of standard traffic barriers and signs – use rural standard signs.
- Keep the number of signs to a minimum. Amalgamate and cluster signs and other street furniture where appropriate to reduce clutter.
- Conserve and restore existing distinctive timber and metal fingerposts – repairing or replacing with rural standard signs in replacement schedule.
- Refer to the Kent Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- Other useful information can be found in Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's Rural Lanes Practice Note and guidance developed from Quiet Lanes around the Greensand Ridge – A National Demonstration Project in Kent.
- Further information is also available from the Countryside Agency and Suffolk County Council Guide – Country Lanes.

Left to right:

Inappropriate kerbing to rural lane

Maintain rural lane unkerbed

Simple iron railing to define road edge

Retain historic fingerpost designs

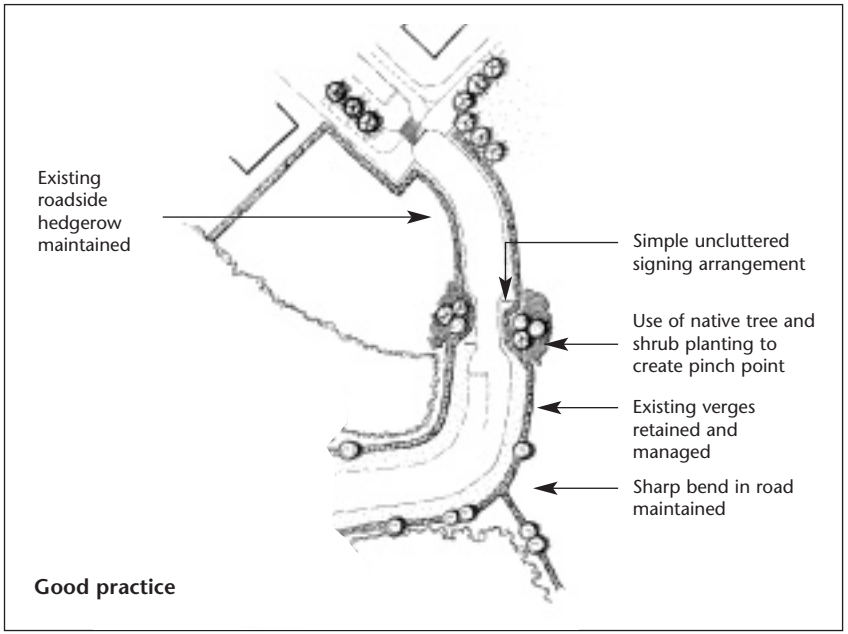
Traffic Calming and Gateways

Issue

Due to increasing levels and speeds of traffic in many parts of the AONB, the use of traffic calming and associated gateways is becoming an increasingly common feature. These need to be sensitively designed to avoid adverse visual impacts on the landscape and built heritage. Gateways can also be used to create a favourable first impression for visitors to the AONB.

Design Guidelines

- Design traffic management and calming schemes sensitively on approaches and through settlements to take account of historic and rural character.
- Reduce "through" signing to cut down traffic.
- Seek to develop functional hierarchy of rural roads.
- Retain strong bends and corners in carriageway.
- Use simple native tree and shrub planting on pinch points.
- Bury or rationalise overhead services in conjunction with highway improvements.
- Minimise the use of lighting. Use high pressure sodium lights to reduce light intensity and consider mounting on buildings.
- Avoid the use of high concrete kerbs, standard traffic barriers, large scale and highly coloured directional signs, concrete block paving and bollards and bright road colours. Use setts instead.
- Ensure that bus shelters and stops are designed in a rural style using local materials.
- Consider the need for lanes to be used by large farm vehicles.
- Consider the use of historic and cultural references in the creation of gateways and use of materials and signage relevant to the specific area and locality.



Traffic calming

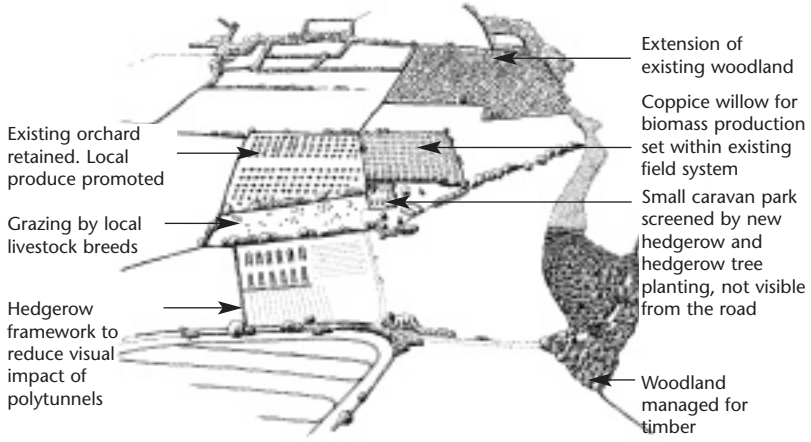
2.5 Rural Diversification

Issue

Many farms and other rural industries are looking to diversify as a result of agricultural policy and socio-economic change. In order to ensure the continuing viability of rural communities, this diversification needs to be encouraged and guided whilst retaining the primary agricultural industry to ensure that the landscape of the AONB is conserved and enhanced.

Design Principles

- Encourage diversification that is principally land based and conserving in nature (or that can support landscape enhancement), seeking to avoid the introduction of potentially intrusive commercial and industrial activities and conflicts with the residents of nearby dwellings.
- Encourage diversification related to local produce to enable conservation and restoration of distinctive features such as orchards, hop gardens and cobnut platts and maintenance of local livestock breeds.



Rural diversification

Good practice

- Respect the scale, shape and pattern of the landscape in introducing new crops and land uses. Conserve typical local field patterns and to conserve and enhance traditional hedgerow, shaw or shelterbelt boundaries wherever possible.
- New structure planting should be similar in layout and species to the surrounding countryside linking with existing hedges and woodlands.
- Refer to FWAG (Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, Kent and Sussex) and Campagnes Vivantes Information: Nature and Architecture (Our Countryside Heritage (2003-2005)) available from http://www.fwag.org.uk.

2.6 Recreation and Tourism

Equine Management

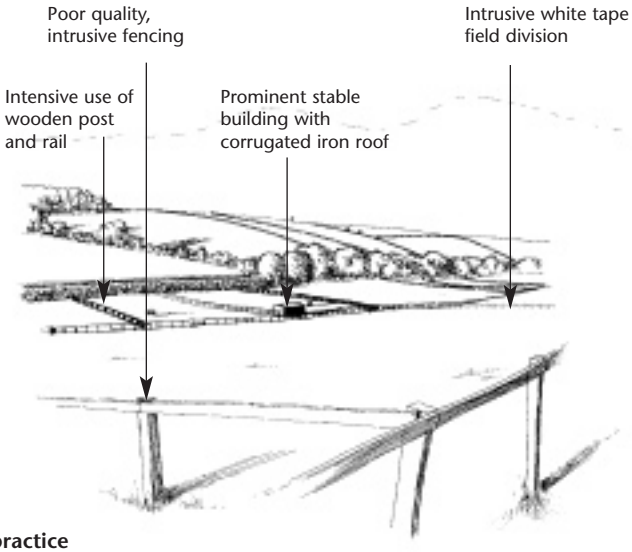
Issue

Equine grazing and stabling is now a common land use in many parts of the AONB, particularly near the edges of populated areas. Often this has had a cumulative adverse impact on the character of the landscape. Problems can include loss of characteristic elements such as hedges, field trees and shaws; poached, overgrazed and weedy pasture; haphazard and poorly maintained fences and sheds for stabling and intrusive stables, exercise areas and equipment. However, there is the potential to make a positive contribution to landscape character with appropriate consideration of design, siting, materials and management.

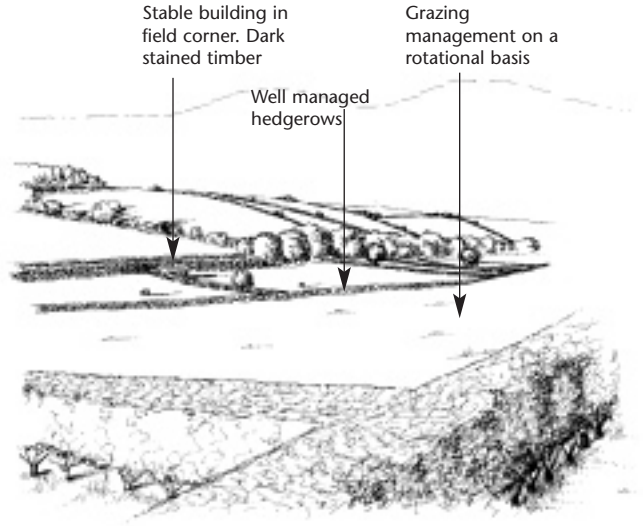
Design Principles

- Avoid siting stables in elevated positions on open skylines or on visually prominent slopes.
- Locate L-shaped stables as part of existing building groupings or in field corners against a backdrop of woodlands, hedgerows and shaws.
- Use dark matt colours for stables. Timber buildings can be treated with a dark wood stain and concrete blocks painted. The use of appropriate local bricks and materials should also be encouraged. Avoid the use of corrugated metal roofing and consider the use of dark roofing felt.
- Rotate feed in different parts of field to avoid localised poaching.
- Avoid siting ménages/exercise areas on sloping sites which can result in an intrusive cut and fill operation.

- Surface materials should be of a dark colour.
- Store jumps under cover when not in use; use natural materials for jumps (see Section 4.3 for fencing design).
- Avoid the use of intrusive white plastic tape and posts for field division. Dark green or dark brown electric tape and green/brown stakes are available instead. Where fencing is needed, a stained timber or chestnut/oak post and rail fence is preferable. Locate fences a minimum of 2m away from hedges.
- Maintain hedges by trimming every 2-3 years, coppicing or laying.
- Plant new hedges to screen permanent fencing.
- Seek to retain original field pattern.
- Compost manure in specially constructed manure stores made of local materials. Consider stable matting to cut down on storage and disposal of bedding material.
- Adopt best practice in respect of pasture management, considering appropriate number of horses and ponies per hectare, rotation of grazing, removal of ragwort and thistles, and minimising the use of fertilisers, especially on chalk grassland. (Further useful detailed advice is available from Kent Downs AONB Unit and Surrey County Council Horse Pasture Management Project – www.surreycc.gov.uk).



Poor practice



Good practice

Horse keeping

Far left: Poor practice, poaching in horse field

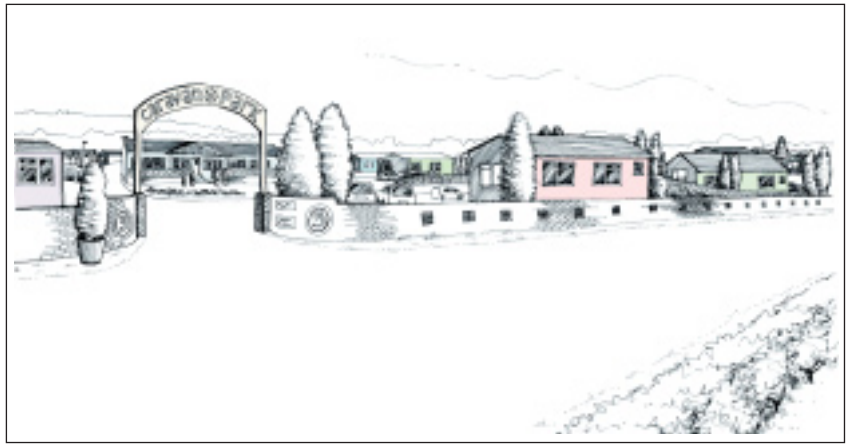
Caravan Parks

Issue

Caravan Parks are an occasional feature in parts of the AONB. Whilst some are well screened by existing hedgerows, woodlands and trees, others are visually intrusive in open countryside.

Design Principles

- There should be a presumption against large scale or permanent caravan parks and better screening could be applied to existing ones.
- Seek the location of small scale temporary caravan sites where they would be well screened by existing trees and hedgerows.
- Avoid the introduction of suburban walls and fences, and conifer planting to define boundaries. Use a framework of new hedges, trees, shaws and woodland planting as appropriate to local character to integrate the site with the surrounding landscape.
- Encourage the use of dark matt colours for caravans instead of reflective white colours.
- Avoid unnecessary signage and paraphernalia at the entrance to caravan parks.
- Encourage mitigation to reduce the impact of existing sites.



Visually intrusive caravan park

Golf Courses

Issue

Poorly designed golf courses can have an adverse visual impact, ignoring their landscape setting with associated loss of important features such as hedgerows and mature trees, inappropriate changes to landform, and introduction of incongruous colour and textures. Countryside Agency policy is that there should be a general presumption against layout of golf courses within the AONB unless it can be demonstrated that the proposed new course contributes to and enhances the special character of the area. Also improvements can be made to existing courses.

Design Principles

- Conserve and enhance key landscape features such as shaws, hedgerow field patterns, field trees, ponds and ditches in the design of the course.
- Keep landform changes to a minimum, avoiding intrusive mounding.
- Create broad areas of unfertilised rough grassland between fairways.
- Give careful consideration to the colours and textures of grass seeding, avoiding heavily fertilised greens.
- Avoid the use of large volumes of 'inert' material in development of golf courses.
- Avoid laying all weather paths and consider the implications of light pollution in the case of golf driving ranges.

Golf Courses in the Countryside 1993, Countryside Commission, should be referred to for detailed guidance on design of new golf courses appropriate to the landscape.

Countryside Car Parks

Issue

Recreation developments in the AONB may often involve some car parking provision. Without careful design this can be intrusive in the landscape and introduce associated urban and uncharacteristic elements. Consideration needs to be given to the design of new car parks as well as the redesign of existing ones.

Design Principles

- Car park sites should be designed to be effectively integrated within the surrounding landscape, with the layout reflecting the shape and pattern of its surroundings. The edges of sites should be tied to existing natural features or reflect the immediate vernacular architecture to avoid arbitrary or unnatural boundaries.
- Consider the lighting and security of car park sites. Whilst there is a presumption against lighting of car parks, security issues must be considered. Where lighting is required, this should follow the guidance set out in Section 2.0.
- Avoid large car parking areas which are more likely to be visually intrusive.
- Simple shapes are preferable. Avoid fussy geometry.
- Consider the use of tree planting to soften the impact of cars. Be aware of desire line routes.
- Materials and planting should be appropriate to the local character of the area (see Section 3.0).
- Car park surfaces can be formed from a good base such as MOT Type 1 (hardcore) with a tar and chip finish that provides the illusion of a natural surface, whilst being easier for use by prams, wheelchairs and less able walkers. Loose bound surfaces such as limestone chippings are best used where there is only occasional use. Consider the use of local loose bound materials such as hoggin or ragstone grands as a dressing for compacted aggregates. (See Section 4.0 Detailed Guidance).
- Use of low bunds or wooden posts to stop vehicles going onto grassed areas.
- Refer to Section 2.11 for appropriate countryside furniture.
- Consider 'shared' use to avoid the need for new provision– for instance of pub/church car parks.

Well designed carpark with planted areas

2.7 Woodlands, Hedges and Trees

Woodlands

Issue

The Kent Downs is one of Britain's most wooded AONBs with over 20% woodland cover. The woodlands are a vital component of the natural beauty and character of the Kent Downs, providing a green mantle to the upper slopes of the escarpments and valleys. It emphasises the undulating nature of the dip slopes and scarp, and frames the agricultural lower slopes and settlements. A wide diversity of woodland types occurs broadly reflecting soil types. A significant feature throughout the AONB is the predominance of sweet chestnut coppice planted into ancient woodland. Shaws or narrow belts of woodland are also particularly characteristic in parts of the Kent Downs. In addition, large blocks of conifer planting have occurred such as in the plateau areas. Issues include the decline of woodland and coppice management, fragmentation of ancient woodland, loss of shaws due to neglect and the harsh edges and poor wildlife value of some conifer plantations.

Design Principles

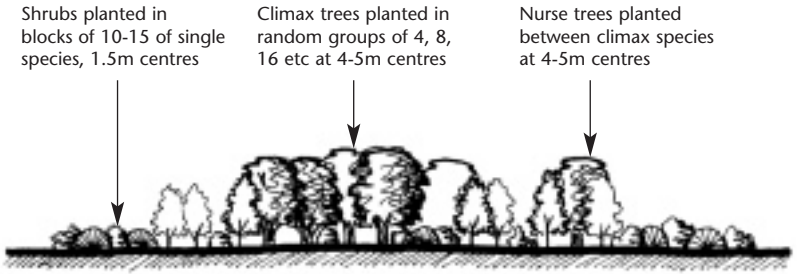
- Draw up management agreements with landowners to achieve natural regeneration and supplementary planting, using native species of local provenance and controlled access.
- Encourage use of products made from local wood. Create a market for these products e.g. woodfuel, firewood and fencing.
- Reinstate coppice management and promote traditional woodland crafts and industries.
- Encourage and manage public access and enjoyment of existing woodland through creation of defined paths, interpretation facilities and recreation areas as appropriate.
- Manage paths, rides and clearings to create sinuous margins with flower rich edges.
- Manage woodland edges to create graduated transitions from both woodland to grassland.
- Improve the setting of conifer plantations in the wider landscape by creating strong and irregular indentations, introducing broad-leaved edges to achieve a softer visual transition to the surrounding countryside.

Far right: Wooded escarpment and ridge

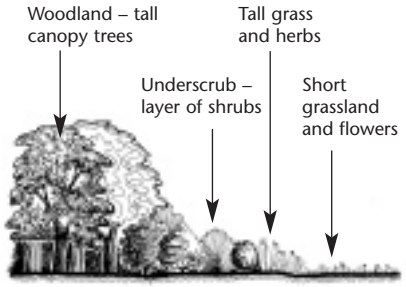
Right: Sweet chestnut coppice

- Encourage removal of conifers at maturity and replace with broadleaved species.
- Leave stagheaded oaks and over mature trees to decline naturally or recover.
- Create new woodlands which can be used for a variety of different purposes, that complement the shape and scale of the surrounding landscape, whilst conserving unimproved grassland, heathland, historic field patterns etc.
- Prioritise the extension of existing woodland and reconnect fragmented or isolated woods.
- Planting patterns should avoid rigid geometric designs, planting trees and shrubs in small groups of the same species.

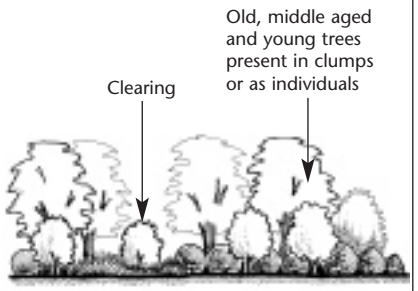
Woodlands and hedges



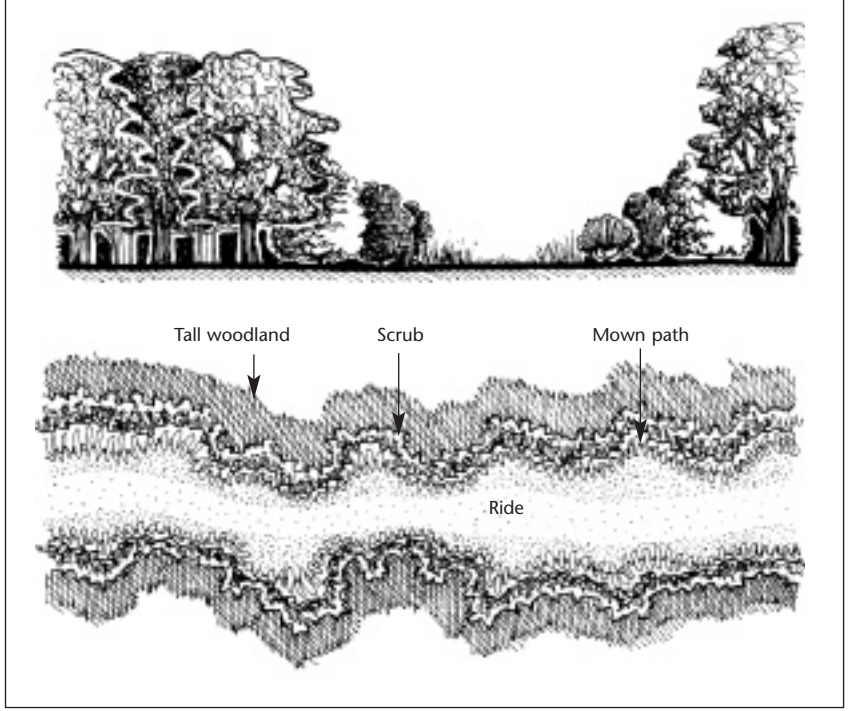
Woodland planting – good practice



Diverse woodland edge habitat



Encourage diversity in stand structure



Paths, rides and clearings managed to create sinuous margins

Hedges

Issue

Hedgerows are an important element contributing to the scale and character of the landscape. Some parts of the Kent Downs, for example, in Hollingbourne Vale and Mid-Kent Downs have experienced loss of hedgerows due to agricultural intensification. Also in many areas they are neglected and suffer from grazing damage. There is a need to restore hedgerows and encourage more sensitive management.

Design Principles

- Conserve, enhance or restore the hedgerow network to reinforce existing field patterns and the character and unity of the landscape.
- Manage hedges to ensure they are visually interesting, stock proof and valuable for wildlife by using traditional management methods, including hedge-laying, coppicing and trimming rather than continual severe cutting back.
- Establish and maintain standard trees in hedgerows.
- Establish new hedgerows and fill gaps in fragmented cores, ensuring mixes of native tree and shrub species, good width and density with associated banks and ditches appropriate to local character.
- When choosing hedgerow species, make clear it is a planted hedge by using predominantly hawthorn with other local species. (Refer to Section 4.0 – Detailed Guidance for further information).

Trees

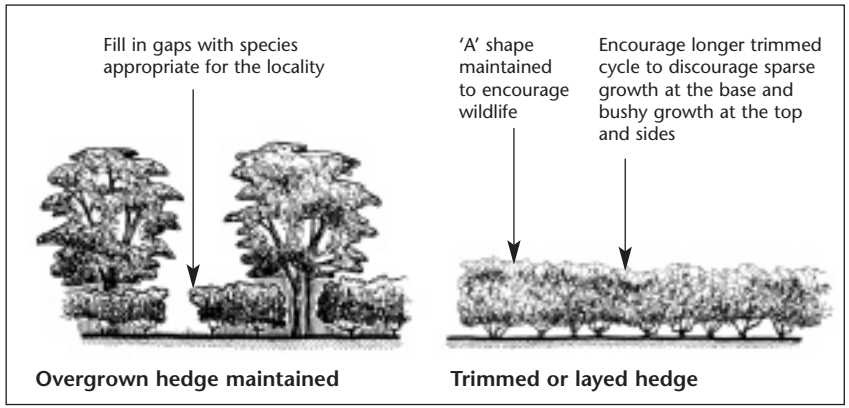
Issue

Non-woodland trees are also an important feature of the Kent Downs AONB, primarily the trees of farmed land, hedgerows and fields, but also including individual specimen trees along roads and in parks and gardens, which can contribute both to wooded character and add to local distinctiveness and sense of place. Many such trees are mature or over mature and therefore their future is uncertain, and ancient/veteran trees (particularly ancient pollards) need special care to protect them for the future.

Design Principles

- Encourage an increase in new hedgerow trees by retaining self sown saplings and planting new native trees appropriate to local character.
- Leave stagheaded oaks to recover.
- To reduce the risk of accidental damage, management schedules should allow for sensitive tree surgery, especially where it is preferable to retain trees rather than felling them.
- Leave standing dead trees where it is safe to do so.
- Bring old pollards back into management through considered re-pollarding over a period of a few years.
- Introduce new pollards where they are locally characteristic.
- Conserve prominent trees on skylines along roadsides and in villages.

Hedgelaying



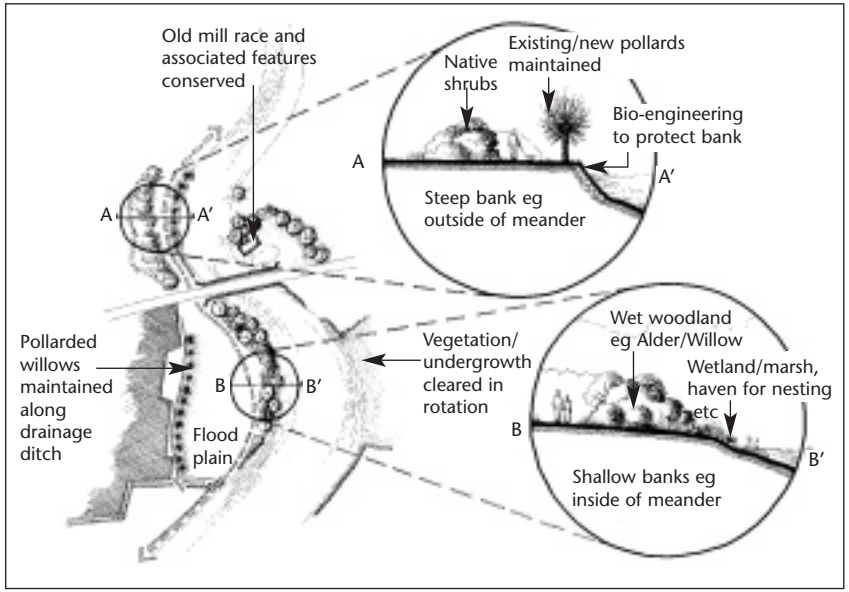
2.8 Rivers, Ponds and Wetlands

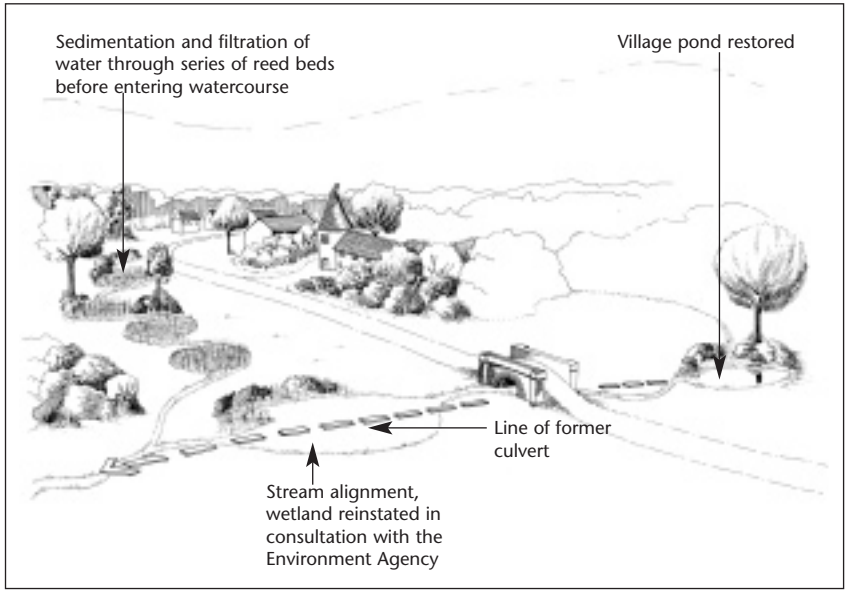
Issue

Rivers, ponds, dew ponds, wet gravel workings, marshes, ditches and springs are important elements contributing to landscape character and local distinctiveness in the Kent Downs. Many wetland habitats have come under threat from drainage schemes, inappropriate development and pollution caused by fertiliser run-off and other agricultural activities.

Design Principles

- Please note that consultation with the Environment Agency is essential when considering implementing any of the principles in this section. Some of them may require formal land draining consent from the Agency.
- The Environment Agency has the role of consenting body for the modification of a water course.
- The Environment Agency can offer best practice environmental management guidance for weed cutting and other operations in or adjacent to watercourses.
- Conserve the unspoilt natural qualities of river and stream features including a diversity of features such as meanders, shallows and breakwaters, except for essential flood prevention.
- Avoid culverting and canalising watercourses.
- Use 'soft' engineering techniques such as preplanted natural fibre mats or timber revetment, where channel protection and modification works are deemed essential.
- Encourage the inclusion of appropriate semi-natural habitats between farmland/development and the edges of watercourses.
- Enhance the appearance and setting of watercourses by using varied bank profiles and where appropriate riverside trees, wet woodland and scrub in keeping with local landscape character.
- Encourage the protection of river banks from heavy trampling by farm animals.
- Encourage the protection of chalk streams as a priority UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat.
- Seek opportunities where possible to reinstate natural watercourse alignments, reintroducing features such as meanders, cut-offs and multiple courses.





- Pursue traditional methods of ditch clearance on a 'little and often' basis ensuring wildlife diversity using a range of channel widths and depths.
- Maintain the banks of watercourses on a rotational basis to avoid clearance of vegetation over extensive stretches.
- Encourage the conservation of ponds, restoring where possible neglected ponds on farmland, downland dewponds and in villages.
- Create systems of balancing ponds, swales, soakaways, balancing lakes and reed and willow beds to provide for storage of storm water, oxygenation, sedimentation and filtration of surface water.
- Make use of porous surfacing for pavements and other hard standings to reduce surface water runoff.

Refer to the relevant Habitat Action Plan for Wetlands for further guidance. (Contact Kent County Council for further information.)

Pond Conservation and Management

Pond Management Issues

Pond management is not always clear cut and it is advisable to seek advice for each case – some common issues are:

- Drying out is not always bad for a pond's wildlife, as seasonal ponds can support specialised populations, including frogs and newts.
- Pond depth should vary and does not necessarily have to be at least 2 metres deep as is often recommended.
- Ponds can support a wide variety of life, regardless of their size.
- Shade can provide variety in terms of life that a pond can support and it is not always necessary to prevent shade.
- It is sometimes necessary to dredge a pond to stop choking by vegetation. This should be carried out in autumn.
- Fluctuating water levels can provide habitat variety for both water and land species.
- Ponds are not isolated habitats. Pond wildlife is linked with catchment water quality and surrounding habitat.
- Low intensity grazing at the edges of ponds can provide good short plant habitat and valuable muddy edges.
- For further information refer to 'Ponds in the Weald' (High Weald AONB Unit, 1997) and 'The Pond Life Project' (http://cwis.livjm.ac.uk/pondlife/)

2.9 Chalk Grassland, Acid Grasslands/Heathlands and Arable Field Margins

Issue

Unimproved chalk grassland with its flower-rich springy turf and profusion of insect life remains a major landscape characteristic of the Kent Downs AONB, despite significant losses in the last sixty years. Acid grassland on the greensand and clay plateau (typically surviving on parkland, common land and Chart Woods) is also important. In addition, arable field margins with characteristic plant species such as ground pine and farmland birds such as skylark, corn bunting and yellowhammer add to local landscape variety and distinctiveness. Both conservation and management of existing habitats and restoration and creation of new areas is vital to the landscape character of the Kent Downs, as well as for biodiversity.

Design Principles

- Retain chalk grassland, heathland and acid grassland, and appropriately manage through grazing, targeting the largest areas for active management.
- Increase the areas of these habitats, particularly linking and extending existing areas through programmes of land management (e.g. agri-environment schemes).
- Seek to maintain open large scale character of downland. Carefully place fencing and gates on hillsides to avoid visual disruption from small scale field division.
- Control scrub invasion of chalk grassland, considering the need for a gradation of scrub, long and short grassland to create interest and variety.
- Encourage creation of field margins. (Refer to Section 4.0 – Detailed Guidance).

2.10 Historic Landscape

Issue

The Kent Downs AONB is particularly rich in historic landscapes and features, including historic parks and gardens. No part has been unaffected by past human activity. They often make a vital contribution to distinctiveness and character, imparting a strong local character. However, as a result of intensive agriculture, lack of management, loss from development, damage to veteran trees and the settings of ancient monuments, this rich historic character is being eroded. Appropriate conservation, design and management measures are therefore essential.

Design Principles

- Conserve, restore and manage historic parks and gardens, parkland landscapes and features based on sound advice and research of their historic, ecological and landscape value.
- Consider the relationship of features to one another, to the estate and to the wider landscape.
- Give priority to the conservation, restoration and management of features such as avenues and designed vistas, parkland trees, water areas and estate boundary features (treebelts, deer pales, ditches, ornamental fencing, walls and gates).
- Encourage the conversion of arable parkland to pasture.
- Conserve and enhance other historic landscape features such as old hedgerows and shaws, old lanes and tracks, old flint and ragstone walls, timber signposts, mileposts and park railing.
- Protect, conserve and enhance archaeological monuments in their settings, including earthwork monuments using appropriate management methods, including scrub clearance, the avoidance of ploughing, tree planting and restoration of grazing.
- Identify potential archaeological sites before any alterations are made to the landscape, to avoid damage to unknown sites.
- Promote the conservation and enhancement of traditional orchards, cobnut platts and hop gardens as distinctive landscape features.
- Protect and conserve historic landscape boundary features such as stone markers, old hedges and woodland boundary trees.

Countryside furniture (see page 24)

Left to right:

Village sign contributes to local distinctiveness

Well designed interpretation panels appropriate to place

High quality, sturdy height barrier

Litter bin – appropriate for countryside use

2.11 Countryside Furniture

Issue

Signs, seating, benches, litterbins, bollards and other furniture used in the Kent Downs can sometimes create a negative image characterised by poor location and siting, design, and maintenance.

Design Principles

- Countryside furniture should reflect local character and where possible utilise local materials to ensure that it is appropriate to local sense of place.
- Encourage good design of signs reflecting local character and sense of place.
- Consider linking signs or interpretation boards with a common logo or design placed on posts or gates.
- Ensure that steps and boardwalks make use of locally provenanced materials and are accessible to people with all levels of mobility.
- Ensure interpretation boards are clear, attractive and of robust design.
- Consider the use of timber posts for highway signs.
- Avoid a plethora of different sign designs in one location.
- Ensure simple robust designs for all fencing, gates, bollards, seating, benches etc.
- Ensure use of native timber, ie English oak, sweet chestnut.
- Use local materials wherever possible.
- Ensure all designs are accessible to people with all levels of mobility.

2.12 Hard Materials

Issue

The Construction Industry use materials which are nationally and internationally available. Developments, therefore, do not necessarily respond to the local character and sense of place. There is a need to respond to the range of materials, colours and features that contribute to Kent Downs AONB Character.

Design Principles

- Use the preferred materials shown on the lists below, taking account of the Character Area Design Guidelines which identify those that are specific to different localities.
- Use appropriate materials and rural details which respect local vernacular in the countryside and in small settlements.
- Avoid suburban detailing.
- Avoid the use of materials simulating others including concrete roof tiles, UPVC weatherboarding and windows and reconstructed stone.
- Refer to the Kent Public Rights of Way Reference Manual as a guide on standards, specifications and legislation.

Preferred Materials

Enclosure and Boundaries

- Flint and brick walls (where appropriate).
- Ragstone walls (identified in Landscape Character Areas).

Left to right:

Cleft chestnut post and rail fencing

Simple, sturdy, picnic table design, appropriate to place

Informal timber steps

Traditional "Kissing Gate" arrangement

- Cleft chestnut post and rail fencing.
- Sawn oak post and softwood rail fencing.
- Picket fencing.

Surfacing

Further information is located in Section 4.0 (Detailed Guidance).

- 'Conservation' or reclaimed granite kerbs.
- Cobbles.
- Granite setts.
- Sandstone flags.
- Bound gravel.
- Tar spray and gravel chippings.
- Crushed limestone chippings.
- Hoggin.
- Ragstone.

Furniture

- Locally sourced hardwood timber and wrought iron.

Lighting

- Use lighting in settlements only.
- 5-7m high pressure sodium lanterns of simple design, painted in a dark matt colour appropriate to the location, in settlements only.
- Use appropriate security lighting, where necessary – refer to "*Lighting in the Countryside: Towards Better Practice*" (ODPM).

2.13 Planting Species

Issue

There is a need to increase the use of native species to reinforce local landscape character and enhance biodiversity. There is also a need to consider the best-known implications of climate change on species and consider the latest information.

Design Principles

- Use native species which are of local provenance stock or at least of British origin to safeguard the integrity and biodiversity of the landscape.
- Identify the type of soil on the site and use the tables overleaf as a guide to appropriate planting species. Take account also of the Character Area Design Principles which identify locally distinctive woodland types.
- Take further advice from your local authority landscape officer or the Countryside Management Project (see Contacts List) on exact species and planting mixes appropriate to the specific site location.

Left to right:

Use of traditional local building materials; brick, flint, ragstone and oak

Brick and flint wall

Simple picket fence – use oak/chestnut

Sandstone flags and cobbles

Suggestions for planting species within landscape character areas

Dry chalky soils **South Foreland, Postling Vale, East Kent Downs, Stour Valley, Hollingbourne Vale, Kemsing Vale, Darent Valley and Medway Valley character areas**	
Woodlands (on chalk slopes) Woodlands (in valleys) Hedges and hedgerow trees	Beech, ash, hazel, holly. Locally yew, wild cherry and whitebeam. Beech, ash, pedunculate oak, field maple and hazel. Hawthorn or mixed hawthorn, dogwood, field maple, oak, hazel, holly, wayfaring tree. Locally box, privet, spindle and dog rose.
Chalky clay soils **West Kent Downs, Mid Kent Downs and East Kent Downs character areas**	
Woodlands Hedges and hedgerow trees	Pedunculate oak, hazel, ash, field maple. Hawthorn, hazel, field maple, pedunculate oak and beech. Locally dogwood, wayfaring tree, spindle, hornbeam, ash and bullace plum.
Wet waterlogged soils **Darent Valley, Stour Valley, Kemsing Vale, Lympne , Hollingbourne Vale and Postling Vale character areas**	
Woodlands and scrub	Alder, sallow, osier, grey willow, crack willow, hawthorn and dogwood. Locally guelder rose.
Sandy acid soils **Sevenoaks Greensand Ridge character area**	
Woodlands Hedges and hedgerow trees	Beech, ash, pedunculate oak, sessile oak, hornbeam and hazel. Birch should regenerate naturally, no need to plant. Hawthorn, Hazel and Oak.
Heavy clay soils **Low Weald character area**	
Woodlands	Pedunculate oak, hazel and field maple. Hedges and hedgerow trees Hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, dogwood and pedunculate oak. Locally guelder rose.

This table gives some suggestions of planting species for different character areas. It does not represent an exclusive list. It is necessary to look at which native species exist locally in local ancient hedges and woodlands (see section 4.4.7).

3.0 Landscape character area design guidance

3.0 Landscape Character Area Design Guidance

3.1 Introduction

The Kent Downs has been classified into 13 distinct Landscape Character Areas by the Countryside Commission published Landscape Assessment of the Kent Downs AONB 1995 (CCP479). These are shown on the Landscape Character Map (Figure 1). Several of these character areas have been further subdivided into Local Character Areas to take account of more local features and pressures in the landscape.

The purpose of this guidance is to conserve and enhance the distinctive characteristics and quality of each character area or local character area through appropriate design. It should be read in conjunction with the AONB-wide design principles in Chapter 2. Users should note it takes account of the relevant guidance/actions included in the Landscape Character Assessments produced for the County of Kent as a whole, and for the districts of Sevenoaks, Swale, Maidstone, Medway and parts of Canterbury. These should also be consulted for more detailed guidance on the condition and sensitivity of the landscape and/or other very locally specific landscape conservation and enhancement measures. Reference should also be made to approved Design Statements for applicable villages within the AONB.

The Landscape Assessment of Kent (Kent County Council/Babtie October 2004) was used in the preparation of this guidance. The assessment 'draws together existing landscape character assessments of the county' and includes landscape character areas within the AONB. The document should also be consulted for updated information on sensitivity and condition for each landscape character area.

3.2 Character Area Guidance

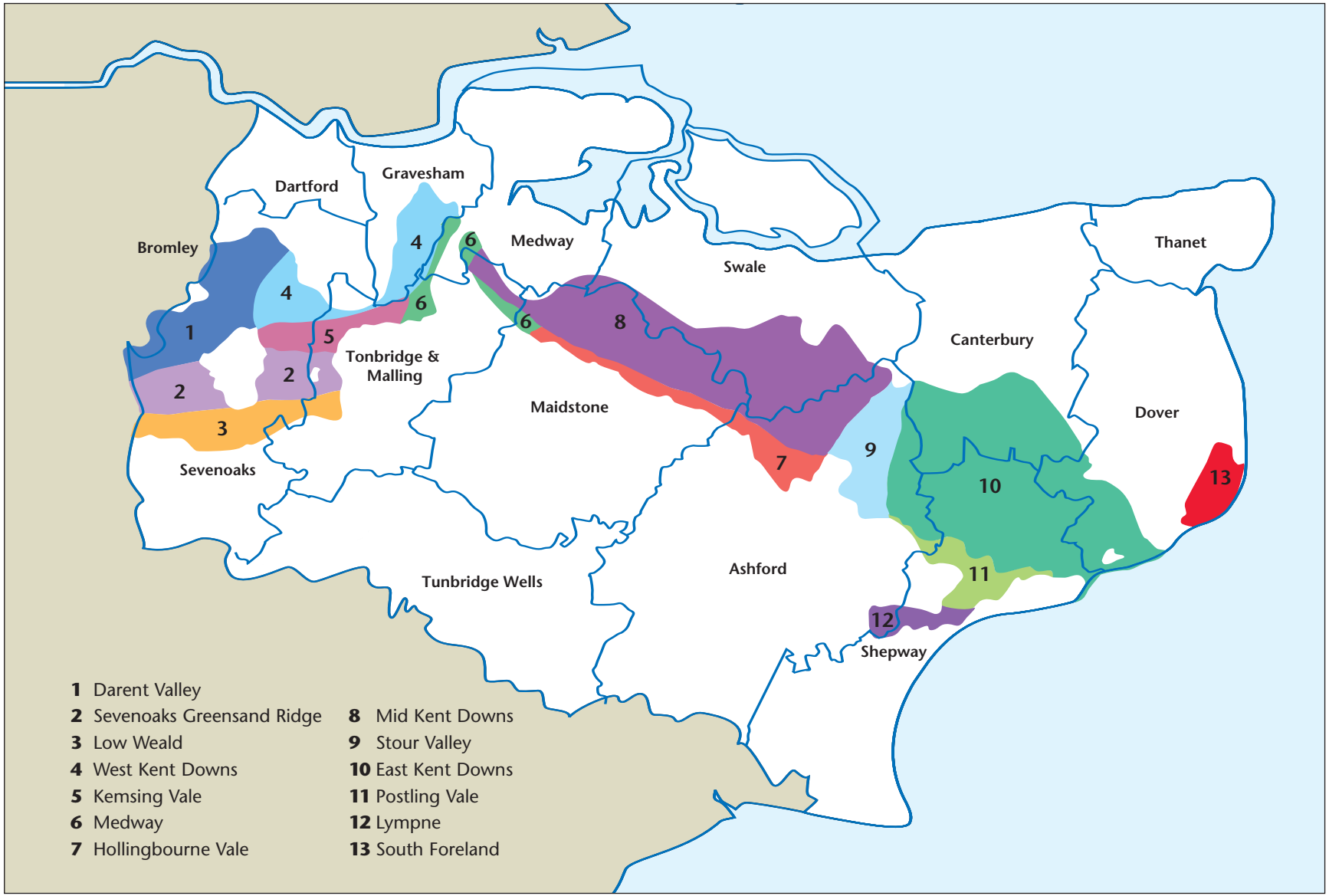
Guidance is provided for the following Landscape Character Areas:

Darent Valley
Sevenoaks Greensand Ridge
Low Weald
West Kent Downs
Kemsing Vale
Medway
Hollingbourne Vale
Mid Kent Downs
Stour Valley
East Kent Downs
Postling Vale
Lympne
South Foreland

For each Landscape Character Area the following are set out:

- Key Characteristics (Summary)
- Landscape Character Objectives
- Design Guidelines (for the Character Area or for Local Character Areas where subdivision is recognised).

The Kent Downs landscape character areas and local authority boundaries



Darent Valley • Westerham to Farningham

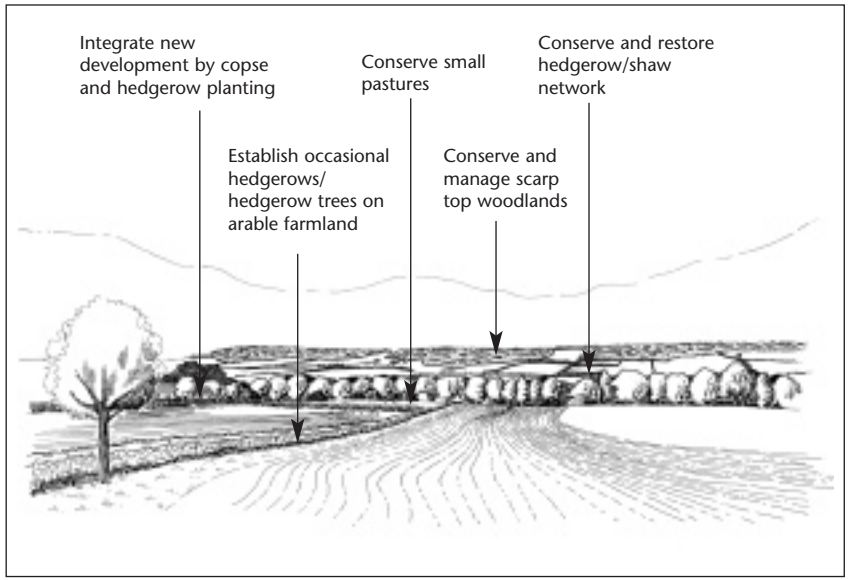
Local Character Areas: West Darent, North Darent, Knockholt.

Key Characteristics

- Steep, often wooded scarp top and greensand ridge.
- Strong hedgerow patterns on valley sides.
- River within tree-lined corridor.
- Riverside trees and pasture.
- Flint and brick and weather boarded buildings.
- Much of the floodplain is arable farmland.
- Motorway.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To maintain and improve where necessary the existing hedge network, in particular on the scarp foot and on the northern downland "prairies".
- To enhance the river corridor by conserving and extending the variety of tree and grassland habitats.
- To curb the general suburbanisation of the countryside due to inappropriate development, introduction of non-native species and use of unsympathetic materials and design.
- To protect and enhance unimproved chalk grassland.
- Conserve the historic landscape and special character of villages and settlements.
- To reduce the impact of major roads in the landscape.



West Darent

Key Characteristics

- Woodland of upper scarp bordered by extensive pasture on slopes below.
- Intensively cultivated arable fields on fertile strip at scarp foot.
- Mixed agriculture within the valley bottom.
- Several areas of historic parkland adjacent to the Pilgrim's Way above Westerham.
- Historic villages.
- M25 and M26 motorways run through the middle of the vale.
- Sparse network of narrow hedges.
- Wet pastures.
- Pilgrims Way is a strong visual and cultural feature.

West Darent

Design Guidelines

- Conserve the pattern of irregular wet pastures in the valley bottom, and the form and features of historic parkland around the Pilgrims Way.
- Create wooded links/shaws from the wooded ridge to the base of the scarp.
- Conserve and manage scarp-top woodlands.
- Integrate any new development around the edge of the scarp foot and river valley settlements by copse and thick hedgerow planting.
- Integrate the motorway corridor with a strong framework of copses and hedgerows.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile, ragstone and flint.
- Seek to reduce impact of motorway noise.
- Conserve features of Pilgrims Way.

North Darent

Key Characteristics

- Steep wood-topped scarps, with fragmented areas of chalk grassland on upper valley sides.
- Lower intensively farmed scarp foot with strong pattern of hedges and shaws (which are sometimes overgrown).
- Thick belts of trees along the river, road and railway in the valley bottom.
- Ordered pattern of hedgerows in the north.
- Open arable fields around Eynsford.
- M25 cuts through western edge of area, isolating small sections of AONB.
- Unenclosed wood-pastures of Lullingstone Park.

North Darent

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and restore hedgerows on lower slopes, thick belts of trees along the river valley bottom, and unique mature beech avenues along roads leading up valley sides.
- Ensure any new land uses such as horse pasture, golf courses and smallholdings conserve and enhance the strong pattern of hedgerows and shaws.
- Conserve the wood pastures of Lullingstone Park including its ancient oak trees.
- Seek the sympathetic use of local materials – brick, tile and flint.
- Avoid inappropriate use of non-native species.
- Avoid suburban boundary treatments.
- Conserve, enhance and seek to connect chalk grassland areas.

Knockholt

Key Characteristics

- Dense woodlands along top of western escarpment.
- Small-scale mixed farmland and deciduous coppice woodlands concealed by escarpment.
- Several dry valleys give the landscape a gently rolling character.
- Densely settled area (settlement associated with the railway).
- M25, although hidden, exerts considerable influence on the landscape.
- Flint and brick buildings.

Knockholt

Design Guidelines

- Conserve existing oak, beech, chestnut coppice woodlands and restore on open arable farmland in the north.
- Conserve small enclosed pastures, and narrow historic lanes with wood banks.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and ragstone.
- Avoid inappropriate use of non-native species.
- Avoid suburban boundary treatments.
- Create formal parkland features as part of new development.
- Create appropriate and manageable woodland boundaries to the common boundary between existing woodland and housing.

Sevenoaks Greensand Ridge • Westerham to Ightham

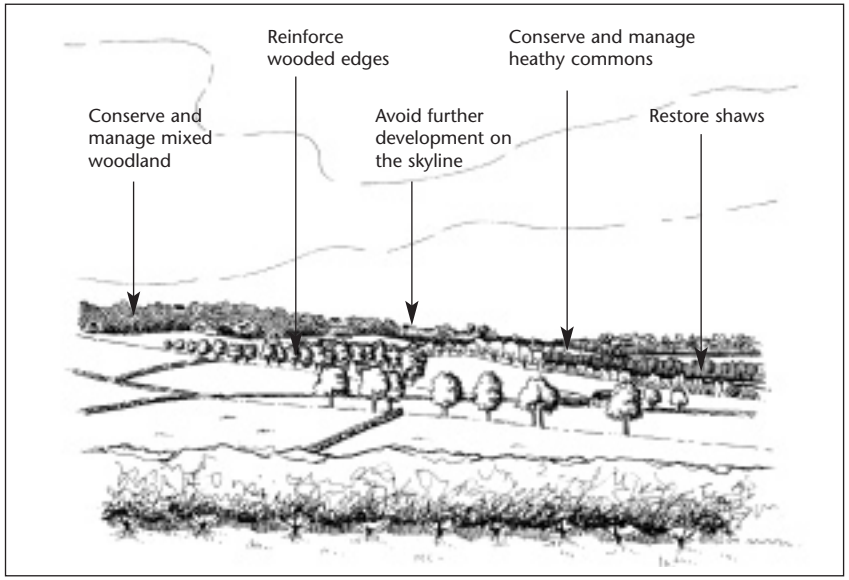
Local Character Areas: Westerham Greensand, Ightham Greensand.

Key Characteristics

- Extensive, often dense, deciduous and coniferous woodlands.
- Heathy commons.
- Small orchards.
- Magnificent views across the Low Weald.
- Small pastures divided by lines of mature trees and species-rich hedgerows.
- Ragstone buildings and walls.
- Occasional cobnut groves or platts.
- Split chestnut post and rail fencing and chestnut-paling.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To maintain the existing overall wooded character of the ridge, encouraging deciduous woodlands, and a mosaic of small healthy spaces within the scarp top woodlands, and to retain and open up extensive and far-reaching views across the Low Weald.
- To maintain the intimate landscape of the orchard belt, preserving the tall shelterbelts, network of small lanes and the cobnut platts.



Westerham Greensand

Key Characteristics

- Areas of dense mixed woodland.
- Thickets of birch and gorse.
- Tall stands of oak and beech, conifer plantations and old chestnut coppice.
- Series of small lanes.
- Larger fields edged by thick strips of mature trees.
- Scattered farms.
- Sinuous pastures at valley bottom.
- Substantial modern houses surrounded by horse paddocks.

Westerham Greensand

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage dense woodland cover of stands of oak and beech, sweet chestnut coppice and thickets of birch.
- Restore and manage heaths and acid grassland.
- Reinforce wooded edges.
- Conserve, manage and restore wide shaws in the farmland.
- Maintain the character of the narrow lanes including distinctive oblique angle junctions.
- Conserve the wooded setting of existing small settlements, and ensure any new small-scale development does not intrude on long views.
- Seek the use of sympathetic building materials such as ragstone, brick and tile.
- Avoid further development on the skyline.
- Integrate new development on edge of villages with small woodlands and hedgerow trees.

Ightham Greensand

Key Characteristics

- Densely wooded appearance.
- Small, irregular pastures.
- Winding lanes.
- Dense stands of conifers and birch.
- Intensively cultivated apple and pear orchards (south-east of Ivy Hatch).
- Rows of poplars and alders.
- Steep wooded scarp slopes.
- Occasional cobnut groves or platts.
- Areas of unimproved acid grassland.
- Extensive area of Historic Parkland and wood pasture at Knole House.

Ightham Greensand

Design Guidelines

- Conserve ancient parkland trees and small irregular pastures and restore and manage heath and acid grasslands.
- Retain and manage dense hedgerows along narrow vergeless lanes.
- Manage heathy woodland and other mixed oak, beech and sweet chestnut woodlands.
- Reinforce wooded edges to existing small scale settlements and farmed areas, and around any new small scale development and land use change.
- Support the retention of apple/pear orchards, and cobnut platts.
- Seek the use of sympathetic building materials such as ragstone, brick, weatherboarding and tile.
- Conserve the routes and characteristics of the Greensand drove roads.

Low Weald • Crockham Hill to Shipbourne

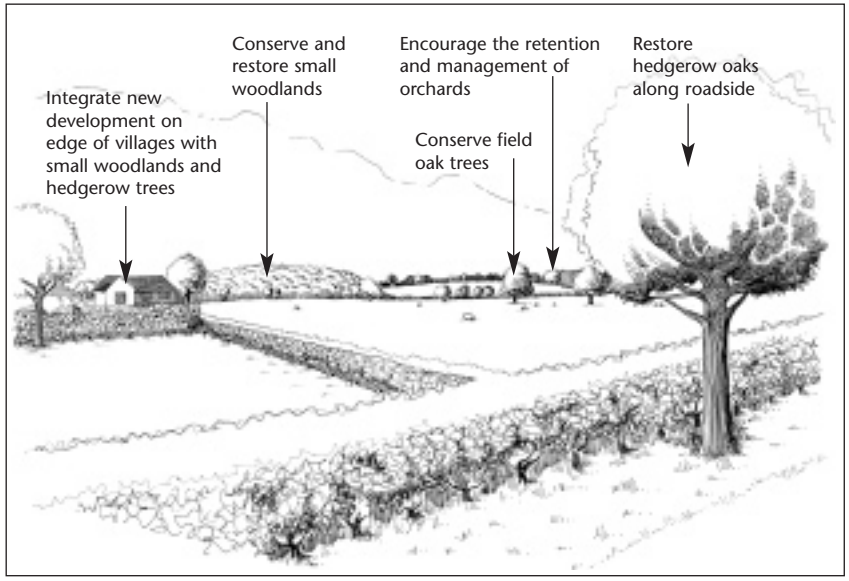
Local Character Areas: Western Low Weald, Eastern Low Weald

Key Characteristics

- Open pastoral landscape.
- Small blocks of woodland.
- Small to medium sized pastures.
- Intensively grazed fields separated by thick shaws and trimmed hedges.
- Isolated former hedgerow field trees.
- Brick and ragstone buildings with hanging tiles.
- Timber-frame buildings.
- Wooded greensand scarp is prominent in views.
- Wetlands and standing water (Bough Beech Reservoir).
- Springs, Springholes and ponds on Wealden Clays.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To retain the mosaic of small irregular fields and woodlands within a strong network of hedges and hedgerow trees.



Western Low Weald

Key Characteristics

- Patchwork of medium-sized pastures.
- Strong network of trimmed hedges.
- Distinctive field pattern across gentle slopes.
- Scattered mature hedgerow trees and small deciduous woodlands.
- Extensive views from scarp top to High Weald.
- Dramatic greensand scarp dominates northern horizon.
- Scattering of field ponds and Springlines, some draining into Bough Beech Reservoir.
- Streamside woodlands and wetlands.

Eastern Low Weald

Key Characteristics

- Gentle rounded slopes.
- Few trimmed hedges.
- Strong ornamental pattern created by recent tree planting at field edges.
- Thick shaws of mature, deciduous trees.
- Small discrete woodland blocks.
- Irregular pastures with scattered field ponds.
- Estate Parkland.
- Distinctive greens and commons.
- Brick and Ragstone buildings with hanging tiles.

Western Low Weald

Design Guidelines

- Reinforce the pattern of hedgerows and shaws, and of small woodlands.
- Conserve existing, and establish new field and hedgerow oak trees.
- Conserve and reinforce existing streamside woodland/wetland habitats.
- Ensure any new development respects rural character and is integrated by new small woodland, copse and hedgerow planting.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local building materials – brick, tile hanging and ragstone.
- Improve horse pasture paddocks by removing white tape and replacing it with dark green or dark brown. Introduce hedging with fences as a means of dividing up pasture.

Eastern Low Weald

Design Guidelines

- Reinforce the strong pattern of hedgerows, shaws, and of small woodlands.
- Conserve isolated field and hedgerow oak trees and establish new hedgerow trees along roads.
- Ensure any new development respects the existing rural setting of small settlements, conserving distinctive greens and commons.
- Conserve and enhance estate parkland, including characteristic boundary features such as ragstone walls, chestnut fencing and hedgerows with mature trees.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local building materials such as brick, ragstone and tile hanging.

West Kent Downs • West Kingsdown to Shorne

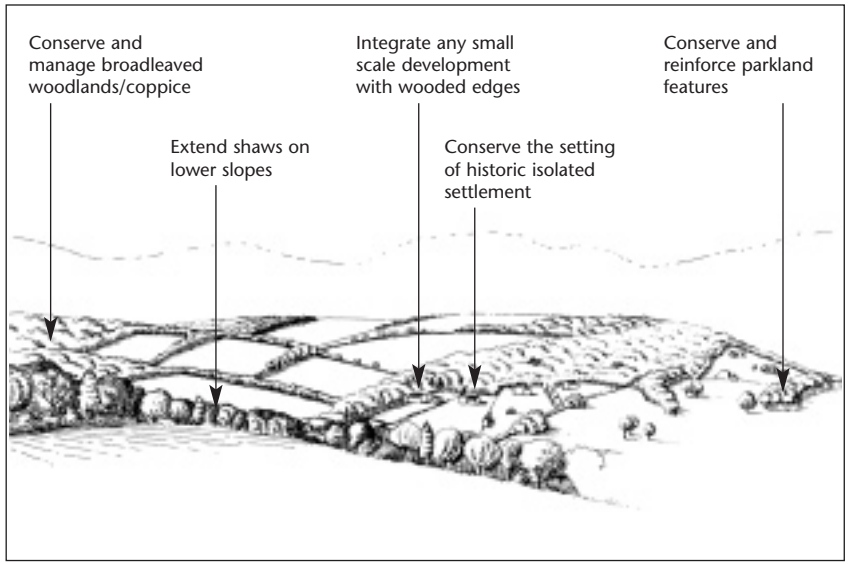
Local Character Areas: Kingsdown, Luddesdown, Cobham

Key Characteristics

- Extensive deciduous woodlands surround large arable fields.
- Thick deciduous shaws and hedgerows.
- Remote, enclosed dry valleys with small pastures.
- Village settlements in the woodlands.
- Small network of country lanes.
- Large arable fields on plateaux.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To retain the agricultural character of the landscape, maintaining in particular the extensive deciduous woodlands and ameliorating urban-edge pressures.
- Curb urbanisation and loss of distinctiveness.



Kingsdown

Key Characteristics

- Coppiced, mixed woodland.
- Small, irregular pastures with thick hedgerow boundaries.
- Some intensive arable cultivation.
- Rolling sweeps of downland.
- Small holdings, horse pasture and 'gardened' woodland.
- Historic isolated settlements.
- Motorway.

Luddesdown

Key Characteristics

- Rolling valleyside pastures.
- Extensive undulating arable fields.
- Large areas of mixed woodland form thick 'walls' around fields.
- Ancient lanes and hedgerows.

Kingsdown

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage coppice, mixed and Scots pine woodland.
- Conserve pastures and irregular field patterns.
- Conserve the setting of historic isolated settlement.
- Conserve and manage tall hedges on roadside.
- Ensure any new development is integrated with wooded edges.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and flint.
- Seek to reinstate hedgerow structure.
- Conserve historic isolated settlements.
- Seek to overcome creeping suburbanisation.
- Improve degraded motorway and urban-edge landscapes.
- Extend shaws.

Luddesdown

Design Guidelines

- Conserve woodland on ridges and extend shaws onto lower slopes.
- Conserve and extend hedgerows along ancient lanes (and reinforce hedge structure).
- Ensure any small scale development does not erode rural character and is integrated by woodland edges, shaws and hedgerows linked to the existing network.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and flint.
- Seek to overcome creeping suburbanisation.
- Conserve and manage hedgerows.

Cobham

Key Characteristics

- Extensive mixed woodlands.
- Areas of parkland.
- Actively worked coppice woodlands.
- Ecologically valuable deciduous woodlands along the top of the scarp.
- Some fruit growing.
- Dominant transportation infrastructure.
- Estate houses such as Cobham Hall and small settlements.

Cobham

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and reinforce the parkland features of Cobham Hall (fencing, parkland trees, grassland, treebelts).
- Conserve coppice and heathy woodland. Extend woodland planting to existing open areas to the west of Cobham Village.
- Restore hedgerows along local highways and to small scale fruit growing areas around villages.
- Conserve and reinforce the use of vernacular details.

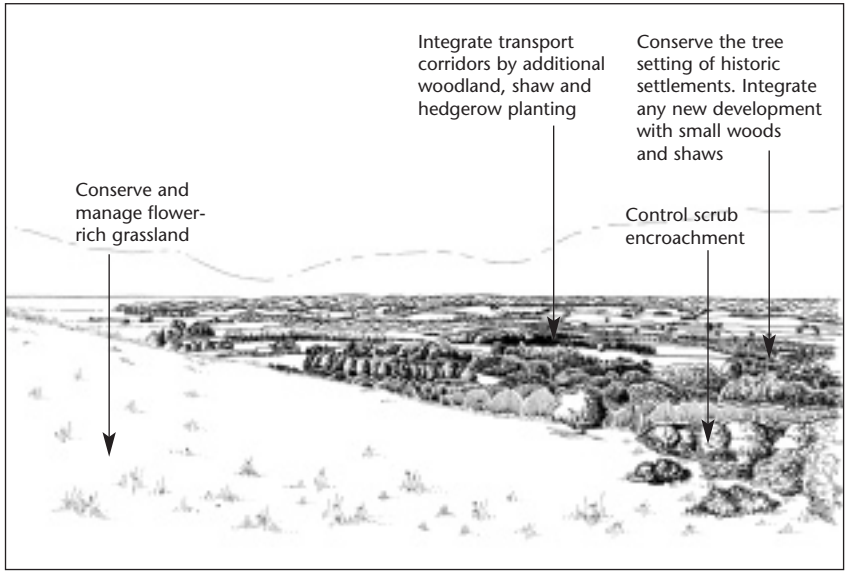
Kemsing Vale • Kemsing to Ryarsh

Key Characteristics

- Steep scarp with a patchwork of woodland dominated by beech, yew and whitebeam.
- Rough, unimproved chalk grassland.
- Magnificent views southwards from scarp.
- Thick, overgrown hedges along Pilgrim's Way.
- Large, intensively cultivated scarp foot arable fields.
- Strong pattern of trimmed hedges with frequent hedgerow trees in the vale.
- Traditional brick and flint, and ragstone estate houses and farmsteads.
- Individual mature trees.
- Visual impact of motorways.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To protect and enhance the mosaic of scarp woodlands and unimproved chalk grassland, while improving the quality and extent of the existing hedges and woodlands in the vale.
- To reduce the impact of major roads in the landscape.



Kemsing to Ryarsh

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage existing woodland and shaws, and chalk grassland.
- Conserve historic estate features – avenues, entrances, boundaries and the setting of estate houses.
- Conserve the open, large scale of the landscape and views.
- Conserve and manage trimmed hedgerows and distinctive hedgerow trees along lanes.
- Integrate transport corridors by additional hedgerow, woodland and shaw planting, respecting the scale and pattern of the landscape.
- Conserve the wooded setting of villages and integrate any new development with hedgerows, hedgerow trees, copses, ponds and ditches.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – red brick, tile hanging, flint, weatherboarding and ragstone.
- Control scrub encroachment.

Medway • Birling to Cuxton; Wouldham to Aylesford

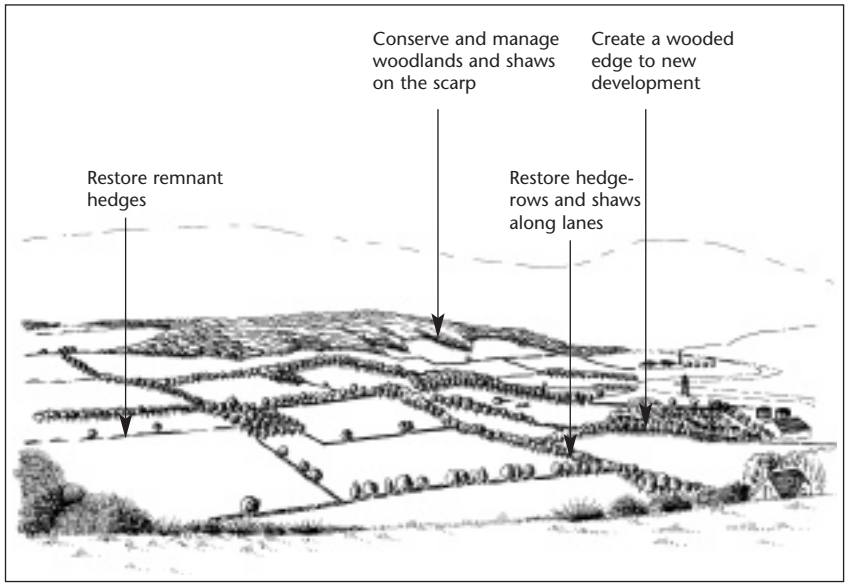
Local Character Areas: Western Scarp, Eastern Scarp, Boxley Vale

Key Characteristics

- Wooded upper scarps.
- Wide views across the river, river corridor settlements and south towards the greensand ridge.
- Trimmed remnant hedges surround large arable fields on the scarp foot.
- Riverside marshes.
- Brick and flint buildings.
- Rolling, intensively cultivated fields.
- Swathes of dense mixed woodland.
- Mosaic of unimproved grassland and scrub.
- Views over adjacent chalk pits and quarries.
- Industrial history of Medway.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To improve the quality of the rural landscape by conserving the scarp woodlands and by establishing a new structure of hedgerows and shaws on the slopes to balance the industrial landscape and the valley bottom.
- To control further encroachment of development into the AONB and urbanisation.



Western Scarp

Key Characteristics

- Intensively cultivated arable land along the scarp foot.
- Large 'prairie' fields.
- Loss of hedgerow boundaries.
- Woodland and shaws.
- Chalk quarries and industry.

Eastern Scarp

Key Characteristics

- Intensively farmed scarp-foot fields.
- Dense woodland.
- Dominant overhead wires and pylons.
- Scrub-flecked ditches and rough tussocky grass.

Western Scarp

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage the woodland and shaws on the scarp.
- Restore occasional wooded shaws to define large blocks of arable farmland.
- Consider opportunities for arable field margins/or conversion of arable to pasture.
- Create a wooded edge to urban development.
- Restore hedgerows and shaws along lanes.

Eastern Scarp

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage woodlands and shaws on the scarp.
- Conserve and manage riverside marshes for plant and invertebrate habitat value in the north.
- Restore wooded shaws and hedgerows along highways.
- Consider opportunities for establishing arable field margins or conversion of arable to pasture.
- Improve the setting of settlements and seek to reduce the visual impact of industrial development outside the AONB by hedgerow and shaw planting.
- Create a wooded edge to new development.

Boxley Valley

Key Characteristics

- Scarp woodlands (yew and box).
- Large scarp-foot fields.
- Hedgelined fields interspersed by attractive parkland.

Boxley Valley

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage existing yew and mixed woodlands on the scarp.
- Restore wooded shaws and copses, and hedges along highways.
- Conserve the wooded setting of settlements.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – red brick, tile hanging, ragstone and flint.

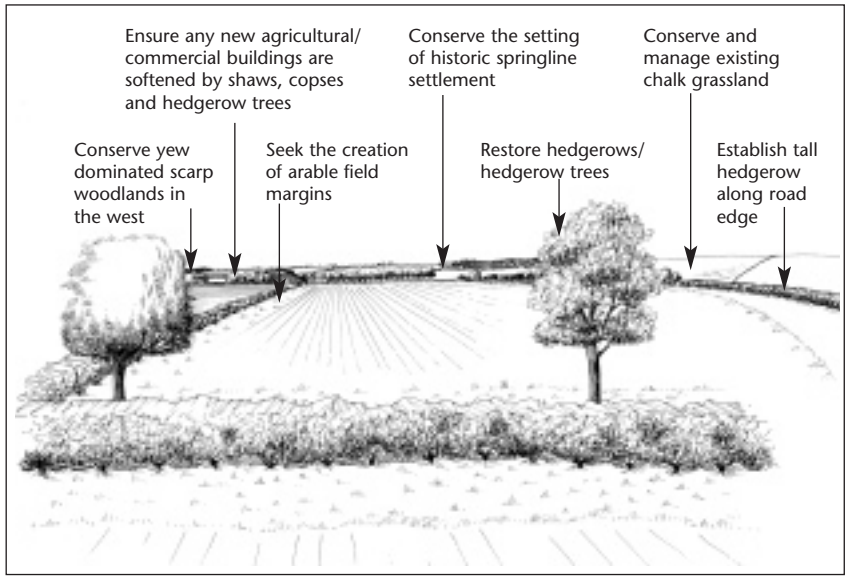
Hollingbourne Vale • Boxley to Westwell

Key Characteristics

- Yew dominated scarp woodlands in the west, open cultivated fields on the scarp in the east, with many hedgerow trees.
- Extensive views from the scarp.
- Large arable scarp foot fields.
- Some mixed farmland.
- Predominantly grassland on scarp.
- Thick hedges along Pilgrim's Way.
- Historic springline villages.
- Scarp crossed by considerable number of roads and footpaths (some, former drove-ways).

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To restore a strong hedgerow network on the scarp foot based on remaining field boundaries, and to return cultivated areas of the scarp to species rich chalk grassland.
- Conserve, create and manage a good hedgerow network, including patches along Pilgrim's Way.
- To reduce the impact of the existing road and railway network on the landscape.



Boxley to Westwell

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage existing wooded areas of the scarp, including yew dominated scarp woodlands in the west.
- Conserve and manage existing species rich chalk grassland and encourage restoration of arable scarp slopes to chalk grassland.
- Conserve, manage and restore scarp shaws and hedgerows as well as beech avenues along roads where they are a distinctive local feature.
- Encourage sensitive management of arable and pasture farmland in the vale.
- Create new corridors of streamside vegetation.
- Conserve the setting of historic springline settlements and ensure any new development is integrated with hedgerow/hedgerow tree and copse planting.
- Soften the visual impact of existing poor quality agricultural buildings and housing development.
- Restore thick well managed hedgerows to highways.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – red brick, tile hanging, weatherboarding, flint and ragstone.
- Seek the creation of arable field margins.

Mid Kent Downs • Boxley to Selling

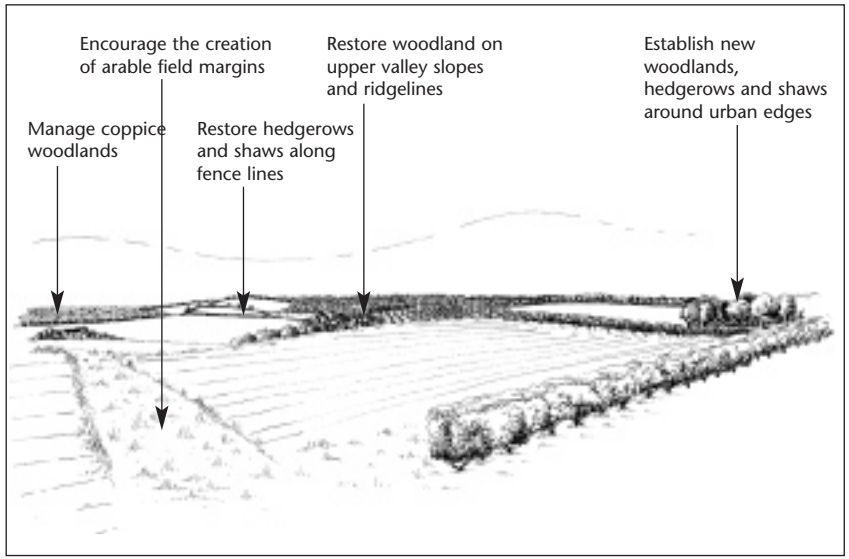
Local Character Areas: Nashenden Valley, Chatham Outskirts, Bicknor, Faversham Fruit Belt, Challock

Key Characteristics

- Series of wide ridges and steep-sided dry valleys.
- Extensive coppice woodlands and some large expanses of conifer woodland.
- Much surviving original ancient woodland.
- Large arable fields on the plateaux.
- Hedgerow trees prominent in parts.
- Orchards and shelterbelts around Chatham, Bicknor and Faversham.
- Tiny, scattered villages linked by narrow lanes.
- Hop gardens and parkland.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To manage and restore hedgerows, trees and woodlands, especially in the valleys.
- To seek to conserve the small scale of the roads and villages and the remote quality of the countryside.
- To maintain the existing diversity of orchards, hop gardens, parkland and farmland, and control urban fringe pressures.



Nashenden Valley (west of Walderslade)

Key Characteristics

- Open landscape with very large arable fields.
- Large blocks of dense, deciduous woodland.
- Few hedges or shaws.
- Dominant transportation infrastructure.
- Small pastures.
- Chalk ridge with some narrow steep dry valleys.

Chatham outskirts

Key Characteristics

- Mosaic of deciduous woodland.
- Large, intensively farmed, arable plateaux.
- Few hedgerows.
- Patchwork of small pastures, neglected grassland and scrub.
- Derelict orchards and overgrown hedges.
- Influence of urban edge and long views to industrial estate.

Nashenden Valley (west of Walderslade)

Design Guidelines

- Conserve distinctive local woodland characteristics such as hazel coppice and many oaks within the mix of other broadleaf species.
- Conserve small pastures/clearings along wooded edges.
- Conserve and manage wooded edges to roads.
- Conserve wooded shaws.
- Conserve the sparse settlement pattern.
- Conserve the historic form of open common land.

Chatham outskirts

Design Guidelines

- Conserve characteristic beech/yew woodland.
- Restore woodland on ridgelines.
- Restore wooded links from the ridge into large arable areas.
- Restore hedgerows along lanes and around settlements.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and flint.
- Encourage the creation of arable field margins.

Bicknor

Key Characteristics

- Wide arable fields.
- Dense belts of woodland.
- Small, sunken, single-track lanes.
- Scattered villages.
- Tile-hung oast houses.
- Pockets of historic parkland.
- Orchards and hop gardens along northern edge
- Fine views across to the Swale Estuary.

Faversham fruit belt

Key Characteristics

- Hop gardens and orchards.
- Lines of tall, regular alder and poplar trees.
- Rolling, intensively farmed open arable fields.
- Infrequent blocks of woodland.
- Steep wooded slopes of Perry Hill.

Challock

Key Characteristics

- Open arable plateaux farmland.
- Many fields with no clear boundaries.
- Network of small lanes.
- Trimmed hedges and hedgerow trees between Challock and Perry Hill, interspersed by small orchards.
- Large expanse of Challock Forest/King's Wood.
- Occasional vernacular buildings.

Bicknor

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage the dense belts of broadleaf woodland.
- Create new broadleaf woodland on open ridge tops.
- Create wooded edges to settlements.
- Reinforce roadside hedgerows.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and flint.
- Encourage the retention of orchards.

Faversham fruit belt

Design Guidelines

- Retain and manage alder and poplar shelterbelts.
- Encourage the retention of orchards, and/or enclose diversified land use and arable farmland within a new network of small woodlands.
- Integrate the existing urban edge and any new development by woodland edges.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and flint.

Challock

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage large areas of broadleaf woodland, including coppice woodland of Challock Forest/King's Wood.
- Reinforce shaws and beech stands.
- Seek opportunities for creation of arable field margins.
- Conserve the settings of historic farmsteads.
- Reinforce woodland edges.
- Reinforce the localised and characteristic design and pattern of settlements.

Stour Valley • Brook to Chartham

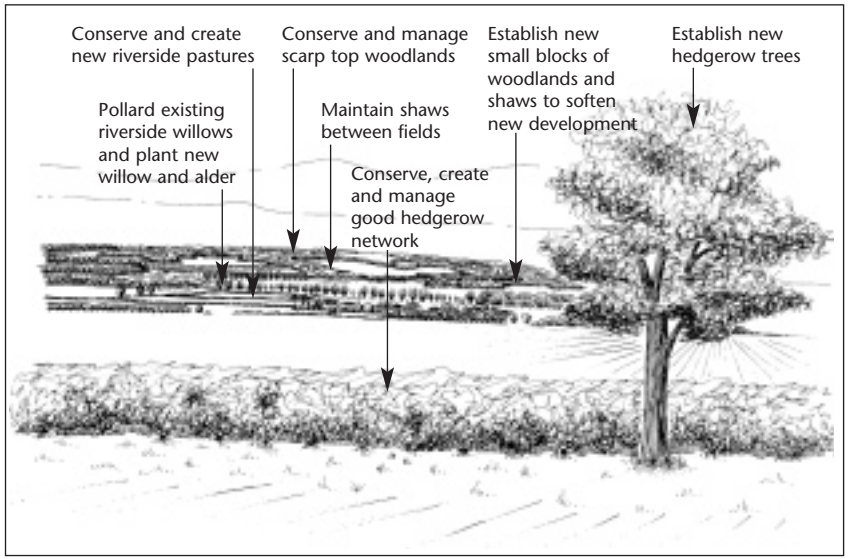
Local Character Areas: Wye, Hampton, Chilham

Key Characteristics

- Dense deciduous scarp top woodlands.
- Strong pattern of mixed farmland.
- Hedgerow trees and thin lines of trees on the slopes and the floodplain.
- Mature parkland.
- Alder and willow along some sections of the river.
- Pastoral floodplain.
- Network of narrow, trimmed hedges and mature trees.
- Thick shaws and overgrown hedges on valley sides.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To restore and maintain the hedges and lines of trees which produce the characteristic field pattern, and to enhance the visual and ecological quality of the river corridor.
- Conserve arable field margins.



Wye

Key Characteristics

- Narrow lines of trees or overgrown hedges at field boundaries.
- Traces of ancient field systems in the west.
- Series of rough grassland-dominated enclosed coombes.
- Deciduous woodland patches.
- Wide, flat floodplain.
- Great Stour river with generally well vegetated banks.
- Long views.
- Sparse settlements and few river crossing points.

Wye

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and enhance riverside vegetation, replanting willows and alder, establishing marginal aquatic vegetation and creating new areas of tall grassland and scrub.
- Pollard existing riverside willows and plant new willow and alder.
- Create new floodplain wetlands.
- Conserve and manage chalk grassland.
- Manage and reinforce existing hedgerows, especially roadside hedges and hedgerow trees.
- Establish small blocks of woodland to soften the existing and any new development.
- Conserve and improve the setting of historic buildings.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and flint.

Hampton

Key Characteristics

- Scarp-foot springs.
- Wooded scarp and rich chalk grassland.
- Small fields with irregular field pattern.
- Intensively cultivated farmland.
- Pockets of damp pasture.
- Former hedgerows largely removed.

Chilham

Key Characteristics

- Large arable fields in east.
- Sweeps of parkland on western slopes.
- Dense woodlands dominate skyline.
- Gentle enclosed valley sides.

Hampton

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage wooded scarp and rich chalk grassland.
- Conserve historic irregular field patterns.
- Conserve and manage hedgerows.
- Conserve the setting of historic hamlets and farmsteads.

Chilham

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and reinforce historic parkland features.
- Conserve and reinforce small woodlands and copses.
- Conserve and manage hedgerows.
- Reinforce the river corridor with new wetland habitats.

East Kent Downs • Crundale Bridge, Capel-le-Ferne to Lyminge

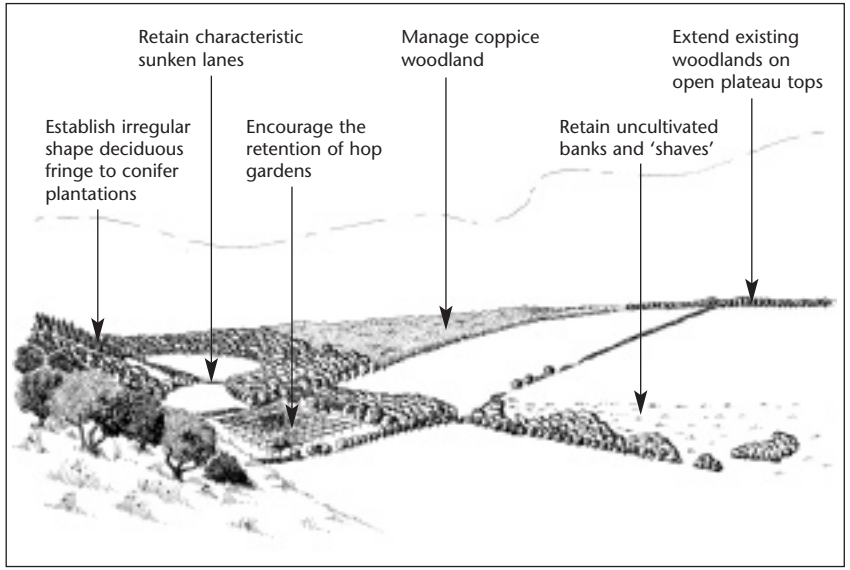
Local Character Areas: Petham, Elham, Alkham

Key Characteristics

- Long wooded ridges.
- Dry valleys with open valley bottoms.
- Extensive coppice and conifer woodlands.
- Coastal downs.
- Thick shaws or overgrown hedges on the valleysides.
- Narrow uncultivated banks or 'shaws'.
- Tiny remote settlements incorporating traditional building materials (flint, brick and tile).
- Large arable fields on ridge-top plateaux.
- Maze of sunken one-track lanes.
- Scattered military remains, e.g. pill boxes and gun emplacements.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To maintain the existing woodland cover, increasing the proportion of deciduous woodlands and to restore the hedgerow network.
- To maintain the remote, undeveloped qualities of the valleys.
- To conserve and enhance the wild character and vegetation of the cliff tops.



Petham

Key Characteristics

- Intimate rolling valleys.
- Scattered farmsteads.
- Block of deciduous woodlands on ridges.
- Extensive views into secluded coombes.
- Areas of traditional chalk grassland.
- Frequent redundant oast houses.
- Almost no hop gardens still in production.
- Hedges and hedgerow trees.

Elham

Key Characteristics

- Heavily wooded plateau to the west with conifer plantations and ancient woodlands.
- Expanses of conifer plantations and remnants of deciduous ancient woodland in the west.
- Predominantly large, intensively cultivated arable plateaux to the east.
- Pockets of historic parkland and orchards on northern valley slopes.
- Hedgerow trees.
- Stelling Minnis (common land) – key landscape feature.
- Loss of hedgerow network.
- Open views and narrow roads along the ridgeline.

Petham

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage characteristic mixed woodlands of beech, oak, ash and yew and hazel coppice with beech standards.
- Conserve and manage hedgerows and shaws.
- Conserve and replant beech avenues on cross contour roads.
- Conserve and enhance species rich grassland.
- Conserve the small scale, isolated settlement pattern.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and flint.

Elham

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage broadleaf woodland.
- Encourage the planting of broadleaf edges to plantation areas.
- Extend wooded edges and create shaws to define arable fields and pastures.
- Maintain small scale settlement pattern.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and flint.
- Conserve and manage remaining common land using considered reintroduction of grazing if feasible.
- Reinforce hedgerow network.
- Conserve open views.

Alkham

Key Characteristics

- Scattered woodlands (some of high nature conservation value) on steep valley sides.
- Decaying hedges.
- Exposed chalk cliffs and tumbled, scrub covered rock-falls.
- Small pockets of scrub.
- Dominant long ridges and isolated valleys.

Alkham

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage unimproved grasslands and pastures.
- Consider reversion of arable to grassland.
- Conserve and manage existing woodlands.
- Create woodland on the edges of the arable plateaux and on steeper slopes.
- Conserve the open, undeveloped character of the coastal downs.
- Conserve the isolation of small settlements.
- Avoid ribbon development along existing roads in the lower valleys and integrate with new hedgerow/hedgerow tree planting.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and flint.
- Reinstate hedgerows lost by intensive agricultural practices.

Postling Vale • Brabourne to Newington

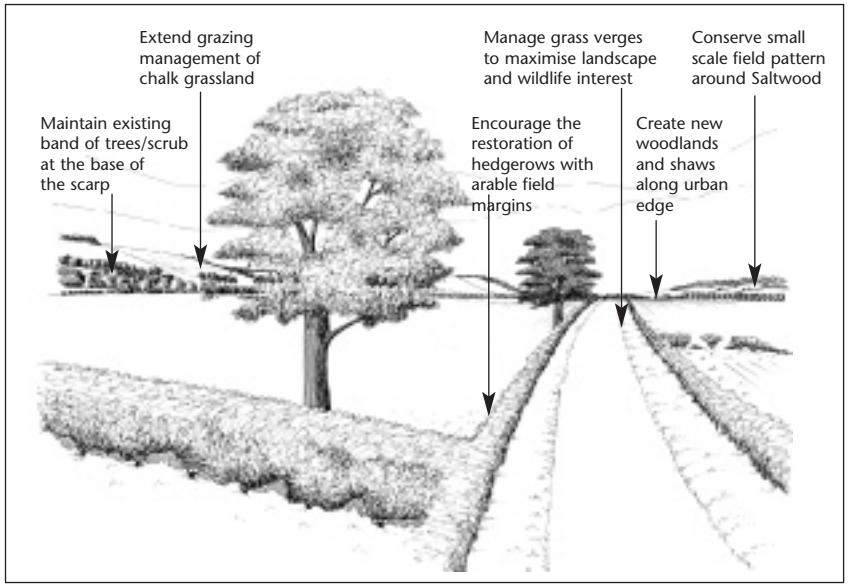
Local Character Areas: Folkestone outskirts, Saltwood, Stowting

Key Characteristics

- Species rich rough grassland on the scarp.
- Thick belt of scrub along the scarp foot.
- Magnificent views from the scarp.
- Arable fields edged by remnant hedges and scattered large woodlands.
- Intimate landscape of thick hedges and hedgerow trees around Hythe.
- Dominant major roads.
- Thin hedges aligning the Pilgrim's Way.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To restore landscape features such as hedgerows and shaws on the scarp foot, which emphasise the bold scale of the surrounding landform.
- To maintain open sweeps of species rich chalk grassland on the scarp, allowing the landform of the Downs to dominate.
- To restore and replace decaying hedgerows and hedgerow trees around outskirts of Hythe.



Folkestone outskirts

Key Characteristics

- Series of steep enclosed coombes and prominent downs.
- Views from scarp dominated by transport corridors.
- Hedge and shaw field boundaries.
- M20 motorway and Channel Tunnel dominate the Southern boundary.

Folkestone outskirts

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and extend areas of chalk grassland as an important wildlife feature on the scarp.
- Improve existing settlement landscape settings. Where new settlement is proposed, ensure appropriate new landscaping, for example using woodland and shaws
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile, flint and ragstone.
- Reduce the impact of the existing road and railway network on the landscape.
- In areas of more open landscape or where hedges are in decline encourage the creation of small areas of woodland and reinforce hedgerows with new planting.

Saltwood

Key Characteristics

- Deciduous woodland along the valley sides.
- Small pastures surrounded by dense hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Most hedgerow field boundaries replaced by wire fence in the east.
- Extensive views across the town and out to sea.
- Intimate and enclosed valleys.
- Saltwood Castle and farm buildings have a strong positive impact on views promoting a localised vernacular style.

Saltwood

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage the woodland cover on valleysides.
- Encourage the restoration of small-scale field pattern in existing open areas, using dense hedgerows.
- Conserve historic character of the built form.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and ragstone.
- Restore the characteristics of the estate roads and peripheral highways.

Stowting

Key Characteristics

- Large arable fields surrounded by small shaws or overgrown hedges.
- Predominantly grassland scarp.
- Occasional blocks of deciduous woodland on the scarp.
- Motorway and pockets of suburbanisation along the scarp foot.
- Significant amount of hedgerow loss.

Stowting

Design Guidelines

- Conserve wood and manage woodland, including beech stands on the hilltops.
- Conserve views of dominant rounded chalk hills.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local building materials.
- Seek reversion of arable to grassland on scarp slope.

Lympne • Bonnington to Hythe

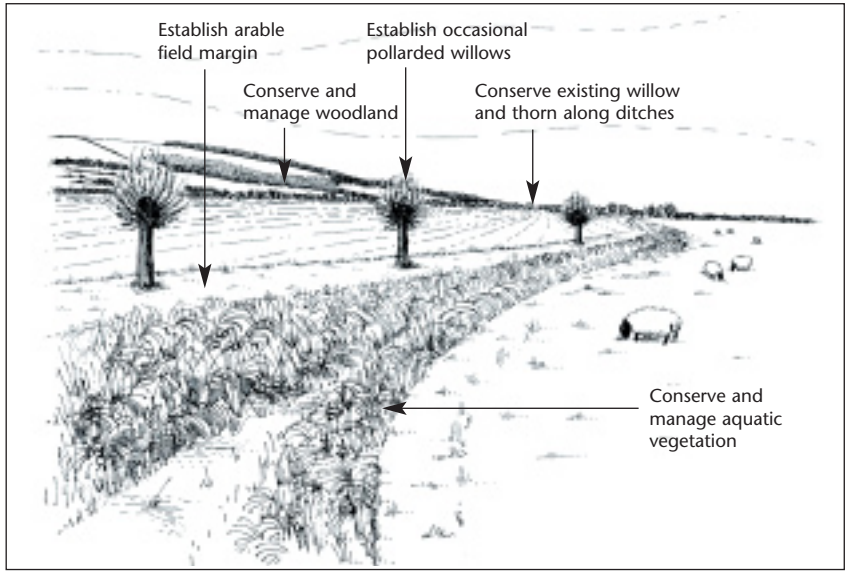
Local Character Areas: Hythe Escarpment, Aldington, Romney Marsh

Key Characteristics

- Species rich grassland, scrub and woodland on the greensand scarp.
- Magnificent views over the marsh.
- Very large pasture and arable fields on the marsh, divided by fences, ditches and sporadic willows and thorns.
- Scattered old military defences.
- Rough grassland dotted with scrub on scarp.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To retain the open 'natural' scrub and grassland character of the scarp and to discourage further suburbanisation of properties.
- To maintain and enhance the distinctive ditches of the remote undeveloped quality of the Marsh.
- Conserve and enhance views to and from the scarp.



Hythe Escarpment

Key Characteristics

- Botanically rich rough grassland scarp-face.
- Sparse vegetation.
- Remnant hedgerows across the slopes.
- Unimproved agricultural grasslands.

Aldington

Key Characteristics

- Deciduous ancient woodland dominates the scarp.
- Arable cultivation on the lower slopes.
- Spectacular views across Romney Marsh and English Channel.
- Elements of suburbanisation.

Romney Marsh

Key Characteristics

- Productive arable land and pasture.
- Extensive network of historic drainage ditches or 'sewers'.
- Occasional windblown scrubby trees.

Hythe Escarpment

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage wooded top of the scarp.
- Conserve and manage wooded rough and pastoral grasslands.
- Conserve the historic features and vegetation along Royal Military Canal.
- Ensure any extensions to existing houses on the scarp; avoid further intrusion, and the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and ragstone.
- Conserve and enhance open views.

Aldington

Design Guidelines

- Conserve and manage the coppice woodland.
- Avoid further introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and ragstone.

Romney Marsh

Design Guidelines

- Conserve the large-scale field pattern divided by historic drainage ditches and occasional thorn hedges.
- Manage ditches to encourage aquatic vegetation and maintain water levels.
- Establish new pollarded willows and arable field margins along ditches.
- Ensure any new development, e.g. farm buildings are well integrated using thorn hedges and hedgerow trees.
- Conserve and manage aquatic vegetation.
- Establish arable field margins.

South Foreland • Dover to Kingsdown

Key Characteristics

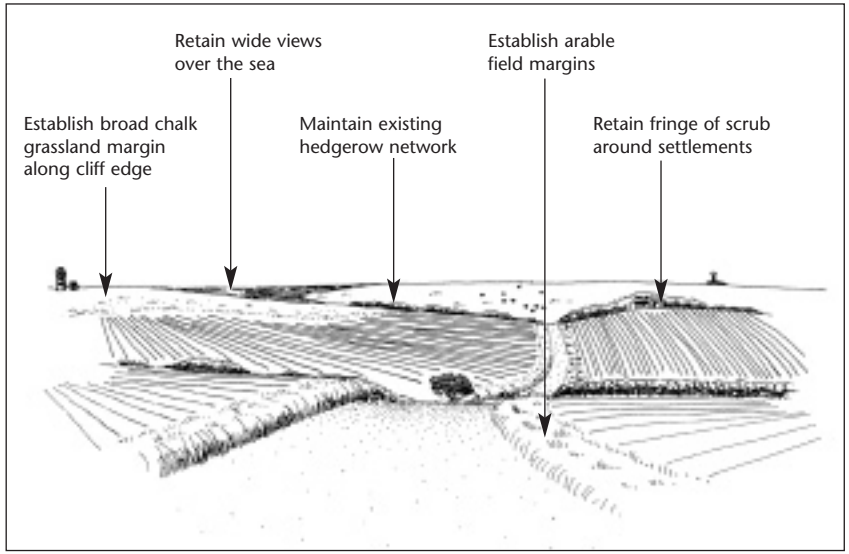
- White Cliffs of the Heritage Coast.
- Unimproved chalk grassland along cliff tops.
- Open exposed landscape dotted by farms and small settlements fringed by trees and scrub.
- Large rolling arable fields with a thin network of remnant hedge.
- Open landscape vulnerable to any form of development.

Overall Landscape Character Objectives

- To conserve the spacious and wilder aspects of the landscape, retaining species rich grassland, pockets of scrub and restore the network of existing hedgerows where appropriate.

Design Guidelines

- Encourage larger areas of species rich chalk grassland along the cliff top edge, as an important wildlife and landscape feature through arable reversion.
- Conserve pockets of scrub and trees.
- Maintain open views to the sea.
- Use scrub planting to provide additional softening to clutter of sheds and fencing around radio masts.
- Maintain existing hedgerow network.
- Establish arable field margins.



4.0 Detailed guidance

4.0 Detailed guidance

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The aim of this section is to provide further information and guidance on the use, design and specification of materials and structures mentioned in previous sections. It has to be recognised that sites and locations vary and that the solution for one site or type of development will not necessarily be the best for others.

4.1.2 Advice on the possible solutions can be sought from a number of organisations and professionals. Proposals may require planning permission from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in which case advice may be sought from landscape, conservation or planning officers. Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are subject to more stringent controls and conservation officers from the LPA are more likely to offer detailed advice on any proposals.

4.1.3 Further advice on proposals that do not require planning permission can be sought from a number of organisations and publications with advice increasingly available on the Internet. A list of contacts, publications and web links is contained in Appendices 1 and 2.

Worked ragstone for new steps pre-assembled in quarry before shipment to site

4.2 Materials

General

4.2.1 The Kent Downs AONB partnership is committed to the principle of sustainable landscapes and this is reflected in the Management Plan for the Kent Downs AONB and so where possible sustainable materials should be used. In essence this means locally available and where possible renewable. Using locally grown timber for example, promotes management of local woodland; provides local jobs; supports traditional skills and helps maintain a key characteristic (coppice woodland) of the Landscape Character.

4.2.2 The reuse of locally sourced reclaimed materials by recycling them for refurbishment or new development will generally be the most sustainable option and also perpetuates local character. Reclaimed materials will however always be limited in supply.

4.2.3 From a sustainability point of view the use of new quarried materials is not quite so straight forward but local materials are more likely to be in keeping with the area and will generally be more sustainable than importing a similar material from other areas of the country or abroad. However there are a number of materials that have been imported into the area over the years, particularly with the advent of the railways, that have become engrained in the local character and might still be appropriate to use. These include yorkstone and as paving slabs, setts or cobbles and kerb stones.

4.2.4 With all materials it is important to consider the characteristics of the local character area. Generally it will be appropriate to use traditional materials and patterns found nearby particularly where they are a strong characteristic feature.

Timber

4.2.5 The Kent Downs support a variety of woodlands including chestnut coppice, mixed broadleaved coppice and broadleaved and coniferous woodland. The coppice woodland predominantly produces sweet chestnut and oak for use in fencing whilst other woodland produces timber for the broader timber industry including oak frame construction. Forestry policies are generally seeking to replace coniferous plantations with mixed broadleaved planting which is more in keeping with landscape character and has greater benefits for biodiversity.

4.2.6 All fences should therefore wherever possible utilise oak and chestnut produced from local well-managed woodland. Other structures such as bus shelters, benches, bollards, sign posts, gates, stiles and buildings, can and should also where possible, be made from locally sourced timber. This will mainly be green heart construction grade oak, which is suitable for most types of construction. However more intricate items such as gates need to be made from cured timber (which is more difficult to obtain and expensive) or more commonly, treated softwood to avoid splitting and twisting. Softwood should always be treated with preservative when used for construction but oak or chestnut, which cannot be treated in this way, may last as long or longer than treated softwood.

4.2.7 There are a number of schemes that certify that timber is from a well managed sustainable woodland, the most well known of which is the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Other locally grown native broadleaved timbers such as beech or ash are generally used in the furniture or turning industry.

4.2.8 To ensure that appropriate sources of timber are used from woodland that is being well managed timber should be specified as:
All timber to be sourced locally (within the Kent Downs AONB or close by) certified by the FSC or other approved certification scheme.

Bricks and Tiles

4.2.9 Clay bricks and tiles are the traditional building materials of the Kent Downs. The colour and texture of clay bricks and tiles varies according to the source of the clay and the manufacturing process used. Traditionally much of the process was done by hand using a wide variety of sources for the clay resulting in a wealth of variety in the finished product. Large-scale quarries and mechanised production processes have reduced this variability. Never-the-less clay products still have inherent characteristics and a unique appearance not replicated by concrete products.

4.2.10 For projects where brick or tiles are critical, reclaimed or handmade products would be preferable. Elsewhere, new clay bricks or tiles can be specified, taking care to match as closely as possible local colours, patterns or textures. The use of the materials, such as the type of bonding in brickwork, should also reflect local styles and, in the case of walling, local designs.

Tile hanging on upper elevation of traditional brick building

Natural Stone and Local Aggregates

4.2.11 These are the natural stones and aggregates that are commonly found and/or used across the Kent Downs AONB and are an important element in the colour and character of the landscape.

Flint

4.2.12 Flint, which is always found in tandem with chalk, occurs within and around much of the Kent Downs AONB and has had a long history in the Downs, first as a tool and then a building material. Commonly, because of its irregular form, flint is used within free standing or house walls contained by brick quoins and bands or as decorative panels. Flints are usually 'knapped' to give them a smooth face and they are used in a variety of dug and 'knapped' forms in different patterns or styles. The dressing and laying of flints is a very specialised trade requiring expert skills and advice.

Ragstone

4.2.13 Ragstone, a dull grey stone, is still quarried on an industrial scale close to the Kent Downs AONB. It has traditionally been used within the AONB as a road stone, cobble or sett and a walling block. Although difficult to 'dress' with a regular face it has been used as rectangular blocks for the construction of walls and buildings and was very popular for the construction of 19th century churches. More frequently, owing to the difficult and variable nature of the stone, it is seen as irregular and self faced irregular blocks in walling. Due to its irregular shape, as with flint, ragstone has been set within brick quoins and bands. 'Spalls', fist sized irregular chips of ragstone, have been used to surface paths but modern usage of ragstone is as a general construction aggregate, including fill for gabions and loose or partly binding gravels. Where appropriate to the character area, ragstone, laid in even courses, would be a suitable material for use in the construction of walls, paths or tracks and has the added benefits of being widely and readily available from sources close to the AONB.

Hoggin

4.2.14 'Hoggin' is the term given to a mixture of clays, sands and gravels to form a material that compacts well and provides a usable, stable surface for paths and tracks at low cost. Traditionally this was an 'as-

Right: Flint walling with brick quoins

Far right: Ragstone outbuilding with tiled roof

dug' mixture widely used across the south east of England. Now largely replaced by more predictable materials (e.g. MOT Type 1), hoggin is not readily available as a construction aggregate. Ragstone gravel, up to 6mm nominal size with fines laid over a suitable sub-base, will provide a more appropriate alternative low-cost material for paths and tracks.

Granite setts or kerbs

4.2.15 Although not a local material, granite has been widely used across much of the North Downs and surrounding area for kerbs and setts in the construction of roads and other infrastructure projects but is more closely associated with urban areas than rural. Generally, where granite does occur as part of historic development it should be reused and restored. For new development adjacent to such areas consideration can be given to extending the granite or to using alternative modern reconstituted stone products such as 'conservation' kerbs and setts. These are cheaper, lighter and easier to work than granite and should be used instead of concrete. Alternatively new ragstone kerbs could be used.

Reconstituted materials and aggregates

4.2.16 It is recognised that traditional materials are not suitable for all modern uses and applications. As previously mentioned reconstituted granite kerbs may be appropriate in some areas to replace granite for a variety of practical reasons. Generally however reconstituted stone and imported aggregates should not be used. However where they are employed they should, like the local materials, reflect the underlying geology and be similar in colour and tone to traditional materials and natural stones or soils. An example of modern usage of aggregates is anti-skid surfacing on the highway. This material has quite stringent performance criteria that cannot be found in the local geology but a material may be specified that is similar in colour for instance to that of ragstone gravel.

Far left: Ragstone walling with brick coping – good example

Left: "Conservation kerbs" used with ragstone setts

4.3 Fencing, gates and timber structures

Fences

4.3.1 The types of timber and the reason for their suggested use has been set out in the previous section. Below is a description of the fence types commonly found across the AONB together with photographs and supporting text that contain suggestions for appropriate use.

Cleft post and rail

4.3.2 Traditional standard design is 4' (1.2m) high three rails with posts at 9' (2.7m) centres using oak or chestnut. Posts are typically morticed and sawn or cleft. Rails are triangular section with flattened ends and are usually from cleft chestnut. Rails overlap with flat ends in a single mortise and are held by galvanised nails. This is a traditional rural fence particularly suitable for woodland edges, hedgerows and rural lanes. Wire netting can be added to make the fence stock proof.

Sawn post and rail

4.3.3 Traditional standard design is 4' high three rails with posts at 9'6" centres with intermediate prick posts using sawn oak. More recently these fences are almost exclusively built from treated softwood but oak is recommended for use in the Kent Downs AONB. Posts are mortised to the section of the rails. Rails are scarf jointed in the mortise and held by nails. Prick posts are held by nails.
Commonly used for horse paddocks and smaller animal enclosures. Wire netting can be added to make the fence stock proof.

Picket or pale fences

4.3.4 Commonly, decorative formal fences the designs of which are varied with some areas or estates having their own distinctive pattern. In its most common form it is normally 900m high with sawn pointed posts and pales. Posts are mortised with two rails and pales are spaced just less than their width. Traditionally this would have been oak but today is more commonly treated softwood. Quite often the fence is painted white.
Typically used as a garden or cottage fence associated with dwellings and occasionally country estates. In the most traditional simplistic form the whole would have been made of cleft chestnut giving a more rustic appearance.

Post and wire

4.3.5 These are a modern fence with different gauges and patterns of wire to suit different livestock or applications. Commonly high tensile wire is used so that it can be put under tension and it is erected on

Left to right:

Traditional three rail cleft oak and chestnut fencing

Sawn post and morticed rail three bar fence – oak is recommended material

Traditional rustic chestnut picket fence

Post and wire on open downland

chestnut posts.

The main attributes of these fences are that they are relatively cheap and unobtrusive. They are commonly erected alongside hedgerows to make them stock proof. They should be used to divide grazing land in open areas such as downland where there is no hedgerow and none are to be planted.

The use of green coloured wire is a misplaced attempt to conceal fencing and the use of it is therefore not encouraged. Wire 'chain link' fencing whether plastic coated or uncoated is more suited to urban areas and should not be used.

Chestnut paling

4.3.6 Made entirely of chestnut stakes joined together by twisted wire and fixed to chestnut posts this fence is most commonly used today as a temporary low-level security fence in suburban situations for which it is supplied in rolls. As a more traditional rural fence each spile can be driven into the ground and then wired together. This provides a strong flexible design ideal for making good gaps in hedgerows or small section of fencing on difficult terrain or to awkward shapes. It can also be used in this form when the spiles are driven close together as a bank revetment for loose soil, riverbanks and ditch edges.

Estate railings

4.3.7 Metal estates railings were commonly used around large country estates during the 1800s and early 1900s. In places these have become an important characteristic element that should be maintained. New sections of this type of fencing are unlikely to be appropriate except where associated with development in such areas. Where required they should follow the pattern of existing fences.

Security fencing

4.3.8 Intrusive security fencing should be avoided. Designs and materials normally associated with urban areas such as chainlink, metal pailing and close board fencing should be avoided.

Where security fencing is required wooden fence posts and galvanized steel wire should be used. The fencing should be screened with thorny hedges of native plants. This will help reduce the visual impact of the fencing on the landscape and provide additional deterrent to intruders.

Entrance gates should be simple and in keeping with rural character. Timber gates are preferred and the driveway and entrance should be in scale with surroundings and no wider than necessary.

Elaborate, ornate and high gates are more suburban than rural. They are out of place in the countryside and are not appropriate in the Kent Downs.

Left to right:

Sawn oak picket fence

Chestnut paling

Metal estate railings

Woven hurdles

Woven hurdles

4.3.9 Made from coppiced hazel or chestnut and occasionally willow, woven hurdles offer an attractive alternative to closeboard fencing. Chestnut and Hazel hurdles are more appropriate for most areas of the Kent Downs as the products are locally available. Woven hurdles are a traditional and sustainable product. Hurdles are held in place by tall chestnut posts driven into the ground.

Other Structures

Gates and stiles

4.3.10 Consider if a gate or stile is necessary – removing them can make the countryside accessible to more people – where they are required consider designs which allow disabled access – for more information see selected references. The gate should where possible be in keeping with the type of fencing with which it is associated. Invariably for most rural locations a traditional timber five bar gate is acceptable but for metal estate railings or picket fences a matching design would be preferable.

Similarly, stiles and kissing gates should reflect the materials of the fence they are associated with. When passing through a hedge, stiles should reflect the materials of those fences found nearby. As mentioned previously whilst oak and chestnut would be preferable gates and other intricate structures are more likely to be made of pressure treated softwood.

Bus stops and shelters

4.3.11 These structures come in a variety of styles and designs but are often simplistic utilitarian structures that are poorly maintained. Conversely there are a number of good examples that utilise timber construction and tiled roofs and reflect the vernacular of local architecture. Whilst these good examples represent best practice they should not be slavishly copied without regard for the character and architecture around the proposed site.

Interpretive signs

4.3.12 Interpretive signs, finger posts and notice posts are important means of encouraging access and of communication with the public. Care has to be taken with design and siting to avoid creating unnecessary clutter or visually intrusive elements particularly in exposed rural locations. Local timber is likely to be the most suitable material but each situation will require careful site-specific design solutions.

Left to right:

Stile through post and wire fence in chestnut

Kissing gate in sawn timber – oak recommended

Oak bus shelter with clay tiled roof

Country Park sign

4.4 Woodland and hedgerows

4.4.1 The management of woodland and hedgerows can be complex and apart from dealing with seasonal constraints and long time scales it needs to take account of different and often conflicting requirements in terms of function, amenity and biodiversity. Quite often specialised advice will be needed but much useful and accessible information has been published that can be of use to those that own smaller parcels of land. In particular the North West Kent Partnership has published, 'Caring for and Managing the Landscape of the Kent Downs' and specifically covers woodland and hedgerows. Whilst this is designed for the West Kent part of the AONB, nearly all the advice applies equally well to the whole of the AONB. The most important thing to take into account, whether in West Kent or East Kent, is the individual character of the area for the site under consideration and what characteristics it possesses that should be perpetuated. Section 3.0 of this report sets out for each character area Key Characteristics, Objectives and Design Guidelines and these should be referred to when considering the guidance issued in this or any other publication.

4.4.2 The advice issued by the North West Kent Partnership is not repeated here but set out below are a number of key points for woodlands and hedgerows to help with the understanding of this guide and other publications on the subject (Refer to North West Kent Countryside Partnership, 'Caring for and Managing the Landscape of the Kent Downs').

Woodland

4.4.3 The current structure and condition of almost all woodland in Kent, including ancient woodland has resulted from past management and commonly, in more recent times a lack of positive management. Positive management is needed where access or amenity is important or where the woodland structure (e.g. coppice) is based on regular management practices. Individual veteran trees that have in the past been pollarded or coppiced may be dependant upon the continuation of this process to ensure their longer-term survival. Management can also improve the structure and biodiversity of woodland. Woodland should therefore have a long-term management plan that addresses the relevant issues and should take account of:

- Important individual trees within the wood that need special attention (e.g. veteran trees, ancient woodland indicator species such as wild service tree *Sorbus torminalis* or small leaved lime *Tilia cordata*).
- Historic management practices (e.g. pollarding or coppicing)
- Necessary consents or permissions (e.g. felling licence or tree preservation order)
- Replanting where timber trees are to be clear felled
- Available grants
- Public access (formal or informal)
- Biodiversity
- Available expertise and advice.

Veteran pollard tree in woodland

4.4.4 Where new planting of woodland is proposed it should not be at the expense of other important habitats or features such as unimproved grassland or heathland. The species selected should reflect the local character area as set out in section 2.13 and be planted as a mix of species including a range of understorey shrubs. Planting plans and mixes for a new woodland should include:

- Only 10 to 15% high forest trees such as oak and ash with the remainder made up of understorey shrubs (e.g. hazel *Corylus avellana* and dogwood *Cornus sanguinea* or lower storey trees (e.g. hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* or hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*).
- A broad range of species planted in a random mix based on a 1 to 3m grid with trees well distributed across the planting area and shrubs in groups of 3 to 5 of the same species.
- Where used wild cherry *Prunus avium* and wild service trees *Sorbus torminalis* should be in small numbers (less than 5% of tree species).
- Woodland edge mixes – ideally a strip several metres wide of scrub planting at the edge of the woodland.
- Proposals for thinning during establishment to maintain species and structural balance.
- Protection from mechanical (e.g. strimmer) or environmental (e.g. rabbit or deer) damage and provision for weed control during establishment.
- A programme of inspection and review.

Hedgerows

4.4.5 The term hedgerow in its broadest sense covers linear tree and shrub features such as clipped hedges, shelterbelts or narrow shaws. All are important characteristic features in their own right requiring their own particular management regime. However this section of the guidance is restricted to managed or clipped agricultural hedges. These hedges come under the Hedgerow Regulations (1997), which sets out a definition and criteria for 'Important' hedgerows i.e. those of particular historical or ecological interest. All hedgerows can however be important, regardless of their classification under the regulations as they:

- Are an important element of local landscape character
- Provide connectivity for important ecological resources
- Act as screen to unattractive features
- Provide shelter to people and wildlife and protect crops from the wind.
- Offer a suitable habitat for a number of flora and fauna including protected species.

4.4.6 Hedgerows are a managed feature and where regularly cut need little or no further attention for many years. If left to grow hedges become gappy or thin and reinvigoration may be required. This can be done through coppicing or laying. Hedge laying is a traditional form of management that improves the strength of a hedge and requires

Left to right:

New woodland planting on a 1.5m grid protected by rabbit fencing

Managed hedgerows along rural lane

Recently layed hedge

New hedgerow planting protected by mesh guards

specialist skills. It is not suitable for all hedges and so specialist advice should be sought before undertaking this work. In general regular management should:

- Cut every second or third year where possible, as this will improve the value to wildlife.
- Cut hedges in the same area on a rotation basis for improved ecological structure.
- Cut during January or February (this avoids disturbing nesting birds but leaves autumn fruits as long as possible for wildlife).
- Preserve and, where appropriate, add standard trees.
- Maintain a minimum 2m margin between cultivation or development (including access paths) and the base of the hedge.

4.4.7 Planting of new hedges should where possible follow historic field boundaries/hedge lines or existing landscape features/patterns. The planting mix and structure will depend upon the character area as set out in section 3.0. Commonly a large proportion is hawthorn (more than 40%) for rigidity and strength but a wide variety of species can be used and should include standard trees at 10 to 20m centres. General principles of good practice for new hedge planting include:

- Planting in a double staggered row at 600cm apart with rows 45 to 60cm apart.
- Plant whips, either bare-rooted or pot-grown.
- Planting in a prepared and weed free trench a minimum 900mm wide.
- Provision for protection from mechanical (e.g. strimmer) or environmental (e.g. rabbit or deer) damage and weed control during establishment.
- Using a broad range of species planted in a random mix.
- Provision for regular pruning even during establishment will improve survival rates for new plants and encourage dense growth down to the base.
- Provide measures for weed control in the first three years through mulching using bark or felt mats. This also reduces soil water loss, another important issue in the care of new hedges.
- The best time to plant new hedges is from November to February.

Well managed road side hedges that are regularly trimmed

Appendices

Appendix 1.0 Selected references

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Kentish Stour Countryside Project *Have a Hedge Campaign* www.kentishstour.org.uk

North Downs Way Project *North Downs Way Strategy 2000* www.nationaltrails.gov.uk

North West Kent Countryside Partnership (draft 2004) *Caring for and Managing the Landscape of the Kent Downs* www.kentdowns.org.uk/north_west.html

ODPM *Lighting in the Countryside: Main Document – towards better practice* www.odpm.gov.uk

ODPM (2004)*Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas* www.odpm.gov.uk

ODPM (2001) *Planning Policy Guidance 8: Telecommunications* www.odpm.gov.uk

Rural Transport Initiative (March 2002) *Quiet Lanes around the Greensand Ridge: A National Demonstration Project in Kent* www.kent.gov.uk

Sevenoaks District Council, Kent County Council and the Countryside Agency/Babtie Group (November 2003) *Sevenoaks District Countryside Character Assessment* www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

Surrey County Council *Horse Pasture Management Project* www.surrey cc.gov.uk

Appendix 2.0 Useful contacts and background information

Councils

Ashford Borough Council
Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1PL
Tel: 01233 637311 www.ashford.gov.uk

London Borough of Bromley Council
Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, Kent, BR1 3UH
Tel: 0208 464 3333 www.bromley.gov.uk

Canterbury City Council
Military Road, Canterbury, CT1 1YW
Tel: 01227 862000 www.canterbury.gov.uk

Dover District Council
Whitecliffs Business Park, Dover, Kent, CT16 3PJ
Tel: 01304 821199 www.dover.gov.uk

Gravesham Borough Council
Civic Centre, Windmill Street, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1AU
Tel: 01474 337000 www.gravesham.gov.uk

Kent County Council
County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ
Tel: 01622 671411 www.kent.gov.uk

Maidstone Borough Council
London House, 5/11 London Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8HR
Tel: 01622 602000 www.maidstone.gov.uk

Medway Council
Municipal Buildings, Canterbury Street, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 5LA
Tel: 01634 306000 www.medway.gov.uk

Sevenoaks District Council
Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1HG
Tel: 01732 227000 www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

Shepway District Council
Civic Centre, Castlehill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY
Tel: 01303 850388 www.shepway.gov.uk

Swale Borough Council
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT
Tel: 01795 417850 www.swale.gov.uk

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ
Tel: 01732 844522 www.tmbc.gov.uk

Kent Downs AONB Unit

West Barn, Penstock Hall, Canterbury Road, East Brabourne,
Ashford, Kent, TN25 5LL
Tel: 01303 815170 Fax: 01303 815179
mail@kentdowns.org.uk
www.kentdowns.org.uk

Nick Johannsen – Director
Emma Lansdell – AONB Officer
Frances Clayton – Assistant AONB Officer
Gillian Bell – Support Officer
Tim Owen – External Funding and Partnerships Development Officer
Stella Bandu – Interreg Projects and Planning Co-ordinator
Catherine Brady – Interreg Projects Co-ordinator
Sally Evans – Mid Kent Downs Officer
Sarah Loftus – Sustainable Rural Tourism Officer

Countryside management projects

Kentish Stour Countryside Project
Sidelands Farm, Wye, Ashford, Kent TN25 5DQ
Tel: 01233 813307, Fax: 01233 812532
Email: kentishstour@kent.gov.uk

Medway Valley Countryside Partnership
3 Lock Cottages, Lock Lane, Sandling, Maidstone, Kent ME14 3AU
Tel/Fax: 01622 683695
Email: medwayvalley@kent.gov.uk

Mid Kent Downs
West Barn, Penstock Hall, East Brabourne, Ashford, Kent TN25 5LL
Tel: 01303 815170
Email: mail@kentdowns.org.uk

Northwest Kent Countryside Partnership
Mead Crescent, Mead Road, Dartford, Kent DA1 2SH
Tel: 01322 294 727, Fax: 01322 290787
Email: nwkent@kent.gov.uk

Whitecliffs Countryside Project
6 Cambridge Terrace, Dover, Kent CT16 1JT
Tel: 01304 241806
Email: wccp@whitecliffscountryside.org.uk

Organisations/Agencies

Environment Agency
Kent Area Office, Orchard House, Endeavour Park, London Road,
Addington, nr West Malling, Kent
Tel: 01732 875587, Fax: 01732 875057
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group Kent
Coldharbour Farm, Wye, Ashford, Kent TN25 5AH
Tel: 01233 813186

Forestry Commission England
Great Eastern House, Tenison Road, Cambridge CB1 2DV
Tel: 01223 314546, Fax: 01223 460699
Email: nationaloffice.fce@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Kent County Council
Environment and Economy, Invicta House, Sessions Square,
Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XX
www.kent.gov.uk

Kent Wildlife Trust
Tyland Barn, Sandling, Kent ME14 3BD
Tel: 01622 662012
Email: info@kentwildlife.org.uk

National Trust
Polesden Lacey, Dorking, Surrey RH5 6BD
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Woodland Trust
Autumn Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6LL
Tel: 01476 581135
www.woodland-trust.org.uk

Appendix 3.0 Glossary of terms

Advanced planting The term 'advanced planting' is used in the context of new developments and refers to the practice of carrying out new planting for screening/enhancement in advance of completion, or even in some cases, commencement of the development project. This allows time for the planting to establish and mature before it is fully needed and helps to mitigate impact during and after construction.

Balancing pond An excavation, which may usually be either dry or partly watered, provided in order to control the rate of surface water run-off.

Bund An artificial bank used to enclose an area of land.

Cobnut planting Planting of hazelnuts or Corylus seeds.

Coppicing A traditional method of woodland management in which multiple stems are allowed to grow up from the base of a felled tree. The stems are then cut every few years. In the past the shoots that re-grew from the stumps would have provided fuel and wood for making tool handles fencing and charcoal.

Cut and fill A system of bench construction on hill slopes to produce road rights-of-way and landings whereby convex slopes are excavated and concave slopes (gullies) are filled; also, excavation of the upslope side of the right-of-way, and fill on the down slope side.

Deer pale Traditional deer-proof fence round the perimeter of a park.

Desire Line An informal path that pedestrians prefer to take to get from one location to another rather than using a pavement or other official route.

Gabions Wire cages, usually rectangular, filled with cobbles and used to protect from erosion.

Habitat The natural home of any plant, and where animals feed, breed and rest. Often used in the wider sense, referring to major assemblages of plants and animals found together such as woodlands or grasslands

Hardwood Trees which are generally deciduous, broad leafed species such as oak, alder or maple.

Local provenance Genetic material which has originated from a place and a source considered as local for the area where it has been planted.

Mature Trees that are sufficiently developed to be harvestable.

MOT Type 1 A granular, crushed, graded aggregate from 75mm nominal diameter to dust. Used for consolidated fill and informal car parks.

Natural regeneration The renewal of a woodland by natural seeding, sprouting, suckering or layering. Seeds may be deposited by wind, birds or mammals.

Native woodland An area of woodland largely composed of species which are native to the United Kingdom.

Over mature In even-aged management, those trees or strands past the mature stage.

Pollard A tree that has been felled at two or more metres above ground level in order to produce a crown of poles. The crowns are often valuable nesting sites for birds.

Quoins Dressed stones at the corners of buildings, placed in an alternating or stacked position.

Revetment A facing of wood, stone or other material to sustain an embankment when it receives a slope steeper than the natural slope; also a retaining wall.

Scrub A general term used to describe a community of immature tree and shrub species, which colonise open ground, particularly grassland.

Sett A small rectilinear pavior (brick or slab used for paving), often made of natural stone, used for edgings and pavings.

Settlement character The distinct pattern or combination of elements that consistently is seen in part of a settled built up area.

Shaves Disconnected 'ribbons' of permanent grassland.

Shaw Narrow belt of woodland, which is a remnant of a larger wood but has been cut back by fields.

Shelter belts A group of trees and/or shrubs that act as a screen from winds and other weather. They are generally used on sites that need particular protection, such as plant nurseries, buildings or open land adjacent to areas of vast open space on their windward side.

Spile A large stake driven into the ground as a support for another structure.

Swale Shallow, wide (often grassed) depressions which carry water over the surface of the land to a water storage or discharge system. They are often located on road-sides, reducing the need for kerbs and gullies.

Transplants Seedlings or cuttings which have been transplanted at least once. The term usually refers to plants which are two or three years old.

Unimproved grassland Grassland, which has never been treated with chemical fertilisers or herbicides and as a result is usually rich in wildlife.

Vernacular Structures, which reflect regional and cultural adaptations of architectural fashions.

Whips Transplants consisting of only a single slender stem, without significant side branching.

Appendix 4.0 List of consultees

General details about the consultation process

Copies of the draft handbook were sent to:

- Officers and elected members in the AONB local authorities, followed with a stakeholders workshop in late November 2003.
- Parish Councils in the AONB.
- Statutory organisations; Countryside Agency; English Nature; Defra.
- Public organisations, interest groups and a number of interested individuals.

List of consultees

Acrise Parish Meeting
Addington Parish Council
Adisham Parish Council
Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council
Alkham Parish Council
Allhallows Parish Council
Ashford Borough Council
Aylesford Parish Council
Babtie
Barham Parish Council
Bekesbourne with Patrixbourne Parish
Bicknor Meeting
Bishopsbourne Parish Council
Borough Green Parish Council
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell Parish Council
Boughton-under-Blean Parish Council
Boxley Parish Council Office
Brabourne Parish Council
Brasted Parish Council
Bredgar Parish Council
Bredhurst Parish Council
Bridge Parish Council
British Gates and Timber Ltd
British Horse Society
Brook Parish Council
BTVC
Burham Parish Council
Burmarsh Parish Council
Canterbury City Council
Capel-le-Ferne Parish Council
Challock Parish Council
Charing Parish Council
Chartham Parish Council
Chevening Parish Council
Chiddingstone Parish Council
Chilham Parish Council
CLA
Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
Cobham Ashenbank Management Scheme
Cobham Parish Council
Common Ground
Cooling Parish Council
Countryside Agency
CPRE
Crundale Meeting
Cuxton Parish Council
Defra
Kentish Stour Countryside Project
Kingston Parish Council
Knockholt Parish Council
Leigh Parish Council
Lenham Parish Council
Leybourne Parish Council
London Borough of Bromley
Lower Hardres Parish Council
Luddesdown Parish Council
Lydden Parish Council
Lyminge Parish Council
Lympne Parish Council
Maidstone Borough Council
Medway and Swale Estuary Partnership
Medway Valley Countryside Project
Meopham Parish Council
Mid Kent Water
Milstead and Kingsdown Parish Council
Ministry of Defence
Molash Parish Council
Monks Horton Meeting
NAAONB
National Farmers Union
National Grid plc
National Trust
Network Rail Southern
Newington Parish Council
Newnham Parish Council
Norton and Buckland Parish Council
NW Kent Countryside Project
Ospringe Parish Council
Otford Parish Council
Otterden Meeting
Paddlesworth Parish Meeting
Parc Naturel Regional des Caps et Marais
Petham Parish Council
Platt Parish Council
Plaxtol Parish Council
Postling Parish Council
Rail Link Countryside Initiative
Ringwould with Kingsdown Parish Council
River Parish Council
Riverhead Parish Council
Ryarsh Parish Council
St James, Isle of Grain Parish Council
St Mary Hoo Parish Council
St.Margaret's-at-Cliffe Parish Council
Saltwood Parish Council
Sandridge Parish Council
Seal Parish Council
Seeboard PLC
Selling Parish Council
Sevenoaks Area Committee
Sevenoaks District Council
Sevenoaks Parish Council
Sheldwich, Badlesmere and Leaveland
Shepherdswell with Coldred Parish Council
Shepway District Council
Shipbourne Parish Council
Shoreham Parish Council
Shorne Parish Council
Snodland Town Council
South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)
Stalisfield Parish Council
Stanford Parish Council
Stelling Minnis Estavers
Stelling Minnis Parish Council
Stockbury Parish Council
Stoke Parish Council
Stowting Meeting
Sundridge and Ide Hill Parish Council
Swale Borough Council
Swanley Town Council
Swingfield Parish Council
Temple Ewell Parish Council
Throwley Parish Council
Thurnham Parish Council
Tonbridge & Mailing Area Committee
Tonbridge & Mailing Borough Council
Transco
Trottiscliffe Parish Council
Upper Hardres Parish Council
Waltham Parish Council
West Kingsdown Parish Council
West Peckham Parish Council
Westerham Parish Council
Westwell Parish Council
White Cliffs Countryside Project
Wichling Meeting
Womenswold Parish Council
Woodland Trust
Wormshill Meeting
Wouldham Parish Council
Wye with Hinxhill Parish Council