

Appendix L

Landscape Character Type L: Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

The *Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vale* landscape type is found on the mudstones of the Gault Formation and the Lower Greensand beds which are exposed to the north and east of the Greensand Terrace, along the southern and western edges of the Greensand and the Weald. It comprises a gently undulating lowland vale supporting fields of arable, pasture and woodland.

Description

Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating landform underlain by mudstones of the Gault Formation and sandstones of the Lower Greensand.
- Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clay soils support mixed farmland and deciduous woodland copses dominated by oak, hazel and ash woodland.
- Drained by numerous water courses, many of which are tributary streams of the Rother or Wey.
- The wet and unproductive soils have given rise to a remote and marginal character.
- A largely medieval landscape of isolated farmsteads set within irregular fields, some of which retain the original lobate form of medieval assarts providing a strong sense of historical continuity.
- Thick hedgerows with spreading hedgerow oaks, or narrow strips of woodland ('rews'), provide a sense of enclosure.
- Ponds and meadows on the fringes of tributary streams provide biodiversity interest.
- Settlement is characterised by a high density of dispersed settlement across the clay comprising hamlets and isolated farmsteads of medieval origin with larger settlements on the sandstone beds.
- Later farmsteads of 18th-19th century date are situated within areas representing later enclosure of marshland and parkland.
- The presence of landscape parks indicates the recreational use made by wealthy landowners of this poor and unproductive landscape.
- This low lying landscape provides a convenient transport corridor, containing main roads (e.g. A3(T) and the mainline railway), which affect tranquillity.

Physical Landscape

L.1 The *Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vale* is underlain by Gault Clay, a formation of soft mudstones and silty mudstones which have weathered to yellow and brown clays, which create a low lying ‘vale’ like landform. Between Petersfield and Liss is an outcrop of Lower Greensand which gives rise to a much more undulating landform. Overlying the bedrock geology are drift deposits of alluvium (along the numerous streams) and ‘head’ (downwash deposits at the base of the Greensand Hills around Liss and Petersfield).

L.2 The underlying clay geology has given rise to slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged loamy and clay soils, known as Pelo-stagnogley soils. The sandstones have given rise to well drained coarse loamy soils with slowly permeable subsoils. These soils have retained a high proportion of woodland cover, interspersed with mixed pasture and arable farmland. Fields are enclosed by thick, high hedgerows with hedgerow oaks, and rews.

L.3 The vales are drained by streams and the underlying clay substrate supports a number of ponds. These lowland vales also provide a convenient route for communication routes.

Perceptual/Experiential Landscape

L.4 The relatively small fields, high proportion of woodland cover and thick, high hedgerows contribute to a sense of intimacy and enclosure in this landscape. These features also contribute to the lush lowland character which contrasts with the adjacent open sandy landscapes and exposed chalk scarps. Although the *Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vale* is perceived as an organised landscape as a result of its division into fields, the fields are irregular in form.

L.5 Views are limited due to the enclosure of the gently undulating landform by woodland and tall hedgerows, except for occasional long distance views towards the escarpments which run parallel to the character type either to the west or south.

L.6 The presence of communication routes and settlements detract from the tranquil character of the landscape. The settlements and roads also contribute to visible human impact on the landscape (including artificial lighting) which reduces the perceived naturalness of the landscape. This is an area with a high density of scattered settlement as well as some larger villages/ towns.

L.7 A relatively sparse network of rights of way and small areas of common land provide limited opportunity for countryside access.

L.8 The lowland farmlands of this landscape type have not attracted artists and writers as have the adjacent Chalk downs and Greensand hills – there are therefore few recorded perceptions of this area through literature and art.

Biodiversity

L.9 Essentially this is a mixed farmland landscape with arable agriculture interspersed with permanent pasture grassland and frequent woodland. Arable and pasture grassland fields are typically bordered by intact and thick hedgerows, which together with mature boundary oaks provide important ecological features. Numerous ponds and tributary streams also form key ecological components of the landscape.

L.10 Many of the woodlands are of ancient origin and support characteristic ancient woodland plant species, as well as providing important habitat for a range of breeding bird species and invertebrates. Many of these deciduous woodlands are identified as BAP Priority Habitat and carry non-statutory nature conservation designations such as LWS or LNR. Two large nationally important areas of common land occur within this type - Binswood SSSI and Shortheath Common SSSI. The former is a fragment of the old Royal Forest of Woolmer, still actively managed as wood pasture. The latter embraces a wide range of heathland habitats with a substantial valley mire. Occasional areas of unimproved grassland also occur (primarily floodplain grazing marsh along tributary streams), together with man-made habitats, for example disused railway lines and ponds, which in some instances have developed significant ecological interest.

Key Biodiversity Features	Importance
Deciduous woodland (a BAP Priority Habitat), many of which are ancient in origin.	Many of the ancient woodlands carry non-statutory designation and support a range of characteristic woodland plant species, as well as being valuable areas for breeding birds and invertebrates.
Areas of unimproved semi-natural grasslands, often with non-statutory designation, most commonly coastal and floodplain grazing marsh as well as small isolated areas of lowland dry acid grassland and purple moor grass and rush pastures. There are also areas of semi-improved grassland (all BAP Habitats).	Unimproved grasslands are valued for supporting a diversity of plant and animal communities, and floodplain grazing marsh is notable for supporting breeding and wintering birds. Semi-improved grassland is valued for the potential for habitat enhancement.

Key Biodiversity Features	Importance
Scattered woodland, woodland strips, hedgerows, mature trees and ditches	Within the mixed farmland, the presence of additional habitat contributes significant to ecological value. The network of hedgerows and mature trees provide important wildlife corridors.

L.11 Areas around Shortheath Common SSSI/SAC are identified by Natural England's National Habitat Networks Mapping project as providing potential for connecting existing BAP priority habitats of lowland fens, heathland and dry acid grassland with purple moor grass and rush pastures at Hartley Woods LWS. A Network Enhancement Zone is also identified linking Sutton Meadows LWS with an area of existing lowland heath in the Weald to the north.

Historic Character

L.12 The development of deciduous woodland cover following the last glaciation (c.8500BC) saw the exploitation of this lowland landscape by Mesolithic hunters. Later prehistoric and Romano-British communities, dependent largely on agriculture, were deterred by the thick woodland and heavy, wet clay soils. However, the lighter soils on the sandstone beds between Petersfield and Liss were settled from the Bronze Age (the recently discovered Roman Villa at West Liss has evidence of a Bronze Age settlement underneath).

L.13 Little attempt to clear the land was made until the Saxon period, when communities situated on better soils elsewhere in the region began to exploit the landscape, initially as swine pastures within the woodland. By the 12th-13th centuries, piecemeal clearance of the woodland was in progress.

L.14 The area is characterised by this largely medieval landscape of isolated farmsteads set within irregular fields, some of which retain the original lobate form of medieval assarts, surrounded by woodland. Later blocks of 18th-19th century enclosure represent later piecemeal enclosure of marshland and parkland. These historic fieldscapes are interspersed with larger fields from modern amalgamation.

L.15 Today the woodland of pre-1800 (and probably medieval) origin survives as small blocks scattered across the character area, but combines with the wooded field boundaries (rews) to give the landscape a much more wooded visual appearance.

Key Features of the Historic Environment	Importance
Marginal nature of the landscape	Provides a continuing sense of remoteness.

Key Features of the Historic Environment	Importance
Isolated farmsteads set within areas of early enclosure and surrounded by woodland	Landscape largely unchanged since the medieval period providing a strong sense of historical continuity.
Designed landscapes	Provide evidence of the use of agriculturally marginal land by the wealthy strata of society for recreational use.
Pre-1800 woodland	Landscape largely unchanged since the medieval period providing a strong sense of historical continuity.

Settlement Form and Built Character

L.16 The settlement pattern in this area is characterised by a high density of dispersed settlement with some larger villages/towns on the sandstone outcrop. This conforms to Historic England's rural settlement designation of Weald Sub-Province within the South-eastern Province. The settlement form typically comprises a scatter of hamlets and isolated farmsteads of medieval origin set within areas of early enclosure surrounded by woodland. Later farmsteads of 18th-19th century date are situated within areas of recent enclosure.

L.17 Building materials include sandstone extracted from the local greensands, red brick formed from local clays, and clay tiles.

Evaluation

Ecosystem Services in Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.18 Ecosystem services are the benefits people and society get from the natural environment. The *Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales* provides:

Provisioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Food provision – mixed farming producing arable crops, and livestock grazing ■ Timber provision – mainly from commercial plantations on larger estates ■ Water availability – numerous tributary streams and ponds feed the main rivers
Regulating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Regulating water flows – the slowly permeable subsoils absorb and store winter rainfall. ■ Regulating soil quality and soil erosion – permanent vegetation cover such as pasture and woodland maintains soil quality and reduces soil erosion. ■ Climate regulation – permanent grassland and woodland provides carbon sequestration and storage benefits. ■ Air quality regulation – woodlands play an important role in regulating local air quality. ■ Pollination – unimproved and semi-improved grasslands are important nectar sources for pollinating insects.
Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sense of place – a lush lowland character with small fields enclosed by tall hedgerows and woodland rews creating intimate remote pockets. ■ Tranquillity – the farmland is generally tranquil, especially away from the main settlements and transport corridors. ■ Recreation – limited network of footpaths and some small areas of open access
Supporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Biodiversity - deciduous woodland and grassland habitats support a range of species.

Sensitivities

L.19 This landscape type has many sensitive physical and aesthetic/perceptual features that are vulnerable to change, as set out in the table below:

Key Landscape Sensitivities	
1.	The rural, pastoral character of the landscape which results from areas of grazing and lack of settlement.
2.	The unimproved semi-natural grasslands are particularly important ecological habitats.
3.	Woodlands, rews, thick hedgerows and spreading hedgerow oaks which create a lush, wooded character and sense of enclosure which contrasts with the adjacent open downs. Woodlands of ancient origin are particularly important habitats.
4.	The strong sense of historical continuity provided by the remnants of the medieval landscape including the hamlets and isolated farmsteads of medieval origin and irregular fields, particularly those that retain the original lobate form of medieval assarts.
5.	The landscape parks (Burton and Bignor Parks) indicate historic recreational use of the landscape.
6.	The unity of the built components of the landscape arising from a consistent palette of building materials including sandstone extracted from the local Greensands, red brick formed from local clays, and clay tiles.
7.	The remote and tranquil character of the landscape.
8.	The dark skies associated with the South Downs International Dark Skies Reserve which are vulnerable to light sources, particularly in the 'Dark Sky Core' of the International Dark Sky Reserve around Dumpford and Duncton.
9.	Despite high tree cover and high hedges, the landscape is visible from the adjacent scarps and downs to the south, the Greensand Terrace to the west, and the Greensand Hills to the north and east which increases its visual sensitivity.

Change – Key Issues and Trends

Past Change

L.20 Past change includes:

Past Change
1. Development of horse paddocks, particularly on the edge of farms and settlements leading to introduction of inappropriate 'ranch' style fencing and overgrazing of pastures.
2. Loss of some field boundaries due to decline in hedgerow management.
3. Loss of meadows and river valley grasslands as a result of agricultural improvements

Future Landscape Change

L.21 The likely further changes are set out in the table below:

Future Change
1. Increased rainfall could lead to high water flow in the streams and localised flooding, contrasting with periods of drought and low flows.
2. Increased temperatures may result in changes to the species composition of habitats (particularly affecting the ancient woodlands and medieval rews) and formation of pathogens which could result in the decline in the ability of woodland to regenerate and the loss of mature/significant landscape trees.
3. Wind damage, due to increases in severe gales, is another possible issue - the predominance of the older age classes may increase the susceptibility of woodland to damage from droughts and storms.
4. Agricultural management will be driven by the changes in the world market and agricultural policy. In this area of heavy clay soils, it is possible that some land may become marginal for farming and vulnerable to scrub encroachment or purchase as hobby farms or for horse grazing or other diversification activities.
5. Positive landscape change could result from regimes to promote enhanced environmental management of hedgerows, hedgerow trees, woodland and wet pastures alongside streams. Future management of woodlands for fuel or for timber in construction may be a positive benefit.
6. If Net Zero commitments are implemented it is likely that there will be a major programme of afforestation including woodlands, on-farm wood and shelterbelts.
7. The pastures are vulnerable to summer drought and it is possible that climate change and Net Zero commitments may lead to key changes in land use including a reduction in grazing land to free up land for other uses such as bioenergy crop planting.
8. Small alterations to individual properties (such as introduction of external lighting or suburban style fencing and boundaries), plus increased demand for leisure land uses such as horse riding, fishing and golf.
9. Infrastructure upgrades to the A3(T) or the mainline London to Woking railway, as well an increasing traffic pressure, may have a negative impact on the tranquillity of the landscape.

Broad Management Objective and Landscape Guidelines

L.22 The overall management objective should be to conserve the lush pastoral character of the clay vales, the intact medieval landscape, and a rural setting to hamlets and villages.

Guidance for Landscape Management

- A.** Conserve ancient woodland and medieval rews, and plan for long term woodland regeneration. Monitor the spread of introduced invasive species in ancient deciduous woodland, and plan for long term woodland regeneration. As conditions change, plant suitable species and manage woodlands to improve structure, health and diversity of habitat, improving the connectivity of woodland across the *Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales*.
- B.** Consider re-introducing traditional woodland management techniques, such as coppicing, and encourage interest in, and marketing of, local wood products.
- C.** Conserve and manage the network of thick hedgerows, hedgerow oaks and field oaks that characterise the landscape. Consider re-planting hedgerows that have been lost, encourage buffer strips along hedgerows and encourage new tree planting to maintain the hedgerow tree population.
- D.** Maintain the lush, pastoral character of the landscape and seek to manage and extend a rich habitat mosaic including unimproved grassland.
- E.** Encourage sympathetic integration of horse paddocks through maintenance of hedgerow field boundaries and avoiding overgrazing of pastures.
- F.** Encourage the retention and management of riverside trees. Seek to minimise water pollution from agriculture through sensitive land management practices, including creating buffer strips along watercourses to minimise run-off.
- G.** Safeguard early enclosures that are remnants of a medieval landscape.
- H.** Manage parkland habitats, particularly the succession of veteran trees which form an integral part of the historic landscape.
- I.** Be alert to potential new pests and diseases and plan for their management. Continue to monitor native species to assess changes in numbers and distribution. Monitor and control the spread of invasive species which are a cause of decline in native habitats, such as Giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum* on grazing marsh and *Rhododendron Rhododendron ponticum* in woodland. Refer to the SDNP INSS.
- J.** Encourage and support the development of soil management plans to reduce soil erosion and compaction. Minimise soil structural deterioration and improve water infiltration and drainage.

Guidance for Integrating Development into the Landscape

- A.** Integrate built development on the edges of villages into the rural landscape, through native planting, to maintain the rural setting to hamlets and villages.
- B.** Monitor the effects of incremental change to buildings – develop design guidance to help resist suburban style garden boundaries, kerbs, and lighting.
- C.** Ensure careful siting of stables and ménages and encourage sympathetic integration of horse paddocks through the maintenance of existing field boundaries, avoiding the overgrazing of pastures.
- D.** Take account of views from the adjacent greensand terrace, scarps and downs in relation to any change.
- E.** Conserve the tranquil wooded and undeveloped character of the landscape and associated dark skies. Pay particular attention to the introduction of any new lighting into this landscape, particularly in the 'Dark Sky Core' of the International Dark Sky Reserve around Dumpford and Duncton, taking account the technical guidance advice note: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/TLL-10-SDNPA-Dark-Skies-Technical-Advice-Note-2018.pdf>

Woodland strategy and suitable species

L.23 The LCT contains 18.63km² of woodland, approximately 21% of woodland cover, making it one of the more wooded parts of the National Park. The woodland is predominantly associated with woodland copses of oak, hazel and ash and woodland strips along field boundaries. Hedgerow oaks and field oaks also characterise the landscape. There is an opportunity for create new areas of woodland cover to reinforce the wooded character of this area, as well as to buffer, link and extend existing copses and woodland strips, particularly areas of ancient woodland. Thickening hedgerow boundaries is a further opportunity.

L.24 Appropriate plant species may be informed by the National Biodiversity Network Gateway, relevant Biodiversity Action Plans and biological records from the relevant Biological Records Centre

L.25 Ensure any purchased plant stock is through reputable nurseries, operating the Plant Health Assurance Scheme (once it has been trialled) to protect against the risk of *Xylella fastidiosa* and other plant health risks.

Character Areas	
There are three distinct areas of <i>Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales</i> in the South Downs. One is located along the Rother Valley and is drained by the River Rother, while the other two are located further north within the catchment of the River Wey. The watershed between the two river catchments forms the boundary between the most southern character area and the two character areas located further north.	
L1:	Rother Valley Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales
L2:	Kingsley/Blackmoor Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales
L3	Alice Holt Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L1: Rother Valley Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

Location and Boundaries

The *Rother Valley Mixed Farmland and Woodland* occurs on the clays and sandstones that separate the *Greensand Hills* from the chalk downs of Hampshire and West Sussex. It contains the course of the upper Rother between Greatham Mill and Liss. The area's outer boundary (closest to the chalk) is well defined by the locally prominent slope leading up to the *Greensand Terrace* and the area's inner boundary (closest to the Weald) represents a transition to the sandier ridges of the *Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic* and the *Blackdown to Petworth Greensand Hills*.

Key Characteristics

- Low lying clay and sandstone 'vale' containing numerous tributary streams and ponds. Contains the wooded course of the upper Rother valley which flows across the sandstone.
- Slowly permeable soils support mixed farmland, unimproved neutral grassland and woodland in which thick hedgerows and spreading hedgerow oaks create a lush, wooded character.
- Woodlands of ancient origin support characteristic ancient woodland plant species, as well as providing important habitat for a range of breeding bird species and invertebrates.
- Thick, high hedgerows, small blocks of scattered woodland and wooded field boundaries (rews) contribute to a sense of intimacy and enclosure.
- A medieval landscape of scattered hamlets and isolated farmsteads of medieval origin set within irregular fields, some of which retain the original lobate form of medieval assarts, surrounded by woodland.
- Medieval market town of Petersfield, a planned settlement, and the modern dormitory development of Liss, which originated as a medieval hamlet, are located on the sandstone, linked by the A3(T) and mainline railway.
- Distinctive building materials including sandstone extracted from the local Greensands, red brick formed from local clays, and clay tiles.
- Landscape parks (Burton and Bignor Parks) indicate the recreational use made by wealthy landowners of this heavy clay landscape.
- Views over this area from surrounding high land including the chalk downs and greensand hills.

Specific Characteristics Unique to the Rother Valley Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.26 The underlying clay geology creates a flat landform across much of the vale. However, the sandstones around Liss and Petersfield result in a more undulating topography, for example at Steep Marsh. Although dominated by arable agriculture, this is interspersed with permanent pasture grassland and frequent woodland creating a mosaic of mixed farmland and woodland. Medieval assarted fields survive in the more undulating areas, which have not been subject to agricultural improvement. A well-developed hedgerow network exists, which together with mature boundary oaks are an important landscape and ecological resource.

L.27 Many of the woodlands are of ancient origin and support characteristic ancient woodland plant species, as well as providing important habitats for a range of breeding bird species and invertebrates. Many of these woodlands carry

non-statutory nature conservation designation as LWS or LNRs, for example Paddock Wood LWS. In addition, occasional small areas of semi-improved grassland also occur (e.g. Sutton Meadow LWS), and man-made habitats for example disused railway lines and ponds have also developed significant ecological interest. Traditional orchards are also characteristic, for example at West Liss and Steep Marsh.

L.28 The valley is drained by the River Rother and its tributaries. The wooded course of the upper River Rother is a key component of this landscape character area, hidden amongst the undulating sandstone outcrop between Liss and Petersfield. The River Rother does not have a great visual influence on the landscape, but is of ecological importance for its associated wetland habitats, including BAP Priority Habitat coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, willow and alder carr, and its associated bird interest. It is designated as a LWS from its source to the Hampshire/Sussex border. Semi-improved grassland habitats and floodplain grazing marsh can also be

found along its tributaries. Burton Pond is notable for its wetland flora and breeding birds.

L.29 The settlement pattern in this character area is generally typical of its type (a high density of dispersed settlement). However, the exceptions to the dispersed pattern are the settlements of Liss and Petersfield on the sandstone. Petersfield is a medieval market town, a deliberately planned settlement established as a market town to serve the surrounding chalklands. Building materials characteristic of Petersfield include red and blue brick buildings (including distinctive red and blue brick chequer patterns) and timber framed buildings with flint infill. Liss originated as a Bronze Age settlement. A Roman Villa was then developed on the site that grew into a medieval hamlet. It subsequently developed as a railway village. Although it has expanded considerably it is hidden within the undulating topography of this part of the upper Rother valley. This area also forms a convenient route for communication infrastructure – in this case the A3(T) and the mainline railway. These major transport routes contribute to the visible human impact on the landscape of this character area (including artificial lighting) which reduces the perceived naturalness of the landscape. However, away from the main settlements and transport routes the landscape is relatively tranquil.

L.30 Two landscape parks exist at the eastern end of this character area (Burton and Bignor Parks Registered Park and Garden), indicating the recreational use made by wealthy landowners of this poor and unproductive landscape. There are also a number of smaller historic parks and gardens around Petersfield which are listed on Hampshire’s list of local parks and gardens of historic interest.

L.31 Some parts of the landscape are accessible via a network of rights of way, particularly the upper Rother valley. Rights of way include the long distance Hanger’s Way, which passes through Petersfield, the Royal Woolmer Way which starts from Liss, and the Sussex Border Path, which crosses the area just east of Harting Pond. There are cycle hire facilities at Petersfield and both on-road and traffic free cycle routes promoted by Sustrans between Petersfield and Liss. The disused railway line provides recreational opportunities and is designated as the Liss Riverside Railway Way LNR. The Shipwrights Way path and cycle route also passes through Petersfield. The areas of common land at Goose Green, Three Cornered Piece, Didling Common, Bex Lane Waste, Fuller’s Piece and Sware Lane offer little available access due to scrub encroachment.

Sensitivities Specific to the Rother Valley Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.32 All of the landscape and visual sensitivities listed in the landscape type evaluation apply to this character area. Specific sensitivities relevant to this character areas are included in the table below:

Key Landscape Sensitivities	
1.	The extensive area of medieval assarts surviving around Nyewood.
2.	The two landscape parks of Burton and Bignor which indicate the recreational use of this relatively unproductive clay landscape.
3.	The relative tranquillity of the landscape in areas away from the A3(T), mainline railway, Petersfield and Liss.
4.	Views of the area from viewpoints in the adjacent Greensand Terrace and as well the chalk landscapes beyond, including those identified as representative in the View Characterisation and Analysis report ¹ .

Change Specific to the Rother Valley Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.33 Past change specific to this area includes:

Forces for Change	
1.	The development and widening of transport corridors including the A3(T) which has fragmented fields, introduced lighting into the rural landscape and increased noise levels and visual clutter along the road corridor.
2.	Development of scrub and woodland on formerly grazed commons.
3.	Pressure for built development and land use change, particularly on the outskirts of Petersfield and Liss. This could result in increases in artificial lighting, new urban edges and increases in traffic pressures on rural roads. Existing industrial developments have produced a harsh urban edge to Petersfield.

Landscape Management/Development Considerations Specific to the Rother Valley Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.34 In addition to the generic landscape management and development considerations for this landscape type, the following landscape management considerations are specific to this character area:

¹ LUC. 2015 South Downs National Park: View Characterisation and Analysis

- a. Conserve the field and woodland patterns associated with the area of assarts surviving at around Nyewood.
- b. Conserve the setting of the landscape parks at Burton and Bignor, as well as the many small parks and gardens on Hampshire's register of local historic parks and gardens.
- c. Manage areas of common land to provide a balance of habitats and improved access.

L.35 The following development considerations are specific to this character area:

- a. Integrate built development on the edges of Petersfield and Liss into the rural landscape and maintain the rural setting to these settlements.
- b. Consider opportunities to further mitigate the impact of the A3(T) on the rural character of the landscape through conservation of existing visual screening and noise attenuation.
- c. Consider the impact of development in this area in views from surrounding higher land.

L2: Kingsley/Blackmoor Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

Location and Boundaries

The *Kingsley/Blackmoor Mixed Farmland and Woodland* occurs on the clays to the east of the *East Hampshire Greensand Terrace*. The western boundary (closest to the chalk) is well defined by the locally prominent Greensand scarp the marks the edge of the *Greensand Terrace* and its eastern boundary is defined by the National Park boundary which coincides with a change in geology to the sandy landscapes of the *Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic*.

Key Characteristics

- Low lying clay 'vale' at the foot of the East Hampshire Greensand 'terrace' containing the headwaters of the River Wey, numerous streams and ponds.
- Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clay soils support mixed farmland, unimproved neutral grassland and woodland in which thick hedgerows and spreading hedgerow oaks create a lush, wooded character.
- Two large area of common land at Binswood and Shortheath provide rich habitats for biodiversity (designated SSSIs) as well as providing open public access.
- Woodlands of ancient origin support characteristic ancient woodland plant species, as well as providing important habitat for a range of breeding bird species and invertebrates.
- Thick, high hedgerows, small blocks of scattered woodland and wooded field boundaries (rews) contribute to a sense of intimacy and enclosure.
- Essentially a medieval landscape of scattered hamlets and isolated farmsteads of medieval origin set within irregular fields, with two medieval deer parks located at East Worldham and Blackmoor House.
- Some areas of recent enclosures have overlaid the medieval field pattern, for example in the area east of the Selborne orchards.
- Distinctive building materials including sandstone extracted from the local greensands, red brick formed from local clays, and clay tiles.
- Blackmoor Park is a 19th century landscape park that indicates the recreational use made by wealthy landowners of this relatively unproductive landscape.
- Views over this area from the adjacent *East Hampshire Greensand Terrace* to the west.

Specific Characteristics Unique to the Kingsley/Blackmoor Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.36 This landscape character area retains a medieval landscape structure – comprising an early enclosure pattern and the remnants of two medieval deer parks – one at East Worldham and the other at Blackmoor House. The majority of the area today is characterised by arable agriculture, together with scattered small woodland blocks, some of which are of ancient in origin and also designated as LWS, for example Blackmoor Wood LWS and Rookery Copse LWS. This area is drained by numerous streams which flow eastwards into the River Wey with associated wetland habitats including floodplain grazing marsh (a BAP Priority Habitat) particularly along the Kingsley and Oakhanger Stream. As well as the streams, the vale contains a number of ponds, some of which are former clay pits.

L.37 Of particular note in this character area is the presence of common land. Binswood comprises an actively managed wood pasture, of acidic poorly drained unimproved pasture with scattered old oaks and beeches, and areas of dense woodland. The site is particularly important for its invertebrate and lichens assemblages and is recognised for its contribution to biodiversity at a national level (being designated as a SSSI). Shortheath Common is located on an outcrop of Lower Greensand on the eastern edge of the vale - it is a distinctive feature of this character area, comprising ancient common land which supports bogs, marshes, water bodies, heath, grassland and woodland. This site is of international nature conservation value, particularly for its valley mire system and is designated as an SSSI/SAC. Of particular note are the mire and bog communities which support a number of notable plants species, such as marsh cinquefoil, round-leaved

sundew, cranberry and a many species of bog moss. These commons now provide open access as well as recreational opportunities for horse riding, dog walking and angling at Shortheath. The network of public rights of way provides further opportunities for countryside access, including the long distance Hanger’s Way, which borders Binswood Common.

L.38 The area is particularly tranquil and remote as a result of the low density of settlement and absence of major transport routes. The presence of pylons across the landscape and communications mast and reservoir at Hartleywood Farm, and the MOD transmitting station at Oakhanger also affect the perception of tranquillity and remoteness.

Sensitivities Specific to the Kingsley/Blackmoor Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.39 All of the landscape and visual sensitivities listed in the landscape type evaluation apply to this character area. In additions, specific sensitivities to this character area are:

Key Landscape Sensitivities	
1.	The medieval deer parks at East Worldham and Blackmoor House.
2.	Blackmoor Park which indicates 18 th century recreational use of this relatively unproductive clay landscape.
3.	The two large areas of common land at Binswood and Shortheath. which are designated for their ecological value.
4.	The high degree of tranquillity and remoteness within this area.

Change Specific to the Kingsley/Blackmoor Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.40 In addition to the generic changes listed in the landscape type evaluation, specific changes relevant to this character area include:

Forces for Change	
1.	Pressure for development and land use change, outside the National Park, particularly around Oakhanger and Kingsley or redevelopment of MOD sites.

Landscape Management / Development Considerations Specific to the Kingsley/Blackmoor Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.41 In addition to the generic landscape management and development considerations for this landscape type, the following landscape management considerations are specific to this character area:

- a. Safeguard the medieval deer parks at East Worldham and Blackmoor House that are remnants of a medieval landscape.
- b. Conserve the features and setting of Blackmoor Park and maintain its pastoral character.
- c. Ensure management of areas of common land at Binswood and Shortheath support a balance of biodiversity, historic and recreational objectives.
- d. Conserve the high degree of tranquillity and remoteness within this area.
- e. Consider the impact of development in this area in views from the East Hampshire Greensand Terrace and the chalk landscape beyond.

L3: Alice Holt Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

Location and Boundaries

This small character area is located on Gault Clay and defined by the extensive woodland/plantation cover (Forestry Commission). The eastern edge of this character area is defined by the National Park boundary which also coincides with the edge of woodland cover. The northern and southern boundaries are also largely delineated by the extent of woodland cover and the transition to lower lying adjacent landscapes. A change in the underlying geology (to Upper Greensand) defines the western boundary.

Key Characteristics

- Underlain by mudstones of the Gault Formation which create a gently undulating landform and are prone to slippage.
- Predominantly seasonally wet acid and loamy and clayey soils support broadleaf and coniferous woodland. Over 100ha of original 19th century oak dominated woodland is of particular ecological interest.
- A number of small fields of pasture are contained within the woodland.
- The forest supports a wide range of breeding birds, and a population of the purple emperor butterfly, a species which is now restricted to a limited number of broadleaved woodlands in Southern England.
- Drained by tributaries of the Slea and the Wey with a number of ponds (e.g. Lodge Pond).
- Small nuclear villages located along the A325 (such as Bucks Horn Oak) with some dispersed, linear settlement along rural roads.
- Extensive recreational opportunities associated with the forest, plus several recreation sites (e.g. Blacknest Golf Course).
- Cut north-south by the A325 with a number of rural roads separating woodland inclosures.
- A peaceful landscape away from the A325.

Specific Characteristics Unique to the Alice Holt Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.42 The underlying mudstones of the Gault Formation creates a gently undulating landform. Drift deposits of head covering the north eastern half of the character area correspond to tributaries of the River Wey (South Branch). The geology gives rise to predominantly slowly permeable, seasonally wet acid and loamy and clayey soils. A high proportion of semi-natural woodland cover has been retained (all of which is ancient) on these clay based soils. Woodland is divided into Inclosures which contain varying proportions of broadleaf and coniferous woodland with Corsican pine and oak as key species. For example, Holt Pound is a predominantly coniferous, Abbots Wood is predominantly broadleaf and Lodge Inclosure is mixed woodland. A number of small areas of pasture are contained within woodland with field boundaries formed by the woodland edge (Halfway Farm and Woodlands Farm). The farmland to the west of the forest edge (e.g. Broadview Farm) is of recent enclosure whereas the farmland enclosed by woodland or on the edge of the forest are due to 19th century parliamentary enclosure or

isolated 20th enclosure). The character area is drained by tributaries of the River Wey and Slea. A number of ponds occur within the landscape e.g. Lodge Pond.

L.43 The diversity in woodland provides a variety of texture and colour and offers different experiences, for example Abbots Wood has an impressive avenue of beech which lines one of the tracks. The open clearings of pasture contrast with the enclosure provided by tree cover. The area is dissected by the A325 with several settlements, however away from the roads, within the forest enclosures this is a peaceful and natural landscape with a strong sense of seclusion.

L.44 The forest is managed to produce timber, encourage wildlife and provide recreational opportunities. Access to the forest is good with a number of car parks, a comprehensive footpath network and is well used by off-road cyclists. Alice Holt visitor centre provides an important educational facility. Alice Holt is the home to one of the Forestry Commission's two main research stations. Other recreational facilities include Blacknest Golf Course.

L.45 The forest gives its name to coarse Roman period pottery produced at various sites in the area from the first to 4th centuries AD. This is recognised by a Scheduled Monument listing which identifies the southern part of Goose Green Inclosure and part of Abbots Wood Inclosure as Romano-British kiln sites. Alice Holt Pottery is characterised as coarse grey sandy clay which has a very rough look. The forest is also famous for its oak trees, which once supplied timber for building navy ships.

L.46 The extensive forestry area includes a number of component LWS sites. The majority of the woodland is considered to be of ancient origin, although much has been replanted and now comprises coniferous forest dominated by Corsican pine. However, over 100ha of 19th century oak dominated woodland also occurs and is of particular ecological interest. As a whole this area supports a wide range of breeding birds, and a population of the purple emperor butterfly, a species which is now restricted to a limited number of broadleaved woodlands in Southern England. Bentley Station Meadow on the edge of the Forest is dedicated to butterfly conservation.

L.47 This is a heavily wooded landscape of pre-1800 origin, although subsequently replanted. The unproductive Gault Clay was historically used as common woodpasture. Occasional archaeological monuments include an important Roman pottery industry surviving in the landscape as a series of dumps of wasters (misfired pottery) forming mounds (protected as Scheduled Monuments).

L.48 Settlement is largely post-1800 common-edge settlements (e.g. Bucks Horn Oak) forming linear patterns associated with regular small garden plots. Local building materials include sandstone, red brick and clay tiles. Modern 20th century additions include scientific (Forestry Commission Research Station) and leisure (Blacknest Golf Course) facilities as well as the expansion of existing nucleated settlements located along the A325 and other dispersed, linear settlements along roads. The A325 transport corridor which crosses the character area has introduced visual clutter, lighting and increased noise levels into the landscape.

Sensitivities Specific to the Alice Holt Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.49 All of the landscape and visual sensitivities listed in the landscape type evaluation apply to this character area. Specific sensitivities relevant to this character area are included in the table below:

Key Landscape Sensitivities	
1.	The large tracts of ancient woodland (particularly the 19 th century oak dominated woodland) containing small pastoral fields, and the important habitat it provides.
2.	The sensitive balance between biodiversity, recreation and productive use of the forest.
3.	The sense of peacefulness found within the woodland, away from the main road.
4.	Views within and to this landscape are contained and restricted by the high proportion of woodland which limits visual sensitivity.

Change Specific to the Alice Holt Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.50 Past change specific to this area includes:

Forces for Change	
1.	Pressure for incremental ribbon development along the A325 transport corridor.
2.	Pressure for 'suburbanisation' of the landscape, particularly along roads.

Landscape Management / Development Considerations Specific to the Alice Holt Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vales

L.51 In addition to the generic landscape management and development considerations for this landscape type, the following landscape management considerations are specific to this character area:

- a. Conserve the natural and tranquil character of the woodland and the opportunities it provides for timber production, wildlife and recreation.
- b. Conserve the pattern of small pastoral fields which survive within the woodland.

L.52 The following development considerations are specific to this character area:

- a. Conserve the settlement pattern and avoid further incremental linear development along the A325.
- b. Maintain the rural character of the roads and avoid use of excessive lighting, signage and 'suburban' features.