

## **PART 2:**

# **THE CHARACTER OF THE SOUTH DOWNS LANDSCAPE**

This second part of the report contains the characterisation for the South Downs. It provides a description and evaluation of each generic landscape type and presents more detailed information for each landscape character area.



## 8. THE CHARACTER OF THE SOUTH DOWNS LANDSCAPE

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### INTRODUCTION

- 8.1. The interaction of physical, historic, natural and social and economic processes, described in the previous chapters, have in combination created the unique and distinctive character of the South Downs. It is a very complex and landscape with significant local variation and contrast. The great diversity is recognised in the identification of a very large number of **landscape types** (18). Each of these landscape types has a distinct and relatively homogenous character with similar physical and cultural attributes, including geology, landform, land cover and historic evolution. The landscape types are further subdivided into component **landscape character areas**. The character areas are discrete geographic areas that possess the common characteristics described for the landscape type. Each character area has a distinct and recognisable local identity.
- 8.2. The landscape classification for the South Downs is set out in **Table 8.1** and illustrated on **Figure 8.1**. The classification and boundary mapping has been undertaken using GIS, with mapping at a scale of 1:25,000. A more detailed map showing an overview of the classification is provided as an annex to this report.

**Table 8.1: The South Downs Landscape Classification**

<b>A: Open Downland</b>	
A1:	Ouse to Eastbourne Open Downs
A2:	Adur to Ouse Open Downs
A3:	Arun to Adur Open Downs
A4:	Mount Caburn
A5:	East Winchester Open Downs
<b>B: Wooded Estate Downland</b>	
B1:	Goodwood to Arundel Wooded Estate Downland
B2:	Queen Elizabeth Forest to East Dean Wooded Estate Downland
B3:	Stansted to West Dean Wooded Estate Downland
B4:	Angmering and Clapham Wooded Estate Downland
<b>C: Clay Plateau</b>	
C1:	Froxfield Clay Plateau
<b>D: Downland Mosaic</b>	
D1:	South Winchester Downland Mosaic
D2:	Hambledon and Clanfield Downland Mosaic
D3:	Bramdean and Cheriton Downland Mosaic
D4:	Newton Valence Downland Mosaic

<b>E: Chalk Valley Systems</b>	
E1:	Lavant Valley
E2:	Emms Valley
E3:	Meon Valley
E4:	Itchen Valley
<b>F: Major River Floodplains</b>	
F1:	Cuckmere Floodplain
F2:	Ouse Floodplain
F3:	Adur Floodplain
F4:	Arun and Lower Rother Floodplain
<b>G: Major Valley Sides</b>	
G1:	Cuckmere Valley Sides
G2:	Ouse Valley Sides
G3:	Adur Valley Sides
G4:	Arun Valley Sides
<b>H: Major Scarps</b>	
H1:	Ouse to Eastbourne Downs Scarp
H2:	Adur to Ouse Downs Scarp
H3:	Arun to Adur Downs Scarp
H4:	Buriton to Arun Scarp
H5:	Saltdown to Butser Hill Scarp
H6:	Selborne Hangers to East Meon Scarp
<b>I: Scarp Footslopes</b>	
I1:	Ouse to Eastbourne Scarp Footslopes
I2:	Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes
I3:	Arun to Adur Scarp Footslopes
<b>J: Greensand Terrace</b>	
J1:	East Hampshire Greensand Terrace
J2:	East Meon to Bury Greensand Terrace
<b>K: Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vale</b>	
K1:	Rother Valley Mixed Farmland and Woodland
K2:	Kingsley/Blackmoor Mixed Farmland and Woodland
K3:	Alice Holt Mixed Farmland and Woodland
<b>L: Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic</b>	
L1:	Parham Farmland and Heath Mosaic
L2:	Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic

L3:	Woolmer Forest/Weaver's Down
<b>M: Sandy Arable Farmland</b>	
M1:	North Rother Sandy Arable Farmland
<b>N: Greensand Hills</b>	
N1:	Blackdown to Petworth Greensand Hills
<b>O: Low Weald</b>	
O1:	Milland Basin
O2:	Northchapel Basin
<b>P: Wooded Claylands</b>	
P1:	West Walk – Rookesbury Park
<b>Q: Upper Coastal Plain</b>	
Q1:	South Downs Upper Coastal Plain
<b>R: Shoreline</b>	
R1:	Seaford to Beachy Head Shoreline
R2:	Brighton to Rottingdean Shoreline

## FORMAT OF THE ASSESSMENT

- 8.3. Detailed information is provided for each of the landscape types and character areas.

### Landscape Types

- 8.4. Each section is initiated by a summary map illustrating the location of the landscape type in relation to the South Downs as a whole, and identifying constituent character areas. This is followed by a map illustrating the component historic landscape types. A detailed landscape type description and evaluation is then provided. The information is presented as follows:

#### Description

##### *Integrated Key Characteristics*

- 8.5. This section provides an integrated summary of key characteristics of the landscape type.

##### *Physical Landscape*

- 8.6. This section provides background information on geology, landform, hydrology and land cover elements that contribute to character.

##### *Perceptual/Experiential Landscape*

- 8.7. This section covers perceptual characteristics, tranquillity, countryside access, and artistic and literary perceptions as follows:



- Perceptual characteristics include those defined in the landscape character assessment guidance i.e. scale, enclosure, diversity texture, form, line colour, balance, movement, pattern, etc. focussing on how specific elements contribute to the aesthetic characteristics.
- Tranquillity is defined by analysis of noise levels, perceived naturalness, visible overt human impact, density of settlement/ diffusion of people and artificial lighting in each character area. These criteria have been drawn from the University of Northumbria's method for defining tranquillity<sup>17</sup>.
- Countryside access is defined by presence of publicly accessible landscapes, the extent of such landscapes, and the level of public access (as well as proximity to people) e.g. presence of open access land, density of public rights of way network, land managed for access.
- Literary perceptions and cultural associations are drawn from existing published AONB assessments. Perceptions recorded through descriptive writings, visual arts and music can indicate how the landscape has changed over time, and communicate the special perceptual qualities of the landscape.

### ***Biodiversity***

- 8.8. This section includes a summary of the key biodiversity features and their relative importance using information from Phase 1 habitat maps, distribution of designated sites, and information contained in the designated site citations.

### ***Historic Character***

- 8.9. This section includes a summary of the key historic processes and features and their contribution to character using information from the historic landscape classification, and distribution of designated sites.

### ***Settlement Form and Built Character***

- 8.10. This section provides information on settlement types and patterns, building styles and local materials. The information is taken from fieldwork, historic research and existing assessments.

### ***Evaluation***

#### ***Sensitivity***

- 8.11. A subset of key characteristics - the key positive attributes that, if lost or changed, would change the character of the landscape.

#### ***Change - Key Issues and Trends***

- 8.12. Evidence for past change is drawn from previous studies and assessments, field survey, and consultation. This is presented as a list of bullet points.

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<sup>17</sup> Mapping Tranquillity: Defining and Assessing a Valuable Resource', co-commissioned by the Campaign to Protection Rural England and the Countryside Agency.

- 8.13. Future change is presented as a series of paragraphs covering climate change, agriculture and rural land management, and development. The information has been compiled using reports on climate change in the south east, results of the work on socio-economic/agricultural character, and information emerging from discussions with AONB officers.

### **Broad Management Objective and Landscape Guidelines**

- 8.14. The overall management objective may also be interpreted as a 'vision' for the landscape type. This is followed by bulleted guidelines separated into 'Landscape Management Considerations' and 'Development Considerations'.

### **Landscape Character Areas**

- 8.15. Further specific information is presented at the character area level. This information should be read in the context of the landscape type. Information is presented as follows:

#### ***Location and Boundaries***

- 8.16. A brief description of where the area lies within the South Downs. It includes information about how the boundaries were defined and its relationship with adjacent areas.

#### ***Integrated Key Characteristics***

- 8.17. This section provides an integrated summary of character, referring to specific examples where appropriate.

#### ***Specific Characteristics Unique to the Character Area***

- 8.18. This section focuses on the key characteristics of the area, including specific characteristics that are unique to that character area. This addresses physical, perceptual, biodiversity, historic, settlement and built form characteristics in an integrated way.

#### ***Sensitivity Specific to the Character Area***

- 8.19. This section picks up on any specific landscape and visual sensitivities that apply to this character area, in addition to those listed in the landscape type evaluation.

#### ***Change Specific to the Character Area***

- 8.20. This section presents past, present or future change that specifically applies to this character area, in addition to that presented in the landscape type evaluation.

#### ***Landscape Management/Development Considerations Specific to the Character Area***

- 8.21. This section presents considerations that are specific to this character area, in addition to the considerations presented at the landscape type level.



South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (Updated)

Figure 8.1: The South Downs Landscape Classification

Key

South Downs National Park Boundary (confirmed 2009)

Landscape Types

- A: Open Downland
- B: Wooded Estate Downland
- C: Clay Plateau
- D: Downland Mosaic
- E: Chalk Valley Systems
- F: Major River Floodplains
- G: Major Valley Sides
- H: Major Scarps
- I: Scarp Footslopes
- J: Greensand Terrace
- K: Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vale
- L: Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic
- M: Sandy Arable Farmland
- N: Greensand Hills
- O: Low Weald
- P: Wooded Claylands
- Q: Upper Coastal Plain
- R: Shoreline

Note: See fold-out maps at the back of this report for more detailed boundaries

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