

Overall Character

This Character Area extends from Warningcamp in the west to Clapham in the east. With its enclosed valleys, wooded chalk uplands and a densely wooded escarpment, the landscape in many places conveys a strong sense of enclosure, seclusion and remoteness. Prominent beech and mixed woodlands, together with swathes of conifer forest are interwoven with large sweeping arable fields, chalk grassland, country houses and parkland in the rolling plateau and ridges.

Key Characteristics

- Rolling chalk uplands with a bold combination of woodland, farmland and commercial plantations often connected by copses and dense hedgerows.
- Steep, wooded northern escarpment.
- Fairly evenly sloping dip slope with broad, branching dry valleys and ridges.
- Mixture of medium to large, predominantly beech forests and distinctive beech hangers.
- Larger fields and woodlands on the ridges, smaller in the valleys.
- Large area of estates and parklands, especially on the dip slope.
- Wealth of historic features including prehistoric earthworks, trackways, and ancient strip - lynchets.
- Light covering of scattered flint villages and country houses linked by spinal valley roads joined via the A27 further south.
- Concentrations of unimproved chalk grassland.
- Sense of remoteness.

Angmering Park

South Downs

The area covered by the Sheet is derived from:

The Western Downs (E1) Landscape Character Area as defined in the unpublished **West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment** (November 2003).



Historic Features

- Small, medium, and large irregular and rectilinear assarts, many subsequently incorporated into 18th and 19th century estate farmland.
- Many earthwork features from field systems of the Bronze Age. Iron Age Romano-British field systems in Clapham Wood.
- Deserted medieval settlement of Upper Barpham Farm which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).
- Strip-lynchets at Long Furlong.
- Flint Mine and Bowl Barrow on Church Hill.
- Trackways and steep winding tracks up the downland escarpments (borstals).
- Important historic parklands at Angmering and Michelgrove Park.
- Lime works at Parham Fields and Clapham.

Biodiversity

- Old and storm damaged woodland with dead and dying trees.
- Major areas of chalk grassland, notably at Warningcamp Hill and New Down, Long Furlong and Church Hill, The Sanctuary, The Gallops and No Mans Land which are designated Sites of Natural Conservation Importance (SNCI's).
- Many large ancient woodlands, most replanted, at Clapham Wood (SNCI), Parham Fields, Surgeons Fields, Wepham Wood and Michelgrove Park.
- Dry chalk valleys with winterbourne streams.
- Relatively good woodland connectivity through the area.

Change - Key Issues

- Decline in traditional woodland management.
- Increased recreational activities such as horse-riding.
- Major existing road improvements along the A27 trunk road further south leading to changes in the largely undeveloped character and rural road structure.
- Changes in farming practices, in particular the reduction in livestock. Stewardship schemes could be a potential positive force for change.
- Past hedgerow removal due to arable intensification and enlargement of fields.
- Development or fragmentation of large country estates.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

Key sensitivities are:

- Loss of extent and diversity of woodland cover, much of which is ancient woodland.
- Changes in farming practices leading to changes in field size and/or loss of hedgerows.
- Loss of chalk grassland due to reduction of grazing livestock.
- Changes to the scattered low key settlement pattern, or small scale incremental development in villages and hamlets bringing in urban and suburban features and materials.
- Loss of wider visual unity of historic parkland landscapes due to development or fragmentation of larger estates.
- Inappropriate design and scale of road improvements. Whilst linked by the main A27 further south, roads are rural in character, often leading on to historic trackways and byways.
- Loss of rural quality of rights of way network of tracks and byways, through inappropriate development.
- Decline in quality of historic landscape features due to changes in land management practices.



Plantation and isolated trees - Patching



Wooded scarp slope - Long Furlong

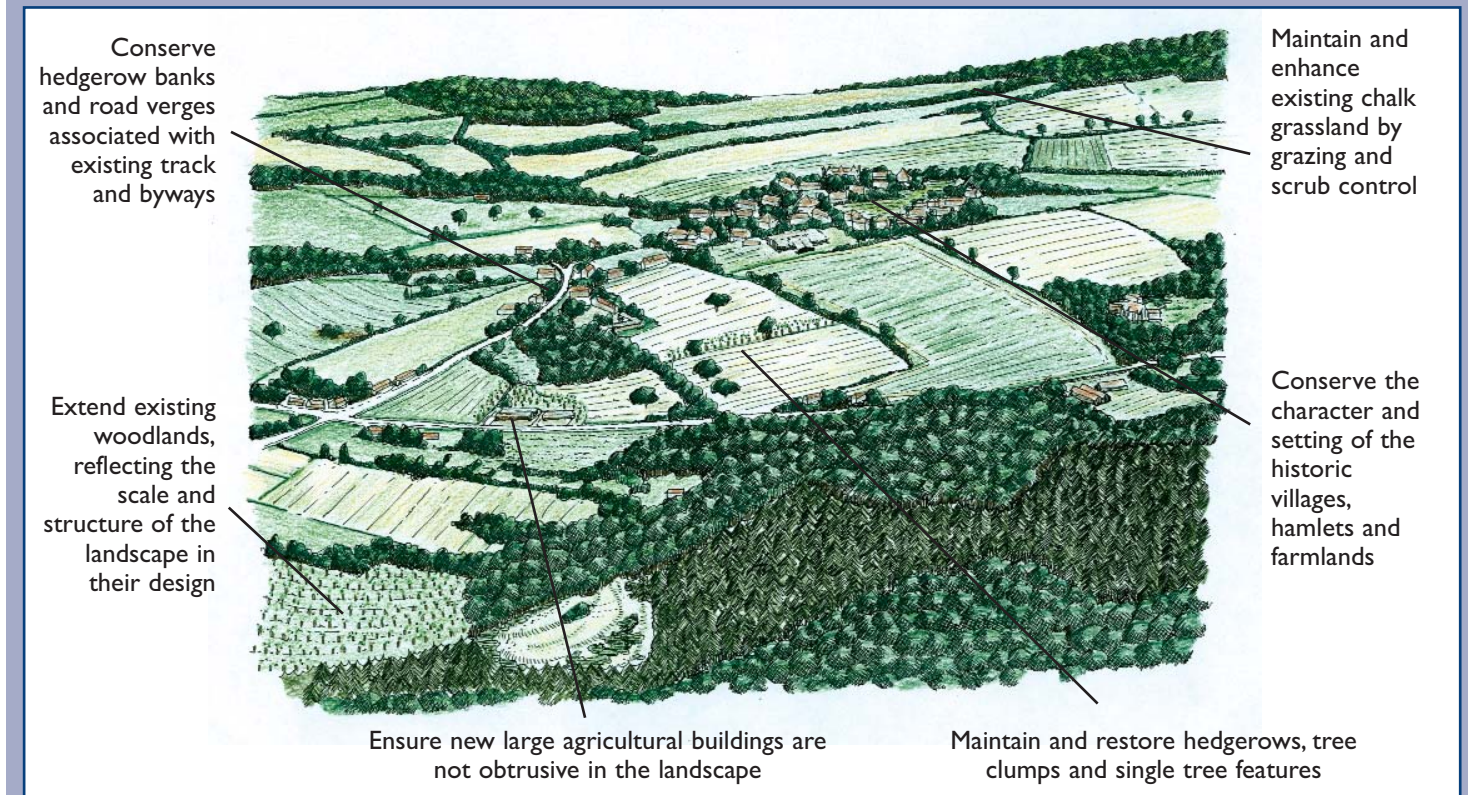


Beech hangers - Long Furlong



Flint houses in Patching

Land Management Guidelines



Conserve and enhance the quiet rural qualities and environment of the small villages and rural network, encourage landscape restoration and woodland management and ensure that new development is well integrated within the landscape.

- Maintain the rich historic character of the area, including archaeological monuments and their settings, distinctive historic field patterns and historic parkland. Restore historic parkland as appropriate.
- Conserve the pattern and character of winding lanes. Conserve hedgerow banks and road verges associated with existing track and byways to retain their significance in the landscape and their nature conservation importance.
- Conserve and enhance the predominantly wooded character of the area by management of woodlands and sympathetic restoration of damaged or neglected woodlands.
- Carry out a full assessment of existing woodland and tree cover. Promote good forestry design and encourage the visual integration of existing conifer woodland through the development of well-designed broadleaved fringes.
- Extend existing woodlands reflecting the existing scale and structure of the landscape in their design, except where this conflicts with historic and nature conservation interests. Aim to establish a complete link from east to west to overcome the gap at Patching.
- Maintain and restore hedgerows, tree clumps and single tree features. Plant and replant single tree features and copses throughout arable areas wherever they will create significant landscape features and can be accommodated.
- Conserve and enhance existing chalk grassland by grazing and scrub control. Target Stewardship schemes to ensure retention of existing chalk downland and reversion of arable land.
- Encourage the formation of chalk grass headlands around large arable fields and assess the potential for grass linkage corridors with other grassland areas.
- Ensure that new large agricultural buildings are not obtrusive in the landscape. Avoid placing them on slopes where they would be highly visible from long range views.
- Conserve and enhance the character and setting of the historic villages, hamlets and farmsteads. Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.

The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- County-wide Landscape Guidelines set out in *A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape* (November 2005) published by West Sussex County Council.
- Objectives and actions contained in the *Interim South Downs Management Plan* (March 2004) published by the Sussex Downs Conservation Board.