

LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT
SOFT SAND SINGLE ISSUE REVIEW 2019

PREPARED FOR

WEST SUSSEX AND SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

BY

The terra firma Consultancy Ltd

30th October 2019



**WEST SUSSEX AND SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT
SOFT SAND SINGLE ISSUE REVIEW 2019**

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

1. This landscape assessment (the Study) provides an update to previous minerals and waste landscape sensitivity and capacity assessments produced in 2011 and 2016 for West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA), who work together on waste and minerals planning, producing the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (JMLP) which was adopted in July 2018. Policy M2 of the JMLP requires the Authorities to prepare a Single Issue Review of Soft Sand policies (SIR) by January 2021. This is effectively a new strategy for soft sand which will be inserted into the adopted JMLP as required. The Regulation 18 consultation set out the main Issues and Options the SIR would consider and the next stage of the plan making process is to produce a draft SIR for Regulation 19 consultation towards the end of 2019. Landscape is a key consideration for the Authorities and therefore this Study will form a vital piece of evidence to support the SIR.
2. The Study will be carried out broadly using the same methodology as previous assessments by Land Use Consultants, updated to reflect the following key documents:
 - South Downs Local Plan (2019)
 - The government's 25 Year Environment Plan (2018)
 - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019)
3. Key aspects reflected in the above documents include the importance of environmental net gain and ecosystem services, reflected in the 'landscape led approach' taken in SDNPA policy.
4. A total of 9 sites were 'shortlisted' as part of the Mineral Site Selection Report (January 2017), and subject to a 'Stage 2' assessment (Soft Sand Sites Selection Report, January 2019) to rule out any sites with overriding deliverability or viability constraints. The shortlisting of sites does not automatically mean their designation is acceptable, but that further assessment is needed, including this Landscape Assessment Study.
5. The nine sites being assessed in this Study were included in previous assessments. All except 2 are within the SDNP. The 9 sites are:
6. Within SDNP:
 - CH7B East of West Heath Common (extension);
 - CH8A Minsted West (extension);
 - CH8C Severals West;
 - CH8D Severals East;
 - CH10A Duncton Common (extension);
 - CH10C Coopers Moor (extension);
 - HO2 Chantry Lane (extension);

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7. Outside SDNP:

- HO4A Ham Farm
- Buncton Manor Farm (further assessments undertaken)

Structure of the Study

8. The Study is structured as follows:

- Introduction
 - Purpose of the Study
 - Structure of the Study
 - Policy context
- Methodology
 - Definitions
 - Assessment process
 - Mineral development and sensitivity indicators
 - Desktop studies
 - Site assessment
- Assessment of sensitivity
- Guidelines for restoration
- Conclusions and recommendations
- References
- Glossary of terms
- Appendix 1: Figures
 - Figure 1 Study area and site locations
 - Figure 2 Topography
 - Figure 3 National Character Areas
 - Figure 4 Not used
 - Figure 5 SDNP landscape character areas
 - Figure 6 Landscape designations
 - Figure 7 Heritage designations
 - Figure 8 Nature conservation designations
 - Figure 9 Tranquillity
 - Figure 10 Not used
 - Figure 11 ZTV for Buncton Manor Farm

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- Appendix 2: Site sensitivity assessments for 9 sites
 - Site location and context
 - Map and viewpoint locations
 - Site photographs
 - Characterisation of the site
 - Sensitivity assessment
 - Overall sensitivity to extraction
 - Landscape capacity, including potential for net gain
 - Recommendations for mitigation and landscape opportunities and positive impact on ecosystem services
 - Options for restoration after use

Policy context

National Planning Policy

9. The National Planning Policy Framework (2019 – NPPF) confirms that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development and that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Planning policy-making and decision-making should take into account the roles and character of different areas and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services. Paragraph 170 states that the planning system 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 in the development plan)
 - ‘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
 - ‘minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures’
10. In paragraph 172 the NPPF states that:
- ‘Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited.’)
11. Chapter 17 covers the facilitation of the sustainable use of minerals and states, at paragraph 203, that:
- ‘It is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs. Since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation’.

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12. Paragraph 204 sets out guidance for policies, including that they should:

- provide for the extraction of mineral resources of local and national importance, but not identify new sites or extensions to existing sites for peat extraction;
- so far as practicable, take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste would make to the supply of materials, before considering extraction of primary materials, whilst aiming to source minerals supplies indigenously;
- set out criteria or requirements to ensure that permitted and proposed operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health, taking into account the cumulative effects of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or a number of sites in a locality;
- when developing noise limits, recognise that some noisy short-term activities, which may otherwise be regarded as unacceptable, are unavoidable to facilitate minerals extraction; and
- ensure that worked land is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity, taking account of aviation safety, and that high quality restoration and aftercare of mineral sites takes place.

13. Paragraph 205 states that great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction when determining planning applications, and that, as far as practically possible minerals landbanks should be provided outside of protected landscapes. No unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment should be allowed, including the cumulative impacts of a number of sites in a locality. Restoration and aftercare should be provided at the earliest opportunity and to 'high environmental standards'.

The Environment Act 1995

14. The Act sets out two statutory purposes for national parks in England and Wales:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage.
- Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public.

25 year Environment Plan

15. In January 2018, the Government published 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'. The overarching aim of the Environment Plan is:

- 'To help the natural world regain and retain good health ... deliver cleaner air and water in our cities and rural landscapes, protect threatened species and provide richer wildlife habitats'

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16. More specific 25-year goals are to provide:

- Clean air
- Clean and plentiful water
- Thriving plants and wildlife (including increasing woodland in England in line with the aspiration of 12% cover by 2060: this would involve planting 180,000 hectares by end of 2042)
- A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought
- Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently
- Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment.

17. Of particular relevance to landscape, the Plan pledges to conserve and enhance the beauty of our natural environment, and make sure it can be enjoyed, used by and cared for by everyone and improving its environmental value while being sensitive to considerations of its heritage. This includes making sure that there are high quality, accessible, natural spaces close to where people live and work, particularly in urban areas, encouraging more people to spend time in them to benefit their health and wellbeing and focusing on increasing action to improve the environment from all sectors of society.

18. In addition, the Plan sets out a framework aimed at managing pressures on the environment by: mitigating and adapting to climate change, minimising waste, managing exposure to chemicals and enhancing biosecurity.

19. In pursuit of the broad goals, 6 chapters set out more detailed policies:

- Using and managing land sustainably, including increasing the number of homes built to 300,000 per year by 2025 – with net gain of environmental improvements, including stronger new standards for green infrastructure and ensuring new development happens in the right places.
- Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes.
- Connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing.
- Increasing resource efficiency and reducing pollution and waste.
- Securing clean, productive and biologically diverse seas and oceans.
- Protecting and improving the global environment.

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WSCC Landscape Evidence

West Sussex Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study for Potential Mineral and Waste Sites (October 2011)

20. This was carried out by Land Use Consultants in support of the Minerals Local Plan (2018) with the following key aims:

- to provide an assessment of the landscape and the potential for it to accommodate the mineral workings (i.e. its sensitivity and capacity); and
- to provide guidance on the extent to which each site might be able to accommodate mineral development without having a significant detrimental impact on the character of the area taking into account current practices of design and mitigation.

21. The methodology employed, which drew on key industry guidance and best practice, will be used as a basis for the production of this Study. The 2011 Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study assessed the 8 of the soft sand sites currently being re-assessed in this Study, and the findings of the 2011 Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study have been considered in the updated 2019 Study, including a series of ZTV (zone of theoretical visibility) diagrams.

West Sussex Minerals Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study for Potential Mineral and Waste Sites: Minerals Addendum (March 2016 and September 2016)

22. These addendums included updated assessments of the HO4A Ham Farm site due to changes in the site boundary and assessment of the Buncton Manor Farm site. Again, the findings are considered in this Study.

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA, 2003)

23. The WSCC character assessment was used along with the SDILCA to set out the baseline for the 2011 Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study and 2016 updates and will also inform this 2019 Study. The sites fall within either WG1 Western Scarp Footslopes or WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths. The key characteristics and strategies for both are set out within each site assessment report.

South Downs National Park Authority Planning Policy and Landscape Evidence

24. Subsequent to the 2011 Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study the SDNPA adopted a number of statutory documents, most recently The South Downs Local Plan, but also including the National Park Partnership Management Plan and Special Qualities of the National Park, as well as the South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment.

25. The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) has a duty to work in partnership to foster the economic and social wellbeing of local communities within the National Park, in pursuit of two statutory purposes: 1) To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area; and 2) to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public.'

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26. The 7 special qualities, identified following wide-ranging consultation, are as follows:

- 1. Diverse, inspirational landscapes and breath-taking views;
- 2. A rich variety of wildlife and habitats including rare and internationally important species;
- 3. Tranquil and unspoilt places;
- 4. An environment shaped by centuries of farming and embracing new enterprise;
- 5. Great opportunities for recreational activities and learning experiences;
- 6. Well-conserved historical features and a rich cultural heritage;
- 7. Distinctive towns and villages, and communities with real pride in their area.

The South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan (SDNP PMP 2013)

27. The SDNP PMP was adopted in 2013 and is described as the first overarching five year strategy for the management of the SDNP. It provided a framework for local planning decisions and the SDNP emerging local plan. The National Park PMPs are recognised in the NPPF as being a material consideration to planning decision making. A review of the PMP is underway and will be published in autumn 2019. A number of policies are relevant:

- **Policy 1:** Conserve and enhance the natural beauty and special qualities of the landscape and setting in ways that allow it to continue to evolve and become more resilient to the impacts of climate change and other pressures.
- **Policy 3:** Protect and enhance tranquillity and dark night skies
- **Policy 27:** Protect and enhance the National Parks Special Qualities through the management and restoration of minerals sites.

South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA 2011)

28. The SDILCA was used along with the WSCCLCA to set out the baseline for the 2011 Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study and 2016 updates and will also inform this 2019 Study. The sites fall within either I3 Arun to Adur Scarp Footslopes or L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic. The key characteristics and strategies for both are set out within each site assessment report.

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South Downs Local Plan (adopted July 2019)

29. Relevant policies and background papers as they relate to the Study are:

- According with the purposes of the SDNP *inter alia* conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area (Core Policy SD1);
- Protecting and providing more, better joined up natural habitats (Core Policy SD2);
- Conserving and enhancing landscape character including taking opportunities to create and connect green corridors and restoring cultural heritage features which have been lost or degraded (Strategic Policy SD4);
- Adopting a landscape-led approach to design and respecting local character through sensitive, high quality design (Strategic Policy SD5);
- Conserving and enhancing views from public rights of way (Strategic Policy SD6);
- Conserving and enhancing relative tranquillity (visual and aural) (Strategic Policy SD7);
- Conserving and enhancing the intrinsic quality of dark night skies (Strategic Policy SD8);
- Conserving and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity including the restoration or creation of habitat and the creation of linkages between sites and protection of international sites (including SAC), national sites (including SSSI) and ancient woodland (Strategic Policy SD9);
- Conserving and enhancing trees, hedgerows and woodlands including avoiding loss or damage of non-protected trees (Development Management Policy SD11);
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (including heritage assets and their setting) and the re-use of redundant heritage assets (Strategic Policy SD12);
- Listed buildings and their setting (Development Management Policy SD13);
- Maintaining existing public rights of way (Strategic Policy SD20);
- Maintaining or enhancing green infrastructure, strengthening and connecting ecological networks (Strategic Policy SD45);
- Sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) and ensuring no net increase on surface water run-off (Development Management Policy SD50).

SDNPA View Characterisation and Analysis (2015)

30. This study identifies and describes valued views within the SDNP. Of relevance to this Study are a number of views from the South Downs Way as well as other locally elevated views. The View Characterisation and Analysis study also identifies landmarks, views of which are important from the surrounding landscape as well as being viewpoints, often elevated. Beacon Hill and Torberry Hill in the west, and Chanctonbury Ring in the west are relevant to this Study.

Ecosystem Services Background Paper (April 2018)

31. Ecosystem services are the benefits people and society get from the natural environment and which contribute to the purposes and duty of the National Park and form part of the special qualities. The SDNPA has sought to embed an ecosystems approach into the South Downs Local Plan (chiefly set out in core policy SD2) and the Partnership Management Plan. Figure A shows the ecosystem services delivered in the SDNP.

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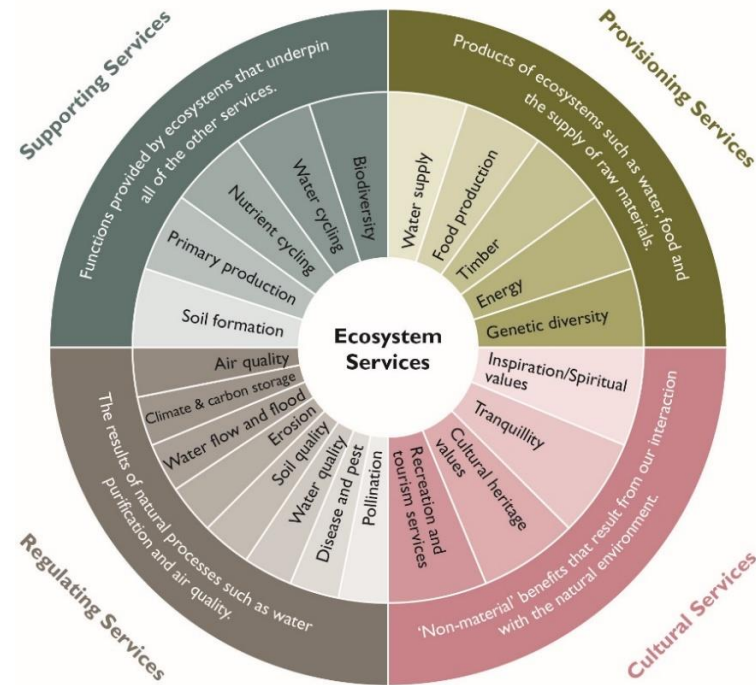


Figure A - Ecosystem services (courtesy of SDNP)

32. Core Policy SD2 requires all development proposals to have an overall positive impact on the ability of the natural environment to contribute goods and services, achieved firstly through high quality design. The policy sets out eleven sets of opportunities to impact positively on the natural environment such as conserving and enhancing soils and reducing levels of pollution. All planning applications will need to be accompanied by a statement that sets out how the proposed development impacts, both positively and negatively, on ecosystem services. Benefits are expected to be delivered on-site.
33. This 2019 Study incorporates a high level assessment of the relative sensitivity of sites and their potential for delivery of improvement in ecosystem services or environmental net gain through the development of the 9 sites for soft sand extraction.

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South Downs Supplement to WSCC Sensitivity Study 2011 SDNP Landscape Architect 2015 – Updated May 2017

34. The SDNP provided supplementary comment on the 2011 WSCC Sensitivity and Capacity Study, giving further consideration of the National Park purposes as set out in the Environment Act (see paragraph 14 above), and particularly to the purpose of providing recreational opportunities and ensuring that *'development in all its guises does not impact on the expectations of visitors to this beautiful landscape'*. In considering impacts on recreation the supplementary advice came to slightly different conclusions. Aspects which formed part of the supplementary assessment considered to be beneficial to outdoor recreation included:
- the area in which the site is located is promoted for walking in literature, guides;
 - whether there are publicised car parks;
 - the presence of visitor destinations & known beauty spots;
 - proximity to way marked long distance trails;
 - good connectivity to other routes and areas – for example connections to the South Downs Way and/or nearby settlements and points of access to the network.
35. Special Qualities 1, 3 and 5 were broadly assessed in supplementary advice to the degree to which they were present in the vicinity of the potential minerals sites. The assessment awarded a score of Low – Medium – High for SQ 3 & 5. SQ1 was assumed to be embedded in the assessment of landscape character sensitivity.
36. The supplementary advice acknowledged that restoration is an important aspect of minerals planning which should be considered at the earliest stage to enable decision makers to identify sites offering the greatest benefits and opportunities to long term enhancement of the SDNP Special Qualities. The report stated that while many of the sand sites could potentially be restored to valuable heathland many of the sites would be excavated below the water table with concerns that long term water quality would affect the overall success of restoration and wider functioning impacts on the surrounding water courses including the River Rother.
37. Of relevance to this Study (2019) are the following 'overall sensitivity' conclusions where they differ from the 2011 WSCC Sensitivity and Capacity Study, due to the additional consideration of SDNP Special Qualities and purposes:
- CH7B East of West Heath: reduced from medium / high sensitivity to medium sensitivity. Careful consideration of access, public right of way, and mitigation of impacts on views.
 - CH10A Duncton Common: increased from medium to high sensitivity and recommended for exclusion.
 - CH10C Coopers Moor: increased from medium / high to high sensitivity and recommended for exclusion.
38. Further recommendations and observations were made on all the sites assessed and these will be taken into account in this Study.

METHODOLOGY

39. The methodology used for this Study is based upon the methodology used by Land Use Consultants in their 2011 WSCC Sensitivity and Capacity Study, which itself built upon latest thinking as set out in Topic Paper 6 - Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity, as well as their own experience. While Topic Paper 6 was published in 2002, no formal update has been published. Discussions within the profession are leading towards bringing the assessment of sensitivity more in line with landscape and visual impact assessment guidance by expressing susceptibility to change more explicitly as a part of sensitivity. As this would not materially affect the assessment outcomes, the original 2011 Land Use Consultants methodology is used for this Study, with the additional aspects of ecosystem services and environmental net gain included as key considerations in line with South Downs Local Plan (2019), the 25 Year Environment Plan, and the NPPF(2019).

Definitions of key terms

Landscape sensitivity

40. For the purposes of this Study, the definition used in the 2011 WSCC Sensitivity and Capacity Study is used:

- Sensitivity is the extent to which the character of the landscape is susceptible to change as a result of proposed mineral workings.

41. Sensitivity has been assessed based on a series of criteria, developed to highlight specific landscape and visual characteristics which are most likely to be affected by the development type being considered, including the site and its immediate surrounding. Criteria relate to the physical / natural factors, experiential, visual, and value. Further information about the criteria is set out in Figure B.

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landform | <i>Simple, predominantly flat</i> | <i>Simple, predominantly flat to undulating</i> | <i>Occasional variety but lacking strong complexity</i> | <i>Complex with topographical variety</i> | <i>Very complex with strong topographical variety</i> |
| Landcover / pattern | <i>Simple, large-scale pattern (large conifer plantations, arable fields), and/or regularly disturbed, fragmented landcover</i> | <i>Largely simple, some disturbance, largely fragmented landcover and landuse</i> | <i>Some variety, limited disturbance, a degree of consistency in pattern of landuse and landcover</i> | <i>Varied pattern with some intricacy, largely undisturbed and coherent landcover, some historic landuse pattern evident</i> | <i>Intricate, varied pattern, undisturbed consistent patterns of land cover or land use, historic field patterns</i> |
| Scale | <i>Large scale, featureless</i> | <i>Medium to large scale</i> | <i>Medium to small scale with occasional human scale indicators</i> | <i>Small scale with human scale indicators</i> | <i>Very small scale, intricate with human scale indicators</i> |
| Enclosure | <i>Enclosed</i> | <i>Mostly enclosed, some open areas</i> | <i>Some enclosure</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> |
| Condition | <i>Low level of intactness with landscape elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Some intactness with some elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Generally intact with elements in reasonable state of repair</i> | <i>Intact and elements in good state of repair</i> | <i>High level of intactness and very good state of repair</i> |
| Typicality and rarity | <i>No rare features or weak association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Few rare features or some association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Some rare features and attributes or largely corresponding to key characteristics</i> | <i>Rare features and attributes, strong correspondence with key qualities</i> | <i>Rare features of regional importance or representative of key characteristics and qualities</i> |
| Tranquillity (including noise and lighting) | <i>Not tranquil, much human activity, noise and light</i> | <i>Limited tranquillity</i> | <i>Some human activity reducing sense of tranquillity, some lighting</i> | <i>Relatively tranquil, no lighting</i> | <i>Tranquil, little human activity, noise or lighting</i> |
| Remoteness | <i>Presence or proximity to human activity or modern development or industrial structures e.g. utility, infrastructure</i> | <i>Close to some visible signs of human activity and modern development</i> | <i>Some sense of distance and remoteness, human activity and modern development largely absent</i> | <i>Perception of remoteness, sense of distance from human influences</i> | <i>Strong sense of remoteness; physically remote or perception of being remote</i> |
| Ecosystem services | <i>No services apparent, systems degraded</i> | <i>Limited services apparent</i> | <i>Some services apparent</i> | <i>Clear benefit/s contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> | <i>Multiple benefits contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| VISUAL CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Skylines | <i>No relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Limited relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Some relationship to skyline with some complexity and interruption</i> | <i>Relationship to prominent skylines that is largely simple or with some variety and interruption</i> | <i>Strong relationship to prominent, simple and undeveloped skylines</i> |
| Views and landmarks | <i>Contains no landmarks and is not a feature in local views</i> | <i>No or limited landmarks or limited significance in local views</i> | <i>Locally important landmarks or views</i> | <i>Some important landmarks, or significant views</i> | <i>Landscape includes important landmarks or is important in views across a wide area</i> |
| Intervisibility | <i>Self-contained, restricted intervisibility</i> | <i>Occasional views to adjacent landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility with some neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility and strong links to neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Extensively intervisible, part of wider landscape</i> |
| Visual receptors | <i>Low number of viewers from properties and transport routes</i> | <i>Local transport routes, limited numbers of residents</i> | <i>Some visibility from main transport routes and a number of residents</i> | <i>Frequent properties and views from main transport routes</i> | <i>Higher visibility from main transport routes and large number of properties</i> |
| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
| LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landscape designations | <i>No or limited intervisibility or relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Some intervisibility and relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Located in close proximity to a designated landscape with some intervisibility and relationship with it</i> | <i>Located within or in close proximity to a designated landscape, some significant intervisibility and association with the wider designated area</i> | <i>Located within a nationally or locally designated landscape with a strong association with the wider designated area</i> |
| Natural heritage | <i>No landscape conservation designations</i> | <i>Limited extent of nature conservation areas and areas of ancient woodland</i> | <i>Some nature conservation designations</i> | <i>Nature conservation designations over a significant area</i> | <i>Statutory nature conservation designations over an extensive area</i> |
| Historic environment and settings and cultural influences | <i>No significant historic features</i> | <i>Historic features but not relating to landscape</i> | <i>Some historic features relate to landscape</i> | <i>Some prominent historic features</i> | <i>Historic features are prominent in the landscape</i> |
| Recreation | <i>Little or no recreational use</i> | <i>Low level informal or local recreational use</i> | <i>Locally significant recreational use or attraction</i> | <i>Well used for recreation, greater than local attraction</i> | <i>Important for recreation for locals and visitors</i> |

Figure B - Sensitivity criteria

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42. A 5-point scoring scale is used to record sensitivity. Definitions of sensitivity scoring categories are given below in Figure C for guidance. Reasoned, professional judgement is used to reach conclusions based on different aspects of sensitivity and how these combine to reach an overall sensitivity, e.g. a medium landscape sensitivity and a medium visual sensitivity might be raised to an overall medium-high sensitivity by a medium-high value, which might have an overriding significance. This approach is in line with the 2011 WSCC Sensitivity and Capacity Study.

| Sensitivity score | Definition |
|-------------------|---|
| High | Key characteristics of the landscape are highly vulnerable to change. The nature of the development would result in a significant change in character. Characteristics contribute to SDNP purposes and special qualities. |
| Medium-High | Key characteristics of the landscape are vulnerable to change. There may be some limited opportunity to accommodate development without changing landscape character or affecting SDNP purposes and special qualities. Great care would be needed in locating mineral sites. |
| Medium | Some of the key characteristics of the landscape are vulnerable to change. Although the landscape may have some ability to absorb some development, it is likely to cause some change in character with possible impact on SDNP purposes and special qualities. Care would be needed in locating mineral sites. |
| Medium-Low | Few of the key characteristics of the landscape are vulnerable to change or support the SDNP purposes and special qualities. The landscape is likely to be able to accommodate development with only minor change in character or effect on SDNP special qualities. Care is still needed when locating mineral sites to avoid adversely affecting key characteristics and special qualities and ensure best fit with the landscape and to provide environmental net gain. |
| Low | Key characteristics of the landscape are robust, not representative of SDNP special qualities and would not be adversely affected by development. The landscape is likely to be able to accommodate development without a significant change in character or effect on SDNP purposes and special qualities. Care is still needed when locating mineral sites to ensure best fit with the landscape and to provide environmental net gain. |

Figure C - Sensitivity definitions

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Landscape capacity

43. Landscape capacity is a term used to describe the resilience or robustness of the landscape and its ability to accommodate different amounts of change or development of a specific type without fundamentally changing its overall character, key attributes or quality. Broadly it reflects:

- the sensitivity of the landscape resource and its visual amenity;
- the value attached to the landscape or specific elements in it.

44. In assessing landscape sensitivity and capacity within this Study, judgements as to acceptability of specific development proposals are not made, as these judgements need to be weighed up in the overall planning balance.

Landscape value

45. The European Landscape Convention (ELC) recognises that all landscapes matter, be they ordinary, degraded or outstanding. There is however recognition that value is also ascribed to landscapes, and Topic Paper 6 identifies the need for judgements about landscape capacity to reflect that certain landscapes are valued by society for different reasons.

46. Therefore for the purposes of this Study, landscape value reflects local and national landscape designations as well as other factors such as:

- natural heritage assets;
- cultural heritage assets; and
- recreational resources, including long distance paths.

47. As Topic Paper 6 notes, a valued landscape, whether nationally designated or not, does not automatically, and by definition, have high sensitivity. Similarly, 'landscapes with high sensitivity do not automatically have no, or low capacity to accommodate change, and landscapes of low sensitivity do not automatically have high capacity to accept change'.

Assessment process

48. The process of assessment is set out in Figure D below.

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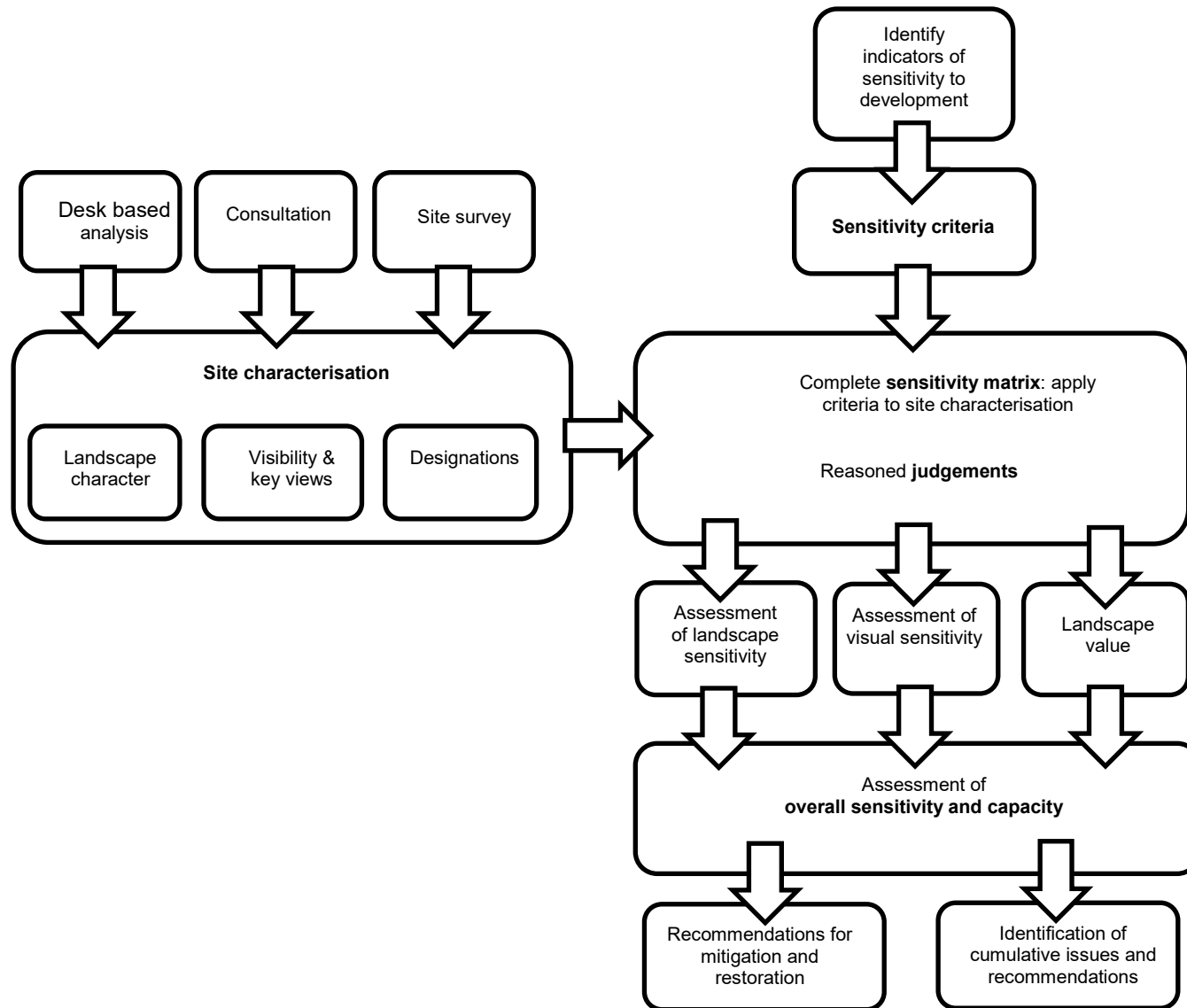


Figure D Assessment process

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Soft sand extraction and sensitivity indicators

49. The key features and potential impacts of soft sand extraction are as follows:

- Removal of existing landscape features;
- Location on rolling footslopes of the chalk downs;
- Excavation, machinery including excavators, conveyors (dry extraction), pipework (wet extraction) and lighting, resulting in visual intrusion;
- Noise and visual intrusion of on-site processing;
- Visual intrusion from stockpiling sand during extraction;
- Dust apparent within the vicinity of sand pits and rural lanes linked to main roads;
- Frequent heavy vehicle movements on local roads and narrow lane network;
- Mitigation measures such as perimeter mounding (using topsoil and overburden), the planting of native trees, shrubs and heather groundcover and inclusion of water;
- Removal of any infrastructure (pipework, conveyors, hardstanding and buildings) upon completion of works, but permanent alteration of land form usually remains.

Desktop studies

50. An initial desk-based assessment of sensitivity was undertaken, informed by other relevant studies including landscape assessments and the previous 2011 and 2016 Sensitivity and Capacity studies. The desk top research exercise also included a review of GIS data and map studies, including the following diagrams which are included as Appendix 1: topography (**Figure 2**), landscape designations (**Figure 6**), cultural heritage designations (**Figure 7**), nature conservation designations (**Figure 8**), tranquillity (**Figure 9**).

Landscape character

51. Landscape characterisation underpins the approach to landscape sensitivity assessment. The landscape character of the wider study area within which each site fell was considered, drawing on the existing landscape character assessments of WSCC, SDNP as well as the national scale.

52. The Study area sits within the following character areas at the various levels:

- **National Character Area:** Wealden Greensand (CH7B, CH8A, 8C, 8D, CH10A, 10C, HO2), Low Weald (HO4A and Buncton Manor Farm).
- **West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):**
 - LCA LW7 Wiston Low Weald (HO4A and Buncton Manor Farm),
 - LCA WG1 Western Scarp Footslopes (CH7B),
 - LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths (CH8A, 8C, 8D, CH10A, 10C),
 - LCA WG7 Storrington Woods and Heaths (HO2).
 - LCA WG8 Central Scarp Footslopes (borders HO4A)

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- **South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):**
 - LCT I: Scarp Footslopes; LCA I3 Arun to Adur Scarp Footslopes (HO2, HO4 and Buncton Manor Farm);
 - LCT L: Wealden farmland and heath mosaic combined with LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic (7B, 8A, 8C, 8D, 10A, 10C)
 - LCT M: Sandy Arable Farmland combined with LCA M1 North Rother Valley Sandy Arable Farmland (7B)

53. Relevant key characteristics, ecosystem services, forces for change and guidelines for the National Character Area: Wealden Greensand are described (paraphrased) below as they apply to 7 of the 9 sites and Low Weald for Ham Farm and Buncton Manor Farm. Details of WSCC and SDNP landscape character assessments are set out within each site assessment.

National Character Area 120 Wealden Greensand

- A long, narrow belt of Greensand typified by scarp-and-dip slope topography. The Greensand forms escarpments separated by a clay vale: the overall undulating and organic landform – particularly in the west – gives a sense of intimacy to the landscape.
- There are extensive areas of ancient mixed woodland of hazel, oak and birch, with some areas having been converted to sweet chestnut coppice in past centuries. These areas reflect the diverse geology, including the distinctive chalk grassland elements within the East Hampshire Hangers Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the wooded commons ('charts') of East Surrey and West Kent, and conifer plantations.
- Semi-natural habitats include: remnant lowland heathland; the wetlands associated with the River Arun in West Sussex; and unimproved acid grasslands found in commons, parklands, heathland and other areas of unimproved pasture.
- Fields are predominantly small or medium, in irregular patterns derived from medieval enclosure. Boundaries are formed by hedgerows and shaws, with character and species reflecting the underlying soils. On the clay, hedgerows are dense and species-rich, with occasional standard oaks. On more acidic soils they generally consist of hawthorn and blackthorn, also with occasional oak trees, and often trimmed low.
- Agricultural land comprises a mosaic of mixed farming, with pasture and arable land set within a wooded framework.
- The rural settlement pattern is a mixture of dispersed farmsteads, hamlets and some nucleated villages. Large houses set within extensive parks and gardens are found throughout the area
- There are a range of historic landscape features, including field monuments, old military defences, prehistoric tumuli, iron-age hill forts, Roman forts, the Royal Military Canal, small quarries and relics of the iron industry (including hammer ponds). Sunken lanes cut into the sandstone are a historic and characteristic feature, as are older deer parks and more recent 18th-century parklands.
- Surface water is an important feature across the Greensand, with many streams and rivers passing through the NCA: the Western Rother, Wey, Arun, Medway and the Great and East Stour.

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Ecosystem services:

- **Food provision:** An area of mixed farming that produces significant amounts of cereals and other arable crops. Also livestock, including sheep, pigs and cattle, and notably fruit growing and other horticultural crops.
- **Biomass energy:** The existing woodland cover (25 per cent of the NCA) offers significant potential for the provision of biomass through bringing unmanaged woodland under management.
- **Water availability:** Water availability in both surface waters and the aquifer is under pressure from existing abstractions for public water supply and (to a lesser extent) for industrial and agricultural supply. The Lower Greensand aquifer supports surface water flows and provides base flow to the internationally important wildlife sites of the Arun Valley – SPA, SAC, Ramsar and heathland sites that have water-dependent habitats. The aquifer has an important role in maintaining spring and base flows of rivers; any low flows may damage the ecology of rivers and wetlands.
- **Climate regulation:** The very acidic sandy and loamy soils include some thin, organic and peaty topsoils that are a store of carbon, associated with the area's remnant heathland habitats. Some of the loamy and clayey flood plain soils are peaty at depth or include small areas of peaty soils. The woodlands of the NCA also play an important role in climate regulation. However, as many of the soils are droughty sands and coarse loams, they generally have a low organic matter content, which could be enhanced by organic matter inputs.
- **Regulating soil erosion:** Freely draining, loamy and/or sandy soils make up 60 per cent of the NCA, and generally carry an enhanced risk of soil erosion on moderately or steeply sloping land where cultivated or bare soil is exposed. This is often exacerbated where organic matter levels are low after continuous arable cultivation, or where soils are compacted. Wind erosion can also be an issue for many of these soils. The freely draining, sands, silts and coarse loam soils, can be at risk of increased erosion. Loamy and Clayey soils with impeded drainage can be prone to both capping and slaking and are easily compacted by machinery or livestock if accessed when wet, increasing the risks of soil erosion by surface water run-off. In the south-west of the NCA, steeper sandy soils under arable cultivation are highly prone to erosion.
- **Regulating water quality:** Stretches of the rivers that fall within the NCA are of variable quality, as is the groundwater. Seek to reduce diffuse pollution from agriculture. Within the Arun and Western Rother priority catchment, steeper, sandy soils under arable cultivation are highly prone to erosion: as a result, the Western Rother suffers from very high levels of siltation. The Medway and Stour catchments are also both prone to sedimentation from soil erosion and phosphate run-off. Water quality is also influenced by the presence of industry and urban development within the NCA.
- **Regulating water flow:** Flooding has been an issue within the NCA and the river catchments more widely. Land adjacent to both the Mole and Wey has been subject to significant flooding in the past, including flooding of urban areas along their course. Flood plain management in the wider catchment is identified as being a key mitigation measure.

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- **Sense of place/inspiration:** A sense of place is provided by the prominent Greensand ridge, which affords many far-reaching views over the Low Weald from the scarp top, as well as by the extremely varied landscape character – a result of the diverse underlying soils and geology, and the overlying land use. Also distinctive are the extensive areas of lowland heathland and ancient woodland, which include the distinctive hanger woodlands found on steeper slopes. Rivers draining the dip slope (and their associated wetland habitats) further support this varied character, as do the irregularly-patterned fields bounded by hedgerows and shaws. The rural settlement pattern of dispersed farmsteads, hamlets, some nucleated villages and tree-lined, sunken lanes adds to the distinctive sense of intimacy within the landscape in the south-west.
- **Sense of history:** The history of this landscape is evident in the predominantly irregularly-patterned fields and in the ancient road network, as well as in the area's prehistoric associations. Aspects of history that are particularly striking in the landscape are the numerous large houses and designed parklands. The hammer ponds associated with iron workings along the foot of the north-west escarpment contribute to the sense of history and provide links with the area's industrial heritage.
- **Tranquillity:** Twenty-seven per cent of the NCA is classified as 'undisturbed' according to CPRE data, a decline from over 60 per cent in the 1960s. Tranquillity is most generally associated with the intimate rural landscape of the south-west (much of which falls within the South Downs National Park).
- **Recreation:** Recreation and access are supported by 3,315 km of public rights of way, as well as over 6,700 ha of open access land. Part of the area to the south-west falls within the South Downs National Park, which seeks to offer wide-ranging opportunities for countryside recreation and access. These recreational opportunities offer benefits to physical and mental health, and to local economies, but there is a need to manage their impact on sensitive sites, where the ecology of these areas is at risk from significant footfall or from potentially damaging activities.
- **Biodiversity:** The NCA supports a variety of habitats and species. This includes lowland woodland; lowland heathland; wet woodland; and a number of international designations, indicating the area's contribution to international biodiversity.
- **Geodiversity:** The geodiversity of the Wealden Greensand NCA is of great importance. Disused quarries and road cuttings are particularly important. The ridge itself gives spectacular views across the Low Weald. As well as being of great importance in its own right, the geology is of fundamental importance to biodiversity. The complexity of the geology and soils has led to great variation in the vegetation that it supports. There are also clear links between traditional building materials and industries, which have been supported by the local geology; for example, ironstone was important in early iron production in the area.

Statements of environmental opportunity:

- SEO 1: Protect and manage the nationally recognised and distinctive character of the landscape, conserving and enhancing historic landscape character, tranquillity, sense of place, and the rich historical and geological heritage of the Wealden Greensand. Enhance access provision where appropriate, to maintain public benefit from and enjoyment of the area
- SEO 2: Protect, manage and significantly enhance the mosaic and connectivity of semi-natural habitats within the mixed farmed landscape – particularly the internationally important woodland and heathland habitats – for the benefit of biodiversity, pollination, soil and water regulation, landscape character and enhanced adaptation to climate change.
- SEO 3: Manage and significantly enhance the quality of the characteristic wetland and water environment of the Greensand. This will contribute to sustainable flood risk management, will benefit the regulation of water quality and water availability, as well as enhancing the sense of place, biodiversity, recreation and wetland habitat adaptation to climate change.

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- SEO 4: Plan to deliver a network of integrated, well managed green spaces in existing and developing urban areas, providing social, economic and environmental benefits, and reinforcing landscape character and local distinctiveness – particularly on or alongside the boundaries of the designated landscapes within the Wealden Greensand.

National Character Area 121 Low Weald

- Broad, low-lying, gently undulating clay vales with outcrops of limestone or sandstone providing local variation.
- The underlying geology has provided materials for industries including iron working, brick and glass making, leaving pits, lime kilns and quarries. Many of the resulting exposures are critical to our understanding of the Wealden environment.
- A generally pastoral landscape with arable farming associated with lighter soils on higher ground. Land use is predominantly agricultural but with urban influences.
- Field boundaries of hedgerows and shaws (remnant strips of cleared woodland) enclosing small, irregular fields and linking into small and scattered linear settlements along roadsides or centred on greens or commons. Rural lanes and tracks with wide grass verges and ditches.
- Small towns and villages are scattered among areas of woodland, permanent grassland and hedgerows on the heavy clay soils where larger 20th-century villages have grown around major transport routes.
- Frequent north–south routeways and lanes, many originating as drove roads, along which livestock were moved to downland grazing or to forests to feed on acorns.
- Small areas of heathland particularly associated with commons such as Ditchling and Chailey. Also significant historic houses often in parkland or other designed landscapes.
- The Low Weald boasts an intricate mix of woodlands, much of it ancient, including extensive broadleaved oak over hazel and hornbeam coppice, shaws, small field copses and tree groups, and lines of riparian trees along watercourses. Veteran trees are a feature of hedgerows and in fields.
- Many small rivers, streams and watercourses with associated water meadows and wet woodland.
- Abundance of ponds, some from brick making and quarrying, and hammer and furnace ponds, legacies of the Wealden iron industry.
- Traditional rural vernacular of local brick, weatherboard and tile-hung buildings plus local use of distinctive Horsham slabs as a roofing material.
- Weatherboard barns are a feature. Use of flint is notable in the south towards the South Downs.

Ecosystem Services:

- **Food provision:** Livestock were traditionally reared on the pasture and continue to be a major land use. Dairy farming is in decline but survives, particularly in a small area around Edenbridge in the centre of the NCA. Arable and horticultural farming remain important, particularly in the east.
- **Timber provision:** Despite the wooded nature of the NCA and the long history of wood supply, the area does not supply a large amount of timber for the modern market.
- **Genetic diversity:** Some old and traditional orchards and remnants of the hop-growing industry survive and contain important local varieties that are now rarely available, such as Sussex Forge apple, named because of its association with the iron-working area around Crawley and East Grinstead. The Sussex cattle breed was refined largely in the Low Weald during the early 19th century and the Sussex Herd Book Society was formed following a public meeting in Horsham to promote the breed. Descendants of these original herds still graze parts of the NCA. The area was also important in the development of the Southdown sheep breed.

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- **Climate regulation:** Longstanding woodland is abundant in the Low Weald and is a good carbon store, as is the undisturbed soil beneath which has a higher carbon content. Similarly, its long ley and semi- and unimproved grasslands will tend to have higher soil carbon content than cultivated equivalents. Growing timber is good carbon sequestration, particularly in habitats such as wet woodland with rapid deposition.
- **Regulating water quality:** Buffering watercourses and reservoirs, thereby slowing the pathway of run-off, could have a significant impact, along with working with farmers and land managers both within the Low Weald and particularly on the higher ground and catchments in adjacent NCAs to promote good practice.
- **Regulating water flow:** Predominantly clayey flood plain soils with naturally high groundwater and the area's low-lying nature make many areas in the Low Weald susceptible to flooding.
- **Pest regulation:** The significant proportion of ancient woodland, particularly oak, makes this NCA especially vulnerable to introduced pests and diseases. Mature elm has been lost from most of the Low Weald with the exception of parts which fall within the Dutch Elm Disease Control Area in East Sussex.
- **Sense of history:** The Low Weald has a strong sense of being an anciently settled and farmed landscape, with farmsteads (often of medieval origin) set in landscapes also enclosed in the medieval period and successively reorganised. The landscape is influenced by remnants of the Wealden iron industry. There are many fine houses, many medieval in origin and often set within historic parkland as well as many smaller gardens and designed landscapes.
- **Tranquillity:** The Low Weald is a predominantly pastoral and wooded landscape that is still largely rural and relatively tranquil outside the main urban centres.
- **Recreation:** Recreation is supported by 3,974 km of public rights of way. Commons such as Ditchling and Chailey are popular for recreational activities.
- **Biodiversity:** The Low Weald is the most important area for spiked rampion in England and is among the top five NCAs for several other species such as chamomile and true fox-sedge. The area is rated in the top ten NCAs for containing bullfinch and lesser-spotted woodpecker and its wooded character supports many rare species, including nightjar and notably woodland butterflies such as the wood white and moths such as the forester and scarce brown streak. It is also rated in the top twelve in terms of species richness by the Bat Conservation Trust and there are colonies of rare barbastelle and Bechstein's bats. The wet woodland also makes it important for fungi, mosses, liverworts and lichens.
- **Geodiversity:** The NCA is geologically important and contains 11 geological SSSI and 19 local sites. Geological features include Jurassic-Cretaceous stratigraphy sites notable for well-preserved fossils. Many of these sites are critical to our understanding of the complex Wealden geology.

Statements of Environmental Opportunity:

- SEO 1: Protect, manage and significantly enhance the area's intricate and characteristic mix of semi-natural ancient woodlands, gill woodland, shaws, small field copses, hedgerows and individual trees to reduce habitat fragmentation and benefit biodiversity, while seeking to improve and encourage access for health and wellbeing and reinforce sense of local identity.
- SEO 2: Conserve and enhance the distinctive historical aspects of the Low Weald landscape, including its important geological features and sites of heritage interest, particularly those associated with Wealden iron industry, enabling access, continued research, interpretation, understanding and enjoyment of the extensive and nationally significant resources.

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- SEO 3: Work at a landscape scale to improve the quality, state and structure of all Wealden rivers, streams and standing waterbodies and their appropriate flood plains, taking account of water quality, water flow and hydraulic connection with the flood plain, while seeking to enhance biodiversity, historic features and recreation opportunities and reinforcing sense of place.
- SEO 4: Maintain the sustainable but productive pastoral landscape of the Low Weald, while expanding and connecting semi-natural habitats to benefit biodiversity, regulating soil and water quality by promoting good agricultural practice, and maintaining the extent and quality of unimproved permanent grassland and meadows. Restore degraded neutral grasslands to buffer sites and encourage pollinators and predators for pest regulation.

Zone of theoretical visibility

54. The ZTV (zone of theoretical visibility) diagrams produced as Appendix 3 in the 2011 Sensitivity and Capacity Study and updated for HO4A Ham Farm in September 2016 were used as guidance for this Study, with an updated ZTV diagram produced for Buncton Manor Farm.

55. Land Use Consultants set out their ZTV methodology in the 2011 Sensitivity and Capacity Study:

Evaluation of the theoretical extent to which the individual sites will be visible across the study area was undertaken by establishing a 'Zone of Theoretical Visibility' (ZTV), using specific computer software designed to calculate the theoretical intervisibility between the development and its surroundings. ReSoft Windfarm and Arcmap GIS computer software was used to generate the ZTV.

These programmes calculate areas from which the site, modelled to a maximum height of 5m above ground level, is potentially visible. This used digital contour information to identify those locations from which each potential mineral site is, in theory, visible. The analysis is based on bare ground topography i.e. without tree cover, buildings etc. with the following categories of woodland (using the National Inventory of Woodland and Trees (NIWT)) factored into the calculation of the ZTV of the mineral sites, assuming a tree height of 15m): Broadleaved; Coniferous; and Mixed.

The ZTV therefore does not allow for the screening or filtering effect of coppice woodland, shrubs, field boundaries or buildings. It should also be noted that the programme uses point height data, rather than continuous data, and assumes straight line topography between data points, and is not able therefore to take account of small scale topographic features. As it uses a 'bare ground' model, with additional account taken only of large woodland blocks, the maps produced represents a 'maximum potential visibility' scenario, which is likely to be a worst case scenario and much more limited on the ground. ZTV mapping provides a valuable measure of the extent of visibility, the nature of areas from which sites could be visible, identifying for example, sensitive areas, viewpoints, settlements etc which could be affected, and the implications for landscapes of different character and sensitivity.

The ZTVs are theoretical and actual visibility is very much reduced over that shown on the ZTV. This is particularly relevant to the sites on the coastal plain. The ZTVs indicate a blanket of visibility, whereas actual visibility would be intermittent and related to the direction of travel, activity of the receptor and availability of viewpoints (e.g. roads, PROW, properties). The ZTVs do not measure or assess the degree of impact on the view, but merely identify areas of further investigation.

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56. The ZTV diagrams have been used to inform fieldwork, as a starting point for the extent of visibility which has then been checked by visiting each site and the surrounding area. The assessments in this Study are based on the general visibility rather than a comprehensive survey which would be required for a full landscape and visual impact assessment to inform site detailed development proposals.

Consultation

57. As part of the 2011 Sensitivity and Capacity Study, consultation was undertaken with the South Downs National Park Authority and West Sussex County Council to identify specific issues of sensitivity related to each of the sites in relation to the management objectives for the Park and key viewpoints to be considered for to specific sites. Appendix 1 of the 2011 Sensitivity and Capacity Study provides a summary of information and comments received. Of relevance to this Study are key viewpoints on the South Downs Way and at Bepton Down and Duncton Common. The SDNP provide further commentary on the sites in 2015 and 2017 and this is summarised above in paragraphs 34-38.

Site assessment

58. Field survey work was carried out in June and July 2019 to test the findings of the desk-based studies. Each site and its surrounding area was visited, including key viewpoints identified through consultation with the South Downs National Park Authority and West Sussex County Council. The emphasis of the work was as follows:

- to test the findings of the landscape sensitivity analysis;
- to test the desk-based analysis of intervisibility based on the ZTV, considering the screening and filtering effect of trees and woodland on the ground;
- to assess the overall sensitivity of the landscape to the mineral working proposal in question;
- to examine the extent to which landscape and visual effects could be mitigated and ecosystem net gain achieved through design, siting, advance planting or other measures and to provide guidance on these measures;
- to consider, where appropriate, potential restoration and net environmental gain and after use.
- to consider the value of the landscape eg. Intactness, condition etc.

59. Field survey forms were used, comprising three main sections:

- consideration of key features, characteristics and ecosystem services of the landscape of the site and immediate surroundings;
- analysis of the landscape in terms of the characteristics and qualities with a bearing on its sensitivity to the specific mineral working proposal, including intervisibility with surrounding areas and sensitive features present within the site;
- a brief assessment of potential mitigation measures appropriate to the site and its location in the wider landscape with the aim of achieving environmental net gain.

60. The site survey forms, together with the information and analysis from the desk based work, formed the basis of the assessment, where the sensitivity criteria were applied to each site. Completed assessment sheets are presented in full in Appendix 2.

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ASSESSMENT OF SENSITIVITY

61. The assessment tables included in full in Appendix 2 include detailed maps and photographs taken during site visits. Each table includes a summary of the key qualities of the landscape character area within which the site falls, drawing on the key qualities and guidance set out in the relevant landscape character assessments. For each site landscape, visual and value criteria are set out and sensitivity graded on a 5 point scale, with explanatory text.
62. It should be noted that the assessment does not consist of a rigid scoring system, rather the sensitivity of each site was assessed through professional judgement guided by performance against the criteria. As the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment notes, there are '*complex relationships between the different components of the landscape*'. For different sites, falling within different landscape character areas with a range of specific issues, different criteria are considered more or less important. Those criteria which relate to the SDNP special qualities are afforded greater weight. For the 2 sites lying outside but close to the SDNP boundary the intervisibility criterion is afforded greater weight in the balance of judgement.
63. For each site, therefore, sensitivity and capacity depend upon a range of factors which have been carefully balanced through seeking to make transparent, professional judgements, rather than a rigid scoring system.
64. The following table (Figure E) details the findings of the sensitivity assessment of the 9 sites.

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| Site | Landscape character sensitivity | Visual sensitivity | Landscape value | Overall sensitivity |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| CH7B East of West Heath Common | Medium | Low | Medium-high | Medium |
| CH8A Minsted West | Medium | Medium | Medium-high | Medium-high |
| CH8C Severals West | Medium-high | Medium-high | Medium-high | Medium-high |
| CH8D Severals East | Medium-high | Medium-high | Medium-high | Medium-high |
| CH10A Duncton Common | Medium | Medium-high | Medium-high | Medium-high |
| CH10C Coopers Moor | Medium-high | Medium-high | Medium-high | High |
| HO2 Chantry Lane | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium |
| HO4A Ham Farm | Medium | Medium | Medium-low | Medium |
| Buncton Manor Farm | Medium | Medium-high | Medium | Medium-high |

Figure E - Summary of sensitivities

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Summary of findings

65. The following table (Figure F) sets out a summary of the findings of the overall sensitivity and capacity assessment of the 9 sites.

66. With the exception of HO4AHam Farm and Buncton Manor Farm, all the sites lie within the South Downs National Park and this is largely reflected in the high sensitivity and broadly low capacity of the landscape to accommodate soft sand workings.

| Site | Summary of key landscape, visual and landscape value sensitivities and issues | Overall sensitivity | Overall capacity |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| CH7B East of West Heath Common | <p>Secluded quality, low lying and generally flat with views into the area restricted by existing vegetation. The intricacy of landscape pattern and elements reduces the capacity of the landscape to accommodate development of this nature without adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area.</p> <p>Given the proximity of the existing extraction quarry to the northwest, there is potential for cumulative effects on the Special Qualities of the wider character areas within the South Downs National Park.</p> <p>Sensitive features such as Scheduled Monuments and riparian / heathland habitats in the immediate vicinity.</p> <p>Mineral workings have the potential to adversely affect the fabric and settings of these features so mitigation would need to be planned and executed carefully. Access to the Site is likely to require careful consideration, including potential impacts on views from the adjacent public right of way(s) and localised effects of traffic movement (erosion of verges, dust and noise) to the surrounding network of small lanes, tracks, bridge and residential properties off Harting Road.</p> | Medium | Moderate |
| CH8A Minsted West | <p>Sense of rurality, remoteness and tranquillity with views to the South Downs ridge and adjacent public right of way. Within the SDNP and including some Special Qualities.</p> | Medium-high | Moderate-low |
| CH8C Severals West | <p>Sense of rurality, remoteness and tranquillity with areas of ancient woodland, the western edge water course and setting of the Serpent Trail of greatest sensitivity.</p> | Medium-high | Moderate-low |

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| | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------|--------------|
| CH8D Severals East | Sense of rurality, remoteness and tranquillity with areas of ancient woodland, and setting of the Serpent Trail of greatest sensitivity. | Medium-high | Moderate-low |
| CH10A Duncton Common | <p>Medium scale, plantation forest with existing tree cover providing visual containment (of potential extraction activities). Tranquil with broadleaved trees including specimen field oaks (of potential veteran status) and the water courses. Sensitivities reduce the overall capacity of this landscape to accommodate development of this nature without adverse impacts on the characteristic landscape features and habitat value.</p> <p>Development has the potential to affect the amenity and recreational value of the adjacent areas, as it forms a link between areas to the east and west of high recreational value. There may, however be opportunity physically to re-route the Serpent Trail and the bridleways that form this important link. It should be noted however that the historic public rights of way are highly important in the South Downs National Park, and due to their important contribution to the Special Qualities any alteration may be strongly resisted by the South Downs National Park Authority.</p> <p>With the proximity of the existing extraction quarry of Heath End to the northeast, there is potential for cumulative effects on the special qualities of the wider Wealden Farmland and Heathland Mosaic character area and on the South Downs National Park as a whole. There is the potential for extraction, seen adjacent to the existing quarry to become visually intrusive in the panoramic view from no.10 Fryan's Hanger and routes across the chalk ridge to the south.</p> | Medium -high | Moderate-low |

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| | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------|---------------------|
| <p>CH10C Coopers Moor</p> | <p>Comprising predominantly of woodland with restricted views into the area. Visual containment of extraction activities within existing tree cover. Shape and size (of the site) narrows to the west, reducing the scope to mitigate against adverse impacts on the more sensitive features within the site, such as the mature broadleaf trees and the water courses. Tranquil in character and overlooked by higher ground to the south, adequate screening of views from the ridge may not be achieved by retaining and enhancing the existing tree buffer and vegetation around the perimeter. These factors reduce the overall capacity of the landscape to accommodate development of this nature without adverse impacts on the habitat value and visual amenity. With the proximity of the existing extraction Site to the northeast, there is potential for cumulative effects on the special qualities of the wider Wealden Farmland and Heathland Mosaic character area, within the South Downs National Park, and the potential for this type of development to visually intrude into views from Fryan's Hanger and the chalk ridge to the south.</p> | <p>High</p> | <p>Low</p> |
| <p>HO2 Chantry Lane</p> | <p>Pastoral fields with hedgerows and trees, visible from South Downs Way. Within SDNP but displaying limited Special Qualities. Nearby nature and heritage designations.</p> | <p>Medium</p> | <p>Moderate</p> |
| <p>HO4A Ham Farm</p> | <p>Medium to small scale, sloping profile, mature trees and hedgerows, visible from South Downs Way. Outside SDNP but shares some characteristics with Central Scarp Footslopes character area to the south</p> | <p>Medium</p> | <p>Moderate</p> |
| <p>Bunton Manor Farm</p> | <p>Medium scale, undulating profile, mature trees, hedgerows and watercourse. Visible from viewpoint at Chanctonbury Ring within SDNP. Outside SDNP but shares some characteristics with Central Scarp Footslopes character area to the south.</p> | <p>Medium-high</p> | <p>Moderate-low</p> |

Figure F Summary of overall sensitivity and capacity

GUIDELINES FOR RESTORATION

67. Generic guidelines for restoration options relating to each site are summarised in Figure G below. Details of recommendations for each site are provided in the complete assessment sheets in Appendix 2.
68. For all sites, long term restoration should aim to maximise the habitat value and where appropriate to improve the historic and landscape character by restoring and enhancing hedgerows and woodland structure. Restoration should be carried out in accordance with a management plan which should be drawn up through the planning application process.
69. Guidelines for restoration are broadly based on the landscape guidelines and managements plans, where these highlight specific aims for particular areas. The recommendations made for the individual sites are closely linked to their location, the presence of heathland, agricultural land and woodland in the immediate surroundings and the potential relationship the site could have with areas of high habitat value. For all sites, the main aim of restoration should be to restore, enhance and improve the landscape pattern, visual amenity, and habitat value of the site, and provide net gain to ecosystem services, making links to wider systems where possible. Improved access and recreational opportunities should be sought as part of the process of restoration where possible.

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| Site | Woodland | Agricultural land | Heathland | Riparian scrub and woodland | Water, wetland and / or ponds |
|--------------------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| CH7B East of West Heath Common | | | | | |
| CH8A Minsted West | | | | | |
| CH8C Severals West | | | | | |
| CH8D Severals East | | | | | |
| CH10A Duncton Common | | | | | |
| CH10C Coopers Moor | | | | | |
| HO2 Chantry Lane | | | | | |
| HO4A Ham Farm | | | | | |
| Buncton Manor Farm | | | | | |

Figure G - Summary of restoration options

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

70. The findings of the assessment of sensitivity and capacity of the individual sites are detailed in the site assessment sheets contained in Appendix 2. and summarised in Figures E and F of this report.
71. Cumulative issues are relevant to a number of the sites. The recommendations for phasing provided as part of the assessments are broadly based on the existing screening by landform, or filtering by vegetation, and the ability of sites to be effectively screened from view. It is assumed a sufficient amount of time will be allowed for advanced planting to mature. Advice on the phasing of extraction has been provided in the assessment sheets within Appendix 2 where potential cumulative issues have been identified. Large sites should where possible be divided into smaller areas and developed in sequence with advanced planting and ongoing restoration of worked areas integrated into the phasing to minimise visual intrusion.

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REFERENCES

- All background documents to JMLP and the SDNP Local Plan
- The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland. Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity.
- Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland CAX 84.
- A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018)
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013)
- Mineral Site Selection Report (January 2017)
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019)
- Soft Sand Sites Selection Report (WSCC and SDNPA Jan 2019)
- South Downs Local Plan (2019)
- The South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan (2013)
- South Downs National Park Special Qualities of the National Park (2011)
- South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (2011)
- South Downs Supplement to WSCC Sensitivity Study 2011 SDNP Landscape Architect 2015 – Updated May 2017
- West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan Single Issue Soft Sand Review – Issues and Options Consultation: Reg 18 (Jan 2019, WSCC and SDNPA)
- West Sussex Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study for Potential Mineral and Waste Sites (October 2011)
- West Sussex Minerals Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study for Potential Mineral and Waste Sites: Minerals Addendum (March 2016)
- West Sussex Minerals Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study for Potential Mineral and Waste Sites: Addendum (September 2016)
- West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA 2003)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Drinking Water Safeguard Zones (Surface Water):** catchment areas that influence the water quality for their respective Drinking Water Protected Area (Surface Water), which are at risk of failing the drinking water protection objectives.
- **Ecosystem services:** Ecosystem services are the benefits people and society get from the natural environment. These are defined by the SDNP as: supporting services (biodiversity, water cycling, nutrient cycling, primary production, soil formation); provisioning services (water supply, food production, timber, energy, genetic diversity); cultural services (inspiration and spiritual values, tranquillity, cultural heritage values, recreation and tourism services); regulating services (air quality, climate and carbon storage, water flow and flood, erosion, soil quality, water quality, disease and pest control, pollination).
- **Historic Landscape Characterisation – HLC:** An English Heritage programme developed over twenty years ago which provides an assessment of the historical types and component parts of the landscape, which contribute to its wider landscape character. The principles of HLC are now being extended to other characterisation programmes, for example in towns and regional HLC overviews, as well as to other countries in the UK.
- **Landscape Character:** A distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular type of landscape. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, landuse and human settlement. It creates the particular sense of place of different areas of the landscape.
- **Landscape Character Assessment – LCA:** An established technique used to understand and describe the character of a landscape in a consistent and comprehensive way. Within the current national Landscape Character Assessment Guidance¹⁵, the purposes of LCAs are defined as a means to "help us to understand, and articulate, the character of the landscape. It helps us identify the features that give a locality its 'sense of place'. It uses statistical analysis and application of structured landscape assessment methodologies. LCAs are carried out at different scales, providing more detailed descriptions and analysis at a local level within the national framework of National Character Areas (see below).
- **Landscape Condition:** Based on judgements about the physical state of the landscape, and about its intactness, from visual, functional, and ecological perspectives. It also reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements which make up the character in any one place.
- **Landscape Effects:** Change in the elements, characteristics, character, and qualities of the landscape as a result of development.
- **Landscape Elements:** A component part of the landscape, such as trees, woodland and ponds.
- **Landscape Features:** Prominent eye-catching elements, e.g. wooded hill tops, and church spires, drumlin hills, scarp slopes, dramatic landscape topography.
- **Landscape led approach:** An approach to planning, used by the SDNPA, which gives priority to the protection and enhancement of the landscape through both specific landscape policies and through the great weight given to landscape evidence in the local plan.

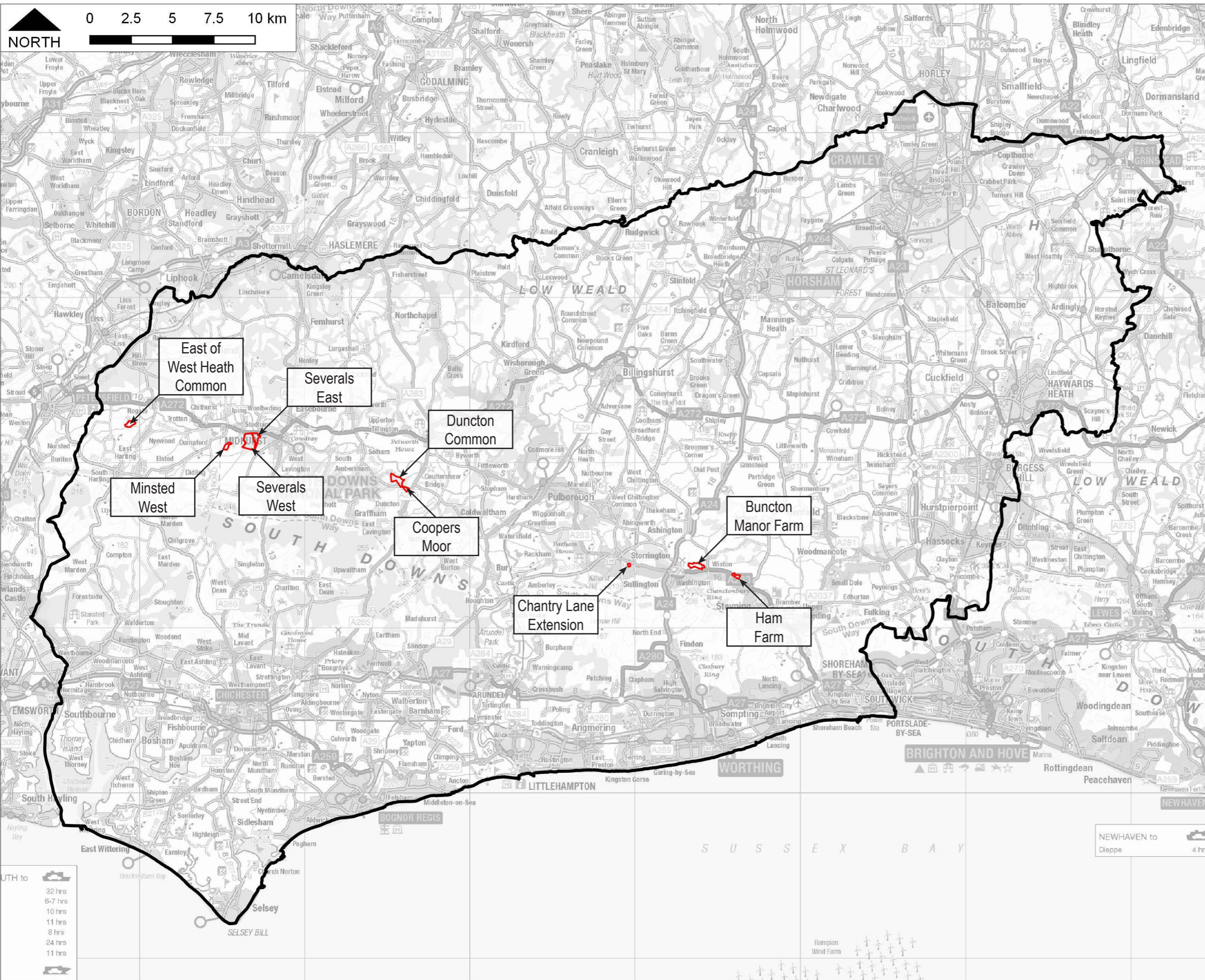
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- **Landscape Patterns:** Spatial distributions of landscape elements combining to form patterns, which may be distinctive, recognisable and describable e.g. hedgerows and stream patterns.
- **Landscape Qualities:** Term used to describe the aesthetic or perceptual and intangible characteristics of the landscape such as scenic quality, tranquillity, sense of wildness or remoteness. Cultural and artistic references may also be described here.
- **Landscape Resource:** The combination of elements that contribute to landscape context, character, and value.
- **Landscape Value:** The relative value or importance attached to a landscape or view (often as a basis for designation or reflected by a given designation attributed to an area) which expresses national or local consensus, because of its quality, including perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, cultural associations or other conservation issues. A given designation does not imply value across the whole of the designated area, or that there are not similarly high quality landscapes elsewhere – it reflects areas which have been recognised by people and where protection is enforced through policy
- **Mitigation:** Measures including any process, activity, or design to avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate for adverse environmental impact or effects of a development. This can include inbuilt mitigation which is designed into and embedded in the proposal itself (for example to avoid sensitive areas, improve views etc), and additional mitigation measures such as earth mounding or planting.
- **National Character Areas:** England has been divided into areas with similar landscape character, which are called National Character Areas (NCAs); previously known as Joint Character Areas (JCAs). Further information is available at <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/englands/character/default.aspx>
- **National Parks:** Extensive designated areas of countryside which have statutory protection to conserve and enhance their natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and to promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities.
- **Environmental net gain:** A principle of achieving measurable improvements as a result of development, such as air quality and biodiversity enhancement.
- **Scale Indicators:** Landscape elements and features of a known or recognisable scale such as houses, trees and vehicles that may be compared to other objects where the scale of height is less familiar, to indicate their true scale.
- **Sense of Place (*genius loci*):** The essential character and spirit of an area: *genius loci* literally means ‘sprit of the place’.
- **Time depth:** The ‘imprint’ of the past on the present day landscape as a result of long term interaction between human activity and natural processes. Time depth enhances our appreciation of how landscapes have changed through time or survived through continuity.

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- **Tranquillity:** A perceptual description applied to landscape that is perceived to be relatively more natural, peaceful, and quiet when compared to other areas, which may be visually developed or noisy.
- **Visual amenity:** Value of a particular place in terms of what is seen by visual receptors, taking account of all available views and the total visual experience. It is the assembly of components, which provide an attractive setting or backcloth for activities, to which value is attached in terms of what is seen.
- **Visual Sensitivity:** The sensitivity of visual receptors such as residents or recreational users of an area, to visual change proposed by development.
- **Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV):** Area or zone of visual influence or theoretical visibility of the development within the study area for the visual assessment, generated by a computerised model of the development and a digital terrain model of the landscape.

APPENDIX 1: STUDY AREA FIGURES

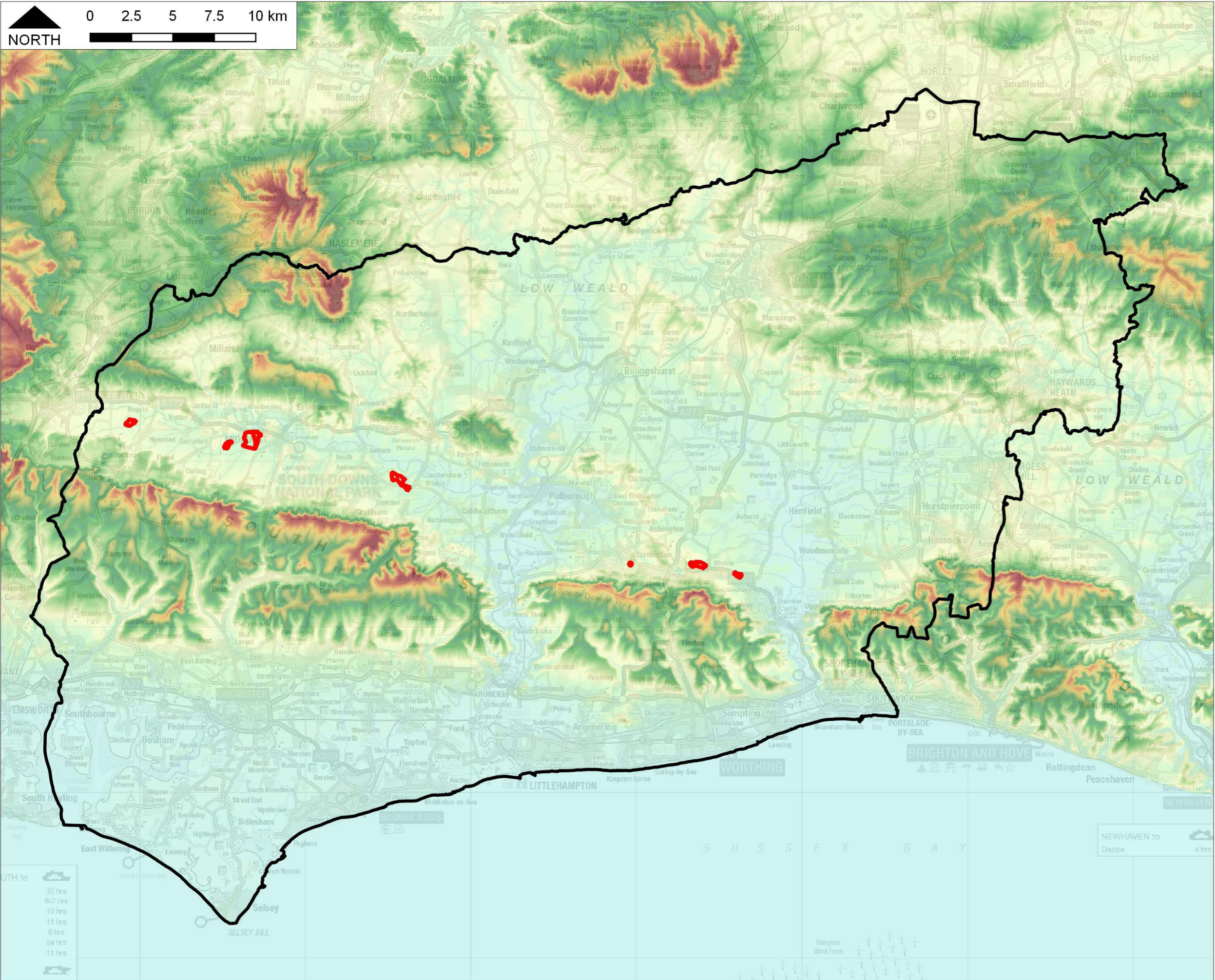
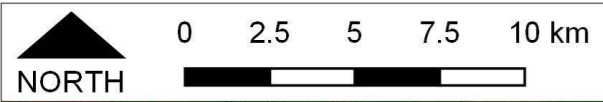


Landscape Sensitivity to Minerals
Figure 1: Study area and site locations

Key

- Site Boundaries
- West Sussex County Boundary

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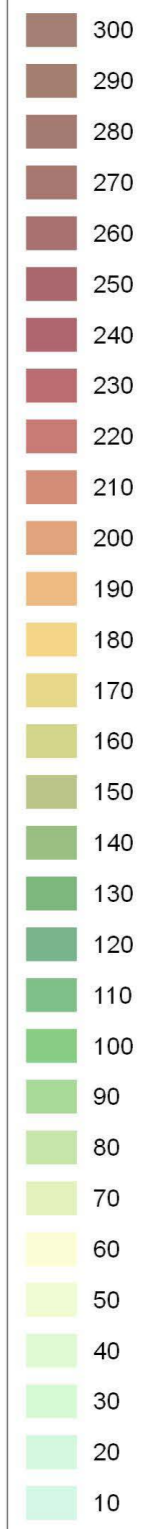


Landscape Sensitivity to Minerals

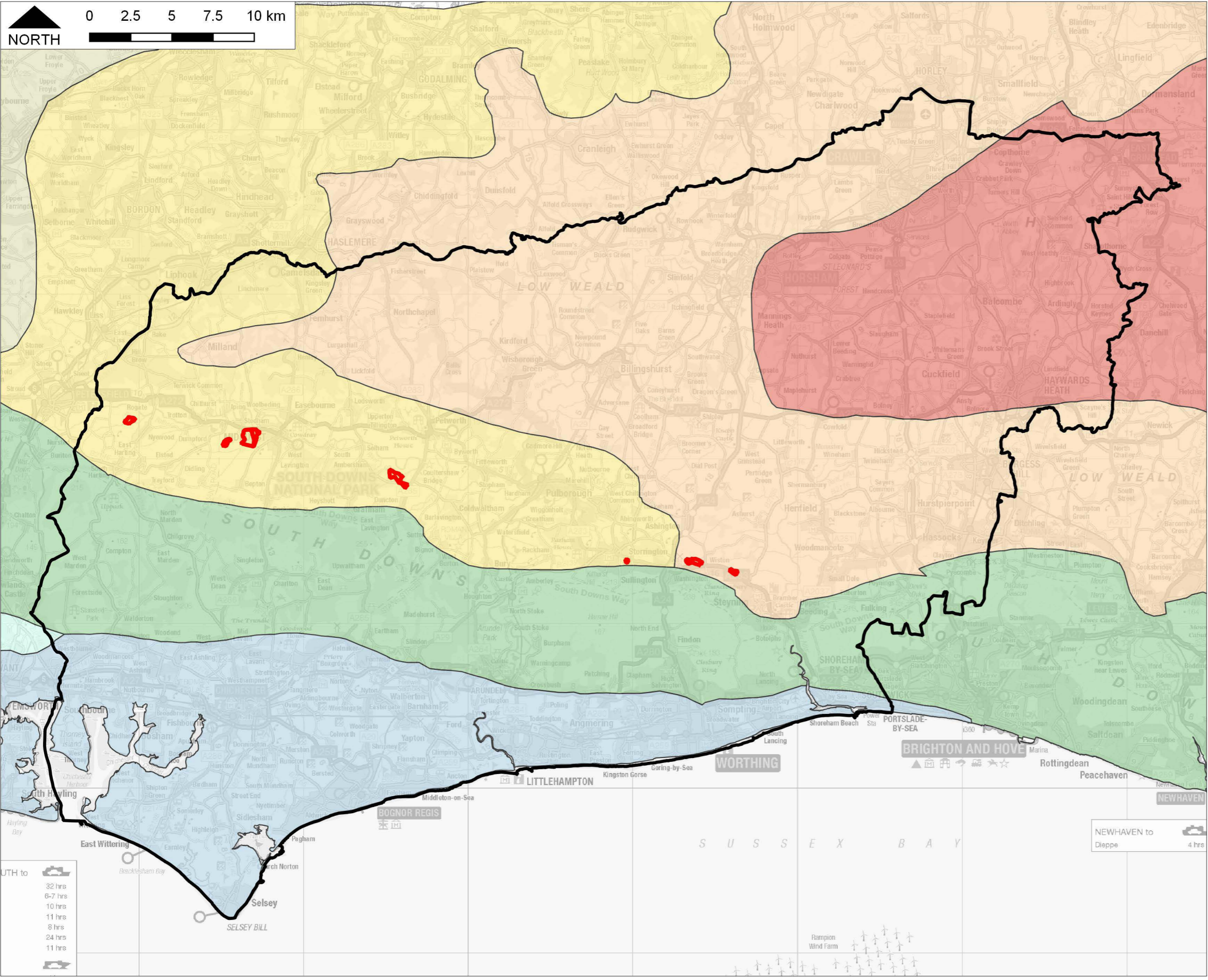
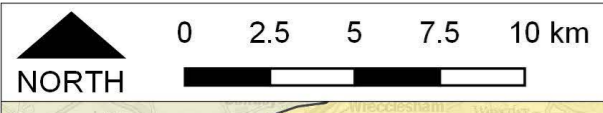
Figure 2: Topography

- Key**
- Site Boundaries
 - West Sussex County Boundary

Height in metres (A.O.D.)



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Landscape Sensitivity to Minerals
Figure 3: National Character Areas

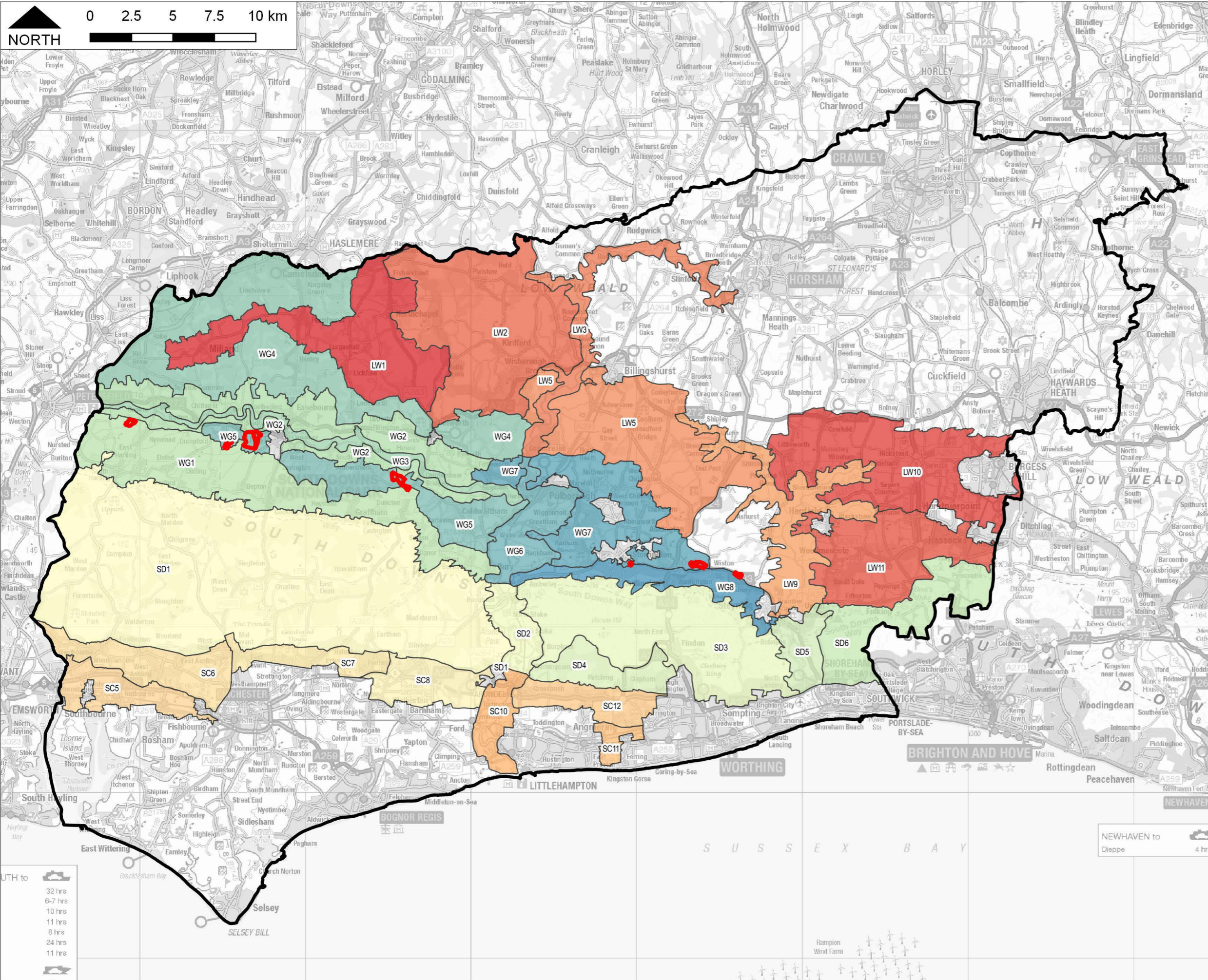
Key

- Site Boundaries
- West Sussex County Boundary

National Character Areas

- Hampshire Downs
- High Weald
- Low Weald
- South Coast Plain
- South Downs
- South Hampshire Lowlands
- Wealden Greensand

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Figure 5: SDNP Character Areas

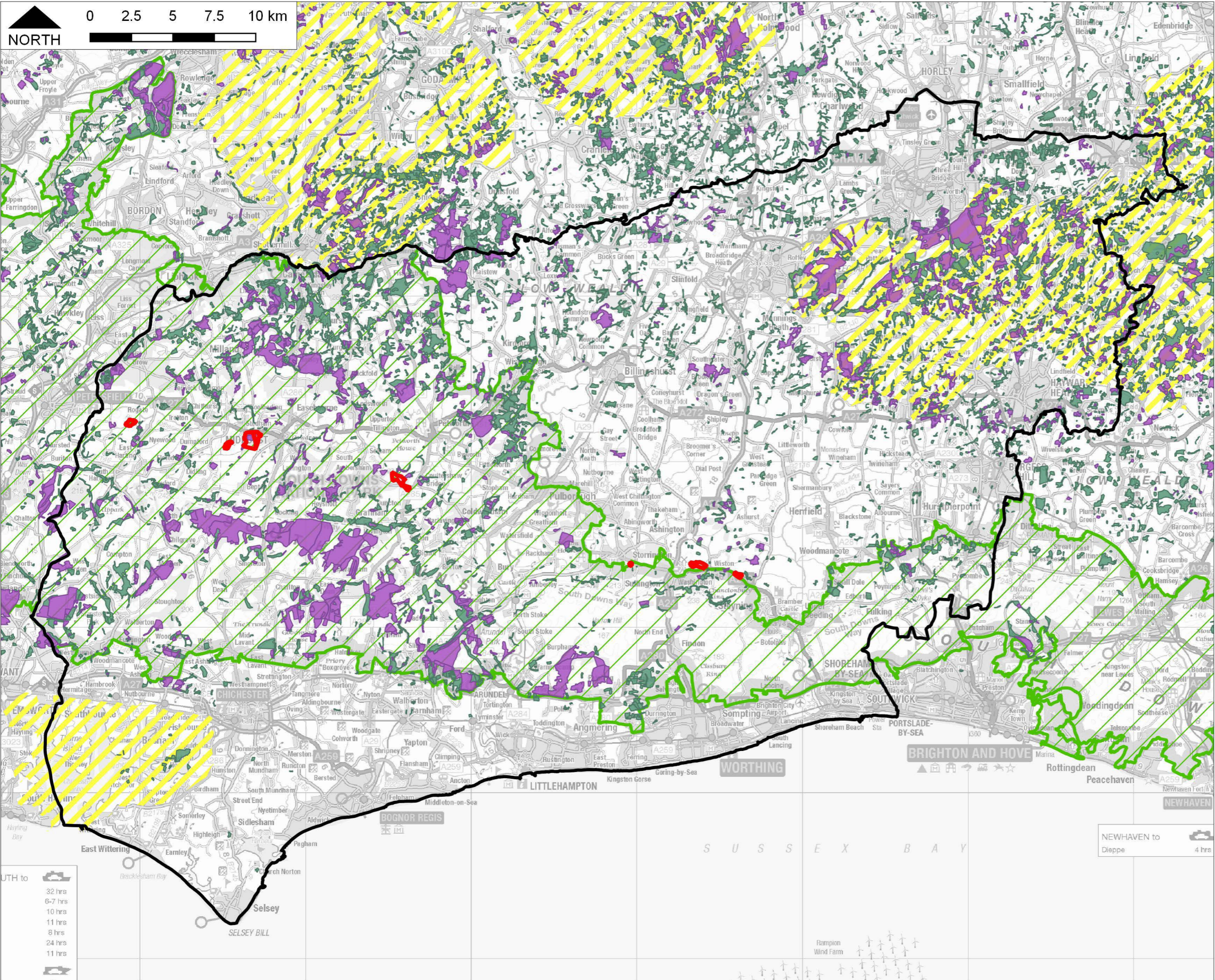
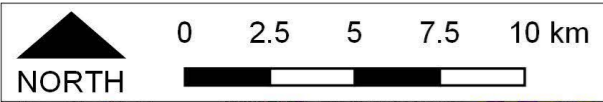
Key

- Site Boundaries
- West Sussex County Boundary

Landscape Character Areas

- LW1 North Western Valleys
- LW10 Eastern Low Weald
- LW11 Eastern Scarp Footslopes
- LW2 North Western Low Weald
- LW3 Upper Arun Valley
- LW5 Southern Low Weald
- LW9 Upper Adur Valley
- SC10 Lower Arun Valley
- SC11 Littlehampton & Worthing Fringes
- SC12 Angmering Upper Coastal Plain
- SC5 Southbourne Coastal Plain
- SC6 Ashlings Upper Coastal Plain
- SC7 Halnaker Upper Coastal Plain
- SC8 Fontwell Upper Coastal Plain
- SD1 Western Downs
- SD2 Downland Arun Valley
- SD3 Central Downs
- SD4 Angmering Park
- SD5 Downland Adur Valley
- SD6 Eastern Downs
- WG1 Western Scarp Footslopes
- WG2 Rother Farmlands
- WG3 Rother Valley
- WG4 North Western Ridges
- WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths
- WG6 Arun Wildbrooks
- WG7 Storrington Woods & Heaths
- WG8 Central Scarp Footslopes

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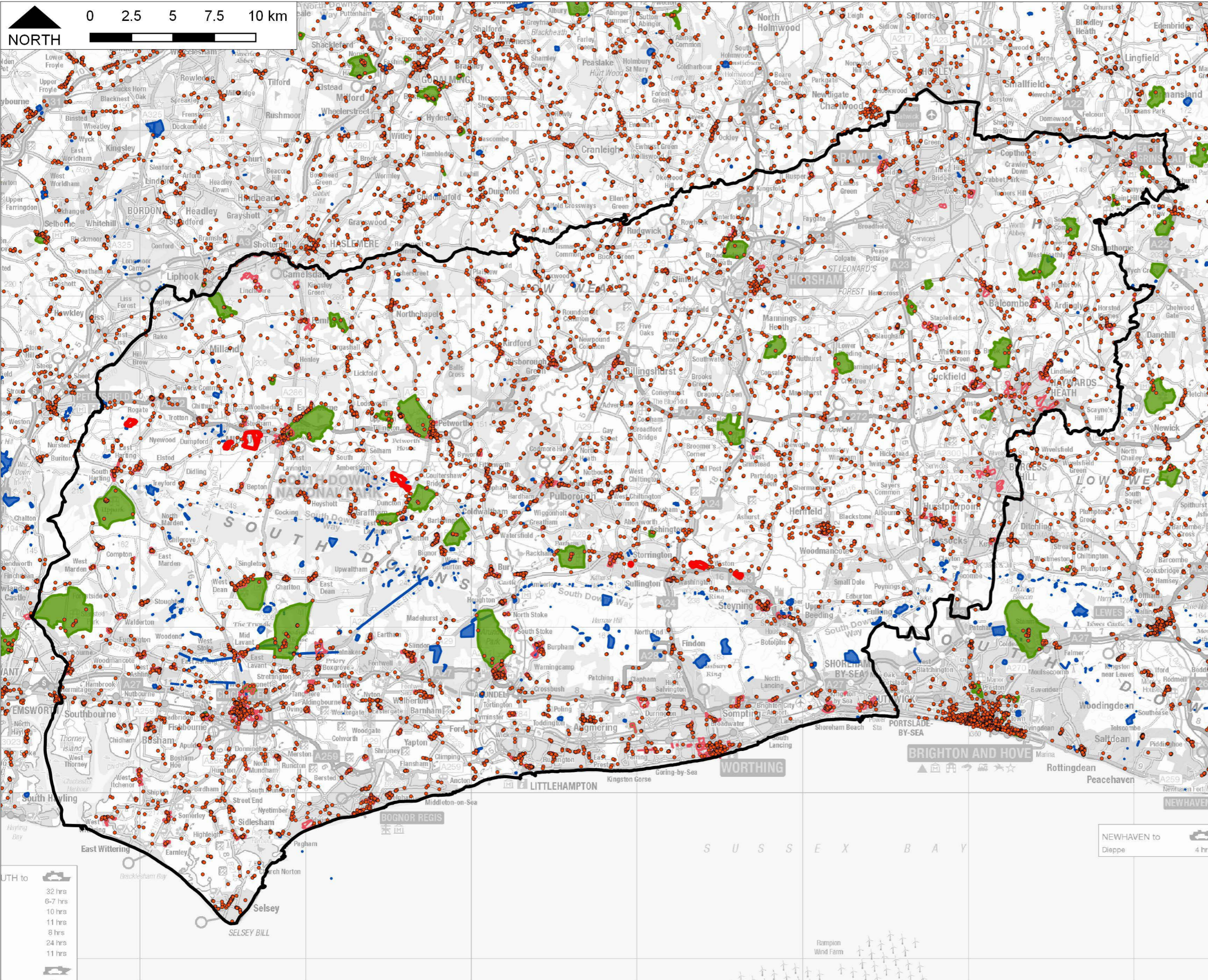


Landscape Sensitivity to Minerals
Figure 6: Landscape Designations

- Key**
- Site Boundaries
 - West Sussex County Boundary
 - South Downs National Park
 - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
 - Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
 - Ancient Replanted Woodland

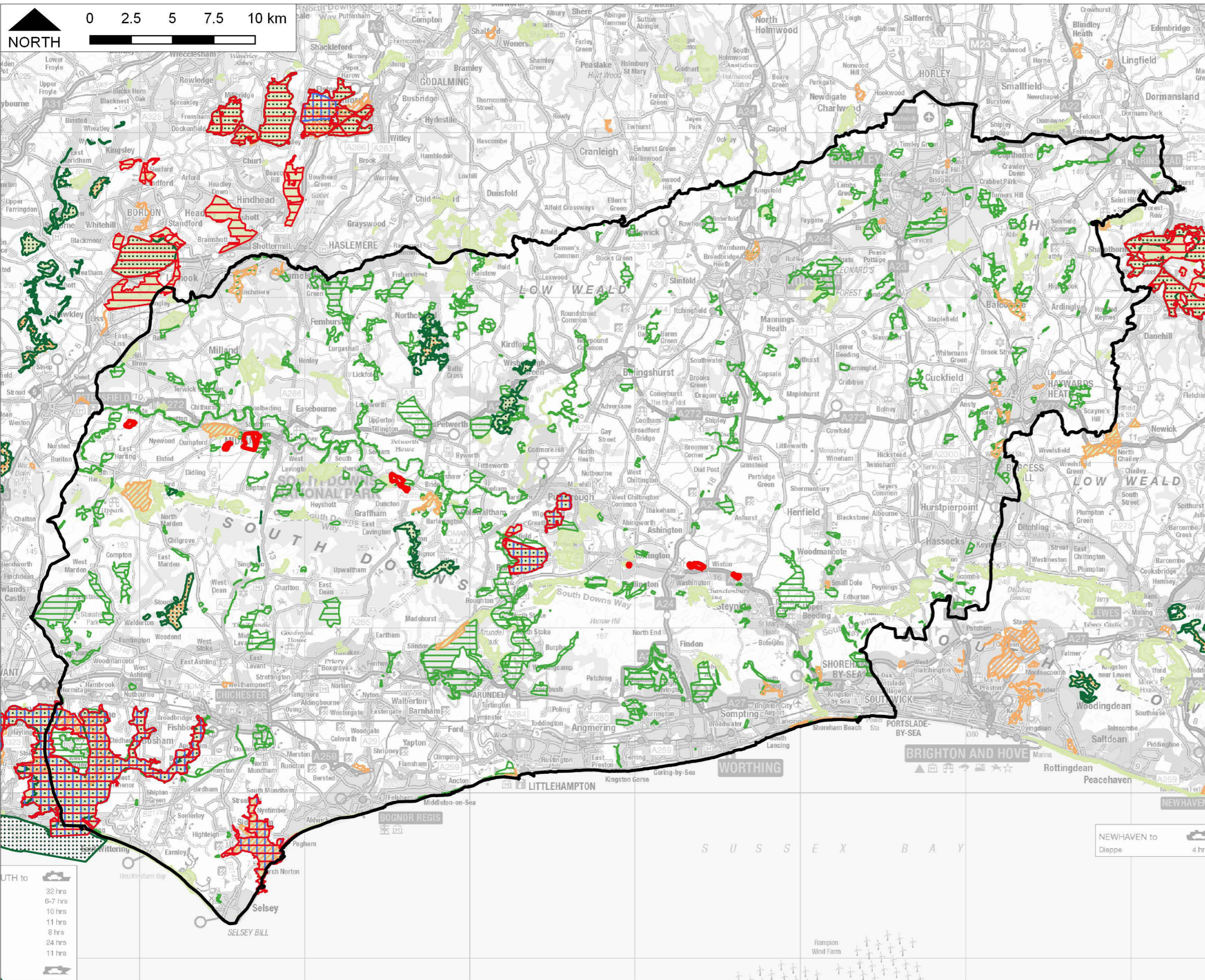


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Landscape Sensitivity to Minerals
Figure 7: Heritage Designations

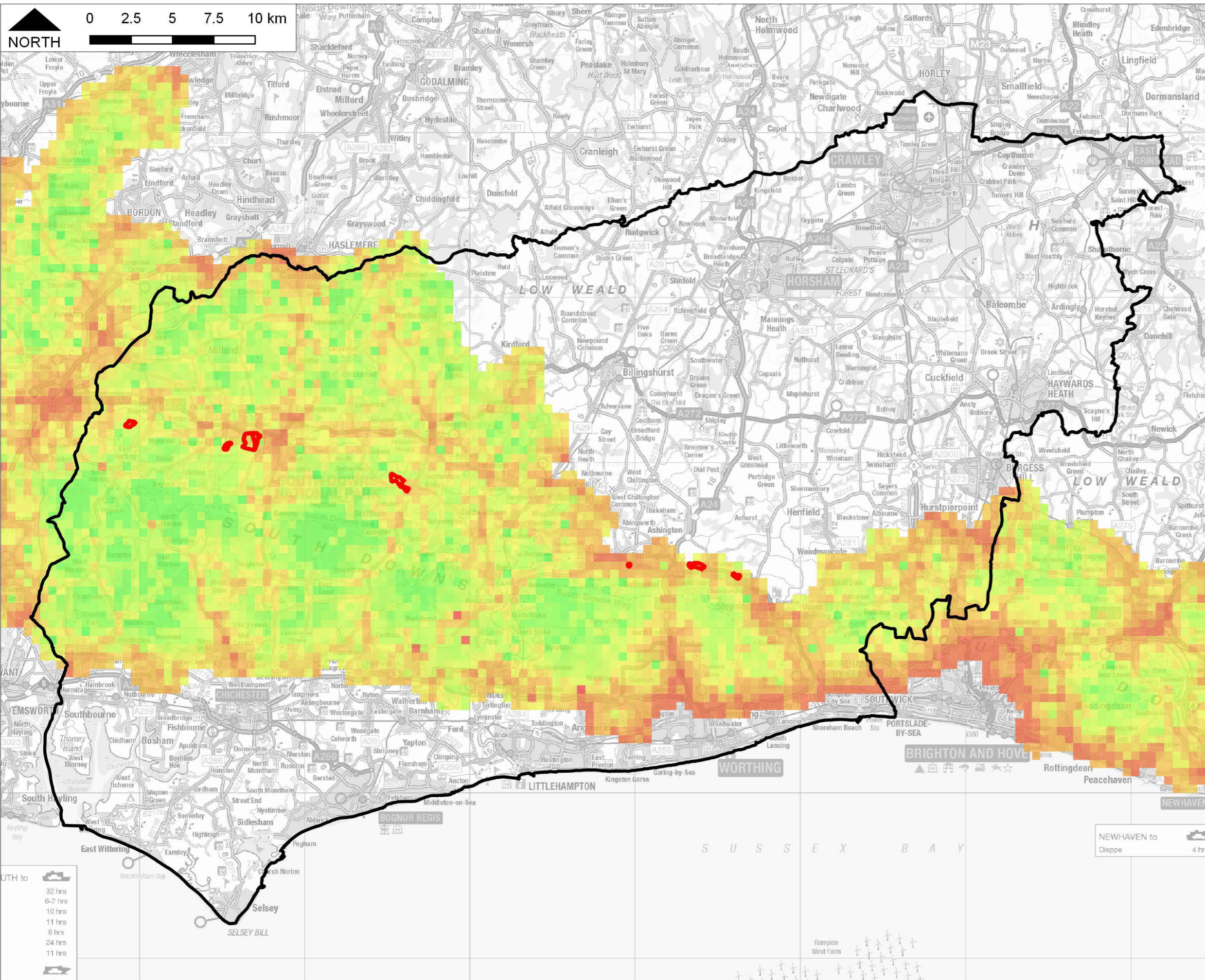
- Key**
- Site Boundaries
 - West Sussex County Boundary
 - Listed Buildings
 - Conservation Areas
 - Scheduled Monuments
 - Registered Parks and Gardens



Landscape Sensitivity to Minerals
Figure 8: Conservation Designations

- Key**
- Site Boundaries
 - West Sussex County Boundary
 - Special Protection Areas (SPA)
 - Ramsar sites
 - Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
 - National Nature Reserves (NNR)
 - Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
 - Local Wildlife Sites (aka SINCs)
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

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Landscape Sensitivity to Minerals
Figure 9: Tranquillity in the SDNP

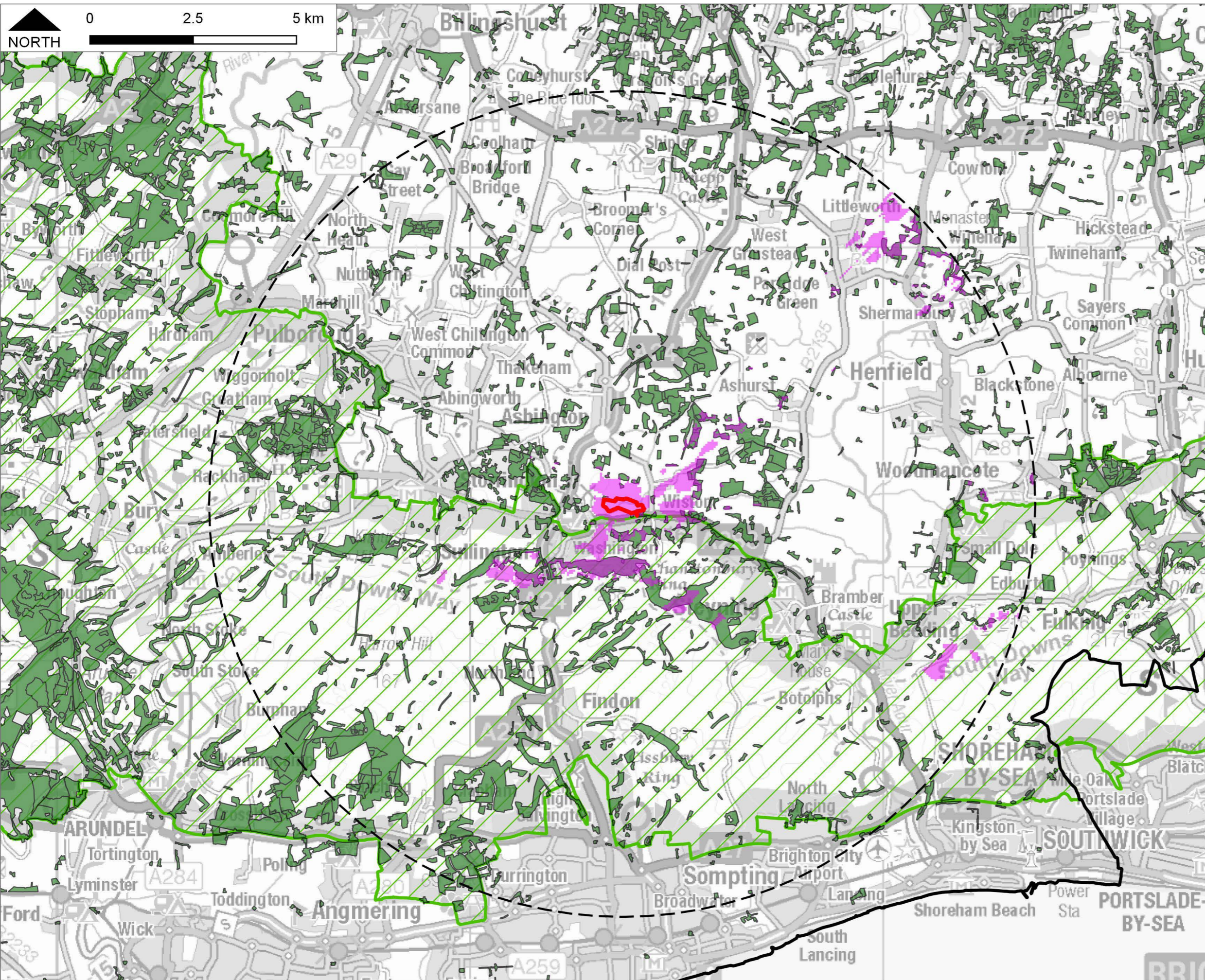
Key

- Site Boundaries
- West Sussex County Boundary

Tranquillity

- Most tranquil
- .
- .
- .
- Least tranquil

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Landscape Sensitivity to Minerals
Figure 11: ZTV for Buncton Manor Farm

Key

- Site Boundary
- West Sussex County Boundary
- 10km buffer around site
- Woodland
- Zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV)
- South Downs National Park

Notes:

This ZTV is calculated from a viewing height of 2m, a site height of 5m and to a bare ground terrain model derived from OS Terrain 50 height data.

Woodland has been factored into the ZTV using the National Forest Inventory Woodland England 2017 (NFIW) dataset.

The following categories from the NFIW were included at 15m height:

- Broadleaved;
- Coniferous;
- Mixed.

The following categories from the NFIW were included at 10m height:

- Young Trees.

APPENDIX 2: SITE SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENTS

SITE CH7B EAST OF WEST HEATH COMMON

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SITE CH7B EAST OF WEST HEATH COMMON

Site location and context

1. The site is located in the west of West Sussex approximately 2.6km to the east of Petersfield, 1.2km southwest of the village of Rogate and 600m to the northeast of the village of Nyewood. The site is approximately 1km to the south of the A272, which runs from Petersfield to Midhurst and beyond.
2. The site is in the middle of the South Downs National Park (with views out to the south). The site lies at the foot chalk escarpment of the South Downs (which lies to the south) in an area characterised by low ridges and vales with a predominantly secluded, tranquil landscape. The site is not currently accessible by road and there are trees and hedgerow trees forming the boundaries. The site comprises three fields, each with trees / hedgerow trees at their boundaries.

Site is likely to be available in 1-5 years. Approximate timescale anticipated for extraction is approx. 9 years. Restoration may be phased with working and will also follow completion of extraction.

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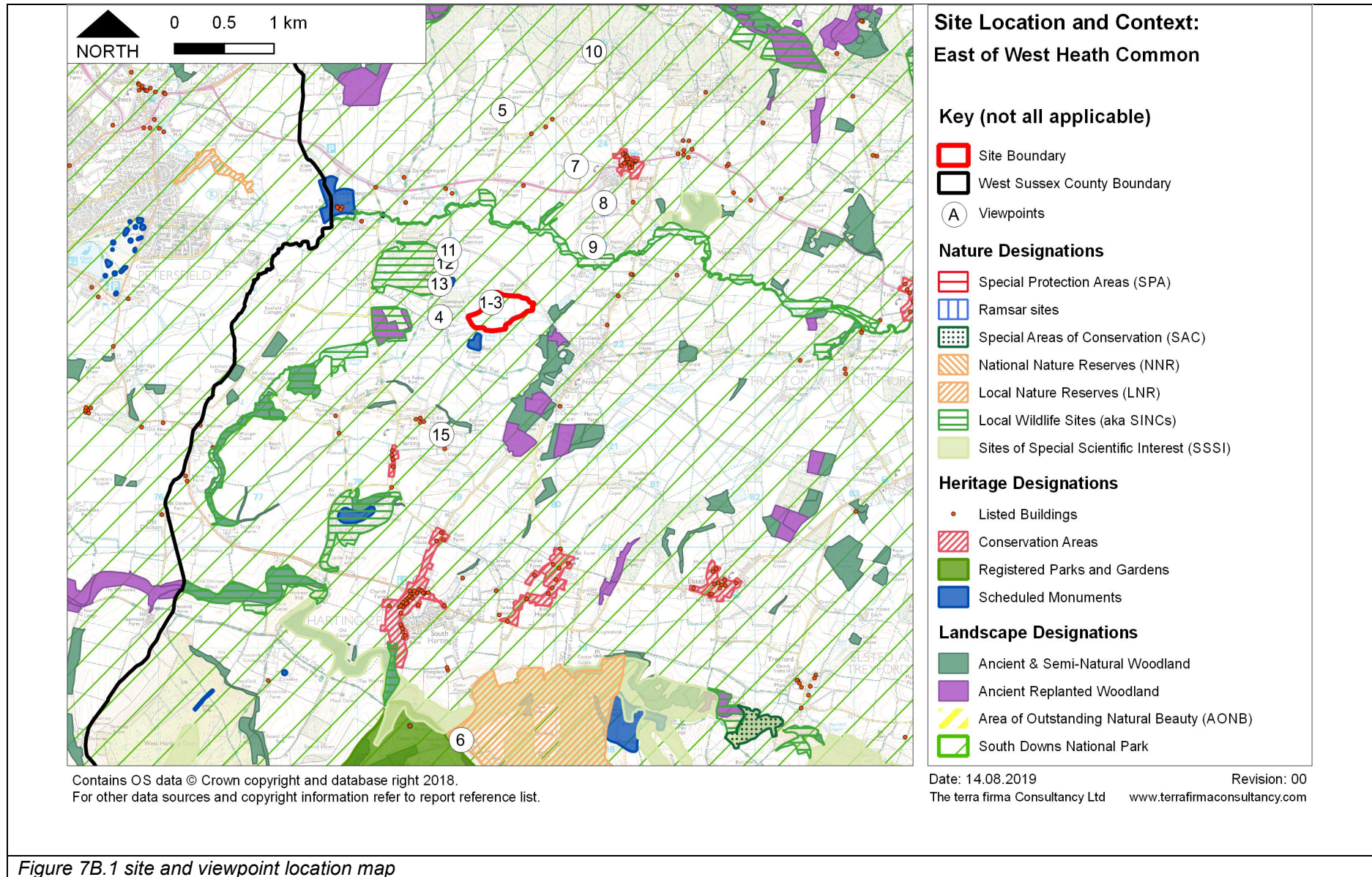


Figure 7B.1 site and viewpoint location map



Figure 7B.2 Panoramic photograph 1 taken from within the site looking south-east. The vegetation defines the boundary.



Figure 7B.3 Panoramic photograph 2 taken from within the site looking south towards the drain.



Figure 7B.4 Photograph 3 taken from within the site looking south-west at riparian woodland that abuts the boundary.



Figure 7B.5 Photograph 4 taken from track and Serpent Trail looking east. The existing quarry is visible to the left. The site lies behind the group of trees / woodland to the right and screened from view.



Figure 7B.6 Photograph 5 taken from lane due north of the site. The site lies within existing woodland. Straight ahead the South Downs ridgeline with Landmark L12 and SDNP viewpoint 36 Harting Down forms the skyline.



Figure 7B.7 Photograph 6 taken from Landmark L12 and SDNP viewpoint 36 Harting Down looking north towards the site. The existing quarry is in the distance (beyond large yellow crop fields). The site is to the right of this.



Figure 7B.8 Photograph 7 taken from rural lane, north of the A272. The site is screened by tree cover within the valley. The pylon (to the left of Hill Ash Farm in the centre of photograph) a useful orientation point. It marks the site position and stands at its southern edge.



Figure 7B.9 Photograph 8 taken from footpath out of Rogate.



Figure 7B.10 Photograph 9 taken from high point on Souter's Copse; footpath out of Rogate. The site lies directly behind the woodland that stands to the rear of fawn colour field behind bright green field.



Figure 7B.11 Photograph 10 taken from Lane and footpath exit at Redhill Copse in the north looking south-west towards the site.



Figure 7B.12 Photograph 11 taken from the Serpent Trail arriving from the north looking south-east at the site. Uninterrupted views extend across the valley floor to the South Downs ridgeline and SDNP viewpoint 37 Pen Hill.



Figure 7B.13 Photograph 12 taken from the Serpent Trail arriving from the north looking south-east at the site. The site is obscured by the Round barrow Scheduled Monument and woodland behind.



Figure 7B.14 Photograph 13 taken from the Serpent Trail arriving from the north looking south-east at the site. The site is obscured by the Round barrow Scheduled Monument.



Figure 7B.15 Photograph 14 taken from the Serpent Trail arriving from the north looking south-east. The mature oak tree is one of 3 standalone trees within the field (the site).



Figure 7B.15 Photograph 15 taken from footpath to east of Hill Ash farm, West Harting. The site is in line, behind the pole and pylon. Both the existing quarry and proposed site are screened by intervening, mature tree cover.

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Characterisation of the site

3. Relevant key characteristics, ecosystem services, forces for change and guidelines for the National Character Areas are described in the introductory section as they apply to all the 9 Sites. Details of WSCC and SDNPA landscape character assessments are set out below.

National Character Area Wealden Greensand (see introduction)

Key characteristics from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG1 Western Scarp Footslopes
 - Rolling relief of low ridges and vales with dramatic views of the chalk escarpment to the south.
 - Many winterbourne streams flowing northwards from the base of the chalk escarpment.
 - Picturesque, traditional spring line villages with stone churches.
 - Patchwork of farmland and woodland interlaced with a varied pattern of hedgerows.
 - Narrow winding lanes, often sunken and enclosed by hedge banks, link the settlements.
 - Managed parkland and estate landscapes.
 - Larger areas of woodland over the clay and numerous streams define the field boundaries.
 - The densities of copses, streamside woodlands and hedgerow trees tend to increase towards the edges of settlements.
 - Settlements are small and usually clustered with a strong historic character and few suburban influences.
 - The influence of the large country houses and estates is strong in some settlements.
 - Varied building materials include flint, clunch (both chalk and white sandstone), brick, local sandstone and half-timber.
 - Villages, scattered farms and designed parklands provide a wealth of detail and interest.

South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden farmland and heath mosaic combined with LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic
 - Slightly elevated, flat topped plateau formed from sandstones of the Folkestone formation (reaching 60m at West Heath)
 - Well-drained sandy soils support a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
 - Large areas of modern woodland plantations covering areas of former commonland and earlier blocks of ancient (probably medieval) woodland.

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- An intimate mix of semi-natural habitats and agriculture creating valuable foraging and over-wintering sites for a range of bird species.
 - Numerous Bronze Age barrow cemeteries are indicative of a prehistoric ritual landscape.
 - Roman roads and a posting station at Hardham reinforce the historic function of the area as a landscape to traverse rather than settle.
 - Settlement is relatively late, comprising isolated farmsteads of 18th-19th century origin set within areas of recent enclosure, and 'squatter' settlement on the edges of the common land.
 - Includes the planned medieval market town of Midhurst, constructed from local sandstones.
 - Remnant unenclosed commons are of cultural and historic significance and provide open access for recreation.
 - Large number of sand pits indicating the economic value of the sands of the Folkestone Beds.
 - The plateau becomes fragmented to the west with outliers such as West Heath and Heath Common standing as 'islands' amongst the lower lying farmland
- LCT M: Sandy Arable Farmland combined with LCA M1 North Rother Valley Sandy Arable Farmland
 - Gently undulating lowland sandstone landscape with well-drained, easily eroded sandy soils. The Sandgate Beds create a gently rolling relief with well-drained, easily eroded sandy soils which are almost exclusively used for arable farmland.
 - A simple, open arable landscape divided into large scale geometric fields representing 20th century re-organisation of the landscape. Fields are bounded by denuded hedgerows.
 - The large open arable fields, denuded hedgerow boundaries and lack of woodland create an open character with long views.
 - Mature standard oaks and ancient woodland remnants are key ecological and visual features in this predominantly arable landscape.
 - Contains the course of the River Rother which flows east-west along a narrow floodplain, within a gently meandering course, with historic stone crossing points. The river is of significant ecological interest, supporting occasional linear areas of wet woodland, marsh and wet meadow.
 - Narrow eroded sunken lanes with sandy verges, bordered by bracken-clad hedgebanks, provide a sense of enclosure.
 - Small nucleated sandstone villages, usually of mid-late Saxon origin, comprising nucleated groups of former farmsteads situated around the church and manor house.
 - Typical settlement form comprises a large number of small nucleated villages, usually of mid-late Saxon origin throughout the character area – as at Rogate, Lodsworth and Petworth, with a scatter of isolated farms.
 - The relatively low-lying nature of the landscape makes it a convenient route for road infrastructure.

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Land management guidelines from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG1 Western Scarp Footslopes:
 - Conserve the largely secluded, tranquil character of the area.
 - Conserve and manage distinctive habitats including coppice woodlands, streamside woodlands, flower-rich grasslands, ponds and small marshes.
 - Restore linear woodland and hedgerows across arable farmland to link with existing woodlands.
 - Encourage the planting of tree groups around farm buildings and single oak trees in arable fields.
 - Plan for long-term woodland regeneration and appropriate management of existing woodlands.
 - Conserve, strengthen and manage existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees, especially around irregular fields, and replant hedgerows where they have been lost.
 - Conserve tracks and lanes and manage their margins to minimise erosion and maximise nature conservation interest.
 - Maintain the historic character of the area including small scale field patterns, historic parkland and sunken lanes.
 - Promote the creation of arable field margins and corners including along stream edges.
 - Encourage restoration of arable farming to pasture in areas with former parkland trees.
 - Promote the use of current Stewardship schemes or equivalent.
 - Monitor the cumulative effect of small-scale developments on landscape character. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
 - Seek to reduce the extent, intensity and impact of horse grazing.
 - Conserve and enhance the character and setting of small villages and farmsteads.
 - Ensure new development is well integrated into the wider landscape, using small woodland and new hedgerow planting as appropriate.
 - Encourage the reduction in fertilizer use on agricultural land.
 - Pay particular attention to the siting of telecommunication masts.

South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden farmland and heath mosaic combined with LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic
 - Maintain the surviving areas of unenclosed common at Iping, Trotton, Heyshott, and Lavington, and consider opportunities for creating further unenclosed commons within the area.
 - Manage existing heathland to prevent excessive encroachment of scrub and assess potential for creating new, interconnected heathlands.
 - Conserve the extensive area of surviving early enclosures around Pythingdean and Pallingham.
 - Conserve Burton mill pond and its 18th century mill and their landscape setting. Ensure that the impressive views of South Downs across the pond are maintained.
 - Manage heathland sites at Ambersham Common, Burton Park, Coates Castle, Iping Common, Trotton Common and Lavington Common, and aim to link these sites through new heathland creation.

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- Conserve the landscape features of the small parks at Coates Castle and Nyewood House, and the northern part of Burton Park, to ensure these parks continue to provide a sense of historic continuity.
 - Conserve the mansio (posting station) at Hardham and stretch of Roman road as features in the landscape.
 - Ensure that any further built development is integrated into its landscape context using native vegetation.
 - Conserve the medieval assarts on the edge of Coldwaltham.
 - Ensure any change in this area takes account of views from the Greensand hills to the north and the Chalk scarp to the south.
- LCT M: Sandy Arable Farmland combined with LCA M1 North Rother Valley Sandy Arable Farmland
 - Conserve and manage the network of hedgerows that give the landscape its structure - consider re-planting hedgerows that have been previously removed
 - Encourage regeneration of hedgerow oak trees. Also consider new tree planting in hedgerows denuded of trees.
 - Protect edges of woodland from damage from farm machinery and consider opportunities to extend and link broadleaved woodland.
 - Encourage and support the development of soil management plans to reduce soil erosion.
 - Buffer strips alongside watercourses and hedgerows should be a priority to enhance biodiversity and create a continuous network of wildlife corridors.
 - Integrate existing and new built development into the rural landscape, using new planting to enhance the visual and ecological character diversity of the landscape.

Site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area likely to be affected by extraction activities)

Landscape character criteria

Physical / natural factors

4. The site extends across a very gently undulating landform. Underlying the Grade 3 and 4 agricultural land is Folkestone Sand. The site is pasture and is bound by hedgerows and trees on all sides, with an area of woodland bordering to the northwest (Downpark Common) and to the northeast (Chases Copse) and a winding stream and drain system bounds the area to the south. The surrounding area is characterised by intricate patchworks of field patterns, interspersed with woodland and copses which in parts gives a secluded, tranquil landscape. To the north the area is more characteristic of the field pattern associated with LCA M1 North Rother Valley Sandy Arable Farmland. The River Rother lies approximately 820m to the north from the centre of the site.

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5. Site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area) likely to be affected by extraction activities include:

- Slightly elevated, flat topped plateau formed from sandstones of the Folkestone formation
- Well-drained sandy soils supporting heathland habitats (acid grassland, bracken, gorse).
- Agriculture field creating valuable foraging and over-wintering site for a range of bird species.
- Scheduled Monument, Two bowl barrows 380m south of Wenham Cottage: part of West Heath Common round barrow cemetery. Finds associated with prehistoric ritual landscape may extend further east.
- Scheduled Monument, Medieval moated site in Parlour Copse along southern boundary
- Mature hedgerow oaks, hedgerows, woody scrub,
- Drains around site perimeter
- Copses, streamside riparian woodlands and hedgerow trees associated with Downpark Common and Chases Copse around field perimeter.

May be affected by noise and visual intrusion (alignment of conveyor or pipework conveying wet sand to main quarry):

- Serpent Trail (footpath) existing Wenham Edge heading south across West Heath Common.

May be affected by an increase in haulage movements:

- Narrow eroded sunken lanes with sandy verges, bordered by bracken-clad hedgebanks, provide a sense of enclosure.
- Harting Road and Durford Bridge (Scheduled Monument) current access route to/from Cemex to A272
- Residential properties off Harting Road

Experiential

6. The site is not currently accessible to members of the public; detail is given in relation to public perception gained from public rights of way crossing the wider area.
7. The site has an enclosed character, with views screened by trees and woodland surrounding it. Large electricity pylons to the south are a stark contrast with the intimate character of the landscape. The site has a rural quality; the presence of a disused railway line to the north lined with mature vegetation, woodlands and current agricultural practice (meadow) viewed from Serpents Trail.
8. CPRE data indicates that the site is within an area where tranquillity is rated slightly above medium⁴⁹ and is within an area defined as 'disturbed by noise', bordering an 'undisturbed' area⁵⁰. The area is generally unlit however mineral extraction activities and degraded farm buildings and associated paraphernalia (in the west) have reduces the perceived tranquillity. Figure 9 Tranquillity in the SDNP confirms this.
9. There is some variation in colour and texture across the site, with hedgerows and trees / hedgerows around the perimeter of the site.

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Visual criteria

Visibility and key views

10. The ZTV indicates potential visibility from the surrounding area, with some visibility from the surrounding area (within 2.5km) to the north and south. Beyond 2.5km, potential visibility to the site is much reduced, only being available from ridge of high ground to the south running in an east-west direction and ridge of high ground to the north running in a similar east-west direction. In all directions, trees in the short and longer distance comprise the skylines, with the skyline to the south being punctuated by large electricity pylons. Seen from the surrounding roads and public rights of way from the south, east and north the actual visibility of the site is restricted by the extensive, surrounding woodland cover.
11. Looking out from within the site there is a degree of inter-visibility with properties on high ground to the south above the tree line. Clear, uninterrupted views (of woodland that contains the site) from properties: Hill Ash Farm and Quebec, and properties in West Harting that sit on the ridgeline facing north.
12. Views from surrounding Representative Viewpoints identified in the South Downs National Park: View Characterisation and Analysis Study (2015) have been appraised. The site is currently indiscernible amongst tree cover in views from the South Downs Way, though the contrasting colour of sand could be visible if the site were quarried from Landmark L12 and SDNP viewpoint 36 Harting Down. With appropriate restoration it is likely to become less visible as the surrounding woodland cover matures. The remaining SDNP viewpoints are likely to remain unaffected.
13. Potential intervisibility between the site and Hill Ash Farm and residential properties on high ground within West Harting approx. 1.4km to the north-east of the site. At close range the site is visible from Down Park Farm Cottages, adjacent to the site to the west, although the extent is limited by trees, similar is found along the Serpent Trail - long distance footpath.

Landscape value criteria

Landscape designations

14. The site is located centrally within the SDNPA.

Condition, typicality and rarity

15. The site reflects key characteristics highlighted in the LCA for the Western Scarp Footslopes character area, including a patchwork of farmland and woodland interlaced with a varied pattern of hedgerows and picturesque, traditional spring line villages with stone churches. The site also contains several key characteristics of the LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic and blends with LCA M1 North Rother Valley Sandy Arable Farmland outlined in SDILCA.
16. The Historic Landscape Character Assessment (HLC) indicates the site lies within 'Fieldsapes'. Modern field amalgamation AD1845-present bordered by areas characterised as 'woodland' to the northeast and northwest. The surrounding landscape however is largely medieval/post medieval in layout according to the HLC.

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Cultural heritage and settings

17. There are two Scheduled Monuments located close to the site, with an additional two within the vicinity with potential to be affected by extraction operations, they comprise of the The 'Medieval Moated site' is located to the south approximately 50m from the site boundary; 'Two Bowl Barrows' is located approximately 300m to the northwest; Durford Bridge and 'Durford Abbey' (and associated listed buildings) located approximately 1.5km to the northwest.
18. The Medieval Moated site is wooded, whilst the other two monuments are currently not visible from the site due to screening provided by woodland. However, working this site for mineral extraction may negatively affect these monuments as a result of ground disturbance due to operational tracks and placement of conveyer / pipework infrastructure.
19. West Harting Conservation Area is located approximately 1.5km to the southwest of the site whilst the Rogate Conservation Area is just over 1.5km to the northeast of the site (both Conservation Areas contain a number of listed buildings). The proposed extraction site is not visible from West Harting Conservation Area (as demonstrated by the ZTV) whilst tree cover to the north is likely to screen this site from views from Rogate.
20. There are several listed buildings located in close proximity (within 2km to the north, east and south of the site). The closest is Sandhill House located approximately 0.8km to the east. It is likely that the site is screened from this location by woodland bordering the site to the east. It should be noted that the large electricity pylons already result in negative visual effects on this listed building.

Natural heritage

21. There are 3 SNCIs located near the site, one immediately to the north, following the course of the River Rother (approximately 0.7km from the site), one to the east (west Heath Common), and one located to the southwest, the latter two of which are approximately 0.5km from the boundary. There is a designated SSSI (Fyning Moor) located approximately 1.5km to the northeast of the site. Rotherlands, a LNR is located approximately 2.5km to the northwest. There are several ancient woodland sites near to the site (within 2km), with the closest located to the east approximately 200m away.

Recreation

22. There are no Public Rights of Way within the site. A network of linked bridleways and the Serpent Trail long distance footpath (Harting 861), pass the site to the west and south west.

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Sensitivity assessment

| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landform | <i>Simple, predominantly flat</i> | <i>Simple, predominantly flat to undulating</i> | <i>Occasional variety but lacking strong complexity</i> | <i>Complex with topographical variety</i> | <i>Very complex with strong topographical variety</i> |
| | Gently undulating. | | | | |
| Landcover / pattern | <i>Simple, large-scale pattern (large conifer plantations, arable fields), and/or regularly disturbed, fragmented landcover</i> | <i>Largely simple, some disturbance, largely fragmented landcover and landuse</i> | <i>Some variety, limited disturbance, a degree of consistency in pattern of landuse and landcover</i> | <i>Varied pattern with some intricacy, largely undisturbed and coherent landcover, some historic landuse pattern evident</i> | <i>Intricate, varied pattern, undisturbed consistent patterns of land cover or land use, historic field patterns</i> |
| | Pasture and arable farmland with irregular and intricate field pattern; network of trees and hedgerows within and bounding the site; winding stream at the southern boundary and ditches within; adjacent copses. | | | | |
| Scale | <i>Large scale, featureless</i> | <i>Medium to large scale</i> | <i>Medium to small scale with occasional human scale indicators</i> | <i>Small scale with human scale indicators</i> | <i>Very small scale, intricate with human scale indicators</i> |
| | Small to medium scale. | | | | |
| Enclosure | <i>Enclosed</i> | <i>Mostly enclosed, some open areas</i> | <i>Some enclosure</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> |
| | Relatively enclosed in character with a degree of screening provided by surrounding trees, hedgerows and copses | | | | |

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| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| Condition | <i>Low level of intactness with landscape elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Some intactness with some elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Generally intact with elements in reasonable state of repair</i> | <i>Intact and elements in good state of repair</i> | <i>High level of intactness and very good state of repair</i> |
| | Pasture in good condition; surrounded by riparian woodland, birch-oak wood trees and hedgerows which gives it a 'lush' character'. Grade 2 (very good quality) and 3 (good to moderate quality) agricultural land extends across most of the site. | | | | |
| Typicality and rarity | <i>No rare features or weak association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Few rare features or some association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Some rare features and attributes or largely corresponding to key characteristics</i> | <i>Rare features and attributes, strong correspondence with key qualities</i> | <i>Rare features of regional importance or representative of key characteristics and qualities</i> |
| | Largely representative of the LCA character; containing scheduled monuments. The site contains several key characteristics of the respective character area within the South Downs National Park. | | | | |
| Tranquillity (including noise and lighting) | <i>Not tranquil, much human activity, noise and light</i> | <i>Limited tranquillity</i> | <i>Some human activity reducing sense of tranquillity, some lighting</i> | <i>Relatively tranquil, no lighting</i> | <i>Tranquil, little human activity, noise or lighting</i> |
| | Relatively high level of tranquillity somewhat decreased by current sand excavation operations. | | | | |
| Remoteness | <i>Presence or proximity to human activity or modern development or industrial structures e.g. utility, infrastructure</i> | <i>Close to some visible signs of human activity and modern development</i> | <i>Some sense of distance and remoteness, human activity and modern development largely absent</i> | <i>Perception of remoteness, sense of distance from human influences</i> | <i>Strong sense of remoteness; physically remote or perception of being remote</i> |
| | Relatively strong sense remoteness, although this is affected by the presence of large electricity pylons and awareness of farmsteads. | | | | |

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| Ecosystem services | <i>No services apparent, systems degraded</i> | <i>Limited services apparent</i> | <i>Some services apparent</i> | <i>Clear benefit/s contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> | <i>Multiple benefits contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> |
|---|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| <p>Linked to wider river catchment with management and regulating water quality important, water integral to habitat function and biodiversity, a clear sense of place and history, tranquil, particularly the area's prehistoric associations, geology, common/heathland. Very sandy soils particularly sensitive and contribute to biodiversity and character. Regional footpath and public right of way network contribute to Special Qualities.</p> | | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| VISUAL CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Skylines | <i>No relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Limited relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Some relationship to skyline with some complexity and interruption</i> | <i>Relationship to prominent skylines that is largely simple or with some variety and interruption</i> | <i>Strong relationship to prominent, simple and undeveloped skylines</i> |
| | Skyline formed by trees (both in the short and longer distance); large electricity pylons disrupt skyline to the south. | | | | |
| Views and landmarks | <i>Contains no landmarks and is not a feature in local views</i> | <i>No or limited landmarks or limited significance in local views</i> | <i>Locally important landmarks or views</i> | <i>Some important landmarks, or significant views</i> | <i>Landscape includes important landmarks or is important in views across a wide area</i> |
| | The site does not contain distinctive landmarks and is not a feature in any significant views from the chalk escarpment to the south, however Scheduled monuments form localised landmarks adjacent to public right of way. | | | | |
| Intervisibility | <i>Self-contained, restricted intervisibility</i> | <i>Occasional views to adjacent landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility with some neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility and strong links to neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Extensively intervisible, part of wider landscape</i> |
| | Self-contained with restricted views to the south and north with trees/hedgerows provided effective screening; long distance visibility limited. A limited degree of intervisibility to/from surrounding network of public and long-distance path (Serpent Trail). Intervisibility between the site and intermediate ridge (West Harting) to the south. | | | | |
| Visual receptors | <i>Low number of viewers from properties and transport routes</i> | <i>Local transport routes, limited numbers of residents</i> | <i>Some visibility from main transport routes and a number of residents</i> | <i>Frequent properties and views from main transport routes</i> | <i>Higher visibility from main transport routes and large number of properties</i> |
| | Minimal receptors; residents / users of Down Park Farm; users of the Serpent Trail | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landscape designations | <i>No or limited intervisibility or relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Some intervisibility and relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Located in close proximity to a designated landscape with some intervisibility and relationship with it</i> | <i>Located within or in close proximity to a designated landscape, some significant intervisibility and association with the wider designated area</i> | <i>Located within a nationally or locally designated landscape with a strong association with the wider designated area</i> |
| | The site is within the South Downs National Park. | | | | |
| Natural heritage | <i>No landscape conservation designations</i> | <i>Limited extent of nature conservation areas and areas of ancient woodland</i> | <i>Some nature conservation designations</i> | <i>Nature conservation designations over a significant area</i> | <i>Statutory nature conservation designations over an extensive area</i> |
| | site not subject to nature conservation designation. Within the immediate surroundings SNCIs in close proximity and SSSI 1.5km to the northeast. Several ancient woodland sites within 2km, with the closest located to the east approximately 200m away. | | | | |
| Historic environment and settings and cultural influences | <i>No significant historic features</i> | <i>Historic features but not relating to landscape</i> | <i>Some historic features relate to landscape</i> | <i>Some prominent historic features</i> | <i>Historic features are prominent in the landscape</i> |
| | Scheduled monuments in close proximity but not on the site; Conservation Areas and listed buildings within 2km. Settings unlikely to be affected with limited visual connection. | | | | |
| Recreation | <i>Little or no recreational use</i> | <i>Low level informal or local recreational use</i> | <i>Locally significant recreational use or attraction</i> | <i>Well used for recreation, greater than local attraction</i> | <i>Important for recreation for locals and visitors</i> |
| | Series of linked bridleways and the Serpent Trail passes close to the west and southwest boundaries. An important contribution to Special Qualities | | | | |

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Overall sensitivity to extraction

Landscape character sensitivity: Medium

23. The site comprises low-lying pastoral and arable fields with the pylons passing to the south detracting slightly from an otherwise secluded and tranquil landscape. The site reflects key characteristics highlighted in the LCA for the Western Scarp Footslopes character area, including an intricate patchwork of farmland and woodland interlaced with a varied and historical pattern of hedgerows.
24. The landscape sensitivity is judged to be medium with several features on the site and immediate surroundings representative of and contribute to the wider character area key characteristics and the Special Qualities of the South Downs National Park.

Visual sensitivity: Low

25. There is some intervisibility with the chalk escarpment to the south, although this is generally very limited by the extensive, surrounding tree cover within the river valley. Views from the surrounding network of public footpaths into the site are limited by the surrounding vegetation of hedgerows and trees.

Landscape value: Medium High

26. The site is located within the South Downs National Park and contributes to the key characteristics and special qualities of the Mixed Farmland and Woodland Vale/Wealden Farmland and Heathland Mosaic character types.
27. Whilst it has limited intervisibility with the wider area (and limited direct recreational value), the potential effects of development on the tranquillity of the area would be noticeable.

Sensitivity to extraction:

28. Overall, the site is considered to have a **Medium sensitivity**, with the woodland at Chase Copse, the network of hedgerows and trees, streams and the setting of the Serpent Trail long distance path and scheduled monuments of greatest sensitivity.

Landscape capacity, including potential for net gain

29. The site has a secluded quality, is low lying and generally flat with views into the area restricted by existing vegetation. The intricacy of landscape pattern and elements reduces the capacity of the landscape to accommodate development of this nature without adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area.
30. Given the proximity of the existing extraction quarry to the northwest, there is potential for cumulative effects on the Special Qualities of the wider Wealden/ Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic and North Rother Valley Sandy Arable Farmland character area within the South Downs National Park. There are also sensitive features such as Scheduled Monuments to the south and North-west, and riparian / heathland habitats in the immediate vicinity.
31. Mineral workings in this location have the potential to adversely affect the fabric and settings of these features so mitigation would need to be planned and executed carefully. Access to the site is likely to require careful consideration, including potential impacts on views from the adjacent public right of way(s) and localised effects of traffic movement (erosion of verges, dust and noise) to the surrounding network of small lanes, tracks, bridge and residential properties off Harting Road

Conclusion

32. It is judged that the site has a **Medium sensitivity** that results in a **Moderate capacity** overall for accommodating mineral extraction. Sand quarries, streams and water bodies are a typical feature of this landscape's character, It is inevitable that a change from agriculture fields to permanent body of open water will have an effect on the special qualities of the SDNP, however due to the level of existing woodland this is a landscape that has the ability to absorb development of this nature.
33. There is a long-term potential for the enhancement and improvement of the habitat value, recreational value and the condition of landscape features in conjunction with the development of the site to provide an overall environmental net gain.

Recommendations for mitigation and landscape opportunities

34. The recommendation is to develop this site with appropriate mitigation measures and enhancements in place:
 - East of West Heath would require careful consideration of access issues and routing of existing PROW, together with detailed mitigation for views and intrusion.
 - Inclusion of temporary bunding of stripped topsoil (up to 2m height) around perimeter; utilising soil and seed bed as part of restoration proposals;
 - Retention of existing mature woodland around the field perimeter, the mature field oaks (except for one) and incorporation within restoration planting proposals.
 - Advanced planting to the northern entry point with an appropriate mix of native species, to add to the existing screening and manage views of the site interior seen from the Serpents Way;
 - Allow existing riparian woodland to extend and regenerate water edges;

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- Careful phasing of extraction linked to restoration planting around the perimeter. Opportunities for varying water depth for habitat gain;
- Careful siting of pipework or conveyor (for wet extraction),
- Careful siting of access track, avoiding surrounding areas of grassland, riparian woodland and copses. Ensure tree belts and hedgerows remain intact and enhanced by new planting where possible.
- Create and retain appropriate buffers around the scheduled monument (Moat) that lies beyond the southern boundary to guard against damage to the fabric of the earthwork;
- Create and retain appropriate buffers around the woodland, copses and tree belts abutting the site and link new planting with this, and to the existing network of hedgerows and mature trees, to create continuous, interconnected belts of trees and vegetation.
- Sensitive treatment of the setting of the footpaths, particularly the Serpent Trail, ensuring appropriate screening of views into areas of extraction.

Options for restoration after use and positive impact on ecosystem services

- Restoring parts of the site (along the northern edge) to support a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland. Appropriate options include expansion of riparian/ heathland woodland scrub linked to watercourses/ land drainage system to manage water table and option for developing areas of open water alongside the implementation of an appropriate management plan, to be agreed prior to consent;
- Returning the site to its existing profile and then restoring to a mix of heathland and open water linked to riparian woodland, scrub and wet meadow following extraction. Long term restoration should aim to maximise the habitat value of the site with a mosaic of habitats linked into the surrounding farmland and seek to improve the historic and landscape character by restoring and enhancing hedgerows and woodland structure.
- Opportunities should be taken to improve links with the surrounding woodland and copses, including Downpark Common and Chase Copse.

SITE CH8A MINSTED WEST

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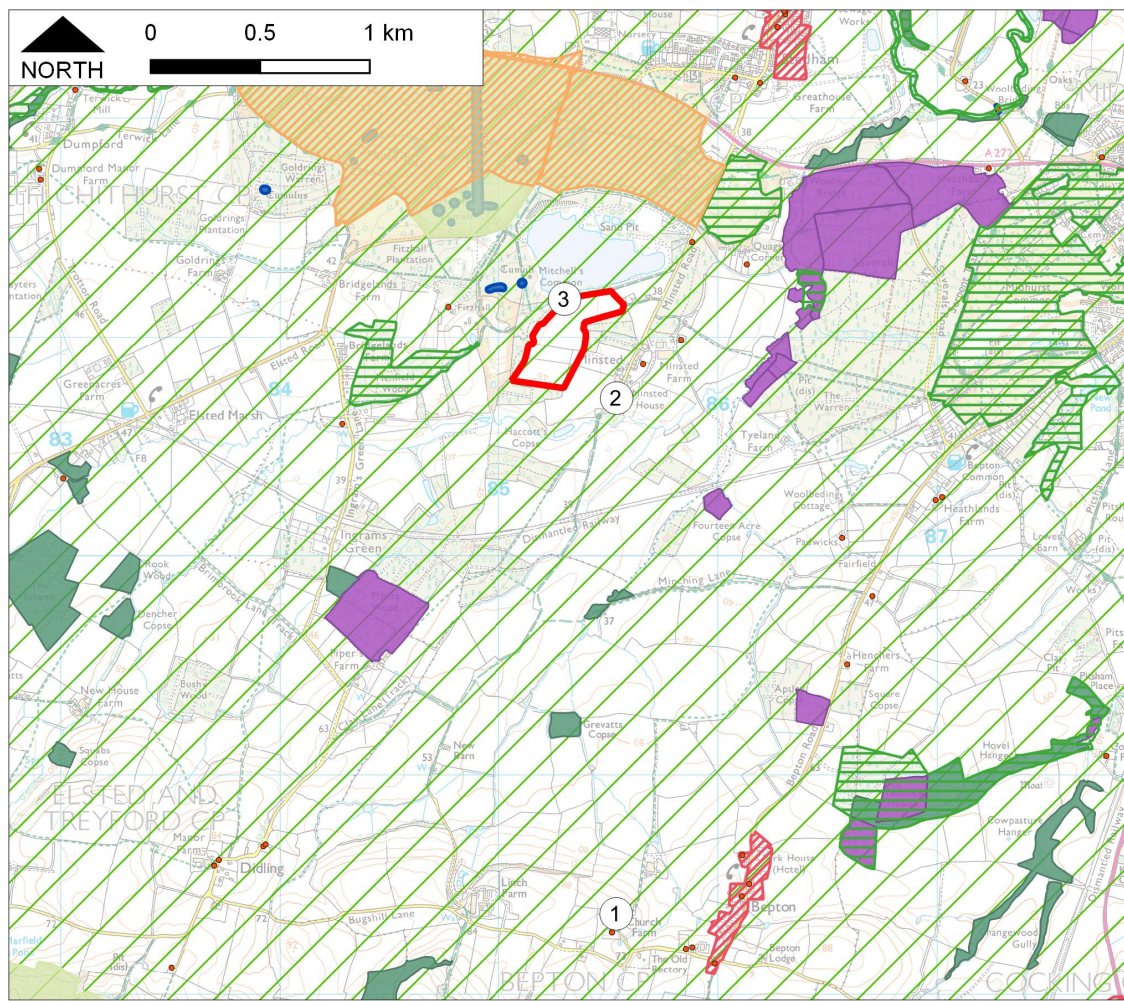
SITE CH8A MINSTED WEST

Site location and context

1. The site is located in the west of West Sussex, approximately 1.3km to the southwest of Midhurst, and 600m to the south of the A272, which runs from Petersfield to Midhurst.
2. The site is in the middle of the South Downs National Park (with clear views to the Downs to the south of the site), in a broader area characterised by dry open heathland and dense woodland, which forms an irregular patchy mosaic over very low, flat-topped ridges. Significant tracts of common land, once used for rough grazing and bracken or turf cutting, are also found in the area. The site itself is flat/gently sloping, under arable use, and is bounded to the north by the Minsted Sand Pit, and to the east, west and south by heathy woodland (mixture of coniferous and deciduous).

Approximate timescale anticipated for start and completion for this site: 10-15 years; available immediately

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**Site Location and Context:
Minsted West**

Key (not all applicable)

- Site Boundary
- West Sussex County Boundary
- A Viewpoints

Nature Designations

- Special Protection Areas (SPA)
- Ramsar sites
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
- Local Wildlife Sites (aka SINCs)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Heritage Designations

- Listed Buildings
- Conservation Areas
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monuments

Landscape Designations

- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
- Ancient Replanted Woodland
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- South Downs National Park

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Figure 8A.1 Site and viewpoint location map



Figure 8A.2 Site photograph 1 View north from public footpath near Bepton church, approximately 2km from site, which is not visible due to multiple layers of woodland.



Figure 8A.3 Site photograph 2 View north-west from public footpath and rural lane near Minsted House, approximately 200m from site. The southern part of the site is visible between and against a backdrop of woodland.



Figure 8A.4 Site photograph 3 from the bridleway on north-western edge of the site, with much of site openly visible and views to Bepton Down as a backdrop.

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Characterisation of the site

3. Relevant key characteristics, ecosystem services, forces for change and guidelines for the National Character Area: Wealden Greensand are described in the introductory section as they apply to all the 9 sites. Details of WSCC and SDNP landscape character assessments are set out below.

National Character Area Wealden Greensand (see introduction)

Key characteristics from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths:
 - Very low, flat topped sandstone ridges cut by small streams running south to north.
 - Large swathes of heather dominate the distinctive heaths of Iping
 - Commons, with smaller patches occurring elsewhere.
 - Extensive areas of pine and oak-birch woodland which border the heaths.
 - Rough-grazed agricultural land and horse paddocks.
 - A few straight roads and dead-end tracks.
 - Ancient earthworks and banks.
 - Isolated cottages and farms.
 - Views limited by tracts of dense woodland.
 - Sand quarries.
 - Ponds.
 - Extensive tracts of Common Land.

South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden farmland and heath mosaic; LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic
 - Slightly elevated, flat topped plateau formed from sandstones of the Folkestone formation.
 - Well-drained sandy soils support a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
 - Small to medium sized fields of rough grazed pasture and horse paddocks bounded by hedgerows with gorse and bracken and hedgerow oaks. Clusters of oak trees and Scots pine trees form visual accents.

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- Large areas of modern woodland plantations covering areas of former commonland and earlier blocks of ancient (probably medieval) woodland.
- An intimate mix of semi-natural habitats and agriculture creating valuable foraging and over-wintering sites for a range of bird species.
- Numerous Bronze Age barrow cemeteries are indicative of a prehistoric ritual landscape.
- Settlement is relatively late, comprising isolated farmsteads of 18th-19th century origin set within areas of recent enclosure, and 'squatter' settlement on the edges of the common land.
- Remnant unenclosed commons are of cultural and historic significance and provide open access for recreation.
- Large number of sand pits indicating the economic value of the sands of the Folkestone Beds.
- Views limited by dense woodland cover.

Land management guidelines from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths:
 - Conserve the largely undeveloped character of the landscape.
 - Conserve the historic character of the area, including features such as Bronze Age barrows, historic parklands and millponds and mills.
 - Conserve, manage and extend extensive wet and dry heathlands using sound heathland management techniques, taking account of prehistoric heathland landscape.
 - Create heathland links through restoration of old heathland and along public rights of way, woodland and forestry rides.
 - Encourage the restoration of sand quarries to a range of habitats including heathland, sand banks and open water, to increase their wildlife value.
 - Encourage appropriate screening of all quarry works by planting, carried out in advance of quarrying wherever possible.
 - Conserve and encourage sound management of the woodland cover, promoting coppice management where appropriate.
 - Manage degraded hedgerows and hedgerow trees, using the trees in particular to screen development.
 - Conserve and manage the old trackways and lanes with their associated banks and verge vegetation.
 - Carry out tree planting to screen unsightly buildings, linking in with existing vegetation patterns.
 - Avoid further introduction of suburban styles and materials into the landscape.
 - Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change.

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South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden farmland and heath mosaic; LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic
 - Maintain the surviving areas of unenclosed common [including] at Iping and consider opportunities for creating further unenclosed commons within the area.
 - Manage existing heathland to prevent excessive encroachment of scrub and assess potential for creating new, interconnected heathlands.
 - Manage heathland sites [including] at Iping Common and aim to link these sites through new heathland creation.
 - Ensure that any further built development is integrated into its landscape context using native vegetation.
 - Ensure any change in this area takes account of views from the Greensand hills to the north and the Chalk scarp to the south.

Site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area likely to be affected by extraction activities)

Landscape character criteria

Physical / natural factors

4. The site extends across a predominantly flat to slightly sloping landform, comprising arable land. Underlying this is Lower Greensand. The site is bound to the north by the Minsted Sand Pit, and to the east, west and south by healthy woodland (a mixture of deciduous and coniferous woodland); a small area to the southeast of the site is neighboured by an adjacent field currently under arable crop.
5. There is a small river approximately 400m to the south of the site and a small river located 900m to the east of the site. The River Rother is located approximately 1.5km to the north.

Experiential

6. The site has a semi-enclosed character, but with clear wide sweeping views available across the site to the neighbouring woodland and the South Downs beyond to the south. The shape of the site means that there is limited visibility across the site from the north-east corner and there is a greater feeling of enclosure here, and from the south of the site into this northeast corner.
7. The site has a rural, tranquil quality, with an absence of roads nearby. The Minsted Sand Pit to the north, and the plantation woodland in the broader area give the area and the site a 'managed' character, though at the time of the site visit the Minsted Sand Pit was not in operation.
8. CPRE data indicates that the site is within an area of medium tranquillity. The south of the site is within an area defined as 'undisturbed' and the north of the site is in an area defined as 'disturbed by noise'. At the time of the site visit the area was very peaceful and tranquil. The area is generally unlit except for domestic lighting associated with houses at Minsted Farm to the south-east of the site and 2 cottages on Andrews Lane to the north-east. Figure 9 Tranquillity confirms the same.

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9. There is some variation in colour and texture across the site, with greater shadow at the edges where there is vegetation and around the few trees which extend out from the eastern boundary.

Visual criteria

Visibility and key views

10. The ZTV indicates relatively limited potential visibility from the surrounding area to this site as a result of tree cover. Fieldwork indicates that views are further restricted in reality, with visibility restricted to the bridleway (BW907, 909) that runs along the northern boundary, and from Minsted House, and Minsted Road to the south-east. The skyline comprises both tree cover and the rising slopes of the chalk escarpment to the south. The site is currently indiscernible amongst tree cover in views from the South Downs Way, though the contrasting colour of sand could be visible if the site were quarried.

Landscape value criteria

Landscape designations

11. The site is located centrally within the SDNP.

Condition, typicality and rarity

12. The site and its immediate area reflect key characteristics highlighted in the above LCAs, including dense woodland, with intensive areas of pine and oak-birch woodland, sand quarries, rough-grazed agricultural land and horse paddocks. The Historic Landscape Character Assessment characterises this area as 'Assart Fieldscapes' Early Post medieval Cohesive Assart AD 1500-1599. The surrounding landscape contains significant areas of a similar aged layout.

Cultural heritage and settings

13. There are three listed buildings located to the southeast of the site (all within 0.5km). There is some intervisibility with the southern part of site and Minsted House Cottage and Minsted Farmhouse. There are two listed buildings to the northeast of the site one within 0.5km and one just over 0.5km distance from the site. Due to screening around the Minsted Sand Pit, the proposed mineral extraction site is not visible from these listed buildings. There is also a listed building located under 0.5km to the west of the site (no visibility due to tree cover). There are three Conservation Areas in close proximity to the site: Steadham 1.2km to the northeast; Iping approximately 1.7km to the north; and Trotton 1.8km to the northwest. There is no visibility from any of these Conservation Areas to the proposed site. There are a number of Scheduled Monuments to the northwest of the site. The closest is 'Bowl Barrow on Fitzhall Rough' which is located approximately 200m away.

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Natural heritage

14. There are a few SNCIs in the surrounding area: Henfield Wood approximately 200m to the west; Stedham Common within 0.5km to the northeast; and Severals Bog, approximately 0.8km to the east. There are a further two SNCIs 1.5km to the north of the site. Ipping Common (a designated SSSI and LNR) is located within 0.5km to the north of the site. There are a number of areas of ancient woodland scattered in the vicinity. The closest is located approximately 0.7km to the southeast.

Recreation

15. There are no Public Rights of Way within the site but there are several Bridleways located to the west, with a route that runs along the northern boundary of the site (BW907), with views across the site. There is also a footpath located approximately 150m to the east of the site (FP910) and a bridleway (BW3358) and Footpath (FP903) located 0.4km to the southeast.

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Sensitivity assessment

| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landform | <i>Simple, predominantly flat</i> | <i>Simple, predominantly flat to undulating</i> | <i>Occasional variety but lacking strong complexity</i> | <i>Complex with topographical variety</i> | <i>Very complex with strong topographical variety</i> |
| | Flat to slightly sloping | | | | |
| Landcover / pattern | <i>Simple, large-scale pattern (large conifer plantations, arable fields), and/or regularly disturbed, fragmented landcover</i> | <i>Largely simple, some disturbance, largely fragmented landcover and landuse</i> | <i>Some variety, limited disturbance, a degree of consistency in pattern of landuse and landcover</i> | <i>Varied pattern with some intricacy, largely undisturbed and coherent landcover, some historic landuse pattern evident</i> | <i>Intricate, varied pattern, undisturbed consistent patterns of land cover or land use, historic field patterns</i> |
| | Some complexity and intricacy with irregular shape and surrounding woodland; simple arable land use within | | | | |
| Scale | <i>Large scale, featureless</i> | <i>Medium to large scale</i> | <i>Medium to small scale with occasional human scale indicators</i> | <i>Small scale with human scale indicators</i> | <i>Very small scale, intricate with human scale indicators</i> |
| | Medium scale | | | | |
| Enclosure | <i>Enclosed</i> | <i>Mostly enclosed, some open areas</i> | <i>Some enclosure</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> |
| | Partly enclosed in north, open to south-east | | | | |

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| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| Condition | <i>Low level of intactness with landscape elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Some intactness with some elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Generally intact with elements in reasonable state of repair</i> | <i>Intact and elements in good state of repair</i> | <i>High level of intactness and very good state of repair</i> |
| | Intensively managed farmland. Predominately arable fields with the structure and condition of hedgerows and trees variable across the site. | | | | |
| Typicality and rarity | <i>No rare features or weak association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Few rare features or some association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Some rare features and attributes or largely corresponding to key characteristics</i> | <i>Rare features and attributes, strong correspondence with key qualities</i> | <i>Rare features of regional importance or representative of key characteristics and qualities</i> |
| | Somewhat typical of wider LCA, though the site itself less so than its immediate setting | | | | |
| Tranquillity (including noise and lighting) | <i>Not tranquil, much human activity, noise and light</i> | <i>Limited tranquillity</i> | <i>Some human activity reducing sense of tranquillity, some lighting</i> | <i>Relatively tranquil, no lighting</i> | <i>Tranquil, little human activity, noise or lighting</i> |
| | Generally tranquil and dark, some nearby domestic lighting; little affect from adjacent quarry, as it is well screened, though if machinery were operational it could be audible | | | | |
| Remoteness | <i>Presence or proximity to human activity or modern development or industrial structures e.g. utility, infrastructure</i> | <i>Close to some visible signs of human activity and modern development</i> | <i>Some sense of distance and remoteness, human activity and modern development largely absent</i> | <i>Perception of remoteness, sense of distance from human influences</i> | <i>Strong sense of remoteness; physically remote or perception of being remote</i> |
| | No main roads in close proximity to site which gives it a remote character. This is reduced by presence of Minsted Sand Pit. | | | | |
| Ecosystem services | <i>No services apparent, systems degraded</i> | <i>Limited services apparent</i> | <i>Some services apparent</i> | <i>Clear benefit/s contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> | <i>Multiple benefits contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> |
| | Food provision through production of arable crops, within Drinking Water Safeguard Zone, some sense of place and history, tranquil, adjacent footpath | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | | | | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|----------------------|--|--|---|--|--|
| VISUAL CRITERIA | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Skylines | <i>No relationship to skyline</i> | | <i>Limited relationship to skyline</i> | | <i>Some relationship to skyline with some complexity and interruption</i> | | <i>Relationship to prominent skylines that is largely simple or with some variety and interruption</i> | | <i>Strong relationship to prominent, simple and undeveloped skylines</i> | | |
| | The site does not form important skyline which is formed by backdrop of woodland and South Downs | | | | | | | | | | |
| Views and landmarks | <i>Contains no landmarks and is not a feature in local views</i> | | <i>No or limited landmarks or limited significance in local views</i> | | <i>Locally important landmarks or views</i> | | <i>Some important landmarks, or significant views</i> | | <i>Landscape includes important landmarks or is important in views across a wide area</i> | | |
| | Contains no distinctive landmarks and is not a feature in any significant views. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Intervisibility | <i>Self-contained, restricted intervisibility</i> | | <i>Occasional views to adjacent landscapes</i> | | <i>Intervisibility with some neighbouring landscapes</i> | | <i>Intervisibility and strong links to neighbouring landscapes</i> | | <i>Extensively intervisible, part of wider landscape</i> | | |
| | Views to South Downs with possible views back to site, views from adjacent bridleway and nearby properties | | | | | | | | | | |
| Visual receptors | <i>Low number of viewers from properties and transport routes</i> | | <i>Local transport routes, limited numbers of residents</i> | | <i>Some visibility from main transport routes and a number of residents</i> | | <i>Frequent properties and views from main transport routes</i> | | <i>Higher visibility from main transport routes and large number of properties</i> | | |
| | Sensitive view receptors on bridleway and including residents of a small number of houses, potentially from South Downs | | | | | | | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landscape designations | <i>No or limited intervisibility or relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Some intervisibility and relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Located in close proximity to a designated landscape with some intervisibility and relationship with it</i> | <i>Located within or in close proximity to a designated landscape, some significant intervisibility and association with the wider designated area</i> | <i>Located within a nationally or locally designated landscape with a strong association with the wider designated area</i> |
| | The site is within the SDNP | | | | |
| Natural heritage | <i>No landscape conservation designations</i> | <i>Limited extent of nature conservation areas and areas of ancient woodland</i> | <i>Some nature conservation designations</i> | <i>Nature conservation designations over a significant area</i> | <i>Statutory nature conservation designations over an extensive area</i> |
| | No designation on the site but nearby SNCIs and SSSI | | | | |
| Historic environment and settings and cultural influences | <i>No significant historic features</i> | <i>Historic features but not relating to landscape</i> | <i>Some historic features relate to landscape</i> | <i>Some prominent historic features</i> | <i>Historic features are prominent in the landscape</i> |
| | A number of listed buildings but limited intervisibility | | | | |
| Recreation | <i>Little or no recreational use</i> | <i>Low level informal or local recreational use</i> | <i>Locally significant recreational use or attraction</i> | <i>Well used for recreation, greater than local attraction</i> | <i>Important for recreation for locals and visitors</i> |
| | No public access on the site but bridleway along northern boundary, and other nearby public rights of way and open access areas | | | | |

Overall sensitivity to extraction

Landscape character sensitivity: Medium

16. Although the site is comprised of simple arable fields it is defined by adjacent woodland and does have a sense of rurality, remoteness and tranquillity which is little affected by the adjacent quarry. The site provides some ecosystem services including a sense of tranquillity which, combined with the sense of place due to views of the South Downs ridge, contribute to the Special Qualities of the SDNP.

Visual sensitivity: Medium

17. The site is not widely visible but there are views to the South Downs ridge, including from the bridleway along the northern boundary, where view receptors have a relatively high sensitivity.

Landscape value sensitivity: Medium-high

18. The key value of the site is that it is within the SDNP and displays some of the Special Qualities. In addition there are some nearby nature designations and heritage assets.

Overall, the site is considered to have a **Medium-high** sensitivity to extraction.

Landscape capacity, including potential for net gain

19. Although broadly enclosed, with views into the area generally restricted by existing vegetation, the site has a secluded and tranquil quality which reduces the capacity of the landscape to accommodate development of this nature without adverse impacts on the character of the surrounding area, including a number of Special Qualities such as tranquillity and views to the Downs. With the proximity of the existing extraction site to the north, there is potential for cumulative effects on the special qualities of the wider Wealden Farmland and Heathland Mosaic character area within the SDNP. It is judged that the site has a **Low to Moderate** capacity overall for accommodating mineral extraction. There is a long term potential for the enhancement and improvement of the habitat value, recreational value and the condition of landscape features in conjunction with the development of the site to provide an overall environmental net gain.

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Recommendations for mitigation and landscape opportunities

- Advanced planting around the perimeter with an appropriate mix of native species, to strengthen and reinforce existing screening of views into the site;
- Careful siting of access tracks and roads, avoiding surrounding areas of woodland and copses and ensuring tree belts, hedgerows and mature stands of trees remain intact as far as possible;
- Create and retain appropriate buffers around the woodland, copses and tree belts abutting the site and link new planting with this, and to the existing network of hedgerows and mature trees, to create continuous, interconnected belts of trees and vegetation;
- Ensure appropriate screening of views into the site from the surrounding footpaths and areas of open access land.
- Sensitive treatment of the setting of the bridleway along the northern boundary.

Options for restoration after use and positive impact on ecosystem services

- Restoring all or parts of the site to support a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland, alongside the implementation of an appropriate management plan, to be agreed prior to consent;
- Returning the site to its existing profile and then restoring to agricultural use following extraction. Long term restoration should aim to maximise the habitat value of the farmland, minimising soil erosion and pollution (of soil and ground water), and to improve the historic and landscape character by restoring and enhancing hedgerows and woodland structure.
- Opportunities should be taken to improve habitat connectivity with the Steadham Common LNR and surrounding fragmented areas of heathland.
- Restoration proposals should be considered in combination with the restoration of the existing site to the north.

SITE CH8C SEVERALS WEST

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SITE CH8C SEVERALS WEST

Site location and context

1. The site is located in the west of West Sussex, approximately 1km to the west of Midhurst. The site is bounded to the north by the A272, which runs from Petersfield to Midhurst, and to the east by Severals Road, beyond which lies site CH8D Severals East.
2. The site is located within the South Downs National Park in a broader area characterised by dry open heathland and dense pine and oak-birch woodland, which form an irregular patchy mosaic covering very low, flat-topped ridges. Significant tracts of common land, once used for rough grazing and bracken or turf cutting, also permeate the area.
3. The site itself is gently sloping to the south and currently consists of deciduous and coniferous plantation (land to the east and south is also plantation, with the land to the south having been a sand pit).

Approximate timescale anticipated for start and completion for this site: Circa 10-15 years, available 1-5 years

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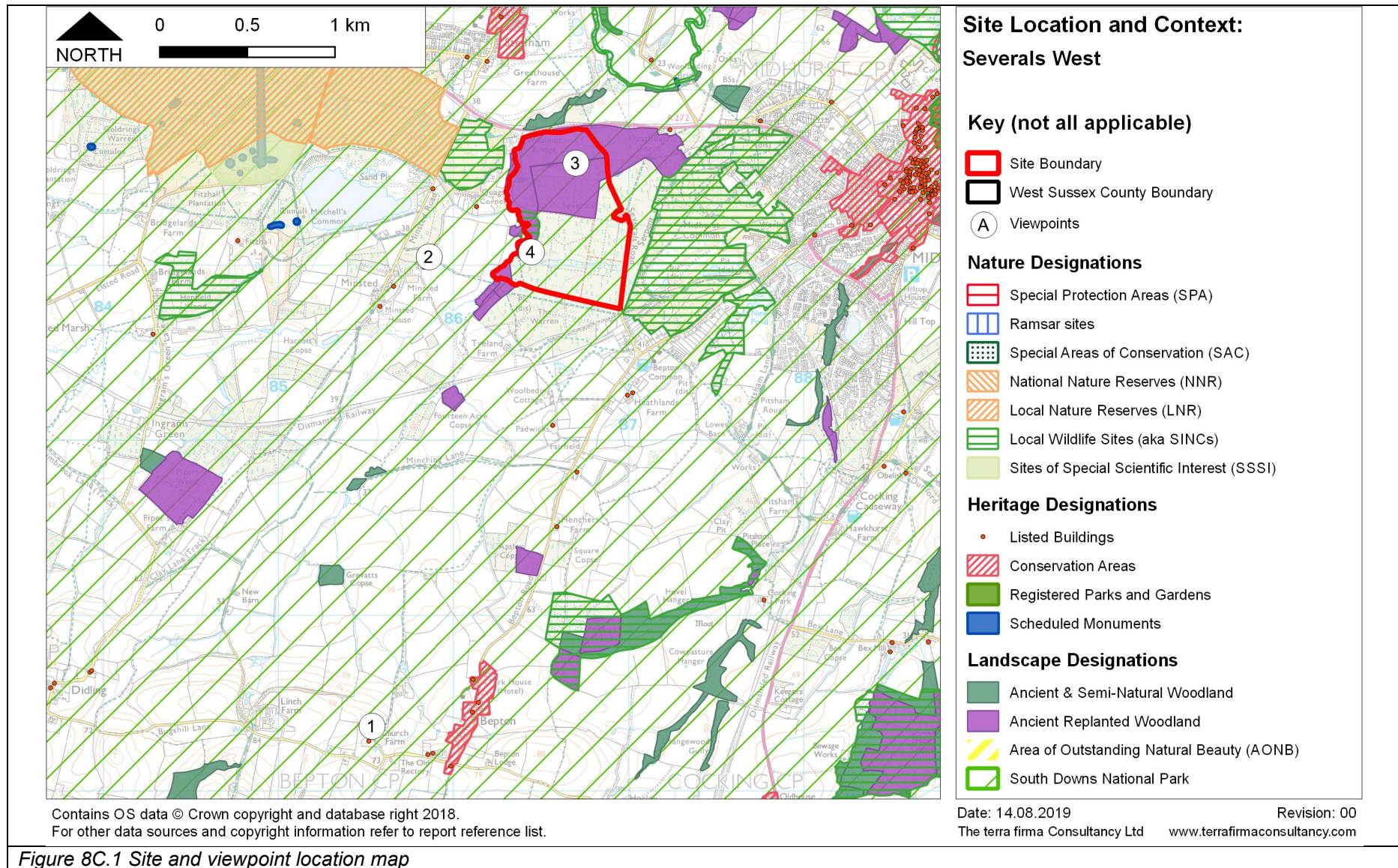


Figure 8C.1 Site and viewpoint location map



Figure 8C.2 Site photograph 1 View north from public footpath near Bepton church, approximately 2km from site, which is not visible due to multiple layers of woodland.



Figure 8C.3 Site photograph 2 View east from public footpath near Minsted House, approximately 400m from site. The tops of conifer trees within the site are visible above the deciduous trees forming the wooded stream corridor along the outside of the site's western boundary.



Figure 8C.4 Site photograph 3 from the Serpent Trail regional footpath on northern edge of the site, looking south across site, with views to South Down ridge glimpsed through woodland



Figure 8C.5 Site photograph 4 from local footpath towards western edge of the site. Conifer plantation at various ages with ground flora in different states of regeneration, with water courses crossing southern part of the site.

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Characterisation of the site

4. Relevant key characteristics, ecosystem services, forces for change and guidelines for the National Character Areas are described in the introductory section as they apply to all the 9 sites. Details of WSCC and SDNP landscape character assessments are set out below.

National Character Area Wealden Greensand (see introduction)

Key characteristics from published landscape character assessments:

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- LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths:
 - Very low, flat topped sandstone ridges cut by small streams running south to north.
 - Large swathes of heather dominate the distinctive heaths of Iping
 - Commons, with smaller patches occurring elsewhere.
 - Extensive areas of pine and oak-birch woodland which border the heaths.
 - Rough-grazed agricultural land and horse paddocks.
 - A few straight roads and dead-end tracks.
 - Ancient earthworks and banks.
 - Isolated cottages and farms.
 - Views limited by tracts of dense woodland.
 - Sand quarries.
 - Ponds.
 - Extensive tracts of Common Land.

South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden farmland and heath mosaic combined with LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic
 - Slightly elevated, flat topped plateau formed from sandstones of the Folkestone formation.
 - Well-drained sandy soils support a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
 - Small to medium sized fields of rough grazed pasture and horse paddocks bounded by hedgerows with gorse and bracken and hedgerow oaks. Clusters of oak trees and Scots pine trees form visual accents.
 - Large areas of modern woodland plantations covering areas of former common land and earlier blocks of ancient (probably medieval) woodland.

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- An intimate mix of semi-natural habitats and agriculture creating valuable foraging and over-wintering sites for a range of bird species.
- Numerous Bronze Age barrow cemeteries are indicative of a prehistoric ritual landscape.
- Settlement is relatively late, comprising isolated farmsteads of 18th-19th century origin set within areas of recent enclosure, and 'squatter' settlement on the edges of the common land.
- Remnant unenclosed commons are of cultural and historic significance and provide open access for recreation.
- Large number of sand pits indicating the economic value of the sands of the Folkestone Beds.
- Views limited by dense woodland cover.

Land management guidelines from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths:
 - Conserve the largely undeveloped character of the landscape.
 - Conserve the historic character of the area, including features such as Bronze Age barrows, historic parklands and millponds and mills.
 - Conserve, manage and extend extensive wet and dry heathlands using sound heathland management techniques, taking account of prehistoric heathland landscape.
 - Create heathland links through restoration of old heathland and along public rights of way, woodland and forestry rides.
 - Encourage the restoration of sand quarries to a range of habitats including heathland, sand banks and open water, to increase their wildlife value.
 - Encourage appropriate screening of all quarry works by planting, carried out in advance of quarrying wherever possible.
 - Conserve and encourage sound management of the woodland cover, promoting coppice management where appropriate.
 - Manage degraded hedgerows and hedgerow trees, using the trees in particular to screen development.
 - Conserve and manage the old trackways and lanes with their associated banks and verge vegetation.
 - Carry out tree planting to screen unsightly buildings, linking in with existing vegetation patterns.
 - Avoid further introduction of suburban styles and materials into the landscape.
 - Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change.

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South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden farmland and heath mosaic combined with LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic
 - Maintain the surviving areas of unenclosed common at Iping and consider opportunities for creating further unenclosed commons within the area.
 - Manage existing heathland to prevent excessive encroachment of scrub and assess potential for creating new, interconnected heathlands.
 - Manage heathland sites at Iping Common and aim to link these sites through new heathland creation.
 - Ensure that any further built development is integrated into its landscape context using native vegetation.
 - Ensure any change in this area takes account of views from the Greensand hills to the north and the Chalk scarp to the south.

Site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area likely to be affected by extraction activities)

Landscape character criteria

Physical / natural factors

5. The site extends across a gently undulating landform with most of the site is comprising deciduous and coniferous plantation, with the broader area being a patchy mosaic of heath and woodland. The site is underlain by Lower Greensand. It is bound to the north by the A272, which runs from Petersfield to Midhurst, and to the east by Severals Road.
6. There is a small river to the west of the site (that flows along the western site boundary within a wooded setting). The River Rother is located approximately 0.4km to the north of the site. There is a small river approximately 1.4 km to the east of the site.

Experiential

7. The site is currently covered in deciduous and coniferous plantation, giving it a sense of enclosure, increased further by the height of the trees. The greatest sense of enclosure is where ground flora is most mature, including along the western edge. There are no long-distance open views from within the site, with only short-distance views available where trees have been felled, although glimpses to the South Downs ridge are possible from the high ground in the northern part of the site, filtered by the trees.
8. The site has a rural quality, although this lessens near to the north boundary where the site meets the A272.
9. CPRE data indicates that the majority of the site is within an area of medium tranquillity, although there is an area in the south of the site with higher tranquillity. The site is within an area defined as 'disturbed by noise', presumably due to the presence of the A272. The area is generally unlit except for domestic lighting associated with houses at Quags Corner, Woolmer Bridge and Minsted Farm. The A272 just outside of the northern boundary is unlit by street lamps but affected by vehicle lights.

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10. Colour and texture is varied across the site due to the coniferous and deciduous tree cover, and the presence of some felled areas and with ground flora at different stages of regeneration creating some variation.

Visual criteria

Visibility and key views

11. The ZTV indicates relatively limited potential visibility from the surrounding area as a result of tree cover. Fieldwork indicates that views to the Downs are restricted by woodland, but glimpses are possible filtered by trees, notably from the higher ground in the north of the site. In the absence of the woodland it is predicted that there would be clear views to the South Downs to the south.
12. The site is currently indiscernible amongst tree cover in views from the South Downs Way, though the contrasting colour of sand could be visible if the site were quarried.
13. With regards the immediate surroundings, there is visibility from Severals Road, the A272, buildings opposite the southeast corner of the site and potentially from buildings at Quags Corner and Minsted Farm. The site is also visible from users of the numerous footpaths and bridleways located around the site, including the Serpent Trail footpath running across the northern part of site and close to its south-eastern corner. The skyline is comprised of tall trees and forms the skyline from parts to the north.

Landscape value criteria

Landscape designations

14. The site is located centrally within the South Downs National Park.

Condition, typicality and rarity

15. The site reflects key characteristics highlighted in the LCA for the Chichester to Rother Woods and Heaths, including dense woodland, with intensive area of pine and oak-birch woodland, sand quarries. The Historic Landscape Character Assessment characterises this area as 'Woodland' Early modern dated 1800-1913.

Cultural heritage and settings

16. There are a number of listed buildings located within 1km of the site: the closest is 'Badgers, Quags Corner' located approximately 0.3km to the west (with visibility to the site from this building); Woodmans Cottage located approximately 0.4km to the west (woodland screens this building from the proposed site); and Heathbarn Farmhouse located 0.4km to the northeast of the site (woodland screens this building from the proposed site).
17. There are four Conservation Areas within 2km of the site: Ipping which is approximately 1.6km to the northwest; Stedham and Woolbeding approximately 0.5km and 1km away to the north respectively. There is no visibility from any of these Conservation Areas to the proposed site.

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Cowdray House Registered Historic Park and Garden is located approximately 2km to the east of the site, but is screened by woodland and the settlement of Midhurst.

18. There are a number of Scheduled Monuments to the west of the site, the closest being Bowl Barrow on Fitzhall Rough which is located approximately 1.3km away.

Natural heritage

19. There is an SNCI (Severals Bog) located within the site. There is also an SNCI (Stedham Common) located less than 100m to the northwest of the site, a large SNCI (Midhurst Common) located approximately 0.4km to the east of the site, and an SNCI (River Rother) located 0.4km to the north of the site. Ipping Common LNR is located approximately 0.5km to the west of the site as is Ipping Common SSSI (which covers most of the same area). The majority of the north and central part of the site is ancient woodland. There are also pockets of ancient woodland located (within 2km) to the north, east and south of the site.

Recreation

20. There are a large number of permissive footpaths and informal paths crossing the site and the regional Serpent Trail also crosses the northern part of site. The footpaths have good links to the wider footpath and bridleway network located around the site.

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Sensitivity assessment

| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landform | <i>Simple, predominantly flat</i> | <i>Simple, predominantly flat to undulating</i> | <i>Occasional variety but lacking strong complexity</i> | <i>Complex with topographical variety</i> | <i>Very complex with strong topographical variety</i> |
| | Gently undulating with high ground in north. Land drops more sharply into a stream valley on the western boundary. | | | | |
| Landcover / pattern | <i>Simple, large-scale pattern (large conifer plantations, arable fields), and/or regularly disturbed, fragmented landcover</i> | <i>Largely simple, some disturbance, largely fragmented landcover and landuse</i> | <i>Some variety, limited disturbance, a degree of consistency in pattern of landuse and landcover</i> | <i>Varied pattern with some intricacy, largely undisturbed and coherent landcover, some historic landuse pattern evident</i> | <i>Intricate, varied pattern, undisturbed consistent patterns of land cover or land use, historic field patterns</i> |
| | Some complexity and intricacy where undergrowth is thick and along the western edge; much of the southern part of site is simple conifer plantation in compartments, albeit at different ages / stages of management and regeneration | | | | |
| Scale | <i>Large scale, featureless</i> | <i>Medium to large scale</i> | <i>Medium to small scale with occasional human scale indicators</i> | <i>Small scale with human scale indicators</i> | <i>Very small scale, intricate with human scale indicators</i> |
| | Scale varies from medium to small – larger in areas recently cleared of timber, smaller in areas with thick undergrowth | | | | |
| Enclosure | <i>Enclosed</i> | <i>Mostly enclosed, some open areas</i> | <i>Some enclosure</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> |
| | Fully enclosed by woodland within and adjacent to site. Sense of enclosure greater in areas with thick undergrowth | | | | |

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| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| Condition | <i>Low level of intactness with landscape elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Some intactness with some elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Generally intact with elements in reasonable state of repair</i> | <i>Intact and elements in good state of repair</i> | <i>High level of intactness and very good state of repair</i> |
| | Some managed plantation with high degree of disruption at early stages following clearance of timber. Other areas more intact including ancient woodland. | | | | |
| Typicality and rarity | <i>No rare features or weak association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Few rare features or some association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Some rare features and attributes or largely corresponding to key characteristics</i> | <i>Rare features and attributes, strong correspondence with key qualities</i> | <i>Rare features of regional importance or representative of key characteristics and qualities</i> |
| | Typical of wider LCA | | | | |
| Tranquillity (including noise and lighting) | <i>Not tranquil, much human activity, noise and light</i> | <i>Limited tranquillity</i> | <i>Some human activity reducing sense of tranquillity, some lighting</i> | <i>Relatively tranquil, no lighting</i> | <i>Tranquil, little human activity, noise or lighting</i> |
| | Generally tranquil and dark, some nearby domestic lighting; localised disturbance of forestry operations and felled areas; northern parts affected by traffic noise from A272 | | | | |
| Remoteness | <i>Presence or proximity to human activity or modern development or industrial structures e.g. utility, infrastructure</i> | <i>Close to some visible signs of human activity and modern development</i> | <i>Some sense of distance and remoteness, human activity and modern development largely absent</i> | <i>Perception of remoteness, sense of distance from human influences</i> | <i>Strong sense of remoteness; physically remote or perception of being remote</i> |
| | Remote character; reduced towards the northern boundary (due to A272) and by proximity to hamlet of Bepton Common to the south-east | | | | |

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| Ecosystem services | <i>No services apparent, systems degraded</i> | <i>Limited services apparent</i> | <i>Some services apparent</i> | <i>Clear benefit/s contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> | <i>Multiple benefits contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> |
|---|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| <p>Timber provision and potential biomass, regulation of soil erosion in permanently vegetated areas, within Drinking Water Safeguard Zone, regulation of water flow with localised wet areas, some sense of place and history, tranquil, extensive and well used footpath network, regional footpath, contributes to Special Qualities</p> | | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| VISUAL CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Skylines | <i>No relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Limited relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Some relationship to skyline with some complexity and interruption</i> | <i>Relationship to prominent skylines that is largely simple or with some variety and interruption</i> | <i>Strong relationship to prominent, simple and undeveloped skylines</i> |
| | Skyline formed from tall trees. Trees on northern edge form skyline looking south from the A272 and from the Rother Valley to the north. | | | | |
| Views and landmarks | <i>Contains no landmarks and is not a feature in local views</i> | <i>No or limited landmarks or limited significance in local views</i> | <i>Locally important landmarks or views</i> | <i>Some important landmarks, or significant views</i> | <i>Landscape includes important landmarks or is important in views across a wide area</i> |
| | Contains no distinctive landmarks but wooded northern edge encloses views along and forms the setting of the A272. | | | | |
| Intervisibility | <i>Self-contained, restricted intervisibility</i> | <i>Occasional views to adjacent landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility with some neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility and strong links to neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Extensively intervisible, part of wider landscape</i> |
| | Limited, filtered views to South Downs with possible views back to site, views from Serpent Trail and other nearby footpaths and from nearby properties. Northern edge visible from Rother valley to north. | | | | |
| Visual receptors | <i>Low number of viewers from properties and transport routes</i> | <i>Local transport routes, limited numbers of residents</i> | <i>Some visibility from main transport routes and a number of residents</i> | <i>Frequent properties and views from main transport routes</i> | <i>Higher visibility from main transport routes and large number of properties</i> |
| | Sensitive view receptors on Serpent Trail, footpaths and including residents of a small number of houses, potentially from South Downs | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landscape designations | <i>No or limited intervisibility or relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Some intervisibility and relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Located in close proximity to a designated landscape with some intervisibility and relationship with it</i> | <i>Located within or in close proximity to a designated landscape, some significant intervisibility and association with the wider designated area</i> | <i>Located within a nationally or locally designated landscape with a strong association with the wider designated area</i> |
| | The site is within the SDNP and displays some characteristics of the wider landscape | | | | |
| Natural heritage | <i>No landscape conservation designations</i> | <i>Limited extent of nature conservation areas and areas of ancient woodland</i> | <i>Some nature conservation designations</i> | <i>Nature conservation designations over a significant area</i> | <i>Statutory nature conservation designations over an extensive area</i> |
| | SNCI and ancient woodland within site and nearby SNCIs and SSSI | | | | |
| Historic environment and settings and cultural influences | <i>No significant historic features</i> | <i>Historic features but not relating to landscape</i> | <i>Some historic features relate to landscape</i> | <i>Some prominent historic features</i> | <i>Historic features are prominent in the landscape</i> |
| | A number of listed buildings but limited intervisibility | | | | |
| Recreation | <i>Little or no recreational use</i> | <i>Low level informal or local recreational use</i> | <i>Locally significant recreational use or attraction</i> | <i>Well used for recreation, greater than local attraction</i> | <i>Important for recreation for locals and visitors</i> |
| | The site forms a link between Midhurst Common, to the east, and the Steadham Common to the west, traversed by dense network of paths and bridleways, including the Serpent Trail. An important contribution to Special Qualities | | | | |

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Overall sensitivity to extraction

Landscape character sensitivity: Medium high

21. Although the site is partly comprised of conifer plantation with a managed character it also contains adjacent woodland and an SNCI and borders a wooded stream. Overall there is a sense of rurality, remoteness and tranquillity which is locally affected by the forestry operations. The site provides multiple ecosystem services including timber production, regulation of soil erosion and water flow, a sense of tranquillity which, combined with the importance of the site as a recreational experience, contribute to the Special Qualities.

Visual sensitivity: Medium high

22. The site is not widely visible but there are sensitive view receptors on the Serpent Trail and local footpaths, with some views from the Rother valley to the north in which the site's northern edge forms the wooded skyline. There is a possibility of views back from the South Downs.

Landscape value: Medium high

23. The key value of the site is that it is within the SDNP and displays several Special Qualities. In addition, it contains a designated nature site and contributes significantly to the recreational value of the area.

Sensitivity to extraction: Medium-high

24. Overall, the site is considered to have a Medium high sensitivity, with the areas of ancient woodland, the western edge water course and setting of the Serpent Trail of greatest sensitivity.

Landscape capacity, including potential for net gain

25. Although comprising large areas of plantation forest restricting views into the area and potentially enabling the visual containment of extraction activities within existing tree cover, the site has areas of ancient woodland and SNCI which reduce the overall capacity of the landscape to accommodate development of this nature without adverse impacts on the recreation and habitat value and tranquil character of the area.

26. With the proximity of the existing extraction site to the northwest and the proposed adjacent Severals East site, there is potential for cumulative effects on the special qualities of the wider Wealden Farmland and Heathland Mosaic character area within the South Downs National Park.

Conclusion

27. It is judged that the site has a **Medium high sensitivity** to disturbance that results in a **Moderate to Low capacity** overall for accommodating mineral extraction.
28. There is a long-term potential for the areas of coniferous plantation to be enhanced and improved upon in conjunction with the development of the site, including the habitat value, recreational value and the condition of landscape features, to provide an overall environmental net gain.

Recommendations for mitigation and landscape opportunities

- Phasing of extraction, so that a series of small areas are developed in sequence, reducing the potential for visual intrusion that the development of large areas would result in;
- Careful siting of development and infrastructure away from the slopes to the north and west which are visible from surrounding areas to the north and the A272;
- Careful siting of access tracks and roads, avoiding areas of ancient woodland and ensuring pockets of mature broad-leaf trees remain intact;
- Create and retain appropriate buffers around the water course in the west of the site;
- Create and retain appropriate buffers around the areas of ancient woodland and the SNCI within the site, and link new planting with the existing structure of mature woodland, and the surrounding network of hedgerows and woodland, to create continuous, interconnected belts of trees and vegetation;
- Advanced planting around the perimeter with an appropriate mix of native species, to strengthen and reinforce existing screening of views into the site;
- Sensitive treatment of the setting of the footpaths, particularly the Serpent Trail, ensuring appropriate screening of views into areas of extraction.

Options for restoration after use and positive impact on ecosystem services

- Restoring the site to support a mosaic of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland, alongside the implementation of an appropriate management plan, to be agreed prior to consent;
- Returning the site to its existing profile and then restoring to woodland following extraction. Long term restoration should aim to maximise the habitat value by taking opportunities to improve habitat connectivity with the Steadham Common LNR, surrounding fragmented areas of heathland and Minstead Common to the west.
- Restoration proposals should be considered in combination with the restoration of other sites in the vicinity.

SITE CH8D SEVERALS EAST

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SITE CH8D SEVERALS EAST

Site location and context

1. The site is located in the west of West Sussex, approximately 1km to the west of Midhurst. The site is bounded to the north by the A272, which runs from Petersfield to Midhurst,(and beyond) and to the west by Severals Road, beyond which lies site CH8C Severals West.
2. The site is located within the South Downs National Park. Views to the Downs are completely restricted due to woodland, but in the absence of the woodland it is predicted that there would be clear views to the South Downs to the south. The site lies within a broader area characterised by dry open heathland and dense pine and oak-birch woodland, which form an irregular patchy mosaic across very low, flat-topped ridges. Significant tracts of common land, once used for rough grazing and bracken or turf cutting, also permeate the area.
3. The site itself is gently sloping to the south and currently consists of deciduous and coniferous plantation (land to the west and east is also plantation, with the land to the east also including Midhurst Common).

Approximate timescale anticipated for start and completion for this site: Circa 5 years, available in 1-5 years

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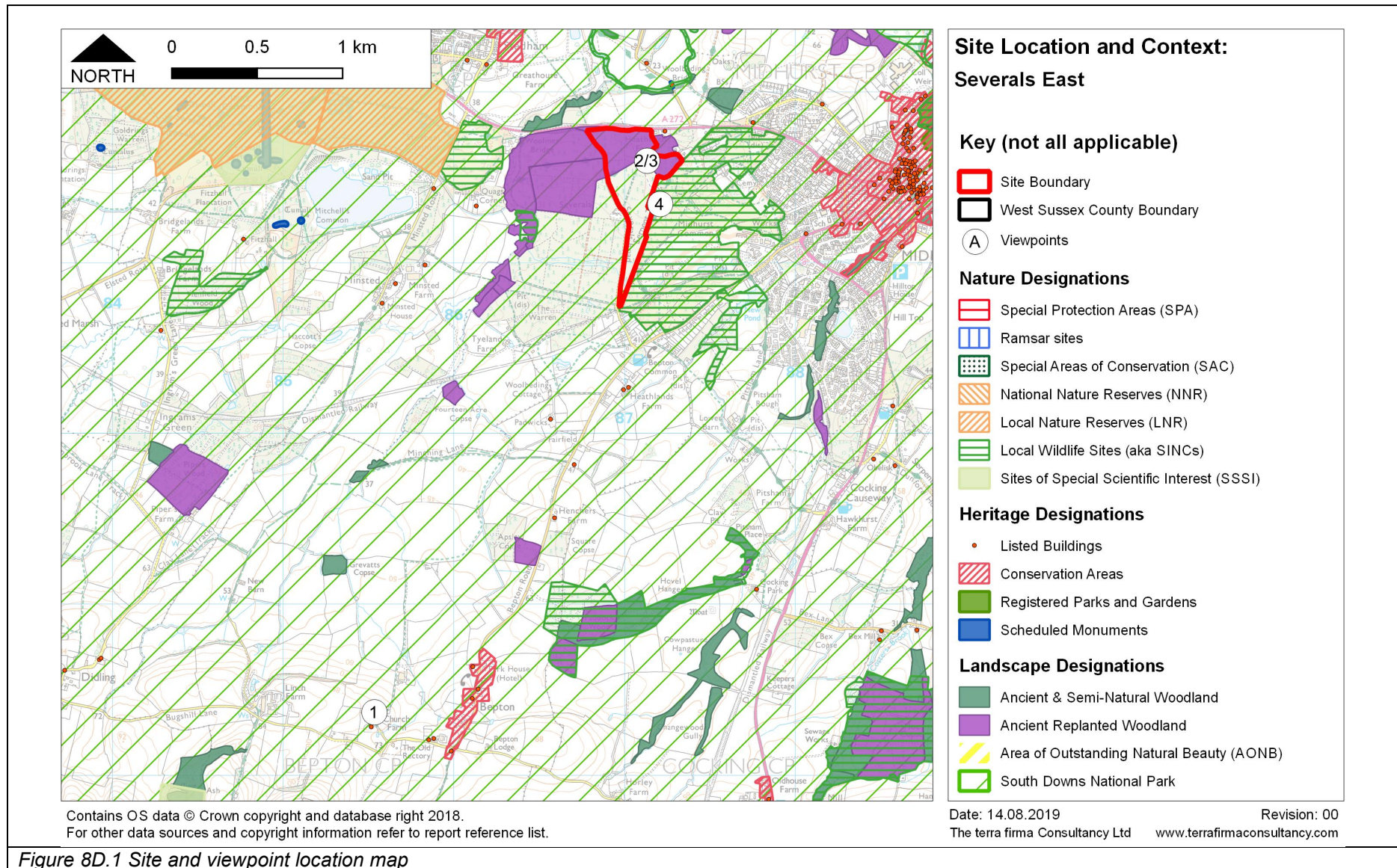


Figure 8D.1 Site and viewpoint location map



Figure 8D.2 Site photograph 1 View north-east from public footpath near Bpton church, approximately 2km from site, which is not visible due to multiple layers of woodland.



Figure 8D.3 Site photograph 2 View north-west from Serpent Trail as it crosses the northern part of site. High ground to the north is visible along the open power line 'rides'.



Figure 8D.4 Site photograph 3 looking south-west from the Serpent Trail regional footpath in the north of the site, with views contained by woodland at various ages



Figure 8D.5 Site photograph 4 from Serpent Trail on the eastern edge of the site adjacent to Midhurst Common (left), looking south along clear 'ride', with South Downs visible. Conifer plantation contains views within site (right of photo).

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Characterisation of the site

4. Relevant key characteristics, ecosystem services, forces for change and guidelines for the National Character Areas are described in the introductory section as they apply to all the 9 sites. Details of WSCC and SDNP landscape character assessments are set out below.

National Character Area Wealden Greensand (see introduction)

Key characteristics from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths:
 - Very low, flat topped sandstone ridges cut by small streams running south to north.
 - Large swathes of heather dominate the distinctive heaths of Iping
 - Commons, with smaller patches occurring elsewhere.
 - Extensive areas of pine and oak-birch woodland which border the heaths.
 - Rough-grazed agricultural land and horse paddocks.
 - A few straight roads and dead-end tracks.
 - Ancient earthworks and banks.
 - Isolated cottages and farms.
 - Views limited by tracts of dense woodland.
 - Sand quarries.
 - Ponds.
 - Extensive tracts of Common Land.

South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden farmland and heath mosaic combined with LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic
 - Slightly elevated, flat topped plateau formed from sandstones of the Folkestone formation.
 - Well-drained sandy soils support a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
 - Small to medium sized fields of rough grazed pasture and horse paddocks bounded by hedgerows with gorse and bracken and hedgerow oaks. Clusters of oak trees and Scots pine trees form visual accents.
 - Large areas of modern woodland plantations covering areas of former commonland and earlier blocks of ancient (probably medieval) woodland.
 - An intimate mix of semi-natural habitats and agriculture creating valuable foraging and over-wintering sites for a range of bird species.

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- Numerous Bronze Age barrow cemeteries are indicative of a prehistoric ritual landscape.
- Settlement is relatively late, comprising isolated farmsteads of 18th-19th century origin set within areas of recent enclosure, and 'squatter' settlement on the edges of the common land.
- Remnant unenclosed commons are of cultural and historic significance and provide open access for recreation.
- Large number of sand pits indicating the economic value of the sands of the Folkestone Beds.
- Views limited by dense woodland cover.

Land management guidelines from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths:
 - Conserve the largely undeveloped character of the landscape.
 - Conserve the historic character of the area, including features such as Bronze Age barrows, historic parklands and millponds and mills.
 - Conserve, manage and extend extensive wet and dry heathlands using sound heathland management techniques, taking account of prehistoric heathland landscape.
 - Create heathland links through restoration of old heathland and along public rights of way, woodland and forestry rides.
 - Encourage the restoration of sand quarries to a range of habitats including heathland, sand banks and open water, to increase their wildlife value.
 - Encourage appropriate screening of all quarry works by planting, carried out in advance of quarrying wherever possible.
 - Conserve and encourage sound management of the woodland cover, promoting coppice management where appropriate.
 - Manage degraded hedgerows and hedgerow trees, using the trees in particular to screen development.
 - Conserve and manage the old trackways and lanes with their associated banks and verge vegetation.
 - Carry out tree planting to screen unsightly buildings, linking in with existing vegetation patterns.
 - Avoid further introduction of suburban styles and materials into the landscape.
 - Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change.

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South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden farmland and heath mosaic combined with LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic
 - Maintain the surviving areas of unenclosed common [including] at Iping and consider opportunities for creating further unenclosed commons within the area.
 - Manage existing heathland to prevent excessive encroachment of scrub and assess potential for creating new, interconnected heathlands.
 - Manage heathland sites [including] at Iping Common and aim to link these sites through new heathland creation.
 - Ensure that any further built development is integrated into its landscape context using native vegetation.
 - Ensure any change in this area takes account of views from the Greensand hills to the north and the Chalk scarp to the south.

Site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area likely to be affected by extraction activities)

Landscape character criteria

Physical / natural factors

5. The site extends across a gently sloping landform (rising to the northeast) with most of the site comprising coniferous plantation, with peripheral areas being a mosaic of heath and woodland. The site is underlain by Lower Greensand. It is bound to the north by the A272, which runs from Petersfield to Midhurst, and to the west by Severals Road.
6. There is a small river approximately 0.5km to the west of the site. The River Rother is located approximately 0.4km to the north of the site. There is also a small river approximately 1.3km to the east

Experiential

7. The site is currently a mix of deciduous and coniferous plantation woodland, giving it a sense of enclosure, increased further by the height of the trees. Long-distance open views from within the site are not generally available, the only exception being some narrow views along the open 'rides' which contain power lines, from which the high ground to the north and south is visible. Short-distance views are available where trees have been felled and where undergrowth is absent.
8. The site has a rural quality, although this reduces near to the north boundary where the site meets the A272.
9. The majority of the site is within an area of medium tranquillity, with the very southern part being in an area of slightly lower tranquillity. The site is within an area defined as 'disturbed by noise' presumably due to the presence of the A272. The area is generally unlit except for domestic lighting associated with houses at Heathbarn Farm. The A272 just outside of the northern boundary is unlit by street lamps but affected by vehicle lights.
10. Colour and texture is varied across the site due to the coniferous and deciduous tree cover, and with woodland at different stages of regeneration creating some variation.

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Visual criteria

Visibility and key views

11. The ZTV indicates relatively limited potential visibility from the surrounding area as a result of tree cover. Fieldwork indicates that views to the Downs are restricted by woodland, but glimpses are possible along cleared 'rides' containing power lines. In the absence of the woodland it is predicted that there would be clear views to the South Downs to the south and high ground to the north.
12. The site is currently indiscernible amongst tree cover in views from the South Downs Way, though the contrasting colour of sand could be visible if the site were quarried. With regards to the immediate surroundings, there is visibility to the site edges from Severals Road, the A272, and Midhurst Common as well as potentially from Heathbarn Farm.
13. Views from the Serpent Trail are possible as it runs along the eastern boundary and across the site. The site is also visible from users of the other footpaths and bridleways located around the site, and other footpaths crossing the site.
14. The skyline is comprised of tall trees and forms the skyline from parts to the north.

Landscape value criteria

Landscape designations

15. The site is located centrally within the SDNP.

Condition, typicality and rarity

16. The site reflects key characteristics highlighted in the LCA for the Chichester to Rother Woods and Heaths, including dense woodland, with intensive area of pine and oak-birch woodland, sand quarries. The Historic Landscape Character Assessment characterises this area as 'Woodland' Early modern dated 1800-1913.

Cultural heritage and settings

17. There are a number of listed buildings located within 1km of the site: the closest is the Grade II Listed Heathbarn Farmhouse located on the northern boundary and the Grade II Listed Toll House located 0.4km to the north-east (currently screened by woodland). The listed building 'Badgers, Quags Corner' is located approximately 0.8km to the west (screened from the site by woodland).
18. There are four Conservation Areas within 2km of the site: Ipping which is approximately 2km to the northwest; Stedham and Woolbeding approximately 0.7km and 0.8km away to the north respectively. There is no visibility from any of these Conservation Areas to the proposed site. Cowdray House Registered Historic Park and Garden is located approximately 1.6km to the east of the site, but is screened by woodland and the settlement of Midhurst. There are a number of Scheduled Monuments to the west of the site, the closest being Bowl Barrow on Fitzhall Rough which is located approximately 1.7km away.

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Natural heritage

19. There is a large SNCI (Midhurst Common) directly adjacent to the east and extending into the site's eastern edge, a small SNCI (Stedham Common) located approximately 0.7km to the west, and an SNCI (River Rother) located 0.3km to the north of the site. Ipping Common LNR is located approximately 1km to the west of the site as is Ipping Common SSSI (which covers most of the same area). There is an area of ancient woodland covering the northern part of the site and extending to the west. There are also pockets of ancient woodland located (within 2km) to the north, east and south of the site.

Recreation

20. There are a number of footpath networks located within the site and in close proximity to the boundary. The long-distance Serpent Trail follows the eastern boundary and crosses the northern part of site. The footpaths have good links to the wider footpath and bridleway network located around the site.

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Sensitivity assessment

| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landform | <i>Simple, predominantly flat</i> | <i>Simple, predominantly flat to undulating</i> | <i>Occasional variety but lacking strong complexity</i> | <i>Complex with topographical variety</i> | <i>Very complex with strong topographical variety</i> |
| | Gently undulating with rising land to the north-east. | | | | |
| Landcover / pattern | <i>Simple, large-scale pattern (large conifer plantations, arable fields), and/or regularly disturbed, fragmented landcover</i> | <i>Largely simple, some disturbance, largely fragmented landcover and landuse</i> | <i>Some variety, limited disturbance, a degree of consistency in pattern of landuse and landcover</i> | <i>Varied pattern with some intricacy, largely undisturbed and coherent landcover, some historic landuse pattern evident</i> | <i>Intricate, varied pattern, undisturbed consistent patterns of land cover or land use, historic field patterns</i> |
| | Some complexity and intricacy where undergrowth is thick; much of the site is simple conifer plantation, albeit at different ages / stages of management and regeneration | | | | |
| Scale | <i>Large scale, featureless</i> | <i>Medium to large scale</i> | <i>Medium to small scale with occasional human scale indicators</i> | <i>Small scale with human scale indicators</i> | <i>Very small scale, intricate with human scale indicators</i> |
| | Medium scale | | | | |
| Enclosure | <i>Enclosed</i> | <i>Mostly enclosed, some open areas</i> | <i>Some enclosure</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> |
| | Fully enclosed by woodland within and adjacent to site. Sense of enclosure greater in areas with thick undergrowth | | | | |

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| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| Condition | <i>Low level of intactness with landscape elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Some intactness with some elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Generally intact with elements in reasonable state of repair</i> | <i>Intact and elements in good state of repair</i> | <i>High level of intactness and very good state of repair</i> |
| | Some managed plantation with high degree of disruption at early stages following clearance of timber. Other areas more intact including ancient woodland. | | | | |
| Typicality and rarity | <i>No rare features or weak association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Few rare features or some association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Some rare features and attributes or largely corresponding to key characteristics</i> | <i>Rare features and attributes, strong correspondence with key qualities</i> | <i>Rare features of regional importance or representative of key characteristics and qualities</i> |
| | Typical of wider LCA | | | | |
| Tranquillity (including noise and lighting) | <i>Not tranquil, much human activity, noise and light</i> | <i>Limited tranquillity</i> | <i>Some human activity reducing sense of tranquillity, some lighting</i> | <i>Relatively tranquil, no lighting</i> | <i>Tranquil, little human activity, noise or lighting</i> |
| | Generally tranquil and dark, some nearby domestic and traffic lighting; localised disturbance of forestry operations and felled areas; northern parts affected by traffic noise from A272 | | | | |
| Remoteness | <i>Presence or proximity to human activity or modern development or industrial structures e.g. utility, infrastructure</i> | <i>Close to some visible signs of human activity and modern development</i> | <i>Some sense of distance and remoteness, human activity and modern development largely absent</i> | <i>Perception of remoteness, sense of distance from human influences</i> | <i>Strong sense of remoteness; physically remote or perception of being remote</i> |
| | Remote character; reduced towards the northern boundary (due to A272) and by proximity to hamlet of Bepton Common to the south | | | | |

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| Ecosystem services | <i>No services apparent, systems degraded</i> | <i>Limited services apparent</i> | <i>Some services apparent</i> | <i>Clear benefit/s contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> | <i>Multiple benefits contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> |
|---------------------------|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| | <p>Timber provision and potential biomass, regulation of soil erosion in permanently vegetated areas, within Drinking Water Safeguard Zone, regulation of water flow with localised wet areas, some sense of place and history, tranquil, extensive and well used footpath network, regional footpath, contributes to Special Qualities</p> | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| VISUAL CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Skylines | <i>No relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Limited relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Some relationship to skyline with some complexity and interruption</i> | <i>Relationship to prominent skylines that is largely simple or with some variety and interruption</i> | <i>Strong relationship to prominent, simple and undeveloped skylines</i> |
| | Skyline formed from tall trees. Trees on northern edge form skyline looking south from the A272 and from the lower ground to the north around Woolbeding. | | | | |
| Views and landmarks | <i>Contains no landmarks and is not a feature in local views</i> | <i>No or limited landmarks or limited significance in local views</i> | <i>Locally important landmarks or views</i> | <i>Some important landmarks, or significant views</i> | <i>Landscape includes important landmarks or is important in views across a wide area</i> |
| | Contains no distinctive landmarks but wooded northern edge encloses views along and forms the setting of the A272. | | | | |
| Intervisibility | <i>Self-contained, restricted intervisibility</i> | <i>Occasional views to adjacent landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility with some neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility and strong links to neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Extensively intervisible, part of wider landscape</i> |
| | Limited, filtered views to South Downs with possible views back to site, views from Serpent Trail and other nearby footpaths and from nearby properties. Northern edge visible from Rother valley to north. | | | | |
| Visual receptors | <i>Low number of viewers from properties and transport routes</i> | <i>Local transport routes, limited numbers of residents</i> | <i>Some visibility from main transport routes and a number of residents</i> | <i>Frequent properties and views from main transport routes</i> | <i>Higher visibility from main transport routes and large number of properties</i> |
| | Sensitive view receptors on Serpent Trail, footpaths and including residents of a small number of houses, potentially from South Downs | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landscape designations | <i>No or limited intervisibility or relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Some intervisibility and relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Located in close proximity to a designated landscape with some intervisibility and relationship with it</i> | <i>Located within or in close proximity to a designated landscape, some significant intervisibility and association with the wider designated area</i> | <i>Located within a nationally or locally designated landscape with a strong association with the wider designated area</i> |
| | The site is within the SDNP and displays some characteristics of the wider landscape | | | | |
| Natural heritage | <i>No landscape conservation designations</i> | <i>Limited extent of nature conservation areas and areas of ancient woodland</i> | <i>Some nature conservation designations</i> | <i>Nature conservation designations over a significant area</i> | <i>Statutory nature conservation designations over an extensive area</i> |
| | SNCI and ancient woodland within site and nearby SNCIs and SSSI | | | | |
| Historic environment and settings and cultural influences | <i>No significant historic features</i> | <i>Historic features but not relating to landscape</i> | <i>Some historic features relate to landscape</i> | <i>Some prominent historic features</i> | <i>Historic features are prominent in the landscape</i> |
| | A number of listed buildings but limited intervisibility (although views available from listed building close to northern edge) | | | | |
| Recreation | <i>Little or no recreational use</i> | <i>Low level informal or local recreational use</i> | <i>Locally significant recreational use or attraction</i> | <i>Well used for recreation, greater than local attraction</i> | <i>Important for recreation for locals and visitors</i> |
| | The site forms a link between Midhurst Common, to the east, and the Steadham Common to the west, traversed by a number of paths and bridleways, including the Serpent Trail. An important contribution to Special Qualities | | | | |

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Overall sensitivity to extraction

Landscape character sensitivity: Medium high

21. The site corresponds in part to the key characteristics highlighted in the LCA for the Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic character area, being heavily modified by coniferous plantations. Although the site is partly comprised of conifer plantation with a managed character it also contains adjacent woodland and part of an SNCI. Overall there is a sense of rurality, remoteness and tranquillity which is locally affected by the forestry operations and the road. The site provides multiple ecosystem services including timber production, regulation of soil erosion and water flow, a sense of tranquillity which, combined with the importance of the site as a recreational experience, contribute to the Special Qualities of the SDNP.

Visual sensitivity: Medium high

22. The site is not widely visible but there are sensitive view receptors on the Serpent Trail and on Midhurst Common with some views from the Rother valley in which the site's northern edge forms the wooded skyline, and slopes beyond the valley to the north. There is a possibility of views back from the South Downs.

Landscape value: Medium high

23. The key value of the site is that it is within the SDNP and displays several Special Qualities. In addition, it contains a designated nature site and contributes significantly to the recreational value of the area.

Sensitivity to extraction: Medium-high

24. Overall, the site is considered to have a Medium high sensitivity, with the areas of ancient woodland and the setting of the Serpent Trail of greatest sensitivity.

Landscape capacity, including potential for net gain

25. Although predominantly comprising plantation forest restricting views into the area and potentially enabling the visual containment of extraction activities within existing tree cover, the site has areas of ancient woodland and a small part of the Midhurst Common SNCI which reduce the overall capacity of the landscape to accommodate development of this nature without adverse impacts on the recreation and habitat value and tranquil character of the area.

26. The southern part of the site narrows considerably, reducing scope to locate extraction away from sensitive landscape features in adjacent areas of woodland and heathland.

27. With the proximity of the existing extraction site to the northwest and the proposed adjacent Severals West site, there is potential for cumulative effects on the special qualities of the wider Wealden Farmland and Heathland Mosaic character area within the South Downs National Park.

Conclusion

28. It is judged that the site has a **Medium high sensitivity** that results in a **Moderate to Low capacity** overall for accommodating mineral extraction, with the southern and northern fringes of the site of lower capacity.
29. There is potential for the areas of coniferous plantation to be enhanced and improved upon in conjunction with the development of the site, including the creation of heathland habitats and the improvement of recreational value and the condition of landscape features.

Recommendations for mitigation and landscape opportunities

- Phasing of extraction, so that a series of small areas are developed in sequence, reducing the potential for visual intrusion that the development of large areas would result in;
- Careful siting of development and infrastructure away from the sloping northern fringe to reduce visibility from surrounding areas to the north and the A272;
- Careful siting of access tracks and roads, avoiding areas of ancient woodland and ensuring pockets of mature broad-leaf trees remain intact;
- Create and retain appropriate buffers including along the eastern edge of the site adjacent to Midhurst Common;
- Create and retain appropriate buffers around the areas of ancient woodland and the SNCI within the site, and link new planting with the existing structure of mature woodland, and the surrounding network of hedgerows and woodland, to create continuous, interconnected belts of trees and vegetation;
- Create and retain appropriate buffers around properties to the north-east of the site;
- Advanced planting around the perimeter with an appropriate mix of native species, to strengthen and reinforce existing screening of views into the site;
- Sensitive treatment of the setting of or re-routing of the footpaths, particularly the Serpent Trail, ensuring appropriate screening of views into areas of extraction.

Options for restoration after use and positive impact on ecosystem services

- Restoring the site to support a mosaic of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland, alongside the implementation of an appropriate management plan, to be agreed prior to consent;
- Returning the site to its existing profile and then restoring to woodland following extraction. Long term restoration should aim to maximise the habitat value by taking opportunities to improve habitat connectivity with the Steadham Common LNR, surrounding fragmented areas of heathland and Minstead Common to the west.
- Restoration proposals should be considered in combination with the restoration of other sites in the vicinity.

SITE CH10A DUNCTON COMMON

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SITE CH10A DUNCTON COMMON

Site location and context

1. The site is in the west of West Sussex, approximately 1.2km to the north of the village of Duncton. The site is bounded to the south by a rural lane: Duncton Common Road which runs west from the A285.
2. The site lies within the South Downs National Park, in an area of lowland plateau to the north of the chalk escarpment of the Downs. The broader landscape is characterised by dry open heathland and dense pine and oak-birch woodland, which forms an irregular mosaic covering very low, flat-topped ridges. Significant tracts of common land, once used for rough grazing and bracken or turf cutting, are also found throughout the area.
3. The site itself slopes uphill to the northwest and currently consists of deciduous and coniferous woodland. Land to the northwest and south are also woodland, whilst land to the east is currently occupied by a sand pit.
4. The site lies to the west and abuts the existing sand quarry of Heath End Sandpit.

Site is likely to be available in 1-5 years. Approximate timescale anticipated for extraction is 15 to 20 years. Restoration may be phased with working and will also follow completion of extraction.

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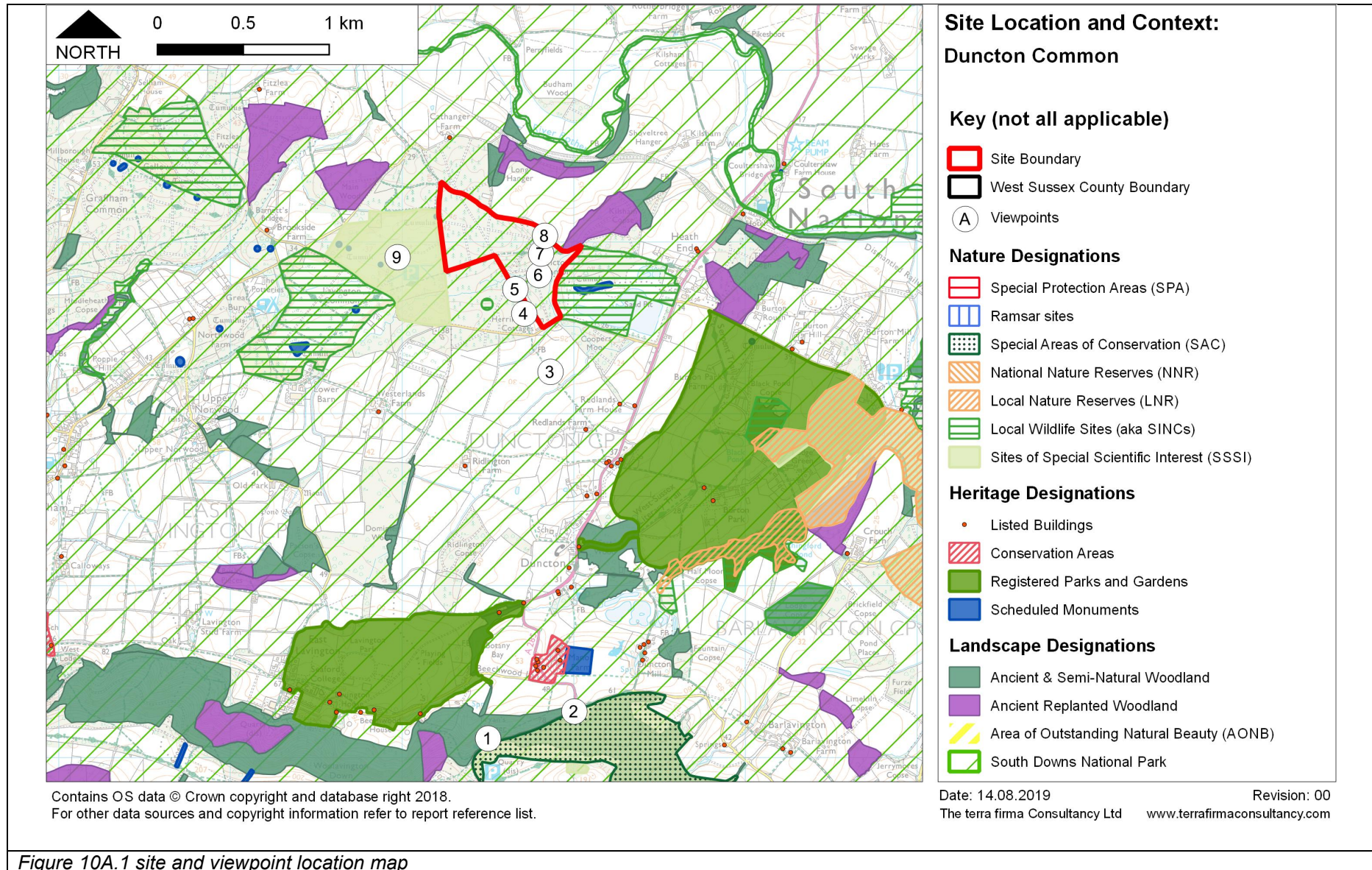


Figure 10A.1 site and viewpoint location map

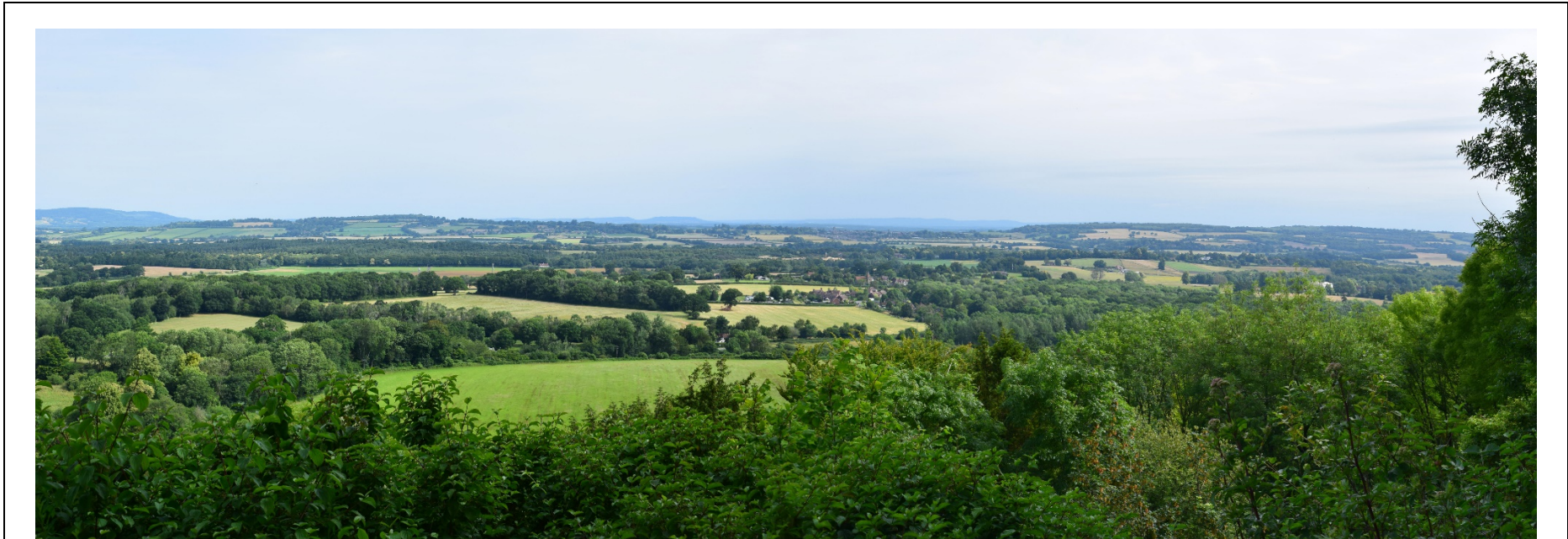


Figure 10A.2 Photograph 1 taken from Ordnance Survey viewpoint car park. This is SDNP Representative viewpoint 10: Fryan's Hanger off the A285 above Duncton). View looking northwest towards the site (with the site located to the north)



Figure 10A.2 Zoomed in view showing the existing Heath End Sandpit that lies to the left of Duncton Church Spire (middle/ centre of picture).



Figure 10A.3 – *Photograph 2 from rural lane to the south of Duncton Mill. Top of tree canopies (on the site) visible in the middle distance against rising ground that forms a significant part of the north-facing views across the Weald from the lane beneath Duncton Hanger escarpment (located to the south),*

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Figure 10A.4 – Photograph 3 taken from footpath to the south of the site. Group of mature trees to right of Herringbroom Cottages form the southern boundary. The remaining site lies behind the Cottages and to the left behind existing belt of trees. Duncton Common Road is along this well vegetated edge facing farmland.



Figure 10A.5 - Photograph 4 taken from footpath looking north towards the site.



Figure 10A.6 - Photograph 5 6 taken from footpath looking east into the site.



Figure 10A.7 – Photograph 6 taken from footpath crossing the site at bridge crossing stream.

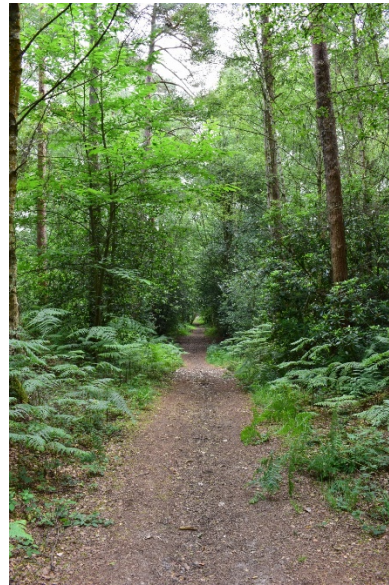


Figure 10A.8 - Photograph 7 taken internally from footpath looking east along The Serpent Trail.



Figure 10A.9 – Photograph 8 taken internally from footpath looking west into area of open heathland situated along the Sites' northern edge



Figure 10A.10 - Photograph 9 taken from within Lavington Common looking due east. The belt of Pine trees straight ahead defines the western edge of the site.



Figure 10A.11 – Photograph 10 taken from the north looking south towards the site from farm gateway / roadside opposite The Lodge and gates out of Petworth Park (National Trust).



Figure 10A.11 – Photograph 11 taken from the north looking south towards the site from Upperton recreation ground, linked to Serpent Trail.



Figure 10A.11 - Photograph 12 taken from the north (of the A272) looking south towards the site from rural lane next to The Manor of Dean.



Figure 10A.11 - Photograph 13 taken from the north (of the A272) looking south towards the site from rural lane below The Manor of Dean.



Figure 10A.11 - Photograph 14 taken from the north looking south towards the site. .



Figure 10A.11 – Photograph 15 taken from the north looking south towards the site from recreation ground at Upperton / Tillington. The site is within the wooded setting. Photograph illustrates typical intervisibility between the landscape character areas.

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Characterisation of the site

5. Relevant key characteristics, ecosystem services, forces for change and guidelines for the National Character Areas are described in the introductory section as they apply to all the 9 Sites. Details of WSCC and SDNPA landscape character assessments are set out below.

National Character Area Wealden Greensand (see introduction)

Key characteristics from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths:
 - Very low, flat topped sandstone ridges cut by small streams running south to north.
 - Large swathes of heather dominate the distinctive heaths of Iping and Ambersham
 - Commons, with smaller patches occurring elsewhere.
 - Extensive areas of pine and oak-birch woodland which border the heaths.
 - Rough-grazed agricultural land and horse paddocks.
 - A few straight roads and dead-end tracks.
 - Ancient earthworks and banks.
 - Isolated cottages and farms.
 - Views limited by tracts of dense woodland.
 - Localised suburban style development along roads.
 - Sand quarries.
 - Ponds.
 - Extensive tracts of Common Land.

South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic combined with LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic:
 - Slightly elevated, flat topped plateau formed from sandstones of the Folkestone formation, reaching 65m at Ambersham Common.
 - Well-drained sandy soils support a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
 - Large areas of modern woodland plantations covering areas of former common land and earlier blocks of ancient (probably medieval) woodland.
 - An intimate mix of semi-natural habitats and agriculture creating valuable foraging and over-wintering Sites for a range of bird species.

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- Numerous Bronze Age barrow cemeteries are indicative of a prehistoric ritual landscape.
- Roman roads and a posting station at Hardham reinforce the historic function of the area as a landscape to traverse rather than settle.
- Settlement is relatively late, comprising isolated farmsteads of 18th-19th century origin set within areas of recent enclosure, and 'squatter' settlement on the edges of the common land.
- Includes the planned medieval market town of Midhurst, constructed from local sandstones.
- Remnant unenclosed commons are of cultural and historic significance and provide open access for recreation.
- Large number of sand pits indicating the economic value of the sands of the Folkestone Beds.

Land management guidelines from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths:
 - Conserve the largely undeveloped character of the landscape.
 - Conserve the historic character of the area, including features such as Bronze Age barrows, historic parklands and millponds and mills.
 - Conserve, manage and extend extensive wet and dry heathlands using sound heathland management techniques, taking account of prehistoric heathland landscape.
 - Create heathland links through restoration of old heathland and along public rights of way, woodland and forestry rides.
 - Encourage the restoration of sand quarries to a range of habitats including heathland, sand banks and open water, to increase their wildlife value.
 - Encourage appropriate screening of all quarry works by planting, carried out in advance of quarrying wherever possible.
 - Conserve and encourage sound management of the woodland cover, promoting coppice management where appropriate.
 - Conserve areas of alder associated with streams running south to north.
 - Manage degraded hedgerows and hedgerow trees, using the trees in particular to screen development.
 - Conserve species-rich road verges.
 - Conserve and manage the old trackways and lanes with their associated banks and verge vegetation.
 - Carry out tree planting to screen unsightly buildings, linking in with existing vegetation patterns.
 - Avoid further introduction of suburban styles and materials into the landscape.
 - Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change.

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South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic combined with LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic:
 - Maintain the surviving areas of unenclosed common at Iping, Trotton, Heyshott, and Lavington, and consider opportunities for creating further unenclosed commons within the area.
 - Manage existing heathland to prevent excessive encroachment of scrub and assess potential for creating new, interconnected heathlands.
 - Conserve the extensive area of surviving early enclosures around Pythingdean and Pallingham.
 - Conserve Burton mill pond and its 18th century mill and their landscape setting.
 - Ensure that the impressive views of South Downs across the pond are maintained.
 - Manage heathland Sites at Ambersham Common, Burton Park, Coates Castle, Iping Common, Trotton Common and Lavington Common, and aim to link these Sites through new heathland creation.
 - Conserve the landscape features of the small parks at Coates Castle and Nyewood House, and the northern part of Burton Park, to ensure these parks continue to provide a sense of historic continuity.
 - Conserve the mansio (posting station) at Hardham and stretch of Roman road as features in the landscape.
 - Ensure that any further built development is integrated into its landscape context using native vegetation.
 - Conserve the medieval assarts on the edge of Coldwaltham.
 - Ensure any change in this area takes account of views from the Greensand hills to the north and the Chalk scarp to the south.

Site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area likely to be affected by extraction activities)

Landscape character criteria

Physical / natural factors

6. The site extends across a gently sloping landform, which rises to a hill (45m AOD) in the northwest corner. Approx. 28.5 Ha the site is of moderate size that comprises predominantly of coniferous woodland with occasional deciduous planting and notable specimen (potentially veteran) oak trees. Fragmented mosaic of heath and broadleaved woodland lie along the northern boundary.
7. The site is underlain by the sandstones of the Lower Greensand. It is bound to the south by a rural lane (Duncton Common Road which runs west from the A285, with land to the northwest and south also comprising woodland. Heath End sandpit to the east forms the boundary with the site.
8. The River Rother is located approximately 0.5km to the north; there is a small river/ stream running through the south-eastern part of the site which joins the River Rother to the north east. There is also a small river located approximately 0.6km to the west. The Ordnance Survey mapping indicates further small streams, brooks and water courses cross the site.

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9. Site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area) likely to be affected by extraction activities include:

- Extensive areas of pine and oak-birch woodland
- Large area of heathland
- Well-drained sandy soils that support a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
- (Potentially) Ancient earthworks and banks
- Water courses, ponds
- Forestry tracks, Public right of way and The Serpent Trail

Indirectly:

- Remnant unenclosed commons are of cultural and historic significance and provide open access for recreation.
- Woodland plantation covering areas of former common land and connected to ancient (probably medieval) Kilsham Copes associated with Duncton Common.

May be affected by noise and visual intrusion from an increase in haulage movements

- Rural, straight road likely to be historically important and part of an earlier network related to the Common and landuse
- Isolated settlements (cottages) on the edges of the common land. - disturbance to resident's amenity

Experiential

10. The site is accessible to the public footpath from a public footpath that runs north from Herringbroom Cottages on Duncton Common Road.

11. The site comprises mixed deciduous woodland and coniferous plantations giving it a sense of enclosure, increased further by the height of the trees. There are no long-distance open views from within the site, although focussed views through the site and into adjacent areas are afforded by the network of paths and rides.

12. The site has a rural quality, and the CPRE data indicates that it is within an area of medium-high tranquillity⁶⁸ and much of the site is within an area defined as 'undisturbed by noise'. The area is generally unlit except for domestic lighting associated with Herringbroom Cottages. The adjacent lane is unlit by street lamps but affected by vehicle lights. Figure 9 Tranquillity confirms this.

13. There is some variation in colour and texture due to the coniferous and deciduous tree cover, and the presence of paths that cross the site.

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Visual criteria

Visibility and key views

14. The ZTV indicates that potential visibility from the surrounding area to this site is mostly found along an east-west orientated area to the north of the site where the land slopes uphill, between the site and Tillington, with some limited availability of views from the south of the site, and largely within the 5km of it.
15. Views from within the site to the Downs in the south are restricted by existing woodland that lies between the site and Duncton Common Road.
16. Should woodland that meets the road on the southern boundary be removed, there would be a open, clear view of the site. The site is currently indiscernible amongst tree cover in views from the Open Access Land and footpaths, though the contrasting colour of sand could be visible if the site were quarried.
17. There is a degree of intervisibility between the site with the rising slopes of the Downs. From this public viewpoint excavation on the site is likely to be visible to the same extent as the existing sand quarry workings adjacent (see zoomed panoramic photograph in Figure 10A.2) It is anticipated that a similar extent of view may be possible from the South Downs Way across Graffham Down during the winter months (to be confirmed).
18. Actual visibility is largely restricted by the surrounding tree cover. With regards to the immediate surroundings, a small part of the site is visible from the road along the site's southern boundary and north-south public footpath. There is also visibility from the publicly accessible land to the west of the site and from the numerous footpaths that traverse the site.

Landscape value criteria

Landscape designations

19. The site is located within the South Downs National Park.

Condition, typicality and rarity

20. The site reflects key characteristics highlighted in the LCA for the Rother Woods and Heaths, including dense woodland, with an intensive area of pine and oak-birch woodland, sand quarries, rough-grazed agricultural land and horse paddocks.
21. The Historic Landscape Character Assessment characterises the majority of the site area as 'unimproved/unenclosed', wooded over common, Early twentieth century, AD 1914-AD1945 with some areas characterised as 'woodland' in the east.

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Cultural heritage and settings

22. There are numerous heritage assets in the surrounding area to the site. A 'Bowl Barrow' Scheduled Monument is located just beyond the western boundary, with several 'Bowl Barrow' Scheduled Monuments located close to the west and southwest of the site, and more located approximately 1km to the east. The 'Duncton Common Road Barrow Cemetery' Scheduled Monument is located approximately 100m to the east.
23. Burton Park Registered Park and Garden is located approximately 0.8km to the south east and Lavington Park Registered Park and Garden is located approximately 1.6km to the south.
24. There are several listed buildings near the site, notably a high concentration to the south east (between approximately 0.5km and 1.5km). There may be some visibility from these to the southern part of the site, depending on localised tree cover. The closest listed building is Cathanger Farmhouse which is located approximately 300m to the north, with views and its setting screened by woodland.

Natural heritage

25. The site is defined by several features of natural heritage comprising of mature oaks (remnant field boundary), dry heathland and wetland habitats, offset by area of commercial forestry (scots pine), which has a degree of inherent value,
26. Lavington Common SSSI is located immediately to the west (of the site) and directly abuts the site's western boundary.
27. There are numerous SNCIs located adjacent to and in close proximity to the site: Heath End SandPit SNCI adjacent to the site to the east; Duncton Common SNCI 250m to the south of the site; and the River Rother SNCI 0.5km to the north. Two further SNCI's are located approximately 1km to the west of the site and there is a group of approximately 6 SNCIs located roughly within 2km to the southeast. The Burton and Chingford Ponds SSSI and Burton Park LNR are located approximately 1.5km to the southeast. A SAC/SSSI (Duncton to Bignor Escarpment) is located a little over 2km to the south of the site.
28. To the east, an area classified as ancient woodland is adjacent to the site, with further extensive areas of ancient woodland within 2km.

Recreation

29. There are two footpaths that cross the site ('Duncton' FP672 – The Serpent Trail and 'Petworth' FP3527) and the Lavington bridleway BW671 runs along the northern and eastern boundary.
30. The Serpent Trail bisects the site. A 64mile long distance route linking Burton Park and the small settlement at Heath End in the east with the open access area of Lavington Common to the west (amongst many other Sites of interest along its route). Within Lavington Common (managed by the National Trust) car parking and picnic area is situated in easy walking distance along the Serpent Trail to the site's western boundary. Open Access Area present. Several rides containing non-statutory forestry paths and tracks criss-cross the site.

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Sensitivity assessment

| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landform | <i>Simple, predominantly flat</i> | <i>Simple, predominantly flat to undulating</i> | <i>Occasional variety but lacking strong complexity</i> | <i>Complex with topographical variety</i> | <i>Very complex with strong topographical variety</i> |
| | Gently undulating; rising to a low, broad topped hill in the northwest. A gentle incised valley follows the course of the stream. | | | | |
| Landcover / pattern | <i>Simple, large-scale pattern (large conifer plantations, arable fields), and/or regularly disturbed, fragmented landcover</i> | <i>Largely simple, some disturbance, largely fragmented landcover and landuse</i> | <i>Some variety, limited disturbance, a degree of consistency in pattern of landuse and landcover</i> | <i>Varied pattern with some intricacy, largely undisturbed and coherent landcover, some historic landuse pattern evident</i> | <i>Intricate, varied pattern, undisturbed consistent patterns of land cover or land use, historic field patterns</i> |
| | Predominantly coniferous plantation with occasional broadleaf trees, and a small tributary of the River Rother bisecting the site | | | | |
| Scale | <i>Large scale, featureless</i> | <i>Medium to large scale</i> | <i>Medium to small scale with occasional human scale indicators</i> | <i>Small scale with human scale indicators</i> | <i>Very small scale intricate with human scale indicators</i> |
| | Small to medium scale, with some intricacy provided by landform. | | | | |
| Enclosure | <i>Enclosed</i> | <i>Mostly enclosed, some open areas</i> | <i>Some enclosure</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> |
| | Fully enclosed by woodland, becoming more open to the northern part . | | | | |

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| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| Condition | <i>Low level of intactness with landscape elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Some intactness with some elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Generally intact with elements in reasonable state of repair</i> | <i>Intact and elements in good state of repair</i> | <i>High level of intactness and very good state of repair</i> |
| | Presence of deciduous and coniferous plantation. More intact in the northern half. | | | | |
| Typicality and rarity | <i>No rare features or weak association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Few rare features or some association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Some rare features and attributes or largely corresponding to key characteristics</i> | <i>Rare features and attributes, strong correspondence with key qualities</i> | <i>Rare features of regional importance or representative of key characteristics and qualities</i> |
| | Heathland of Lavington Common is a rare remnant and SSSI, valued in the county and for the SDNP. Fragments of open heath along the northern edge offset the coniferous plantation that cover the site, and less typical of the wider LCA. Presence of scheduled monuments add to rarity and sensitivity of this landscape. | | | | |
| Tranquillity (including noise and lighting) | <i>Not tranquil, much human activity, noise and light</i> | <i>Limited tranquillity</i> | <i>Some human activity reducing sense of tranquillity, some lighting</i> | <i>Relatively tranquil, no lighting</i> | <i>Tranquil, little human activity, noise or lighting</i> |
| | Tranquil across much of the site internally, increasing as move north offset by perceived tranquillity on the northern edge reduced by traffic noise, frequency of vehicle movements along Duncton Common Road (including quarry lorry movements) and noise emanating from operations associated with the adjacent Heath End SandPit. | | | | |
| Remoteness | <i>Presence or proximity to human activity or modern development or industrial structures e.g. utility, infrastructure</i> | <i>Close to some visible signs of human activity and modern development</i> | <i>Some sense of distance and remoteness, human activity and modern development largely absent</i> | <i>Perception of remoteness, sense of distance from human influences</i> | <i>Strong sense of remoteness; physically remote or perception of being remote</i> |
| | A sense of remoteness particularly in the northern half, although evidently this perception may alter periodically in the southern half due to it being a 'working' landscape of commercial forestry. | | | | |

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| Ecosystem services | <i>No services apparent, systems degraded</i> | <i>Limited services apparent</i> | <i>Some services apparent</i> | <i>Clear benefit/s contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> | <i>Multiple benefits contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| | <p>Within the site, stream showing signs of discolouration sediment / discharge. Water quality seriously degraded (polluted) however overall <i>multiple benefits arising from</i> existing woodland/ common/ heathland with potential for biomass energy through management (restoring an earlier and lost coppice regime), regulating and protection of the fragile, friable sandy soils, internal brooks and stream serving aquifer. Located within drinking water protected zone.</p> <p>Commercial forestry is distinctive and feature of this locality adding to the sense of place, however other habitats and history associated with former commons, ancient road system and heathland and settlement pattern with agricultural land-use part of the wider Ecosystem services. These aspects and regional footpath and public right of way network contribute to Special Qualities.</p> | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| VISUAL CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Skylines | <i>No relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Limited relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Some relationship to skyline with some complexity and interruption</i> | <i>Relationship to prominent skylines that is largely simple or with some variety and interruption</i> | <i>Strong relationship to prominent, simple and undeveloped skylines</i> |
| | At a local level the site does not form part of any significant skyline from the local area due to the gentle topography and well wooded surroundings. When viewed from high points in the wider landscape (from the north and south) the site is seen against a backdrop of woodland and wooded hangers. | | | | |
| Views and landmarks | <i>Contains no landmarks and is not a feature in local views</i> | <i>No or limited landmarks or limited significance in local views</i> | <i>Locally important landmarks or views</i> | <i>Some important landmarks, or significant views</i> | <i>Landscape includes important landmarks or is important in views across a wide area</i> |
| | Contains no distinctive landmarks although the wooded landscape generally forms part of the acknowledged qualities seen in the significant north-facing view across the Weald from viewpoint SDNP 10 Fryan's Hanger on the escarpment to the south. | | | | |
| Intervisibility | <i>Self-contained, restricted intervisibility</i> | <i>Occasional views to adjacent landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility with some neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility and strong links to neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Extensively intervisible, part of wider landscape</i> |
| | Inter-visibility with important SDNP viewpoints on the high Downs to the south; visibility from the A285 and houses to the southeast, although views across the site are restricted by tree cover. | | | | |
| Visual receptors | <i>Low number of viewers from properties and transport routes</i> | <i>Local transport routes, limited numbers of residents</i> | <i>Some visibility from main transport routes and a number of residents</i> | <i>Frequent properties and views from main transport routes</i> | <i>Higher visibility from main transport routes and large number of properties</i> |
| | Receptors likely to include users of the Serpent Trail long distance footpath and Lavington Common to the west; residents of properties in the vicinity and users of the A285 to the east; users of several footpaths and bridleways within and near the site. | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landscape designations | <i>No or limited intervisibility or relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Some intervisibility and relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Located in close proximity to a designated landscape with some intervisibility and relationship with it</i> | <i>Located within or in close proximity to a designated landscape, some significant intervisibility and association with the wider designated area</i> | <i>Located within a nationally or locally designated landscape with a strong association with the wider designated area</i> |
| | The site is within the South Downs National Park. | | | | |
| Natural heritage | <i>No landscape conservation designations</i> | <i>Limited extent of nature conservation areas and areas of ancient woodland</i> | <i>Some nature conservation designations</i> | <i>Nature conservation designations over a significant area</i> | <i>Statutory nature conservation designations over an extensive area</i> |
| | Numerous designated nature conservation Sites (SNCI), SSSI as well as remnant heathland commons and ancient woodland in close proximity and within the surrounding area, although no designation applies to the site itself. | | | | |
| Historic environment and settings and cultural influences | <i>No significant historic features</i> | <i>Historic features but not relating to landscape</i> | <i>Some historic features relate to landscape</i> | <i>Some prominent historic features</i> | <i>Historic features are prominent in the landscape</i> |
| | Heritage assets are present in the surrounding area, but inter-visibility with these is restricted by local tree cover | | | | |
| Recreation | <i>Little or no recreational use</i> | <i>Low level informal or local recreational use</i> | <i>Locally significant recreational use or attraction</i> | <i>Well used for recreation, greater than local attraction</i> | <i>Important for recreation for locals and visitors</i> |
| | Footpaths and bridleways bisect the north of the site, including the Serpents Trail long distance path that links Burton Park and the small settlement at Heath End in the east with the open access area of Lavington Common to the west that is a well-used area of open access including a picnic and car parking area is located in close proximity. An important contribution to Special Qualities. | | | | |

Overall sensitivity to extraction

Landscape character sensitivity: Medium

31. The site corresponds in part to the key characteristics highlighted in the LCA for the Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic character area, although is heavily modified by coniferous plantations. Sensitive attributes include the sense of remoteness and tranquillity and several features of higher sensitivity such as water courses, heathland, broadleaved copses, mature broadleaf trees and areas of ancient woodland.

Visual sensitivity: Medium high

32. Although entirely enclosed by coniferous forest, and further screened in views seen from the surrounding lanes and footpaths by localised tree cover, the site remains partially visible in the long distance north-facing views seen from the high, chalk ridge to the south. Views from the A285, the minor road to the south and surrounding properties are largely restricted by the tree cover and landform. The proximity of footpaths and bridleways, including the Serpent Trail, increases the overall visual sensitivity of the area.

Landscape value: Medium / high

33. The site is located within the South Downs National Park and reflects some key characteristics and qualities of the Wealden Farmland and Heathland Mosaic character type.
34. Whilst the forested low-lying landform limits inter-visibility with the surrounding area to an extent, the site forms a link between Burton Park to the east and Lavington Common to the west, traversed by a network of paths and bridleways, including the Serpent Trail. The site therefore contributes to the recreational value of the wider area.

Sensitivity to extraction:

35. Overall, the site is considered to have a **Medium High sensitivity**, with some of the key characteristics of the landscape vulnerable to change. The most sensitive area is to the northeast, due to the natural topography, proximity to ancient woodland, Open Access Land and close relationship with Lavington Common. The remaining area (coniferous area) is moderate with pockets of high sensitivity.

Landscape capacity, including potential for net gain

36. The site predominantly comprises plantation forest, restricting views into the area and enabling the visual containment of extraction activities within existing tree cover. The site is however tranquil in character and the broadleaved trees including specimen field oaks (of potential veteran status) and the water courses reduce the overall capacity of this landscape to accommodate development of this nature without adverse impacts on the characteristic landscape features and habitat value.

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37. The development of the site has the potential to affect the amenity and recreational value of the adjacent areas, as it forms a link between areas to the east and west of high recreational value. There may however be opportunity physically to re-route the Serpent Trail and the bridleways that form this important link. It should be noted however that the historic public rights of way are highly important in the South Downs National Park, and due to their important contribution to the Special Qualities any alteration may be strongly resisted by the South Downs National Park Authority.
38. With the proximity of the existing extraction quarry of Heath End to the northeast, there is potential for cumulative effects on the special qualities of the wider Wealden Farmland and Heathland Mosaic character area and on the South Downs National Park as a whole. There is the potential for extraction, seen adjacent to the existing quarry to become visually intrusive in the panoramic view from no.10 Fryan's Hanger and routes across the chalk ridge to the south.

Conclusion

39. It is judged that the site has a **Medium High sensitivity** to disturbance and therefore a **Moderate to low capacity** for accommodating mineral extraction. The northern and western fringes of the site of the lowest capacity. Within the site capacity is limited to areas of existing coniferous plantation. Moderate capacity is dependent on the protection of the mature oak veteran trees and retention of the surrounding vegetation buffer to ensure adequate level of screening remain, preventing harm to the special Qualities of the SDNP. The restoration proposals must be in keeping and clearly enhance the wider landscape character.
40. There is a long-term potential for the enhancement and improvement of the habitat value, recreational value and the condition of landscape features in conjunction with the development of the site to provide an overall environmental net gain.

Recommendations for mitigation and landscape opportunities

41. Due to capacity and landscape sensitivity in certain areas the recommendation is for the partial development of this site, based on mitigation measures that could include:
 - Phasing of extraction, so that a series of areas are developed in sequence, reducing the potential for the visual intrusion that development of the entire area at one time would result in;
 - Careful siting of access tracks and roads, avoiding pockets of mature broadleaf trees;
 - Mitigate the impact on access point onto rural roads and sensitive verges;
 - Create and retain appropriate buffers around the water courses through the site;
 - Create and retain appropriate buffers around areas of ancient woodland to the northwest of the site and link new planting with the existing structure of mature woodland;
 - Retain footpaths, bridleways and the Serpent Trail in their existing alignment, and ensure appropriate screening of views into areas of extraction activity from them.

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Options for restoration after use and positive impact on ecosystem services

- Return the site to its existing profile and reprofile to include sensitive ground modelling of former hill area in the north-west that bounds Lavington Common.
 - To be replanted and without disturbance to the existing public rights of way;
 - Retain an appropriate depth tree / vegetation buffer along the western and southern boundary to minimise visual impact;
 - The use of bunding and landform to screen extraction seen from public rights of way;
 - If unavoidable consider the re-routing and interpretation and enhancement of tracks, footpaths and bridleways, including the Serpent Trail;
 - Following extraction restore excavated areas back to a mix of dry heath and wetland habitats, utilising natural regeneration and new planting;
 - Long term restoration should aim to maximise the habitat value by taking opportunities to improve habitat connectivity with the Lavington Common to the west, and surrounding areas of mature woodland;
 - Consider the inclusion of ponds and smaller water features;
 - The inclusion of native planting to stabilise fragile soils and prevent further erosion;
- Restoration proposals should aim to reinstate a landscape capable of supporting a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including a mosaic of open heather heath, acid grassland, gorse, woody scrub, ponds and oak-birch woodland, alongside the implementation of an appropriate management plan, to be agreed prior to consent.

SITE CH10C COOPERS MOOR

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SITE CH10C COOPERS MOOR

Site location and context

1. The site is located in the west of West Sussex, approximately 1km to the north of the village of Duncton. The site is bounded to the north by Duncton Common Road which runs west from the A285. The site comprising of mixed woodland and in parts coppiced. Land to the south, east and west is open pasture. A watercourse flows through the site linked to Duncton Common.
2. The site lies within the South Downs National Park, in an area of lowland plateau to the north of the chalk escarpment of the Downs. The broader landscape is characterised by dry open heathland and dense pine and oak-birch woodland, which form an irregular patchy mosaic across very low, flat-topped ridges. Significant tracts of common land, once used for rough grazing and bracken or turf cutting, are also found in the area.

Site is likely to be available in 1-5 years. Approximate timescale anticipated for extraction is 5 to 7 years. Restoration may be phased with working and will also follow completion of extraction.

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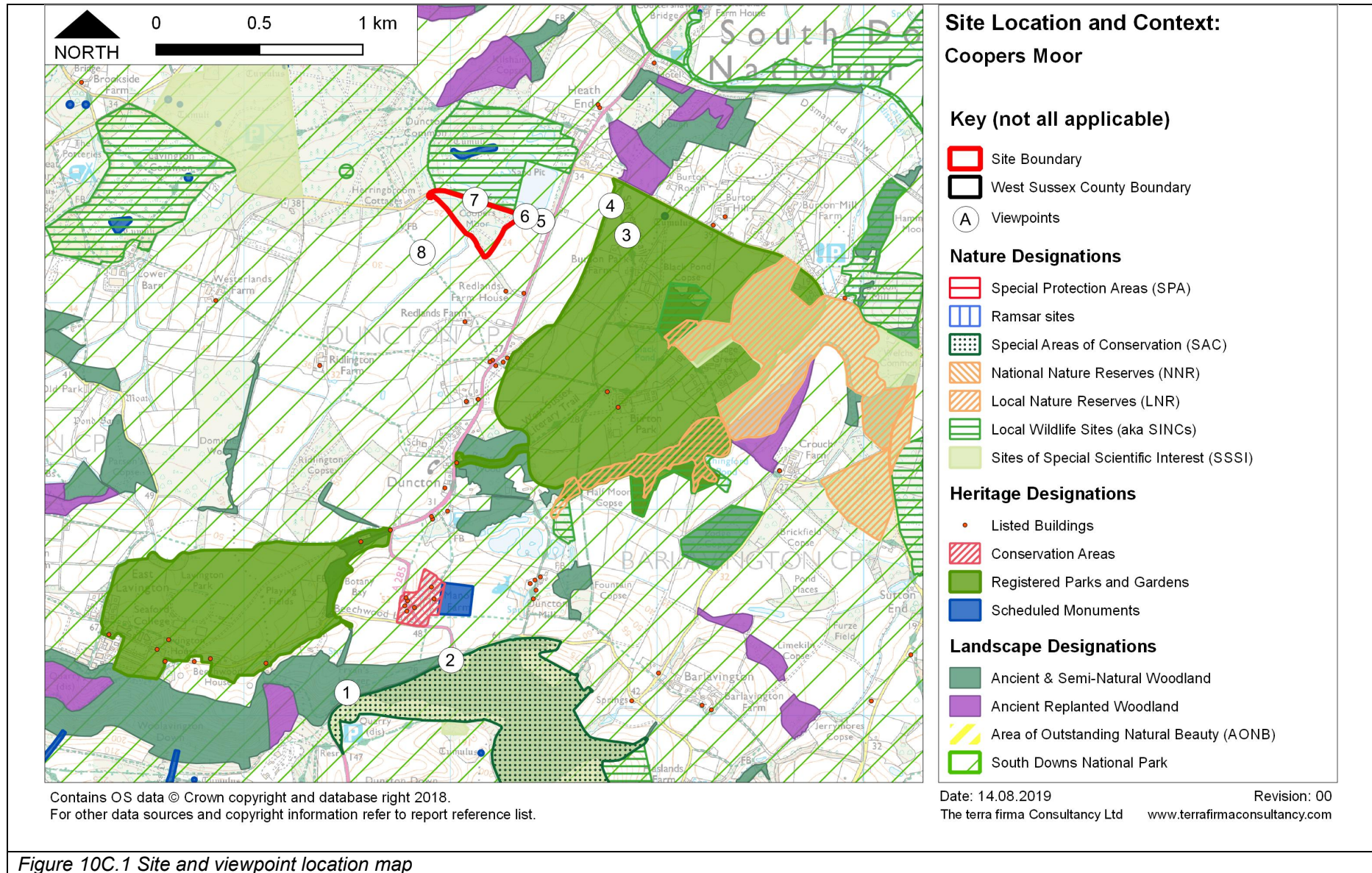


Figure 10C.1 Site and viewpoint location map



Figure 10C.2 Photograph 1 taken from Ordnance Survey viewpoint car park. This is SDNP Representative viewpoint 10: Fryan's Hanger off the A285 above Duncton). View looking northwest towards the site (with the site located to the north)



Figure 10C.2 Zoomed in view showing the existing Heath End Sandpit to the left of Duncton Church Spire in middle/ centre of picture



Figure 10C.3 – *Photograph 2 taken from rural lane south of Duncton Mill. Top of tree canopies (on the site) visible in the middle distance against rising ground that forms a significant part of the north-facing views across the Weald from the lane beneath Duncton Hanger escarpment (located to the south),*



Figure 10C.4 – Photograph 3 from the Serpent Trail looking west. The Scots Pine trees visible through the gap in the hedge / oak trees (planted along the A285 verge) screening the site behind from view.



Figure 10C.5 - Photograph 4 taken from footpath looking west. The trees on the site lie behind trees seen to the left of 'The Barn' off the A285.



Figure 10C.6 - Photograph 5 taken looking south-west from turning off A285 onto Duncton Common Road. Woodland (Coopers Moor) is in clear view forming field edge. To the right of the road lies the existing sand quarry screened by embankment and trees.



Figure 10C.7 - Photograph 6 taken looking south-west from Duncton Common Road. View of the eastern wooded edge of the site. Group of large trees (Beech and Oaks) planted at the site corners dominate the view.



Figure 10C.8 – Photograph 7 taken looking south-west from Duncton Common Road directly into Coopers Moor (northern edge).

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Figure 10C.9 – Photograph 8 taken from footpath looking north east. The site's southern, wooded edge forms the skyline.

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Characterisation of the site

3. Relevant key characteristics, ecosystem services, forces for change and guidelines for the National Character Areas are described in the introductory section as they apply to all the 9 Sites. Details of WSCC and SDNPA landscape character assessments are set out below.

National Character Area Wealden Greensand (see introduction)

Key characteristics from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths:
 - Very low, flat topped sandstone ridges cut by small streams running south to north.
 - Large swathes of heather dominate the distinctive heaths of Iping and Ambersham
 - Commons, with smaller patches occurring elsewhere.
 - Extensive areas of pine and oak-birch woodland which border the heaths.
 - Rough-grazed agricultural land and horse paddocks.
 - A few straight roads and dead-end tracks.
 - Ancient earthworks and banks.
 - Isolated cottages and farms.
 - Views limited by tracts of dense woodland.
 - Localised suburban style development along roads.
 - Sand quarries.
 - Ponds.
 - Extensive tracts of Common Land.

South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic combined with LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic:
 - Slightly elevated, flat topped plateau formed from sandstones of the Folkestone formation, reaching 65m at Ambersham Common.
 - Well-drained sandy soils support a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
 - Large areas of modern woodland plantations covering areas of former common land and earlier blocks of ancient (probably medieval) woodland.
 - An intimate mix of semi-natural habitats and agriculture creating valuable foraging and over-wintering Sites for a range of bird species.

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- Numerous Bronze Age barrow cemeteries are indicative of a prehistoric ritual landscape.
- Roman roads and a posting station at Hardham reinforce the historic function of the area as a landscape to traverse rather than settle.
- Settlement is relatively late, comprising isolated farmsteads of 18th-19th century origin set within areas of recent enclosure, and 'squatter' settlement on the edges of the common land.
- Includes the planned medieval market town of Midhurst, constructed from local sandstones.
- Remnant unenclosed commons are of cultural and historic significance and provide open access for recreation.
- Large number of sand pits indicating the economic value of the sands of the Folkestone Beds.

Land management guidelines from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths:
 - Conserve the largely undeveloped character of the landscape.
 - Conserve the historic character of the area, including features such as Bronze Age barrows, historic parklands and millponds and mills.
 - Conserve, manage and extend extensive wet and dry heathlands using sound heathland management techniques, taking account of prehistoric heathland landscape.
 - Create heathland links through restoration of old heathland and along public rights of way, woodland and forestry rides.
 - Encourage the restoration of sand quarries to a range of habitats including heathland, sand banks and open water, to increase their wildlife value.
 - Encourage appropriate screening of all quarry works by planting, carried out in advance of quarrying wherever possible.
 - Conserve and encourage sound management of the woodland cover, promoting coppice management where appropriate.
 - Conserve areas of alder associated with streams running south to north.
 - Manage degraded hedgerows and hedgerow trees, using the trees in particular to screen development.
 - Conserve species-rich road verges.
 - Conserve and manage the old trackways and lanes with their associated banks and verge vegetation.
 - Carry out tree planting to screen unsightly buildings, linking in with existing vegetation patterns.
 - Avoid further introduction of suburban styles and materials into the landscape.
 - Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change.

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South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT L: Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic combined with LCA L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic:
 - Maintain the surviving areas of unenclosed common at Iping, Trotton, Heyshott, and Lavington, and consider opportunities for creating further unenclosed commons within the area.
 - Manage existing heathland to prevent excessive encroachment of scrub and assess potential for creating new, interconnected heathlands.
 - Conserve the extensive area of surviving early enclosures around Pythingdean and Pallingham.
 - Conserve Burton mill pond and its 18th century mill and their landscape setting. Ensure that the impressive views of South Downs across the pond are maintained.
 - Manage heathland Sites at Ambersham Common, Burton Park, Coates Castle, Iping Common, Trotton Common and Lavington Common, and aim to link these Sites through new heathland creation.
 - Conserve the landscape features of the small parks at Coates Castle and Nyewood House, and the northern part of Burton Park, to ensure these parks continue to provide a sense of historic continuity.
 - Conserve the mansio (posting station) at Hardham and stretch of Roman road as features in the landscape.
 - Ensure that any further built development is integrated into its landscape context using native vegetation.
 - Conserve the medieval assarts on the edge of Coldwaltham.
 - Ensure any change in this area takes account of views from the Greensand hills to the north and the Chalk scarp to the south.

Site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area likely to be affected by extraction activities)

Landscape character criteria

Physical / natural factors

4. The site extends across a predominantly flat landform and comprising of mixed woodland (in places formerly coppiced), surrounded by a mosaic of heath, woodland and land under agricultural and grazing use. It is bound to the north by a rural lane (Duncton Common Road) which runs west from the A285, with land to the south, east and west being open pasture.
5. The site is underlain by Lower Greensand. Heath End Sandpit lies to the north beyond the road opposite the site, although this quarry is not visible due to the vegetated banking and depth of tree cover that lines the road.
6. The River Rother is located approximately 1km to the north; there is a small brook that enters the site from the south, flowing north west to join a secondary tributary in Duncton Common and on to the River Rother in the northeast. A secondary issue (brook) enters the site at its eastern corner, with potential for additional streams and ponds to be present.

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7. site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area) likely to be affected by extraction activities include:

- Areas of pine and oak-birch woodland;
- Well-drained sandy soils that support a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland;
- Ancient earthworks and banks.

Indirectly:

- Remnant unenclosed commons are of cultural and historic significance and provide open access for recreation;
- Woodland plantation covering areas of former common land and connected to ancient (probably medieval) Kilsham Copes associated with Duncton Common.

May be affected by noise and visual intrusion from an increase in haulage movements:

- Rural, straight road likely to be historically important and part of an earlier network related to the Common and land use;
- Disturbance to resident's amenity and views from isolated cottages off the A285.

Experiential

8. The site is not currently accessible to members of the public; detail is given in relation to public perception gained from public rights of way crossing the wider area).
9. The site is a triangular area of deciduous and coniferous woodland. A line of mature oak trees along the northern boundary contributes to a strong sense of vegetated enclosure along Duncton Common Road. There are views to the South Downs from the southwest boundary of the site.
10. The site has a rural quality, although the roads to the north and east decreasing the degree of tranquillity. This is reflected in the CPRE data that indicates the site is within an area of medium tranquillity⁷⁰ and within an area defined as 'disturbed by noise'⁷¹. The area is generally unlit except for domestic lighting associated with houses along the A285. This busy road is unlit by street lamps but affected by vehicle lights. Figure 9 Tranquillity in the SDNP indicates the site lies in an area of least tranquillity due to the proximity of the A285.
11. There is some variation in colour and texture seen from outside the site due to the variety of coniferous and deciduous tree species.

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Visual criteria

Visibility and key views

1. The ZTV indicates that potential visibility from the surrounding area to this site is very limited. Potential views from the southwest, from the village of Tillington, from areas to the east and west of Petworth, and an area that includes the Serpent Trail – a long distance footpath. There is clear visibility from the northern slopes of the Downs themselves, with areas of potential visibility from the South Downs Way National Trail.
2. Potential visibility from beyond 3km to the south (including the Serpent and West Sussex Literary Trails) is minimal and restricted to trees on the site absorbed within the surrounding woodland. Visibility from beyond 5km is indicated to be minimal. Actual visibility may be further restricted by tree cover.
3. Views from public rights of way descending and following the northern wooded slopes of Woolavington Down and Graffham Down are a typical feature noted within SDILCA. Figure 10C.2 illustrates the panoramic view from Fryan's Hanger off the A285 above Duncton (Representative Viewpoint 10 identified in the *South Downs National Park: View Characterisation and Analysis Study (2015)* looks northwards to the far horizon. The panorama looks northwest with the site located due north with the existing quarry and site currently indiscernible amongst tree cover in views from the South Downs Way, though the contrasting colour of sand could be visible if the site were quarried. The site would not be visible from Representative Viewpoint 18 Petworth House and Parkland and along A272 Midhurst Road due to the topography and intervening tree cover.
4. With regards to the immediate surroundings, the northern boundary of the site defined by line of mature hedgerow Oaks with mixed woodland behind. The site is clearly visible through this semi-open edge alongside Duncton Common Road. Visibility from the A285 to the east of the site across open farmland.
5. The site is visible from the higher ground to the east traversed by public footpath and bridleway including the Serpent Trail. There is clear visibility from the buildings to the east and southeast of the site. There is also clear visibility from the public footpath that runs in parallel approx. 235m from the Sites' southwest boundary.
6. The views out to the South Downs across Burton mill pond and its 18th century mill mentioned in the LCA would not be affected.

Landscape value criteria

Landscape designations

7. The site is located within the SDNPA.

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Condition, typicality and rarity

8. The woodland (whole site) is a key feature contributing to the LCA WG5 Rother Woods and Heaths and L2 Rother Farmland and Heath Mosaic character. The surrounding areas of dense woodland, with intensive areas of pine and oak-birch woodland, sand quarries, rough-grazed agricultural land and horse paddocks that border the site reflects several key characteristics highlighted for the Chichester to Rother Woods and Heaths character area.
9. The Historic Landscape Character Assessment indicates the site as 'woodland' Early Modern Plantation mixed, AD 1800-AD1913.

Cultural heritage and settings

10. The site is not subject to heritage designation however the surrounding landscape contains 15 Scheduled Monuments comprising 'Bowl Barrows' located to the west across Lavington Common/ Little Bury and northwest across Graffham Common, with 'Duncton Common round barrow cemetery' Scheduled Monument located approximately 200m to the north (although not visible from the site due to heavy tree screening along the southern boundary of the existing sand quarry pit).
11. Burton Park (Grade II) Registered Park and Garden is located approximately 0.4km to the east of the site, and 'Bowl Barrow' Scheduled Monument is located within this park. It is likely that there is visibility from the western boundary to Coopers Moor. Lavington Park Registered Park and Garden is located approximately 1.6km to the south of the site (screened by woodland and the lie of the land). A Conservation Area and Scheduled Monument is located at Manor Farm approximately 1.5km to the south of the site. Petworth House, Park & Garden (Grade I) is located approximately 3.3km to the north-north-east of the site.
12. There are several listed buildings located to the south and southeast, the closest being the Grade II Listed 'Redlands Farmhouse' and 'Milestone Cottage', both 200-250m to the southeast of the site. From these buildings the site's edge facing south-east is clear in view across open field.

Natural heritage

13. There are numerous SNCIs located adjacent or in close proximity to the site: Heath End SandPit SNCI directly adjacent to the north; the River Rother SNCI 1km to the north; Duncton Common SNCI approximately 0.4km to the northwest; Black Pond Copse SNCI located approximately 0.8km to the southeast of the site; and two further SNCIs located 1.2km and 1.7km also to the southeast. The Chingford Ponds SSSI and Burton Park LNR are located approximately 1km to the southeast of the site. There is an SAC/SSSI (Duncton to Bignor Escarpment) located a little under 2km to the south of the site.
14. There are several wooded areas classified as ancient woodland located within 2km of the site, the closest being just under 0.5km to the north.

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Recreation

15. There are no Public Rights of Way within the site. Tracks through Duncton Common are accessible linked to a wider network of footpaths and bridleways close to the site (to the north, south, east and west), including 'The Serpent Trail' (long distance footpath) to the north and east.

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Sensitivity assessment

| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landform | <i>Simple, predominantly flat</i> | <i>Simple, predominantly flat to undulating</i> | <i>Occasional variety but lacking strong complexity</i> | <i>Complex with topographical variety</i> | <i>Very complex with strong topographical variety</i> |
| | Predominantly flat to gently undulating. | | | | |
| Landcover / pattern | <i>Simple, large-scale pattern (large conifer plantations, arable fields), and/or regularly disturbed, fragmented landcover</i> | <i>Largely simple, some disturbance, largely fragmented landcover and landuse</i> | <i>Some variety, limited disturbance, a degree of consistency in pattern of landuse and landcover</i> | <i>Varied pattern with some intricacy, largely undisturbed and coherent landcover, some historic landuse pattern evident</i> | <i>Intricate, varied pattern, undisturbed consistent patterns of land cover or land use, historic field patterns</i> |
| | Mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland. South-east facing edge predominantly birch with stands of Beech and Oak at corners. Internally coppiced Sweet Chestnut (left to regenerate), with areas of Oak and Scots pine, broadly more mature to the west of the site, and with mature Oak trees along the perimeter. Is a key characteristic of the character area within the National Park. | | | | |
| Scale | <i>Large scale, featureless</i> | <i>Medium to large scale</i> | <i>Medium to small scale with occasional human scale indicators</i> | <i>Small scale with human scale indicators</i> | <i>Very small scale, intricate with human scale indicators</i> |
| | Small to medium scale. The site is of a triangular irregular shape linked to woodland covering Duncton Common to the west. | | | | |
| Enclosure | <i>Enclosed</i> | <i>Mostly enclosed, some open areas</i> | <i>Some enclosure</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> |
| | Fully enclosed (by continuous woodland) bordered by open farmland to the south | | | | |

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| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| Condition | <i>Low level of intactness with landscape elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Some intactness with some elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Generally intact with elements in reasonable state of repair</i> | <i>Intact and elements in good state of repair</i> | <i>High level of intactness and very good state of repair</i> |
| | Presence of mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland at varying stages of maturity. Good condition although somewhat reduced by lack of coppice regime. | | | | |
| Typicality and rarity | <i>No rare features or weak association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Few rare features or some association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Some rare features and attributes or largely corresponding to key characteristics</i> | <i>Rare features and attributes, strong correspondence with key qualities</i> | <i>Rare features of regional importance or representative of key characteristics and qualities</i> |
| | Woodland covering the site is a key characteristic feature highlighted in the LCA for the Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic character area; Ancient earthworks and banks visible seen and possibly associated with the historic road network and Common. Scheduled Monuments in the vicinity. | | | | |
| Tranquillity (including noise and lighting) | <i>Not tranquil, much human activity, noise and light</i> | <i>Limited tranquillity</i> | <i>Some human activity reducing sense of tranquillity, some lighting</i> | <i>Relatively tranquil, no lighting</i> | <i>Tranquil, little human activity, noise or lighting</i> |
| | Generally high to medium level of tranquillity, further reduced on edges by traffic noise. | | | | |
| Remoteness | <i>Presence or proximity to human activity or modern development or industrial structures e.g. utility, infrastructure</i> | <i>Close to some visible signs of human activity and modern development</i> | <i>Some sense of distance and remoteness, human activity and modern development largely absent</i> | <i>Perception of remoteness, sense of distance from human influences</i> | <i>Strong sense of remoteness; physically remote or perception of being remote</i> |
| | Some sense of remoteness, although evidently a 'working' landscape as adjacent to agricultural fields, rural and main roads and residential properties. | | | | |

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| Ecosystem services | <i>No services apparent, systems degraded</i> | <i>Limited services apparent</i> | <i>Some services apparent</i> | <i>Clear benefit/s contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> | <i>Multiple benefits contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> |
|---|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| <p>As an existing woodland the potential exists for biomass energy through management, regulating and protection of fragile, friable sandy soils, internal brooks and stream serving aquifer and located within drinking water protected zone. Sense of place and key feature in the landscape associated with agricultural land-use, lane network and rural settlement pattern. These aspects and regional footpath and public right of way network contribute to Special Qualities.</p> | | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| VISUAL CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Skylines | <i>No relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Limited relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Some relationship to skyline with some complexity and interruption</i> | <i>Relationship to prominent skylines that is largely simple or with some variety and interruption</i> | <i>Strong relationship to prominent, simple and undeveloped skylines</i> |
| | <p>Looking towards the site the gentle topography and well wooded surroundings mean the site does not form part of any significant skyline seen from the wider area, however at close range (Figure 10C.8) the site's southern, wooded edge forms the skyline.</p> <p>Looking away from the site the South Downs ridge forms the skyline and is a distant landmark in the South. Tree cover, residential buildings and, in parts, rising land creates the skyline to the east. Woodland obscures the skyline to the north.</p> | | | | |
| Views and landmarks | <i>Contains no landmarks and is not a feature in local views</i> | <i>No or limited landmarks or limited significance in local views</i> | <i>Locally important landmarks or views</i> | <i>Some important landmarks, or significant views</i> | <i>Landscape includes important landmarks or is important in views across a wide area</i> |
| | <p>The site does not contain any distinctive landmarks but is a distinctive wooded feature at a local level. Tree tops visible in the middle distance seen against rising ground within north-facing views across the Weald from SDNPA viewpoint V10 Fryan's Hanger and lane beneath Duncton Hanger escarpment (located to the south),</p> | | | | |
| Intervisibility | <i>Self-contained, restricted intervisibility</i> | <i>Occasional views to adjacent landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility with some neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility and strong links to neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Extensively intervisible, part of wider landscape</i> |
| | <p>Inter-visibility with the chalk ridge of the Downs to the south; partial visibility from the A285 and houses to the southeast, although views across the site are restricted by tree cover.</p> | | | | |

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| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| Visual receptors | <i>Low number of viewers from properties and transport routes</i> | <i>Local transport routes, limited numbers of residents</i> | <i>Some visibility from main transport routes and a number of residents</i> | <i>Frequent properties and views from main transport routes</i> | <i>Higher visibility from main transport routes and large number of properties</i> |
| <p>Woodland forms a visible and important landscape feature. Receptors likely to include road users on the A285 and Duncton Common Road passing to the north; residents of properties off A285 and users of the footpath passing across the open farmland to the southwest of the site likely to be most affected.</p> | | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landscape designations | <i>No or limited intervisibility or relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Some intervisibility and relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Located in close proximity to a designated landscape with some intervisibility and relationship with it</i> | <i>Located within or in close proximity to a designated landscape, some significant intervisibility and association with the wider designated area</i> | <i>Located within a nationally or locally designated landscape with a strong association with the wider designated area</i> |
| | The site is within the South Downs National Park. The landscape surrounding the site contains several important features that contribute to the key characteristics and special qualities of the Wealden Farmland and Heathland Mosaic character type. | | | | |
| Natural heritage | <i>No landscape conservation designations</i> | <i>Limited extent of nature conservation areas and areas of ancient woodland</i> | <i>Some nature conservation designations</i> | <i>Nature conservation designations over a significant area</i> | <i>Statutory nature conservation designations over an extensive area</i> |
| | site not subject to nature conservation designation. Within the immediate surroundings lie numerous SNCI, ancient woodland and SAC/SSSI. mature field boundary oaks, mixed woodland cover and former coppice management present on site, although not designated, is of habitat value. | | | | |
| Historic environment and settings and cultural influences | <i>No significant historic features</i> | <i>Historic features but not relating to landscape</i> | <i>Some historic features relate to landscape</i> | <i>Some prominent historic features</i> | <i>Historic features are prominent in the landscape</i> |
| | Heritage assets are present in the surrounding area. The 'Duncton Common Road Barrow Cemetery' Scheduled Monument is located approximately 200m to the north but visibility from these to the site is limited by tree cover. | | | | |
| Recreation | <i>Little or no recreational use</i> | <i>Low level informal or local recreational use</i> | <i>Locally significant recreational use or attraction</i> | <i>Well used for recreation, greater than local attraction</i> | <i>Important for recreation for locals and visitors</i> |
| | Public access into the site is not permitted. Footpaths, bridleways, Serpent Trial and forestry tracks in close proximity to the site. An important contribution to Special Qualities. | | | | |

Overall sensitivity to extraction

Landscape character sensitivity: Medium High

16. The site corresponds in part to the key characteristics highlighted in the LCA for the Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic character area, although is modified by planted woodland.
17. The more sensitive attributes, including the sense of remoteness and tranquillity, and features of higher sensitivity, including the water courses through the site, mature broadleaf trees concentrated in the west and around the perimeter, and young birch woodland, increase the sensitivity of the site overall.

Visual sensitivity: Medium High

18. Although entirely enclosed by woodland, and further screened in views from surrounding areas to the north by of forest and surrounding tree belts, the site is visible across open farmland to the south and in long distance north-facing views from the upper slopes of the chalk ridge to the south. Intermittent views from the A285, the minor road to the north the bridleway passing to the southwest of the site, and surrounding properties are available.

Landscape value: Medium High

19. The site is located within the SDNPA. The landscape surrounding the site contains several important features of landscape value that contribute to the key characteristics and special qualities of the Wealden Farmland and Heathland Mosaic character type. Within the immediate surroundings lie numerous SNCI, ancient woodland and SAC/SSSI adding to the Sites habitat value, although the forested low-lying landform limits inter-visibility with the surrounding area to an extent.
20. The site is located between Burton Park to the east and Lavington Common to the west. The network of paths and bridleways connecting the two areas, including the Serpent Trail, pass through an area of forest to the north that restricts views towards the site. There is little recreational value afforded by the site itself.

Sensitivity to extraction:

21. Overall, the site is considered to have a **High sensitivity**, with woodland, streams, heathland habitats and road network vulnerable to change.

Landscape capacity, including potential for net gain

22. Although comprising predominantly of woodland, enabling the visual containment of extraction activities within existing tree cover, the small-scale nature of the site, which narrows to the west, reduces the scope to mitigate against adverse impacts to surrounding receptors and on the more sensitive features within the site, such as the mature broadleaf trees and the water courses.
23. The site is also tranquil in character and overlooked by higher ground to the south, which means adequate screening of views from the ridge may not be achieved by retaining and enhancing trees and vegetation around the perimeter. These factors reduce the overall capacity of the landscape to accommodate development of this nature without adverse impacts on the habitat value and visual amenity.

Conclusion

24. It is judged that the site has a **High sensitivity** that results in a **Low capacity** for accommodating mineral extraction.
25. With the proximity of the existing extraction site to the northeast, there is potential for cumulative effects on the special qualities of the wider Wealden Farmland and Heathland Mosaic character area, within the South Downs National Park, and the potential for this type of development to visually intrude into views seen from Fryan's Hanger and the chalk ridge to the south.
26. There would only be a limited potential for the enhancement and improvement of the habitat value, recreational value and the condition of landscape features in conjunction with the development of the site.

Recommendations for mitigation and landscape opportunities

27. The recommendation is not to develop this site to the low capacity and visual sensitivity, however should circumstances result in extraction required to take place:
 - Careful siting of access tracks and roads, avoiding significant mature, broadleaf and coppiced trees;
 - Mitigate the impact on access point onto rural roads and sensitive verges;
 - Create and retain appropriate buffers around the water courses internally within the site;
 - Retain mature trees around the perimeter and reinforce with additional planting of Beech / Oak trees to improve on existing screening seen from surrounding public rights of way and residential properties;
 - Link new planting with the existing structure of woodland, tree belts and hedgerows within the surrounding farmland to the south;
 - Ensure appropriate screening of views into the site from Duncton Common Road to the north, the A285 and the public path to the southwest is included.
 - Mitigation and restoration measures would have to provide a high net gain to Ecosystem Services.

Options for restoration after use and positive impact on ecosystem services

- Returning the site to its existing profile and woodland with the existing line of water courses/ ponds accommodated following extraction.
- Long term restoration should aim to maximise the habitat value by taking opportunities to improve habitat connectivity with the Lavington Common SSSI to the west, and surrounding areas of mature woodland. Restoration proposals should aim to reinstate a landscape capable of supporting a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including a mosaic of open heather heath, acid grassland, gorse, woody scrub, ponds and oak-birch woodland, alongside the implementation of an appropriate management plan, to be agreed prior to consent.

SITE HO/2 CHANTRY LANE

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SITE HO/2 CHANTRY LANE

Site location and context

1. The site is located in central West Sussex, directly adjacent to the large village of Storrington. The site is 130m to the south of the A283 (a major tourist route) which runs from Shoreham-by-Sea, crossing the A24 before reaching Storrington, then turning north through Petworth to meet the A3 at Milford.
2. The site is an extension to an existing sand pit which sits outside of the South Downs National Park, with its northern and western boundaries coinciding with that of the Park's. The broader area is characterised by a locally undulating landform, which forms a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north. It was not possible to access the site so this assessment relies on information from publicly accessible vantage points and from satellite imagery.
3. It should be noted that since this assessment was carried out further options for accessing the site from have been proposed, including accessing directly from the A283 and diverting Sullington Lane.

Approximate timescale anticipated for start and completion for this site: 10-15 years. Available immediately.

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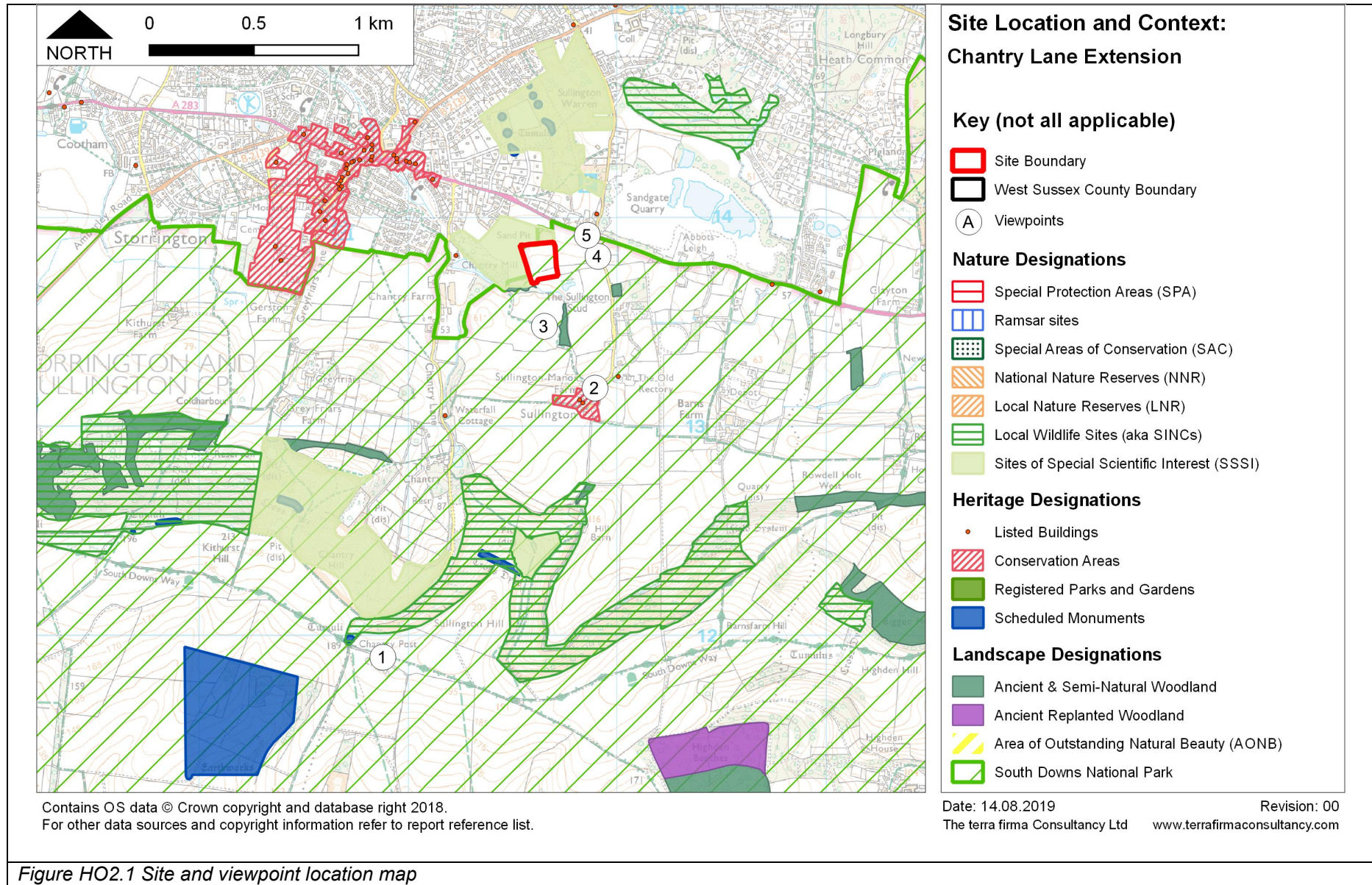


Figure HO2.1 Site and viewpoint location map



Figure HO2.2 Site photograph 1 View north from South Downs Way east of Chantry Post, approximately 2km from site. Ground plane of site is visible in distance as is exposed face of adjacent sand pit. Views will be more open in winter.

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Figure HO2.3 Site photograph 2 View north from PRoW north of Sullington Manor Farm within Sullington Conservation Area, approximately 600m from site which is not visible due to intervening vegetation. Exposed face of adjacent sand pit is visible above trees. Views may be more open in winter.



Figure HO2.4 Site photograph 3 View north from PRoW north of Sullington Manor Farm, approximately 250m from site. Ground plane of site is visible against backdrop of exposed face of adjacent sand pit.



Figure HO2.5 Site photograph 4 View west from Sullington Lane, approximately 180m from site. Partial view of ground plane of site through intervening field boundary with South Downs as a backdrop. Views may be more open in winter.



Figure HO2.6 Site photograph 5 View south-west from A283 Washington Road, approximately 180m from site. Ground plane of site is visible site through intervening field boundary with South Downs as a backdrop. Views may be more open in winter.

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Characterisation of the site

4. Relevant key characteristics, ecosystem services, forces for change and guidelines for the National Character Areas are described in the introductory section as they apply to all the 9 sites. Details of WSCC and SDNP landscape character assessments are set out below.

National Character Area Wealden Greensand (see introduction)

Key characteristics from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG7 Storrington Woods and Heaths
 - Smaller broadleaved woods.
 - Mixed arable and pasture farmland with predominantly small to medium-sized fields with a variable density of hedgerows. Hedgerows tend to be more fragmented around arable farmlands.
 - Numerous small streams with fringing woodland.
 - Many narrow, winding lanes, some sunken with exposed sandstone outcrops.
 - Sand quarries.
 - Small villages with many stone buildings (purple ironstones and honey coloured sandstones) and scattered cottages linked by narrow lanes.
 - Localised suburban development around Storrington and West Chiltington.
 - Extensive rights of way network.

South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT I: Scarp Footslopes combined with LCA I3 Arun to Adur Scarp Footslopes
 - Complex geology comprising bands of chalk, mudstones and sandstones giving rise to a locally undulating lowland landscape at the foot of the northern scarp of the *Arun to Adur Downs*.
 - Large, fertile straight-sided arable fields on the Lower Chalk geology at the foot of the scarp, enclosed in the 20th century from open fields and earlier piecemeal enclosures.
 - Small irregular fields of pasture on the less productive clay soils, which originated as woodland assarts, represent a largely intact late medieval landscape.
 - Hedgerows with mature hedgerow oaks link closely with the woodland, forming an interlocking network that is of high biodiversity value as well as creating a sense of seclusion and enclosure.
 - Streams, arising from springs at the foot of the Chalk/Upper Greensand flow northwards in narrow, hidden stream valleys, some enshrouded in woodland.
 - Field ponds, mill ponds and designed ponds are common features of the clay.

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- Villages located on the springline, e.g. Washington, are linked by the A283, which coincides largely with the character area boundary. The steep chalk scarp forms a dramatic backdrop to villages at the scarp foot.
- A network of public rights of way provides opportunities for countryside access.
- The scarp footslopes are visually dominated by the steep chalk scarp to the south, which forms a backdrop to views. Impressive panoramic views from adjacent scarp and downs reveal a pleasingly balanced woodland and farmland mosaic.

Land management guidelines from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG7 Storrington Woods and Heaths:
 - Maintain historic character, including patterns of small irregular fields and historic parks.
 - Conserve and enhance the predominantly undeveloped character.
 - Conserve the character of narrow sunken lanes.
 - Maintain and manage existing woodlands, heathlands, and streamside woodlands to create a mosaic of heathland habitats.
 - Recreate heathland wherever possible, prioritising areas which will increase connectivity.
 - Encourage woodland, tree belt, hedgerow and hedgerow tree planting in arable farmland and around urban and village edges, farm buildings, industrial sites and along major roads. Aim for a wooded network.
 - Encourage woodland tree planting on the low Folkestone Sand ridge along the Storrington to Washington stretch of the A283.
 - Ensure appropriate screening of all quarry works by planting, carried out in advance of quarrying wherever possible.
 - Restore sand quarries to heathland habitats.
 - Ensure that any improvements to the quarry roads are at a suitable scale to be well integrated into the ridge top viewpoints.
 - Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change.
 - Ensure any new development is well integrated into the wider landscape. Use woodland and hedgerow planting as appropriate.

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South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT I: Scarp Footslopes combined with LCA I3 Arun to Adur Scarp Footslopes
 - Conserve the intact medieval landscape on the clay, particularly the fields originating as woodland assarts.
 - Conserve the mosaic of acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oakbirch woodland on outcrops of sandstone and support the restoration of conifer plantations to native species.
 - Use planting to mitigate the visual impact of existing intrusive features.
 - Encourage sensitive integration of fencing, tracks, hardstanding, jumps that are associated with hobby farms or private stables and that fall outside planning control.
 - Maintain visual and physical connections between the medieval port of Steyning and the Adur Valley.
 - Use broadleaved woodland planting to screen built development and quarries.

Site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area likely to be affected by extraction activities)

Landscape character criteria

Physical / natural factors

5. The site extends across a gently sloping landform with the land rising to the north of the site. The site comprises pastoral farmland, located on an area of Grade 4 agricultural land, underlain by Upper Greensand and Gault Clay, bordering on Chalk. The existing sand pit lies adjacent to the site, and another sand pit (Sandgate Quarry) lies to the northeast. The surrounding landscape comprises open farmland bound by hedgerows and mature trees. Small areas of woodland lie to the south and west of the site although not directly adjacent to the site. A minor river lies in close proximity to the southern boundary of the site, as well as a pond in the neighbouring field to the southeast.
6. There is a designated RIG directly adjacent to the site, where the existing sand pit is located.

Experiential

7. The landscape is of a small-medium scale and has a predominantly open feeling, with some enclosure provided by trees to the south and southwest. The site comprises pasture, as does the surrounding fields. There is an existing sandpit to the west, providing an indication of how the proposed site may be altered if worked for minerals. The A283 to the north is busy, resulting in continuous movement and noise. There are houses facing the site along this road, as well as the more urban area of Storrington in close proximity to the west. Light will be generated by these buildings and also by traffic, although the road itself is unlit. As such, the site does not have a very remote or tranquil nature. CPRE data indicates that the site is within an area of low-medium tranquillity (Figure 9), and that it is within an area defined as 'disturbed by noise'. At the time of the site visit it did not appear the Chantry Lane Sand Pit was in operation.
8. Colour and texture are consistent across the site, with some variation provided by trees at the periphery.

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Visual criteria

Visibility and key views

9. The ZTV indicates that potential visibility from the surrounding area to this site is intermittent, and that it is predominantly around the area within a few kilometres of the site. There is potential visibility from an east-west orientated area to the south, with visibility ceasing at the South Downs Way National Trail. Visibility to the north is very limited, with some long-distance visibility from Pulborough to the northwest of the site.
10. With regards to the immediate surroundings, the site is visible from the A283 to the north and from the properties along this road that facing it, Sullington Lane to the east, Sullington Manor Farm to the south, and some of the buildings at the edge of Storrington to the west.
11. From within the site, the skyline comprises the South Downs when looking south, rising land to the north, and a mix of buildings and trees to the east and west.

Landscape value criteria

Landscape designations

12. The site is located within the South Downs National Park.
13. The ZTV indicates that potential visibility from the surrounding area will be available from an east-west orientated area to the south of the site, and that there will be visibility from the South Downs Way National Trail which lies 2km to the south.

Condition, typicality and rarity

14. The site is characteristic of this character area, being within a gently undulating landform, being part of a mosaic of woodland and farmland, and forming a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north.
15. The Historic Landscape Character Assessment characterises the area of the site as 'Fieldsapes': Planned Private Enclosure, Early Post-Medieval AD 1500-1599, (Characteristics which are shared by the adjacent Sullington Stud Farm).

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Cultural heritage and settings

16. The closest heritage assets to the site are the Grade II Listed Jasmine Cottage and School Cottage, 250m to the northeast of the site. There is restricted visibility towards the site from this building (with trees and other houses providing screening). The Grade II Listed Chantry Mill is sited 300m to the west of the site, with likely visibility from this building (note that it is already adjacent to a sand pit). The Sullington Conservation Area is situated 600m to the south of the site, and there is visibility from this area to the proposed Chantry Lane extension. There is a Conservation Area within the middle of Storrington, although existing houses screen this area from the proposed site. Whilst further extraction will affect views from the approaching A283, it is considered that given there is an existing sand pit, the proposed extension is not likely to result in significant additional visual effects. There is a series of Scheduled Monuments 400m to the north of the site (Bowl Barrows associated with Trinity Methodist Church). Visibility from these monuments to the site is restricted by housing.

Natural heritage

17. The Chantry Mill SSSI is directly adjacent to the site (the sand pit), whilst the Sullington Warren SSSI is 250m to the north. Heath Common SNCI is located 700m to the northeast. Sullington Hill SNCI, Amberley Mount to Sullington Hill SSSI and Kithurst Hill SNCI are all located approximately 1km to the south of the site.

18. There are a number of small areas of woodland designated as ancient woodland in proximity; the closest is adjacent to the site to the southwest.

Recreation

19. A section of the Storrington and Sullington public footpath (FP2664) runs in a northwest-southeast direction, approximately 100m to the southwest of the site, as well as 200m to the north. There is a network of bridleways to the south of the site, running through Sullington Manor Farm (BW2686).

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Sensitivity assessment

| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landform | <i>Simple, predominantly flat</i> | <i>Simple, predominantly flat to undulating</i> | <i>Occasional variety but lacking strong complexity</i> | <i>Complex with topographical variety</i> | <i>Very complex with strong topographical variety</i> |
| | Gently sloping down towards the north | | | | |
| Landcover / pattern | <i>Simple, large-scale pattern (large conifer plantations, arable fields), and/or regularly disturbed, fragmented landcover</i> | <i>Largely simple, some disturbance, largely fragmented landcover and landuse</i> | <i>Some variety, limited disturbance, a degree of consistency in pattern of landuse and landcover</i> | <i>Varied pattern with some intricacy, largely undisturbed and coherent landcover, some historic landuse pattern evident</i> | <i>Intricate, varied pattern, undisturbed consistent patterns of land cover or land use, historic field patterns</i> |
| | Pastoral farmland bound by a network of hedges and broadleaf hedgerow trees | | | | |
| Scale | <i>Large scale, featureless</i> | <i>Medium to large scale</i> | <i>Medium to small scale with occasional human scale indicators</i> | <i>Small scale with human scale indicators</i> | <i>Very small scale, intricate with human scale indicators</i> |
| | Medium scale | | | | |
| Enclosure | <i>Enclosed</i> | <i>Mostly enclosed, some open areas</i> | <i>Some enclosure</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> |
| | Located within open farmland with a limited sense of enclosure provided by lines of trees and hedgerows bounding the field and small areas of woodland to the west. | | | | |

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| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| Condition | <i>Low level of intactness with landscape elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Some intactness with some elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Generally intact with elements in reasonable state of repair</i> | <i>Intact and elements in good state of repair</i> | <i>High level of intactness and very good state of repair</i> |
| | The field structure and hedgerows are in generally good condition, with semi-mature and occasionally mature hedgerow trees linked into the wider structure of hedgerows, belts of trees and small broadleaf woodland. | | | | |
| Typicality and rarity | <i>No rare features or weak association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Few rare features or some association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Some rare features and attributes or largely corresponding to key characteristics</i> | <i>Rare features and attributes, strong correspondence with key qualities</i> | <i>Rare features of regional importance or representative of key characteristics and qualities</i> |
| | The site is characteristic of this character area, being within a gently undulating landform, being part of a mosaic of woodland and farmland, and forming a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north. | | | | |
| Tranquillity (including noise and lighting) | <i>Not tranquil, much human activity, noise and light</i> | <i>Limited tranquillity</i> | <i>Some human activity reducing sense of tranquillity, some lighting</i> | <i>Relatively tranquil, no lighting</i> | <i>Tranquil, little human activity, noise or lighting</i> |
| | Noise and light is present due to the proximity of the A283 and the village of Storrington to the north. Adjacent sand pit is also likely to have a negative effect. | | | | |
| Remoteness | <i>Presence or proximity to human activity or modern development or industrial structures e.g. utility, infrastructure</i> | <i>Close to some visible signs of human activity and modern development</i> | <i>Some sense of distance and remoteness, human activity and modern development largely absent</i> | <i>Perception of remoteness, sense of distance from human influences</i> | <i>Strong sense of remoteness; physically remote or perception of being remote</i> |
| | The site lies at the fringes of a settlement with modern development and structures visible in the surrounding area; little sense of remoteness. | | | | |
| Ecosystem services | <i>No services apparent, systems degraded</i> | <i>Limited services apparent</i> | <i>Some services apparent</i> | <i>Clear benefit/s contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> | <i>Multiple benefits contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> |
| | Some sense of place and history, nearby footpaths, limited contribution to Special Qualities | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| VISUAL CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Skylines | <i>No relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Limited relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Some relationship to skyline with some complexity and interruption</i> | <i>Relationship to prominent skylines that is largely simple or with some variety and interruption</i> | <i>Strong relationship to prominent, simple and undeveloped skylines</i> |
| | The site does not form important skyline which is formed by backdrop of woodland/houses on Washington Road and South Downs | | | | |
| Views and landmarks | <i>Contains no landmarks and is not a feature in local views</i> | <i>No or limited landmarks or limited significance in local views</i> | <i>Locally important landmarks or views</i> | <i>Some important landmarks, or significant views</i> | <i>Landscape includes important landmarks or is important in views across a wide area</i> |
| | Contains no distinctive landmarks but is part of foreground of panoramic views of South Downs from Washington Road. | | | | |
| Intervisibility | <i>Self-contained, restricted intervisibility</i> | <i>Occasional views to adjacent landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility with some neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility and strong links to neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Extensively intervisible, part of wider landscape</i> |
| | Views to South Downs and views back to site, views from adjacent PRoW and from Washington Road. Possible views from nearby properties. | | | | |
| Visual receptors | <i>Low number of viewers from properties and transport routes</i> | <i>Local transport routes, limited numbers of residents</i> | <i>Some visibility from main transport routes and a number of residents</i> | <i>Frequent properties and views from main transport routes</i> | <i>Higher visibility from main transport routes and large number of properties</i> |
| | Sensitive view receptors on PRoW, residents of a small number of houses, views from South Downs Way. Some visibility from A283 Washington Road. | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landscape designations | <i>No or limited intervisibility or relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Some intervisibility and relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Located in close proximity to a designated landscape with some intervisibility and relationship with it</i> | <i>Located within or in close proximity to a designated landscape, some significant intervisibility and association with the wider designated area</i> | <i>Located within a nationally or locally designated landscape with a strong association with the wider designated area</i> |
| | <i>The site is within the SDNP</i> | | | | |
| Natural heritage | <i>No landscape conservation designations</i> | <i>Limited extent of nature conservation areas and areas of ancient woodland</i> | <i>Some nature conservation designations</i> | <i>Nature conservation designations over a significant area</i> | <i>Statutory nature conservation designations over an extensive area</i> |
| | <i>No designation on site but adjacent to Chantry Mill SSSI and some small areas of Ancient Woodland</i> | | | | |
| Historic environment and settings and cultural influences | <i>No significant historic features</i> | <i>Historic features but not relating to landscape</i> | <i>Some historic features relate to landscape</i> | <i>Some prominent historic features</i> | <i>Historic features are prominent in the landscape</i> |
| | <i>Some listed buildings and Sullington Conservation Area in the vicinity but limited intervisibility</i> | | | | |
| Recreation | <i>Little or no recreational use</i> | <i>Low level informal or local recreational use</i> | <i>Locally significant recreational use or attraction</i> | <i>Well used for recreation, greater than local attraction</i> | <i>Important for recreation for locals and visitors</i> |
| | <i>No public access on the site but PRow near to south and west of site.</i> | | | | |

Overall sensitivity to extraction

Landscape character sensitivity: Medium

20. The site comprises of a pastoral field defined by hedgerows and trees and retains some sense of rurality despite the adjacent settlement, sand pit and A283. The site provides limited ecosystem services including some sense of place and a limited contribution to the Special Qualities of the SDNP.

Visual sensitivity: Medium

21. There is intervisibility with the South Downs ridge and the PRow to the south and west of the site where view receptors will have high sensitivity and with the A283 Washington Road to the north.

Landscape value sensitivity: Medium

22. The key value of the site is that it is within the SDNP displaying limited Special Qualities. In addition there are some nearby nature designations and heritage assets.

Sensitivity to Extraction:

23. Overall, the site is considered to have a **Medium sensitivity** to extraction.

Landscape capacity, including potential for net gain

24. Although partially enclosed, with some views into the site somewhat limited by existing vegetation, there is some intervisibility with the South Downs and the site contributes to the foreground of views south from the A283 which reduces the capacity of the landscape to accommodate development of this nature without adverse effects on the surrounding area including some of the Special Qualities such as views to the Downs.
25. In addition, any proposed site access via Sullington Lane has the potential to adversely affect the wider approach to Sullington Conservation Area. With the proximity of the adjacent Chantry Lane extraction site to the west and nearby Sandgate Quarry to the north there is potential for cumulative effects on the wider Arun to Adur Scarp Footslopes character area within the SDNP.

Conclusion

26. It is judged that the site has a **Medium sensitivity** that results in a **Moderate capacity** overall for accommodating mineral extraction.
27. There is a long-term potential for the enhancement and improvement of the habitat value, recreational value and the condition of landscape features in conjunction with the development of the site to provide an overall environmental net gain.

Recommendations for mitigation and landscape opportunities

- Advanced planting around the perimeter, particularly to the south and east, with an appropriate mix of native species, to strengthen and reinforce existing screening of views into the site;
- Careful siting of access tracks and roads, avoiding impacts on the wider setting of Sullington Conservation Area, surrounding areas of woodland and copses and ensuring tree belts, hedgerows and mature stands of trees remain intact as far as possible;
- Create and retain appropriate buffers around the woodland, copses and tree belts abutting the site and link new planting with this, and to the existing network of hedgerows and mature trees, to create continuous, interconnected belts of trees and vegetation;
- Ensure appropriate screening of views into the site from the South Downs, surrounding PRow, Sullington Conservation Area and areas of open access land.

Options for restoration after use and positive impact on ecosystem services

- Restoring all or parts of the site to support a mix of nationally important heathland habitats including open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland, alongside the implementation of an appropriate management plan, to be agreed prior to consent;
- Returning the site to its existing profile and then restoring to agricultural use following extraction. Long term restoration should aim to maximise the habitat value of the farmland, minimising soil erosion and pollution (of soil and ground water), and to improve the historic and landscape character by restoring and enhancing hedgerows and woodland structure.
- Opportunities should be taken to improve habitat connectivity.
- Restoration proposals should be considered in combination with the restoration of the existing Chantry Lane site to the west.

SITE HO/4A HAM FARM

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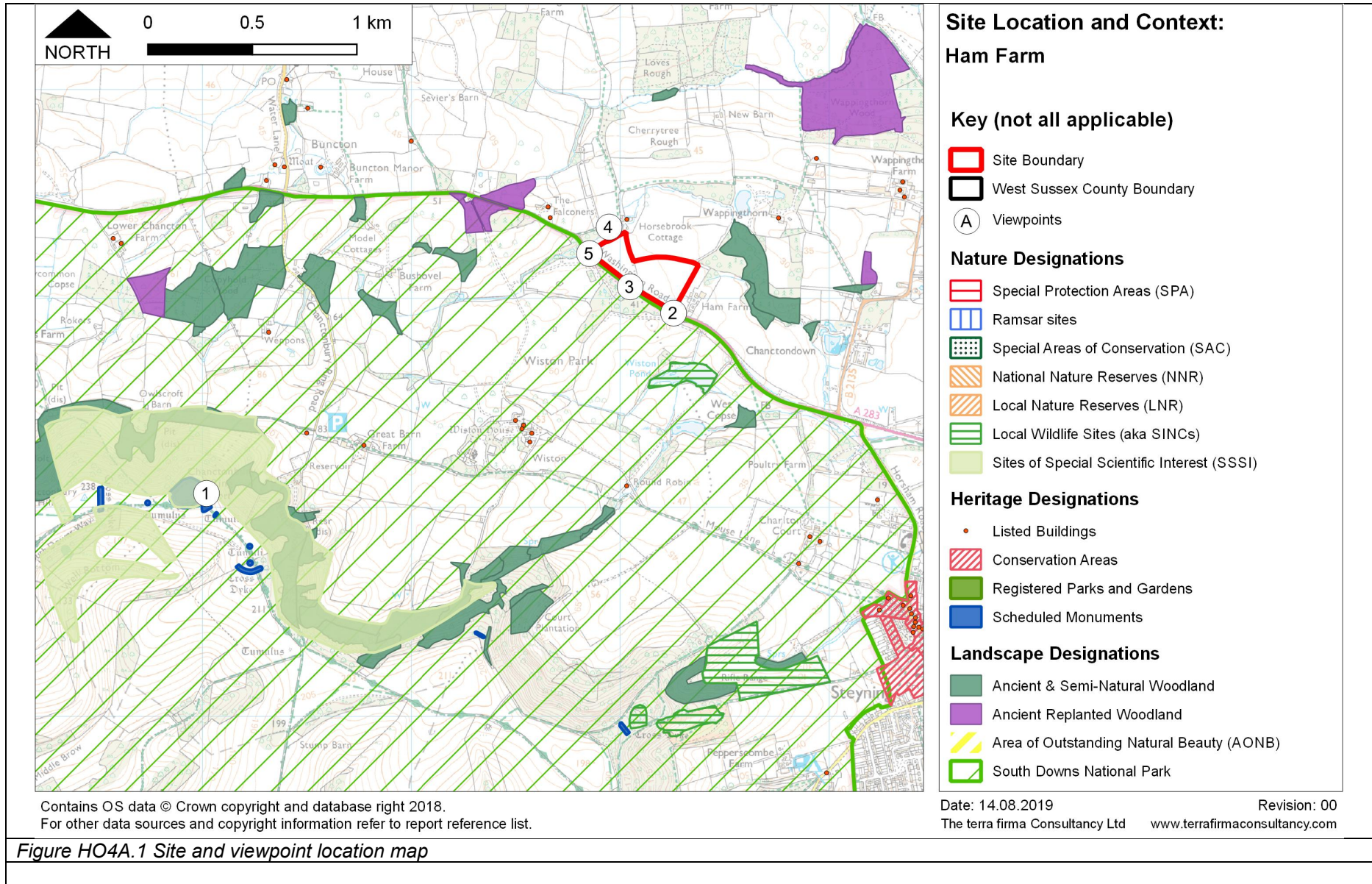
SITE HO/4A HAM FARM

Site location and context

1. The site is located within 2km to the northwest of the small town of Steyning and is bounded to the south by the A283.
2. The site is located in southeast of West Sussex, within a wider area characterised by undulating ridges and vales, with intermittent views of the chalk escarpment to the south. The site is outside of the South Downs National Park, although its southern boundary is adjacent to the northern boundary of the Park. Within the Park, Chanctonbury Hill lies to the southwest of the site, whilst Steyning Round Hill lies to the southeast. Chanctonbury Ring hill fort lies 2.4km to the southwest of the site.
3. The site consists of two fields, each under arable use and separated by a line of trees. The site is bordered by arable fields, with woodland bordering it to the northeast. There is housing adjacent to the site to the west and east (Ham Farm, Hammes Farm and Horsebrook Cottage). There is a small river approximately 400m to the south of the site and a small river located 900m to the east of the site. The River Rother is located approximately 1.5km to the north. This site has been reduced in area since the previous studies in 2011 and 2015, with the northern part of the larger field and the land surrounding Ham Farm no longer included.

Approximate timescale anticipated for start and completion for this site: Circa 10 years. Available 1-5 years.

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Figure HO4A.2 Site photograph 1 View north-east from Chanctonbury Ring, approximately 2.2km from site. Ground plane of larger field is visible in distance, beyond Wiston Park. Views may be more open in winter.

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Figure HO4A.3 Site photograph 2 View north from A283 Washington Road, on southern boundary of site, across eastern part of site with most of site openly visible.

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Figure HO4A.4 Site photograph 3 View north from A283 Washington Road, on southern boundary of site, across western part of site with most of site openly visible.



Figure HO4A.5 Site photograph 4 View south-east from PRoW west of Horsebrook Cottage towards western part of site, approximately 60m from site. Part of ground plane of site visible through intervening vegetation



Figure HO4A.6 Site photograph 5 View east from A283 Washington Road towards site boundary. Part of ground plane of site visible through intervening vegetation

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Characterisation of the site

4. Relevant key characteristics, ecosystem services, forces for change and guidelines for the National Character Areas are described in the introductory section as they apply to all the 9 sites. Details of WSCC and SDNP landscape character assessments are set out below.

National Character Area Low Weald (see introduction)

Key characteristics from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA LW7 Wiston Low Weald:
 - Gently undulating landform.
 - Predominantly small to medium-sized pasture fields, enclosed by woodlands, shaws and hedgerows.
 - Isolated trees in pasture.
 - Dense cover of ancient broadleaved woodlands and conifer plantations.
 - Small stream valleys draining to the Adur.
 - Scattered country houses, some suburban in character.
 - Network of rights of way, green lanes and droveways.
 - Scattered, traditional Wealden farmsteads, cottages and a few linear villages.
 - Many small farms and cottages are concentrated along lanes with the few historic linear villages located at crossroads or road junctions.
 - Low density of winding rural lanes.

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- The site borders LCA WG8 Central Scarp Footslopes which lies to the south
 - Rolling relief of low ridges and vales.
 - Dramatic views of the chalk escarpment to the south and glimpsed views of settlements through woodland and trees.
 - Mixed farmland with fields of varied shapes and sizes on lower slopes.
 - Narrow linear woodlands often near the streams, interlaced with a varied pattern of hedgerows.
 - Numerous streams define field boundaries.
 - Density of copses, streamside woodlands and hedgerow trees increase towards the edges of settlements and lower slopes.
 - Picturesque, traditional spring-line villages and settlements.
 - Small settlement pattern often clustered or centred on manor houses, churches or mills, with a strong historic character and few suburban influences.
 - Managed parkland and estate landscapes.
 - Narrow winding lanes mainly crossing north to south, connecting settlements with the Downs. Lanes rise towards the scarp slope, often with dramatic views of scarp slope.
 - Lanes sometimes sunken and enclosed by hedgebanks.

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South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT I: Scarp Footslopes combined with LCA I3 Arun to Adur Scarp Footslopes
 - Complex geology comprising bands of chalk, mudstones and sandstones giving rise to a locally undulating lowland landscape at the foot of the northern scarp of the *Arun to Adur Downs*.
 - Large, fertile straight-sided arable fields on the Lower Chalk geology at the foot of the scarp, enclosed in the 20th century from open fields and earlier piecemeal enclosures.
 - Small irregular fields of pasture on the less productive clay soils, which originated as woodland assarts, represent a largely intact late medieval landscape.
 - Hedgerows with mature hedgerow oaks link closely with the woodland, forming an interlocking network that is of high biodiversity value as well as creating a sense of seclusion and enclosure.
 - Sandstone outcrops give rise to locally sandy soils which support areas of acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
 - Streams, arising from springs at the foot of the Chalk/Upper Greensand flow northwards in narrow, hidden stream valleys, some enshrouded in woodland.
 - Field ponds, mill ponds and designed ponds are common features of the clay.
 - Villages located on the springline, e.g. Washington, are linked by the A283, which coincides largely with the character area boundary. The steep chalk scarp forms a dramatic backdrop to villages at the scarp foot.
 - Landscape parks such as Parham are located on the less fertile Gault Clay and Lower Greensand. These add diversity and 'time depth' to the landscape.
 - A network of public rights of way provides opportunities for countryside access.
 - The scarp footslopes are visually dominated by the steep chalk scarp to the south, which forms a backdrop to views. Impressive panoramic views from adjacent scarp and downs reveal a pleasingly balanced woodland and farmland mosaic.

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Land management guidelines from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA LW7 Wiston Low Weald:
 - Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area.
 - Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodlands. Support and promote woodland industries.
 - Link hedgerows through new planting and encourage the development of hedgerow trees through tagging, especially on roadsides.
 - Create new woodlands, linking in with existing field boundaries to extend and link existing woodland areas. Encourage wooded linkage through land parcels where there are gaps in the network.
 - Maintain the historic character of the area, including the pattern of small fields and the network of green lanes and droveways. Conserve and reinstate small scale hedgerow and pasture wherever possible.
 - Maintain and restore hedgerow patterns and shaws.
 - Replant and manage isolated trees in pasture.
 - Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests.
 - Encourage landscape enhancements to existing village edges and road approaches. Plant amenity trees in villages.
 - Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change.
 - Encourage sound management of rights of way network.

- The site borders LCA WG8 Central Scarp Footslopes:
 - Conserve and maintain the open character of the scarp footslopes and views to scarp slope.
 - Conserve the largely secluded, tranquil character of the area.
 - Maintain the historic character of the area, including small-scale field patterns, historic parkland, sunken lanes and hedgebanks.
 - Maintain and restore hedgerows, especially in arable farmland.
 - Conserve and manage distinctive habitats including coppice woodlands, streamside woodlands, and vegetation around springs, ponds and small marshes.
 - Restore linear woodland across arable farmland to link with existing woodlands.
 - Aim to create good linkages via trees, woodland and hedgerows across land parcels.
 - Encourage the planting of tree groups around farm buildings and single oak trees in arable fields.
 - Encourage restoration of arable to pasture in areas with former parkland trees.
 - Conserve and enhance the character and setting of small villages and farmsteads.
 - Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change.
 - Ensure any new development is well integrated into the wider landscape. Use small woodland and new hedgerow planting as appropriate.
 - Conserve, manage and restore the historic parkland landscapes at Wiston.
 - Manage road verges to promote nature conservation importance.
 - Conserve and enhance rights of way network.

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South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT I: Scarp Footslopes combined with LCA I3 Arun to Adur Scarp Footslopes;
 - Conserve the intact medieval landscape on the clay, particularly the fields originating as woodland assarts.
 - Conserve the historic picturesque parkland landscapes such as Parham - encourage reversion of arable to pasture in these landscapes.
 - Conserve the mosaic of acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oakbirch woodland on outcrops of sandstone and support the restoration of conifer plantations to native species.
 - Use planting to mitigate the visual impact of existing intrusive features. Seek to minimise use of excessive lighting, signage and 'suburban' features on the edge of Steyning.
 - Use broadleaved woodland planting to screen built development and quarries.

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Site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area likely to be affected by extraction activities)

Landscape character criteria

Physical / natural factors

5. The site lies across a rolling and undulating landform which slopes down to the north. The Grade 3 agricultural land is based on an underlying geology of chalk. The site comprises arable farmland of medium scale and irregular fields. It is bordered on its southern, eastern and western boundaries by hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland. There is a belt of trees in the west of the site, dividing the two fields. The surrounding land use is mixed arable farming, woodland and built development, comprising occasional farm buildings and houses, and the settlement of Steyning to the southeast. A stream runs along the site's western boundary.

Experiential

6. Whilst the site is open and of a medium scale, screening around the edges creates some degree of enclosure, especially in the southwest. As one moves from the southeast corner to the northwest, more open views become available of the fields to the north of the site, the land rising gently to the north.
7. The road bordering the site to the south is busy, reducing tranquillity at this end of the site; this increases as one moves further north. Despite the presence of the road, the site has a rural character. Light will be generated by the few buildings near the site and also by traffic, although the road itself is unlit.
8. CPRE data indicates that the site lies within an area defined as 'disturbed by noise' and of medium tranquillity (Figure 9), with the more northern parts being of a higher tranquillity.

Visual criteria

Visibility and key views

9. The ZTV indicates that visibility of this site from the surrounding area will be available from the east, with some long distance visibility from the northeast around Partridge Green, from the east along the A281 and from the southeast around Upper Beeding and Shoreham-by-Sea (along the A283 and A2037). There is also potential visibility from the south up to the South Downs Way National Trail, which lies 2.3km to the south at its closest proximity. Visibility is likely to be reduced by woodland and tree cover across the surrounding area.
10. From the immediate surroundings, dense vegetative screening along much of the south boundary restricts visibility from the A283, although vegetation becomes more intermittent towards the site's western boundary, where direct views into the site from the road are possible. There is direct visibility from Ham Farm into the southeast of the site, and partial visibility from the Grade II Listed Horsebrook Cottage and adjacent PRow to the west, with some screening around the house. Visibility is also possible from the area of higher land to the north, around Cherrytree Rough.

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Landscape value criteria

Landscape designations

11. The site is located immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the South Downs National Park. Visibility of the site from the National Park is restricted to within 2km of the site to the south, including the upper slopes of the South Downs (Chanctonbury Hill and Steyning Round Hill are located within these slopes to the south) which includes the South Downs Way National Trail.

Condition, typicality and rarity

12. The site is characteristic of this area, with a gently sloping profile, views of the chalk escarpment to the south, glimpsed through woodland and trees, small-medium sized fields bound by hedgerows, with narrow bands of trees following the stream to the north and scattered farmsteads.
13. The Historic Landscape Character Assessment characterises the site area as 'Fieldsapes' Modern Field Amalgamation, Late 20th Century (AD1845-Present) The field pattern that the site sits within is older (Early-Late Post Medieval).

Cultural heritage and settings

14. There are numerous listed buildings within proximity to the site. The Grade II listed Horsebrook Cottage is directly adjacent to the site to the west (some visibility, although predominantly restricted by vegetation); Grade II listed Old Rectory and Roundhouse 300m to the west of the site (although currently screened by trees and hedgerow); Grade II listed Water Tower and Sun Room at Wappingthorn, to the northeast of the site (restricted visibility due to screening by trees); and numerous listed buildings to the southwest in the grounds of the Grade I listed Wiston House (visibility from house and buildings to the site is restricted by woodland at the northern boundary of Wiston Park, but partial views are possible from the park itself onto the site from the park's northern boundary).

Natural heritage

15. There are no nature conservation designations within the site. The closest, Wiston Pond SNCI, is located 250m to the south. Chanctonbury Hill SSSI is approximately 1.6km to the southwest. The large River Adur water meadows & Wyckham Wood SNCI is located 2.4km to the east of the site.
16. There are numerous areas of woodland classified as ancient woodland within 2.5km to the north and south of the site, with the closest being approximately 150m to the northeast.

Recreation

17. There are many public footpaths within 2km of the site, with the closest being the Wiston public footpath (FP2599) within 150m to the west and north of the site. Views from the west are limited by intervening vegetation (greater visibility may be possible from the footpath to the north where the land is higher than the site).

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Sensitivity assessment

| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landform | <i>Simple, predominantly flat</i> | <i>Simple, predominantly flat to undulating</i> | <i>Occasional variety but lacking strong complexity</i> | <i>Complex with topographical variety</i> | <i>Very complex with strong topographical variety</i> |
| | Flat to gently sloping relief. | | | | |
| Landcover / pattern | <i>Simple, large-scale pattern (large conifer plantations, arable fields), and/or regularly disturbed, fragmented landcover</i> | <i>Largely simple, some disturbance, largely fragmented landcover and landuse</i> | <i>Some variety, limited disturbance, a degree of consistency in pattern of landuse and landcover</i> | <i>Varied pattern with some intricacy, largely undisturbed and coherent landcover, some historic landuse pattern evident</i> | <i>Intricate, varied pattern, undisturbed consistent patterns of land cover or land use, historic field patterns</i> |
| | Tree cover to the north and south of the site. Hedgerows and trees within the site. | | | | |
| Scale | <i>Large scale, featureless</i> | <i>Medium to large scale</i> | <i>Medium to small scale with occasional human scale indicators</i> | <i>Small scale with human scale indicators</i> | <i>Very small scale, intricate with human scale indicators</i> |
| | Small to medium scale landscape contrasting with the vast open downs to the south. Views to the steeply rising slopes to the south enable the scale of the landscape which encompasses this site to be appreciated. | | | | |
| Enclosure | <i>Enclosed</i> | <i>Mostly enclosed, some open areas</i> | <i>Some enclosure</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> |
| | Tree belts and hedgerows bounding the fields and surrounding woodland provide a degree of enclosure, particularly in the west of the site. The northern boundary of the site partly crosses an open field. | | | | |

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| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| Condition | <i>Low level of intactness with landscape elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Some intactness with some elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Generally intact with elements in reasonable state of repair</i> | <i>Intact and elements in good state of repair</i> | <i>High level of intactness and very good state of repair</i> |
| | The field pattern and structure of hedgerows and trees are variable across the site, with a more intact structure to the west of the site. | | | | |
| Typicality and rarity | <i>No rare features or weak association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Few rare features or some association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Some rare features and attributes or largely corresponding to key characteristics</i> | <i>Rare features and attributes, strong correspondence with key qualities</i> | <i>Rare features of regional importance or representative of key characteristics and qualities</i> |
| | There is some degree of typicality with small to medium sized fields enclosed by woodlands, shaws and hedgerows and the presence of PRoW | | | | |
| Tranquillity (including noise and lighting) | <i>Not tranquil, much human activity, noise and light</i> | <i>Limited tranquillity</i> | <i>Some human activity reducing sense of tranquillity, some lighting</i> | <i>Relatively tranquil, no lighting</i> | <i>Tranquil, little human activity, noise or lighting</i> |
| | A degree of tranquillity. Noise from the A283 that bounds the site to the south reduces the tranquillity. | | | | |
| Remoteness | <i>Presence or proximity to human activity or modern development or industrial structures e.g. utility, infrastructure</i> | <i>Close to some visible signs of human activity and modern development</i> | <i>Some sense of distance and remoteness, human activity and modern development largely absent</i> | <i>Perception of remoteness, sense of distance from human influences</i> | <i>Strong sense of remoteness; physically remote or perception of being remote</i> |
| | The site has a rural character, but the proximity of the A283 and the scattered farms reduces the sense of remoteness. | | | | |
| Ecosystem services | <i>No services apparent, systems degraded</i> | <i>Limited services apparent</i> | <i>Some services apparent</i> | <i>Clear benefit/s contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> | <i>Multiple benefits contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> |
| | Some sense of place and history, nearby footpaths and stream, food production. | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| VISUAL CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Skylines | <i>No relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Limited relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Some relationship to skyline with some complexity and interruption</i> | <i>Relationship to prominent skylines that is largely simple or with some variety and interruption</i> | <i>Strong relationship to prominent, simple and undeveloped skylines</i> |
| | The low-lying gentle topography and well wooded surroundings means the site does not form part of any significant skyline from the wider area. | | | | |
| Views and landmarks | <i>Contains no landmarks and is not a feature in local views</i> | <i>No or limited landmarks or limited significance in local views</i> | <i>Locally important landmarks or views</i> | <i>Some important landmarks, or significant views</i> | <i>Landscape includes important landmarks or is important in views across a wide area</i> |
| | There are no landmarks within the site, although it is partly overlooked by the elevated slopes of the escarpment to the south. | | | | |
| Intervisibility | <i>Self-contained, restricted intervisibility</i> | <i>Occasional views to adjacent landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility with some neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility and strong links to neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Extensively intervisible, part of wider landscape</i> |
| | Views to the South Downs from the site are especially noticeable, and parts of the site would be visible from the upper north-facing slopes of the downs between Steyning Round Hill to Chanctonbury Ring. | | | | |
| Visual receptors | <i>Low number of viewers from properties and transport routes</i> | <i>Local transport routes, limited numbers of residents</i> | <i>Some visibility from main transport routes and a number of residents</i> | <i>Frequent properties and views from main transport routes</i> | <i>Higher visibility from main transport routes and large number of properties</i> |
| | Receptors include users of the A283 and residents of properties and farms located close to the site. Walkers on the South Down Way to the south are potential receptors. | | | | |

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| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landscape designations | <i>No or limited intervisibility or relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Some intervisibility and relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Located in close proximity to a designated landscape with some intervisibility and relationship with it</i> | <i>Located within or in close proximity to a designated landscape, some significant intervisibility and association with the wider designated area</i> | <i>Located within a nationally or locally designated landscape with a strong association with the wider designated area</i> |
| | The site is located immediately outside the boundary of the South Downs National Park though it shares characteristics with the adjacent Central Scarp Footslopes character area within the Park. There is also a degree of intervisibility with the chalk escarpment between Steyning Round Hill to Chanctonbury Ring to the south. | | | | |
| Natural heritage | <i>No landscape conservation designations</i> | <i>Limited extent of nature conservation areas and areas of ancient woodland</i> | <i>Some nature conservation designations</i> | <i>Nature conservation designations over a significant area</i> | <i>Statutory nature conservation designations over an extensive area</i> |
| | The site is not covered by a nature conservation designation, although some nature conservation designations lie in the vicinity and areas of ancient woodland lie close to the north-eastern boundary. | | | | |
| Historic environment and settings and cultural influences | <i>No significant historic features</i> | <i>Historic features but not relating to landscape</i> | <i>Some historic features relate to landscape</i> | <i>Some prominent historic features</i> | <i>Historic features are prominent in the landscape</i> |
| | There are numerous listed buildings within the immediate vicinity, although deciduous and coniferous trees around the site reduce the potential for intervisibility. | | | | |
| Recreation | <i>Little or no recreational use</i> | <i>Low level informal or local recreational use</i> | <i>Locally significant recreational use or attraction</i> | <i>Well used for recreation, greater than local attraction</i> | <i>Important for recreation for locals and visitors</i> |
| | There is a degree of intervisibility with the South Downs Way National Trail, and a somewhat poorly connected section of public footpath passes close to the northwest of the site, although the recreational value of the site itself is limited. | | | | |

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Overall sensitivity to extraction

Landscape character sensitivity: Medium

18. The site is of medium to small scale, comprising arable farmland with no distinctive or landmark features, although it shares characteristics with Central Scarp Footslopes character area to the south. The gently sloping profile, mature trees and hedgerows (both at the perimeter and bounding internal fields) and the water course to the west of the site increase the overall sensitivity.

Visual sensitivity: Medium

19. Intervisibility with surrounding landscape including the downs of the chalk escarpment to the south, properties in the vicinity and visibility from the A283 increase the sensitivity of the site. Long distance views of part of the site from the north-facing slopes of the chalk escarpment including the long distance path (South Downs Way) are possible, where the site forms part of the wider panorama of the low vales and ridges to the north.

Landscape value sensitivity: Medium Low

20. The site is located outside the South Downs National Park although it reflects some key characteristics of the Central Scarp Foot Slopes character type. Located close to the foot of the scarp it forms part of the setting of the dramatic slopes that rise up to the south. The site is of little direct recreational value. The site itself is of limited habitat value, although the presence of ancient woodland to the north-east and the water course at the western boundary are of some value.

Sensitivity to Extraction

21. Overall, the site is considered to have a **Medium sensitivity**.

Landscape capacity, including potential for net gain

22. Given the relatively flat landform and degree of containment provided by the existing structure of hedgerows and tree cover, there is the potential for providing appropriate screening of the site from the surrounding farmland and views from the A283 to the south. However, the visibility of the site across a broader area of the South Downs National Park and the presence of the water courses and mature vegetation reduces the capacity of the northern and western parts of the site to accommodate development.
23. Additional planting may not reduce visibility of the north-eastern part of the site from the South Downs, albeit that from this location the site will be seen within the wider panorama of the lowlands and comprise a small feature within it.

Conclusion

24. It is judged that the site has a **Medium sensitivity** that results in a **Moderate capacity** overall for accommodating mineral extraction.
25. There is a long-term potential for the enhancement and improvement of the habitat value and the condition of landscape features in conjunction with the development of the site to provide an overall environmental net gain.

Recommendations for mitigation and landscape opportunities

- Works should be carefully phased to minimise impacts;
- Perimeter mounding (using topsoil and overburden) and then planting of native trees and shrubs along the southern and eastern boundaries, including some native evergreen species, to strengthen and reinforce existing screening of views into the site from the A283, to mitigate for loss of existing trees within the access visibility splay, and to limit views from Cherrytree Rough and surrounding open farmland;
- Careful siting of entrance, access tracks and roads, avoiding impacts on views from the South Downs, surrounding areas of woodland and copses and ensuring tree belts, hedgerows and mature stands of trees remain intact as far as possible;
- Create and retain appropriate buffers around the streams, woodland, copses and tree belts abutting the site and link new planting with this, and to the existing network of hedgerows and mature trees, to create continuous, interconnected belts of trees and vegetation;

Options for restoration after use and positive impact on ecosystem services

- Reinstating the original profile of the site and returning the land to agricultural use. Restoring and improving the structure of hedgerows and hedgerow trees, with the aim of maximising farmland habitat value, and connectivity with the surrounding structure of hedgerows and lines of trees.
- Restoring all or part of the site to woodland following extraction. Long term restoration should aim to maximise the habitat value by taking opportunities to link it into the surrounding hedgerow and woodland structure.

SITE BUNCTON MANOR FARM

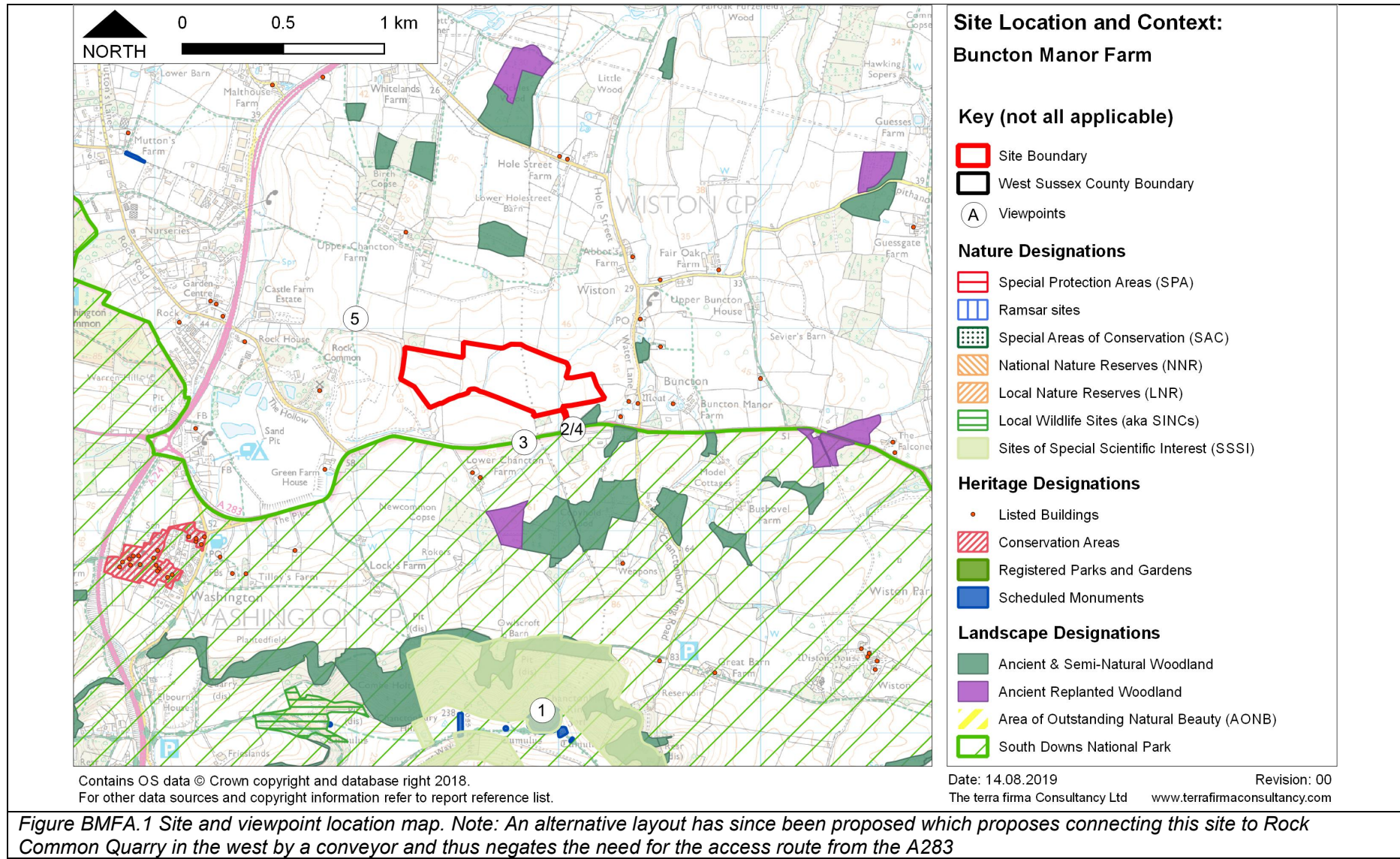
SITE BUNCTON MANOR FARM

Site location and context

1. The site lies approximately 6km to the north of Worthing and is 1.5km to the south of the village of Ashington. The main part of the site is 100 metres north of the A283. The site is bounded by existing field boundaries, including hedgerows and ditches. The site is located in central West Sussex, in an area of transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north. The main part of the site lies within 100m of the northern boundary of the South Downs National Park. The landform is gently undulating with the topography sloping down towards the north east of the site, and retains a mostly undeveloped, rural character.
2. The site comprises four agricultural fields of varying size, with a larger, recently amalgamated field in the east. It was not possible to access the site so this assessment relies on information from publicly accessible vantage points and from satellite imagery.

Approximate timescale anticipated for start and completion for this site: 10-15 years. Available 6-10 years.

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Figure BMFA.2 Site photograph 1 View north from Chanctonbury Ring, approximately 1.5km from site. Ground plane of site is visible in middle distance.

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Figure BMFA.3 Site photograph 2 View north from A283 along previously proposed site access track. Note: An alternative layout has since been proposed which proposes connecting this site to Rock Common Quarry in the west by a conveyor and thus negates the need for this access route.



Figure BMFA.4 Site photograph 3 View east along A283 on northern boundary of SDNP showing previously proposed site entrance. Note: An alternative layout has since been proposed which proposes connecting this site to Rock Common Quarry in the west by a conveyor and thus negates the need for this access route.



Figure BMFA.5 Site photograph 4 View north-east from adjacent to previously proposed site entrance across intervening field towards eastern part of site. Landform rises to restrict views of ground plane of site. Note: An alternative layout has since been proposed which proposes connecting this site to Rock Common Quarry in the west by a conveyor and thus negates the need for this access route.

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Figure BMFA.6 Site photograph 5 View east from PRow north of Rock Common approximately 250m from site boundary. Intervening vegetation restricts views of ground plane of site.

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Characterisation of the site

3. Relevant key characteristics, ecosystem services, forces for change and guidelines for the National Character Areas are described in the introductory section as they apply to all the 9 sites. Details of WSCC and SDNP landscape character assessments are set out below.

National Character Area Low Weald (see introduction)

Key characteristics from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG7 Storrington Woods and Heaths:
 - Low ridges with shallow valleys (ridge and vale).
 - Smaller broadleaved woods.
 - Wooded northern escarpment.
 - Mixed arable and pasture farmland with predominantly small to medium-sized fields with a variable density of hedgerows. Hedgerows tend to be more fragmented around arable farmlands.
 - Small patches of heathland.
 - Numerous small streams with fringing woodland.
 - Many narrow, winding lanes, some sunken with exposed sandstone outcrops.
 - Sand quarries.
 - Extensive rights of way network.

To the south the site entrance borders the South Downs National Park:

South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT I: Scarp Footslopes combined with LCA I3 Arun to Adur Scarp Footslopes;
 - Complex geology comprising bands of chalk, mudstones and sandstones giving rise to a locally undulating lowland landscape at the foot of the northern scarp of the Arun to Adur Downs.
 - Large, fertile straight-sided arable fields on the Lower Chalk geology at the foot of the scarp, enclosed in the 20th century from open fields and earlier piecemeal enclosures.
 - Small irregular fields of pasture on the less productive clay soils, which originated as woodland assarts, represent a largely intact late medieval landscape.
 - Hedgerows with mature hedgerow oaks link closely with the woodland, forming an interlocking network that is of high biodiversity value as well as creating a sense of seclusion and enclosure.

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- Sandstone outcrops give rise to locally sandy soils which support areas of acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
- Streams, arising from springs at the foot of the Chalk/Upper Greensand flow northwards in narrow, hidden stream valleys, some enshrouded in woodland.
- Villages located on the springline, e.g. Washington, are linked by the A283, which coincides largely with the character area boundary. The steep chalk scarp forms a dramatic backdrop to villages at the scarp foot.
- The scarp footslopes are visually dominated by the steep chalk scarp to the south, which forms a backdrop to views. Impressive panoramic views from adjacent scarp and downs reveal a pleasingly balanced woodland and farmland mosaic.

Land management guidelines from published landscape character assessments:

West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA):

- LCA WG7 Storrington Woods and Heaths:
 - Conserve the rich mosaic of woodland and heathland habitats, encouraging heathland landscape restoration and woodland management. Ensure that new development is well-integrated within the landscape.
 - Conserve, manage and link up existing heathland and woodland. Maintain and manage a varied heathland landscape including bare areas, woodland, scrub and wet heath.
 - Maintain historic character, including patterns of small irregular fields and historic parks.
 - Conserve and enhance the predominantly undeveloped character.
 - Conserve the character of narrow sunken lanes.
 - Conserve and retain orchards and vineyards, and plant new ones.
 - Maintain and manage existing woodlands, heathlands, and streamside woodlands to create a mosaic of heathland habitats.
 - Recreate heathland wherever possible, prioritising areas which will increase connectivity.
 - Encourage woodland, tree belt, hedgerow and hedgerow tree planting in arable farmland and around urban and village edges, farm buildings, industrial sites and along major roads. Aim for a wooded network.
 - Encourage woodland tree planting on the low Folkestone Sand ridge along the Storrington to Washington stretch of the A283.
 - Ensure appropriate screening of all quarry works by planting, carried out in advance of quarrying wherever possible.
 - Restore sand quarries to heathland habitats.
 - Ensure that any improvements to the quarry roads are at a suitable scale to be well integrated into the ridge top viewpoints.
 - Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change.
 - Ensure any new development is well integrated into the wider landscape. Use woodland and hedgerow planting as appropriate.

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To the south the site entrance borders the South Downs National Park:

South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA):

- LCT I: Scarp Footholds combined with LCA I3 Arun to Adur Scarp Footholds:
 - Conserve the intact medieval landscape on the clay, particularly the fields originating as woodland assarts.
 - Conserve the mosaic of acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oakbirch woodland on outcrops of sandstone and support the restoration of conifer plantations to native species.
 - Conserve the areas of wetland habitat which form part of, and a setting to, the Amberley Wild Brooks SSSI and the Arun valley RAMSAR.
 - Use planting to mitigate the visual impact of existing intrusive features. Seek to minimise use of excessive lighting, signage and 'suburban' features on the edge of Steyning.
 - Use broadleaved woodland planting to screen built development and quarries.

Site specific characteristics (including the site and the immediate area likely to be affected by extraction activities)

Landscape character criteria

Physical / natural factors

4. The site lies across a rolling and undulating landform which slopes down to the north. The Grade 3 agricultural land is based on an underlying geology of chalk. The site comprises arable farmland of medium scale and irregular fields. It is bordered on all boundaries by hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland with the exception of the central part of the southern boundary which appears to lack boundary vegetation. Within the site the individual fields are also separated by hedgerows with trees and the western field is partly crossed by a line of trees. The surrounding land use is mixed arable farming, woodland and built development, comprising occasional farm buildings and houses, and the settlement of Steyning to the south-east and Washington and Storrington to the west. Rock Common Sand Pit lies approximately 200m to the west. A stream runs north-south through the middle of the site. A saw mill is located to the south of the site largely within a block of woodland.

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Experiential

5. The landscape is of a medium scale and has a generally open feeling, with some enclosure provided by trees to the boundaries. The western portion is more enclosed than the eastern. The site comprises predominantly arable, as do the surrounding fields. There is an existing sandpit to the west, providing an indication of how the proposed site may be altered if worked for minerals.
6. The A283 to the south is busy, resulting in continuous movement and noise. There are a small number of houses to the east on Water Lane as well as surrounding the village of Washington to the west and a sawmill adjacent to the previously proposed site entrance. Light will be generated by these buildings and also by traffic, although the road itself is unlit. *Note: An alternative layout has since been proposed which proposes connecting this site to Rock Common Quarry in the west by a conveyor and thus negates the need for this access route.* As such, the site does not have a very remote or tranquil nature. CPRE data indicates that the site is within an area of medium to low-medium tranquillity (Figure 9), and that it is within an area defined as 'disturbed by noise'. At the time of the site visit it appeared that the Rock Common Sand Pit was in operation.
7. Colour and texture are consistent across the site, with some variation provided by trees at the periphery.

Visual criteria

Visibility and key views

8. The ZTV indicates that visibility of this site from the surrounding area will be available from the north, with some long distance visibility from the north-east around Littleworth, from the east along the A281 and from the south-east around Upper Beeding. There is also potential visibility from the south up to the South Downs Way National Trail, which lies 1.5km to the south at its closest proximity. Visibility is likely to be reduced by woodland and tree cover across the surrounding area.

Landscape value criteria

Landscape designations

9. The site entrance was originally to be located immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the South Downs National Park, however a conveyor route is now proposed linking this site to Rock Common Quarry in the west. Visibility of the site from the National Park is restricted to within 1.75km of the site to the south, including the upper slopes of the South Downs (Chanctonbury Hill and Chanctonbury Ring are located within these slopes to the south) which includes the South Downs Way National Trail.

Condition, typicality and rarity

10. The site is characteristic of this area, with a gently sloping profile, views of the chalk escarpment to the south, glimpsed through woodland and trees, small-medium sized fields bound by hedgerows, and a narrow band of trees following the stream which crosses the site.

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11. The Historic Landscape Character Assessment characterises the site area as 'Fieldsapes' Formal Enclosure (planned /private) (Early Medieval to Early Modern) in the west and Modern Field Amalgamation, Late 20th Century (AD1845-Present) The field pattern that the site sits within is older (Medieval to Post Medieval in the west and Post Medieval to Modern in the east).

Cultural heritage and settings

12. There are many listed buildings within proximity to the site. The Grade II listed Butchers Farmhouse, Yew Tree Cottage and Polecats lie approximately 120m to the south-east of the site (visibility probably limited by vegetation); Grade I listed Buncton Chapel of All Saints and the Grade II listed Buncton Manor Farmhouse and Post Office approximately 350m to the east and north-east (visibility restricted by roadside vegetation and woodland blocks) and Grade II listed Lower Chancton and Granary lie approximately 350m to the south (restricted visibility due to screening by trees). Grade II listed Rock Windmill lies approximately 350m to the west of the site (visibility probably limited by vegetation) (see Figure 4).

Natural heritage

13. There are no nature conservation designations within the site. The closest, Chanctonbury Hill SSSI, is approximately 1km to the south.
14. There are many areas of woodland classified as ancient woodland within 2.5km to the north and south of the site, with the closest being adjacent to the south-east corner of the site.

Recreation

15. There are several public footpaths within 2km of the site, with the closest being footpath 2604 within 250m to the west of the site. Views from the west are limited by intervening vegetation.

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Sensitivity assessment

| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | | | | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|--|----------------------|
| LANDSCAPE CHARACTER CRITERIA | | | | | | |
| Landform | <i>Simple, predominantly flat</i> | <i>Simple, predominantly flat to undulating</i> | <i>Occasional variety but lacking strong complexity</i> | <i>Complex with topographical variety</i> | <i>Very complex with strong topographical variety</i> | |
| | Gently undulating, sloping generally down to the north. | | | | | |
| Landcover / pattern | <i>Simple, large-scale pattern (large conifer plantations, arable fields), and/or regularly disturbed, fragmented landcover</i> | <i>Largely simple, some disturbance, largely fragmented landcover and land use</i> | <i>Some variety, limited disturbance, a degree of consistency in pattern of land use and landcover</i> | <i>Varied pattern with some intricacy, largely undisturbed and coherent landcover, some historic land use pattern evident</i> | <i>Intricate, varied pattern, undisturbed consistent patterns of land cover or land use, historic field patterns</i> | |
| | Arable farmland bound by a network of hedges and broadleaf hedgerow trees. Some individual field trees. | | | | | |
| Scale | <i>Large scale, featureless</i> | <i>Medium to large scale</i> | <i>Medium to small scale with occasional human scale indicators</i> | <i>Small scale with human scale indicators</i> | <i>Very small scale, intricate with human scale indicators</i> | |
| | Variety of scale from relatively small to medium/large. | | | | | |
| Enclosure | <i>Enclosed</i> | <i>Mostly enclosed, some open areas</i> | <i>Some enclosure</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> | <i>Generally open, enclosed in places</i> | |
| | Located within open farmland with some sense of enclosure provided by lines of trees and hedgerows bounding the field and small areas of woodland to the west. More open in the east. | | | | | |

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|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| Condition | <i>Low level of intactness with landscape elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Some intactness with some elements in poor state of repair</i> | <i>Generally intact with elements in reasonable state of repair</i> | <i>Intact and elements in good state of repair</i> | <i>High level of intactness and very good state of repair</i> |
| | The field structure and hedgerows are in generally good condition, with semi-mature and occasionally mature hedgerow trees linked into the wider structure of hedgerows, belts of trees and small broadleaf woodland. No hedgerow to part of southern boundary. | | | | |
| Typicality and rarity | <i>No rare features or weak association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Few rare features or some association with key characteristics of the landscape</i> | <i>Some rare features and attributes or largely corresponding to key characteristics</i> | <i>Rare features and attributes, strong correspondence with key qualities</i> | <i>Rare features of regional importance or representative of key characteristics and qualities</i> |
| | The site is characteristic of this character area, being within a gently undulating landform, being part of a mosaic of woodland and farmland, and forming a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north. | | | | |
| Tranquillity (including noise and lighting) | <i>Not tranquil, much human activity, noise and light</i> | <i>Limited tranquillity</i> | <i>Some human activity reducing sense of tranquillity, some lighting</i> | <i>Relatively tranquil, no lighting</i> | <i>Tranquil, little human activity, noise or lighting</i> |
| | Noise and light is present due to the proximity of the A283. Nearby sand pit is also likely to have a negative effect. | | | | |
| Remoteness | <i>Presence or proximity to human activity or modern development or industrial structures e.g. utility, infrastructure</i> | <i>Close to some visible signs of human activity and modern development</i> | <i>Some sense of distance and remoteness, human activity and modern development largely absent</i> | <i>Perception of remoteness, sense of distance from human influences</i> | <i>Strong sense of remoteness; physically remote or perception of being remote</i> |
| | The site lies close to settlements with modern development and structures visible in the surrounding area; little sense of remoteness. Sand pit nearby. | | | | |
| Ecosystem services | <i>No services apparent, systems degraded</i> | <i>Limited services apparent</i> | <i>Some services apparent</i> | <i>Clear benefit/s contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> | <i>Multiple benefits contributing to SDNP purposes and special qualities</i> |
| | Some sense of place and history, some nearby footpaths, limited contribution to Special Qualities, food production. | | | | |

**WEST SUSSEX AND SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT
SOFT SAND SINGLE ISSUE REVIEW 2019**

| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| VISUAL CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Skylines | <i>No relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Limited relationship to skyline</i> | <i>Some relationship to skyline with some complexity and interruption</i> | <i>Relationship to prominent skylines that is largely simple or with some variety and interruption</i> | <i>Strong relationship to prominent, simple and undeveloped skylines</i> |
| | The site does not form important skyline which is formed by backdrop of woodland on A283 and South Downs | | | | |
| Views and landmarks | <i>Contains no landmarks and is not a feature in local views</i> | <i>No or limited landmarks or limited significance in local views</i> | <i>Locally important landmarks or views</i> | <i>Some important landmarks, or significant views</i> | <i>Landscape includes important landmarks or is important in views across a wide area</i> |
| | Contains no distinctive landmarks and considered unlikely to form part of foreground of views of South Downs from north due to intervening vegetation. Prominent in panoramic views from Chanctonbury Hill, which is a noted viewpoint. | | | | |
| Intervisibility | <i>Self-contained, restricted intervisibility</i> | <i>Occasional views to adjacent landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility with some neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Intervisibility and strong links to neighbouring landscapes</i> | <i>Extensively intervisible, part of wider landscape</i> |
| | Panoramic views to site from South Downs including Chanctonbury Ring. Considered highly likely views back to South Downs from within site. Limited intervisibility with local PRoW and nearby properties. | | | | |
| Visual receptors | <i>Low number of viewers from properties and transport routes</i> | <i>Local transport routes, limited numbers of residents</i> | <i>Some visibility from main transport routes and a number of residents</i> | <i>Frequent properties and views from main transport routes</i> | <i>Higher visibility from main transport routes and large number of properties</i> |
| | Sensitive view receptors on South Downs Way and surrounding Open Access Land overlook the site. Limited visibility from A283, PRoW and nearby properties due to intervening vegetation. | | | | |

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SOFT SAND SINGLE ISSUE REVIEW 2019**

| LOWER SENSITIVITY ← | | → HIGHER SENSITIVITY | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA | | | | | |
| Landscape designations | <i>No or limited intervisibility or relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Some intervisibility and relationship with a locally or nationally designated landscape</i> | <i>Located in close proximity to a designated landscape with some intervisibility and relationship with it</i> | <i>Located within or in close proximity to a designated landscape, some significant intervisibility and association with the wider designated area</i> | <i>Located within a nationally or locally designated landscape with a strong association with the wider designated area</i> |
| | <i>The site is close to SDNP and forms part of its setting but their landform and landscape patterns are distinct.</i> | | | | |
| Natural heritage | <i>No landscape conservation designations</i> | <i>Limited extent of nature conservation areas and areas of ancient woodland</i> | <i>Some nature conservation designations</i> | <i>Nature conservation designations over a significant area</i> | <i>Statutory nature conservation designations over an extensive area</i> |
| | <i>No designation on site but small area of Ancient Woodland adjacent to boundary</i> | | | | |
| Historic environment and settings and cultural influences | <i>No significant historic features</i> | <i>Historic features but not relating to landscape</i> | <i>Some historic features relate to landscape</i> | <i>Some prominent historic features</i> | <i>Historic features are prominent in the landscape</i> |
| | <i>Some listed buildings in the vicinity but limited intervisibility. Views from Chanctonbury Ring Scheduled Monument overlook the site.</i> | | | | |
| Recreation | <i>Little or no recreational use</i> | <i>Low level informal or local recreational use</i> | <i>Locally significant recreational use or attraction</i> | <i>Well used for recreation, greater than local attraction</i> | <i>Important for recreation for locals and visitors</i> |
| | <i>No public access on the site or nearby PRoW. Receptors on South Downs Way may be impacted by operations.</i> | | | | |

Overall sensitivity to extraction

Landscape character sensitivity: Medium

16. The site is of medium scale, comprising arable farmland with no distinctive features and limited sense of remoteness or tranquillity. The somewhat undulating profile, mature trees and hedgerows and the watercourse increase the overall sensitivity.

Visual sensitivity: Medium / high

17. The site is visible to sensitive receptors in views from Chanctonbury Ring within the SDNP to the south but otherwise well-contained with limited intervisibility. It does not contribute to the skyline or contain landmarks and this somewhat reduces its visual sensitivity.

Landscape value: Medium

18. The site is located just outside the South Downs National Park although it reflects some key characteristics of the Central Scarp Foot Slopes character type. Located close to the foot of the scarp it forms part of the setting of the dramatic slopes that rise up to the south. The site is of no direct recreational value although forms part of views from the South Downs. The site itself is of limited habitat value, although the presence of ancient woodland adjacent to the south-east corner and the water course which crosses the site are of some value.

Sensitivity to extraction:

19. Due to the overriding visual sensitivity the site is considered to have a **Medium / high sensitivity**.

Landscape capacity, including potential for net gain

20. Given the gently undulating landform and degree of containment provided by the existing structure of hedgerows and tree cover, there is the potential for providing appropriate screening of the site from the surrounding farmland and nearby views. However, the visibility of the site across a broader area of the South Downs National Park from a noted viewpoint and the presence of the water course and mature vegetation potentially reduces the capacity of the site to accommodate development.
21. Additional boundary planting may not sufficiently reduce visibility from the South Downs to an acceptable level and may result in impact upon its special qualities, especially when seen in conjunction with the sand pit at Rock Common.

Conclusion

22. It is judged that the site has a **Medium / high sensitivity** that results in a **Moderate / low capacity** overall for accommodating mineral extraction, in line with the methodology.
23. There is a long-term potential for the enhancement and improvement of the habitat value and the condition of landscape features in conjunction with the development of the site to provide an overall environmental net gain.

Recommendations for mitigation and landscape opportunities

- Ensuring works at Rock Common Sand Pit have ceased and the landscape has been restored before commencing works on Buncton Manor Farm site to avoid cumulative effects on the special qualities of the SDNP;
- Advanced planting around the perimeter, particularly to the south, with an appropriate mix of native species, to strengthen and reinforce existing screening of views into the site;
- Phasing of works to ensure tree planting has matured and is effective in screening views from South Downs Way and Chanctonbury Hill. Commencing works within the more enclosed western part of the site.
- Careful siting of access tracks, conveyors and roads, avoiding impacts on views from the South Downs, surrounding areas of woodland and copses and ensuring tree belts, hedgerows and mature stands of trees remain intact as far as possible;
- Create and retain appropriate buffers around the streams, woodland, copses and tree belts abutting the site and link new planting with this, and to the existing network of hedgerows and mature trees, to create continuous, interconnected belts of trees and vegetation;
- Ensure appropriate screening of views into the site from the South Downs, PRow and nearby dwellings.

Options for restoration after use and positive impact on ecosystem services

- Reinstating the original profile of the site and returning the land to agricultural use. Restoring and improving the structure of hedgerows and hedgerow trees, with the aim of maximising farmland habitat value, and connectivity with the surrounding structure of hedgerows and lines of trees.
- Restoring all or part of the site to woodland following extraction. Long term restoration should aim to maximise the habitat value by taking opportunities to link it into the surrounding hedgerow and woodland structure.
- There is potential to create links with the former mineral workings site to the west which has recently been restored to pasture and scrub habitat.