



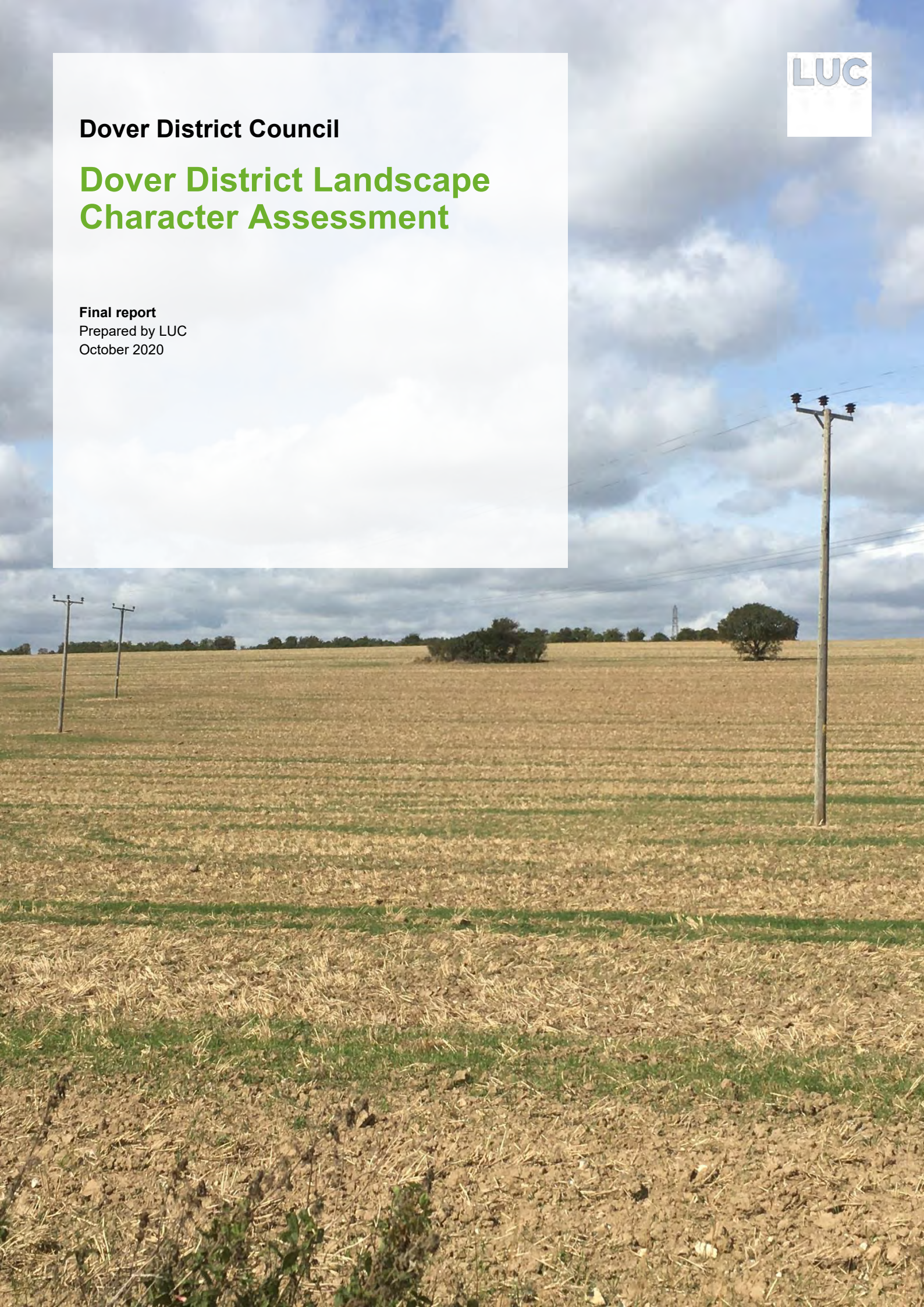
**Dover District Council**

# **Dover District Landscape Character Assessment**

**Final report**

Prepared by LUC

October 2020



## Dover District Council

### Dover District Landscape Character Assessment

**Project Number**  
11055

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction and Landscape Context

### Background and purpose of the Dover Landscape Character Assessment

**1.1** LUC was commissioned in March 2020 to prepare a Landscape Character Assessment for Dover District, covering the area outside the Kent Downs AONB. This study updates the 2006 landscape assessment undertaken by Jacobs. The Kent Downs AONB have prepared their own landscape character assessment for the area within the designated area boundaries. The two assessments provide integrated district wide coverage.

**1.2** The aim is to create a comprehensive and up to date strategic district scale landscape evidence to provide a framework for more detailed landscape studies and sensitivity assessments.

**1.3** The Dover District Landscape Character Assessment (2020) provides a robust evidence base to underpin the review of the Local Plan and to assist in the local planning process. It is intended to both inform work on policy development and development management, guiding development that is sympathetic to local character and the qualities of the landscape. It can help inform locational policies for strategic development as well as appropriate design and mitigation, providing baseline evidence for more detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).

**1.4** Wider application of the Landscape Character Assessment includes land management, notably implementation of agri- environment schemes (the new Environmental Land Management Scheme – ELMS), and land use change to achieve net zero, including opportunities for woodland creation.

**1.5** In summary, the document can be used to consider landscape character when considering any type of change. This includes opportunities for conserving existing character, strengthening, and enhancing character as well as opportunities to create new character.

**1.6** A User Guide is provided in **Appendix A**.

### The role of Landscape Character Assessment

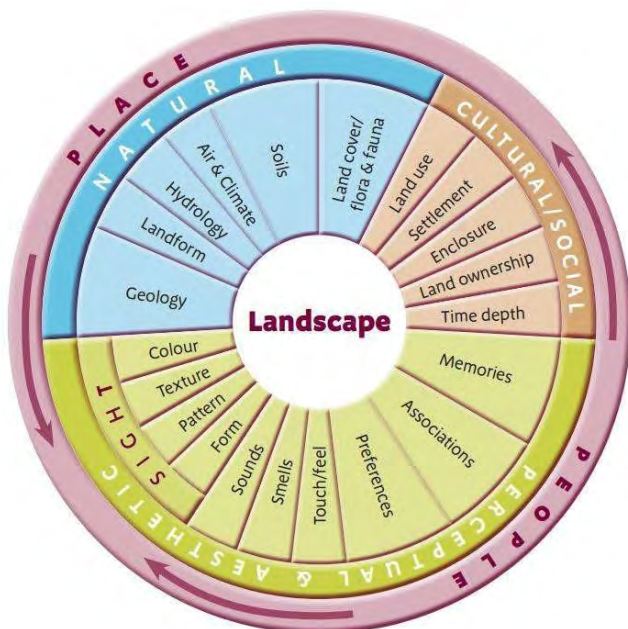
**1.7** Landscape character is defined as:

*“a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse”<sup>1</sup>*

**1.8 Landscape character assessment** is the process of identifying and describing such variations in character across a landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of features and attributes (characteristics) that make different landscapes distinctive. The landscape is the result of the interaction between people and place which gives an area a local identity. The ‘landscape wheel’ below illustrates how the different natural, cultural, and perceptual attributes of a landscape combine to produce character.

**1.9** The process of Landscape Character Assessment is described in *“An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment”* (Natural England, October 2014).

**1.10** Understanding the character of place and evaluating an area’s defining characteristics is a key component in managing growth sustainably and ensuring that the inherent character and qualities of Dover’s landscape can continue to be appreciated. Understanding of character can be used to ensure that any change or development does not undermine whatever is valued or characteristic in a particular landscape and help guide positive change that conserves, enhances, restores, or creates local character.



The ‘landscape wheel’ (Natural England, 2014)

## Dover District context

**1.11** Dover District Council is a district authority in the county of Kent, covering an area of 31,482 hectares (123 square miles)<sup>2</sup> with a coastline of around 20 miles. Over a fifth of the district (22%) is designated as part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) of which 3% is designated as Heritage Coast. The AONB forms the eastern part of the North Downs stretching from the London/Surrey border in a widening ribbon of rolling countryside to meet the sea at the cliffs of Dover. The Kent Downs AONB is the subject of its own separate landscape character assessment and is therefore excluded from this study. The District Assessment has considered integration with the Kent Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment and the role of the surrounding landscape as part of its setting.

**1.12** The Assessment has also considered integration with landscape character recorded for the surrounding district authorities, namely Thanet to the north, Canterbury to the north west, and Folkestone and Hythe to the south west. To the south and east the district is bounded by the coastal edge along the English Channel. The location and context of the study area is shown on **Figure 1.1**.

**1.13** The district has a population of 117,000, equivalent to 7.5% of the population of Kent, with a population density of 3.7 persons per hectare. Urban development is mainly concentrated within three defined urban areas consisting of the market town of Sandwich in the north of the District and the coastal towns of Dover and Deal. Dover has a slightly larger population than Deal and is the principal town and has an international gateway centred on the Port. Deal has an overriding residential character and is a base for short stay seaside tourism. Sandwich is a historic Cinque Port renowned for its medieval street pattern and high concentration of Listed Buildings.

**1.14** Between these settlements, development is characterised by many smaller villages which have largely retained their historic settlement patterns; although in some cases suburbanisation has occurred, resulting in the expansion and formation of larger inland villages including Ash, Aylesham, Eastry, Shepherdswell and Wingham. The rural environment of the district enhances the quality of life enjoyed by both urban and rural residents and the diverse landscape including coast, marshes, ancient woodlands, river valleys, farmland, orchards and rolling chalk hills is an important asset.

**1.15** The district is relatively well connected with regards to its transport links. A number of A-roads cross the district

<sup>1</sup> Natural England (2014), An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/691184/landscape-character-assessment.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691184/landscape-character-assessment.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Dover District Council – Facts and Figures (updated January 2020), <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Corporate-Information/Facts-and-Figures/Facts-and-Figures-about-the-Dover-district.aspx>

providing connections to the M2 and M20 motorways and links to the surrounding settlements including Canterbury, Margate, Ramsgate and Folkestone. Railway lines provide connections within the district to the rest of Kent as well as direct routes to London. These locational factors, combined with the quality of the rural areas and coastline, contribute towards making the area a popular place to live and work.

## The European Landscape Convention

**1.16** The European Landscape Convention (ELC) came into force in the UK in March 2007. It establishes the need to recognise landscape in law; to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and planning of landscapes; and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies. The ELC definition of 'landscape' recognises that all landscapes matter, be they ordinary, degraded, or outstanding:

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

**1.17** The ELC puts emphasis on the whole landscape and all its values and is forward looking in its approach, recognising the dynamic and changing character of landscape. Specific measures promoted by the ELC of direct relevance to this study include:

- The identification and assessment of landscape; and
- Improved consideration of landscape in existing and future sectoral and spatial policy and regulation.

**1.18** This updated Landscape Character Assessment will continue to make a key contribution to the implementation of the ELC in Dover. It helps to reaffirm the importance of landscape, coordinate existing work and guide future work to protect, manage and plan the landscape.

## National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

**1.19** The revised NPPF, published in June 2019, states in paragraph 170 that:

*'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

*...protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality)'*  
(para 170.a)

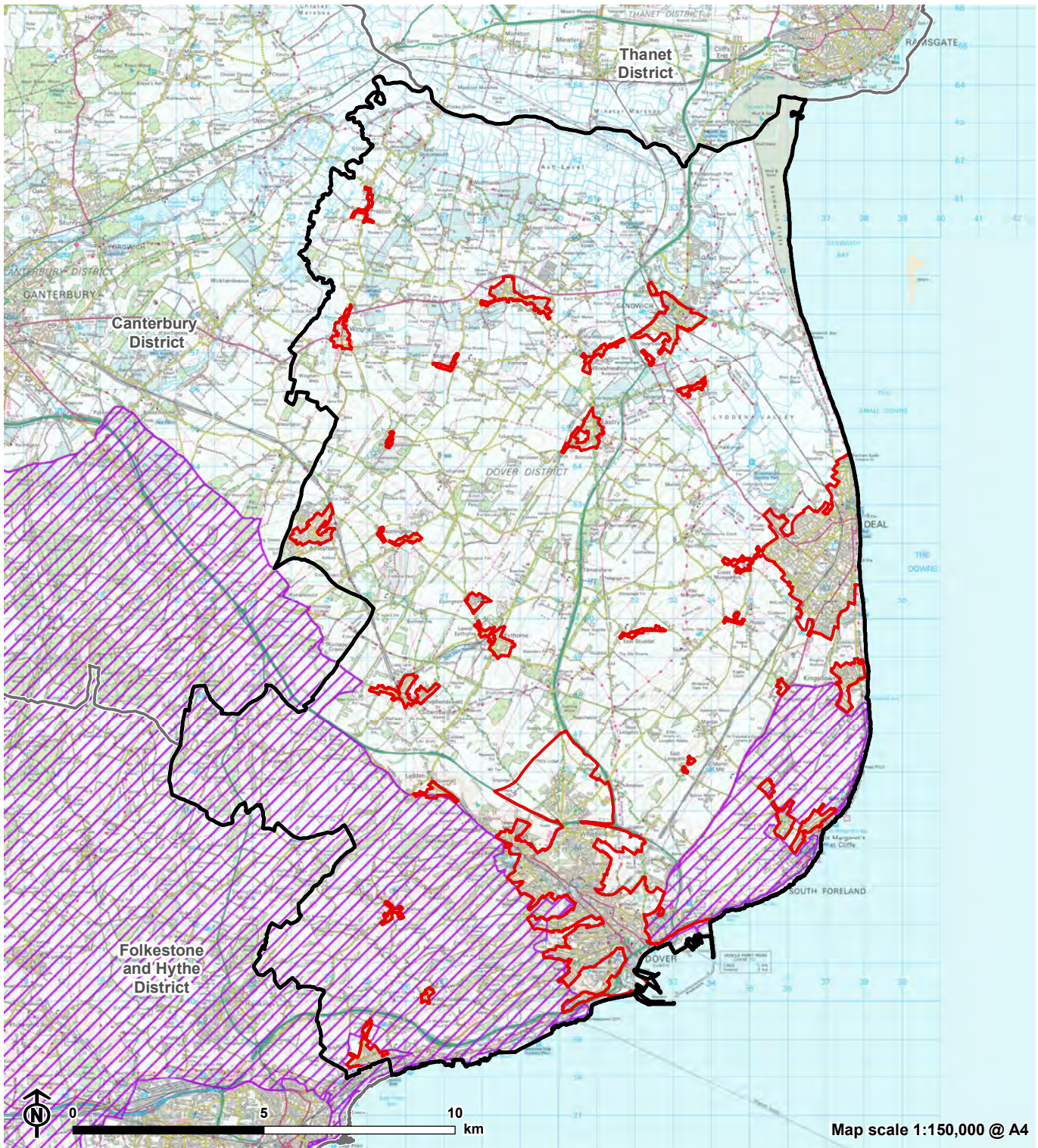
*...recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other*

*benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland ...'* (para 170.b).

**1.20** The NPPF is supported by Planning Practice Guidance which recognises the role that Landscape Character Assessment plays in helping to understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape. This assessment for Dover provides evidence to help protect valued landscapes and recognise the intrinsic value and beauty of the countryside.





## Dover District Policy Context

**1.21** This Landscape Character Assessment forms a sound evidence base to support the landscape policy and other character policies in the local plan.



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**Figure 1.1: Location of District with Adjacent Districts, Settlement Boundaries and the Kent Downs AONB**

-  Dover district
-  Adjacent Local Authority
-  Settlement boundary
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



## Relationship to published landscape studies

**1.22** Landscape Character Assessment can be undertaken at a variety of scales and levels of detail. The Dover Landscape Character Assessment (2020) is part of a hierarchy of landscape character assessment information cascading down from the national to local level.

### National level

**1.23** At a national level, England is divided into 159 distinct National Character Areas (NCAs). Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity. There are descriptive profiles available for each NCA (published in 2014 by Natural England<sup>3</sup>) setting out information on landscape character, changes in the landscape and an assessment of ecosystem services delivered.

**1.24** Dover District is part of two NCAs:

- NCA 113 North Kent Plain, consisting of a generally low lying area of agricultural land between the Thames Estuary to the north and the chalk of the Kent Downs to the south covering the northern part of the geology where the chalk geology gives way to Brick earth and Thanet Beds.
- NCA 119 North Downs covers the southern part of the district (encompassing the Kent Downs AONB) represented by the farmed arable landscape with woodland on the chalk.

**1.25** The Marine Management Organisation commissioned strategic-scale seascape assessments to produce a national seascape character map for all of England's inshore and offshore areas. This consists of individual Marine Character Areas (MCAs) which cross marine plan areas and administrative boundaries. The coastal edge and seascape from the District boundary at Pegwell Bay in the north to the edge of Folkestone in the south is part of MCA 11 Goodwin Sands and North Dover Strait.

**1.26** National landscape character areas within and surrounding Dover district are illustrated on **Figure 1.2**.

### County level

**1.27** At the county level, the Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004) identifies the following seven landscape character areas (LCAs) fall wholly or partly within the district:

- Elham: East Kent Downs
- Alkham: East Kent Downs
- South Foreland
- The Stour Valley
- East Kent Horticultural Belt
- East Kent Arable Belt
- The Wantsum and Lower Stour Marshes

**1.28** The 2020 Dover Landscape Character Assessment refines and updates this study at the District level.

### Local level

**1.29** Landscape does not stop at administrative boundaries but continues seamlessly into surrounding districts. This assessment therefore sits alongside the Landscape Character Assessments of the adjacent authorities of Canterbury, Thanet, and Folkestone. This study aims to provide an integrated classification across administrative boundaries.

### Kent Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment

**1.30** The Dover Landscape Character Assessment excludes the area covered by the Kent Downs AONB which is the subject of an updated consultation draft Landscape Character Assessment (2020 unpublished)<sup>4</sup>. This characterises the land in Dover District in the AONB into two distinct LCAs, and four Local Character Areas:

- 1C: East Kent Downs, divided into:
  - Alkham – covering the distinct chalk dry valleys and ridges south west of Dover town.
  - Elham – covering the wooded downland around Wooton.
- 3A White Cliffs Coast, divided into:
  - South Foreland – covering the coastal edge of the White Cliffs between Dover and Kingsdown.
  - Folkestone Cliffs and The Warren – covering the coastal part of the AONB between Dover and Folkestone.

**1.31** The Kent Downs AONB Assessment is shown in **Figure 1.3**. The district assessment provides seamless landscape character coverage across the district with the AONB assessment.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

<sup>4</sup> [https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/kentdowns\\_aonb/consultationHome](https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/kentdowns_aonb/consultationHome)

### Dover Strait Seascape Character Assessment

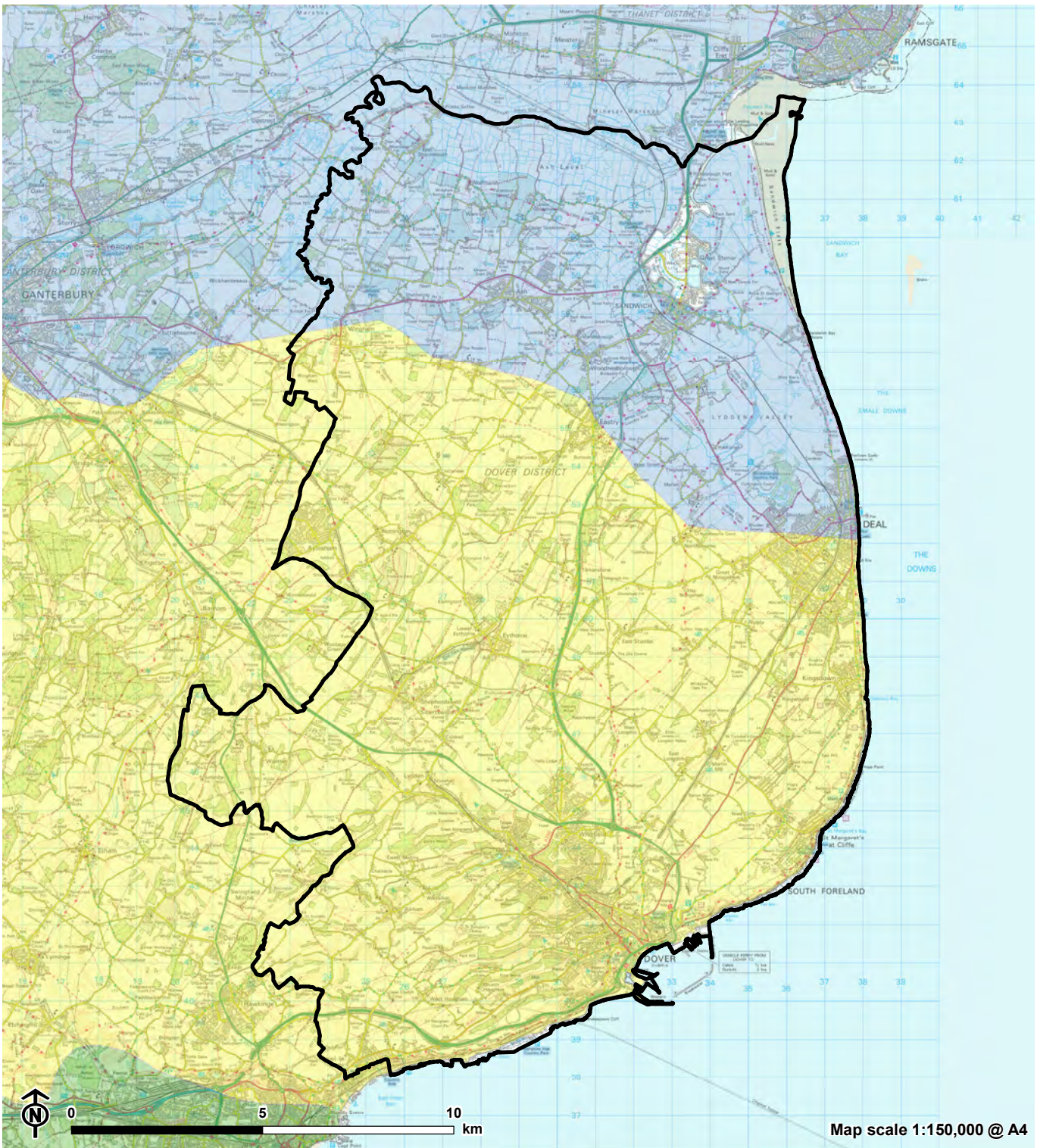
**1.32** The Dover Strait Seascape Character Assessment (2015)<sup>5</sup> covering marine, intertidal and coastal zones, was produced as part of the Interreg-funded NOSTRA project, which sought to share ideas and best practice in marine spatial planning as applied to strait seascapes across Europe. This characterises the Dover District coast into nine distinct Seascape Character Areas:

- C5A: Sandwich and Pegwell Bays
- I1A: Sandwich and Pegwell Bays
- C4B: Deal Seafront and Deal Bank
- C1A: Kingsdown Chalk Cliffs
- C1B: St Margaret's Bay
- C1C: White Cliffs of Dover
- C3A: Dover Port, Harbour and Historic Defences
- C1D: Shakespeare and Abbot's Cliffs
- C2A: East Wear Bay and The Warren

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<sup>5</sup> Kent County Council as part of the NOSTRA Project (2015) Seascape Character Assessment for the Dover Strait

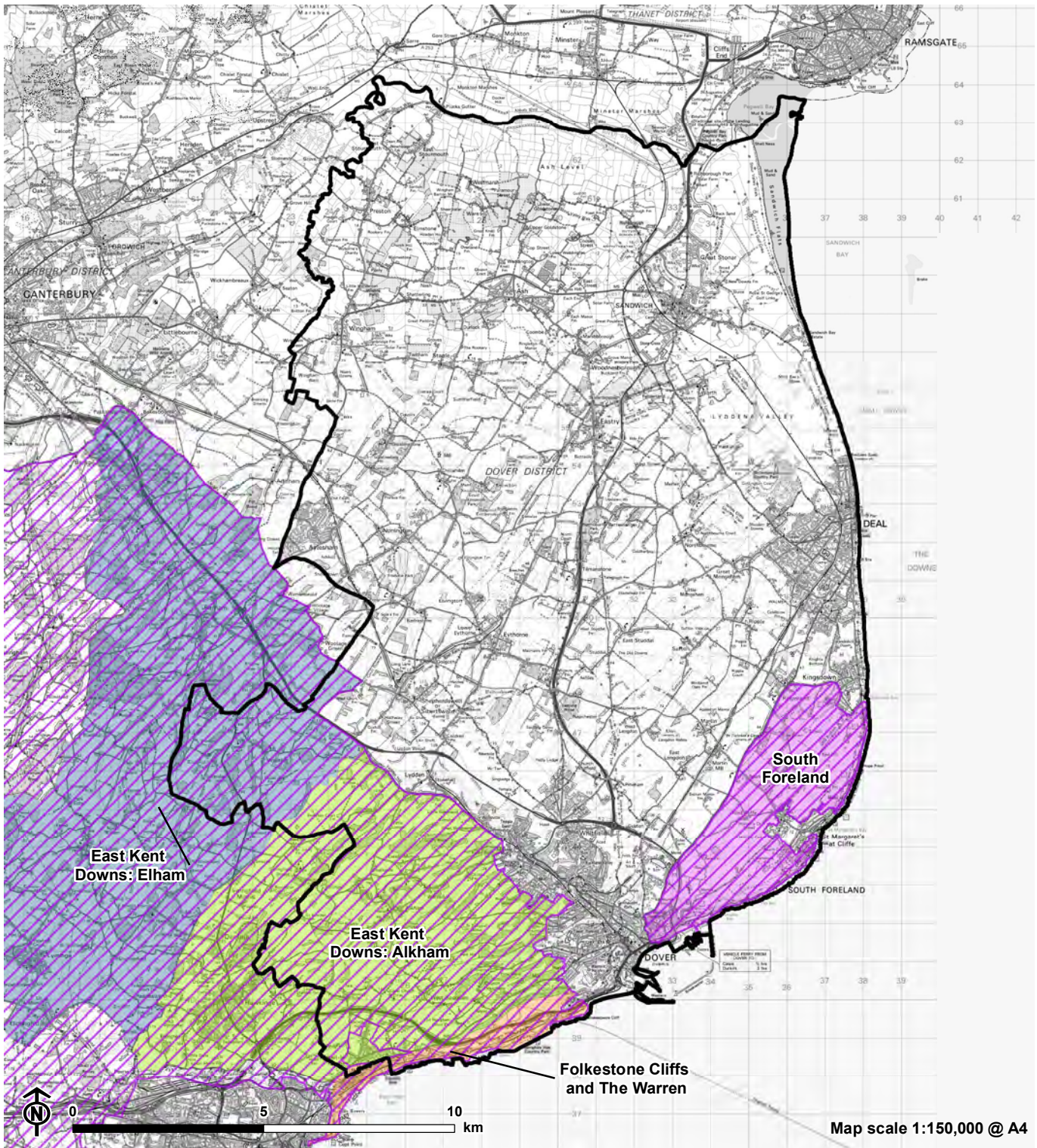
[https://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/48240/Dover-Strait-seascape-character-assessment-full-version.pdf](https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/48240/Dover-Strait-seascape-character-assessment-full-version.pdf)



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Figure 1.2: National Character Areas

- Dover district
- National Character Areas**
- 113: North Kent Plain
- 119: North Downs
- 120: Wealden Greensand



© Natural England copyright 2020. © Crown copyright and database rights 2020 Ordnance Survey 100019780 CB:CB EB:Bean\_C LUC FIG1\_3\_AONB\_LCA\_11055\_r0\_A4P 27/10/2020 Source: NE, OS, LUC

**Figure 1.3: Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas**

-  Dover district
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

# Chapter 2

## Methodology

### Approach

**2.1** The Landscape Character Assessment component follows the method promoted by Natural England through 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (2014)<sup>6</sup>, which embeds the principles of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) within it.

### Process of Assessment

**2.2** The process for undertaking the study involved three main stages described below. This interim report represents the output of **Part 1 Desk review**.

#### Part 1: Desk review and interim report

- Inception
- Review & Baseline data collection/collation
- Desk-based characterisation
- Classification and description
- Interim Report, for client comments

#### Part 2: Site Assessment:

**2.3** A systematic field survey was undertaken to review and refine the draft classification and descriptions presented in the interim report. This involved:

- Verifying and fine-tuning the classification of the landscape types and areas identified including review of boundaries;
- Checking and identifying key characteristics;
- Collecting aesthetic/perceptual information;
- Taking photographs to provide a visual record of the landscape;
- Providing more detailed guidance in relation to changes observed on the ground.

#### Part 3: Reporting

- Updating the interim report with field observations

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<sup>6</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/396192/landscape-character-assessment.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/396192/landscape-character-assessment.pdf)

- Completing a landscape evaluation based on the field survey
- Submitting a draft for client review followed by a final report

**Desk study**

**2.4** The initial desk-based stage involved the collation of a wide range of up to date mapped information to ‘sense-check’ the existing landscape classifications and to update the baseline. Designations relating to cultural heritage, nature conservation and landscape were checked for any changes since the original LCA.

**2.5** Data used within the report, including data collated in the GIS database is shown in **Table 2.1**.

**Table 2.1: GIS Data**

Name	Source
Base OS mapping at 1:25k and 1:50k	Ordnance Survey
Terrain 50 Contour data	Ordnance Survey
Linear features, mass movement, artificial ground, superficial deposits, and bedrock geology 1:50K	British Geological Survey
Administrative boundaries	Dover DC
National Character Areas	Natural England
National Marine Character Areas, and Dover Strait Seascape Assessment	Marine Management Organisation and K CC
Existing Dover Landscape Character Assessment (Jacobs 2006) and Kent LCA	Dover DC, Kent CC
Landscape Character Assessment for neighbouring districts	Ashford, Thanet, Canterbury, Folkestone and Hythe
Public Rights of Way, and access land	Natural England
River features & flood zones	Environment Agency
Nature conservation designations	Natural England (national datasets) and Dover District Council (local datasets)
Priority habitats	Natural England and Dover Council
Forestry	Forestry Commission

Name	Source
Historic Landscape Characterisation dataset	Kent County Council, Oxford Archaeology (South), Historic England
Heritage designations	Historic England (national datasets) and Dover District Council (local datasets)
Dark skies and tranquillity	CPRE
Infrastructure	Ordnance Survey
Local Plan designations and policy areas	Dover District Council

**Classification**

**2.6** Classification is concerned with dividing the landscape into areas of distinct, recognisable, and consistent common character and grouping areas of similar character together.

- **Landscape Character Types (LCTs)** share broadly similar patterns of geology, topography, vegetation, and human influences in each area in which they occur. Although not identical they share a common pattern of elements.
- **Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)** – Each landscape type is divided into geographically specific character areas. These share generic characteristics with other areas of the same type but have their own particular identity or ‘sense of place’.

**2.7** The update of the landscape classification for Dover is based on a review of the 2006 boundaries and new information on landscape change. Some adjustments were made to boundaries and some LCAs were reclassified into a different LCT. Changes to the landscape classification are outlined in **Appendix C**.

**2.8** This process resulted in the definition of eight LCTs and 17 LCAs for Dover district. The classification is shown on **Figures 4.1 and 4.2**.

**Landscape Character Area profiles**

**2.9** The Landscape Character Assessment is presented at LCA level and arranged by their respective LCT within the district in **Chapter 5**.

**2.10** Each LCT section begins with an overview map showing the location of the LCT within the district and its relationship with other LCTs and the component LCAs within it.

**2.11** The 17 individual LCA profiles are structured as follows:

### Map and summary of location and landscape character

- A location map (1:25,000 scale) which shows the extent of the LCA and its relationship with other LCAs, followed by a summary paragraph explaining its defining landscape character and location.

### Representative photos

- Photos to help the reader appreciate the character of the LCA.

### Landscape description

**2.12** This section provides a description of the landscape character of the LCA under each of the following headings:

- **Key Characteristics:** In bullet point format, provides a summary explanation of the character of the LCA;
- **Natural Influences:** a description of the most significant natural influences in the landscape including designated habitats;
- **Cultural Influences:** a description of the most significant cultural influences in the landscape including designated cultural heritage assets;
- **Perceptual Influences:** a description of the most significant perceptual and aesthetic influences in the landscape (*to be augmented by field survey*).

### Evaluation

**2.13** The evaluation provides an understanding of what is important in each LCA and why.

- **Key Sensitivities and Values:** Identifies the qualities that are particularly valued for their contribution to landscape character (i.e. if any one of these attributes ceased to exist, it would change the character to the detriment of the landscape).
- **Landscape Strategy:** Provides an overall strategy to guide the future direction of the landscape based on opportunities for conservation, restoration, enhancement, and creation.
- **Guidelines:** provides guidance on how the strategy can be achieved to ensure future change respects local character. The guidelines can be considered as part of development management, for example guiding mitigation or enhancement or influencing wider land management decisions for the rural environment.

**2.14** Specific guidance is given in relation to **woodland creation opportunities** to help Dover meet the national targets for tree planting to meet Net Zero commitments. This is included as **Appendix D**.

## Chapter 3

### Formative Influences

**3.1** This chapter summarises the main physical and cultural influences that have shaped the landscape of Dover District. The detailed description of different LCAs, that appear later in this report, highlight the key characteristics (both positive and negative) and valued attributes that are of most significance to the particular landscape concerned.

**3.2** The landscape of the district has evolved through the interaction of the natural environment and human activities, through the combination of physical and cultural influences. Physical influences such as geology and landform, together with the pattern of settlement and land use are key determinants of landscape character.

#### Physical influences

**3.3** The physical components of the landscape have the most tangible and fundamental influences upon its character, being the most permanent and least changeable aspect of its appearance. The underlying geology creates the 'backbone' of the landscape. The actions of weathering, erosion and deposition alter the landform, consequently influencing hydrological patterns and affecting the nature of soil conditions. This affects how humans have used and continue to exploit the landscape for agriculture, settlement, and industry and, consequently, influences the nature of the vegetation and fauna that the landscape can support.

#### Geology and Soils

**3.4** **Figure 3.1** illustrates the solid (or bedrock) geology that underlies the district. **Figure 3.2** shows the drift (or superficial) geology formed during the Quaternary period, which overlies the bedrock in places.

**3.5** Dover District extends from the flat alluvial coastal marshes in the north and north east rising gradually across a band of mixed geology and fertile loamy soils to the undulating chalk landscapes and lime-rich soils that characterise much of the District. The valleys and ridges become more pronounced further south before rising sharply to the shallow soils of the rolling chalk downs in the south of the District, mostly within the Kent Downs AONB.

**3.6** The coastal flats to the north at Ash Level, Little Stour Marshes in the north west and Lydden Valley in the north east, is an extensive area of alluvial deposits. These mostly overlay a bedrock of Thanet Formation, with a chalk bedrock



characterising the Lydden valley. The deep loamy clayey soils of the marshes are naturally wet due to the high groundwater. Pockets of peat soils surround the dykes and marshland of Hacklinge marshes in the Lydden Valley and west of Sholden and lie adjacent to the Little Stour river.

**3.7** The north east coast at Sandwich Bay comprises bands of Raised Marine deposits of sand and gravel (Tidal Flat Deposits and Storm Beach Deposits) over a bedrock of sand, silt and clay (Thanet Formation) with Blown Sand (sand and gravel) along the shoreline.

**3.8** West of Sandwich and between Preston and Stourmouth the bedrock changes to a band of sand, clay silt and gravel (Lambeth Group, Thames Group). These are overlain by superficial deposits of Brickearth (silt). The fertile soils in this area are freely draining slightly acid loamy soils.

**3.9** The centre and south of the District are characterised by a chalk bedrock (White Chalk subgroup) overlain with a distinct pattern of narrow bands of Brickearth (clay and silt), following a northeast direction. This pattern becomes more defined towards the south of the District. The chalk soils here are freely draining lime-rich loamy soils.

**3.10** To the south of the District, a narrow band of Clay-with-Flints Formation over the chalk bedrock supports slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage.

**3.11** Along the boundary with the AONB the chalk bedrock of the downs is overlain with shallow well-drained lime-rich soil.

### Coastal Change

**3.12** There have been considerable changes to the Dover coastline since Roman times. At this time the sea extended some 2-3 km further inland along the Wantsum Channel which separated the Isle of Thanet from East Kent. The channel gradually silted up but remained navigable until the 1600s when attempts to keep it open were abandoned. Today the River Wantsum is little more than a drainage channel. Rising sea levels due to global warming in addition to the existing pressure from natural geological processes continue to threaten coastal areas in the District.

**3.13** The Isle of Grain to South Foreland Shoreline Management Plan 2008 (South East Coastal Group) identifies the future management of the Dover coastline for the next 100 years. In areas where coastal erosion would be detrimental to existing development, the future management is generally identified as 'hold the line' (where the existing defence line will be maintained).

**3.14** At Sandwich Bay the undeveloped coastline is fronted by accreting sand dunes of great conservation importance and backed by golf links. The future management is identified as 'no active intervention' (where the shoreline is allowed to

change with management to control or limit movement). The sand dunes in this area are substantial enough to withstand storm events and rising sea levels and protect Sandwich.

**3.15** The policy for the Sandwich Bay Estate and the section of the coast from Sandown Castle to Oldstairs Bay is to hold the line in order to protect the towns of Deal, Walmer and Kingsdown. These settlements, which extend to the shoreline fronted by popular beaches and backed by low-lying land, are vulnerable to change. In response to sea level rise it is anticipated that the defence structures and beach management will need to increase at some point in the future.

### Landform and Drainage

**3.16** Figure 3.3 illustrates the topography and watercourses of Dover District, which relates closely to the underlying geology.

**3.17** The landform of Dover District rises gradually from north to south and is drained by two main rivers, the River Stour in the north and the River Dour in the south.

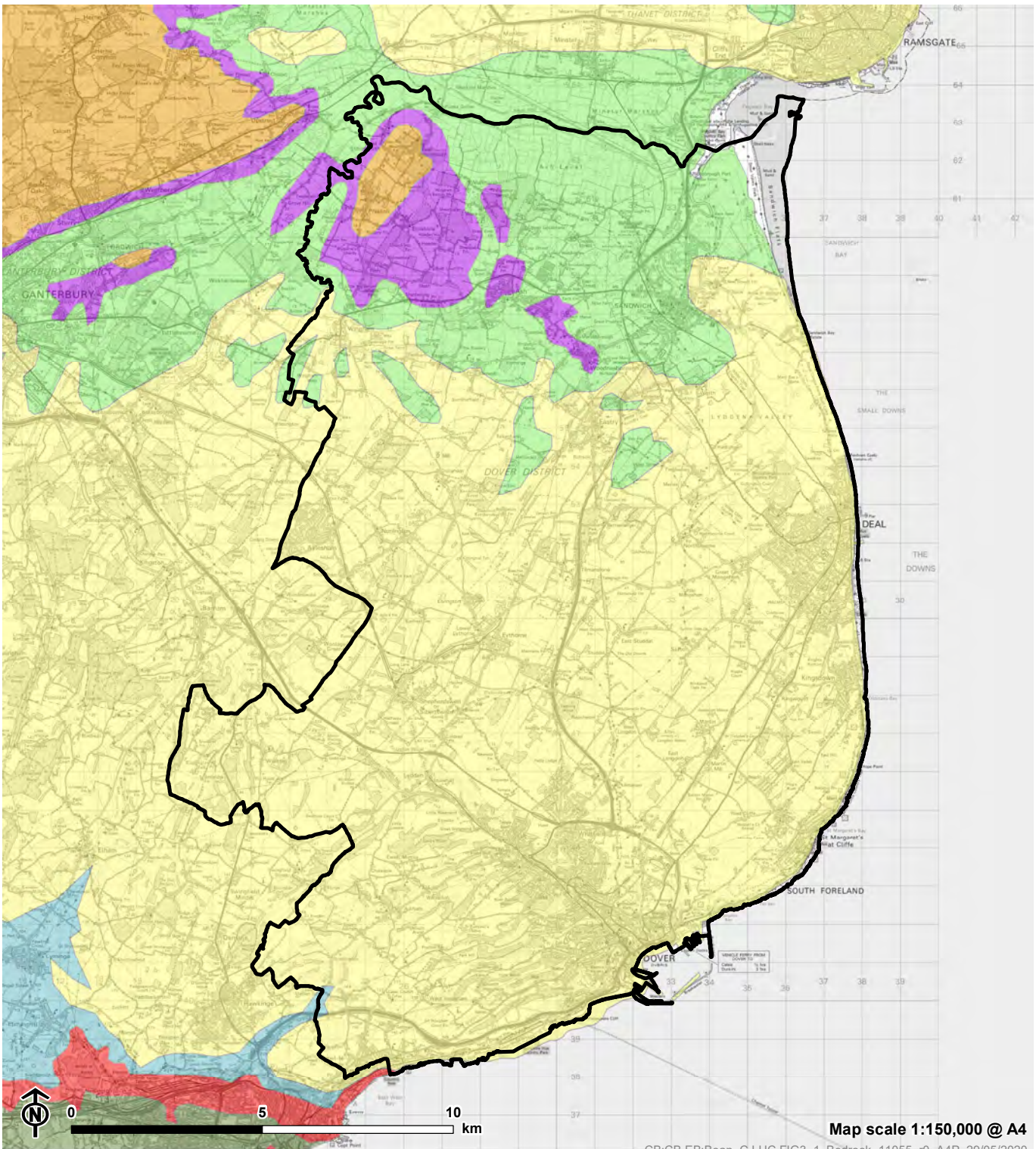
**3.18** The flat open landform on the northern periphery of the District is associated with the alluvial marshes of the Ash Levels, the Lower Stour Valley and Hacklinge Marshes of the Lydden Valley. The marshland and wetlands of this part of the North Kent Plain have an intricate pattern of drainage ditches and dykes which drain into the River Stour.

**3.19** The low-lying shingle beaches along the coast are backed by sand dunes but rise to chalk cliffs to the south of Deal.

**3.20** West of Sandwich the landform is characterised by the flat to gently undulating landscapes of the fertile horticultural belt.

**3.21** As chalk begins to dominate the bedrock in the centre and south the District, the topography is characterised by a regular pattern of rolling ridges and valleys running in a north west direction, which gets more defined towards to the south.

**3.22** To the south of the District, along the boundary with the Kent Downs AONB, the landform rises sharply along the edge of the escarpment slope of the North Downs, at Lydden Hills and Guston Hills. The dry chalk valleys in this area are drained by the River Dour which runs to the coast through Dover. The town grew up around the river and it was a source of power or water throughout its history.

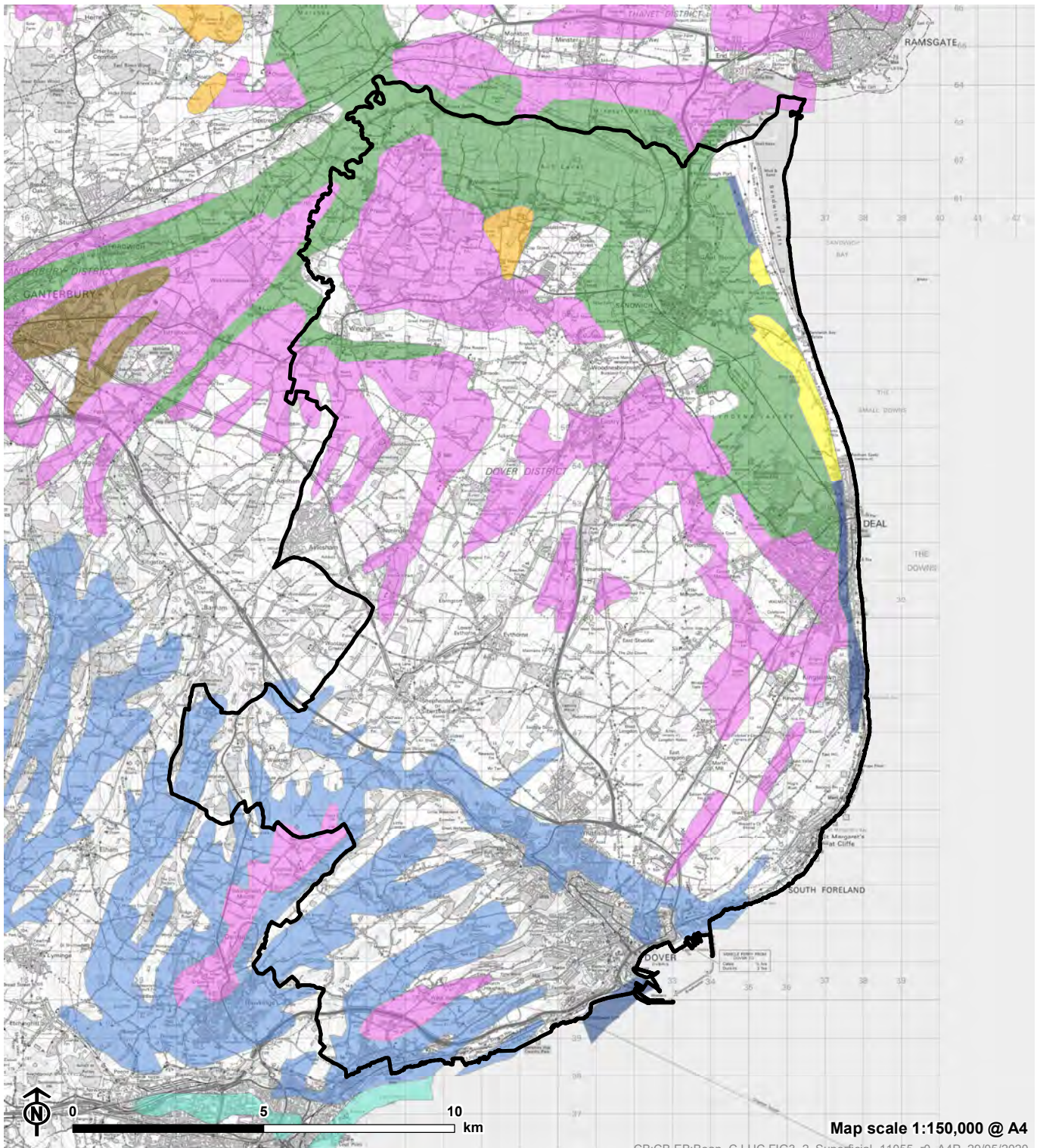


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Map scale 1:150,000 @ A4  
CB:CB EB:Bean\_C LUC FIG3\_1\_Bedrock\_11055\_r0\_A4P 29/05/2020  
Source: British Geological Survey

**Figure 3.1: Bedrock Geology**

- Dover district
- Gault formation and upper greensand formation (undifferentiated)
- Grey chalk subgroup
- Lambeth group
- Lower greensand group
- Thames group
- Thanet sand formation
- White chalk subgroup



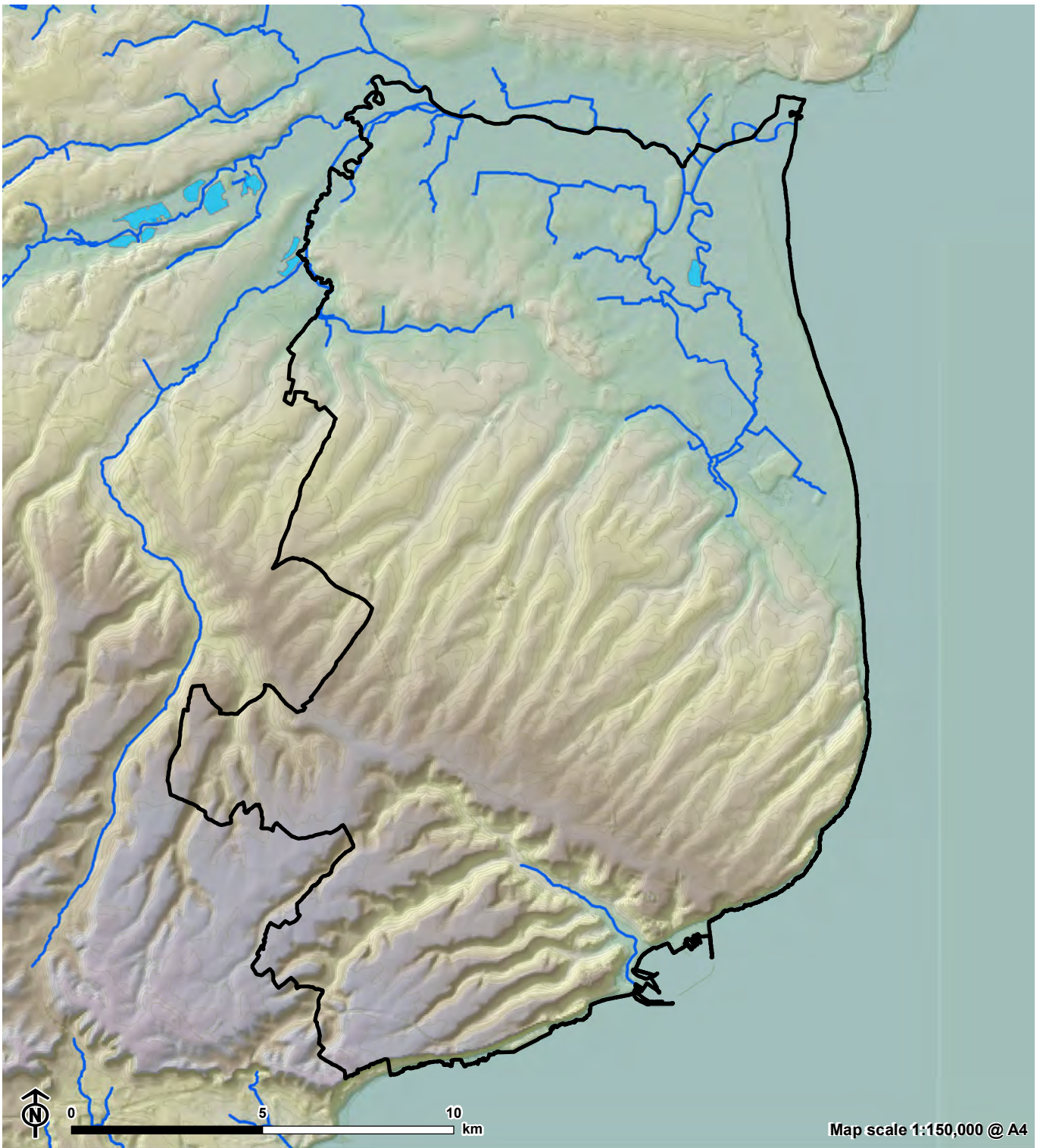
Map scale 1:150,000 @ A4

CB:CB EB:Bean\_C LUC FIG3\_2\_Superficial\_11055\_r0\_A4P 29/05/2020  
Source: British Geological Survey

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Figure 3.2: Superficial Geology

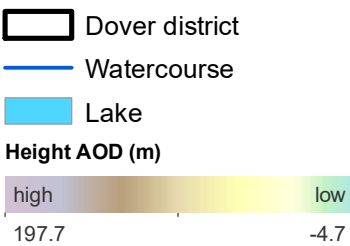
- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Dover district | Clay with flints                            |
| Alluvium       | Landslip                                    |
| Blown sand     | Raised marine deposits (undifferentiated)   |
| Brickearth     | River terrace deposits (undifferentiated)   |
|                | Sand and gravel of uncertain age and origin |



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CB:CB EB:Bean\_C LUC FIG3\_3\_Topography\_11055\_r0\_A4P 28/05/2020  
Source: OS

**Figure 3.3: Topography and Watercourses**



Note: Topography derived from OS Terrain 50

### Agricultural Land Use

**3.23** **Figure 3.4** illustrates the quality of agricultural land, known as agricultural land classification. Land use within the District reflects the topography and soil types.

**3.24** To the north of the District, the poor soils of the flat reclaimed land is used for pasture. These former marshlands are characterised by a network of drainage ditches marked by reeds.

**3.25** The coastal land to the east of the District, although rich in biodiversity, is of little value for agriculture.

**3.26** The deep well-drained loamy soils west of Sandwich supports a belt of intensive horticultural production, with orchards, potatoes and field vegetables, viticulture, and some cereals. This agricultural land is generally classified by the Department for Environment, Farming & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) as Grade 1 – the most valuable agricultural land.

**3.27** To the centre and south of the District the chalk bedrock supports an extensive cereal belt that thrives on the deep calcareous soils. Crops include wheat, oil seed rape, linseed oil and barley. This agricultural land is generally classified by DEFRA as Grade 1 and 2. Smaller, more enclosed fields around settlements or farmsteads are used for pasture.

**3.28** Parkland and woodland diversify the mostly arable land use to the south of the District, where the more undulating landform has a mix of Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land.

**3.29** On the steeper slopes of the chalk hills to the south, small pockets of species-rich unimproved grassland comprising areas of downland pasture, are interspersed with areas of scrub and native woodland.

### Designated Wildlife Sites

**3.30** A significant proportion of Dover District is covered by at least one form of biodiversity designation. Such designations exist at the International, National and Local (County) level.

**Figure 3.5** illustrates the main nature conservation designations located throughout Dover District. Each relevant designated site is identified and described in the individual LCA profiles of this document.

**3.31** The majority of the district's coastline within the intertidal zone and extending inland along the wetland watercourses of Sandwich Bay is designated as SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. These overlapping designations reflect the importance of these coastal habitats for their wetland species interest and their international importance for coastal birds. The rocky shore of the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay contains the finest sand dune system and maritime grassland in South East England and a range of important habitats such as mudflats, saltmarsh, grazing marsh, scrub, and woodland.

**3.32** The famous sea cliffs and cliff top grasslands of the Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs are designated as a SAC, SSSI and Heritage Coast, are geologically important and notable for their natural beauty.

**3.33** Inland the marshlands of the Ash Level with their intricate pattern of drainage are of great nature conservation interest and designated as an extensive LWS.

**3.34** To the south of the District, the rich chalk grassland of the Lydden Hills are highly designated, being a combination of SAC/SSSIs and NNR with outstanding assemblages of plants, particularly rare orchids, and invertebrates. The chalk grassland that wrap around Dover town are also locally recognised as LWS.

**3.35** Small and isolated ancient woodland habitats designated of national and county importance are to be found in the arable farmland to the south of the District. **Figure 3.6** shows the woodland coverage across the district.

### Priority Habitats and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas

**3.36** Dover is rich in priority habitats, with some notably large expanses of habitat on the flat coastal marshes and coastline to the north of the District. These include the wetland habitats of the Ash Levels and Lydden valley, including lowland fens and floodplain grazing marsh, and the intertidal habitats of Sandwich Bay such as vegetated shingle and coastal sand dunes.

**3.37** To the south of the District the rolling chalk valleys and downs are well wooded, with semi-natural deciduous woodland, including numerous ancient woodlands. The steeper slopes of the Lydden Hills are rich in chalk grasslands.

**3.38** In addition to the habitats described above, species-rich hedgerows provide important refuges and conduits for wildlife through the landscape, and in particular may help to connect woodland blocks. However, Dutch Elm disease has had a devastating influence on hedgerows within East Kent and, along with arable intensification, has led to a decline and loss of many hedgerows.

**3.39** In order to secure the maximum biodiversity benefits for the County, the Kent Nature Partnership has created a strategy focusing on Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs). The BOAs within the Dover District shown on **Figure 3.7**.

**3.40** Dover District includes three BOAs:

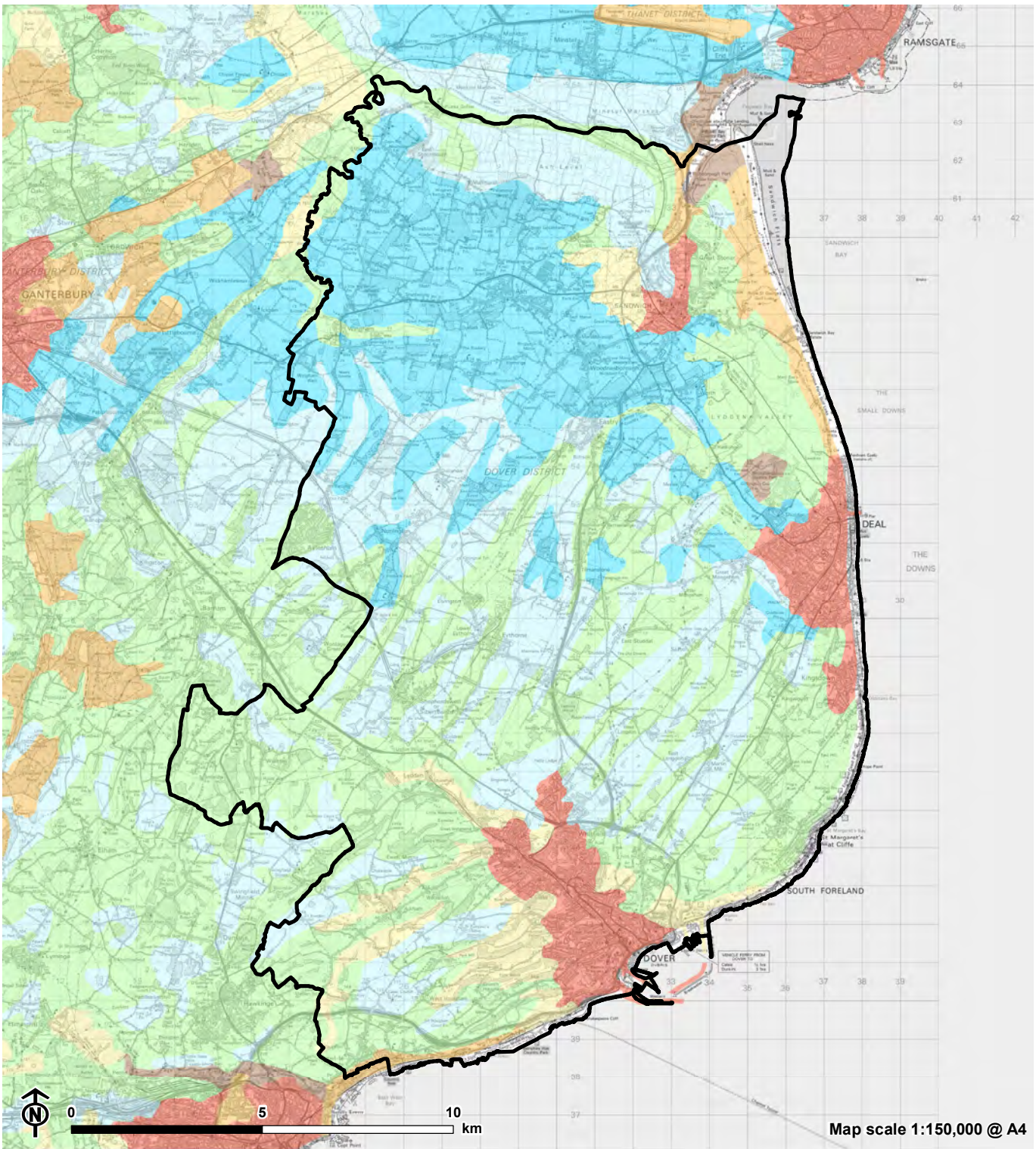
- **The Lower Stour Wetlands BOA** contains some of Kent's most extensive water and wetland habitats. The area includes a very high number of designated sites. Targets for this BOA include no net loss of intertidal mudflats, saltmarsh and sand dunes, the maintenance of existing natural coastal processes, the pursuance of opportunities to restore and/or recreate intertidal

habitats, grazing mars, fen and reedbed (including for bittern) as part of a matrix of natural wetland and coastal habitats and the restoration and enhancement of at least 200ha of grazing marsh around Sandwich and in the Lower Stour Valley, adjoining the Sandwich Bay to Hacklinge Marshes SSSI and/or within the Ash Level and South Richborough Pasture Local Wildlife Site.

- **The Dover and Folkestone Cliffs and Downs BOA** encompasses a series of valleys around Dover, cliffs and cliff-top grassland, intertidal and subtidal chalk, and the steep scarp slope of the North Downs at Dover. Much of the grassland is nationally or internationally important, and there are areas of locally or nationally important woodland. Targets for the Dover and Folkestone Cliffs and Downs BOA include extending, reconnecting, restoring and enhancing areas of chalk grassland, to include restoration of at least 90ha, creation of an additional 75ha and enhancement at least 60ha of chalk grassland to bring it to UK BAP priority habitat quality, by 2020.
- **The East Kent Woodlands and Downs BOA** comprises a complex of woodland and grassland habitats, including several nationally and locally important sites, including some large blocks of woodland of importance for threatened butterflies such as the Duke of burgundy and the black-veined moth. Acid grassland and heath habitats occur on the areas of gravel exposures. Targets include restoring, creating and enhancing areas of chalk grassland, enhancing woodland management, extending and reconnecting fragmented woodlands, creating species-rich neutral grassland and creating acid grassland.

### Landscape Designations

**3.41** The Kent AONB extends across the south of the District and lies outside the scope of this study, although this study considered the interrelationships of landscape with the AONB including role as landscape setting.

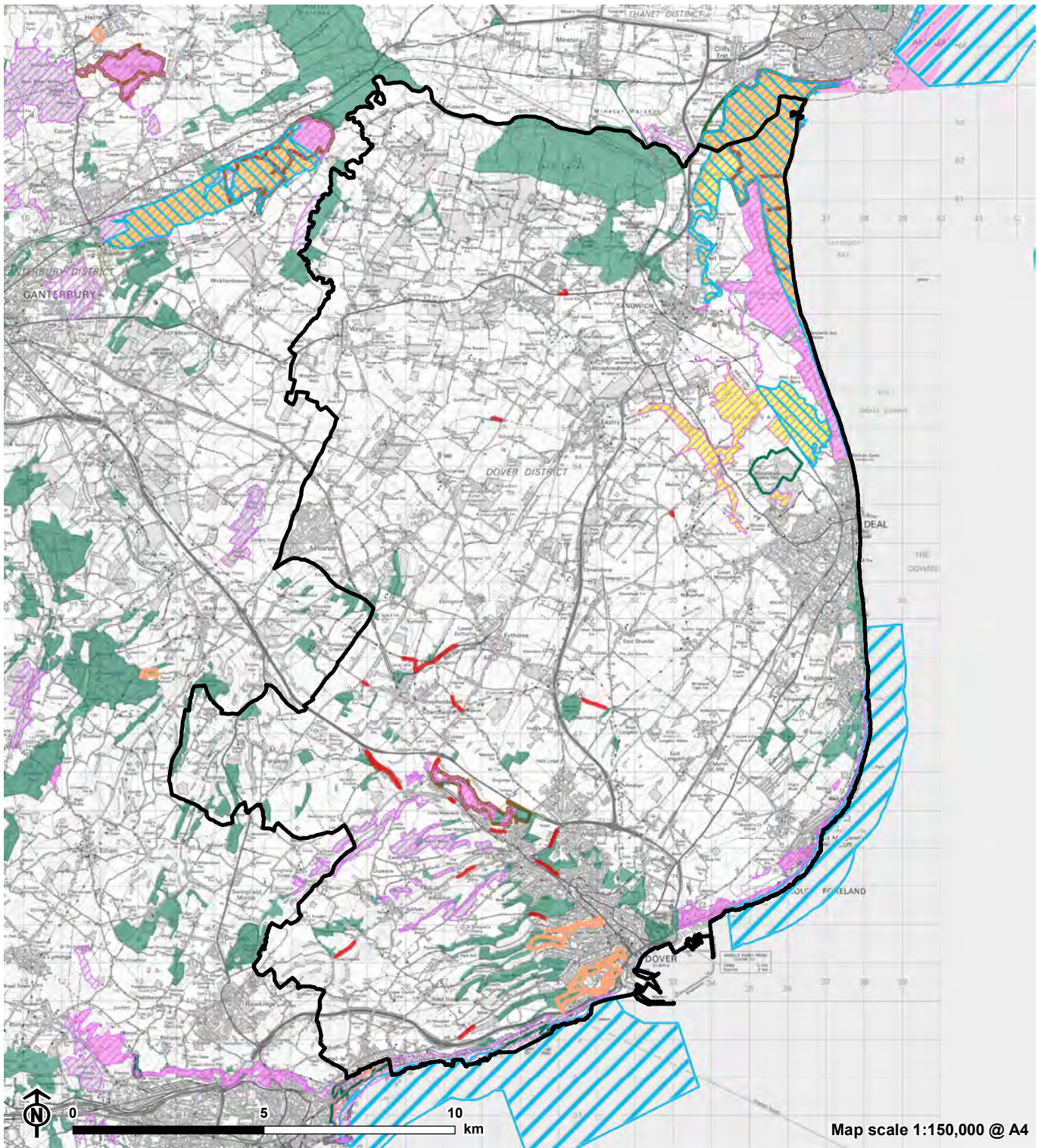


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CB:CB EB:Bean\_C LUC FIG3\_4\_ALC\_11055\_r0\_A4P 28/05/2020 Source: NE

**Figure 3.4: Agricultural Land Classification**

- Dover district
- Grade 1
- Grade 2
- Grade 3
- Grade 4
- Grade 5
- Non agricultural
- Urban

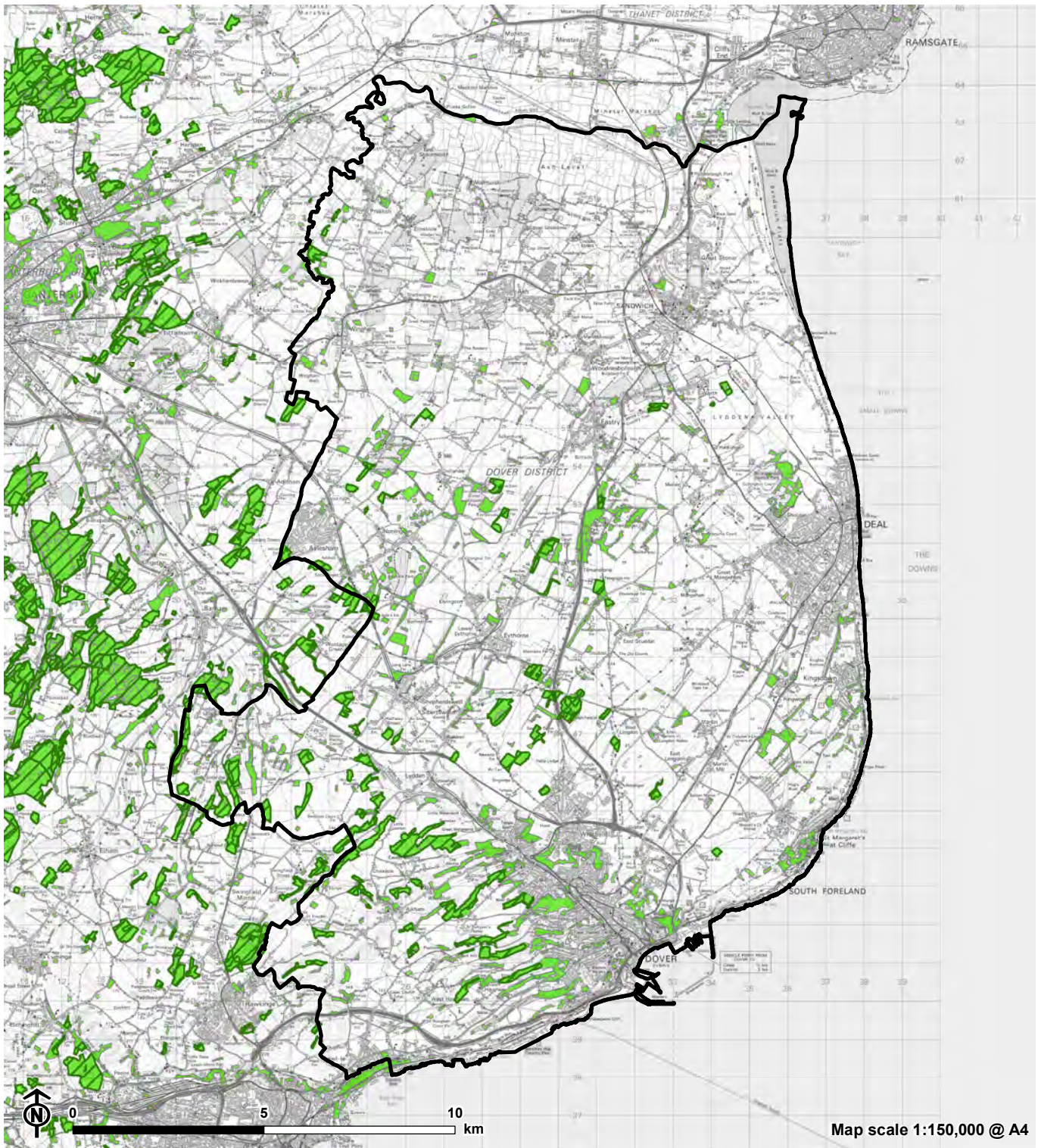


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Figure 3.5a: Nature Conservation




- |                         |                                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Dover district          | Site of Special Scientific Importance |
| Local Wildlife Site     | Ramsar site                           |
| Roadside Nature Reserve | Special Area of Conservation          |
| Local Nature Reserve    | Special Protection Area               |
| Country Park            | Marine Conservation Zone              |
| National Nature Reserve |                                       |

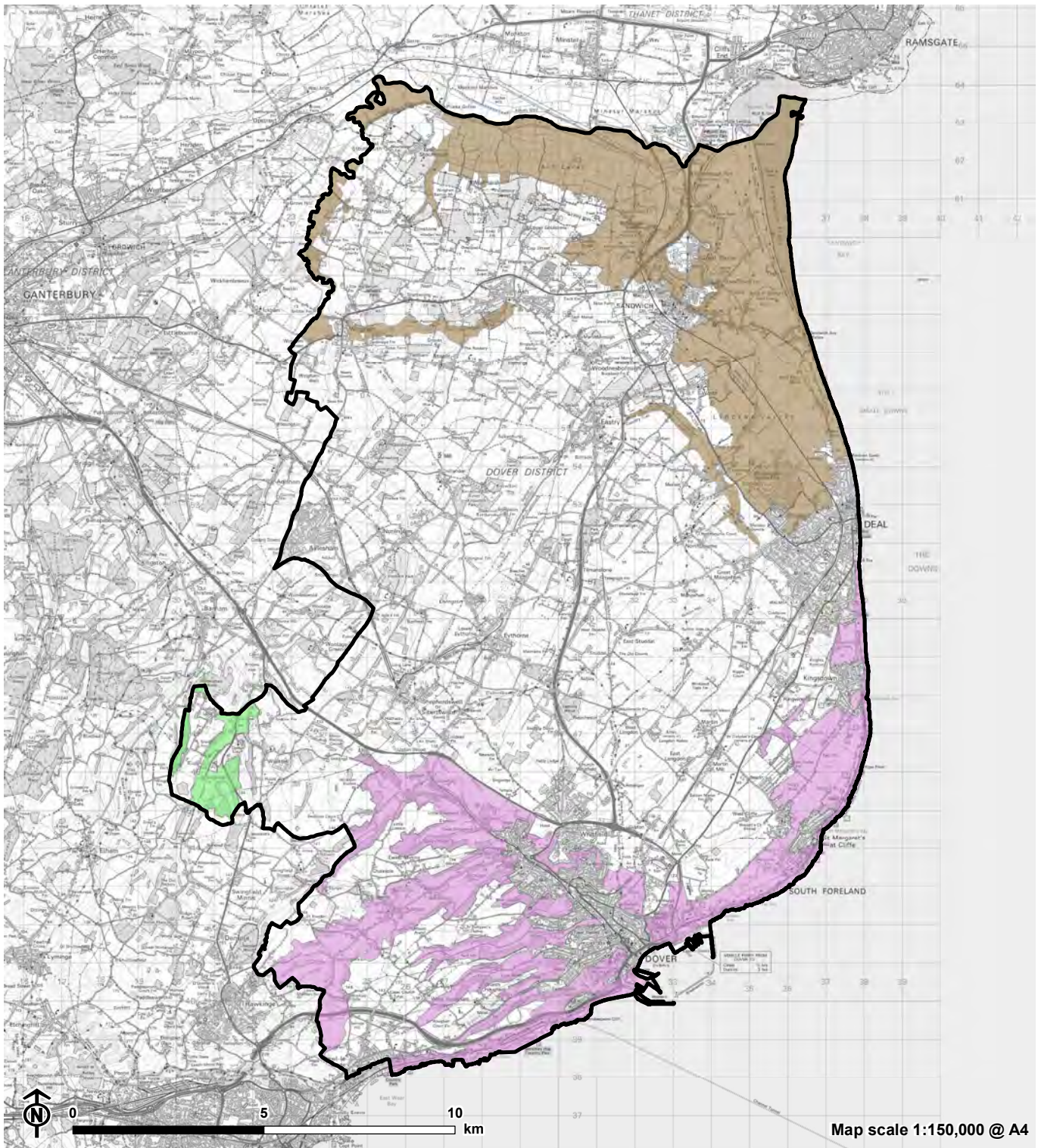




© Natural England copyright 2020. © Crown copyright and database rights 2020 Ordnance Survey 100019780      CB:CB EB:Bean\_C LUC FIG3\_6\_woodland\_11055\_r0\_A4P 29/05/2020  
Source: NE, FC, OS

Figure 3.6: Woodland





-  Dover district
-  Ancient woodland
-  National Forest Inventory



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CB:CB EB:Bean\_C LUC FIG3\_5b\_BOA\_11055\_r0\_A4P 28/05/2020  
Source: DDC, OS

**Figure 3.7: Biodiversity Opportunity Areas**

-  Dover district
-  Dover and Folkestone Cliffs and Downs
-  East Kent Woodlands and Downs
-  Lower Stour Wetlands

## Cultural influences

**3.42** Dover District is situated at the eastern end of the Kent peninsula at the narrowest point of the English Channel, meaning it occupies a strategic position for travel to and from continental Europe. This has meant that at times of peace it has been a gateway to Britain, acting as the main artery for trade, travel and migration; whilst in times of war it has been Britain's front-line - the channel acting as a barrier and the White Cliffs becoming a national symbol of defiance.

**3.43** The District contains a wealth of archaeological sites, monuments and historic assets that reflect a long history of human settlement. These assets, many of which are statutorily designated, play a large part in defining the character of the landscape and the individuality of particular settlements, and in many cases reflect the District's strategic coastal location.

**3.44** There are 50 Scheduled Monuments covering prehistoric to modern periods, although numerically the Medieval period accounts for over half of these. There are almost 2000 listed buildings and 57 conservation areas, predominantly concentrated in Dover, Deal and Sandwich (which has an exceptional concentration), although also covering many of the District's villages and hamlets. There are also 7 Historic Parks and Gardens covering over 660 hectares. These are illustrated on **Figure 3.8**.

**3.45** This section has been informed by reference to the Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation (2014) and relevant Dover Council Evidence Base documents, including the Dover District Heritage Strategy (2013) and associated appendices.

### Prehistoric (700,000 BC – 43 AD)

**3.46** The District has an extremely long record of occupation and activity by humans, including from the Palaeolithic (700,000 - 10,000 BC), the Mesolithic (10,000 – 4,000 BC); the Neolithic (4,000 – 2,500 BC); the Bronze Age (2,500 – 700 BC); and the Iron Age (700 BC – 43 AD).

**3.47** During the Palaeolithic, the presence of humans would have varied depending the environmental and climatic conditions. Palaeolithic human activity is largely evidenced from stone tools, primarily produced from flint. Within Dover District there is evidence of activity on the North Downs around Dover in the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic, although the amount of activity is not as great as elsewhere in Kent.

**3.48** The Mesolithic period saw the end of the last glacial period and the gradual increase in the human population. At the beginning of the Mesolithic Britain was connected to mainland Europe. However, as sea levels rose the interconnecting land mass became slowly submerged beneath the English Channel and North Sea, leaving only a land-bridge (referred to today as 'Doggerland') connecting East Kent and East Anglia to the continent. Transient Mesolithic peoples

would have crossed this land bridge taking advantage of the rich natural resources available on the wet, low lying plains. Around 8,000 BC the bridge was finally submerged, creating the island of Great Britain, and leaving Dover as the nearest point to continental Europe.

**3.49** The rising sea levels also created a number of submerged channels and wetlands within the District, such as the Wantsum Channel - a sea channel that separated the Isle of Thanet from the Kent mainland – and the Lydden Valley. These natural marshlands provided an attractive resource for ancient peoples. Subsequently, a period of relatively dry conditions in the Neolithic and Bronze Age saw occupation sites established on these marginal lands before further sea level rises in the Later Bronze Age inundated the low-lying land once more. Today, evidence of the prehistoric occupation of these low-lying areas lies buried in well preserved peat deposits within the alluvium.

**3.50** During the Neolithic crop growing and animal husbandry was largely adopted in Britain, leading to the forest clearance and the permanent settlement. Monumental 'ritual' architecture also developed, with long barrows and causewayed enclosures in the earlier Neolithic, and henges, stone circles, and cursuses in the later Neolithic. There are no known long barrows in Dover District, as are seen elsewhere in Kent, however there is a possible causewayed enclosure at Tilmanstone. From pottery evidence, settlement activity in the Neolithic seems to be focused around Deal.

**3.51** In Britain, the Bronze Age saw an increase in the size and social complexity of communities, and, notably, the first use of metalworking, which allowed larger-scale forest clearance. Monumental 'ritual' architecture also shifts from the communal to the individual, with barrows and elaborate grave assemblages. The Isle of Thanet and the Wantsum Channel are the focus of Bronze Age settlement activity in east Kent, and within the District there is a high-status site at Mill Hill, Deal. There is also evidence for activity across the rest of the District, including a probable settlement at Dover. Bronze Age boats were discovered at Langdon Bay and at Dover, the latter, dating to c. 1550 BC, is the world's oldest discovered sea-going boat. This discovery underlines the District's proximity to the continent and its role in coastal transport and cross Channel contact from earliest times.

**3.52** The Iron Age in Britain sees the increased complexity of social relations and the development of new technologies, such as iron-working, and trade routes. During this period, settlement in East Kent developed rapidly and coastal areas became more densely settled, particularly in the area of Deal, St Margaret's Bay and Dover. Settlement also spread to upland areas of the District's interior, with the location of many settlements suggested by cropmarks. On the chalk, cropmarks suggest a predominantly north-east to south-west orientation

of elements, which responds to the dominant topography of fingers of raised ground extending north-east from the plateau. The 'grain' of this Iron Age settlement pattern still survives within the landscape today, evident in the pattern of field and parish boundaries, as well as the network of roads, tracks, and lanes. The North Downs Way, which runs from east to west across Kent largely following the southern edge of the chalk escarpment, is thought to date to the Late Iron Age. There also existed a network of minor routes and trackways, often only linking settlements and neighbouring fields, rather than forming any coherent or organised roadway system (as was introduced in the Romans period).

### Roman (43 – 410 AD)

**3.53** Dover District is unique in that the complete story of Roman Britain can be experienced; from the first expeditions of Caesar in 55 BC to the withdrawal of Roman administration in around 410 AD. The District has an incredibly rich resource of assets from this period, including several standing remains which are impressive and visible reminders of the Roman presence. Also, at a landscape level many of the major roads in use within the District today trace their origins to the network established by the Romans.

**3.54** The area was of strategic importance for cross channel landings by the Romans. Julius Caesar crossed the channel in 55 and 54 BC and is thought to have landed on the beaches around Deal on both occasions, although recent evidence suggests that Pegwell Bay may have been the first landing site. The area is also associated with the Claudian invasion of Britain in 43 AD, with part of the Roman invasion force under Senator Aulus Plautius landing at Pegwell Bay and subsequently establishing the entry port of *Rvputae* (Richborough) at the southern end of the Wantsum Channel. Excavations at the site have recorded a double ditch and bank of Claudian date, which is considered to be a beachhead defence; evidence for later streets and wooden buildings as part of the *vicus* (extramural settlement); and earthwork remains of a substantial amphitheatre. In the early-to-mid second century the Romans also took advantage of the sheltered Dour estuary at Dover to create the port of *Dubris*, which became the base of the *Classis Britannica* (the Roman fleet in the Channel). Excavations there have provided much information on the development of the Roman harbour, *vicus*, and the fortifications. Of note was the construction of two lighthouses on the Eastern and Western Heights sometime in the first century AD. The eastern lighthouse (or *Pharos*) survives on Castle Hill and is Britain's tallest surviving Roman building. The subsequent centuries saw the growth of Richborough and Dover as the major ports of entry to the province.

**3.55** The Roman administration imposed an administrative territory in Kent known as the *Civitas Cantiacorum* (centred at

Canterbury). The ensuing period of Roman rule saw some transformation of the geography of East Kent with the construction of several roads. The first major road developed was from Richborough to Canterbury and then on to the crossing of the Thames at Londinium (London). Later the road from Dover to Canterbury (Watling Street) was developed. Other roads linked Dover with Richborough and Dover with *Portus Lemanis* (Lympne) to the west. In places the major roads can still be clearly seen running across the landscape, often followed for much of their length by modern road (e.g. the road running northwards from Dover to Richborough). Other roads are less clear and have been traced through cropmark evidence, through the presence of historic boundaries, or through the distribution of the Roman and Saxon archaeological evidence (in particular cemeteries, which often flanked roads). The influence of the road network on the establishment of small settlements is also clear in the archaeological record and the distribution of assets. By the second century the development of small rural settlements occurred alongside key routes, including at Hillcross Farm, on the Dover to Richborough road; and Preston, Elmstone, Deerson Farm and Each End, close to the Richborough to Canterbury road.

**3.56** By the first century AD much of southern Britain had effectively become *de facto* client states of the Roman Empire and therefore formal inclusion of Kent in 43 AD appears to have had little effect on the farming practices in the area. Whilst some land may have changed ownership, the majority of it continued to be farmed by the native population from farmsteads. The location of Roman finds in the Historic Environment Record illustrates concentrations of activity on the chalk downlands and coastal areas of the District, particularly around Deal and the southern end of the Wantsum (although the apparent scarcity of Roman remains elsewhere is likely to reflect a lack of survey and investigation rather than a real absence). During this period prestige and wealth was demonstrated through the construction of villas, many of which were constructed on established Iron Age sites. Within the District, only five possible villa sites have been identified at Wingham, Sholden, Sandwich, Walmer and Ash. The distribution of villa sites in the District is sparse compared to areas further west in Kent, probably reflecting a preference for the elite to live in the urban centres (i.e. Canterbury and the two ports) rather than the countryside.

**3.57** From the third century onwards a series of new forts, known as Saxon Shore Forts, were built along the east and south coast of Britain to counteract repeated Saxon and Frank pirates raiding the coastline. Forts were built at strategically important locations, including at Dover c. 270 AD and at Richborough c. 277 AD. East Kent, and in particular Richborough, played a significant role in the final years of the

Roman province; the fort at Richborough was one of the last Roman bases in Britain to have its garrison removed.

### Anglo-Saxon (410 – 1066 AD)

**3.58** Following the withdrawal of the Roman army from Britain c. 410 AD, groups of Angles, Saxons and Jutes arrived in east Kent in increasing numbers, first as raiders and later as settlers. From the middle of the fifth century onwards their material culture begins to become common, and by the end of the fifth century they had established the Kingdom of Kent – the oldest of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

**3.59** Anglo-Saxon settlement evidence in Dover District is relatively sparse, although it is likely that early settlements were rural and dispersed in character, forming small farmsteads rather than villages. The Anglo-Saxon settlers gradually replaced the earlier Romano-British pattern of rural estates with their own. The centres of these estates seem to be relatively regularly spaced across Kent and it has been suggested that this was designed to give access to a range of landscape types. Some of these centres were probably of royal origin, such as the estate at Eastry which occupies a hilltop at a key nodal point by the junction of a Roman road and a prehistoric trackway.

**3.60** Settlement evidence becomes more apparent by the later sixth century when the Kingdom of Kent had emerged, although discoveries are concentrated around Eastry, Sandwich, Dover and Wingham. Gradually settlement penetrated further inland and by the late Saxon period most of the villages we are familiar with today had some form of Anglo-Saxon settlement. The place names of many settlements are testament to their Anglo-Saxon origins, with a variety of Saxon place name elements. These include 'ingas' or 'ing' which translates roughly as 'at the place of' (e.g. in an altered form, Great Mongeham), 'ham' means 'homestead' (e.g. Wingham), 'burh' means 'defended place' (e.g. Woodnesborough), 'bourne' means 'stream' (e.g. Northbourne), 'wald' means an 'outlying forest pasture' (e.g. Ringwould), and 'dun', which became 'down', means 'wooded upland' (e.g. Lydden).

**3.61** During the Anglo-Saxon period, no major additional infrastructure appears to have been constructed, instead the continued use of the principal Roman routes is evident in the distribution of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, which tend to cluster along roads. It is also probable that lesser routes also continued in use. Drove roads were also established in places, for example connecting settlements with the reclaimed marshlands of the Wantsum and Lydden Valley to allow access to the grazing marsh.

**3.62** Anglo-Saxon Burial evidence is extensive in eastern Kent; together with Thanet, Dover has the greatest number and density of early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries of any region in

England. Within the District particularly large inhumation cemeteries have been found at Buckland and Finglesham. Kent also had some of the earliest churches and monasteries in the country, including St Martin's Priory in Dover dating to the early seventh century, and a possible monastery founded later in that century at Eastry. A number of churches in the District also have Saxon origins, such as St Mary-in-Castro in Dover, which dates to c. 1000 AD.

**3.63** Tradition has it that Pegwell Bay is the arrival place of St Augustine, the first Christian mission to England in 597 AD sent by Pope Gregory I; and of the brothers Hengist and Horsa, legendary leaders of the first Anglo-Saxon settlers in Britain in 449 AD.

### Medieval (1066 – 1540 AD)

**3.64** Following the Norman Conquest in 1066 AD, there was an increased focus on military and religious architecture. Dover Castle was built by William I's army in this period, on the site of earlier Saxon fortifications on the Eastern Heights. The massive stone keep and curtain walls were built from the mid-twelfth century onwards, making it one of the most powerful castles in Western Europe. The castle subsequently became a royal castle, indicating the status and strategic importance of Dover. The church became very powerful during this period and several religious centres expanded, including Langdon Abbey, St Radegund's Abbey, Dover Priory, Sandwich Friary, and Wingham College. In addition, many small wooden Saxon churches were rebuilt in stone. However, the Reformation in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century marked the decline of the influence and control of the church on the wider landscape. Langdon Abbey was one of the first, if not the first, religious house to be dissolved, in 1535. St Radegund's Abbey followed in 1536, Wingham College in 1537, and Dover Priory and Sandwich Friary in 1538.

**3.65** At the beginning of the period there were only two substantial settlements in the District – Dover and Sandwich - which had evolved primarily as fishing and trading centres. Beyond these a large number of smaller settlements that had developed during the late Saxon period gradually grew in size during this period. The settlement pattern was generally one of dispersed settlements and hamlets, rather than the nucleated villages as was common elsewhere in southern England. In part this was because of the distinctively Kentish practice of 'gavelkind' where land was divided between a landowner's children on their death rather than being inherited by the oldest as elsewhere in England. This meant that over time even large estates had a natural tendency to fragment resulting in a dominant pattern of isolated farmsteads.

**3.66** The main road between Dover and Canterbury and on to London (Watling Street) remained an important route. Dover was the main port of embarkation for English pilgrimage

overseas and many used Watling Street or followed the ancient trackway along the North Downs which has become known as the 'Pilgrim's Way'. The very first page of the Domesday Book of 1086 starts with a long account of Dover, showing that by the early medieval period the town was clearly the most strategically important seaport in south-east England. More than 30 place names within the District also appear in the Domesday Book.

**3.67** The villages and communication systems of the medieval period were to form the lasting framework of the county until the spread of the railways. However, within this stable structure considerable change did take place, including the specialist hop and fruit farming that were partly influenced by the proximity to London, coal mining and the riparian industries, related to naval defence and armaments. Trade links with the continent also grew and Sandwich and Dover became two head ports of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports. The Cinque Ports provided ships and seamen, and gained privileges, such as trade without taxes, for being one of the most powerful organisations in the country.

#### Post Medieval and Industrial (1540 AD – modern)

**3.68** The Post-Medieval and industrial period saw a rapid expansion of settlement and industry within the District, which impacted on the landscape. The major towns and villages grew in both size and population, new transport links were introduced, and new industries and services were developed along with new military technologies.

**3.69** It was not until the post medieval period that roads were significantly improved, or new routes created, under an Act of Parliament in 1709 that created Turnpike Trusts. Within the District the section of Watling Street between Dover and Barham Downs became a turnpike, as did the Dover to Deal, Deal to Sandwich, Sandwich to Eastry, Eastry to Dover, Sandwich to Canterbury and Sandwich to Thanet roads. The improvement of roads around this period may have been in part assisted by the military who saw logistics of movement as an important element of the defence against the threatened French invaders. The turnpike roads generally demised with the establishment of the railway in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which included passenger services and specialised industrial services. The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a number of road improvements and constructions, including the construction of the Ash Bypass (A257), the Sandwich Bypass (A256) and the Dover Bypass (A2).

**3.70** Coal was first discovered in Kent in the late nineteenth century, and over the next few decades many collieries were established, with peak output in 1935. In the District, collieries were established at Betteshanger, Snowdown and Tilmanstone along with accompanying small planned settlements at Aylesham, Elvington, and Mill Hill. In addition, a

network of light railways was constructed, and an aerial ropeway was built to connect Tilmanstone with Dover harbour.

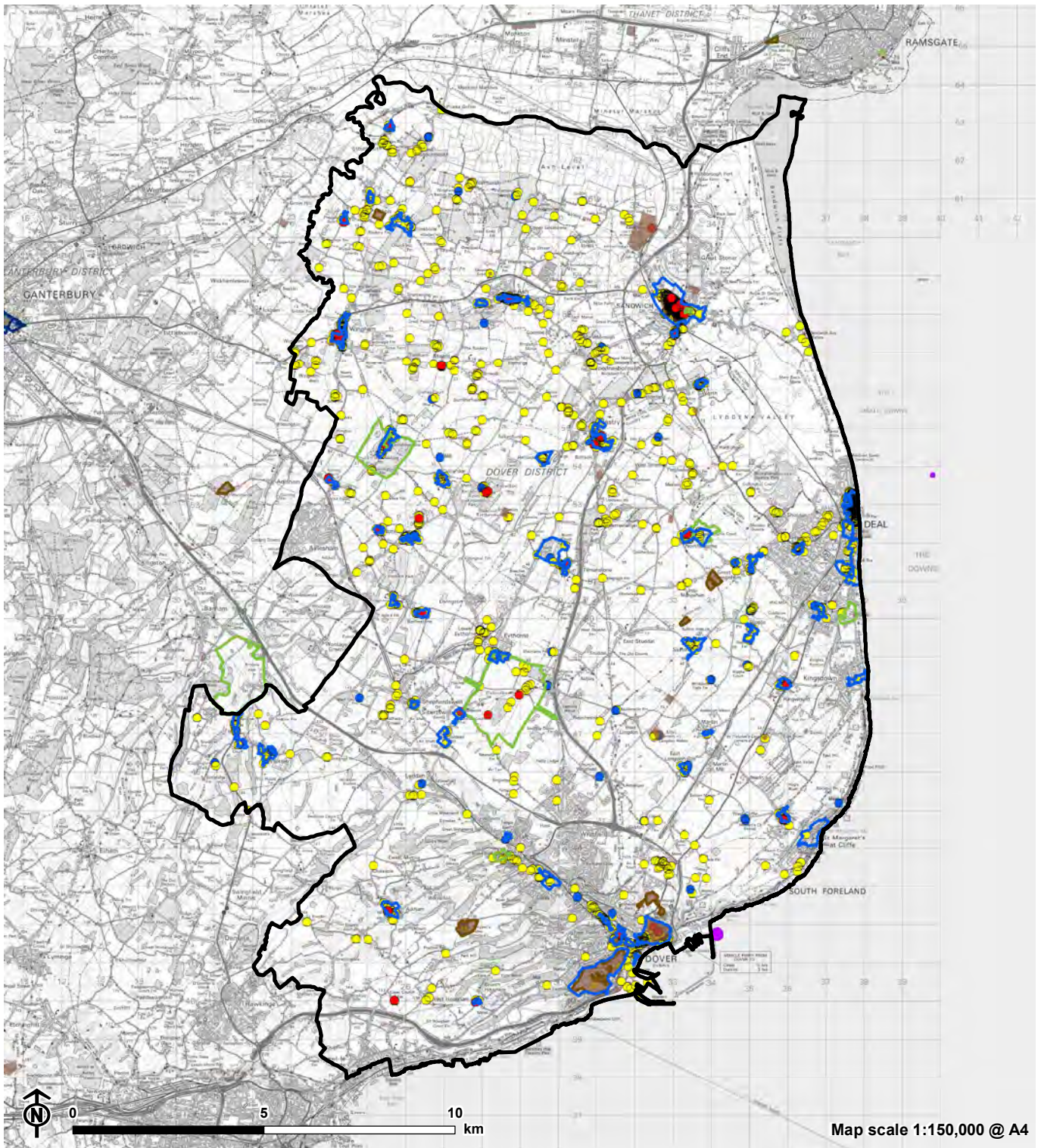
**3.71** The area has continued to be an important agricultural resource throughout this period, and remnants of past agricultural land use and history are evident throughout the landscape. The District's historic farmsteads have played a key role in shaping the character and local distinctiveness of the rural landscape and reflect the richness of the agricultural landscape. Various agricultural industries are also represented; oast houses (or hop kilns) are a visible reminder of the former hop industry, whilst the District's surviving windmills highlight the arable importance of this part of Kent. The majority of these surviving structures were constructed in the Post-Medieval period and a number of them are today designated as Grade II listed buildings, with Chillenden Windmill being the only example of a Grade II\* listed building. Locally distinct materials characterise the architecture, with an abundance of local flint used within walls and Kent peg tiles and thatched roofs, originally using reeds from surrounding marshes, providing a strong sense of place.

**3.72** In 1561 a royal warrant allowing foreign craftsmen to manufacture cloth in England encouraged Flemish and Huguenot Protestant refugees fleeing religious persecution in France and the Netherlands to settle in Sandwich and surrounding area. Most were weavers, although others introduced market gardening to the area. Today, many of the District's buildings have Dutch elements, such as distinctive Flemish gable ends, which indicate the origin of their builders.

**3.73** The District contains a number of historically significant fortifications dating from the post-medieval period. Changes in both the military potential of France and Spain, schism with Catholic powers as well as coastal change in the Sandwich area led Henry VIII to build three new castles, linked by lines of fortifications along the coast at Sandown, Deal and Walmer. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the increasing ability of nations to organise larger fleets and armies, as well as the development of improved artillery weapons, resulted in more powerful defences being built at Dover. These include the fortifications at the Western Heights, which were turned into a massive complex of forts, batteries, ramparts and ditches designed to protect Dover from the west and north. Dover Castle was also further strengthened and towards the end of the same century Fort Burgoyne was built to protect the town from attack from the east. The post-medieval defences in Dover District form a group of sites of outstanding importance, many of which are designated as Scheduled Monuments. The final stage in the development of Dover's defences was during the twentieth century, with the establishment of Connaught Barracks to the east of Dover, first built in 1912/13, later rebuilt during the 1960s and then largely vacated in 2006.

**3.74** During the 20<sup>th</sup> century ever more industrialised warfare required increased supplies and logistics and an entirely new military port was built at Richborough during the First World War. During the Second World War the development of new methods of warfare such as air attack, bombing, radar and cross Channel batteries all required new sites to be constructed in the District. Today, the coastline features numerous remains of Second World War sites including 'Winnie' and 'Pooh', the famous cross channel guns on the Dover cliffs, Swingate Radar Station, complexes of pillboxes, observation posts, bunkers, and the Secret Wartime Tunnels excavated deep below Dover Castle from where the Dunkirk evacuation was commanded.

**3.75** In recent years, housing pressures have led to an increase in modern development on the outskirts of more historic settlements, and commercial and industrial buildings have been introduced to the outskirts of the larger settlements of Dover, Deal and Sandwich. In some areas, major road and railway corridors introduce detracting features and visual intrusion into an otherwise rural landscape, and present potential for further development pressures.



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Source: HE, OS

Figure 3.8: Cultural Heritage

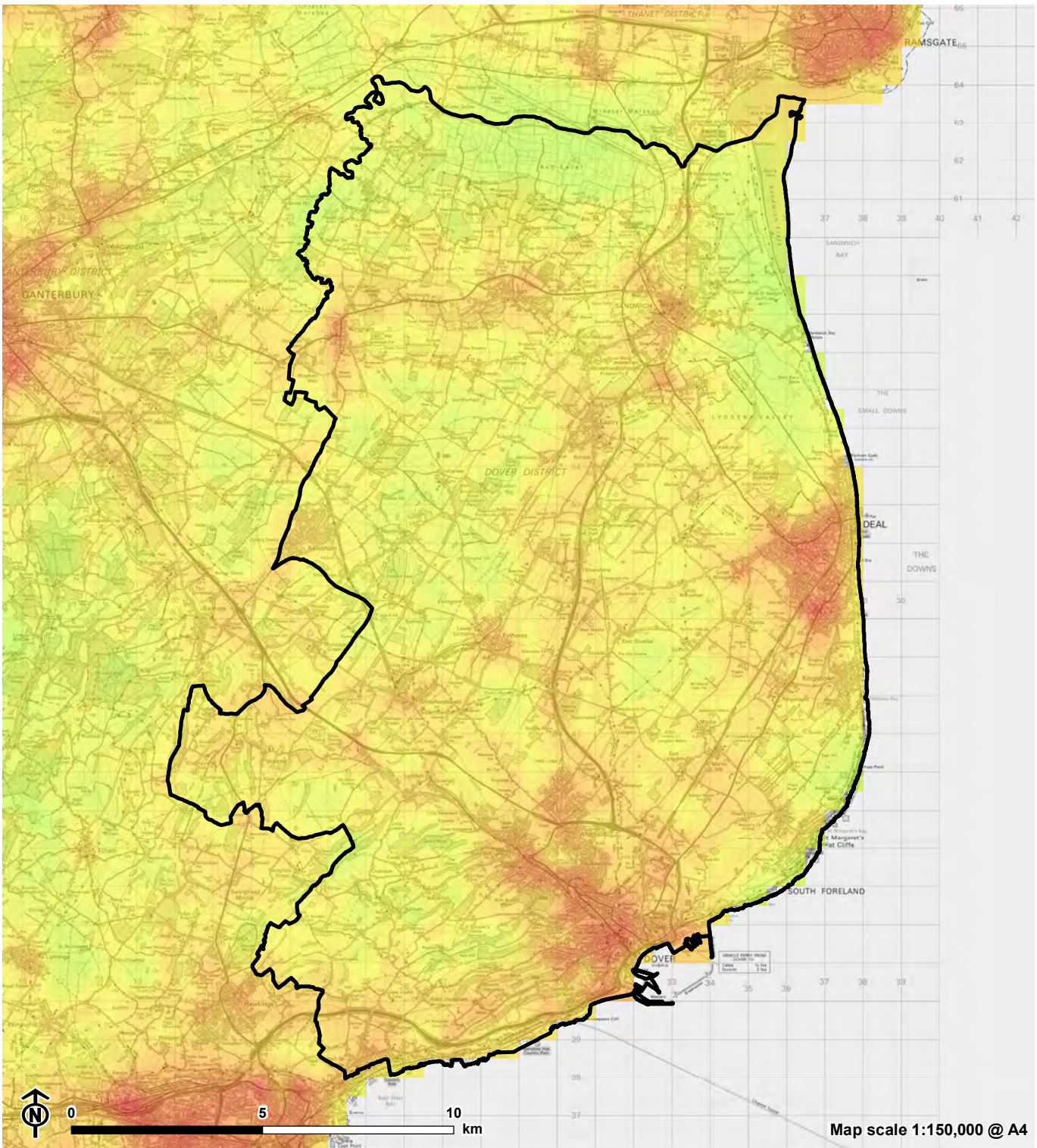
- |                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Dover district               | <b>Listed building</b> |
| Conservation Area            | <b>Grade</b>           |
| Registered Parks and Gardens | I                      |
| Scheduled Monument           | II*                    |
| Protected wreck              | II                     |
| Heritage at Risk             |                        |



## Perceptual landscape

**3.76** Away from the settlements and main roads, many parts of the district enjoy high levels of tranquillity. The areas of highest tranquillity are concentrated in the Little Stour marshes and Ash Levels in the north and Sandwich Bay and the Lydden Valley in the east of the district. This is illustrated on **Figure 3.9**.

**3.77** The levels of light pollution and dark night skies within Dover District are illustrated on **Figure 3.10**. Light pollution decreases with distance from the main settlements, however there are only small pockets of dark night skies free from interference from artificial light within the study area, typically in the Lydden Valley and coast to the east, the Little Stour valley in the north-west and the parklands in the west.



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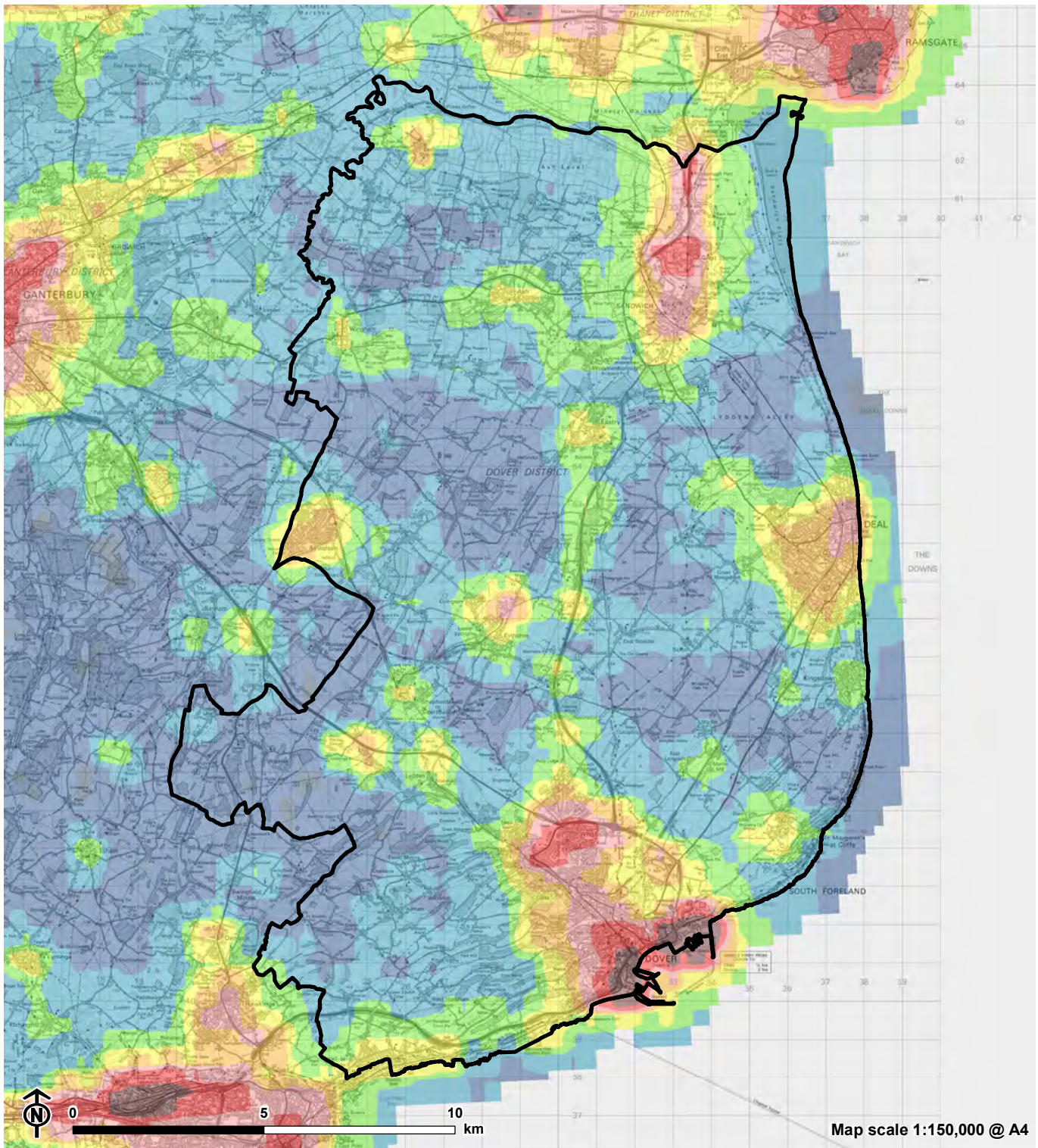
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Source: Campaign to Protect Rural England, LUC

Figure 3.9: Tranquility

Dover district

Level of tranquility

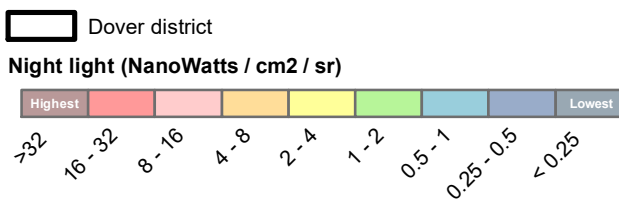
Most Least



Map scale 1:150,000 @ A4

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Source: Campaign to Protect Rural England, LUC

Figure 3.10: Dark Skies



## Chapter 4

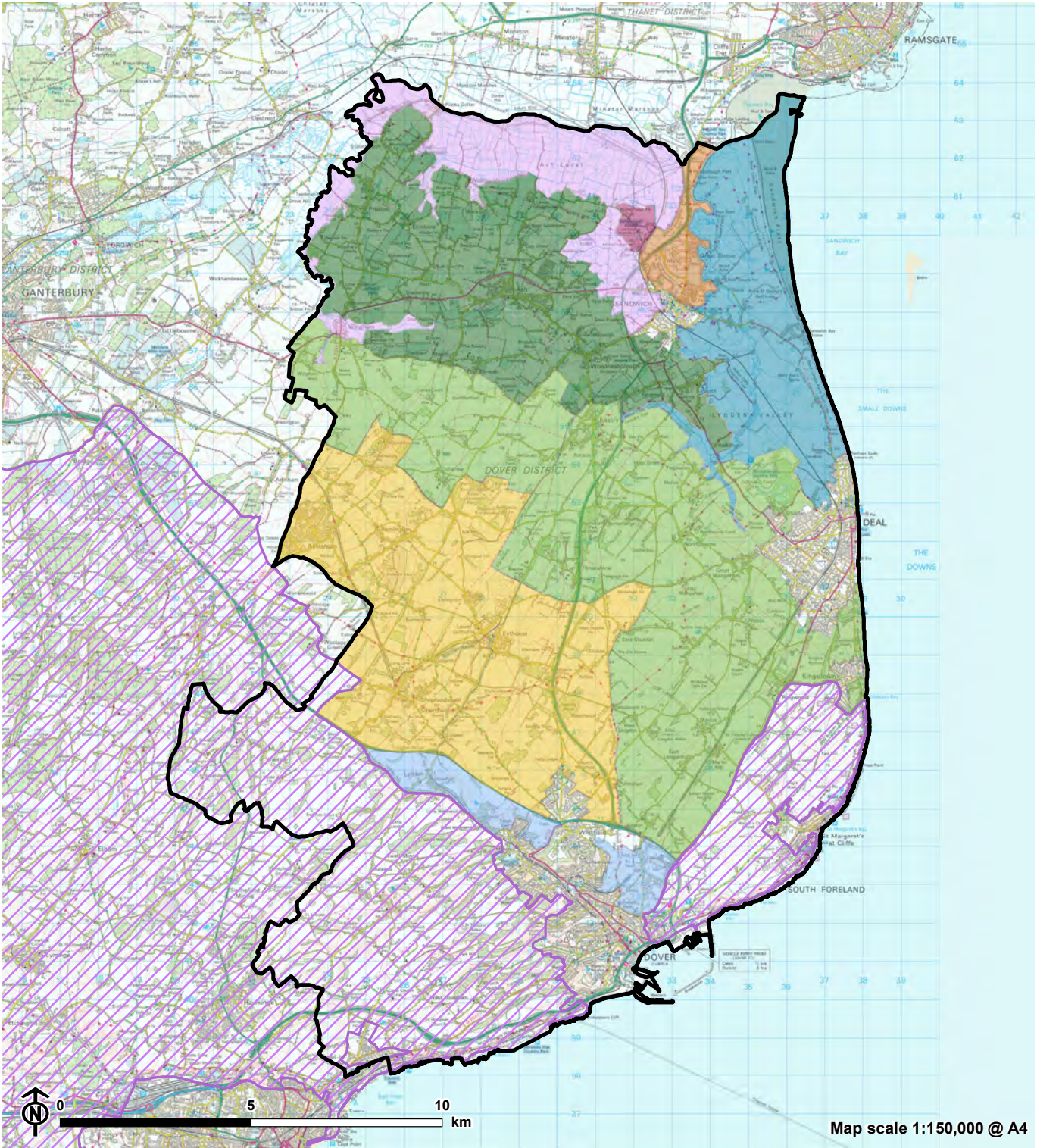
# Landscape Character of Dover District

### Landscape character types and areas

- 4.1** The updated landscape classification identifies eight generic landscape character types (LCTs), each representing a distinct identity and common geology, topography, land use and cultural pattern. These are shown on **Figure 4.1**.
- 4.2** The LCTs are subdivided into local landscape character areas (LCAs), which are discrete geographic areas that possess the characteristics described for the landscape type but have a recognisable local identity. The revised classification identifies 17 LCAs. These are listed in **Table 4.1** below and shown on **Figure 4.2**.
- 4.3** It is important to note that boundaries between one LCT or LCA and the next are transitional and there is rarely a clear-cut change 'on the ground'.
- 4.4** This assessment has been mapped at a scale of 1:25,000 which provides an appropriate level of detail for the landscape character assessment at the strategic district scale. In considering any change in one character area the impact on views to/ from and the character of neighbouring areas should also be considered.
- 4.5** The classification covers the area within Dover District outside the Kent Downs AONB. The AONB has its own landscape character assessment.

Table 4.1: Landscape Character Types and Areas

LCA no.	LCA name
<b>LCT A: River Valleys and Marshes</b>	
A1	Little Stour Marshes
A2	Ash Levels
A3	Little Stour and Wingham River
<b>LCT B: Developed River Valley</b>	
B1	Great Stour – Sandwich Corridor
<b>LCT C: Coastal Marshes and Dunes</b>	
C1	Sandwich Bay
C2	Lydden Valley
<b>LCT D: Horticultural Belt</b>	
D1	Preston
D2	Ash
D3	Staple Farmlands
<b>LCT E: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Parkland</b>	
E1	Shepherdswell Aylesham Parklands
E2	Whitfield Parkland
<b>LCT F: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Woodland</b>	
F1	Chillenden
F2	Northbourne
F3	Ripple
<b>LCT G: Chalk Hills</b>	
G1	Lydden Hills
G2	Guston Hills
<b>LCT H: Defensive Hills</b>	
H1	Richborough Bluff

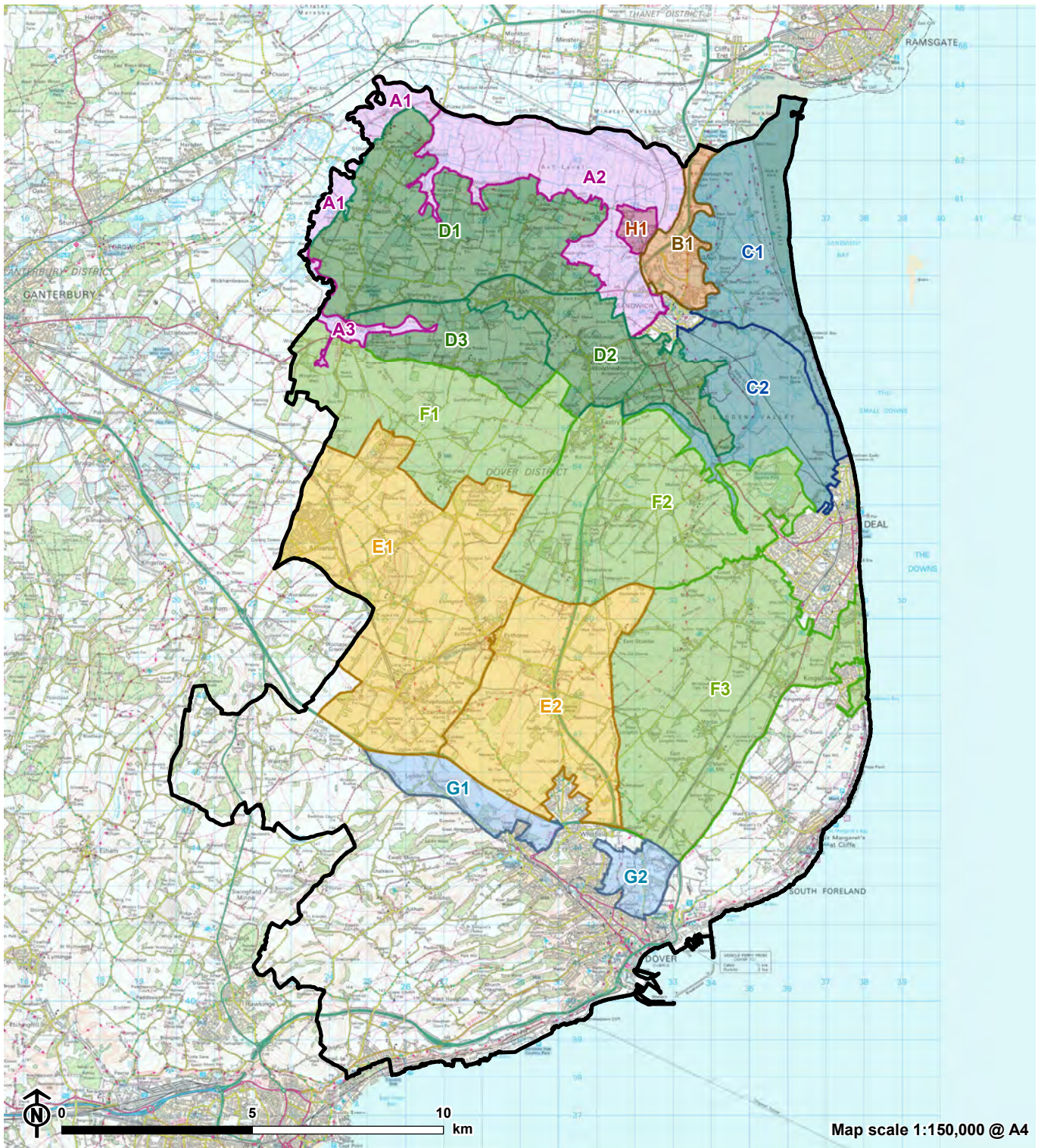


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Source: DDC, LUC

Figure 5.1: Landscape Character Type

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Dover district                     | C: Coastal Marshes and Dunes                |
| Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty | D: Horticultural Belt                       |
| <b>Landscape Character Type</b>    | E: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Parkland |
| A: River Valleys and Marshes       | F: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Woodland |
| B: Developed River Valley          | G: Chalk Hills                              |
|                                    | H: Defensive Hills                          |



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Source: DDC, LUC

**Figure 5.2: Landscape Character Areas**

Dover district	C: Coastal Marshes and Dunes	E: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Parkland	G: Chalk Hills
A: River Valleys and Marshes	C1: Sandwich Bay	E1: Shepherdswell Aylesham Parklands	G1: Lydden Hills
A1: Little Stour Marshes	C2: Lydden Valley	E2: Whitfield Parkland	G2: Guston Hills
A2: Ash Levels	D: Horticultural Belt	F: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Woodland	H: Defensive Hills
A3: Little Stour and Wingham River	D1: Preston	F1: Chillenden	H1: Richborough Bluff
B: Developed River Valley	D2: Ash	F2: Northbourne	
B1: Great Stour Sandwich Corridor	D3: Staple Farmlands	F3: Ripple	

Note:  
For the area within the Kent Downs AONB, please refer to the AONB Landscape Character Assessment.



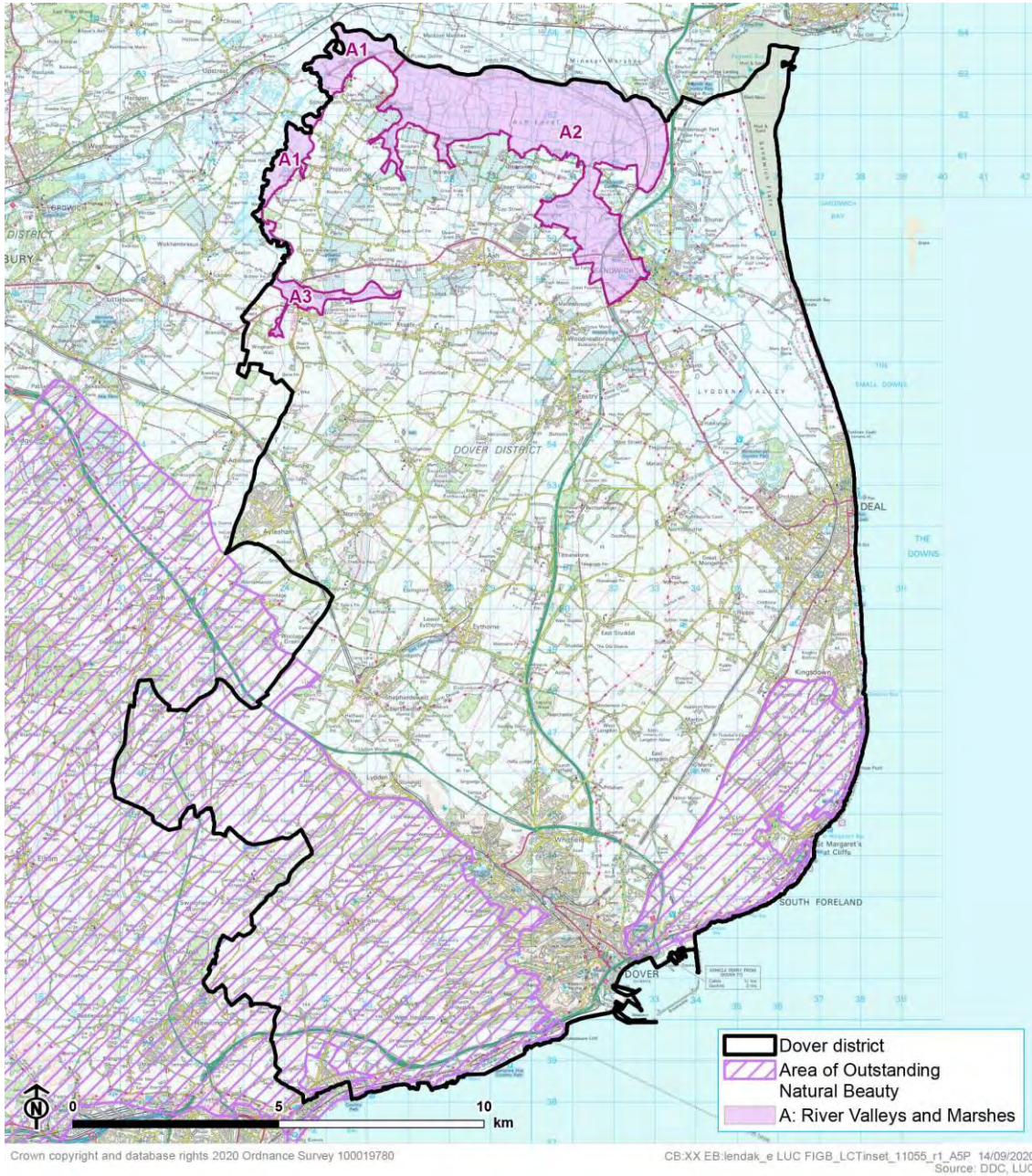
# Dover Landscape Character Profiles





**Chapter 5**  
**Dover Landscape Character**  
**Profiles**

## LCT A: River Valleys and Marshes



### Landscape Character Areas

The River Valleys and Marshes LCT is subdivided into three LCAs:

- A1: Little Stour Marshes
- A2: Ash Levels
- A3: Little Stour and Wingham River

## LCA A1: Little Stour Marshes

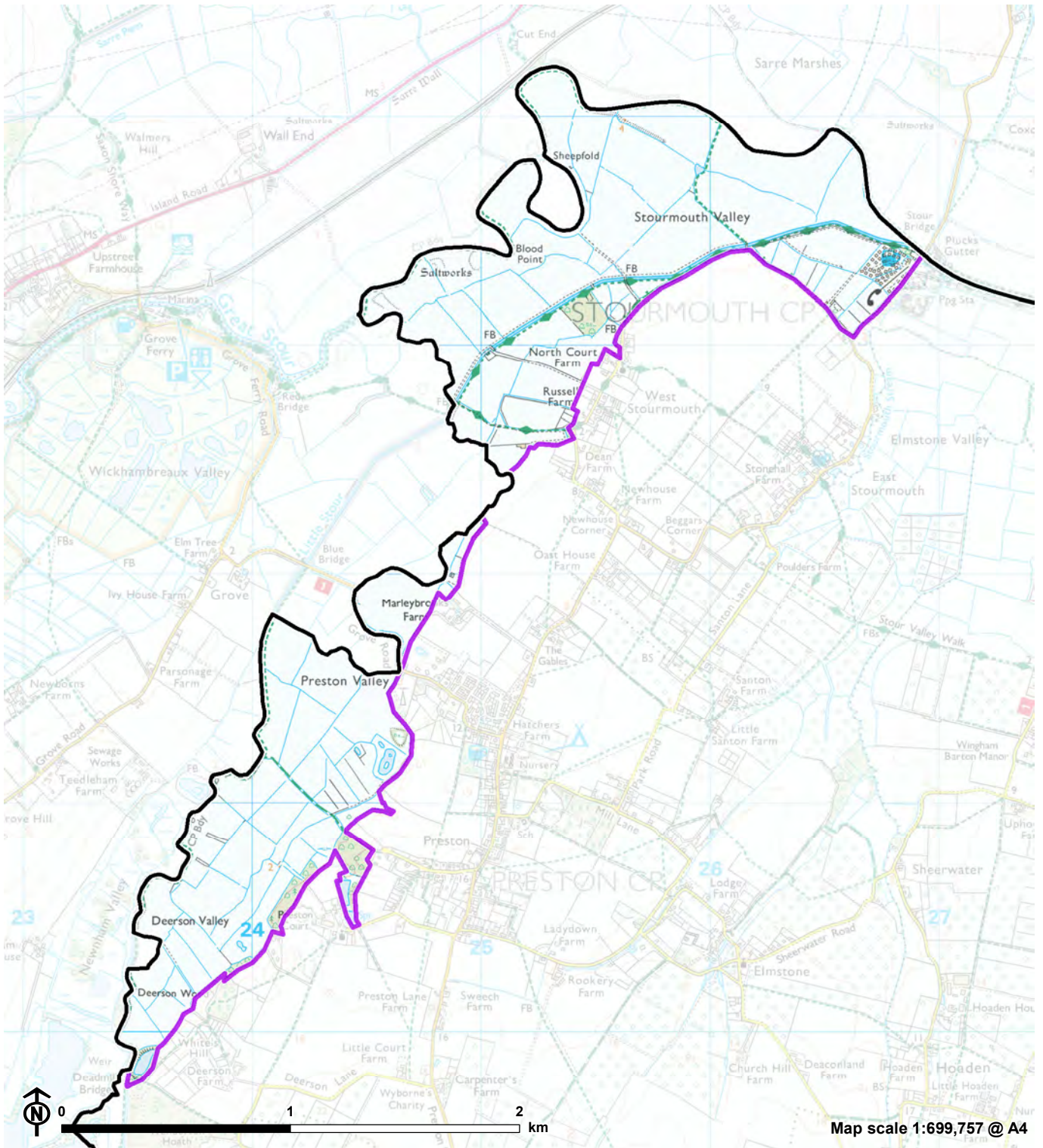
### Location and Summary

The Stour Marshes LCA is located on part of the low-lying former Wanstum Channel along the floodplain of the Little Stour in the north west of the district. The northern and western boundaries follow the district boundaries with Thanet and Canterbury respectively. The eastern and southern boundaries mark the extent of the floodplain, where the geology changes from alluvium and the topography rises above 3m AOD. There are two separate areas of this LCA: the Stourmouth Valley west of West Stourmouth and the Preston and Deerson Valley west of Preston, which are separated by an area of arable fields on the adjacent higher land, with the main part of the Little Stour valley in this location within Canterbury District.

This is a large, flat, and low-lying landscape of arable and pasture grazing. It is reclaimed grazing marsh and retains marshland qualities including drainage ditches and an open expansive character.



Water-filled drainage ditch, marginal vegetation, and woodland plantation west of West Stourmouth

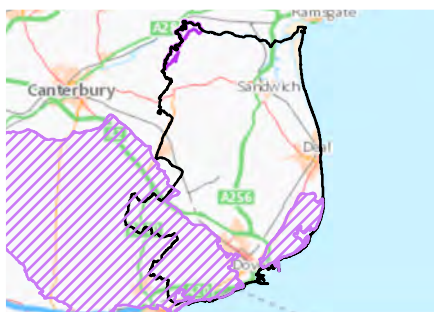


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Source: DDC, LUC

**A1 - Little Stour Marshes**

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- Flat low-lying former marshes around 3m AOD forming part of the floodplain of the Little Stour, underlain by Lambeth and Thanet Sand Formation with alluvium and some tidal deposits.
- Network of linear water-filled drainage ditches separate large arable and pasture fields.
- Occasional hawthorn, willow, and reeds along drainage ditches with patches of sedges in wetter areas.
- Grazing marsh is designated as part of Chislet Marshes, Sarre Penn and Preston Marshes LWS.
- The Little Stour flowed into the former Wantsum Channel at Stourmouth – a sea channel separating mainland Kent from the Isle of Thanet. The reclaimed marshland is crossed by historic drove routes. There is evidence of salterns in the north-west.
- An open undeveloped landscape, buildings confined to Plucks Gutter caravan park in the north-east.
- PRoW cross the marshes along historic drove routes and along the waterways, including part of the Saxon Shore Way Long Distance Footpath.
- An exposed landscape with extensive long views across open arable farmland to the north and west, towards wooded higher ground in adjacent districts. A sense of remoteness pervades due to lack of development.

### Natural Influences

The landform is flat and low-lying, around 3m AOD. Alluvium and tidal deposits overlie the Thanet Sand Formation and Lambeth Group Sands. Soils are seasonally wet deep stoneless calcareous clayey soils.

The landscape is characterised by the medium-scale, flat, open fields segregated by linear drainage ditches, which control the groundwater in the area, along with pumps.

Land is used for arable cultivation, especially around West Stourmouth, although there are still areas of permanent grassland and pasture.

Tree cover is very limited, although there are small areas of priority habitat deciduous woodland and ancient woodland at Preston Court and Deerson Wood, and a small area of deciduous woodland north-west of West Stourmouth. Clumps of vegetation occur along the drainage ditches and streams and consist of hawthorn and willow and some emerging reed and reedmace.

Hedgerows along boundary roads increase the vegetation within the LCA, including hawthorn, bramble, oak, elder, willow and ash. The roadside verges and arable field headlands also add to the biodiversity within this intensively farmed arable landscape.

The area west of Preston Court is part of the Chislet Marshes, Sarre Penn and Preston Marshes LWS. The marshes and floodplains support a variety of bird life, including a nationally important population of reed warbler. The Preston Marshes SSSI lies within Canterbury District to the west of the LCA and is the last remaining area of fen vegetation in the Little Stour valley. The flora and fauna of the SSSI are also associated with this landscape.

The majority of the area is part of the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA, an extensive network of water and wetland habitats. The BOA targets include seeking opportunities to restore and recreate grazing marsh, fen and reedbed and enhancing species-rich grassland to priority habitat quality with the aim of establishing a new landscape-scale freshwater wetland complex.



Arable fields north of West Stourmouth

### Cultural Influences

This is an area which has undergone dramatic change from the time when the Little Stour flowed to the Wantsum Channel which separated the Isle of Thanet from the rest of Kent, to the arable and pasture landscape today. A combination of natural siltation, the formation of mudbanks and human intervention reclaimed the marshland from the seventh century onwards, although the channel was navigable until the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The floodplain of the Little Stour is a valley landscape described as Stourmouth Valley, Preston Valley and Deerson valley.

The channel was important for salt production, and the HLC records medieval salterns (or saltworks) in the north-west of the LCA. The HLC records very little change in the field pattern, although there has been some 20<sup>th</sup> century amalgamation of fields on the floodplain.

The character area is uninhabited. Settlement is confined to the north-east at Plucks Gutter, a hamlet at the confluence of the Little Stour and Great Stour, which has a public house and caravan park. West Stourmouth is located on the higher land (character area D1) at the former confluence of the Little Stour and sea channel



Boats on the River Stour at Plucks Gutter

Two narrow winding rural lanes with high hedgerows cross the LCA: Plucks Gutter along the north-eastern boundary and Grove Road linking Preston and Grove. Straight drove roads, created for herding sheep out to marshland pasture, provide the only access within the area, and are limited in use as farm tracks.

PRoW generally follow the water courses and field boundaries, including along the eastern River Stour and Little

Stour. The nationally promoted Saxon Shore Way follows the Little Stour in the Stourmouth Valley. Recreational angling and boating are popular at Plucks Gutter creating a sense of activity and movement in this large scale open, unsettled landscape.

### Perceptual Influences

This is an open and exposed landscape, enhanced by the absence of built development on the marsh and flat topography, with little to interrupt the view or focus the eye. Glimpses of buildings outside the LCA can be seen e.g. at Preston, however these are not intrusive in the landscape.

Overhead electricity wires and poles and larger pylons within Canterbury district are detracting visual features on the skyline.

There is a good experience of dark skies within the marshes with little light pollution. Noise from the A299 and railway line to the north-west interrupts the tranquillity of the landscape, however it is largely peaceful with a remote character.



Prominent pylon lines within Canterbury district to the north-west

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Flat low-lying and open floodplain of the Little Stour and reclaimed marshland, now predominantly arable with a strong sense of place and openness.
- Historic importance as part of the former Wanstun Channel separating mainland Kent from the Isle of Thanet.
- Ecologically important linear drainage ditches and former marshland, designated as Chislet Marshes, Sarre Penn and Preston Marshes LWS and potential for wider biodiversity enhancement.
- Absence of settlement and development across the marshes contributing to empty, remote character.
- Recreational value from the PRoWs, which provide access across the marshes and along the river.
- Expansive, uninterrupted, long-distance views across the marshes.
- A tranquil and rural area, with an open and exposed remote character and large skies.

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Little Stour Marshes LCA is to restore and enhance the wetland habitat potential and connectivity as part of the wider Stour Valley / Wantsum Marshes, which extend into Thanet and Canterbury districts.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance the biodiversity interest from wetland habitats and watercourses of the former marshland.
- Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of agricultural fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins, management of drainage ditches and other wildlife-friendly farming methods.
- Restore and recreate former grazing marsh, fen and reedbed habitat, as part of the wider wetland network in the Lower Stour catchment, as identified in the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA.
- Enhance areas of improved grassland to good quality semi-improved grassland to bring it to priority habitat quality, as identified in the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA.

### Development Management

- Conserve the open landscape and avoid the introduction of large scale or incongruous elements and conserve essentially unsettled character.
- The open character of most marshland landscapes accentuates the visual impact of many proposals over a wide distance as compared with more enclosed landscape types. Avoid proposals that can result in the interruption of views of large open skies or horizons or impinge on the remote undeveloped quality of the marshland.
- Resist proposals for highway upgrading to retain the rural winding character of the lanes and their grass and hedgerow verges.
- Protect the valued recreation use, seeking opportunities to further enhance access and enjoyment of the rural landscape.

## LCA A2: Ash Levels

### Location and Summary

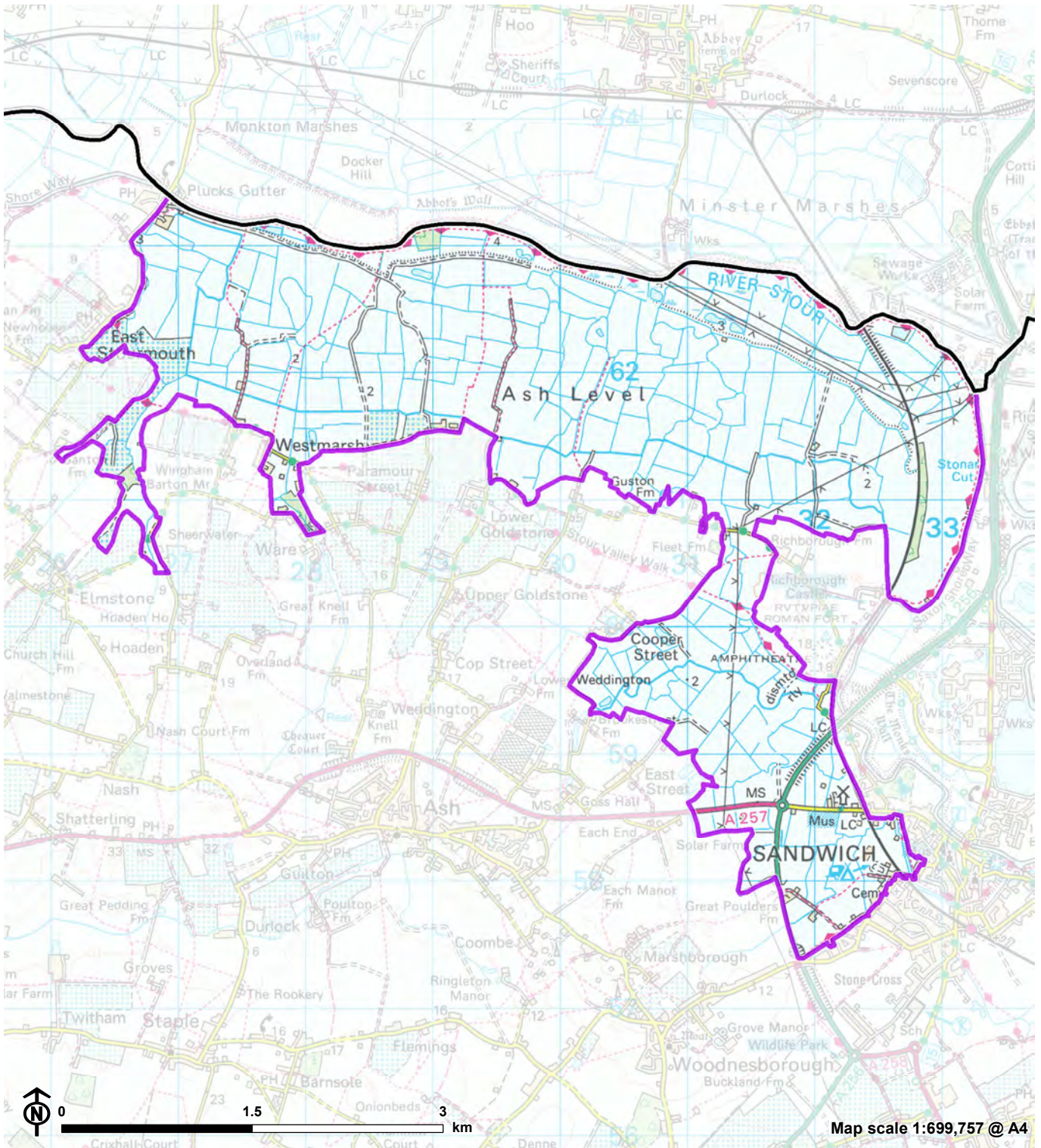
The Ash Levels LCA is located on the low-lying former Wanstum Channel in the north of the district. The northern and eastern boundaries follow the River Stour, which in the north also marks the district boundary with Thanet. The western boundary follows Plucks Gutter / The Street. The southern boundary marks the extent of the former Wanstum Channel and follows the extent of tidal flat deposits, where they meet the rising land of the Preston Horticultural Belt (D1 at approximately the 3-5m contour).

This is a distinctive large scale, flat and low-lying area of arable and pasture grazing. The landscape is reclaimed grazing marsh and retains marshland qualities including drainage ditches and an open expansive character.



Pasture fields east of the Minster-Sandwich railway line





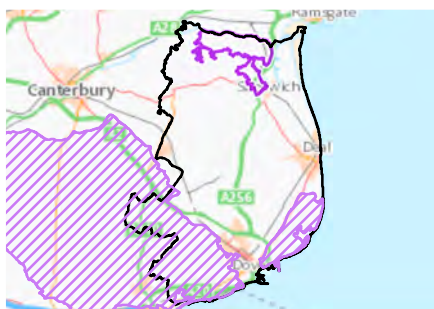


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Source: DDC, LUC

**A2 - Ash Levels**

-  Dover district
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- Flat low-lying marshland around 2-3m AOD underlain by Thanet Sand Formation with tidal flat deposits, reclaimed from the former Wantsum Channel.
- Network of linear water-filled drainage ditches separate arable and some small pasture fields. Small streams including Richborough Stream and Goshall Stream drain to the Stour.
- Floodplain grazing pasture designated as the Ash Level and South Richborough Pasture LWS and the Elmstone Valley LWS.
- Limited tree cover with occasional small wooded copses and orchards.
- Crossed by historic droves running north to south, originally providing access for movement of livestock to the marshes from higher ground and now forming PRow across the marshes. The Saxon Shore Way Long Distance Footpath runs along the River Stour.
- Largely undeveloped landscape, with few roads or buildings, crossed by the railway, A257 and A256 in the south-east.
- The Saxon Shore Way Long Distance Footpath runs along the River Stour.
- Open, visually exposed landscape with long views including to the large-scale buildings of the Discovery Park and development associated with the former Richborough power station.

### Natural Influences

The landform is flat and low-lying, around 2-3m AOD, although a former landfill east of the railway line is higher than the surrounding marshland. Tidal flat deposits overlie the dominant Thanet Sand Formation bedrock, with small areas of Lambeth Group Sands around East Stourmouth. Soils are seasonally wet deep stone-less calcareous clayey soils.

The landscape is characterised by small, flat, open fields segregated by linear drainage ditches. Groundwater in the area is controlled by ditches and pumps.

The land is primarily in arable cultivation of winter cereals including wheat and barley, with some permanent grassland. Sheep and cattle graze the areas of pasture, much of it recorded as priority habitat coastal and floodplain grazing marsh. Some fields around Sandwich are subdivided for horse paddocks and some horticulture. The area is locally designated as the Ash Level and South Richborough Pasture LWS and the Elmstone Valley LWS in the south-west.

Tree cover is limited to clumps of vegetation along the drainage ditches and streams, including hawthorn and willow and some emerging reed and reedmace. A larger area of woodland is located east of Plucks Gutter, designated as priority habitat deciduous woodland. Hedgerows along boundary roads increase the vegetation within the LCA, including hawthorn, bramble, oak, elder, willow and ash.

The majority of the area is part of the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA, an extensive network of water and wetland habitats. The BOA targets include seeking opportunities to restore and recreate grazing marsh, fen and reedbed and enhancing

species-rich grassland to priority habitat quality with the aim of establishing a new landscape-scale freshwater wetland complex.



Water-filled drainage ditch and arable fields east of Plucks Gutter

### Cultural Influences

This is an area which has undergone dramatic change from being part of the Wantsum Channel, which separated the Isle of Thanet from the rest of Kent, to the arable and pasture landscape today. A combination of natural siltation, the formation of mudbanks and human intervention reclaimed the marshland from the seventh century onwards, although the channel was navigable until the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

The marshland is undeveloped, with the exception of the caravan park at Plucks Gutter and small agricultural buildings. On Ash Road in the south-east close to Sandwich there is a

small light industrial area centred around the White Windmill including a garage, farm shop and nursery, and small solar development. The White Windmill is a Grade II listed building dating from around 1760 and was one of at least 15 mills around Sandwich. The mill was restored 1960-1981 and now forms part of the White Mill Rural Heritage Centre.



White Windmill (Grade II listed)

The marshland is largely inaccessible. Roads are limited to the edge of the marsh, connecting the small settlements to the south (within D1). In contrast the busy A257 and A256 and railway line cross the landscape in the east. The Minster-Sandwich railway was built in 1847 and isolates an area of farmland from the rest of the marsh.

PRoW follow the straight drove roads, created for herding sheep out to marshland pasture, and provide the only access within the area. The Saxon Shore Way runs along the River Stour in the north and east, along the district boundary. The River Stour is also popular for angling and kayaking.

### Perceptual Influences

This is an open and exposed landscape, enhanced by the absence of built development on the marsh and flat topography, with little to interrupt the view or focus the eye.

There are views to the higher wooded ground of Thanet to the north.

There is a good experience of dark skies within the marshes, particularly to the west with little light pollution. Human activity increases to the east with the railway line, electricity pylons and views to the industrial estates west of Sandwich including Discovery Point industrial estate. The A256 has an audible influence on the east of the area.

Away from the urban influences on the edge of Sandwich this is a largely tranquil, peaceful, and remote landscape.



Kayakers on River Stour looking towards Discovery Point industrial estate

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Flat low-lying and open reclaimed marshland with a strong sense of place and openness.
- Historic importance as part of the former Wanstun Channel separating mainland Kent from the Isle of Thanet.
- Ecologically important linear drainage ditches and former marshland designated as Ash Level and South Richborough Pasture LWS and Elmstone Valley LWS.
- Absence of settlement and development across the marshes contributing to sense of isolation and remoteness.
- Recreational value associated with the PRoWs, which provide access across the marshes.
- Expansive, uninterrupted, long-distance views across the marshes, including north south routes along former drove roads connecting the valley floor to adjacent higher land.
- A tranquil and rural area, with an open and exposed remote character and large skies.
- Role as landscape setting in relation to Richborough (H1).

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Ash Levels LCA is to restore and enhance the wetland habitat potential and connectivity as part of the wider Stour / Wanstun Marshes, which extend into Thanet and Canterbury districts.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance the biodiversity interest of wetland habitats and watercourses of the former marshland.
- Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of agricultural fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins, management of drainage ditches and other wildlife-friendly farming methods.
- Restore and recreate former grazing marsh, fen and reedbed habitat, as part of the wider wetland network in the Lower Stour catchment, as identified in the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA.

### Development Management

- Conserve the open landscape and avoid the introduction of large scale or incongruous elements or any form of development in this unsettled landscape.
- Consider the impact of change/development on the adjacent agricultural slopes on this very open landscape. And consider the role of this area as the landscape setting for Richborough (H1).
- The open character of most marshland landscapes accentuates the visual impact of many proposals over a wide distance as compared with more enclosed landscape types. Avoid proposals that can result in the interruption of views of large open skies or horizons or impinge on the remote undeveloped quality of the marshland.
- Protect the valued recreational use of the landscape, seeking opportunities to further enhance access and enjoyment of the landscape including the Right of Way network.

## LCA A3: Little Stour and Wingham River

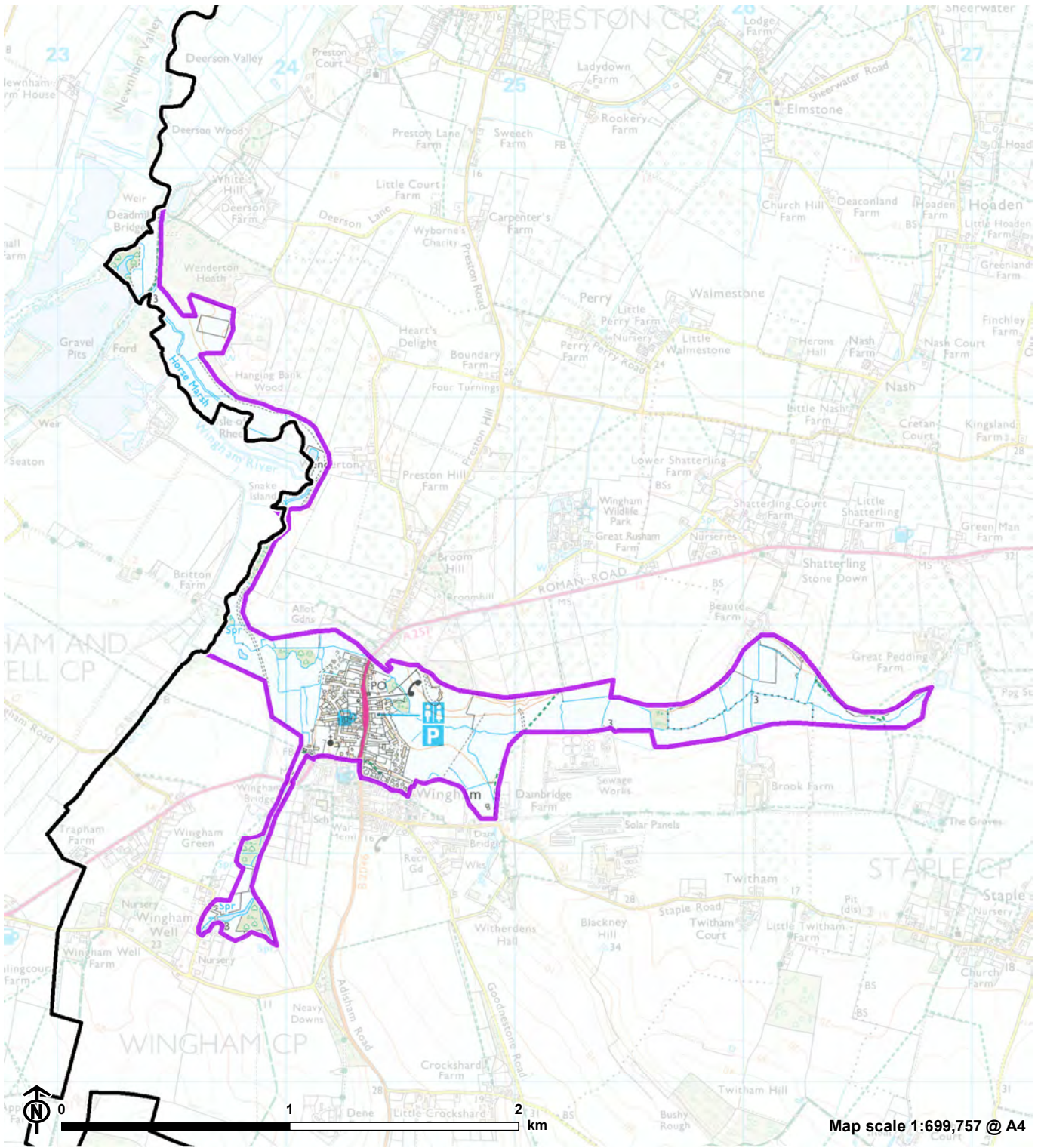
### Location and Summary

The Little Stour and Wingham River LCA is a narrow corridor encompassing the river valley, located in the north-west of the district. The western boundary follows the district boundary with Canterbury district. The boundaries are defined by change from alluvium to chalk and rise in topography marking the defined corridor of the Wingham River tributary.

This LCA is characterised by the flat alluvial flood plain of the Little Stour and Wingham Rivers which continue to be managed in a traditional manner for grazing, and Wingham village in the west.



Landmark spire of St Mary's, Wingham from east of the village

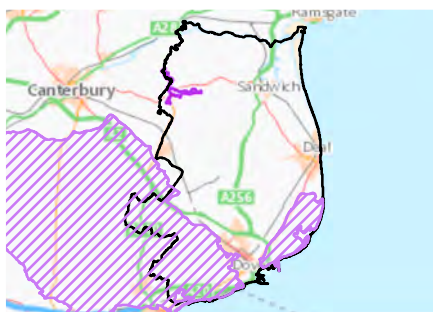


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Source: DDC, LUC

**A3 - Little Stour and Wingham River**

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- Distinct small-scale valley of the Wingham River a tributary of the Little Stour.
- Low-lying flat flood plain, around 3m AOD underlain by Margate Chalk Member with alluvium deposits.
- Marginal vegetation lines the watercourses, with some priority habitat deciduous woodland concentrated south of Wingham Bridge. Open pasture fields lie to the east and west of Wingham.
- Historic Wingham village is the only settlement in the landscape. The spire of St Mary's church is a distinctive feature in the wider landscape.
- Largely inaccessible area, although some PRoW cross the floodplain, connecting to the wider farmland landscape.
- Open landscape, with views contained by rising topography outside of the LCA.

### Natural Influences

The landform is flat and low-lying, around 3m AOD. Alluvium deposits overlie the Margate Chalk, with shallow calcareous and non-calcareous loamy soils over flint gravel.

The landscape is characterised by the large open fields with some water field ditches as the only division, sometimes enhanced with post and wire fencing. Fields are predominantly used as pasture for sheep grazing.



Pasture fields on the Wingham floodplain

There are small clumps of recorded priority habitat deciduous woodland along the water courses and edges of the settlements, and unmanaged marginal vegetation lines the watercourses. The Seaton Pits and Wenderton Manor Woods LWS extends into the north of the LCA.

The majority of the LCA is part of the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA, part of an extensive network of water and wetland habitats. The BOA targets include seeking opportunities to restore and recreate grazing marsh, fen and reedbed and enhancing species-rich grassland to priority habitat quality with the aim of establishing a new landscape-scale freshwater wetland complex.

### Cultural Influences

The Little Stour and Wingham River wind their way across the meadow landscape, and the traditional pastoral land use provides a link with the past and historic land uses.

Wingham village, located on the Roman Road between Richborough and Canterbury is the only settlement in the valley. Wingham was mentioned in the Domesday survey as being in the possession of the Archbishop of Canterbury and was enlarged in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by the construction of a college. The Grade I listed flint St Mary's church, built c.1200, served as the collegiate church from 1282 to 1547. It is one of a number of listed buildings in Wingham, which is designated as a Conservation Area.

The LCA is generally inaccessible although the A257 runs through Wingham. PRoW cross the floodplain at Wingham and Wingham Well and connect Wingham to the A257 in the east.



Wingham village

### Perceptual Influences

This is an open landscape, enhanced by the absence of built development on the flood plain and flat topography, with little to interrupt the view. The spire of St Mary's, Wingham is a distinctive feature, visible across the floodplain.

There is a good experience of dark skies and a sense of tranquillity, although this is impacted by the presence of the A257 and Wingham village.



Wingham River west of Wingham village

### Landscape Evaluation

#### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Flat low-lying flood plain with a strong sense of place.
- Ecologically important priority habitat deciduous woodland locally designated as part of Seaton Pits and Wenderton Manor Woods LWS.
- Traditional sheep grazed pasture fields on the flood plain.
- Historic village of Wingham designated as a Conservation Area provides time depth. The spire of St Mary's is a landmark feature in the wider landscape.
- Open uninterrupted rural valley landscape with absence of other development across the flood plain, contained by rising topography.
- Perceptual tranquil qualities of the undeveloped valley.

### Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Little Stour and Wingham River LCA is to conserve and enhance the rural qualities of the landscape, enhance the habitat potential and connectivity as part of the wider Stour Valley / Wantsum Marshes and wetlands, which extend into Thanet and Canterbury districts.



## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance the biodiversity interest associated with wetland habitats and watercourses and woodland. Where appropriate, restore and recreate former grazing marsh, fen and reedbed habitat, as part of the wider wetland network in the Lower Stour catchment, as identified in the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA.
- Enhance areas of improved grassland to bring it to priority habitat quality.

### Development Management

- Conserve the open landscape and avoid the introduction of large scale or incongruous elements. Conserve the pastoral valley setting of Wingham and views to the church.
- Consider the impact of large-scale farm buildings and other developments e.g. solar farms, sewage works on the adjacent valley sides to assess impacts on the valley and seek to mitigate these.
- Protect the valued recreation use of the landscape, seeking opportunities to further enhance access and enjoyment of the landscape including the Right of Way network.
- Retain connection between Wingham village and the river floodplain to the east and west.

## LCT B: Developed River Valley



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Source: DDC, LUC

### Landscape Character Areas

The Developed River Valley LCT occurs in one location in the district:

- B1: Great Stour – Sandwich Corridor

## LCA B1: Great Stour - Sandwich Corridor

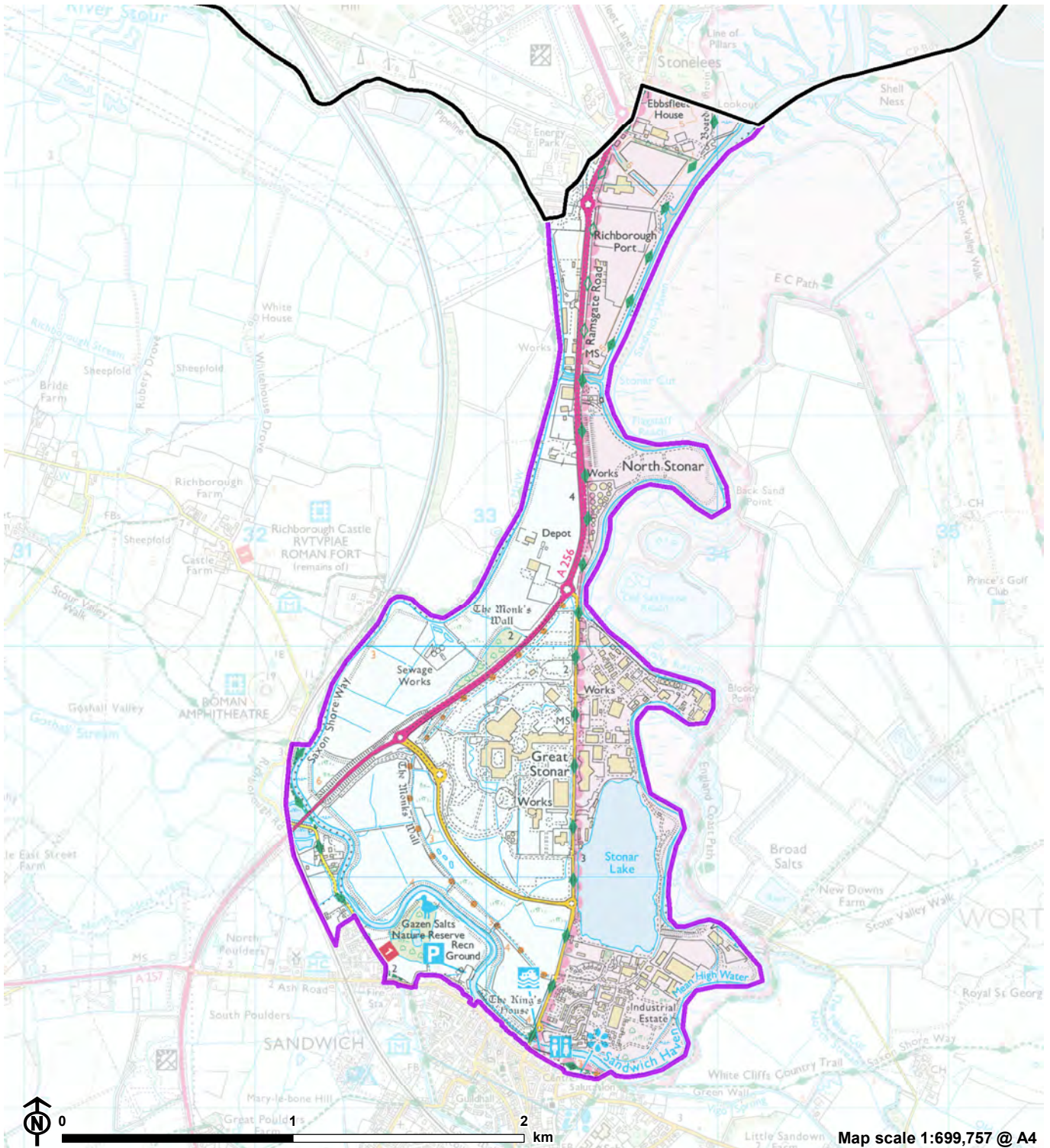
### Location and Summary

The Great Stour - Sandwich Corridor LCA is located north of Sandwich along the floodplain corridor of the River Stour, as it loops to the sea at Pegwell Bay. The historic silting up of the Wantsum Channel changed the course of the river to follow this more convoluted route to the sea. The northern boundary of the character area is defined by the district boundary with Thanet, and the eastern and western boundaries follow the Great Stour River (flowing south to Sandwich and then north to the sea at Pegwell Bay). The southern boundary is formed by the settlement edge of Sandwich.

The LCA is distinguished from adjacent marshes by its developed industrial character and alteration by former gravel extraction landfill and forms a major transport corridor for the A256, with associated development.





Discovery Park is prominent over the adjacent marshes and river corridor

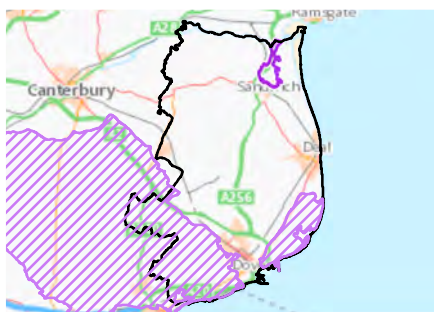


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Source: DDC, LUC

**B1 - Great Stour Sandwich Corridor**

-  Dover district
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- Flat low-lying former marshland between 2-6m AOD underlain by Thanet Sand Formation with alluvial deposits.
- Formed part of the former Wanstum Channel – a sea channel separating mainland Kent from the Isle of Thanet.
- Important historic sites remnant in landscape including medieval port of Stonar, and part of setting of neighbouring historic sites.
- Great Stour River channels contain the landscape, with access to the river provided along rights of way, as well as a channel busy with watercraft. Stonar Lake is a large waterbody formed by gravel extraction.
- Wetland habitats relating to the Great Stour River channels including priority habitat grazing marsh and mudflats mainly within adjacent Sandwich Bay LCA. The Ash Levels and South Richborough Pasture LWS lies in the west.
- Broad leaved trees provide vegetation cover along roads and with more ornamental planting within the industrial estates.
- Land use is dominated by industrial estates including Discovery Park. Pasture and some arable fields and grazing marsh remain in between the road and estate infrastructure, particularly in the west, with areas of former marshland character juxtaposed with the developed areas.
- The A256 Sandwich Bypass runs through the area. A network of estate roads connects the industrial estate buildings.
- Great Stour River and Stonar Lake are popular for walking and fishing. England Coast Path, Saxon Shore Way and Thanet Coastal Path Long Distance Footpaths follow Ramsgate Road / the A256 Sandwich Bypass.
- Open landscape, visually enclosed by large scale development. Contrast of developed and natural landscape in close proximity.

### Natural Influences

The landform is flat and low-lying, around 2-6m AOD. Tidal flat deposits overlie the dominant Thanet Sand Formation bedrock, with an incursion of chalk bedrock in the south-east. Soils are seasonally wet deep loamy and clayey. Much of the area was formerly part of the Wantsum Chanel reclaimed from the river and sea. The 13<sup>th</sup> century Monks Wall represents an early act of reclamation.



The Monks Wall represents an early act of reclamation. Arable land here has now been restored back to grazing marsh/wet grassland.

The Great Stour River provides physical enclosure to the landscape although is not always perceived while travelling through the corridor, although can be accessed by the right of way network providing contrast with the developed road

corridor. The action of tidal drift of shingle along the coast results in the river following a long meandering loop before entering the sea at Pegwell Bay. Stonar Lake in the south-east is a large man-made lake formed by gravel and ballast extraction. It is a priority habitat saline lagoon. and supports carp, sea fish and shrimp.

Land use is dominated by industrial estates, but there is some arable and pasture particularly to the west of the LCA. There are remnant and recreated pockets of priority habitat coastal and floodplain grazing marsh in the west around the Great Stour River, and the Ash Level and South Richborough Pasture LWS extends into the west of the LCA. Gazen Salts in the south of the LCA at Sandwich is a designated Open Space with woodland and wetland on the site of former allotments. Monk's Wall Nature Reserve has recreated traditional wet grazing meadows, attracting wintering wildfowl and waders and breeding waterfowl.

Priority habitat mudflats, coastal saltmarshes and grazing marsh are recorded along the eastern channel of the Great Stour River, connecting with extensively designated habitats in Sandwich Bay to the east of the river channel.

There is limited tree cover. Vegetation is confined to broad hedgerows and some tree cover along the A256 Sandwich Bypass and Ramsgate Road. There has been some tree planting within Discovery Park industrial estate.

The whole LCA, with the exception of Discovery Park industrial estate, is part of the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA, an extensive network of water and wetland habitats. The BOA targets include seeking opportunities to restore and recreate grazing marsh, fen and reedbed and enhancing species-rich grassland to priority habitat quality with the aim of establishing a new landscape-scale freshwater wetland complex.

### Cultural Influences

This is an area which has undergone dramatic change with silting up of the Wantsum Channel which joined the Channel at this point, plus tidal drift so that the River Stour follows a long meandering course to the coast, with the Cinque port of Sandwich stranded inland. The remains of the medieval port of Stonar are recorded at the south side of Stonar Lake. The port was first recorded in 1090 and enjoyed a period of prosperity in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, rivalling the neighbouring port of Sandwich. In the late 14<sup>th</sup> century the port suffered from a French raid and inundation by the sea. Despite quarrying and previous development, the archaeological remains are nationally designated as a Scheduled Monument. In the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century flooding became an issue along the lower course of the Stour and an Act of Parliament was required to create the Stonar Cut to bypass the meandering loop of the river at its narrowest point.

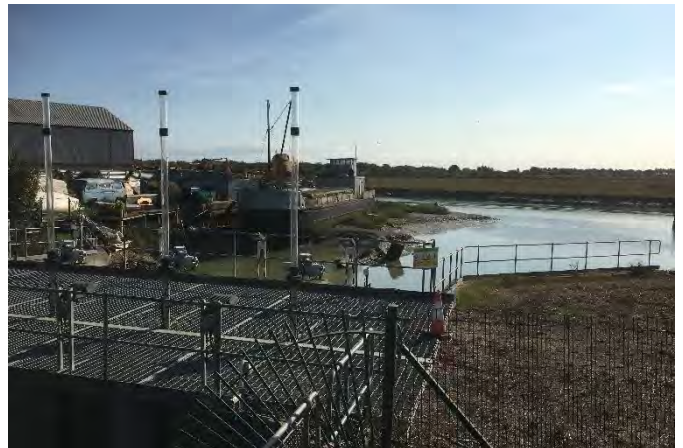
Gazen Salts in the south is part of the Sandwich Conservation Area, which extends from the historic centre of Sandwich. Monks Wall created in the 13<sup>th</sup> century as part of a land reclamation scheme now contains arable land reverted back to grazing marsh (nature reserve).

Quarrying began on the gravel bank at Stonar in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the gravel was used in the construction of the Admiralty Harbour at Dover. The first industrial estate within this LCA was built in the 1950s by Pfizer. It expanded gradually from 1960s-1990s. In 2012 the industrial estate was relaunched as the multi-business science campus Discovery Park. Discovery Park contains an array of large-scale buildings with windows, glass panels and brick facades. These are high rise, and out of place within the wider landscape context juxtaposed with the flat marshland. The associated large-scale car parks dominate significant sections of the LCA and are surrounded by tall metal fencing.

There are a number of smaller light industrial estates north of Discovery Park along the A256 Sandwich Bypass including a recycling centre.

The A256 Sandwich Bypass runs from the south-west to the north of the LCA. The bypass was opened in 1981 and upgraded in the early 2000s. Ramsgate Road follows the straight line of the original Roman Road which ran between Dover and Woodnesborough and now runs through Discovery Park.

The England Coast Path Long Distance Footpaths and the Viking Coastal Trail regional cycling route follow Ramsgate Road through the centre of the LCA. The Great Stour River provides recreation in the form of boating and riverside walks, and Stonar Lake is popular for angling. This natural landscape contrasts with the busy industrial character of the LCA.



Stonar Cut created by Act of Parliament in 18<sup>th</sup> century to bypass the long loop of the Stour

### Perceptual Influences

The landscape is physically open; however, enclosure is provided by the large industrial buildings. Light pollution is created by lighting columns along the road infrastructure and within the industrial estates. There is limited sense of proximity to the sea and the port of Sandwich is generally contained by industrial development in views, with an abrupt transition to the historic town south of Monks Wall.

The industrial estates along the A256 Sandwich Bypass create an urban fringe character within the immediate road corridor landscape. Areas of tranquillity and remoteness are confined to remained areas of marshland, river and open water within and adjacent to development.



The River Stour from Gazen Salts

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Areas of reclaimed marshland landscape which provides potential connection between the Ash Levels to the west and the internationally important wetland habitats of the Stour Valley. Meandering course of the River Stour and river setting to Sandwich. Ecologically important former marshland designated as part of Ash Level and South Richborough Pasture LWS.
- Historically important medieval port at Stonar which provides a reference to the former Wantsum Channel separating mainland Kent from the Isle of Thanet.
- Important historic sites including Monks Wall, and relationship of the river corridor to the adjacent Richborough Castle (H1).
- Recreational value associated with the PRoWs which provide access to the coast, regional recreational routes along the River, plus boating and angling on the Great Stonar River and Stonar Lake.
- Remnant areas of remoteness and tranquillity in association with areas of marshland, water channels and the river corridors in contrast to the developed industrial/business park character.

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Great Stour - Sandwich Corridor LCA is to improve and enhance the landscape character, integrating the natural landscape and industrial character of the LCA and ensuring that it continues to provide an appropriate setting to Richborough and Sandwich.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Conserve features setting of sites of historic importance within and adjacent to the LCA and seek to reference and interpret these hidden sites within the landscape.
- Conserve and enhance the biodiversity interest associated with the wetland habitats and watercourses of the former marshland.
- Restore and recreate former grazing marsh, fen and reedbed habitat, as part of the wider wetland network in the Lower Stour catchment, as identified in the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA.
- Ensure that landscape work associated with the industrial estates/business park references local landscape character in choice and design of planting schemes and, where possible, use trees and screening to help integrate harsh boundaries with the adjacent natural landscape.

### Development Management

- Conserve the undeveloped nature of the land within the Sandwich Conservation Area, to provide a rural setting to the town.
- Enhance the integration of industrial estates, through native wooded boundaries and mature trees to provide visual screening and reduce the impact of built development on the former marshland.
- Improve boundary treatments along the A256 Sandwich Bypass to help filter views of urban fringe uses and reduce the impact of built development on the open and exposed landscape. Landscape enhancement of the road corridor is a key opportunity.
- Protect the valued recreation use of the landscape, seeking opportunities to further enhance access and enjoyment of the wider landscape. In particular, seek opportunities to enhance linear cycle and walking routes that run along the A256 road corridor through appropriate landscape treatments and providing connections to routes along the river.
- Maintain the marshland and natural river corridor setting to historic sites and Sandwich. Consider any change within this area on sites within the wider landscape including the setting of Sandwich and Richborough.

## LCT C: Coastal Marshes and Dunes



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Source: DDC, LUC

### Landscape Character Areas

The Coastal Marshes and Dunes LCT is subdivided into two LCAs:

- C1: Sandwich Bay
- C2: Lydden Valley



## LCA C1: Sandwich Bay

### Location and Summary

The Sandwich Bay LCA is located to the north-east of the district, situated between the sea at Sandwich Bay to the east, Sandwich town to the west, Pegwell Bay to the north and Deal to the south.

The LCA comprises a distinctive area of flat, low-lying arable land, plus ecologically rich areas of salt marsh, mudflats, sand dunes, beach and shallow waters forming part of a wide sweeping bay between Ramsgate and Deal. This is an open, horizontal landscape with large skies and very few vertical elements, within although with visibility to the large-scale industrial buildings and Discovery Park to the west.



White Cliffs Country Trail/ England Coast Path, Sandwich Bay Estate North of Deal

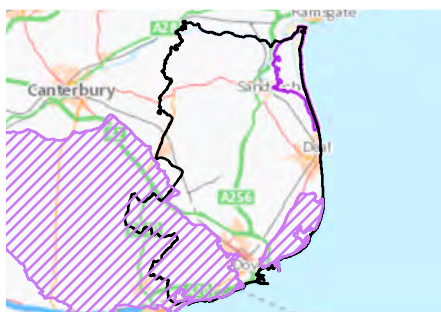


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Source: DDC, LUC

**C1 - Sandwich Bay**

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- A distinctive area of flat, low-lying salt marsh, mudflats, shingle beach and shallow waters forming a wide sweeping bay that transitions to an open seascape in the east.
- Supports an important complex mosaic of habitats and carries several international, national, and local nature conservation designations.
- Central and northern areas are under arable farming within predominantly large, rectilinear fields plus smaller areas of horticultural crops protected by shelterbelts.
- Three renowned golf courses at Royal St Georges on the dunes, Prince's golf links to the north and Royal Cinque Ports to the south, with associated clubhouses.
- Strategically important as site of several historic cross channel landings, including by the Romans, St Augustine, and the Saxons.
- Generally open, with the only limited built development at Sandwich Bay Estate, New Downs Farm, and the club houses of three golf courses.
- A number of small lanes and tracks provide private access to New Downs Farm, golf courses, arable fields, and Sandwich Bay Estate.
- Good recreational land use in the form of coastal walking trails (part of the England Coast Path) and three golf courses.
- Flat, open, horizontal landscape with very few vertical elements; tree cover limited to shelter belt planting.
- A sense of remoteness and wildness in places, with sounds of sea, wind, and birds.
- A sense of dynamism and movement due to changing tides, drifts of coarse coastal grasses blowing in the wind, water sport activity and birds in flight.
- The adjoining urban areas, Deal to the south and Sandwich/Great Stonar to the west, exert an influence on the open landscape, and notably views to large scale buildings in close proximity at Discovery Park.

### Natural Influences

The majority of the LCA comprises a bedrock of chalk and sand, silt, and clay, overlain by a distinctive banding of tidal flat and undifferentiated storm beach (sand and gravel) deposits.

The area has a flat and low-lying topography, with elevations of between 0m and 5m AOD. There is little natural topographical variation across the area, although there are minor undulations within areas of sand dune and there is a noticeable descent from the steeply shelved shingle beach to the shoreline in places. Man-made landforms are evident within the three golf courses and in the form of sea defences such as sea walls and low ridges.

Soils within the majority of the LCA are sandy, deep, and freely draining, although areas to the north-west and west in the vicinity of the River Stour comprise naturally wet loamy and clayey soils.

The LCA supports a complex mosaic of habitats where not intensively farmed and drained. This includes extensive inter tidal mudflats, salt marsh, shingle beach and sand dunes (including the only area of ancient dune pasture in Kent). The

saltmarsh is home to a range of flora, such as sea lavender and rare golden samphire, and the dune pasture provides a habitat for orchids. The LCA is internationally important for waders and wildfowl, and a large colony of harbour seals. As a result, the area carries several international, national, and local nature conservation designations, including a Ramsar site (Thanet Coast & Sandwich Bay), SPA, SAC, SSSI (Hacklinge Marshes), NNR (Sandwich & Pegwell Bay) and LNR (Prince's Beachlands). The LCA lies within the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA.



Cultivated land on the sandy soils, contrasts with areas of rough grazing

Woodland cover within the LCA is generally absent, limited to shelter belt planting associated with arable farming, much of which is coniferous, and scattered hawthorn within grazing land to the north. Small coniferous copses are also a feature of the Prince's Golf Links to the north. The First Edition OS shows the area as comprising extensive areas of open salt marsh, referred to as 'salts' or 'saltings', with evidence of reclamation for agriculture within central and northern parts.

### Cultural Influences

Historically the area has been of strategic importance for numerous cross channel landings, most notably by the Romans. Julius Caesar crossed the channel in 55 and 54 BC and is thought to have landed on the beaches around Deal on both occasions, although recent evidence suggests that Pegwell Bay, to the north, may have been the first landing site. The area is also associated with the subsequent Claudian Roman invasion of Britain in 43 AD, with part of the Roman invasion force under Senator Aulus Plautius landing at nearby Richborough. In addition, Pegwell Bay is thought to have been the arrival point of St. Augustine, the first Christian mission to England in 597 AD; and Hengist and Horsa, legendary leaders of the first Anglo-Saxon settlers in Britain.

There is a small concentration of heritage designations, all of which are Grade II listed buildings within Sandwich Bay Estate. The estate was constructed as part of a planned resort town developed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, before World War I prevented its completion and features an eclectic group of houses in varied architectural styles, although many are in arts and crafts style.

Whilst much of the LCA retains natural habitat and landcover (i.e. salt marsh, mudflats, sand dunes and shingle beach), the central and northern parts of the LCA support agriculture on the reclaimed marshlands of the Sandwich flats. Originally systematically reclaimed as summer pasture for sheep, due to agricultural improvements this is now predominantly arable cropping albeit with some cattle grazing to the west and north, and areas of soft fruit enclosed by shelterbelts. Fields are generally large and rectilinear in shape, with some irregular fields where constrained by natural or man-made hydrological features including streams and dykes. The fields are generally defined by ditches and/or post and wire fencing, although woodland shelter belts have been planted in places. Many of the shelter belts are coniferous, appearing alien within the flat, open coastal landscape.

The LCA is an important recreational landscape, with numerous walking trails (including the England Coastal Path, the Stour Valley Walk, the Saxon Shore Way, and the White Cliffs Country Trail) providing public access along the coast. There are also three golf courses extending in a linear belt to the east, lying inland behind the sea set within dunes and

coastal grassland. These are the Prince's Golf Links (founded 1906) located to the north, the Royal St Georges Golf Links (founded 1887) located due east of Sandwich, and the Royal Cinque Ports Golf Links (founded 1892) to the south. All three have hosted the famous Open Golf Championship, the Royal St Georges having done so on numerous occasions.

There is no settlement, apart from the Sandwich Bay estate, buildings at New Downs Farm and the golf course club houses. No major roads traverse the LCA, although there are a number of small lanes and tracks that provide private access to New Downs Farm, the golf courses, arable land, and the Sandwich Bay Estate.



Northern edge of Deal abutting the coastal landscape

### Perceptual Influences

This is a flat, open, horizontal landscape with large skies and very few vertical elements. Open views are available out to sea to the east and across Pegwell Bay towards Thanet coast to the north.

The open salt marsh and mudflats evoke a sense of remoteness and wildness, with sounds of sea, wind, and birds. There is also sense of dynamism and movement as a result of changing tides altering the shape of the coastline, drifts of coarse coastal grasses blowing in the wind, water sport activity, and birds in flight.

A variation in colour is evident along the coast, with the pale colours of shingle along the higher edge of the beach and the darker colour of the sand at the water's edge. Texture and pattern are provided by clumps of sea kale and sea holly within the shingle and occasional scrub.

The lack of settlement and roads reinforces the remote and inaccessible qualities of the area. However, despite the general lack of built development within the LCA itself, the urban areas adjoining it to the south and west exert an influence. In particular the large-scale industrial development to the west at Sandwich Industrial Estate and Discovery Park in Great Stonar is readily apparent and dominates views in a landward direction, albeit shelter belt planting reduces its influence in places.



Discovery Park is dominant in some views over the flat coastal landscape

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Flat, low-lying landscape with a strong sense of openness allowing uninterrupted views across the landscape and out to sea. Impact of large-scale development to the west on these qualities.
- A general lack of built development and roads which increases the sense of remoteness and wildness.
- Ecologically important, with several international, national, and local nature conservation designations covering areas of salt marsh, mud flats, sand dunes and beach.
- Recreational value of the promoted routes, which provide access to the coast and across the salt marsh, mudflats, sand dunes.
- Historic strategic importance as site of numerous cross-channel landings.
- Forms the setting for three notable link golf courses, including the Royal St Georges Golf Course.

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Sandwich Bay LCA is to conserve and enhance the character of the flat open landscape and sense of place created by the distinctive pattern of ditch lined fields, shingle beach, sand dunes, salt marshes and mudflats. Ecologically important wetland and coastal habitats should be conserved and enhanced and extended where possible

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Work with natural coastal processes to conserve and enhance the coastal landscape with its distinctive pattern of shingle beach, sand dunes, salt marshes and mudflats.
- Conserve and enhance ecologically important wetland and coastal habitats, in line with current management plans identified in the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA – seeking to extend and connect habitats where feasible.
- Generally coniferous shelterbelts are distinctive and characteristic elements in this coastal landscape and should be retained, although replacement with native deciduous species is also an opportunity.
- Restore historic land patterns of the reclaimed marshes, governed by natural and man-made drainage channels.
- Protect and manage the valued recreational use of the landscape, seeking opportunities to further enhance opportunities for access and enjoyment.
- Enhance the visual characteristics and quality of promoted routes, drawing upon the connections to the historic coastal landing events, including through the preservation and enhancement of vistas towards Pegwell Bay and the beaches around Deal.

### Development Management

- Maintain the sense of openness by resisting proposals for new development that impinge on the remote undeveloped quality of the marshland and its shoreline. This includes intensification/density of existing uses.
- Conserve the skyline, avoiding visually intrusive development, both within the area and outside it, that impacts the characteristic large open skies and horizons.
- Consider the impact on longer views from the marshes and the coast of large scale or tall development at Discovery Park and Sandwich Industrial Estate. Tree screening, muted colours, varied rooflines, cladding and non-reflective surfaces will help provide mitigation and integration and should be objective for detailed design of proposed development.
- Ensure that an attractive and integrated edge is formed between rural landscape and the adjacent urban areas. This is important for existing edges as well as any new strategic allocations at Discovery Park or Sandwich Industrial Estate.

## LCA C2: Lydden Valley

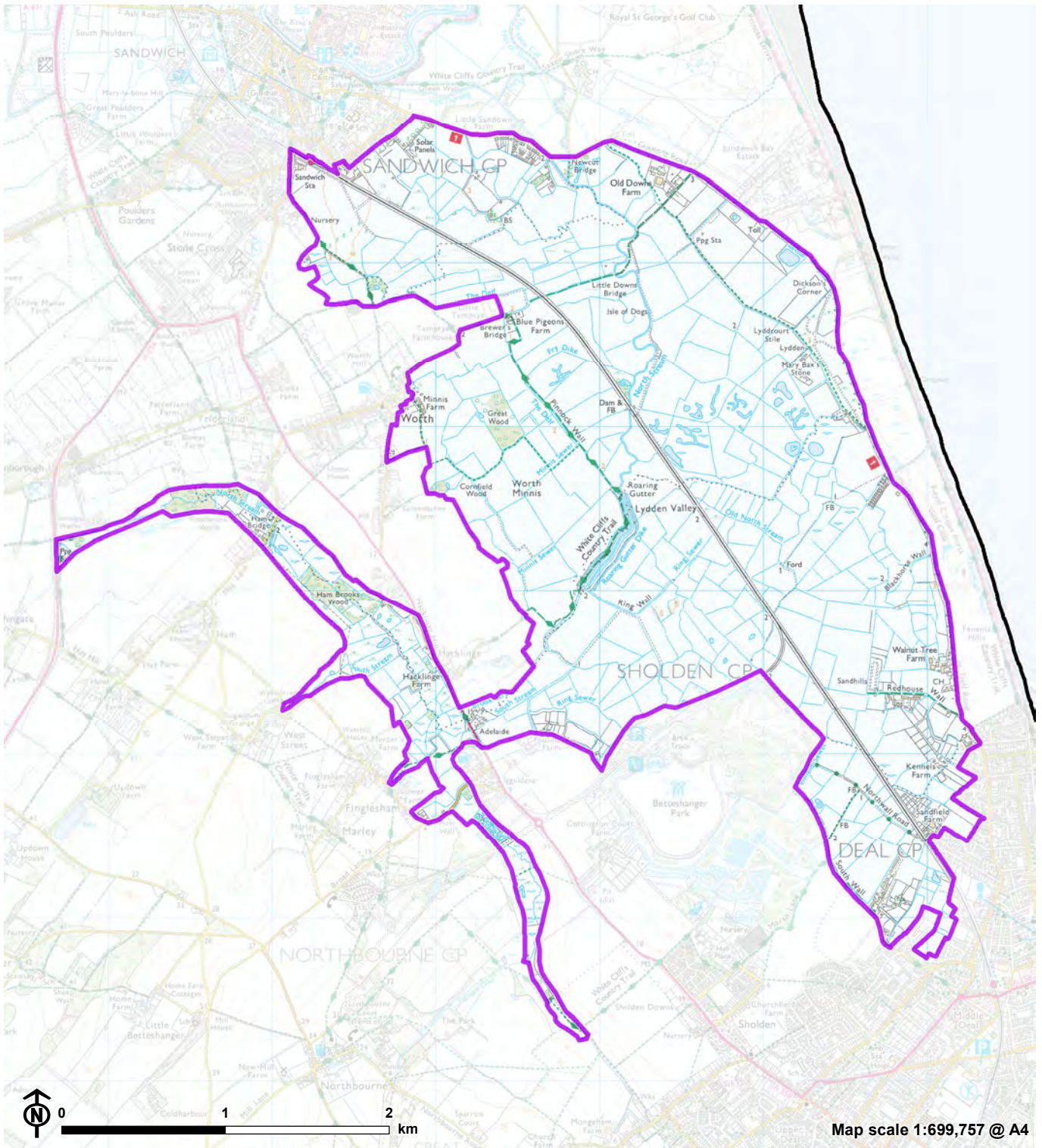
### Location and Summary

The Lydden Valley LCA is located on the low-lying coastal land south-east of Sandwich and north-west of Deal. It comprises agricultural land on former grazing marsh, drained by a complex network of streams, dykes and sewers. The North and South Streams run through the area and drain the land with the water pumped at 'Roaring Gutter' into the Delf Stream that runs to the Stour at Sandwich.

The LCA continues as a narrower enclosed valley inlet to the west along the North Stream towards Eastry. The south the boundary is marked by the rising landform of Betteshanger Country Park located on shale spoil associated with Betteshanger Colliery (LCA F2), and to the north and east by the lighter sands and golf links of Sandwich Bay (LCA C1). Inland, the boundary is marked by the rising landform and agricultural land (D2). A substantial part of the area of former agricultural land is now part of the RSPB Lydden Valley Reserve.





Cattle and grazing marsh near Great Wood

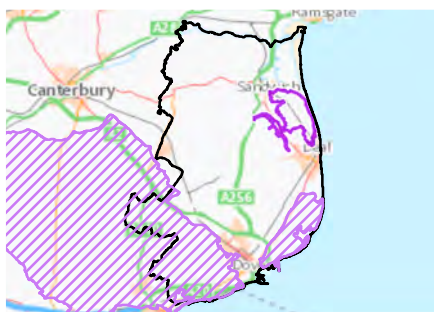


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Source: DDC, LUC

**C2 - Lydden Valley**

-  Dover district
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty





### Key Characteristics

- Flat low-lying topography – forming a large scale horizontal open landscape, with a more enclosed partially wooded valley landscape continuing eastwards to Eastry along the North Stream.
- Land use dominated by pasture, with some arable, horticultural cropping and extensive areas being reverted to traditional grazing marsh.
- Fields are medium scale, with no discernible pattern and boundaries defined by a complex network of drainage ditches.
- Large part of area designated SSSI and Ramsar (area east of the railway also SPA), and part of an Important Bird Area, valued for the large numbers of waders and wildfowl who use the coast and inland grazing marsh in winter and during spring and autumn migrations.
- Other important habitats include blocks of ancient woodland at Great Wood and Reedbrook Wood, plus wet alder wood at Hambrooks. Rare areas of relict fen occur at Hacklinge Marsh and along the Lydden Valley.
- Access limited to a minor single-track lane from Worth plus a network of rights of way, along dike walls as at Pinnock Wall. Large parts of the area are remote and inaccessible.
- General absence of development apart from occasional chalets and farm buildings. Sandwich- Deal rail line cuts across the centre of the area. Occasional telegraph poles and wires are visually prominent.
- Unenclosed open landscape with the big skies and strong perception of remoteness and tranquillity.
- Sense of an isolated ‘forgotten’ hidden rural landscape.

### Natural Influences

The area is unenclosed and open with flat low-lying topography. The geology comprises mainly marine (estuarine) alluvium with some storm gravel beach deposits to the east. Soils comprise seasonally wet deep clay. A section to the south west consists of fen peat, tufa, and river alluvium under deep peat soils with associated calcareous mineral soils.

The land is used almost exclusively as permanent grassland and rough grazing, with some arable land use on improved ground. Cattle graze the large fields, separated by ditches and the occasional post and wire fence. Much of the area is lowland fen priority habitat.

This is a low lying, open landscape. Occasional clumps of hawthorn and gorse emerge along ditch lines, although wooded clumps and isolated trees are rare except near the North and South Streams. Here, small blocks of ancient woodland occur at Great Wood and Reedbrook Wood, plus wet alder wood at Hambrooks. Rare areas of relict fen, priority habitat (lowland fen) are present at Hacklinge Marsh and along the Lydden Valley. Wetter areas of ground are noticeable due to darker patches of sedges and reed vegetation, with further areas of wetland habitats currently being created through blocking up of drainage and restoration of grazing marsh.

Large part of the area is designated as SSSI and Ramsar, with the area east of the railway also SPA. It is part of an Important Bird Area, valued for the large numbers of waders and wildfowl who use the coast and inland grazing marsh in winter and during spring and autumn migrations, including

snipe, redshank and lapwing, as well as bittern and rare Baillon’s crakes.



The North Stream

### Cultural Influences

The HLC defines the dominant historic field pattern as small rectilinear enclosures. Fields are bounded by a network of ditches, dikes. This area of extensive grazing marsh was improved post war with water pumped via Roaring Gutter to make the land viable for more intensive agricultural use, including some areas of arable and horticultural cropping at Worth. The series of ditches provide a pattern of consistency across the area.

There are two small mobile home/chalet parks caravan parks with low rise chalet buildings as well simple barn structures associated with the farms. The built fabric is minimal, and the area has a largely undeveloped character.



Hacklinge pumping station

### Perceptual Influences

Occasional tall structures including lines of conifers and telegraph poles interrupt the simple open horizons and skylines in this predominantly horizontal landscape.

A narrow single track runs through the area with small grass verges and open views to the sides. The railway runs northwest to southeast through the farmland, linking Sandwich with Deal. A number of footpaths and bridleways link to form circular routes and connections with the coast. The sky is a major composite of this low lying open unenclosed landscape.

Due to flat landform, lack of tree cover and unenclosed nature, views across the area are wide and uninterrupted. A rise in level is evident with the wooded slopes of Betteshanger on the former colliery site to the south.



Dikes with reeds divide the grazing marsh

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- The flat open landscape, long views, dramatic skies create visual sensitivity to any form of development or tall structures within and adjacent to the Lydden Valley marshes.
- Long open views east to the coast and south to edge of Deal and Betteshanger.
- Strong ecological interest associated with freshwater grazing marsh and drainage ditches, supporting numbers of wildfowl and waders (SSSI, SPA, Ramsar).
- Small blocks of ancient woodlands including wet alder wood, within the open landscape.
- Absence of development/settlement across the area contributing to the sense of openness and remote qualities.
- Overall tranquil, isolated rural character – sense of history and time depth associated with traditional grazing marsh.
- Value for informal recreation via a network of rights of way that link to inland villages and the coast.

## Strategy

The strategy for the Lydden Valley LCA is to restore and recreate/enhance the traditional grazing marsh, fen and reedbed habitat, as part of the wider wetland network in the Lower Stour catchment, as identified in the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA.

## Guidance

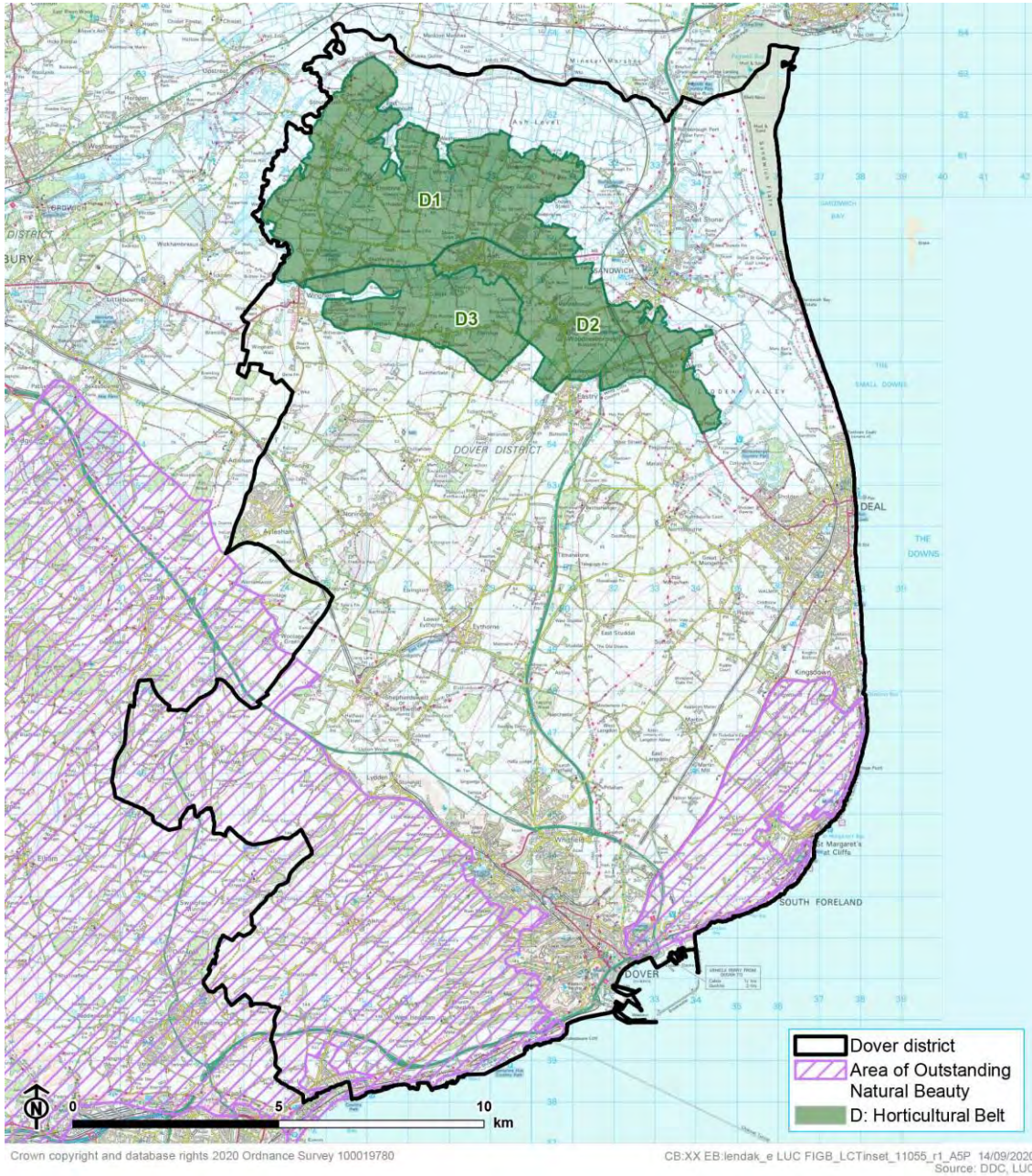
### Landscape Management

- Support proposals to enable the management, conservation and restoration/enhancement of traditional grazing marsh and fen habitats to maximise both landscape and biodiversity benefits.
- Support BOA proposals and targets for a new, landscape-scale wetland complex, including fen, reedbed and grazing marsh, in which successional processes are allowed to proceed.
- Conserve the traditional field pattern of dykes and ditches and traditional grazing marsh character of small grazed fields balancing this with wetland creation projects.
- Conserve and manage the wet woodlands and allow for some natural regeneration of woodland to provide connectivity between existing small blocks.

### Development Management

- Conserve the open undeveloped 'remote' character of the Lydden Valley landscape with its absence of permanent buildings and structures.
- The open character of the landscapes accentuates the visual impact of many proposals over a wide distance - Avoid proposals that can result in the interruption of views of large open skies or horizons or impinge on the remote undeveloped quality.
- Consider impact of development on adjacent slopes on this low-lying open landscape including around Betteshanger Country Park and the northern edge of Deal avoiding extension of an urban fringe landscape. Development here will impact on views within this open landscape.
- Manage recreational use to conserve the biodiversity interest of the marshlands, maintaining existing rights of way access and considering opportunities to provide further low-key footpath access.

## LCT D: Horticultural Belt



### Landscape Character Areas

The Horticultural Belt is subdivided into three LCAs:

- D1: Preston Horticultural Belt
- D2: Ash Settled Horticultural Belt
- D3: Staple Farmlands

## LCA D1: Preston Horticultural Belt

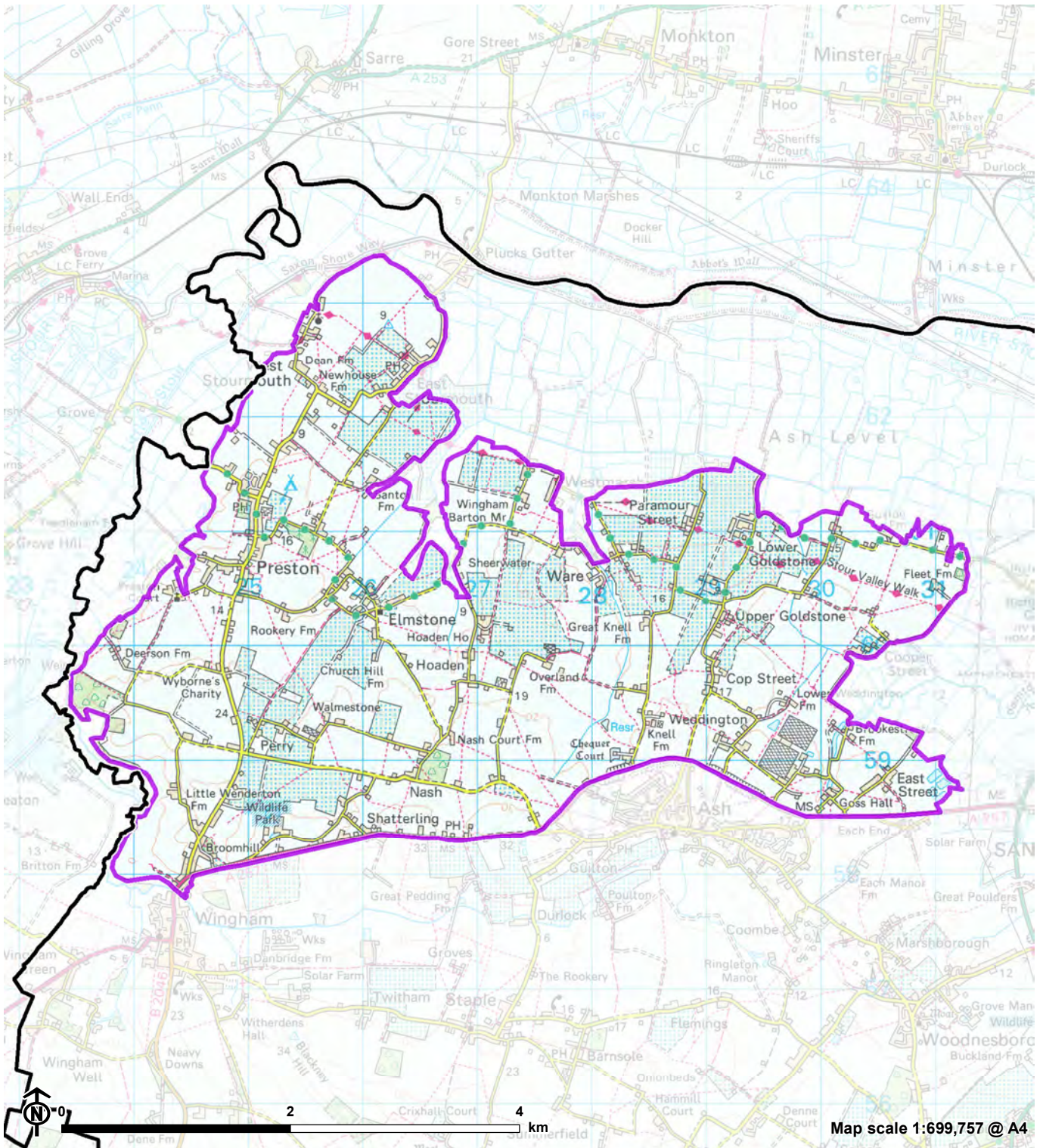
### Location and Summary

The LCA is located to the north of the district. It is defined to the south by the A257; to the north by lower ground associated with the River Stour (the Ash Level); to the east by Goshall Valley; and to the west by lower ground around the Little Stour (Little Stour Marshes).

A largely flat and gently rolling landscape where fertile soils support a variety of agricultural land use, including orchards, vineyards, and arable cropping. The area is rural in character with numerous glasshouses and poly-tunnels, and scattered farmsteads, hamlets, and small villages.



Open arable fields and large skies contrast with more enclosed horticultural crops

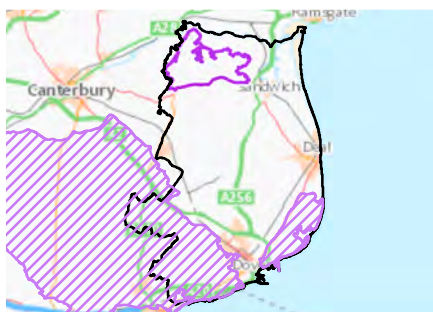


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Source: DDC, LUC

**D1 - Preston**

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- An area of gradually sloping landform, between the Ash Ridge in the south and south west and the Stour Valley marshes but generally perceived as being relatively flat.
- High quality agricultural soils support a variety of agricultural and horticultural land uses, including significant areas of orchards, glasshouses, vineyards, arable and some pasture.
- Narrow north-south valleys on the north side of the ridge draining to the marshes are distinctive features with areas of pasture and sheep grazing.
- Moderate tree cover with small, scattered woodlands and copses and native hedgerows, with tall poplar and alder and beech windbreaks, plus orchard plantations.
- Predominantly rectilinear field pattern, with field size varying depending on land use, large open arable fields contrasting with more enclosed orchards, horticultural uses surrounded by shelterbelts.
- Numerous glasshouses and poly-tunnels, although often well-concealed within the landscape.
- Network of roads, narrow lanes, and tracks, which largely follow north-south and east-west axes.
- A dense network of PRow that connect the various settlements and roads and provide public access across the agricultural land; including the Stour Valley Walk.
- Settlement comprises several scattered clusters of farmsteads and oast houses, hamlets and small villages, as well as some linear settlement along roads with a mix of building styles. More remote and isolated character to the east.
- Areas to the west are more settled, with linear development along the road linking the Stourmouths, Preston and Wingham with a concentration of villages and hamlets.
- Conservation area designations marking historic villages and Numerous Grade II listed buildings throughout the LCA, reflecting the local vernacular and agricultural nature of the landscape, including distinctive brick and black timber barns as well as large modern packing sheds.
- An overriding rural character, although this is eroded in places, with some villages extended. A busy working agricultural character throughout, more 'remote' unsettled character in the east.
- A sense of openness within the larger arable fields, whilst there is a stronger sense of enclosure around orchards, along narrow lanes and within the smaller scale pasture fields near settlements.
- Views are generally limited across the LCA due to the relatively flat topography and enclosure by hedgerow and shelterbelts, although some longer-distance views are available from higher ground.
- A linear pattern, due to the predominant north-south and east-west axes of roads, lanes and tracks; the predominance of rectilinear fields; the straight lines of Poplar and Alder windbreaks; and the parallel lines of poly-tunnels and planting within fields and orchards.

### Natural Influences

The bedrock geology is predominantly comprised of clay, silt, sand, and gravel (Lambeth Group), with pockets of sand, silt, and clay (Thanet formation) to the east. The bedrock is overlain by brickearth (silt) deposits or sand and gravel deposits.

The LCA has a gradually sloping landform, falling from the higher ground (up to 30m AOD) of the Ash Ridge in the south-west and south to the lower ground (approximately 2-3m AOD on its periphery) of the marshlands of the Ash Level to the north and east and to the Little Stour marshes to the west. However, the fall in levels is largely imperceptible in the landscape giving rise to the impression of a relatively flat landscape, albeit slightly undulating in comparison to the

adjoining flat, low-lying marshes. On the north side of the Ash Ridge several narrow and shallow north-south valleys are formed by seepages, which feed small streams and ponds important for biodiversity.

The soils across the LCA are freely draining, slightly acidic and loamy, and form excellent quality agricultural land. As a result, the area is intensely farmed.

Intensive farming has limited ecological diversity and the LCA contains just two nature conservation designations – Chislet Marshes, Sarre Penn and Preston LWS and Seaton Pits and Wenderton Manor Pits LWS – and only very small areas of priority habitat deciduous woodland. Modern field amalgamation has led to the loss of field boundary hedges.

Tree cover in the LCA includes several small deciduous woodlands and copses and native hedgerows. Species include hawthorn, ash, hazel, and elm. Poplar and alder windbreaks and orchard plantations add to the tree cover. Four small areas of Ancient Woodland are to be found on the western periphery of the LCA – Deerson Wood, Wenderton Hoath, Preston Court Wood and Hanging Bank Wood. Areas of roadside verge increase the ecological diversity, with some species rich grassland retained.



Valley seepages adjoining Ash Levels to the north

### Cultural Influences

There is a variety of agricultural land use including orchards, horticultural crops, vineyards, arable and some pasture. The Grade 1 agricultural soils support a wide range of crops, such as fruit, field vegetables, root crops, brassicas, cereals, and hops. Areas of pasture and horse keeping are apparent around settlements. The area features numerous glasshouses and poly-tunnels, although generally well-concealed within the landscape, particularly the larger nurseries at Weddington in the east.

Fields vary in size depending on their use. Arable cultivation is generally within large, open rectilinear or irregular-shaped fields defined by low banks, ditches and/or low gappy hedgerows with very few mature trees. These are classified by the HLC as 19<sup>th</sup> century enclosures with extensive modern boundary loss. Orchards tend to be within smaller sized geometric fields, often enclosed by poplar and alder hedgerows that act as wind breaks. Pasture is largely focussed around settlements and farmsteads in small rectilinear and geometric fields enclosed by native hedgerow vegetation, classified by the HLC as parliamentary enclosures.

The principal roads within the LCA are the A257, which runs east-west along the southern boundary; and Preston Road, which runs north-south through Preston to the west.

Elsewhere the LCA is traversed by a network of narrow lanes and tracks, which largely follow a north-south and east-west axes. The north-south axis reflects the route old 'drove roads',

allowing movement of livestock between higher ground to the south with grazing marsh on lower ground to the north.

The LCA also features a dense network of PRow, which connect the various settlements and roads and provide public access to the agricultural land. The Stour Valley Walk crosses the LCA to the north, connecting Sandwich in the east to West Stourmouth in the west.

A ring ditch and enclosure south of Preston – which is thought to be the remains of an Iron Age round house and a Romano-British farmstead; and a Medieval Moated Site at Chequer Court to the south, reflect the ancient and historic settlement of the area.

Settlement comprises several scattered clusters of historic farmsteads and oast houses, or hamlets and small villages. Some linear settlements have also formed along the roads, such as at Preston Hill and Upper Goldstone. The west of the area is more settled with a concentration of villages and hamlets, including Preston, Preston Court, Elmstone. The small hamlets of East and West Stourmouth mark the original confluence of the Great Stour to the Wantsum Channel.

The larger settlement of Preston contains a mix of building types, from relatively modern brick houses to historic buildings with timber framing, red brick and tile hung exteriors. Preston, Preston Court, Elmstone and West Stourmouth are designated as conservation areas and feature clusters of listed buildings. This includes Grade I listed churches at Preston Court and West Stourmouth. Elsewhere the LCA features numerous Grade II listed farmhouses, cottages, oasts and other outbuildings, which reflect local vernacular and the agricultural grain of the landscape including distinctive black timber barns. Large packing sheds are often associated with the orchard areas.



Black timbered farms are distinctive – now mainly converted for residential use



### Perceptual Influences

The landscape has an overriding rural character, although this is eroded in the vicinity of the relatively busy A257 to the south, and to some extent in proximity to the larger village of Preston due to the recent introduction of new housing development. In addition, at certain times of the year higher levels of activity are noticeable around farms, particularly at harvest time. Levels of enclosure vary across the LCA. There is a sense of openness within the larger arable fields (e.g. around Deerson and around Hoaden and Nash), whereas around orchards, along narrow lanes and within the smaller scale pasture fields near settlements, there is a stronger sense of enclosure due to tall hedgerows and windbreaks.

Views are generally limited across much the LCA due to the relatively flat topography and the visual coalescence of vegetation, which forms a wooded horizon at near or middle distances. However, there are some longer-distance views to the north, including towards the Thanet Ridge, available from areas of higher ground in the vicinity of Nash, Hoaden, Shaterling, Walmestone, Weddington and East Street, and from more open areas on the lower ground around Preston and Elmstone. Built form is generally apparent in views, in the form of isolated clusters of farmsteads or the built-up edge of

the larger villages and hamlets. Large black timber barns and oasts are a strong visual feature.

The landscape has a linear pattern, owing to the predominant north-south and east-west axes of roads, lanes and tracks; the predominance of rectilinear fields; the straight lines of Poplar and Alder windbreaks; and the parallel lines of poly-tunnels and planting within fields and orchards.



Orchard fruit grown under polytunnels

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Gently sloping land, contrasting with the adjacent low-lying former marshes and role as rural setting to this area.
- Narrow and shallow valleys formed by seepages, running to the marshes – a distinctive landscape and important for biodiversity.
- The high-quality soils supporting a wide range of crops which create visual diversity within the intensively farmed landscape. Mix of openness and enclosure according to crop patterns.
- Importance of remaining hedgerows and shelterbelts in providing enclosures and connecting habitats.
- The rural character of much landscape which provides a setting for the historic farmhouses and hamlets and villages with their clusters of listed buildings, including Preston, West Stourmouth and Elmstone.
- Dense network of PRoW that connect the various settlements and roads; includes the Stour Valley Walk.
- Linear grain of the landscape with its rectilinear field pattern and north-south axes reflecting historic drove routes to marsh grazing.
- Long views across the landscape from higher ground which are vulnerable to change from development.
- Relatively remote rural, isolated and unsettled character to the east.

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Preston Horticultural Belt LCA is to enhance the rural character of this intensively farmed area. Provide better connections with the adjacent marshes and strengthen the linear north-south grain of the landscape through reinforcing hedgerow boundaries.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of agricultural fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins and other wildlife-friendly farming methods.
- Increase the extent of native deciduous woodland/tree cover, particularly around settlements, using locally occurring species, to link with small deciduous woodlands, copses, and hedgerows.
- Conserve the traditional pattern and structure of the landscape by improving the continuity of hedgerow to enhance the rectilinear field pattern. Enhance and augment fragmented field boundary hedgerows with native species, filling gaps where possible.
- Conserve, and manage the narrow valley seepages that drain to the marshes – encouraging reversion to pasture along watercourses.
- Seek to encourage the traditional farming practice of top fruit production / and maintain restore traditional orchards.
- Protect the valued recreational use of the landscape (PRoW), seeking opportunities to further enhance opportunities for informal access and enjoyment through well maintained linked routes through farmland.

### Development Management

- Conserve the local distinctiveness of historic buildings and their rural setting, including within the Preston, Preston Court, Elmstone and West Stourmouth Conservation Areas.
- Consider the role of this area as the rural setting for the adjacent marshes.
- Encourage the sympathetic conversion of traditional barns and oast houses, to retain their rural character as features of the agricultural landscape.
- Resist proposals for highway upgrading to retain the rural character of the roads/lanes and their verges.
- Integrate new developments, particularly around Preston, through the use of native hedgerows and woodlands.
- Avoid large scale urban/housing extensions within this working rural agricultural landscape characterised by its small settlements and avoid linear coalescence of development along roads maintaining distinctive settlement identity.
- Conserve the more remote unsettled character to the east.

## LCA D2: Ash Settled Horticultural Belt

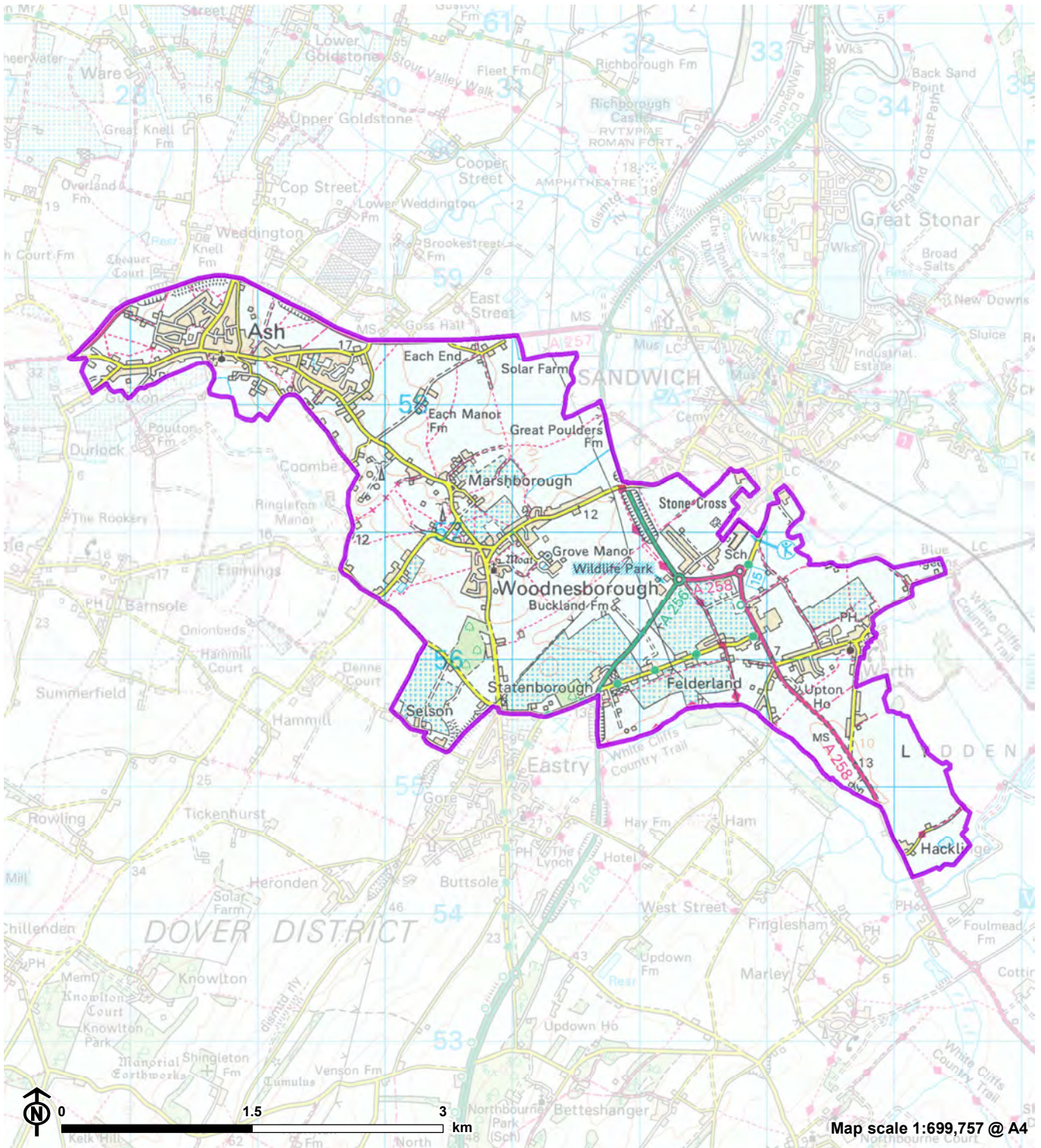
### Location and Summary

The Ash Settled Horticultural Belt LCA is located to the north of the district, extending between Ash and Hacklinge. It is defined to the north by the A257, to the east by the urban edge of Sandwich, to the south by the transition to the low-lying marshes of the Lydden Valley, to the south-west by the urban edge of Eastry, and to the west and north-west by the higher land of the Ash Ridge. The character is defined as distinctive from D1 and D3 due to the extent of settlement and development.

The LCA comprises a gradually sloping landform with a distinct ridge containing the settlements at Ash, and Woodnesborough, with high quality agricultural soils supporting a variety of agricultural land use, including arable, orchards and vineyard.



Distinctive church on hilltop at Ash is visible as a landmark over a wide area

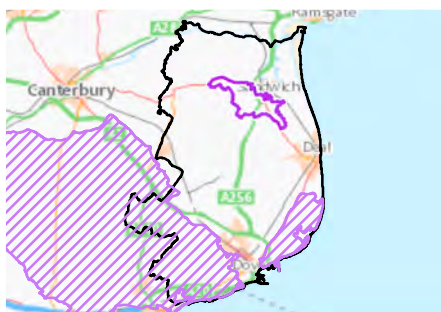


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Source: DDC, LUC

**D2 - Ash**

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- Landform gradually sloping from the Ash Ridge, although for the most part perceived as being relatively flat. Churches on the ridgetops are landmark features in wider views.
- Good quality agricultural soils supporting a variety of agricultural land uses, including arable, orchards, vineyards, and some pasture.
- Large amalgamated arable fields dominate to the north and south, whilst orchards and horticultural cropping is common in a central east-west belt and to the east of Marshborough. Fields of varying shape and size dependent on use. Pasture with paddocks and horse keeping apparent in close proximity to settlements.
- Moderate tree cover with several small woodlands and copses and native hedgerows, added to by poplar and alder windbreaks, orchard plantations and highways structural planting.
- A range of settlement including the relatively large village of Ash, the smaller connected settlements of Marshborough, Woodnesborough and Worth; linear development along roads; and several scattered farmsteads.
- A number of principal roads, including the A257, A256 and A258, as well as a network of B roads connecting settlements and minor lanes and tracks providing access to farmsteads and agricultural land.
- Conservation area designations associated with the historic areas of settlement at Ash and Worth, and clusters of listed cottages and farmhouses within Marshborough and Woodnesborough.
- A dense network of PRoW that connect the various settlements and roads and provide public access to the agricultural land.
- Strongly influenced by development including settlement, busy roads, electricity pylons, and the urban edge of Sandwich and Eastry.
- A strong sense of openness within the larger arable fields, whereas around orchards and within the smaller scale pasture fields there is a sense of enclosure due to tall hedgerows and windbreaks.
- Greater levels of woodland cover on the Ash Ridge creates a sense of enclosure, in particular around Coombe. This contrasts with long views out towards Sandwich and Thanet and south across the Staple Farmlands.
- Built-up edge of settlements and/or scattered farmsteads generally evident in views; oast houses and large black timber barns are a distinctive feature of the agricultural landscape.

### Natural Influences

The LCA is underlain by a bedrock of sand, silt, and clay to the north and chalk to the south. This is overlain by brickearth (silt) and Head (clay and silt) deposits.

The Ash Ridge (up to 37m AOD) lies within the north-west and west of the LCA, extending from Ash south as far as Woodnesborough. The landform within the LCA gradually falls from the ridge to lower ground (at approximately 0-2m AOD) to the north-east, east, south-east, and south. The fall in levels is largely imperceptible across much of the LCA, resulting in the impression of a relatively flat landscape, although the change is steeper and more apparent on the western side of Ash Ridge as for example, on approach to Woodnesborough along Beacon Lane).

The soils across the LCA are freely draining, slightly acidic and loamy, and form high quality agricultural land, except within a very small area to the north-east where loamy and clayey soils form poor quality agricultural land. As a result, the area is intensely farmed.

This is intensively managed agricultural land with limited biodiversity, with nature conservation designations limited to a small part of the Thanet Coast & Sandwich Bay Ramsar Site and the Sandwich Bay to Hacklinge Marshes SSSI on its south-east periphery with the Lydden Valley LCA. Priority habitats are limited to small areas of deciduous woodland.



Horticultural production near Felderland

Tree cover in the LCA includes several small deciduous woodlands and copses and native hedgerows, which are generally concentrated on the higher ground of Ash Ridge, (e.g. around Coombe) or adjacent to settlements. Species include oak, hawthorn, ash, hazel, and elm. Poplar and Alder windbreaks and orchard plantations also add to the tree cover, as does structural planting along the Ash Bypass (A257) and Sandwich Bypass (A256). Roadside verges increase the diversity of plants, and structural planting has been introduced along the A256 and A257.

### Cultural Influences

There is a variety of agricultural land use, including arable, orchards, vineyards, and some pasture. The high-quality agricultural soils support a wide range of crops, including horticultural crops, field vegetables, cereals and potatoes and hops. Large, open arable fields dominate to the north and south, whilst orchards are predominantly concentrated into an east-west belt across the centre of the LCA (centred on Felderland Lane) and to the east of Marshborough. Pasture and horse keeping is also apparent in proximity to settlements. The area features several glasshouses and poly-tunnels, although generally well-concealed within the landscape.

Fields vary in size depending on their use. Arable cultivation generally occurs within large, open rectilinear or irregular-shaped fields defined by low banks, ditches and/or low gappy hedgerows with very few mature trees. Orchards tend to be within smaller sized geometric fields, often enclosed by post and wire fencing and/or Poplar and Alder hedgerows that act as wind breaks. Pasture is largely focussed around settlements and farmsteads in small rectilinear and geometric fields enclosed by native hedgerow vegetation.

Settlement comprises the larger village of Ash, and the smaller settlements of Marshborough, Woodnesborough and Worth; linear development along roads, such as Sandwich Road and Felderland Lane; and several scattered farmsteads and oast houses. The settlements contain a mix of building types, from relatively modern brick houses to comparatively older types with thatch roofs and Flemish gable ends. The settlement edges comprise a mix of peri-urban land uses, including pasture, horse keeping and open spaces and sports fields.

The main settlements feature a number of listed buildings, and there are three conservation areas in Ash - 'The Street', 'Street End' and 'Gulston' - and one in Worth. Of note is the Grade I listed Church of St Nicholas within Ash, which dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Clusters of listed buildings (predominantly farmhouses and cottages) also mark the settlements of Marshborough and Woodnesborough. There are also three Scheduled Monuments within the LCA - an Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Ash Mill, a Medieval Moated Site at

Grove Manor Farm, and a Romano-Celtic temple and Iron Age site south of Worth, reflect the ancient and historic settlement of the area.

The LCA is traversed by a number of principal roads, including the A257 (Ash Bypass), the A256 (Sandwich Bypass) and the A258 (Deal Road). In addition, several B roads connect the settlements and a network minor lanes and tracks provide access to farmsteads and agricultural land. There is also a dense network of PRow that connect settlements and roads and provide public access through the agricultural land. This includes the White Cliffs Country Trail, which crosses the LCA to the south connecting Sandwich and Eastry.



Vernacular farm buildings including black timber and brick barns are a feature of the agricultural landscape

### Perceptual Influences

Despite the predominant agricultural land use, the landscape is strongly influenced by urban elements, including settlement, busy roads, a line of electricity pylons crossing the LCA to the east and south-west, and the urban edge of Sandwich and Eastry in proximity to the east and south respectively, although areas to the south around Hacklinge and to the west of Marshborough retain a more rural character. A number of housing allocations and recent developments are located on the periphery of Sandwich, Ash and Worth. Levels of enclosure vary across the LCA. There is a sense of openness within the larger arable fields, for example to the east of Ash/north-east of Woodnesborough and between Worth and Hacklinge, whereas around orchards and within the smaller scale pasture fields near settlements, there is a stronger sense of enclosure due to tall hedgerows and poplar and Alder windbreaks. In addition, the greater levels of woodland cover on the Ash Ridge to the north-west also creates a sense of enclosure, in particular around Coombe.

There are some longer-distance views east towards Sandwich and industrial development at Great Stonar (including the

former Richborough Power Station) available from open arable land to the east of Ash; and east across the low-lying Lydden Valley towards Sandwich Bay from open arable land to the south of Worth. Longer-distance views are also available west and south-west from the Ash Ridge, albeit woodland cover on the ridge restricts these views in places.

Built form is generally apparent in views, including the built-up edge of settlements and/or scattered farmsteads. Large black timber barns and oast houses are a strong visual feature. In addition, telecom masts at Coombe and Beacon Hill are apparent in views to and from the Ash Ridge.



Flower growing on rich soils near Poulders

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Gently sloping area of land, contrasting with adjacent low-lying f marshes and part of their setting.
- Diversity of agricultural land uses and crops creating a working agricultural landscape character.
- Distinctive sandy ridge around Coombe, with relatively enclosed character.
- Forms the rural setting of conservation areas and listed buildings – settlements along the ridge.
- Dense network of PRoW that connect the various settlements and roads.
- Openness and long views which are vulnerable to changes. Importance of churches at Ash and Marshborough as landmark features in long views across the landscape.

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Ash Settled Horticultural Belt is to enhance the rural character and seek to integrate existing and new development by strengthening landscape patterns and strategic woodland creation.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of agricultural fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins and other wildlife-friendly farming methods.
- Enhance and augment fragmented field boundary hedgerows with native species, filling gaps where possible, and reinstating hedges and hedgerow trees where appropriate.
- Increase the extent of native deciduous woodland/tree cover, particularly around settlements and along the Ash Ridge, using locally occurring species, to link with small deciduous woodlands, copses, and hedgerows.
- Conserve the local distinctiveness of historic buildings and their rural setting, including within the Conservation Areas in Ash and Worth.
- Improve boundary treatments with the use of native hedgerows to help filter views of urban fringe uses.
- Protect the valued recreation use of the landscape, seeking opportunities to further enhance opportunities for access and enjoyment via additional footpaths and walking trails.
- Encourage retention and conservation of remaining traditional orchards.

### **Development Management**

- Encourage the sympathetic conversion of traditional barns and oast houses, to retain their rural character.
- Use woodland creation opportunities to help integrate existing and new urban edges within the rural landscape setting.
- Seek positive landscape management around the settlements and where development/extensions are proposed seek to create a well-structured landscape framework to define edges and integrate settlement within the wider landscape.
- Maintain separation and individual identity of the ridge settlements at Ash, Marshborough, Woodnesborough, avoiding further linear development, consolidation/infilling along the connecting roads.



## LCA D3: Staple Farmlands

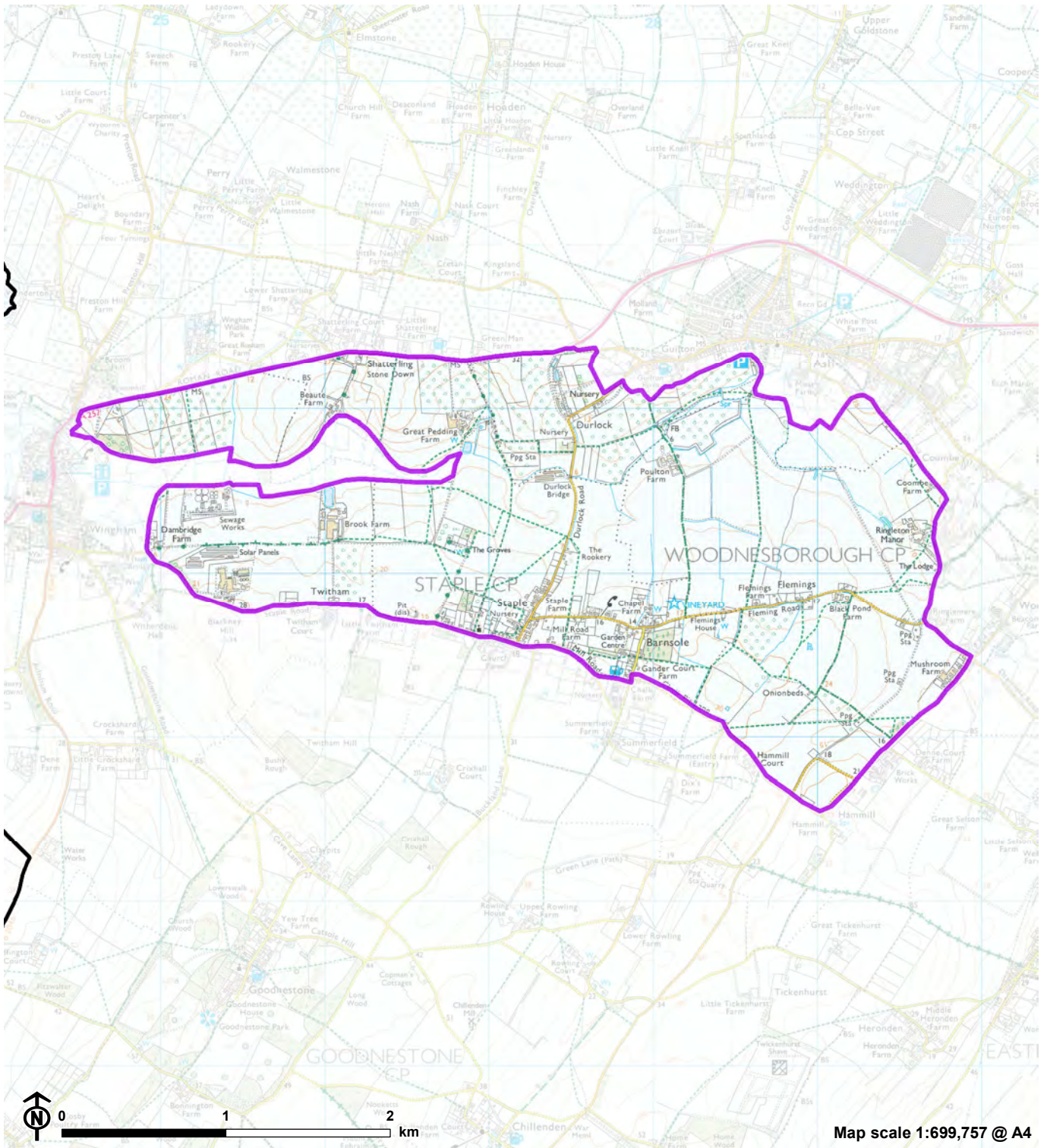
### Location and Summary

The Staple Farmlands LCA is located to the north of the district, lying east of Wingham and south of Ash. It is a transitional landscape between the chalk of the Wingham valley and the Horticultural Belt of Ash and Preston.

The LCA comprises gently undulating farmland with high quality agricultural soils supporting a wide variety of crops and is distinct from the Ash Settled Horticultural Belt due to its intact rural character.



Arable fields and oast houses at Staple Farm

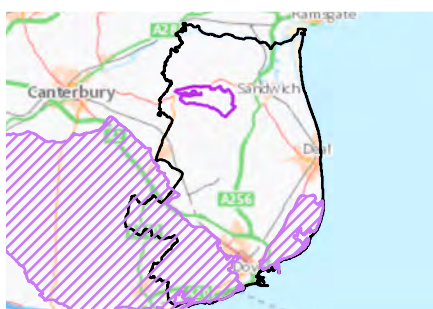


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Source: DDC, LUC

### D3 - Staple Farmlands

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating topography between 5 and 30m AOD, underlain by chalk with sand and silt clay (Thanet Formation).
- Upper reaches of the Wingham River extend through this area at Durlock Bridge.
- Small areas of priority habitat deciduous woodland, plus some poplar shelter belts and conifer plantations.
- Mixed land use of arable and grazing fields interspersed with orchards and vineyards in the north and south, with some priority habitat traditional orchard.
- Limited settlement pattern of isolated historic farmsteads, Staple and Barnsole villages in the south. A distinctive vernacular of redbrick, flint and render.
- Narrow rural lanes connect Staple to settlements outside of the LCA.
- Strong network of PRoW across field boundaries connect the farmsteads.
- Long open views across farmland to the north, with the church spire at Ash a landmark.
- Rural, tranquil landscape with a good experience of dark skies.

### Natural Influences

The landform rises from 5m AOD along the Wingham River valley (LCA A3) and undulates to 30m AOD around Barnsole and Shatterling. There slopes are steeper in the north than the south. The landscape is underlain by chalk in the west which transitions to sand and silts (Thanet Formation), overlain by Head deposits, particularly around Staple. Soils are deep, well-drained, often stoneless, slightly acid loamy soils which form high quality agricultural land.

This is an intensively managed agricultural landscape with limited biodiversity; priority habitats are limited to pockets of deciduous woodland and traditional orchard, concentrated in the north and south of the LCA. Hedgerows and clumps of native trees appear on field boundaries, and species include ash, hawthorn, elder and oak. There are also small coniferous plantations and poplar shelterbelts.

Part of the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA extends into the north of the LCA, along the Wingham River, which is part of an extensive network of water and wetland habitats.



Church of St James, Staple (Grade I listed)

### Cultural Influences

Land use is mixed, predominantly arable, orchards, vineyards, and one hop yard at Great Pedding Farm, with some sheep and poultry grazing.

There is a mixed field pattern, with smaller Parliamentary enclosures around settlements, at Durlock, Flemings and Barnsole, and large 20<sup>th</sup> century fields in the south-west and east. Grazing land has been converted to horse paddocks around Barnsole, and there are pockets of unmanaged pasture at Staple.

The former East Kent Light Railway ran from Wingham through Staple to Ash and was envisaged as connecting collieries to Richborough Port. Many of the proposed collieries along the line were never opened, and Richborough Port was a commercial failure. Freight travelled on the railway line from 1911, with some passenger services and eventually closed in 1949-51. There are now few landscape features relating to the railway line remaining.

Development is limited to isolated historic redbrick farms with some oast houses in the north and south, most of which are Grade II listed. Staple is the only settlement within the LCA, originally built on the edge of the former Wantsum Channel for trading purposes. The church of St James has origins in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and is a Grade I listed building. The vernacular in the LCA is redbrick, with Flemish gable ends and flint. There are more modern brick buildings within Staple and Barnsole.

Infill development after the Second World War has created a loose sense of coalescence between Staple and the hamlets of Barnsole and Summerfield (within LCA F2 Chillenden). Staple also has some employment development including market nurseries, garden centres and the Barnsole Vineyard.



Orchard at Flemings

In the west employment development were established on the site of the abandoned Wingham Coal Mine (1921), where there is also a small solar farm. These features are well-screened by woodland, tree belts and hedge planting.

Narrow hedgerow-lined roads traverse the LCA, connecting Staple and Barnsole to larger settlements outside the LCA including Ash to the north and Eastry to the south-east. The A257 runs along the northern boundary, and is a busy road connecting Wingham and Sandwich.

A rich network of PRow connects the farmsteads, often following field boundaries. A local cycle route runs along Durlock Road in the centre of the LCA.

### Perceptual Influences

There is a contrast between the openness of the large arable fields with views north to Ash, and areas of enclosure around orchards, shelterbelts, and the smaller pasture fields. The rural lanes are generally enclosed by hedgerows, limiting views.

This is a rural and tranquil landscape with few detractors and a good experience of dark skies. The A257 in the north impacts locally on tranquillity.



Arable farming north of Staple

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Transitional character between the chalk downland, river valley and agricultural low-lying former Wanstun Channel.
- Wingham River tributary extending into the area and linking to the Stour Valley wetlands.
- Diversity of agricultural land use with arable fields and traditional orchards, hops and vineyards provide interest within the landscape.
- Scattered historic settlement pattern of farmsteads and small villages, linked by narrow rural lanes.
- Rights of way provide access to the countryside and recreational value.
- Openness and long views, including to the landmark feature of St Nicholas church at Ash, that are vulnerable to change.
- Sense of tranquillity and experience of dark night skies.

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Staple Farmlands LCA is to conserve the rural characteristics of the landscape, strengthening the landscape patterns and ecological interest of hedgerows and deciduous woodland blocks, and retaining the traditional agricultural land uses of orchards and hops.

## Guidance

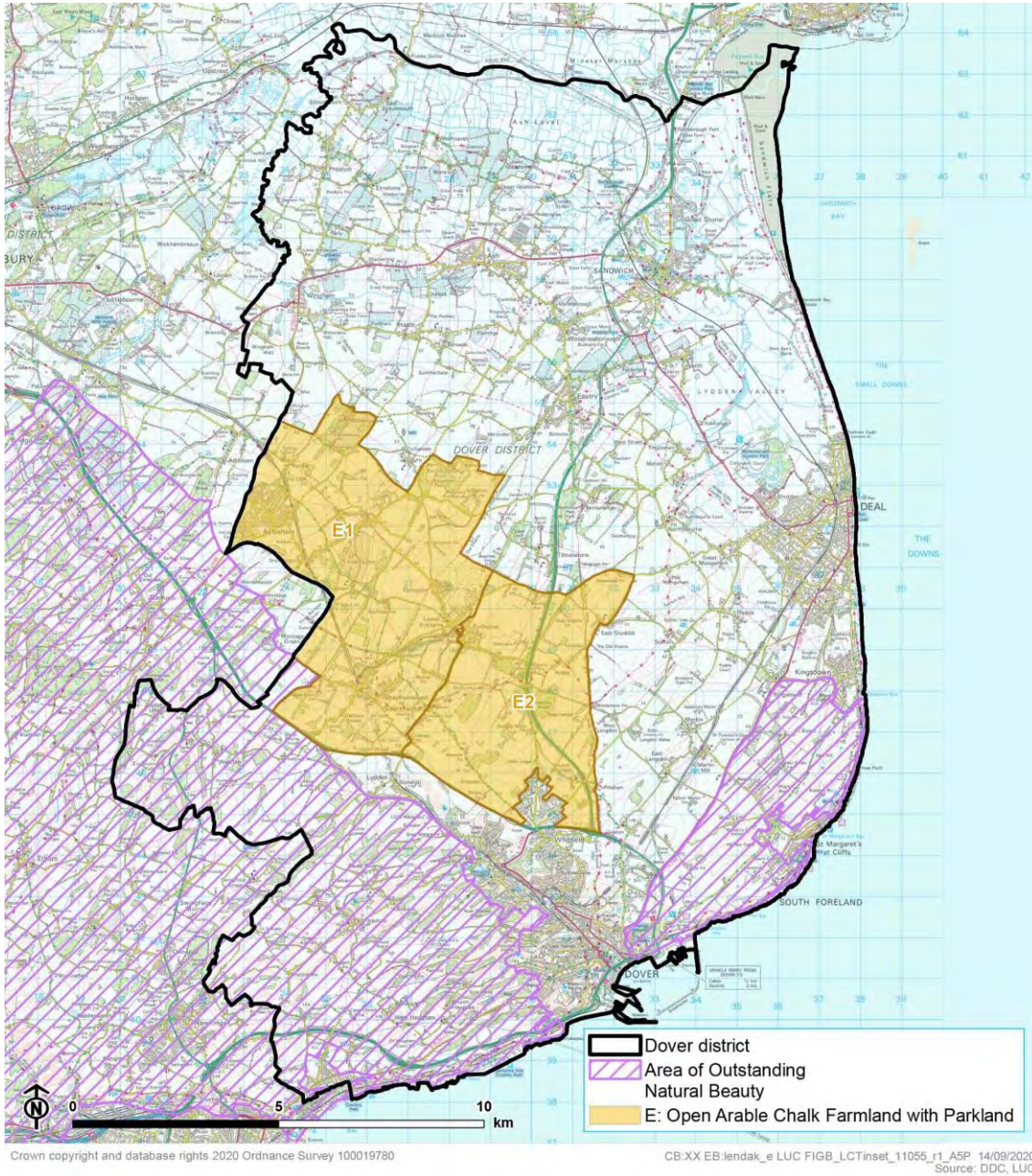
### Landscape Management

- Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of agricultural fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins and other wildlife-friendly farming methods.
- Conserve and improve the traditional landscape pattern and structure of the landscape, as well as increasing biodiversity interest through the establishment and maintenance of hedgerows and hedgerow trees along field boundaries, particularly around Durlock, Flemings and Barnsole.
- Explore opportunities for creation of floodplain grazing marsh along the upper Wingham River valley to increase the coverage of biodiversity interest, as part of the Lower Stour Wetlands LCA.
- Conserve traditional orchards for their historic and biodiversity value.
- Protect the valued recreation usage of the landscape, seeking opportunities to further enhance access and enjoyment.

### Development Management

- Conserve the strong vernacular of historic buildings and their rural setting.
- Conserve and respect the character and pattern of the historic built form and their association with traditional farming practices by resisting further agricultural intensification.
- Conserve the open landscape and avoid the introduction of large scale or incongruous elements.
- Encourage the use of traditional and in keeping materials, such as flint, redbrick and render.
- Resist proposals for highway upgrading to retain the rural character of the narrow lanes and associated verges.

## LCT E: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Parkland



### Landscape Character Areas

The Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Parkland LCT has been subdivided into two LCAs:

- E1: Shepherdswell Aylesham Parklands
- E2: Whitfield Parkland

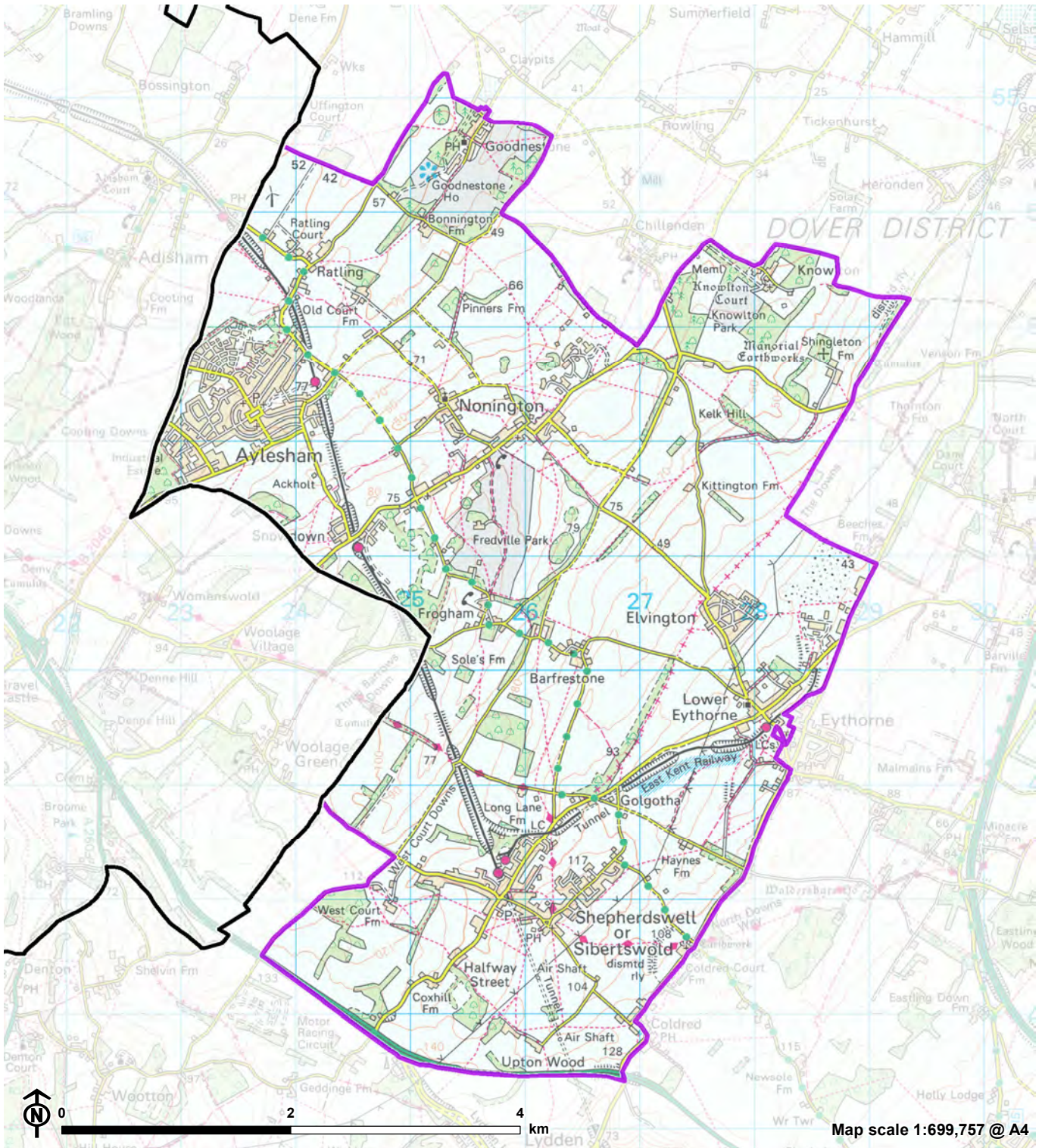
## LCA E1: Shepherdswell Aylesham parklands

### Location and Summary

The Shepherdswell Aylesham Parklands LCA is located in the west of the district. The western boundary is formed by the district boundary with Canterbury and the south-eastern boundary by the Kent Downs AONB. The northern boundary marks the change between areas of parkland and arable land, and the eastern boundary between the parkland and wooded landscape around Whitfield.



Grazing pasture at Fredville Park

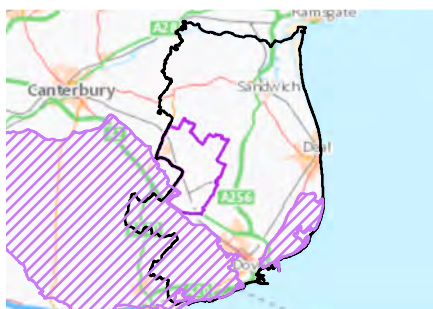


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Source: DDC, LUC

**E1 - Shepherdswell Aylesham Parklands**

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty





### Key Characteristics

- Undulating topography of distinct gentle ridges and valleys, ranging from 45m to 125m AOD, underlain by Chalk with Head deposits associated with the valleys.
- Numerous blocks of deciduous woodland, many of ancient origin, are locally designated and break up large arable fields. These include parkland belts, clumps, and copses.
- Historic parklands at Goodnestone, Knowlton and Fredville with associated historic buildings, woodland, and mature parkland trees.
- Small estate villages linked to the historic parklands with strong vernacular of redbrick, flint and Kent peg tiles, linked by narrow rural roads.
- Historic links to Kent coal mining at Aylesham, Eythorne and Shepherdswell.
- Good, connected PRoW network enabling access into the landscape, including the North Downs Way and Miners Way Trail Long Distance Footpaths.
- A rural and tranquil landscape, although cut by the major transport corridors of the A256, A2 and Dover Priory to London Victoria railway line.

### Natural Influences

A regular pattern of gentle ridges and valleys on a south-west to north-east axis, sits within the wider landform that falls gradually from the higher ground of the Kent Downs to the south-west. The topography within the LCA varies from 45m to 125m AOD. The landscape is underlain by Margate and Seaford Chalk, with overlying bands of Head brickearth deposits in a northeast-southwest direction. Soils are generally well drained fine and silty, with deep clay to loam soils to the south.



Tree-lined avenue at entrance to Knowlton Park

Blocks and belts of native deciduous woodland are found across the LCA, with priority habitat deciduous woodland and ancient woodland abundant. A number of the woodlands are locally designated as Local Wildlife Sites: Woods south of Snowdown; Holy Cross Churchyard, Goodnestone; Fredville Park, Nonington; The Knees and Disused Railway Line, Shepherdswell; and Woods near Shepherdswell. Westcourt

Lane and Shepherdswell Road are also locally designated as Roadside Nature Reserves.

Land is used primarily for arable farming, with large open fields supporting a mix of crops with linseed, wheat, barley and oil seed rape. Pasture fields associated with estate parklands have grazing sheep and cattle, and there are some pockets of pasture are contained within smaller, more enclosed fields around settlements.

### Cultural Influences

The field scale is medium to large, with the field pattern originating from straight-edged Parliamentary enclosure.

The LCA was historically divided into a number of manors and estates. Earthworks at Shingleton, now nationally protected as a Scheduled Monument, represent the foundations of a manor house, associated chapel and other agricultural buildings, part of a 'lost' manor.

Historic parklands survive at Fredville, Knowlton and Goodnestone. The latter is a Grade II\* listed Registered Park and Garden, comprising formal gardens, ornamental planting and parkland, farmland, and woodland. The novelist Jane Austen was a frequent visitor to the estate in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century as her brother married into the Fitzwalter family who owned Goodnestone. Traditional estate railing is found at Goodnestone.

Majestic parkland trees are common within the LCA, including the Majesty Oak in Fredville Park, which is the largest surviving maiden oak in the UK.

Small scattered traditionally Kentish 'estate' villages centred around often Grade I listed churches are found across the LCA. The vernacular in these villages is typically Kentish with

redbrick, flint and Kent peg tiles. Conservation Areas cover Goodnestone, Nonington – Church Street, Nonington – Easole Street, Ratling, Barfrestone, Frogham, Shepherdswell, Coldred and Eythorne. Large modern development occurs within the extended settlement at Aylesham.



Arable fields south of Elvington, with large pylons interrupting the landscape

Coal was discovered in Kent in 1890 during the abortive attempt to drill a Channel Tunnel, and various collieries were established across eastern Kent. Two mines were operational within this LCA: Snowdown and Tilmanstone. The East Kent Railway was built between 1911 and 1917 to serve the growing Kent Coalfield, and was planned to link the collieries with the main railway line and a new port at Richborough. The line between Shepherdswell and Tilmanstone Colliery has since been restored by the East Kent Railway Society as a heritage railway, providing trips between Shepherdswell and Eythorne.

Tilmanstone Colliery opened in 1906 however it was never a commercial success. Elvington Court was leased by the mine owners and fitted out as a dormitory for the workers at Tilmanstone Colliery. The pit village of Elvington was later built to support Tilmanstone Colliery. An aerial ropeway between Tilmanstone and East Langdon (within LCA F3 Ripple) was opened in 1929 to transport the coal more quickly and cheaply for export. The ropeway was dismantled in 1954 and Tilmanstone Colliery closed in 1989. The spoil heap and former railway line from Tilmanstone Colliery are still visible to the east of Elvington.

Snowdown Colliery opened in 1907 and became the first commercial pit in Kent in 1912. The colliery was temporarily closed for two years in 1922 before being bought by the mining company which owned Betteshanger (in LCA F2

Northbourne). Snowdown Colliery closed in 1987. The company built Aylesham village from 1926 which provided accommodation for 650 mining families associated with Snowdown Colliery. Aylesham was originally intended to grow to a town of 30,000 but other proposed collieries in the area were never realised.

Narrow rural lanes connect the historic settlement pattern, lined by strong hedgerows. These contrast with the major transport infrastructure A2, A256 and Dover Priory to London Victoria railway line.

There is a strong network of public rights of way throughout the area including the North Downs Way and Miners Way Trail Long Distance Footpaths.

### Perceptual Influences

Views within the LCA are relatively open, with rolling valleys, and blocks of woodland terminating views. The open views contrast with enclosed woodland areas around the parkland estates. There is more enclosure around settlements due to the built fabric, narrow roads, hedgerows, and mature trees. Hedgerows are largely intact, although there has been some reinforcement with post and wire fencing.

There is a largely tranquil landscape and there is a good experience of dark skies outside of the settlements, particularly at Goodnestone and Knowlton. Tranquillity is reduced locally by the A256 in the east and the A2 in the south. There are a number of electricity pylons and wires through the area which detract from the rural landscape character.



Spoil heap and former railway track from Tilmanstone colliery east of Elvington

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Elevated chalk ridges and valleys provide topographical interest and contrast of openness and enclosure in the landscape.
- Ecologically important priority habitat deciduous woodland and ancient woodland is locally designated.
- Historic parklands at Goodnestone, Knowlton and Fredville create locally distinctive historic landscapes.
- Historic links to coal mining at Tilmanstone and Snowdown former collieries and pit villages and the East Kent Railway provide a link to the recent industrial past.
- Small scattered historic settlements and farmsteads with a vernacular of redbrick, flint and Kent peg tiles.
- Narrow, winding rural lanes.
- Recreational value of PRowS including Long Distance North Downs Way and Miners Trail Way.

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for E1 Sheperdswell Aylesham Parklands LCA is to conserve and enhance the rural character and simple pattern of the rolling arable landscape interspersed with blocks of woodland and parkland.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of arable fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins and other wildlife-friendly farming methods and consider opportunities for reversion of some areas to grazed grassland.
- Conserve and improve the traditional landscape pattern and structure, as well as increasing biodiversity interest through the maintenance of hedgerows.
- Enhance and augment fragmented field boundary hedgerows with native species, replacing post and wire fencing where possible.
- Protect and enhance the valued semi-natural habitats including ancient woodland and deciduous woodland and conserve and enhance the wooded character of the area through appropriate woodland management.
- Increase the extent of native deciduous woodland, using locally occurring native species in order to link to existing woodland. Seek to avoid the introduction of coniferous boundaries/shelterbelts except where part of the estate character.
- Conserve and reinforce the parkland character around Goodnestone, Knowlton and Fredville, putting in place a programme of new parkland tree planting where appropriate.

### Development Management

- Conserve the strong vernacular of historic buildings and their rural setting, particularly within the Conservation Areas and ensure that landscape continues to provide a rural setting to these areas.
- Encourage the use of in keeping materials such as flint, redbrick and Kent peg tiles for any new developments.
- Resist proposals for highway upgrading to retain the rural character of the narrow roads.
- Protect the valued recreation use of the landscape, seeking opportunities to further enhance opportunities for access and enjoyment of the Rights of Way network.
- Conserve elements of tranquillity associated with this rolling chalk landscape.
- Continue to conserve and interpret heritage associated with colliery sites.
- Consider impacts of large-scale development/urban expansion associated with existing settlements with the wider rural setting including the open chalk dip slope to the west within Canterbury District and provide appropriate mitigation.

## LCA E2: Whitfield Parkland

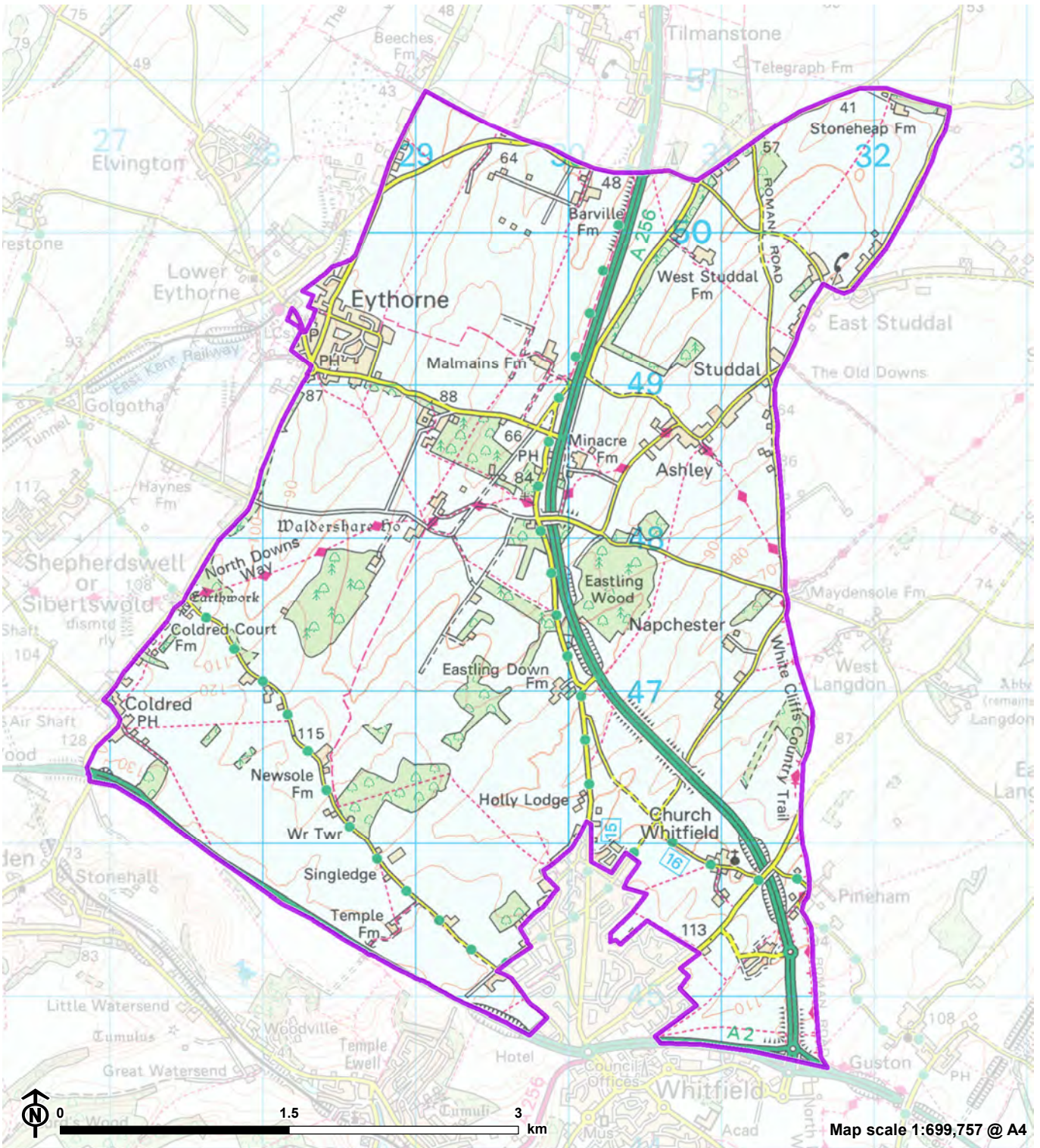
### Location and Summary

The LCA is located to the south of the district, situated between the village of Eythorne in the north and Whitfield in the south. It consists of undulating arable farmland and parkland, lying north east of the more open chalk landscape adjoining the Kent Downs AONB along the coast.

The LCA's southern boundary is defined by the A2, marking the boundary with the distinctive ridge of the Lydden Hills, while other boundaries are more transitional with adjacent landscapes having a similar character. Narrow lanes between the A2 and Eythorne define the western boundary, approximately the edge of Waldershare Park while the northern boundary extends between Eythorne and Studdal via public footpaths and small lanes. The eastern boundary runs along the White Cliffs Country Trail/Roman Road running between Studdal and Dover.





Rolling arable landscape with blocks of woodland

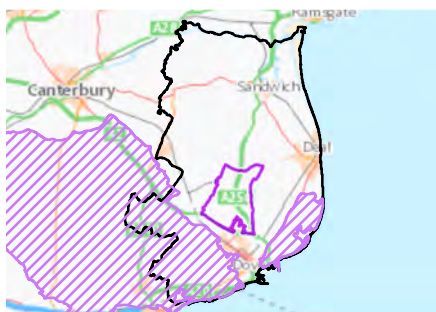


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Source: DDC, LUC

**E2 - Whitfield Parkland**

-  Dover district
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- An elevated undulating topography with a regular pattern of gentle ridges and valleys running north east from the Kent Downs.
- Chalk bedrock overlain with bands of Head deposits associated with the valleys.
- A large-scale open arable landscape on calcareous soils, intensively farmed for cereals, in combination with pasture and woodlands associated with parklands.
- Characterised by large modern fields with some small and medium parliamentary enclosures.
- Large woodland blocks and plantations, many of ancient origin, and deciduous tree belts create interest within the arable landscape.
- Historic parkland at Waldershare estate with mature parkland trees and formal avenues centred on a listed red-brick country house.
- Sparsely settled, outside large settlements at Whitfield and Eythorne except for scattered historic farmsteads with a strong vernacular of red brick, flint and clay tiles with flint and brick boundary walls, linked by narrow country lanes.
- Small historic villages and larger modern settlements on the edge of the area with busy roads radiating from Dover.
- A well-connected network of PRow enabling access through the landscape, including the North Downs Way/White Cliffs Country Trail long distance footpaths.
- Wide views from more elevated ridges across the valleys and out over wider countryside, including north east to the Thanet coast.
- A generally rural and tranquil landscape, although disturbed by major transport corridors of the A2 and A256.

### Natural Influences

An elevated chalk landscape that lies north of Dover and the River Dour valley and sits within the wider landform that falls gradually from the higher ground of the Kent Downs to the south west. The topography is undulating, with a regular pattern of gentle ridges and dry valleys on a south west to north east axis, with elevations between 70m and 130m AOD. The bedrock geology is dominated by Margate and Seaford Chalk, overlain by narrow bands of Head deposits running on the same axis as the ridge and valley formation. A strip of clay with flint deposits runs across the south of the area.

The freely draining, lime-rich loamy soils, deeper in the valley bottoms than on valley sides support intensive farming on good quality agricultural land. Typically, these are large open arable fields supporting a mix of crops including wheat, barley, and oil seed rape. Pasture, including horse paddocks, are contained in smaller more enclosed fields around settlements and farmsteads.

Large blocks of native deciduous woodland are found across the area, often located along the higher valley slopes and ridges. Many blocks are classified priority habitat deciduous woodland and often of ancient origin. Large pre-1810 mixed plantations were laid out as part of the Waldershare estate including The Wilderness, Eastling Wood and Malmaims Wood. Others woodland are designated as Local Wildlife Sites including Eastling Wood, Singleledge and Captain's Wood,

Whitfield, and Caens Wood near Shepherdswell. These ancient woodlands contain a variety of species including coppiced hazel, ash, field maple, sweet chestnut and oak and have a fine display of bluebells, wood anemone, wild garlic, and dog's mercury in spring. Belts of deciduous trees border the fields in places, with groups of mature parkland trees in Waldershare Park including oaks, beeches, limes, and horse chestnut.



Large scale exposed and open landscape on plateau with long views north to Thanet

### Cultural Influences

Waldershare Park dominates the north west of the area, extending over two parallel valleys covering an area of 400ha. The 18<sup>th</sup> century parkland is registered on the Kent Gardens Compendium and listed as Grade II on the Historic England register. The parkland was laid out by Sir Henry Furnese and is centred on a Grade I listed red-brick country house with outlying listed estate buildings. Beyond the formal gardens, rides cut through a wilderness to the Belvedere (listed Grade I), a rectangular folly built by Lord Burlington in 1725-7 which enjoys views along the western valley. The wider parkland has many specimen trees and is largely enclosed by a beech boundary plantation to the east. Formal avenues extend from the park entrances to the west and to the east at Canterbury Lodge.



New development extending north of Whitfield

Fields are regular in shape and follow the northeast-southwest pattern of the valleys and ridges. The farmland is generally classified by the HLC as large scale prairie fields formed as a result of extensive boundary loss of 19<sup>th</sup> century enclosures, with some regular straight-edged Parliamentary enclosures of small to medium size, and a small area of earlier enclosure near Temple Farm.

Settlement is sparse, with scattered historic farmsteads. Small traditionally Kentish villages, centred around a Saxon flint church or village green, are located on the edge of the character area. Conservation Areas covers Coldred, the mining village of Eythorne and the hamlet of Church Whitfield. The Norman ringwork and bailey around the church of St Pancras in Coldred (Grade I) is recognised as a Scheduled Monument. There is a strong vernacular of timber framed buildings with red brick (sometimes rendered or painted) or flint and plain tiled roofs. Flint with red brick boundary walls are characteristic.

In contrast to the prevalent settlement pattern in the area, the larger settlement of Whitfield, which extends north from the A2

from Dover, is characterised by suburban post-war housing development.

Narrow rural lanes connect the historic settlements. These contrast with the busy A2 Dover Road along the southern boundary and the A256 which cuts north-south through the area connecting Whitfield with Sandwich.

A strong network of footpaths and bridleways cross the area, including the North Downs Way which runs from Coldred across Waldershare Park, linking with the White Cliffs Country Trail along the Roman Road.

### Perceptual Influences

This is a largely tranquil landscape and there is a good experience of dark skies, particularly at Waldershare Park. Tranquillity is reduced locally by the A256 Dover Road and the A2 and the outskirts of Whitfield/Dover to the south. The open agricultural landscape plays an important role in separating Whitfield on the northern edge of Dover from the wider countryside. The agricultural land abuts tightly to the open northern perimeter of the urban area and the area retains a strong rural character.

Seasonal variation relates to changes in colour and texture in the woodland, crop rotation and extensive ploughed fields in winter.

Views within the LCA are relatively open, with blocks of woodland terminating some views. There are far-reaching views from higher ridges across the landscape and over lower surrounding areas from the edge of the character area including to the coast and chalk cliffs at Thanet. The narrow roads and mature woodland blocks provide enclosure contrasting with more open ridges and arable land.



Large ancient woodland blocks associated with estates and parklands (Eastling Wood)

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Elevated chalk ridges and valleys provide topographical interest.
- Intact agricultural landscape providing a rural edge to Dover/Whitfield. Strong rural character close to settlement and distinctive rural enclaves such as Church Whitfield.
- Ecologically important priority habitat deciduous woodland and ancient woodland is locally designated and linked to other habitats through tree belts and hedgerows.
- Historic parkland at Waldershare Park with plantations, specimen trees and avenues designated as a Registered Park and Garden.
- Sparsely settled character within the wider rural area, with only scattered farmhouses and villages with a vernacular of red brick, flint, and plain tile roofs, including many Grade II listed examples.
- Narrow winding lanes which cross the landscape and connect settlements, with contrasting sense of openness on ridges and enclosure associated with minor valleys and woodland.
- Recreational value of PRoW, including the North Downs Way and White Cliffs Country Trail.
- The strong sense of tranquillity and experience of dark night skies, particularly around Waldershare Park.
- Elevated views over the surrounding landscape, including long views to the Thanet Coast.

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for E2 Whitfield Parkland LCA is to conserve and enhance the rural character and simple pattern of rolling arable landscape interspersed with block of woodland and parkland. There are specific opportunities to create new areas of woodland cover with new large blocks and swathes of woodland. A key objective is to integrate expanded urban edges at Whitfield into the rural landscape setting.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Manage and enhance the interest of arable fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins and other wildlife-friendly farming methods and consider opportunities for reversion of some areas to grazed grassland.
- Conserve and improve the traditional landscape pattern and structure, as well as increasing biodiversity interest through the maintenance or restoration of hedgerows with native species.
- Protect and enhance valued semi-natural habitats including tree belts and areas of deciduous woodland (including ancient woodland) to strengthen the connectivity to habitats.
- Conserve and reinforce the parkland character of Waldershare estate putting in place a programme of new parkland tree planting where appropriate.
- Seek to create extensive new areas of woodland cover, with new large block and swathes of woodland, with a potential for large scale creation to double the existing cover. The key opportunity for woodland is in relation to proposed urban expansion at Whitfield.

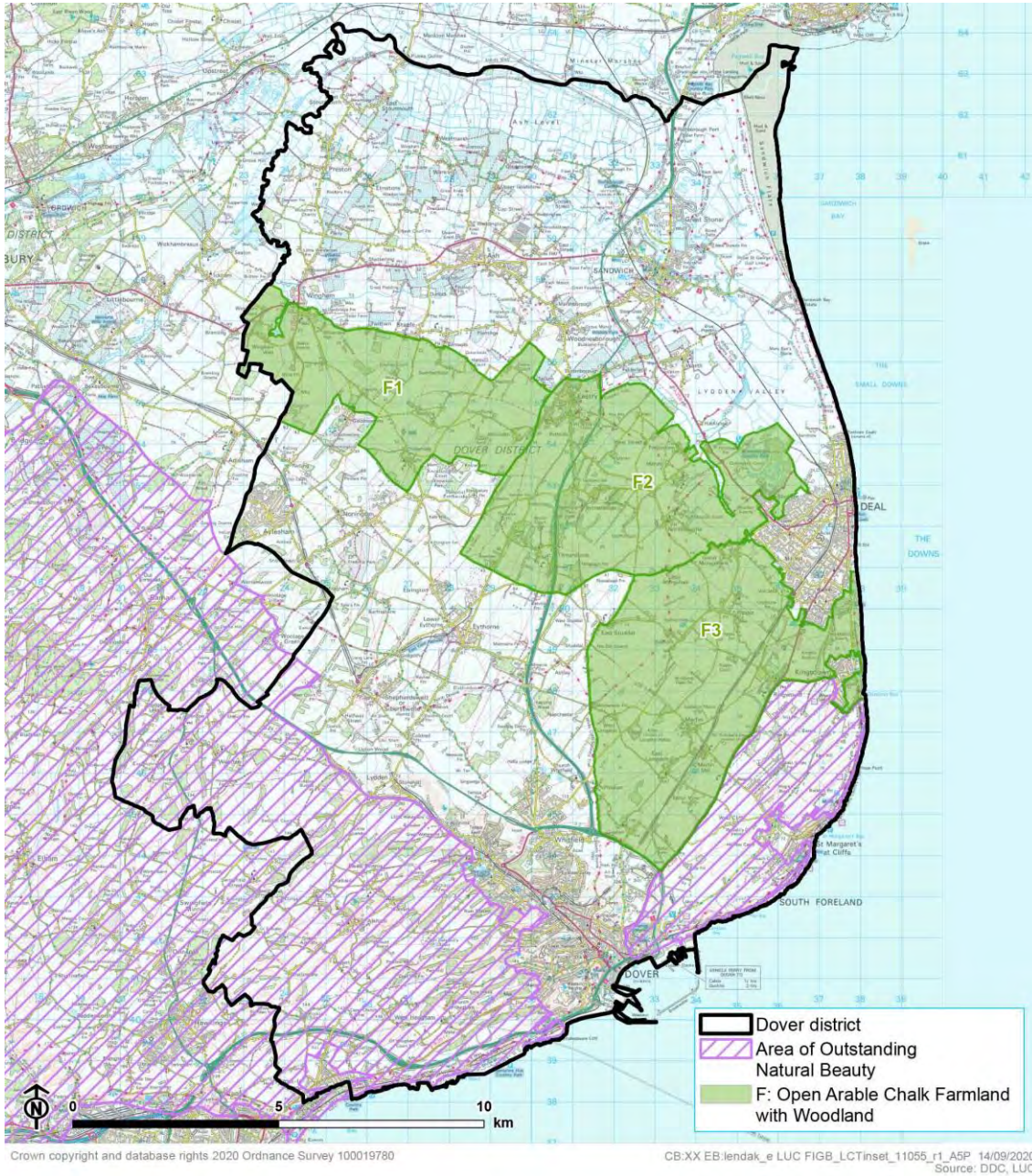
### Development Management

- Conserve the open character of the arable landscape with its wide-reaching views and relative lack of development.
- The open character of the landscape makes it particularly vulnerable to developments which affect its skylines. Resist the introduction of pylons, telecommunications masts etc. particularly on the higher ridges.
- Improve the definition of and strengthen the boundary with the urban edge at Whitfield respecting the contribution from the field pattern. Ensure that strategic developments secure a sensitive and integrated urban edge with the farmland.



- Manage the impact of equestrian land uses and conserve the sense of scale by avoiding further subdivision of field parcels into horse paddocks, seeking to restore a strong landscape framework in association with new development.
- Conserve the distinctive vernacular of historic buildings and their rural setting, particularly within the Coldred and Eythorne Conservation Areas and ensure the landscape continues to provide a rural setting to these areas.
- Reference the pattern of red stock, flint and clay tile buildings in any new development or boundary treatments.
- Resist proposals for highway upgrading to retain the rural character of the narrow roads and lanes.
- Manage the existing PRow network, including connections with the Kent Downs AONB, and consider opportunities for extending it, particularly where this can tie-in with wider initiatives to promote and enable sustainable transport in association with proposed development.
- Consider impacts of large-scale development/urban expansion associated with existing settlements within the wider rural setting and provide appropriate mitigation and ensuring a rural separation between Whitfield/Dover and outlying villages such as Eythorne, Coldred and Church Whitfield.
- Conserve elements of tranquillity associated with this rolling chalk landscape.

## LCT F: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Woodland



### Landscape Character Areas

The Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Woodland LCT is subdivided into two LCAs:

- F1: Chillenden
- F2: Northbourne
- F3: Ripple

## LCA F1: Chillenden

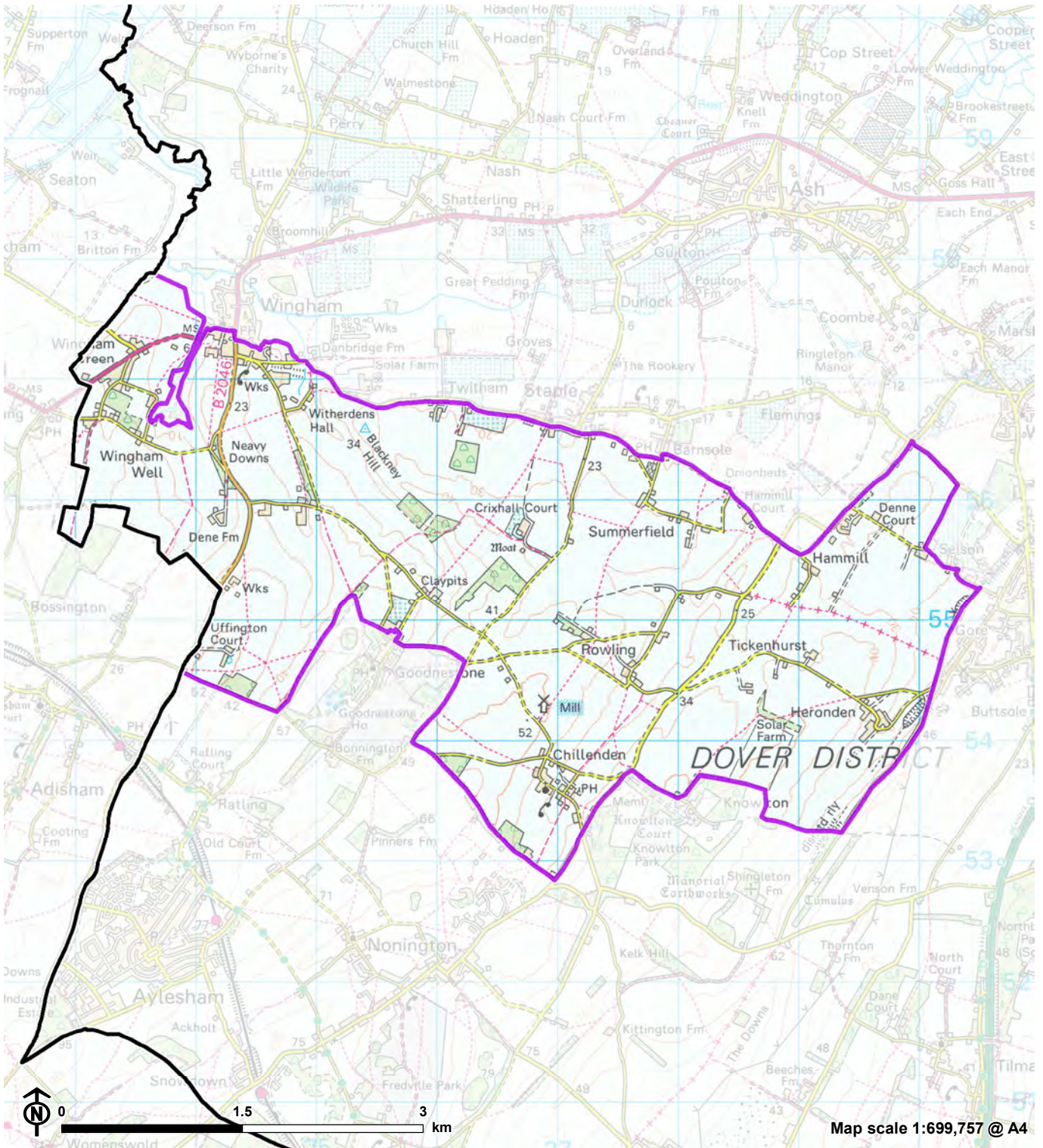
### Location and Summary

The Chillenden LCA is located in the central west of the district. The western boundary is formed by the district boundary with Canterbury and the eastern boundary by Thornton Lane. The northern boundary marks the transition to the flatter horticultural belt around the Wingham River Valley and the southern boundary to the parkland and wooded landscape around Aylesham.

This is a rural chalk landscape with a gentle ridge and valley topography with large arable fields interspersed with woodland blocks and associated parkland estates.



Sloping arable farmland

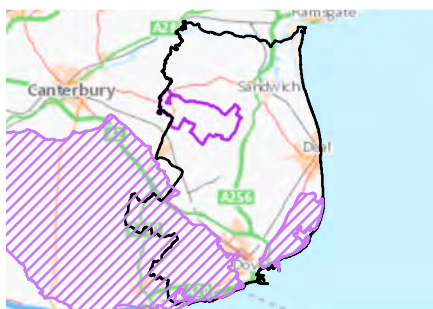


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Source: DDC, LUC

**F1 - Chillenden**

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- A gentle ridge and dry valley topography ranging from 5 to 50m AOD, underlain by chalk with head deposits.
- Numerous small blocks of deciduous woodland, some of ancient origin, break up large arable fields.
- Mixed field pattern formed by Parliamentary and 17<sup>th</sup> century enclosure, with large open fields in the east. Land use is largely arable with areas of pasture on steeper valley sides
- Historic Wingham village, related to the adjacent valley, contains Roman remains and numerous listed buildings, and is designated as a Conservation Area.
- Limited settlement, with a pattern of small historic hamlets, moated manor houses and farmsteads, with traditional building materials including flint, red brick, and render. Flint and brick barns and distinctive features of the agricultural landscape.
- Church spires, such as at one at Wingham and the windmill at Chillenden, and Ash to the north are distinctive landmarks in open views.
- Strong PRoW network connects the farms and villages enabling access into the countryside.
- A rural and tranquil landscape with few modern intrusions crossed by narrow winding rural lanes. Undulating landform giving rise to moderate range views across open arable land with more enclosure around villages and hamlets and in minor valleys.

### Natural Influences

This landscape is underlain by chalk with isolated areas of Thanet Formation Sand Silt and Clay, with bands of Head brickearth deposits in a northeast-southwest direction. Soils are generally well drained calcareous and silty, deeper in the valley bottoms and shallower on valley sides in places. The geology and drainage create a series of shallow dry valley formations on a south-west to north-east axis. The lowest point of 5m AOD is in the north-west, associated with the Wingham River valley. The highest points are 50m AOD in the south, which are part of the wider landform relating to the South Downs.

Small blocks and belts of native deciduous woodland are found across the landscape, including some priority habitat deciduous woodland. Species include ash, hawthorn, elder and oak. There are a number of priority habitat traditional orchards, including one to the north of Goodnestone Park and another associated with Crixhall Court. Crixall Rough is identified as a replanted woodland of ancient origin and Lane to Lower Rowing Farm is identified as a Roadside Nature Reserve.

Lower Stour Wetlands BOA extends from the Wingham River in the north-west, an extensive network of water and wetland habitats. Land is used primarily for arable farming, with large open fields supporting a mix of crops with linseed, wheat, barley, and oil seed rape. There are some smaller more enclosed pasture fields on steeper valley sides, and occasional small remnant areas of priority habitat traditional orchard. Fields have frequently been enlarged with hedgerows removed creating a sense of openness along the roads and lanes.



Rolling arable fields with woodland blocks beyond

### Cultural Influences

The HLC shows a mixed field pattern, with 17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> century enclosure characterising much of landscape, and straight-edged Parliamentary enclosure south of Wingham, and around Uffington and Twitham Hill. There has been extensive boundary loss in the east of the landscape towards Eastry and on Blackney Hill.

Wingham village, largely within the adjacent valley character extends upslope into this area. It has a long history of settlement. The surviving buried remains of a Roman villa south-east of Wingham Bridge, with a bath suite containing tessellated floors, is evidence of the Roman occupation and settlement of Kent. The villa remains are now nationally protected as a Scheduled Monument. Wingham is mentioned in Domesday as belonging to the Archbishop of Canterbury and grew in importance in the 13<sup>th</sup> century when the Archbishop constructed a college. There are a number of

listed buildings within Wingham, including the Grade I listed Old Canonry and Canon Cottage, a row of canon's houses belonging to Wingham College built c. 1285. The listed buildings within Wingham are covered by a Conservation Area.



Chillenden windmill (Grade II\* listed)

Away from Wingham isolated houses and farmsteads and small clusters of houses are linked by a network of narrow lanes. Flint, redbrick and render form the distinctive local vernacular. The majority of the buildings within the LCA are Grade II or Grade II\* listed and the hamlets of Chillenden and Heronden have Conservation Areas. The moated manor house at Crixhall Court dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and is listed Grade II\*. Windmills, including the Grade II\* mill at Chillenden, form distinct landmarks.

Narrow roads connect the small scattered settlements, running along field boundaries in a dominant northeast southwest direction in co-ordination with the contour pattern so that the landscape is experienced as a series of minor valleys and open ridges.

This is an accessible landscape with a number of PRoWs connecting the small settlements and providing access to the countryside.

### Perceptual Influences

Views are relatively open, with the slightly undulating landform giving rise to moderate range views across open areas of arable land with little tree cover. The spire of St Mary's, Wingham is a distinctive feature in views in the west of the LCA and the windmill at Chillenden in views to the south, as well as the church at Ash to the north. Enclosure is notable around settlements associated with the valleys with built fabric, narrow roads, hedgerows, and mature trees. Intermittent views from ridges are relatively far reaching on the slightly more elevated ridges.

Electricity poles and wires are a dominant feature, distracting from the rural character. A solar farm at Twickenhurst Shave is contained within the wider agricultural landscape.

This is a rural and tranquil area with a good experience of dark skies within the LCA, although there is some light pollution in the east towards Eastry.



Arable fields with woodland edges. Twickenhurst Shave solar farm is in the background

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Undulating chalk ridges and valleys provide topographical interest and contrast of openness and enclosure.
- Ecologically important native deciduous woodlands, some of ancient origin.
- The relatively sparse settlement pattern of historic small settlements and farmsteads including Wingham, Chillenden and Heronden which are recognised through designation as Conservation Areas.
- Historic farmhouses with a local vernacular of flint, redbrick and render including many Grade II and Grade II\* listed examples. Oasts, flint and brick barns are features of the agricultural landscape.
- Sparsely settled working agricultural character of the landscape outside minor settlements associated with the valleys.
- Narrow winding rural lanes, and grassy verges creating areas of biodiversity interest within the arable landscape.
- Recreational value of PRoWs.
- Far reaching views over the open arable farmland from higher elevations.

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Chillenden LCA is to conserve the rural agricultural character of the landscape and sense of place created by the combination of rolling farmland and small historic villages and farmsteads linked by rural lanes. There are opportunities for further woodland creation to create a connected network.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of agricultural fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins and other wildlife-friendly farming methods.
- Conserve and improve the traditional landscape pattern and structure, as well as increasing biodiversity interest through the maintenance and restoration of hedgerows.
- Enhance and augment fragmented field boundary hedgerows with native species, replacing post and wire fencing where possible.
- Protect and enhance the landscape's valued semi-natural habitats including ancient woodland and deciduous woodland and wetlands associated with Wingham Valley.
- Conserve and enhance the existing wooded character of the area through appropriate woodland management.
- Increase the extent of native deciduous woodland, using locally occurring native species in order to connect existing isolated woodland blocks, including linear belt and copses and reinstatement and thickening of hedgerows. Seek to avoid the introduction of coniferous boundaries/shelterbelts.

### Development Management

- Conserve the characteristic sparse pattern of historic villages and hamlets, maintaining their enclosed character.
- Conserve the strong vernacular of historic buildings and their rural setting, particularly within the Wingham, Chillenden and Heronden Conservation Area.
- Conserve and respect the character of historic built form and their association with traditional farming practices (barns and oasts in the wider rural landscape).
- Resist proposals for highway upgrading to retain the rural character of the narrow lanes and verges.
- Protect the valued recreational use of the landscape via PRoW, seeking opportunities to further enhance opportunities for access and enjoyment.
- Protect the character of this sparsely settled rural chalk landscape, and sense of tranquillity associated with it.
- Wingham should remain a settlement associated with its river valley setting, avoiding further large-scale expansion on to the valley sides in this character area.

## LCA F2: Northbourne

### Location and Summary

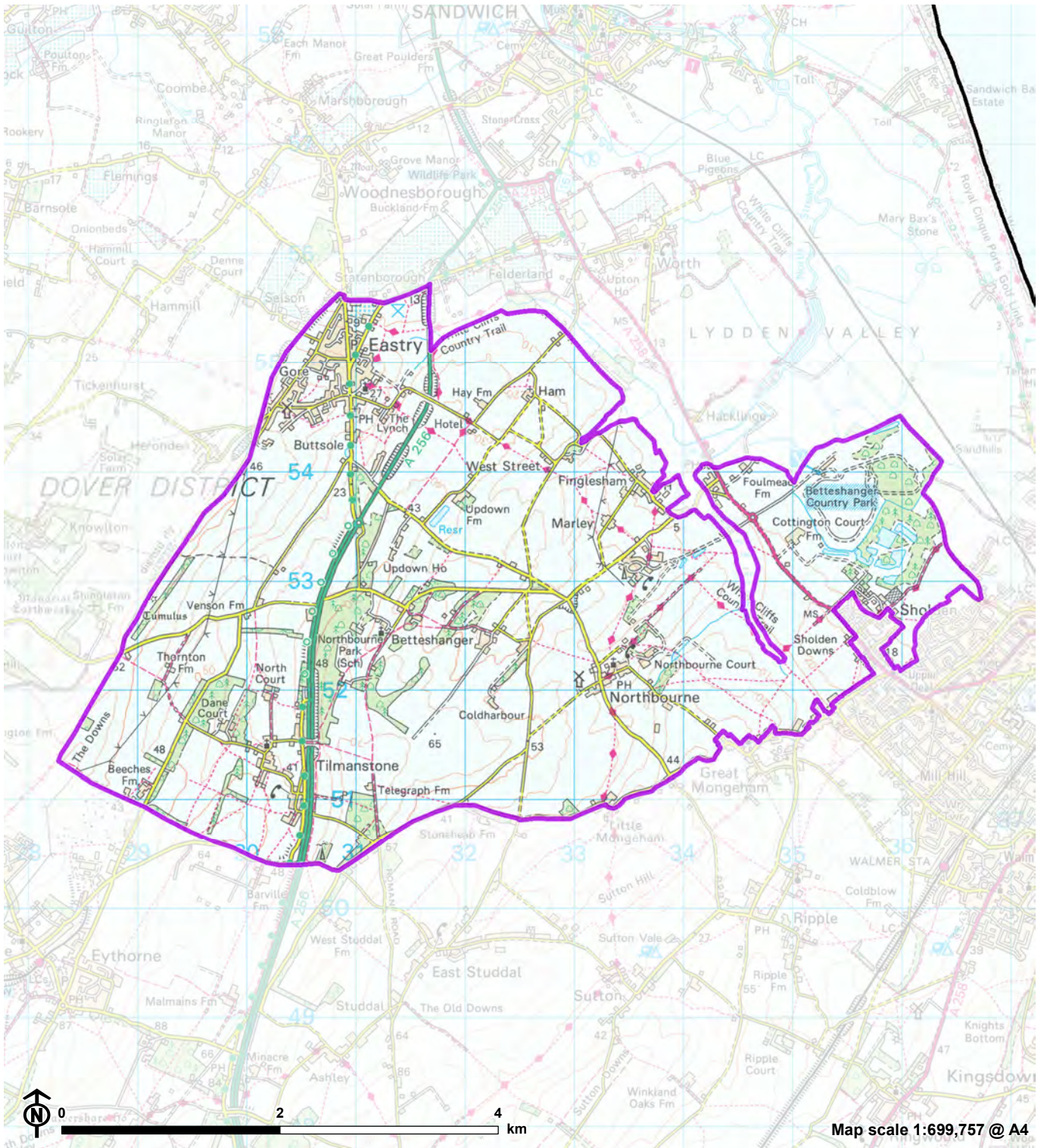
The Northbourne LCA is located in the central east of the district. The western boundary is formed by Thornton Lane and the eastern boundary by the settlement edge of Deal. The northern boundary is formed by the change in topography and geology to the Lydden Valley. The southern boundary marks the transition to the more parkland and wooded landscape around Whitfield and the more undulating arable landscape at Ripple – these boundaries represent a gradual change in character.

This is a rural chalk landscape with a gentle ridge and valley topography, with large arable fields interspersed with woodland blocks.



Long views from the arable ridge to Thanet and the coast



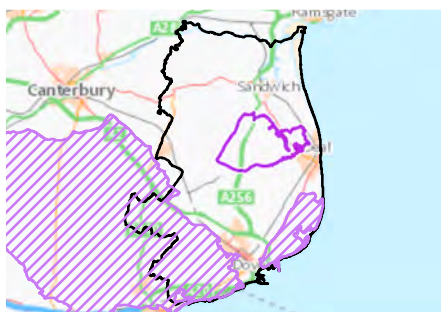


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Source: DDC, LUC

**F2 - Northbourne**

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- A gently rolling topography of ridges and valley, ranging from 5 to 70m AOD, underlain by Chalk with Head deposits.
- Numerous small blocks and belts of deciduous and coniferous woodland, often associated with parkland including ancient woodland at Betteshanger, break up large arable fields.
- A large-scale arable landscape on calcareous soils, intensively farmed for mixed crops with occasional pockets of pasture around settlements. Open exposed on ridges with expansive views.
- A mixed field pattern formed by straight-edged Parliamentary enclosure with large modern fields to the south.
- Historic parklands at Betteshanger and Northbourne which is on the Historic England register. Tilmanstone is also linked to a manorial estate. Estate walls, gatehouses, parkland trees and avenues are prominent in the landscape contrasting with open arable areas.
- Settlement pattern of small farmsteads and villages with numerous listed buildings and traditional building materials including flint, redbrick and render. Small picturesque villages retain a strong intact rural character.
- Historic links to Kent coal mining at Betteshanger, including Almond House former colliery administrative centre and miner's housing. Betteshanger Park now developed for recreation.
- Strong PRoW network enabling access into the countryside, including the White Cliffs Country Trail Long Distance Footpath.
- A rural and tranquil landscape, with narrow winding lanes connecting the farmhouses and settlements, disrupted locally by the A258 and A256, but elsewhere with strong rural character.
- Views are enclosed by woodland and the rolling topography, although from the higher ground in the east there are views to the coast as far as Ramsgate.

### Natural Influences

A series of shallow dry valley formations on a south-west to north-east axis, sitting within a wider landform that falls gradually from the higher ground of the South Downs to the south-west at 70m AOD, towards the lower lying ground associated with the South Stream to the north at 5m AOD.

The geology is dominated by chalk, overlain with bands of Head brickearth deposits on the same axis as the ridge and valley formation.

Intensive arable farming is supported by well drained calcareous loamy soils, deeper in the valley bottoms and shallower on valley sides.

Blocks and belts of native deciduous woodland are found across the LCA concentrated around the historic parks, manor houses and farms. Priority habitat deciduous woodland is concentrated at Betteshanger Country Park and Northbourne Park, which includes replanted woodland of ancient origin at Betteshanger Wood. Ancient woodland is also recorded at Nine Acre Wood to the south of Betteshanger and at Dane Court, near Tilmanstone. There are small areas of conifer throughout the landscape. Hedgerows are largely intact, although there has been some reinforcement with post and wire fencing.

Cottingham Lakes, fishing ponds created after the closure of the Betteshanger colliery in the east of the LCA are part of the

Ramsar site and Sandwich Bay to Hacklinge Marshes SSSI and an Important Bird Area. Waders and wildfowl use the lakes in winter and during autumn and spring migrations.

There is a small Roadside Nature Reserve at the crossroads south-west of Betteshanger Colliery.

Land is used primarily for arable farming, with large open fields supporting a mix of crops including high value salad cropping. Some pockets of pasture populate smaller, more enclosed, fields around settlements.



Successful tree establishment on colliery spoil forming country park at Betteshanger

### Cultural Influences

The field scale is medium to large, with the historic field pattern originating from straight-edge Parliamentary enclosure and irregular fields bound by tracks often deriving from the enclosure of downland. There has been extensive boundary loss in the south of the LCA creating large fields.

Early settlement of the area is evidenced by an Iron Age settlement lying between Northbourne Road and Broad Lane, likely to be an enclosed farmstead. Excavation of this Scheduled Monument has revealed postholes, pits and ditches dating from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. An Anglo-Saxon inhumation cemetery survives as buried remains south of Eastry.

The settlement pattern is of small farmsteads and scattered hamlets, with larger village settlements at Eastry, Tilmanstone and Northbourne (all designated as Conservation Areas). The vernacular in these villages is typically Kentish with flint, redbrick and render. They retain an intact rural character.

Eastry is the largest settlement in the LCA, located on the Roman Road leading north from Dover to Richborough Castle. The historic core is characterised by numerous listed buildings, including the Grade I listed Eastry Court, a palace built in the 14<sup>th</sup> century for the Archbishop of Canterbury. The village expanded with the opening of the East Kent Light Railway in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century built to serve the local collieries, with more recent housing development to the west of the Roman Dover Road.

The villages of Tilmanstone and Northbourne are linked to local manors and estates. Tilmanstone, grew around the manors of Dane Court (Grade II\*), South Court (now demolished) and North Court (Grade II). The village of Northbourne is linked to the large 17<sup>th</sup> century estate of Northbourne Court, which is on the Historic England register. Betteshanger House (Northbourne Park) now a school, is a Victorian estate with parkland and the remains of formal gardens. Mature parkland trees are a feature of the LCA, with the long avenue of holm oak a particularly distinctive feature of the approach to Northbourne.

Coal was discovered in Kent in 1890 during the abortive attempt to drill a Channel Tunnel. Various collieries were established across eastern Kent, with the largest at Betteshanger to the west of Deal. The colliery was opened in 1924 and closed in 1989. Betteshanger was the last surviving pit in Kent and closed in 1989. The Betteshanger Colliery site was redeveloped as Betteshanger Park and is designated as a Regionally Important Geological Sites. The park is popular for recreation with cycling trails, and replanted/ regenerated woodland on colliery shale so that it is viewed as a wooded backdrop form surrounding lower lying land. There are plans to build the Kent Mining Museum on this site.



Estate landscape at Northbourne Court

Narrow roads connect the small scattered farmsteads, running along field boundaries in a dominant northeast-southwest direction, following the topography. Within the open arable landscape the narrow lanes, flanked by grass verges with wildflowers, are a distinctive feature.

This is an accessible landscape with a number of PRoW connecting the small settlements and providing access to the countryside, including the White Cliffs Country Trail and Miners Way. Cottingham Lakes are a popular angling and caravan site.

### Perceptual Influences

Views within the LCA are relatively open, with the rolling topography and blocks of woodland terminating views. From the higher ground in the east there are views to Ramsgate, the coast, and the Thanet Offshore Wind Farm.

This is a rural and tranquil landscape, with a good experience of dark skies, although there is some light pollution to the east towards Sholden and Walmer. Electricity pylons and wires are in the east around Ham detract from the rural character. Tranquillity is reduced locally by the A258 Sandwich Road in the east and A256 in the west.



Holm oaks are a feature around Northbourne including a distinctive avenue

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Elevated chalk ridges and valleys provide topographical interest and contrast of long views and enclosure. Distinctive chalk features including long dry valleys.
- Priority habitat deciduous woodland and ancient woodland at Betteshanger Wood, Nine Acre Wood and Tilmanstone.
- Ecologically important Cottingham Lakes which provide habitats for waders and wildfowl.
- Sparsely settled agricultural character with small scale historic settlements with strong rural character – Northbourne, Tilmanstone, Finglesham, and a vernacular of redbrick, flint and render.
- Parklands at Betteshanger and Northbourne and the manorial estate at Tilmanstone which create locally distinctive historic landscapes and features including parkland trees, avenues, distinctive estate buildings and boundaries.
- Historic links to coal mining at Betteshanger.
- Narrow, winding rural lanes.
- Recreational value of PRoWs and Country Park.
- Relatively isolated, strongly rural character, much accessible only via narrow rural lanes.
- Relationship with the Lydden Valley landscape at Betteshanger – views to and from this sensitive edge.

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for Northbourne LCA is to conserve and enhance the rural character and the existing pattern of rolling arable landscape interspersed and contrasting with woodlands, parklands, and small settlements.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of arable fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins and other wildlife-friendly farming methods.
- Conserve and improve the traditional landscape pattern and structure, as well as increasing biodiversity interest through the maintenance of hedgerows. Enhance and augment fragmented field boundary hedgerows with native species, replacing post and wire fencing where possible.
- Conserve and enhance the ancient woodland and deciduous woodland through appropriate woodland management.
- Increase the extent of native deciduous woodland, using locally occurring native species in order to link to existing woodland. Seek to avoid the introduction of coniferous boundaries/shelterbelts.
- Conserve and reinforce the parkland/estate character around Tilmanstone, Betteshanger and Northbourne, putting in place a programme of new parkland/avenue tree planting where appropriate.

### Development Management

- Conserve the strong vernacular of historic buildings and their rural setting, particularly within the Northbourne, Eastry and Tilmanstone Conservation Areas and ensure that landscape continues to provide a rural setting to these areas.
- Conserve and respect the character of historic built form and their association with traditional farming practices by resisting further agricultural intensification.
- Encourage the use of in keeping materials such as flint, redbrick and render for any new developments.
- Resist proposals for highway upgrading to retain the rural character of the narrow rural lanes and conserve the grass verges which provide an important biodiversity resource in the intensively farmed arable landscape.
- Protect the valued recreational use of the landscape, seeking opportunities to further enhance opportunities for access and enjoyment.
- Continue to conserve and interpret heritage associated with Kent coal mining.

- Consider the impact of large-scale development/urban expansion associated with existing settlement within and outside the area, including Deal and provide appropriate mitigation. At Eastry the rolling chalk contours are important to its rural setting.
- Conserve elements of tranquillity associated with this rolling chalk landscape and its isolated rural character.

## LCA F3: Ripple

### Location and Summary

The LCA is located between Dover and Deal in the east of the District. It consists of open undulating arable farmland on chalk extending to the coast at South Foreland.

The eastern boundary extends around Deal to the coast to Kingsdown and follows the Kent Downs AONB boundary along the A258 Deal Road until it meets the A2 at Dover which forms the short southern boundary. The western boundary follows the White Cliffs Country Trail/Roman Road to Studdal and rural lanes between Studdal and Deal on the northern boundary.

It forms a transitional area of semi remote open chalk landscape between the AONB on the coast and the inland chalk with parkland, north of Whitfield.





Rolling open arable fields east of Ripple

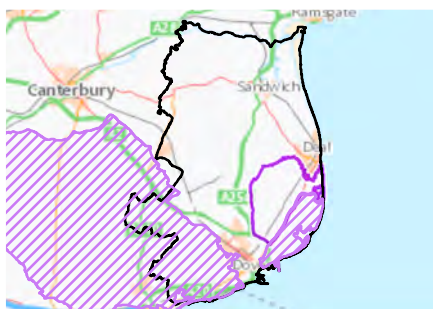


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Source: DDC, LUC

### F3 - Ripple

-  Dover district
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- Underlying chalk geology creates a regular pattern of long parallel valleys and chalk 'downs' with extensive and panoramic views.
- A large-scale arable landscape on calcareous soils, intensively farmed for cereals. Large modern fields arranged in a regular pattern following the north east – south west axis of the landform.
- Small nucleated settlements enclosed by trees and hedgerow and scattered historic farms with traditional building materials including flint, red brick, and Kent peg tiles.
- Extensive archaeological sites related to ceremonial use of the landscape and heritage sites along the coast relating to defence.
- Short stretch of coast at Walmer between the Kent Downs AONB and Deal, nationally and locally designated.
- Narrow rural roads connect the traditional villages, although the A2 on the southern boundary of the area and the A258 to the east are locally dominant and audible. The railway line runs across the area linking Deal to Dover.
- Relatively few trees and large arable fields create an open landscape with expansive views out over the open countryside
- Crossed by a network of narrow rural lanes, often with biodiverse grassy verges in contrast to adjacent arable fields.

### Natural Influences

An open gently rolling landscape extending inland from the Kent Downs AONB at South Foreland. The character area is higher and more undulating to the south, sitting within a wider landform that falls gradually from the higher ground of the Kent Downs to the south-west, towards the lower lying landscape associated with the Lydden Valley to the north. A regular pattern of long parallel dry valleys, and chalk ridges (e.g. Old Downs, Sutton Downs, Eifer Downs), running on a south west to north east axis. Elevations range between 97m AOD and sea level at the Walmer seafront.

The geology is dominated by chalk overlain with narrow bands of Head deposits lying on the same axis as the ridge and valley formation. The shoreline at Walmer is characterised by shingle beaches.



Open arable landscape with species rich grass verges along narrow lanes

Intensive arable farming is supported by the freely draining lime-rich loamy soils (with some areas of slightly acid loamy soils to the east) with deeper soils and better quality agricultural land on the valley floors, and shallower soils on the valley sides. Lower land to the north is of the highest agricultural quality. Large open fields follow the general south west-north east pattern. Arable crops include wheat, barley, and oil seed rape. Pasture is limited to smaller fields around settlements and farmsteads, including a noticeable use of land for horse grazing.

Woodland cover is scattered in this intensively farmed open landscape, with only occasional small blocks of priority habitat deciduous woodland and tree belts bordering the fields in places. Gifford's Covert is the only ancient woodland. The landscape becomes increasingly open to the north.

The short stretch of Channel coastline between Deal and Kingsdown contains ecologically rich coastal and marine habitats associated with the chalk coast, including the priority habitat vegetated shingle and maritime cliffs at Walmer and Kingsdown Golf Course, both designated as local wildlife sites. The chalk cliffs at Kingsdown are designated as part of the Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs SSSI, for the cliff top chalk grassland and cliff vegetation. These habitats are important for their rich fauna, particularly butterflies and moths and cliff nesting birds. The coastal area form part of the Dover and Folkestone Cliffs and Downs BOA.

### Cultural Influences

The open farmland is characterised by large scale regular field patterns, classified by the HLC as prairie fields formed from earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century enclosures with extensive boundary loss. This is interspersed with smaller areas of regular



Parliamentary enclosure of small to medium size and a small area around East Langdon and on Old Downs of late medieval, 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century enclosures.

The easily worked soils attracted early settlement and the open chalk ridgeline were valued as a ritual landscape, with a number of different prehistoric monuments, including four ring ditches on the ridge of Sutton Hill, a bowl barrow, oval barrow and prehistoric pits on Sutton Down, while Great Mongeham is the site of an extensive Anglo-Saxon cemetery (all designated as Scheduled Monuments).

The settlement form comprises small nucleated settlements on the valley slopes, with scattered red brick farmhouses dating from the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century lying outside the villages. The small villages and hamlets are often clustered around a Saxon flint church, such as the Church of St Augustine at East Langdon or the Church of St Peter & St Paul at Sutton (both Grade II\*) and most are recognised through designation as Conservation Areas. Building materials are typical of Kentish vernacular and include a mix of flint, red brick, tile hanging and clay tile roofs. The windmills at Ripple in the north of the area and Swingate in the south (both Grade II listed) are locally prominent in the rolling landscape and are a link to the traditional rural character.



St Mary the Virgin, Ripple (Grade II\* listed)

Large agricultural barns and the sprawling caravan park at Martin Mill and camp site at Kingsdown Beach contrast with the compact settlement pattern of the historic villages.

The remains of the Premonstratensian monastery at Langdon Abbey was established in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and incorporated into a 16<sup>th</sup> century manor house following the dissolution of the monasteries, the house and lands were sold in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the neighbouring Waldershare estate.

The stretch of coastline between Deal and Kingsdown has a long military and maritime history and includes the artillery fort at Walmer (Scheduled Monument) which formed part of chain of defences constructed by Henry VIII to protect the country against invasion. The fort later became the official residence

of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and its gardens are on the Historic England register. The Conservation Area of the seaside village of Kingsdown extends into the character area, focused on the village seafront and beach area.

The small inland settlements and farmsteads are linked by a network of narrow lanes with open verges through the open landscape. The colourful verges provide a biodiversity resource in this intensively farmed landscape. The busy A258 crosses the area running parallel to the railway line, both linking Dover and Deal.

A network of footpaths and bridleways cross the area, including the White Cliffs Country Trail which runs along the straight Roman Road connecting Eastry and Dover on the western boundary of the area and then crosses to Sutton and north to Little Mongeham. The coastal path between Walmer and Kingsdown is extremely popular for recreation and forms part of White Cliffs Country Trail.

### Perceptual Influences

The rolling landform and open arable landscape allow wide far-reaching views across the landscape and over lower surrounding areas including across the coast and to Thanet. The open uncluttered skylines make vertical features more prominent, such as telegraph wires and the communication masts above Broadlees Bottom. Narrow rural roads following hollowed routes through villages, hedgerows and mature trees provide enclosure locally, with only intermittent views from higher ground. Seasonal variation is strong due to changes in crop cycles in the large fields.

The rural landscape has a strong sense of tranquillity and experience of dark night skies, particularly away from the busy A2 to the south and Deal to the north.

The stretch of coastline between Walmer and Kingsdown is dominated by horizons of sea and sky, with views out to sea and to coastal landmarks such as Walmer Castle form the England Coast Path.



Saxon Shore Way at Walmer

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Coherent undulating chalk landscape with an intact agricultural character providing a rural setting for the South Forelands areas of the Kent Downs AONB as well providing rural separation between Deal and Kingsdown.
- Locally and nationally designated cliff top and shoreline habitats that support a diversity of butterflies, moths, and cliff nesting birds. These habitats are vulnerable to disturbance from coastal erosion and overuse of coastal areas by recreational visitors.
- The archaeological ceremonial and burial sites on the downs at Great Mongeham and Sutton Hill which provide a sense of history.
- The scattered settlement pattern of historic villages including East Langdon, Martin, Ringwould, Ripple, Sutton and Great Mongeham which are recognised through designation as Conservation Areas.
- Historic farms and estate buildings of red brick, flint, and plain tile roofs, including many Grade II listed examples.
- Rights of way including links to the Kent Downs AONB such as the White Cliffs Country Trail/England Coast Path.
- The strong sense of tranquillity and experience of dark night skies, particularly away from the A2 to the south and Deal to the north.
- The open character of the landscape allowing uninterrupted views across the arable landscape and over the surrounding lower landscapes. The uncluttered skylines are vulnerable to large scale or intrusive development.
- Panoramic views from more elevated areas, coastal path, and beaches.
- Narrow winding rural lanes and floristically rich grass verges.

## Landscape Strategy

The overall aim is to conserve the rural character of the landscape and sense of place created by the combination of an open rolling arable landscape with small historic villages linked by winding rural lanes and panoramic views from coastal areas, as well as its role as a setting to the Kent Downs AONB.

## Guidelines

### Landscape Management

- Manage and enhance arable land to enhance its biodiversity value and connectivity, by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins and headlands.
- Improve the quality of existing boundaries and restore hedgerows with native species to strengthen connectivity and the traditional landscape pattern and structure.
- Enhance the visual appearance of horse paddocks and conserve the sense of scale by avoiding further subdivision of fields.
- Protect archaeological sites and promote public awareness and access where possible.
- Protect the naturalness of the coastal landscape, conserving and enhancing important cliff and intertidal habitats and encouraging reversion to chalk grassland where feasible.

### Development Management

- Conserve the rural character of the landscape ensuring that it continues to play a role in providing a rural separation between Deal and Kingsdown as well as a rural setting for the Kent Downs AONB.
- Encourage sensitive management of new development at upper Deal and ensure a sensitive and integrated urban edge with the farmland. Maintain rural character and setting of Ripple and Great Mongeham.
- Conserve the characteristic pattern of historic villages maintaining their tight knit enclosed built character.
- Conserve the distinctive vernacular of historic buildings, particularly within the numerous Conservation Areas, and reference the pattern of red stock, flint and clay tile buildings in new buildings and boundary treatments.
- Manage the existing PROW network and consider extending it including links with the AONB.

- Seek to reduce lighting and noise impacts on this landscape and in longer views through sensitive highway design/management. Conserve the distinctive narrow winding lanes and grassy verges.
- Conserve the open skyline, avoiding the introduction of vertical elements such as pylons, telecommunications masts etc.
- Protect and enhance views from more elevated areas and from the coast out to sea and towards landmark features such as Walmer Castle.
- Protect the open character of the chalk landscape, preserving elements of tranquillity associated with it.

## LCT G: Chalk Hills



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Source: DDC, LUC

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### Landscape Character Areas

The Chalk Hills LCT has been subdivided into two LCAs:

- G1: Lydden Hills
- G2: Guston Hills

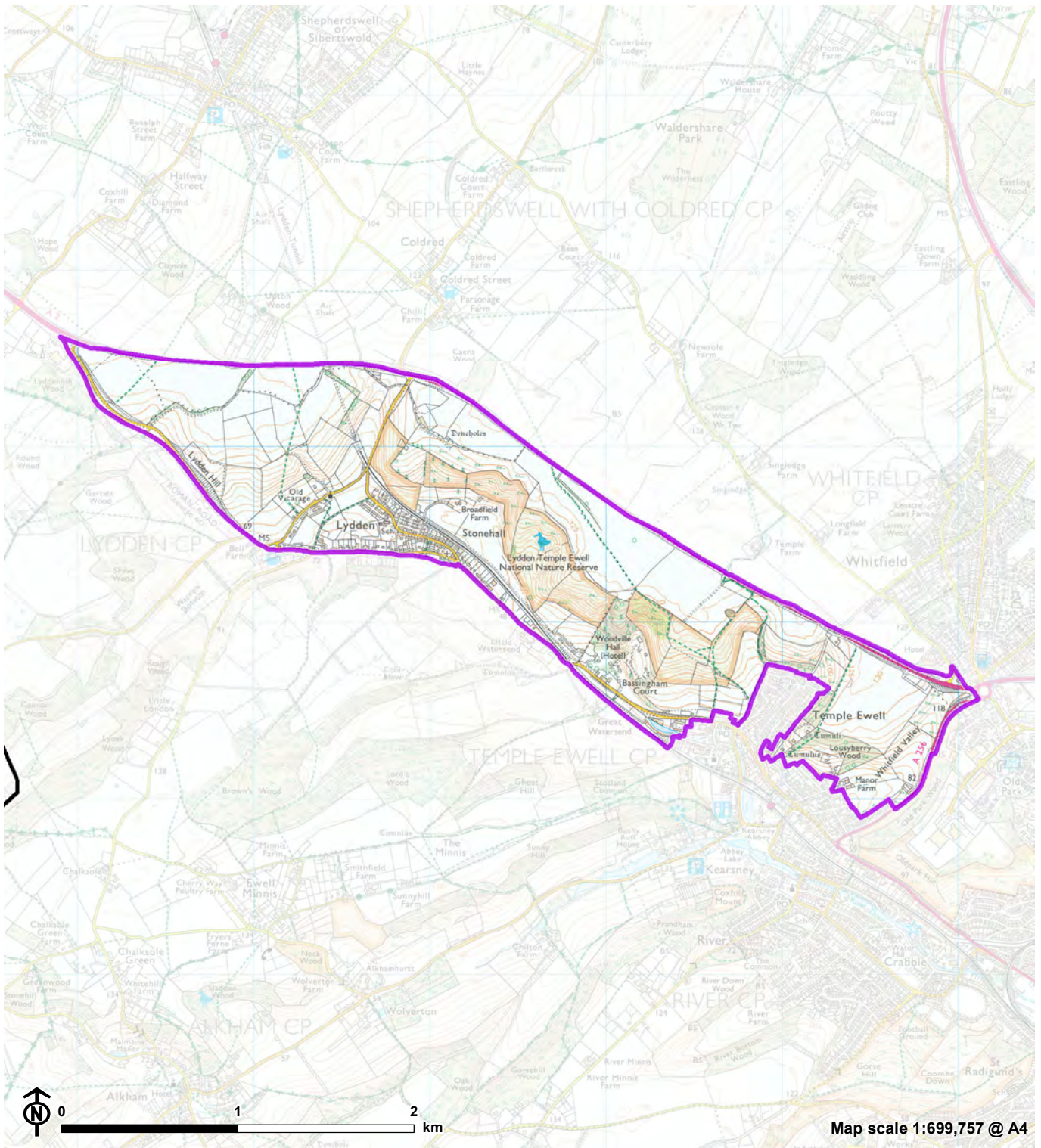
## LCA G1: Lydden Hills

### Location and Summary

The Lydden Hills are formed by a distinctive chalk ridge adjoining the edge of the Kent Downs AONB. Located to the north east of Dover, the character area occupies the land between the AONB and the A2, encompassing the Lydden Temple Ewell National Nature Reserve.





Ridge provides views across to the dry valleys and woodlands of the AONB



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Source: DDC, LUC

**G1 - Lydden Hills**

-  Dover district
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- Steep valley sides, rising to form a distinct elevated ridge, rising up from the Lydden Valley – a dry valley occupied by the Canterbury – Dover rail line.
- Steep chalk slopes overlain by clay with flint deposits along the flatter ridge line.
- Extensive areas of pasture - chalk grassland along the steep slopes and ridge top, plus some areas in arable cultivation to the north of Lydden.
- Varied field size and enclosure pattern including some modern large fields, parliamentary type enclosures, late medieval patterns, plus extensive areas of open unenclosed downland with strip lynchets.
- Extensive areas of priority habitat – lowland calcareous grassland, with smaller areas of deciduous woodland retained on steep slopes at Woodville and Lousyberry Wood, designated at international and national level – SAC, SSSI, NNR and locally as LWS.
- Absence of development, across much of the area with the linear settlement of Lydden within the dry valley, sheltered by the rising topography, with development at Temple Ewell climbing the steep slopes.
- Mixed building material include flint brick, thatch, slate and Kent peg tiles, plus modern suburban development.
- Former colliery at the foot of the slope at Stone Hall.
- Few roads, although the A2 which forms the northern boundary along the ridge top is a locally dominant and audible. Lydden and the A256 follow minor valleys across the ridge to connect to the A2. The railway line and Lydden Road run along the foot of the slope.
- Expansive open views from the ridgeline including long views west to the rising slopes, valleys, and woodlands of the AONB. The ridge, itself, forms an imposing backdrop to settlement at Temple Ewell and Lydden.
- Contrasting landscape of open expansive elevated landscape and enclosed dry valley, tranquillity, and remoteness plus influence of A2, combining rural and urban elements.

### Natural Influences

The Lydden Hills area is characterised by its distinct chalk ridge and scarp landform, with steep south facing slopes overlooking Lydden valley. The geology is dominated by upper chalk with some clay with flints overlying the flatter ridge top. A small ribbon of dry valley and Nailbourne deposits runs along the contours of the downs above Lydden. Soils change from deep loam to clay to the north, to shallow well drained calcareous silty soils across the upper chalk.

Grazed pasture is the dominant land use with some arable land on flatter fields to the south of the A2. Most of the steeper slopes are used for rough grazing. Fields are mixed in size, with various patterns of enclosure. On steeper slopes boundaries run at 90 degrees to the contours. Boundaries comprise native hedgerows and some post and wire fencing. The pattern of open chalk slopes, hedgerows and trees and small blocks of woodland in hollows is a distinctive feature. The Lydden and Temple Ewell Downs SSSI/SAC stretches across the chalk and lowland grassland of the downs, designated for the comprehensive assemblages of plants and invertebrates (Priority Habitat lowland calcareous grassland). It is also a National Nature reserve.

Clumps of native vegetation and tall native hedgerows feature within the agricultural land and along the roads. Species include oak, ash, hazel, and hawthorn and include some large mature isolated trees. Two blocks of broadleaved woodland occur at the foot of the slopes at Woodville Hall and Lousyberry Wood.



Open chalk downland at Lydden Temple Ewell NNR

### Cultural Influences

The varied field size and enclosure pattern includes some modern large fields, parliamentary type enclosures, late medieval patterns, plus extensive areas of open unenclosed downland with strip lynchets.

Farmsteads, such as Lydden Court Farm, are set aside from the main village developments with typical farm buildings including large corrugated metal barns. Flint is a dominant building material in some of the older buildings, such as the Church and its boundary walls, giving reference to the underlying geology of the area.



Linear settlement, Temple Ewell and Lydden along the road in the valley

Lydden village to the west and Temple Ewell to the east are varied in style, materials and age with Kent peg tiles, slate, thatch, brick, and wood. The housing at Lydden follows a linear pattern along the road with housing associated with the former colliery. The village nestles in the valley, enclosed, and protected by the steep rising slopes.

The former Stonehill Colliery was located at the base of the escarpment and a pattern of Corsican Pines persists on the hillside. These were planted as a shelterbelt to provide pit

props and remain a cultural important landscape feature relating to the local industrial heritage.

### Perceptual Influences

The hills are characterised by the absence of development. A minor road runs north-south through the area within the valley, providing a link between the A2 and Lydden Village. The road is narrow and winding, running down a steep hill, with open views down the valley towards Lydden. A railway cuts through the area, north of the housing. Access into the hill is via, rights of way with considerable areas of open access land associated with the chalk grassland.

At Lydden, there is a sense of physical and visual enclosure, with the village in the valley sheltered by the Downs, which create an imposing backdrop. Temple Ewell by comparison include modern development climbing the steep slopes.

The elevated ridge itself, covered by close cropped chalk turf, provides expansive views out across the slopes and valleys of the Kent Downs AONB, and retains a sense of exposure and semi remoteness despite the proximity of the A2.



Rolling horse grazed pasture at Whitfield Valley

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- The distinctive chalk ridge and steep scarp landform providing separation and transition between the AONB and the open arable landscape to the north. Role as rural setting to the AONB.
- One of Europe's finest surviving tracts of ancient chalk downland, with national and international designation priority habitat, supporting a diversity of wildflowers, rare insects, and butterflies.
- The varied field pattern including extensive areas of open downland.
- General absence of development over much of the area – with historic settlement pattern, form and materials associated with Lydden and Temple Ewell in their valley setting.
- The visual landscape pattern and diversity created by the open chalk slopes, hedgerow boundaries and tree and woodland nesting in hollows at the foot of the slopes.
- Local landscape features that provide interest and time depth including the pine clumps associated with the former colliery.



- Sense of elevation, openness, and expansiveness, allowing uninterrupted views across the landscape to the open slopes, woodlands, and valleys of the Kent Downs AONB, as well as the role of the steep slopes as containment and backdrop for Lydden, Temple Ewell and the AONB.

## Landscape Strategy

The overall aim is to conserve and enhance the distinctive landscape and sense of place created by the combination of dramatic scarp landform and extensive tracts of ancient chalk grassland, with its sense of openness and panoramic views, including role as backdrop and setting to the Kent Downs AONB.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance the chalk grassland habitat in line with current management plans and the Dover and Folkestone cliffs and Downs BOA – seeking to restore, extend and connect habitats where feasible.
- Seek to enhance the visual appearance of grassland managed as horse paddocks.
- Seek to prevent further loss or decline in the quality of boundary hedgerows and encourage restoration/reinstatement of hedgerows, particularly those that link to the scarp bottom woodland clumps and existing wooded areas.
- Conserve and perpetuate local landscape features including the pine clumps.
- Consider limited opportunities for woodland creation for example integration of roads along the A256 and Lydden Hill and potentially for new woodland belts on arable land along the A2 to provide a woodland and chalk scrub buffer between the road and downland, plus re-establishment, thickening of hedges, copse and tree belts on the arable fields north west of Lydden village.

### Development Management

- Maintain the characteristic sparse pattern of development, with settlement largely limited to the valley setting avoiding further expansion onto the steep slopes.
- Any large scale or visually intrusive development would be detrimental within this visually prominent landscape and impact on views including the visual setting of the AONB.
- Maintain sense of openness and views.
- Conserve the skyline avoiding any development associated with the A2 and seek to reduce lighting and noise impacts on this landscape and in longer views through sensitive highways design/management and potential for buffer/scrub planting.
- Manage verges and boundaries of the connecting roads through valleys at Lydden Hill and the A256 to conserve the rural chalk landscape and local sense of place.
- Ensure protection and management of the chalk grassland in association with increased recreational use (settlement expansion at Whitfield) providing alternative opportunities for access away from more sensitive habitats.

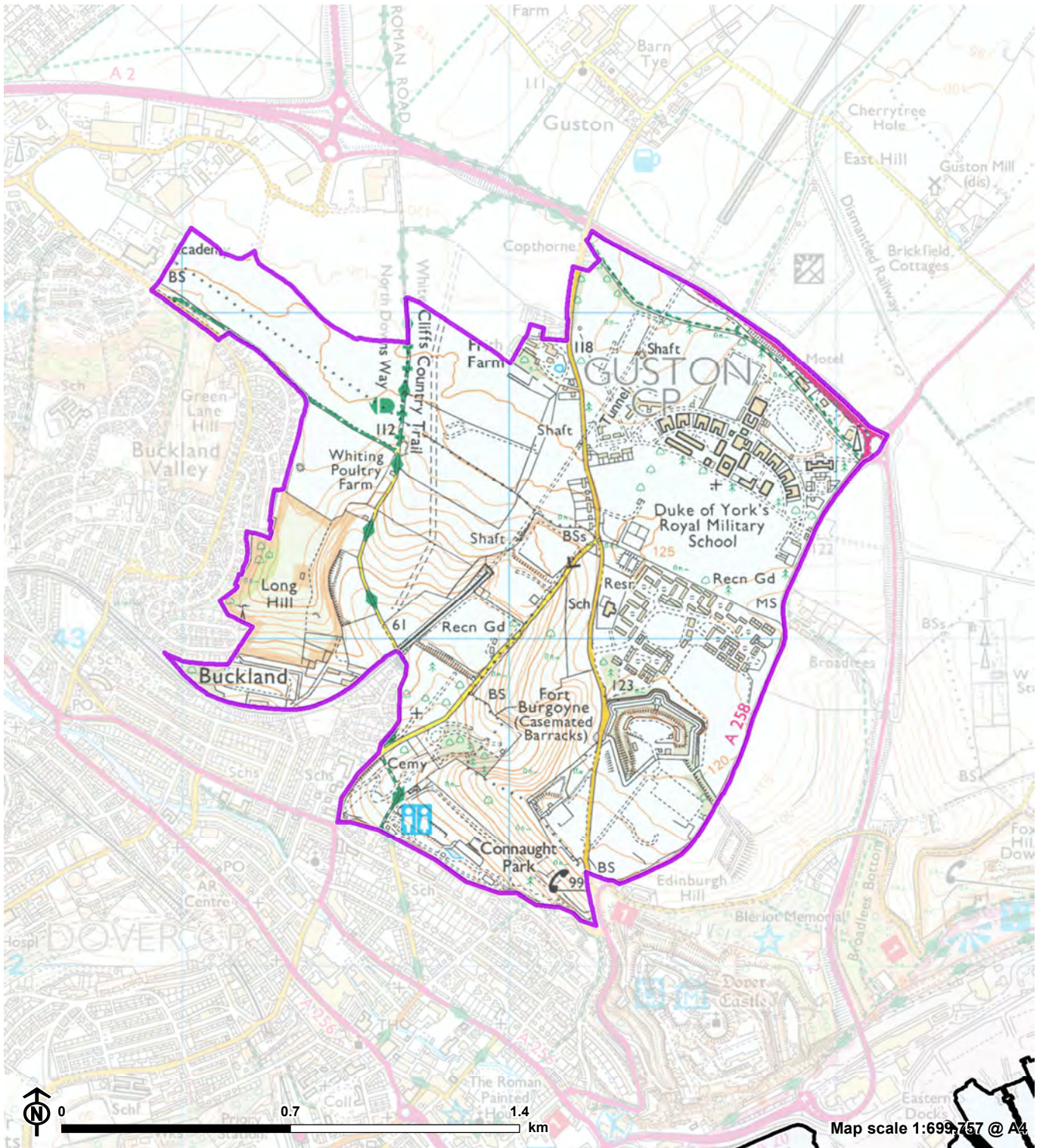
## LCA G2: Guston Hills

### Location and Summary

The Guston Hills LCA is located to the south of the district, immediately to the north of Dover. It forms a small area defined by the urban edge of Dover to the south and south-east, the urban edge of Buckland Valley to the west, the White Cliffs Business Park to the north-west, the A2 to the north and the A258 to the east.





Long views across to Dover in the Dour Valley and the Kent Downs AONB beyond

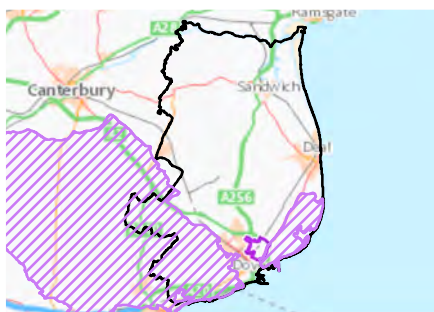


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**G2 - Guston Hills**

-  Dover district
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- Topographical variation, with hilltops in central areas, steeply sloping articulated contours to the south, and gradual fall/plateau to the north.
- Predominantly open arable land to the west and north, with chalk downland interspersed with several deciduous woodlands, woodland belts, and copses to the south and south-east.
- Arable fields are generally large with straight or wavy boundaries and are defined by ditches and/or native hedgerows, many of which are gappy.
- Botanical/Ecological importance of chalk grassland, neutral grassland and lichens reflected in the designation of two LWS on the sloping ground to the south.
- A general lack of development, with the only notable areas of built development being the Duke of York's Royal Military School to the north-east and a residential estate at Burgoyne Heights to the east.
- No major roads traverse the LCA, although the A2 defines its northern boundary and the A258 its eastern boundary; a minor road – Dover Road – passes through the LCA to the east; and two small lanes – Roman Road and Old Charlton Road – traverse the LCA to the south.
- Presence of Fort Burgoyne Scheduled Monument, a 19<sup>th</sup> century Royal Commission fortification considered to be of national importance.
- Forms an important landscape setting for the town of Dover, as well for Fort Burgoyne and the adjacent Dover Castle and Kent Downs AONB.
- From areas of higher ground good views are available to the south and south-west Dover and the AONB.
- Predominantly undeveloped, providing a sense of distinction/separation between Whitfield to the west and the areas of built development off Dover Road to the east.

### Natural Influences

The LCA comprises a bedrock of chalk overlain by head deposits.

The topography is a defining characteristic of the area, which forms the northern side of the chalk valley created by the River Dour. The LCA comprises hilltops across central areas, steeply sloping ground overlooking Dover to the south, and gradual fall to the north. Elevations fall from approximately 125m AOD in central areas, down to 10m AOD in the south and 115m to the north. Coombe Hole is a distinctive area of chalk topography to the south.

Soils vary across the LCA generally in line with the topography: slightly acid loamy soils and freely draining lime-rich loamy soils cover the higher ground in central and northern areas, whilst shallow lime-rich soils lie on the steep slopes to the south.

Western and northern areas of the LCA comprise relatively open arable land enclosed by native hedgerows. In contrast, areas to the south and east are relatively well-wooded, comprising downland interspersed with several deciduous woodlands, woodland belts, and copses. Species include oak, ash, beech, hazel, and hawthorn, as well as some exotic coniferous species in places (e.g. Corsican Pines at the Duke of York's Royal Military School to the north-east).

The sloping ground to the south lies within the Dover & Folkestone BOA and features two LWS – 'Long Hill and Coombe Hole, Dover' and 'St James & Charlton Cemeteries, Dover'. The LWS are designated to protect the important chalk grassland, neutral grassland and lichen habitats interspersed amongst the woodland cover. Additionally, the bat presence in the area of Fort Burgoyne is highly significant. Fort Burgoyne and Coombe Hole, now owned by the Land Trust, are being managed both for heritage and biodiversity.



Chalk grassland and scrub on steeper slopes, with views to development on the plateau

### Cultural Influences

The LCA contains one Scheduled Monument – Fort Burgoyne – within the former Connaught Park Army Barracks site to the south-east. This is one of several Royal Commission fortifications (also known as ‘Palmerston’s Follies’) constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in defence against a feared invasion by the French Navy. It was built to prevent an enemy establishing batteries on the high ground opposite Dover Castle (also a Scheduled Monument) to the south-east. The two monuments therefore have group value and the LCA forms an important part of their setting, as well as that of the town of Dover generally and the adjacent Kent Downs AONB, which lies beyond the A258 to the east. The LCA also contains a large cluster of Grade II listed buildings within the Duke of York’s Royal Military School located to the north east.



Fort Burgoyne Scheduled Monument, with views to Dover castle

Areas of higher ground to the north and west are in use as arable farmland. Fields are predominantly large, with straight or wavy boundaries and are defined by ditches and/or native hedgerows, many of which are gappy and in a poor condition. In contrast the steeper slopes to the south and south-east comprise areas of downland and pasture interspersed with areas of scrub and native woodland. The wooded character is added to by the well-wooded areas of Connaught Park, Danes Recreational Ground, Charlton, and St James’s Cemeteries and around the former Connaught Park Army Barracks site.

As well as the parks and cemeteries to the south, recreational resources within the LCA include an area of Open Access Land (CRoW) off Roman Road to the south-west and several walking trails, including the White Cliffs Country Trail and the North Downs Way, which follow the route of the Roman Road from Dover to Sandwich. The Royal Military School to the north-east covers a relatively large proportion of the LCA and is not publicly accessible, being enclosed by metal railings. No major roads traverse the LCA, although the A258 defines its eastern boundary. Dover Road passes through the LCA to the east, connecting Dover with Guston. Elsewhere two small lanes - Roman Road and Old Charlton Road – traverse the LCA to the south. The Dover to Deal railway line passes through the LCA from the south-west to the north-east, albeit

half within bored tunnel (i.e. north-east from the vicinity of Danes Recreation Ground).

The only notable areas of built development within the LCA are the Royal Military School to the north-east, and a residential estate at Burgoyne Heights to the east. Elsewhere there is a small area of residential development on St Martin’s Road (off Dover Road), adjacent to the military school; and scattered farm buildings on Roman Road located centrally. However, the former Connaught Park Army Barracks site to the south-east is allocated for housing development within the local plan. The allocation lies within the settlement boundary, which also covers parts of the LCA to the north and north-west (i.e. as it extends east from the edge of Whitfield along the A2 corridor as far as Dover Road) thus partially encircling the LCA.

### Perceptual Influences

Whilst the LCA comprises predominantly farmland and downland, it is strongly influenced by its proximity Dover, including the adjacent urban edge and busy roads. However, despite this, the predominantly undeveloped nature of the LCA provides an open ‘buffer’ between the urban edge of Dover/Whitfield and the Kent Downs AONB to the east.

In addition, the agricultural land to the west and north forms an open area between the urban edge of Whitfield and Buckland Valley to the west and the areas of built development off Dover Road to the east (i.e. the military school and residential development at Burgoyne Heights). This provides a sense of distinction/separation between these built-up areas.

The large-scale arable farmland in northern and western areas of the LCA have a sense of openness, whereas areas to the south and east have a greater sense of enclosure owing the woodland cover, topography, and presence of built development. From the more open areas on higher ground good views are available to the south and south-west Dover. This includes from sections of the White Cliffs Country Trail and the North Downs Way, Roman Road, Old Charlton Road and Dover Road.



Cemeteries at the foot of the slopes have an ornamental parkland character

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- Distinct chalk topography of hilltops, combes and steeply sloping downland.
- General lack of development, with exception of eastern areas.
- Ecological/botanical importance of chalk grasslands and lichens.
- Presence of Fort Burgoyne Scheduled Monument, a 19<sup>th</sup> century Royal Commission fortification considered to be of national importance.
- Forms an important setting for Fort Burgoyne, Dover Castle, Dover, and the Kent Downs AONB.
- Recreational value associated with the PRoW, including the White Cliffs Country Trail and the North Downs Way which follow the route of the Dover-Sandwich Roman Road.
- Characteristic views south and south-west over Dover.
- Predominantly undeveloped nature of the LCA providing an open 'buffer' between the urban edge of Dover and the Kent Downs AONB to the east.
- General lack of development to the west and north, providing a sense of distinction/separation between built-up urban areas.
- Role as part of 'gateway' to Kent/England – A2 linking the Channel port to the strategic road network.

## Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Guston Hills LCA is to conserve the open rural chalk landscape so it continues to provide an open buffer and setting between the urban edge of Dover and the Kent Downs AONB, conserving and enhancing valued chalk habitats and historic monuments and their settings, and providing an enhanced gateway along the A2.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Enhance and augment fragmented field boundary hedgerows with native species, filling in gaps where possible.
- Conserve the traditional pattern and structure of the landscape by improving the continuity of hedgerows to enhance the wavy rectilinear field pattern noted in the Kent HLC.
- Explore opportunities for chalk or neutral grassland creation on areas of steeply sloping ground to the south to increase the coverage of biodiversity interest, as identified in the Dover & Folkestone BOA.
- Conserve and reinforce the wooded character of the area to the south and south-east through appropriate woodland management, as identified in the Dover & Folkestone BOA.
- Conserve and reinforce the parkland character to the south (i.e. Connaught Park, Danes Recreational Ground, and Charlton and St James's Cemeteries), putting in place a programme of new parkland tree planting where appropriate.
- Enhance the visual characteristics and quality of the Roman Road approach from the north (i.e. along the White Cliffs Country Trail and the North Downs Way PRoW), drawing upon its historic connections, including through the preservation of vistas towards Dover.

### Development Management

- Conserve and enhance the integration of urban edges, through native wooded boundaries and mature trees to provide visual screening and reduce the impact of built development on the open and exposed landscape.
- Conserve and respect the landscape setting of Fort Burgoyne and Dover Castle, Dover, and the Kent Downs AONB.
- Assess new building proposals within adjacent urban area to ensure that an attractive and integrated edge is formed with the adjacent rural and open recreational landscapes. This is important for existing edges as well as proposed new strategic allocations (e.g. the former Connaught Park Army Barracks site).

- Avoid visually intrusive development on the ridgeline/hill tops in order to conserve the distinctive character of undeveloped skylines.
- Conserve the open and rural character of the landscape ensuring that it continues to play a role in the separation between Whitfield to the west and the areas of built development off Dover Road to the east.

## LCT H: Defensive Hills



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Source: DDC, LUC

### Landscape Character Areas

The Defensive Hills LCT occurs in one location within the district:

- H1: Richborough Bluff



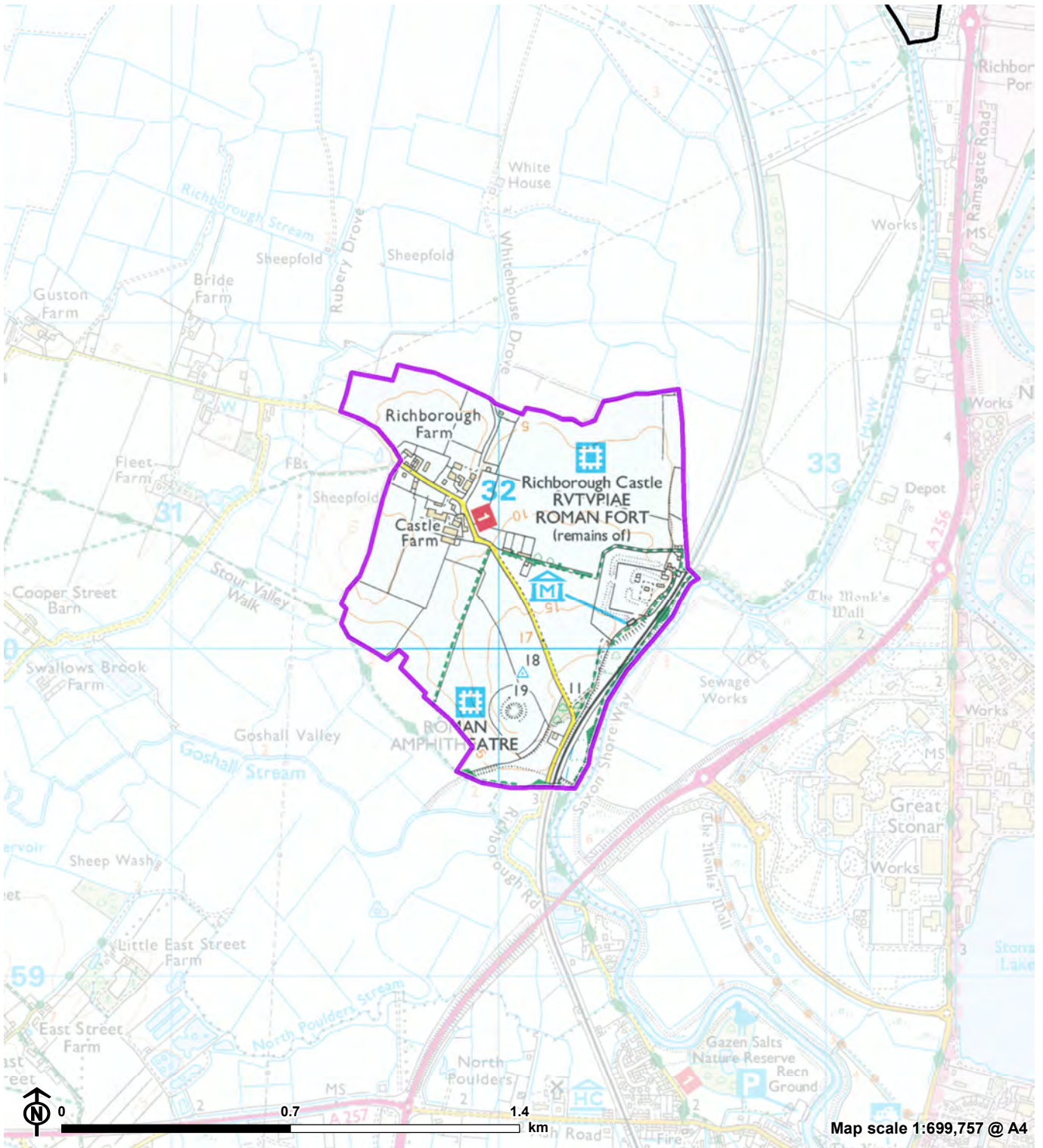
## LCA H1: Richborough Bluff

### Location and Summary

The Richborough Bluff LCA is located in the north of the district, to the north-west of Sandwich rising above the Ash Levels. The LCA is a distinctive knoll of higher land which sits above the surrounding marshes and the boundaries are formed by the change in elevation. A former island in the Wantsum Channel, the LCA is an important historic Roman and Saxon site, strategically located on high ground at a main entry point to Britain.



Richborough Roman Fort (Grade I listed and Scheduled Monument) looking north to Thanet district

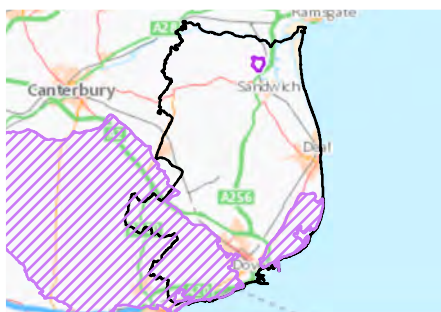


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Source: DDC, LUC

**H1 - Richborough Bluff**

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



### Key Characteristics

- Locally prominent knoll rising from 2m to 19m AOD underlain by Thanet, Lambeth, and Harwich Sand Formations with Head deposits.
- Small scale arable fields bound by native hedgerows with small areas of cattle pasture.
- Former island in the Wanstum Channel – a sea channel separating mainland Kent from the Isle of Thanet, now located some 3km inland from Sandwich Bay.
- The remains of an historic Roman port, amphitheatre and Saxon Shore fort designated as a Scheduled Monument.
- Development limited to farmsteads and small cottages.
- Popular visitor attraction with PRow and cycling routes through the landscape.
- Strategic elevated location with extensive views of the surrounding landscape including to Sandwich and Discovery Point.
- An open, peaceful area, with strong time depth. The sense of remoteness is reduced in the east due to proximity to development at Discovery Park and the A256.

### Natural Influences

The LCA is composed of an outcrop of Lambeth and Harwich Formation sand and gravels, set within the wider Thanet Formation sand silt and clay. These are overlain by an isolated patch of Head deposits (clay and silt). Soils are freely draining, slightly acidic and loamy.

The geology has resulted in the formation of a distinctive knoll or bluff that rises above the surrounding low-lying ground of the Ash Levels and Goshall Valley. Elevations range from 2m to 19m AOD, with a noticeable area of higher ground to the south.



Pasture fields looking north to Castle Farm

Vegetation cover within the LCA is limited to native hedgerows lining fields and roads and scattered deciduous trees and priority habitat traditional orchard at Richborough Farm. Priority habitat deciduous woodland lines the railway line to the east and semi-improved grassland, coastal saltmarsh and mudflats extend along the Great Stour River. The entire LCA

lies within the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA, an extensive network of water and wetland habitats. The BOA targets for a new landscape-scale freshwater wetland complex relate to the surrounding lower lying land. Here the opportunities relate to restoration of species rich grassland.

### Cultural Influences

This is an area which has undergone dramatic change. Richborough Bluff was originally a small island near the south-eastern end of the Wantsum Channel – a sea channel separating the Isle of Thanet from the rest of Kent. The surrounding land was gradually reclaimed from the 7<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and Richborough Bluff is now some 3km inland from the coast.

The earliest evidence of human activity dates from the Early Iron Age; a series of drainage ditches which formed part of a farmstead were found in the east of the LCA.

Richborough was one of the main landing places of the Claudian Roman invasion force under Senator Aulus Plautius in 43 AD. The troops constructed a temporary camp on the island. Excavations at the site have recorded a double ditch and bank which is considered to be a bridgehead defence.

Richborough (or Rutupiae) then became a major port of entry to the Roman province, sitting at the eastern terminus of Watling Street, the main Roman road that extended to London through Canterbury. The site was initially used as a military and naval base to store and distribute the supplies needed by the Roman forces during their rapid conquest of southern Britain. Soon after 85 AD the military supply base was demolished and Richborough became a civilian settlement, and included a quadrifons – a great monumental arch – to commemorate the successful invasion of Britain (later levelled to make way for the Saxon Shore Fort), shops and a large amphitheatre used for mass entertainment and ceremonies.

The port declined in the third century possibly due to competition from other ports such as Dover, and again became a military site. Around 270 AD the site was converted into a Saxon Shore fort, one of a series of forts built by the Romans along the Channel to counteract the threat of raiding Saxon and Frank pirates. It continued in use as a base for the Legio II Augusta until their withdrawal to Gaul in 406 AD, making it one of the last Roman bases in Britain to have its garrison removed.



Richborough Roman Fort (Grade I listed and Scheduled Monument)

The eastern side of the fort has been destroyed by river erosion, although the curtain wall survives to a height of up to 8m. Richborough Castle is designated as a Scheduled Monument, which largely covers the eastern side of the LCA, and the flint remains are also Grade I listed.

The farmland which characterises the area is predominantly in arable use, with some cattle pasture. The small regular fields are classified by the HLC as Parliamentary enclosure and are defined by native hedgerows or by ditches and post-and-wire fencing.

Built development is limited to buildings associated with Richborough Farm and Castle Farm. This includes three Grade II listed farmhouses, a number of barns and outbuildings and a row of small cottages (Castle Cottages).

The LCA is traversed by one B road – Richborough Road – which runs across the LCA from the west to the south-east. Elsewhere a series of small lanes/tracks provide access to fields and to the Scheduled Monument, including Castle Road to the east and Whitehouse Drove to the north. These lanes are very narrow, quiet, and winding, and are for the most part

lined by high hedgerows, except for a stretch of Richborough Road to the south-east which is lined by ditches and post and wire fencing.

A number of PRowS run through the LCA providing access to the Scheduled Monument. In addition, the Saxon Shore Way runs along the banks of the Great Stour River to the east, and National Cycle Route 1 follows the rural roads through the LCA. The Stour Valley Walk long distance footpath runs along the southern boundary. Richborough Castle is open to the public and has a museum, car park and refreshment booth.

### Perceptual Influences

The landscape is open and exposed, with long views over the surrounding flat marshland, particularly from elevated ground to the south. Views to the north include the wind turbine and communications towers on Minster marshes, pylon routes within Thanet district and the towers of Margate are also visible. Sandwich to the south-east and large industrial buildings of Discovery Park and Sandwich Industrial Estate (within LCA B1 Great Stour - Sandwich Corridor ) to the east are dominant in views and appear out of scale with the surrounding landscape, although screened in places by hedgerows. The dominance of these industrial buildings and the busy A256 Sandwich Bypass detract from the relative tranquillity and remoteness of the Richborough Bluff.



Views across A2 towards masts in Thanet district

## Landscape Evaluation

### Key Sensitivities and Values

- The distinctive knoll of higher ground which is locally prominent in the surrounding flat marshes of the Ash Levels.
- Locally important priority habitat coastal saltmarsh and mudflats extend along the Great Stour River and provide a refuge for wading birds and wildfowl.
- Historically important area with strong links to the former coastline, with a symbolically important Roman site, which witnessed both the beginning and end of Roman rule in Britain.
- The rural character of the landscape created by small fields and narrow winding lanes with native intact hedgerows.
- Valued for recreational use, including the Roman site at Richborough, the Saxon Shore Way and Stour Valley Walk Long Distance Footpaths and cycling routes.
- The sense of openness and expansiveness, with long views across the surrounding marshland, which are vulnerable to increasing development. Prominence of the character area in the wider low-lying landscape.

## Landscape Strategy

The overall aim for the Richborough Castle LCA is to conserve and enhance the rural character of the LCA, maintaining its historic importance and distinct character from the surrounding marshes.

## Guidance

### Landscape Management

- Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of agricultural fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins, management of drainage ditches and other wildlife-friendly farming methods.
- Enhance areas of improved grassland to bring it to priority habitat quality.
- Enhance and augment fragmented field boundary hedgerows with native species.

### Development Management

- Conserve and respect the character and setting of Richborough Castle.
- Conserve the open landscape and wide views, avoiding the introduction of further large scale or incongruous elements that would be visually detrimental within the flat expanse of the surrounding landscape.
- Improve boundary treatments to further screen the A256 Sandwich Bypass and industrial estates to the east.
- Retain the rural winding character of the local lanes, resisting proposals for highway upgrades.
- Carefully manage tourist/recreation pressures on Richborough Castle. Retain a natural and informal character to existing and new tourist features, including a muted colour scheme for car parks, footpaths, and interpretation.

## Appendices



# Appendix A

## User Guide



# Appendix B

## Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
<b>AOD</b>	Above Ordnance Datum (sea level).
<b>Agricultural Land Classification</b>	The classification of agricultural land in England in Wales
<b>Analysis</b>	The process of breaking the landscape down, usually in descriptive terms, into its component parts in order to understand how it is made up.
<b>Ancient trees and veteran trees</b>	<p>Individual trees or groups of trees with wood pastures, historic parkland, hedgerows, orchards, park, and other areas. They are often found outside ancient woodlands. irreplaceable habitats with some or all of the following characteristics:</p> <p><i>Ancient trees</i></p> <p>An ancient tree is exceptionally valuable. Attributes can include its great age, size, condition, biodiversity value (as a result of significant wood decay and the habitat created from the ageing process), cultural and heritage value.</p> <p><i>Veteran trees</i></p> <p>A veteran tree may or may not be very old, but it has decay features, such as branch death and hollowing. These features contribute to its biodiversity, cultural and heritage value.</p>
<b>Ancient Woodland</b>	Woodland which the evidence shows has had had continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD and has only been cleared for underwood or timber production. It is an extremely valuable ecological resource, with an exceptionally high diversity of flora and fauna.
<b>AONB</b>	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – a statutory national landscape designation.
<b>Approach</b>	The stepwise process by which a landscape assessment is undertaken.
<b>Arable</b>	Land used for growing crops.
<b>Assart</b>	The informal enclosure of private farmland by encroachment into woodland or heath.
<b>Assessment</b>	An umbrella term used to encompass all the many different ways of looking at, describing, analysing, and evaluating landscape.
<b>BAP</b>	UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species and habitats were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK BAP. The original lists of UK BAP priority habitats were created between 1995 and 1999 and were subsequently updated in 2007. See <a href="http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5155">http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5155</a> for further information.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	The measure of the variety of organisms present in different ecosystems.
<b>Brownfield Site</b>	A development site which is re-using previously developed land.
<b>Built form</b>	The characteristic nature of built development.



Term	Definition
<b>Carr woodland</b>	Marsh or fen woodland in waterlogged terrain. Characteristic trees include alders and willows.
<b>Characteristic</b>	An element that contributes to local distinctiveness (e.g. narrow winding lanes, vernacular building style).
<b>Classification</b>	A process of sorting the landscape into different types, each with a distinct, consistent, and recognisable character.
<b>Combe</b>	A small dry valley, without a permanent watercourse.
<b>Condition</b>	A judgement on the intactness and condition of the elements of the landscape.
<b>Coppicing</b>	The traditional method of woodland management in which trees are cut down to near the ground to encourage the production of long, straight shoots, which can subsequently be harvested.
<b>Description</b>	Verbal description of what a landscape looks like. This is usually carried out in a systematic manner, but it may also include personal reactions to the landscape.
<b>Drift</b>	The name for all material of glacial origin found anywhere on land or at sea, including sediment and large rocks.
<b>EIA</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment
<b>Element</b>	A component part of the landscape (e.g. hedges, roads, woods).
<b>Enclosure</b>	The placing in private hands of land to which there were previously common rights; the merging of commonly held strip fields to form a block surrounded by hedges.
<b>Equine development</b>	A term used to describe areas on the fringes of settlements which are dominated by horse paddocks, stable buildings, and associated paraphernalia.
<b>Feature</b>	A prominent, eye-catching element (e.g. wooded hilltop, church spire).
<b>Floodplain</b>	The area that would naturally be affected by flooding if a river rises above its banks, or if high tides and stormy seas cause flooding in coastal areas.
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information System
<b>GPS</b>	Global Positioning System
<b>Grassland</b>	Land used for grazing. Grassland can be improved (by management practices) semi-improved (modified by management practices and have a range of species less diverse than unimproved grasslands), or unimproved (not treated with fertiliser, herbicide or intensively grazed and consequently species diversity is high).
<b>Greenfield site</b>	A development site, usually on the fringes of a settlement, which has not previously been used for built development.
<b>Habitat</b>	The natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism.
<b>HLC</b>	Historic Landscape Characterisation

Term	Definition
<b>Hydrology</b>	The science dealing with the occurrence, circulation, distribution, and properties of the waters of the earth and its atmosphere.
<b>Intact</b>	Not changed or diminished.
<b>Land cover</b>	Combinations of land use and vegetation that cover the land surface.
<b>Landmark</b>	An object or feature of a landscape or town that is easily seen and recognized from a distance, especially one that enables someone to establish their location.
<b>Landscape</b>	The term refers primarily to the visual appearance of the land, including its shape, form, and colours. However, the landscape is not a purely visual phenomenon; its character relies on a whole range of other dimensions, including geology, topography, soils, ecology, archaeology, landscape history, land use, architecture, and cultural associations.
<b>Landscape character</b>	A distinct pattern or combination of elements that occurs consistently in a particular landscape.
<b>Landscape character area (LCA)</b>	A unique geographic area with a consistent character and identity, which forms part of a landscape character type.
<b>Landscape character type (LCT)</b>	A generic term for landscape with a consistent, homogeneous character. Landscape character types may occur in different parts of the county, but wherever they occur, they will share common combinations of geology, topography, vegetation, or human influences.
<b>Landscape condition</b>	Based on judgements about the physical state of the landscape, and about its intactness, from visual, functional, and ecological perspectives. It reflects the state of repair or intactness of individual features or elements (relating to that feature's primary condition or ultimate <i>desire</i> ).
<b>Landscape strategy</b>	Principles to manage and direct landscape change for a particular landscape type or character area including identification of any particular management needs for specific elements.
<b>Landscape value</b>	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes. In a policy context the usual basis for recognising certain highly valued landscapes is through the application of a local or national landscape designation. Yet a landscape may be valued by different communities of interest for many different reasons without any formal designation, recognising, for example, perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness; special cultural associations; the influence and presence of other conservation interests; or the existence of a consensus about importance, either nationally or locally.
<b>Linear settlement</b>	A settlement that is built along a road, in comparison to a nuclear or dispersed settlement.
<b>Listed Building</b>	A building, object or structure that has been judged to be of national importance in terms of architectural or historic interest.
<b>Local Plan</b>	A development plan prepared by local planning authorities.
<b>LWS</b>	Local Wildlife Site
<b>Natural character</b>	Character as a result of natural or semi-natural features such as woodland, grassland, hedgerows etc.

Term	Definition
<b>National Character Areas (NCAs)</b>	National Character Areas are defined within the <i>National Character Area Study, Natural England (2013)</i> . NCAs divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity.
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NNR</b>	National Nature Reserve
<b>Nucleated settlement</b>	A settlement that is clustered around a centre, in comparison to a linear or dispersed settlement.
<b>Open-field system</b>	An area of arable land with common rights after harvest or while fallow. The fields date from the medieval period and are usually without internal divisions (hedges, walls, or fences).
<b>OS</b>	Ordnance Survey
<b>Parliamentary fields / enclosure</b>	Fields formed by a legal process of enclosure (or inclosure), typically during the 18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> centuries – by passing laws causing or forcing enclosure to produce fields for use by the owner (in place of common land for communal use).
<b>Pastoral</b>	Land used for keeping or grazing sheep or cattle.
<b>Pollarding</b>	A traditional woodland management practice in which the branches of a tree are cut back every few years to encourage new long, straight shoots for harvesting. Differs from <i>coppicing</i> because the cuts are made at sufficient distance from the ground to prevent them from being eaten by animals.
<b>PRoW</b>	Public Right of Way
<b>Ramsar</b>	Wetlands of international importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat
<b>Remediation</b>	Process by which a contaminated or damaged site is repaired and brought back into more general use, or for a specific purpose (e.g. wildlife conservation).
<b>Remnant</b>	A part or quantity left after the greater part has been used, removed, or destroyed.
<b>Riparian habitat</b>	Riverbank habitat.
<b>RNR</b>	Roadside Nature Reserve
<b>SAC</b>	Special Area of Conservation (EC Directive 92/43/EEC Habitats Directive)
<b>SANGS</b>	Suitable Alternative Green Space
<b>Scheduled Monument</b>	Nationally important archaeological sites or historic buildings, given protection against unauthorised change.
<b>Seascape character area (SCA)</b>	A unique geographic area with a consistent character and identity, which forms part of a Seascape Character Type.
<b>Seascape character type (SCT)</b>	A generic term for seascape with a consistent, homogeneous character. Seascape character types may occur in different locations, but share broadly similar combinations of geology, bathymetry, ecology, human influences, and perceptual and aesthetic attributes. For example, sheltered bays, rocky coves, sandy beaches, or harbours are recognisable and distinct seascape character types.

Appendix B  
Glossary of Terms

Dover District Landscape Character Assessment  
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Term	Definition
<b>Semi-natural vegetation</b>	Any type of natural vegetation which has been influenced by human activities, either directly or indirectly.
<b>Sense of Place</b>	A person's perception of a location's indigenous characteristics, based on the mix of uses, appearance and context that makes a place memorable.
<b>Sensitive</b>	The response to change or influence.
<b>Skyline</b>	The outline of a range of hills, ridge or group of buildings seen against the sky.
<b>SPA</b>	Special Protection Area (EC Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds)
<b>SSSI</b>	Site of Special Scientific Interest
<b>Time depth</b>	The time period expressed in the landscape, or the extent to which the landscape reflects a certain time period (a landscape with greater time depth will comprise older elements than a landscape with lesser time depth).
<b>Topography</b>	Combinations of slope and elevation that produce the shape and form of the land surface.
<b>Valued landscape attributes</b>	Positive features and characteristics that are important to landscape character and that, if lost, would result in adverse change to the landscape.
<b>Vernacular</b>	Buildings constructed in the local style, from local materials. Concerned with ordinary rather than monumental buildings.

## Appendix C

### Landscape Classification Changes 2006 and 2020 LCA

2006 Old LCA name / no.	Notes	2020 New LCT / LCA name
		<b>LCT A: River Valleys and Marshes</b>
1 Little Stour Marshes	No change to marshland. Little Stour and Wingham river valley separated (as A3) to reflect difference between the marsh and river valley landscapes.	A1: Little Stour Marshes
3 Ash Levels	No change.	A2: Ash Levels
1 Little Stour Marshes	Little Stour and Wingham river valley separated from Little Stour Marshes (A1) to reflect difference between the marsh and river valley landscapes.	A3: Little Stour and Wingham River
		<b>LCT B: Developed River Valley</b>
4 Sandwich Corridor	Name changed to reflect geographic location of the landscape.	B1: Great Stour – Sandwich Corridor
		<b>LCT C: Coastal Marshes and Dunes</b>
6 Sandwich Bay	Boundary extended north to the district boundary.	C1: Sandwich Bay
7 Lydden Valley	No change.	C2: Lydden Valley
		<b>LCT D: Horticultural Belt</b>
2 Preston and Ash Horticultural Belt	Divided into two LCAs to reflect the change in settlement pattern.	D1: Preston Horticultural Belt
2 Preston and Ash Horticultural Belt	Divided into two LCAs to reflect the change in settlement pattern.	D2: Ash Settled Horticultural Belt
8 Staple Farmlands	No change.	D3: Staple Farmlands
		<b>LCT E: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Parkland</b>
10 Eyethorne Arable Mosaic with Parkland	Divided into two LCAs to reflect the influence of smaller parklands on the landscape.	E1: Shepherdswell Aylesham Parklands
10 Eyethorne Arable Mosaic with Parkland	Divided into two LCAs to reflect the influence of the single parkland around Whitfield on the landscape.	E2: Whitfield Parkland
		<b>LCT F: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Woodland</b>
9 Eastry Arable and Woodland Clumps	Divided into two LCAs to reflect the change in settlement pattern and density of roads.	F1: Chillenden
9 Eastry Arable and Woodland Clumps	Divided into two LCAs to reflect the change in settlement pattern and density of roads.	F2: Northbourne
9 Eastry Arable and Woodland Clumps	Created a separate character area south of Great Mongeham and east of the A256, which is a more open landscape with a greater downland character.	F3: Ripple

Appendix C  
 Landscape Classification Changes 2006 and 2020 LCA  
 Dover District Landscape Character Assessment  
 October 2020

2006 Old LCA name / no.	Notes	2020 New LCT / LCA name
10 Eyethorne Arable Mosaic with Parkland		
		<b>LCT G: Chalk Hills</b>
11 Lydden Hills	No change.	G1: Lydden Hills
12 Guston Hills	Boundaries modified in the north-west to accommodate new settlement boundary around White Cliffs Business Park. Boundary extended to the A268 in the east.	G2: Guston Hills
		<b>LCT H: Defensive Hills</b>
5 Richborough Castle	Name changed to reflect the distinctive geology of the landscape.	H1: Richborough Bluff

# Appendix D

## Woodland Creation Strategy for Dover District

### Introduction

**D.1** As part of the preparation of the 2020 Landscape Character Assessment, Dover District Council wish to understand the landscape capacity for increasing woodland cover. The District, outside the AONB, currently has only 0.8% woodland cover in total, which is therefore very low compared to the national average for England of 10% woodland cover. Of this woodland around 90.8% is classified as broadleaved (National Forest Inventory) of which 12.4% is classified as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (Ancient Woodland Inventory).

**D.2** The Government has set a target of establishing 30,000 ha of new woodland in England by 2025 as outlined in the 2020 budget statement. These are related to the Government's commitment to the Committee on Climate Change's net zero projections advocating the need for 30,000 ha of new trees being established in the UK every year to 2050, to take woodland cover in the UK from 13 to 17% (England currently has c. 10% woodland cover).

**D.3** Dover District is undergoing a period of landscape change, including changes in agriculture, climate change both direct changes and adaptation and mitigation measures, plus the need to accommodate increasing housing numbers. The Landscape Character Assessment provides an evidence base to help plan and manage these changes in a way that conserves, enhances, and creates areas of new cherished landscape character.

**D.4** This Appendix sets out our approach to the assessment of woodland cover and main findings. The results are illustrated in table and mapped form showing areas with greatest capacity for woodland planting and illustrates how Dover District can contribute to the Government target for establishing new woodland (by planting or natural regeneration).

### Method

**D.5** The study uses the landscape character classification to help guide new planting. It draws on a combination of desk study and fieldwork to generate the results.

### Desk study

**D.6** For each character area the following information was reviewed:

### Current woodland cover and status

- National Forest Inventory
- Ancient Woodland Inventory

### Woodland change

- Historic maps including 'Side by Side' georeferenced maps <https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/side-by-side>
- Air photos
- Corine land cover data

### Site Survey

#### D.7 Use of OS maps and site survey to understand:

- current woodland patterns in relation to, for example, landform, estate planting patterns, land use
- extent of connectivity between woodlands – areas of isolated blocks which would benefit from linking

#### D.8 Plus:

- site survey, as part of the LCA to investigate patterns, species mix, and general extent of tree cover associated with hedgerows and other small copses not recorded on mapping

### Results in the LCA

#### D.9 The collated information was used to:

- prepare a key characteristic/descriptive text for each LCA covering the amount, pattern of woodland cover
- understand extent of woodland change
- develop an outline strategy covering woodland creation opportunities, with brief guidance on extent, patterns and species, spatial variations within the LCA.

#### D.10 The results are collated in **Table D.1**.

## Findings

Table D.1: Woodland Creation Strategy for each LCA

LCA no.	LCA name	Woodland Creation Strategy
<b>LCT A: River Valleys and Marshes</b>		
A1	Little Stour Marshes	<p>The Little Stour Marshes contain very limited woodland cover – just 8ha covering 3% of the LCA, although it occurs close to development outside of the LCA and is a feature of views. There is woodland block near North Court Farm in the north, one at Preston and a linear copse at Preston Court. Woodlands at Deerson Wood and Deadmill Bridge are part of larger woodlands outside of the LCA. Preston Court and Deerson Wood are ancient woodlands.</p> <p>The LCA is an area of reclaimed grazing marsh associated with the Wantsum Channel, with no history of woodland cover. Further woodland creation is not appropriate in the area, where the aim is for landscape scale creation of open grazing marsh as part of the wider Stour Valley wetlands. Minor areas of naturally regenerated wetland trees may be appropriate as part of a complex of fen, reedbed and grazing marsh habitats.</p>
A2	Ash Levels	<p>The Ash Levels contain very limited woodland cover – just 15ha in total covering 1% of the LCA. Woodland occurs in three small areas associated with the Stour Channel at Plucks Gutter, a small copse along the Elmstone valley, plus a linear belt of woodland along the rail corridor to the east. None of the woodland is recorded as ancient origin.</p> <p>The LCA is an area of reclaimed grazing marsh associated with the Wantsum Channel, with no history of woodland cover. Further large-scale woodland creation is not appropriate in the area, where the aim is for landscape scale creation of open grazing marsh as part of the wider Stour Valley wetlands. Minor areas of naturally regenerated wetland trees may be appropriate as part of a complex of fen, reedbed and grazing marsh habitats.</p>
A3	Little Stour and Wingham River	<p>The Little Stour and Wingham River contains limited woodland cover – 8ha in total covering 16 % of the LCA. The largest area of woodland occurs in the minor tributary south of Wingham Bridge. There are small copses on the floodplain east and west of Wingham and linear belts along the Wingham River in the north. None of the woodland is recorded as of ancient origin.</p> <p>The LCA is an area of grazing pasture with no recent history of extensive woodland cover. Further large-scale woodland creation is not appropriate on the pastoral floodplain landscape. Further small areas of naturally regenerated wet woodland may be appropriate to link to existing woods.</p>
<b>LCT B: Developed River Valley</b>		



LCA no.	LCA name	Woodland Creation Strategy
B1	Great Stour – Sandwich Corridor	<p>The Great Stour – Sandwich Corridor contains limited woodland cover – almost 8ha covering 2% of the LCA. The woodland is all broadleaved, and confined to the Gazen Salts Nature Reserve, a small copse on the eastern shore of Stonar Lake and woodland along the Great Stour between Sandwich and the Goodwin Park industrial estate. There is no recorded ancient woodland.</p> <p>Further woodland creation is not appropriate in the west, where the aim is for landscape scale creation of open grazing marsh as part of the wider Stour Valley wetlands. Minor areas of naturally regenerated wetland trees may be appropriate as part of a complex of fen, reedbed and grazing marsh habitats. Further planting may also be appropriate along the A256 and within the industrial areas/business park to provide visual screening from the landscape. In these areas there is an opportunity for woodland creation to help create a new landscape framework in association with development areas.</p>
<b>LCT C: Coastal Marshes and Dunes</b>		
C1	Sandwich Bay	<p>Sandwich Bay contains very limited woodland cover – less than 10ha covering less than 1% of the LCA. Broadleaved trees are concentrated in pasture north of Flagstaff Reach, and there are coniferous belts within the Prince's Golf Club. There is also coniferous shelterbelt planting associated with arable farming and horticultural crops. There is no recorded ancient woodland.</p> <p>The LCA is an area of arable farmland leading to the salt marsh, mudflats, sand dunes, beach and shallow waters forming the wide bay between Ramsgate and Deal, with no recent history of woodland. Further woodland creation is not appropriate in the area, where the aim is for the existing natural coastal process to be maintained, taking opportunities for managed realignment of the coast to maintain and enhance intertidal habitats. Minor areas of naturally regenerated wetland trees may be appropriate as part of the successional complex of mudflats and sand dunes. Inland on areas of arable land there may in the future be opportunities for further creation of woodland.</p>
C2	Lydden Valley	<p>The Lydden Valley contains very limited woodland cover – just 25ha in total covering 2% of the LCA. It occurs in three small blocks, including important areas of wet woodland recorded as ancient woodland.</p> <p>Within this area, where the aim is for landscape scale creation of wetland complex, including fen, reedbed and grazing marsh further large-scale woodland creation is not appropriate. Natural regeneration should be allowed to progress in places to create further areas of wet woodland and link the existing blocks of woodland as a minor component of the marsh landscape providing visual and biodiversity.</p>
<b>LCT D: Horticultural Belt</b>		
D1	Preston	<p>The Preston Horticultural Belt is very open and contains under 45ha of woodland cover, which is 2% of the LCA. The majority of this is broadleaved woodland, with small blocks at Nash, Broom Hill, Preston, Chequer Court and East Street. There are four small areas of ancient woodland on the western periphery of the LCA – Deerson Wood, Wenderton Hoath, Preston Court Wood and Hanging Bank Wood. Poplar and alder windbreaks and orchard plantations add to the tree cover.</p> <p>The Preston Horticultural Belt is an area where agriculture has long dominated the fertile soils and woodland was cleared early. The area has potential for further woodland planting to help integrate areas of new development and land uses to create a new wooded character. The open arable landscape in the centre and east could accommodate an extensive area of new woodland, with further woodland planting and copses to integrate settlement and development around Preston and Weddington.</p>
D2	Ash	<p>The Ash Settled Horticultural Belt is very sparsely wooded with some 30ha of woodland equivalent to 2.5% of the LCA located within a number of scattered small copses, none recorded as ancient origin. Tree cover also includes commercial orchards, and occasional poplar shelterbelts and recent structural planting along the A256 and A257.</p> <p>Early clearance of woodland means that area has a long history of intensive agricultural use. It has potential for further woodland planting to help integrate areas of new development and land uses to create a new wooded character. The open arable landscape of the Ash Ridge could accommodate an extensive area of new woodland, with further woodland planting and copses to integrate settlement and development around Ash and Woodnesborough, plus further planting along road corridors, and restoration of field boundaries with the aim of creating connecting areas of woodland.</p>
D3	Staple Farmlands	<p>The Staple Farmlands are very sparsely wooded with just 13ha of woodland equivalent to 2% of the LCA located within a small number of copses, none recorded as ancient origin. Tree cover is</p>

LCA no.	LCA name	Woodland Creation Strategy
		<p>largely confined to commercial orchards, and occasional poplar shelterbelts (check conifers on site).</p> <p>Early clearance of woodland means that the area has had a long history of intensive agricultural use. It has potential for further woodland planting to help integrate areas of new development and land uses to create a new wooded character. The open arable landscape to the east could accommodate an extensive area of new woodland, with further woodland planting and copses to integrate settlement and development around Staple and Wingham to the west, plus restoration of field boundaries with the aim of creating connecting areas of woodland.</p>
<b>LCT E: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Parkland</b>		
E1	Shepherdswell Aylesham Parklands	<p>The area contains 330ha of woodland, majority broadleaved, approximately 10% woodland cover, representing one of the more wooded parts of the District, outside the AONB. The woodland is predominantly associated with the parkland estates with large blocks at Knowlton, Fredville and Goodnestone, plus other medium sized blocks south of Aylesham and around the former Snowdown Colliery. The landscape is more open away from the estate influence. There are nearly 80ha of ancient woodland, half of which is replanted ancient woodland, part managed as coppice with standards.</p> <p>The woodland creation strategy for this area is to seek opportunities for planting further large blocks and swathes of woodland and enhancing connectivity, including perpetuation of park and planting patterns and specimen trees and the re-instatement and thickening of hedgerow boundaries around arable fields.</p> <p>There is a key opportunity for woodland planting to help integrate the stark edges of the modern hill-top settlements, and potential areas of new development associated with existing settlements. The aim should be to buffer, link and connect to existing ancient woodlands. Any new large- scale planting should follow principles of good design.</p>
E2	Whitfield Parkland	<p>The area contains 184ha of woodland, majority broadleaved, approximately 9% woodland cover, representing one of the more wooded parts of the District, outside the AONB. The woodland is predominantly associated with the estates with large blocks at Eastling Wood, The Wilderness, Malmain's Woods, plus other medium sized blocks. The landscape is more open away from the estate influence. More than half (117ha) are ancient woodland, with a small area of replanted ancient woodland, part managed as coppice with standards.</p> <p>The woodland creation strategy for this area is to seek to create new areas of woodland cover, with new large block and swathes of woodland, with a potential for large scale creation to double the existing cover (200ha of new woodland). The key opportunity is in relation to proposed urban expansion at Whitfield. The development masterplan should aim to integrate woodland blocks and belts to link to existing surrounding areas of woodland and provide swathes of accessible woodland on the edges of development to integrate the new urban area within the elevated, open and exposed landscape of the plateau at Whitfield. It should provide a buffer to the outlying more rural areas of the LCA, including the church at Old Whitfield. Elsewhere the aim should be to reinstate and thicken hedges around arable fields and consider opportunities for small scale copse planting, plus a programme for renewal of parkland trees at Waldershare and promote new generations of mature hedgerow oaks.</p> <p>Woodland creation should follow principles of good design and aim to provide multi-functional benefits, and especially opportunities for recreation, health, and wellbeing of existing and new communities at Whitfield, as well as for biodiversity and soils. Species to include hazel, ash, field maple and oak. A detailed strategy and master plan will required be for large scale landscape change.</p>
<b>LCT F: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Woodland</b>		
F1	Chillenden	<p>The Chillenden LCA is predominantly open arable farmland and contains 55ha of woodland, almost all broadleaved, covering 3% of the landscape. Woodland blocks are found at Crixall Rough, Bushy Rough and Wingham Well, with smaller linear plantations along roads and within farmsteads. Crixall Rough is replanted ancient woodland.</p> <p>Chillenden open arable farmland, although long cleared of woodland for agriculture, has potential for further woodland planting to create a new wooded character. The larger arable fields in the east could accommodate an extensive area of new woodland, linking to the Staple Farmlands to the north. Further woodland planting and copses could be used to integrate settlement and development around Wingham, and to link into the parklands of Goodnestone and Knowlton to the</p>

LCA no.	LCA name	Woodland Creation Strategy
		south creating a connected woodland network. Reinstatement and thickening of hedgerows on arable land is a further opportunity
F2	Northbourne	<p>Northbourne contains 234ha of woodland, majority broadleaved, approximately 9% woodland cover, representing one of the more wooded parts of the District, outside the AONB. The woodland is predominately associated with the Tilmanstone, Betteshanger and Northbourne estates, and also at the former colliery site, now Betteshanger Park in the east. The landscape is more open away from the estate influence. There are 30ha of ancient woodland around Tilmanstone and Nine Acre Wood, and replanted ancient woodland at Betteshanger Wood.</p> <p>The woodland creation strategy for this area is to seek to create new areas of woodland cover by planting new large blocks and swathes of woodland, with the potential for large-scale creation to double the existing woodland cover.</p> <p>The key opportunity is in relation to former colliery at Betteshanger (Betteshanger Country Park), the northern edge of Deal and the new edges of Eastry. The development plan should aim to integrate woodland blocks and belts to link to existing surrounding areas of woodland and provide swathes of accessible woodland on the edge of development, linking to Sholden and Deal. Elsewhere the aim should be to thicken hedges around arable fields and consider opportunities for small-scale copse planting, plus a programme for renewal of parkland trees at Tilmanstone, Betteshanger and Northbourne estates, and promote new generations of mature hedgerow oaks.</p>
F3	Ripple	<p>Ripple contains 70ha of woodland, majority broadleaved, covering 3% of the LCA. Scattered blocks are found around Langdon and Ringwold, with linear woodland at Rays Bottom and Knights Bottom between Walmer and Kingsdown. Giffords Covert is the only There is no recorded area of ancient woodland.</p> <p>Although there is no recent history of woodland in the area, Ripple has the potential to create small copses and links between areas of ancient woodland as openness and views towards the coast are important features of the landscape. Woodland planting is not appropriate at the coastline, where cliff and intertidal habitats should be conserved and enhanced as part of the Dover and Folkestone Cliffs and Downs. Areas of chalk grassland and species-rich neutral grassland should be extended, restored, and enhanced where possible. Small areas of planting to extend and reconnect fragmented woodlands would be appropriate where these do not conflict with grassland conservation and enhancement.</p>
<b>LCT G: Chalk Hills</b>		
G1	Lydden Hills	<p>The Lydden Hills is predominantly unenclosed chalk grassland with just over 30ha of broadleaved woodland in total covering about 7% of the LCA, in two blocks at the foot of the slopes at Woodville Hall and Lousyberry Wood, with none is recorded as ancient woodland.</p> <p>This is an area where the focus is on conservation and management of the chalk grassland. The woodland creation strategy is for limited areas of new trees and scrub, for example integration of roads along the A256 and Lydden Hill and potentially for new woodland belts on arable land along the A2 to provide a woodland and chalk scrub buffer between the road and downland, plus re-establishment, thickening of hedges, copse and tree belts on the arable fields north west of Lydden village. Species should be adapted to the chalk habitat and natural regeneration will be preferable in most places rather than planting. The pine clumps above Stonehall should be perpetuated as a cultural reference in the landscape.</p>
G2	Guston Hills	<p>The Guston Hills contains just over 50ha of woodland, almost all broadleaved, covering approx. 11% of the LCA. None is recorded as ancient woodland. The woodland occurs in blocks, belts and scrub along the steep south facing slopes. Much appears relatively recent in origin and includes natural colonisation plus mature specimen tree planting associated with Connaught Park and Cemeteries.</p> <p>The woodland creation strategy for this area is to concentrate new woodland opportunities in association with the large scale arable landscape on the hilltop to the north, integrating areas of proposed development between the Whitfield roundabout and the Duke of York's Military School and to provide a setting to the A2. To the south the aim should be to conserve the distinctive open topography of the chalk slopes and reinforce the parkland character through replacement specimen tree planting, and management of existing belts and copses.</p> <p>Overall, a doubling of the amount of woodland cover by creation of a further 50ha would be an appropriate objective for this LCA. Oak, ash, beech, and hazel are all appropriate species. (Site visit to determine more detail on species, nature of planting on southern slopes, and any parkland, specimen trees associated with barracks, military school).</p>

LCA no.	LCA name	Woodland Creation Strategy
<b>LCT H: Defensive Hills</b>		
H1	Richborough Bluff	Richborough Bluff contains very limited woodland – just 2ha covering 2% of the LCA. It occurs along the railway line in the south-east, and there is an orchard at Richborough Farm. None of the woodland is of ancient origin.  The LCA is a bluff of higher ground above the surrounding marshland, with no recent history of woodland cover. Further woodland creation is not appropriate in the area, both to protect the nationally important historic remains of Richborough Castle, and its setting - a strategic elevated location with long views. There are opportunities to improve hedgerow connectivity and planting to improve integration of the A256 and development in the wider landscape.

## Dover District Woodland Strategy

**D.11** The following table provides a summary of data and strategy for each character area. LCAs in Dover can be very broadly divided into those with the following woodland creation objectives:

<b>very limited woodland creation</b> acceptable (e.g. dunes, marshes, chalk grassland, extensive historic sites)	1
<b>conserve/ retain</b> existing landscape patterns through augmentation and enhancing connectivity	2
restore and create further areas of woodland cover to create a well wooded landscape framework	3
<b>create</b> extensive new woodland, including areas with opportunities for future land use change to woodland/forestry on a large scale	4

**D.12** The results for each LCA are provided in this appendix and illustrated in **Map D.1**.

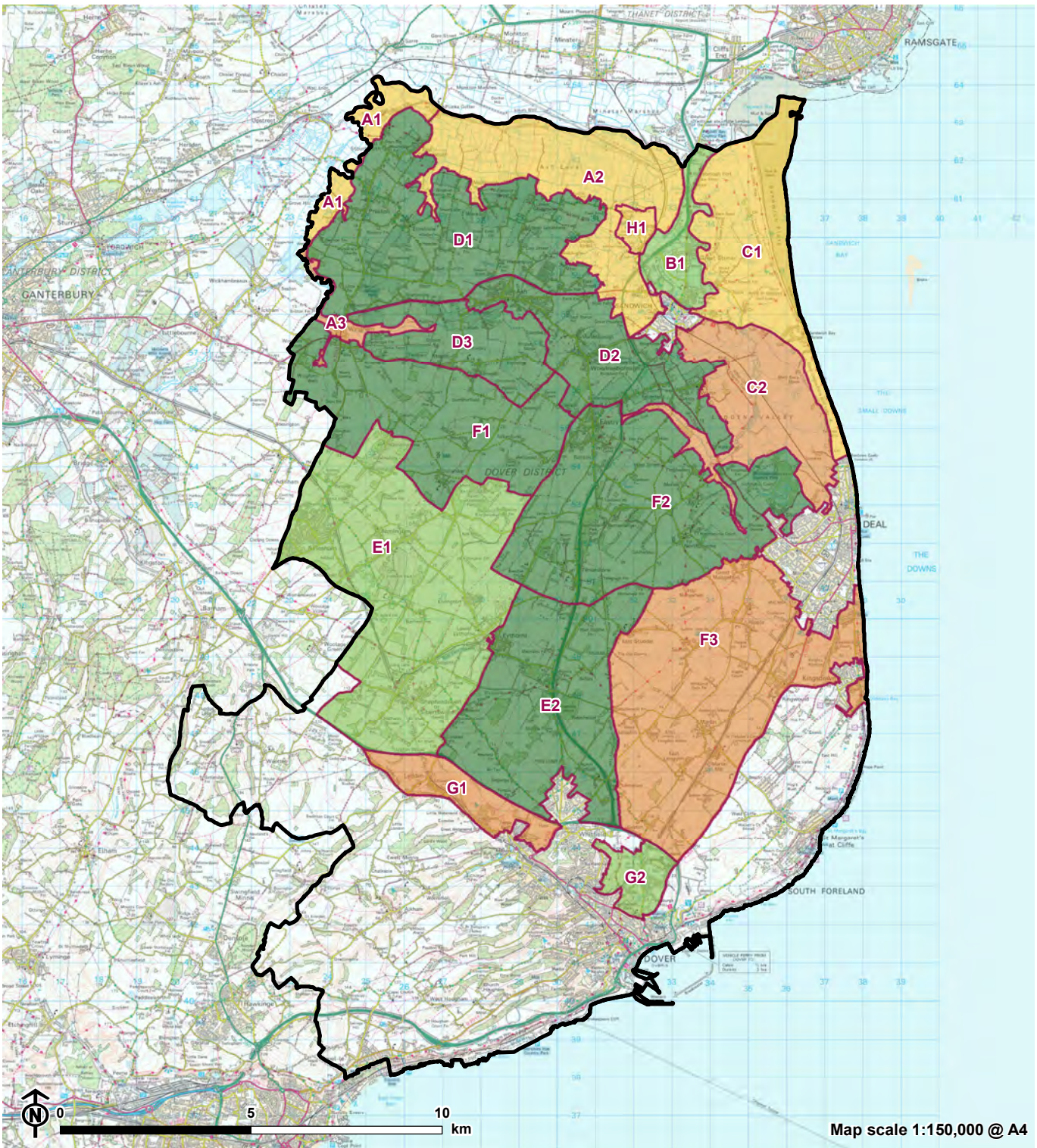
**D.13** These are intended as broad landscape scale strategies and there will be spatial variations in approach within any single character area. The strategies provide landscape character- based guidance to encourage and support woodland creation. The information will need to be aligned with other factors including soils, microclimate, land ownership as well as detailed site survey and analysis.

**Table D.2: Summary Strategy**

LCA no.	LCA name	Total Woodland Cover (ha) <sup>7</sup>	LCA woodland %	Woodland Creation Potential
<b>LCT A: River Valleys and Marshes</b>				
A1	Little Stour Marshes	8.45	2.88	1
A2	Ash Levels	15.81	1.01	1
A3	Little Stour and Wingham River	8.67	16.16	2
<b>LCT B: Developed River Valley</b>				
B1	Great Stour – Sandwich Corridor	7.62	2.02	3
<b>LCT C: Coastal Marshes and Dunes</b>				
C1	Sandwich Bay	9.81	0.72	1
C2	Lydden Valley	25.06	2.15	2

<sup>7</sup> Forestry Commission, National Forest Inventory, <https://data-forestry.opendata.arcgis.com/> (accessed November 2019),

LCA no.	LCA name	Total Woodland Cover (ha) <sup>7</sup>	LCA woodland %	Woodland Creation Potential
<b>LCT D: Horticultural Belt</b>				
D1	Preston	44.23	1.96	4
D2	Ash	29.45	2.54	4
D3	Staple Farmlands	13.32	1.61	4
<b>LCT E: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Parkland</b>				
E1	Shepherdswell Aylesham Parklands	330.89	10.20	3
E2	Whitfield Parkland	184.07	9.01	4
<b>LCT F: Open Arable Chalk Farmland with Woodland</b>				
F1	Chillenden	55.31	3.03	4
F2	Northbourne	236.58	9.11	4
F3	Ripple	70.38	2.36	2
<b>LCT G: Chalk Hills</b>				
G1	Lydden Hills	31.36	7.26	2
G2	Guston Hills	32.30	12.09	3
<b>LCT H: Defensive Hills</b>				
H1	Richborough Bluff	1.84	1.92	1



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CB:CB EB:lendak\_e LUC FIGD1\_LCAWoodlandCreationPot\_11055\_r1\_A4P 16/09/2020  
Source: DDC, LUC

**Figure D1: Landscape Character and Woodland Creation Potentia**

Dover district      Landscape Character Area

**Woodland creation potential**

- Very limited woodland creation acceptable (e.g. dunes, marshes, chalk grassland, extensive historic sites)
- Conserve / retain existing landscape patterns through augmentation and enhancing connectivity
- Restore and create further areas of woodland cover to create a well wooded landscape framework
- Create extensive new woodland, including areas with opportunities for future land use change to woodland/forestry on a large scale

Note: The Kent Downs AONB is excluded from this assessment.