

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

52 NEW STREET, ASH

OPEN: MONDAY to FRIDAY
8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
CLOSED: SATURDAY/SUNDAY

Prepared for Classicus Estates Ltd

November 2022

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I.0 INTRODUCTION

- I.1 RHLA Ltd were appointed by Classicus Estates Ltd to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) in respect of land at 52 New Street, Ash ('the Site') and the following 'Proposed Development':

“Outline planning permission with all matters reserved (except for access) for the demolition of existing buildings, including 51-53 Sandwich Road, and the erection of up to 52 new homes, including affordable, access from New Street and Sandwich Road, together with associated parking, open space, landscaping, drainage and associated infrastructure.”

- I.2 The Site is within the defined settlement boundary of Ash and is allocated for residential led development within the Dover District Council Land Allocations Local Plan¹ and the Ash Neighbourhood Plan².
- I.3 An LVA was considered to be the appropriate method for the assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development following the pre-application meeting in October 2022 (Ref: PE/22/00074).
- I.4 The LVA therefore sets out the existing landscape and visual context of the Site via desk based reviews of relevant published studies, evidence base documents and fieldwork to determine a representative range of landscape and visual receptors which may be impacted upon by the Proposed Development.
- I.5 The LVA has been undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architects with extensive experience in residential led assessments and projects across Kent.
- I.6 The LVA should be read in combination with the drawings for determination and supporting material, including the Proposed Site Plans and Design and Access Statement.

¹ Dover District Council, Land Allocation Plan, <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Regeneration/PDF/Land-Allocations-Local-Plan.pdf>

² Ash Parish Council, <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Regeneration/PDF/Ash-NDP-Plan-Final-Sept-2021.pdf>

2.0 LVA ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

2.1 With reference to **Appendix I**, the LVA methodology follows the best practice principles for assessing landscape and visual effects as recommended by the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition, 2013 (GLVIA 3). The LVA methodology is set out in full in **Appendix I** and is summarised below.

2.2 Landscape and visual matters are assessed separately, such that:

- Landscape – assesses the effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape as a resource (i.e. change to the physical features of the landscape and/or the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential characteristics that make different landscapes distinctive); and
- Visual – assess effects of the Proposed Development on people’s views from the change to existing features or the introduction of new elements within the composition of the view.

Landscape Effects

2.3 The landscape effects are assessed by determining the sensitivity of the landscape receptors (i.e. the Site and published landscape character areas). In accordance with GLVIA 3, the sensitivity of landscape receptors is determined via an assessment of their landscape value and landscape susceptibility. With reference to **Appendix I**, the landscape sensitivity is defined as either very high, high, medium, low or very low.

2.4 The potential landscape magnitude of impact (change) is informed by judgements about the size and extent of the Proposed Development and the duration and reversibility of the Proposed Development. With reference to **Appendix I**, the magnitude of impact is assessed as either high, medium, low, very low or none.

2.5 The relationship between the landscape sensitivity and the landscape magnitude of impact determines a landscape effect. Landscape effects may be beneficial or adverse and are assessed as either major, moderate, minor, negligible or neutral as set out below.

Visual Effects

2.6 The visual effects are determined by identifying a representative range of people (‘visual receptors’) with the potential for views of the Proposed Development.

2.7 The sensitivity of the visual receptors is assessed by determining their value and susceptibility. With reference to **Appendix I**, visual sensitivity is defined as either very high, high, medium, low or very low.

2.8 The visual magnitude of impact (change) is described with reference to the scale of change in the composition of the view and the distance between the visual receptor and the Proposed Development. The magnitude of visual impact is assessed as either high, medium, low, very low or none.

2.9 Like the landscape assessment, the relationship between the visual sensitivity and visual magnitude of impact establishes a visual effect. Visual effects may be beneficial or adverse and are determined as either major, moderate, minor, minor negligible or neutral, as set out below.

Landscape and Visual Effects

2.10 As set out in **Appendix I**, Table 2-1 is used to guide the assessment of landscape and visual effects, based upon the relationship between the sensitivity of receptors and the magnitude of impact. Where the assessment differs from this guide, a reasoned explanation is provided in the assessment narrative.

Table 2-1: Guide to the Significance of Landscape and Visual Effects

Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact				
	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	None
Very High	Major	Major	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Neutral
High	Major or Moderate	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Minor or Negligible	Neutral
Medium	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Minor or Negligible	Negligible	Neutral
Low	Moderate or Minor	Minor	Minor or Negligible	Negligible or Neutral	Neutral
Very Low	Minor or Negligible	Negligible	Negligible or Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

2.11 Major or moderate effects are considered important in landscape and visual terms, with minor, negligible and neutral effects of lesser importance. Where the guide allows for a choice in the effect (i.e. moderate or minor), the decision is based on professional judgement with a reasoned explanation in the assessment narrative for the single predicted effect (i.e. minor).

Assessment Scope, Assumptions and Limitations

2.12 The LVA fieldwork has been undertaken from publicly accessible locations during October 2022. The assessment of residential receptors has been undertaken based on access to the closest publicly accessible location, reviews of aerial mapping and professional judgement. The fieldwork was undertaken during clear weather conditions.

2.13 Whilst the vegetation was predominantly in leaf during the fieldwork, consideration was given to winter conditions, i.e. when the deciduous vegetation is not in leaf.

2.14 The Proposed Development is assessed at year 1 (winter) of operation based upon the Diagrammatic Zonal Site Plan. The assessment assumes that all new residential zones within the Site are 10.5m in

height and that they consist of continuous massing to account for a dwelling being located in any part of a zonal area. The central green zone is assumed to include new planting as part of the biodiversity improvements. There are 2 options of the Diagrammatic Zonal Site Plan reflecting the different access option from Sandwich Road. These options are also accounted for in the assessment.

- 2.15 The Proposed Development is then assessed as year 15 (summer) of operation. The difference from the year 1 assessment is that all vegetation across the study area is in leaf and that the assessment is based on the Proposed Site Plans. These are illustrative, but more representative of individual residential massing and associated new planting in comparison to the Diagrammatic Zonal Site Plan.
- 2.16 The combination of the year 1 and year 15 assessments presents a 'worst' and 'best' case scenario.
- 2.17 The construction phase is not assessed as this is temporary and the pertinent matter is the permanent change in land use and associated new massing and access.
- 2.18 The lighting assessment is qualitative (not measured) and assumes that all lighting within the Proposed Development would be designed in accordance with the relevant industry standards to minimise light spillage and glare.

3.0 THE SITE

3.1 With reference to the following extract from the Design and Access Statement, the Site is situated in the eastern part of Ash, covers approximately 1.46 hectares and is bound by:

- Sandwich Road to the north;
- Contemporary residential development in Pippin Close and land allocated for residential development to the east (ref: DOV/20/00284);
- New Street to the south; and
- Residential properties and land allocated for residential development to the west (ref: DOV/22/01120).



Image 3-1: Aerial view of the Site (red line area) extracted from the Design and Access Statement

- 3.2 The Site is broadly rectangular in form and consists of two storey buildings adjacent to New Street, single storey residential buildings adjacent to Sandwich Road, with paddocks, hard-standing and former orchards and ruderal vegetation.
- 3.3 The landform across the Site falls gradually from south to north. With the southern part of the Site situated around 25 metres (m) Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and the northern part of the Site at around 20m AOD.

Landscape Value

- 3.4 With reference to **Appendix I** in establishing the landscape value of the Site, the Site is not covered by any statutory landscape designations (e.g. AONB) or local landscape designations. The former

buildings adjacent to New Street and the ruderal vegetation across the Site result in a low condition and scenic quality.

- 3.5 There are neither rare landscape features within the Site nor any conservation interest as the Site is not within a Conservation Area. The Site is not publicly accessible and therefore there is no recreational value to the Site.
- 3.6 There is a scenic and functional value to the vegetation along the Site's northern edge, adjacent to Sandwich Road, which forms part of the wider vegetation structure along Sandwich Road. Dover District Council made a temporary Tree Preservation Order (TPO) ref: TPO/22/00016 on the 4th October 2022, suggesting:

“The row of trees is highly prominent in the street scene and is considered to contribute to the local landscape. Felling of trees within the adjoining orchard had recently been undertaken and as such a TPO has been served on the trees to secure their conservation and ecological value, and the rural character of the area.”

- 3.7 As set out in the following visual appraisal, the vegetation along the Site's northern boundary is not prominent in views due to its uniform height and form; unlike taller individual trees along Sandwich Road. Additionally, the Site's vegetation is not the focus of any of the 'key views' within the Ash Neighbourhood Plan. In terms of the rural character of the area, the Site is perceived as part of the settlement pattern, bound by residential and transport land uses and the rural character is due to the fields to the north of the Site.
- 3.8 From the above and noting the temporary nature of the TPO, the landscape value of the Site is assessed as low.

Landscape Susceptibility

- 3.9 In terms of the susceptibility of the Site, the existing buildings and hardstanding are able to tolerate change. The vegetation structure is less able to accommodate change.
- 3.10 As allocated land, the principle of development is considered to be accepted in landscape and visual terms and therefore in combination with the above, the susceptibility is assessed as low.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 3.11 The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a low sensitivity to the Proposed Development.

4.0 SITE CONTEXT

STUDY AREA

- 4.1 With reference to GLVIA 3, the purpose of the LVA study area is to identify the geographic area in which effects may occur due to the Proposed Development.
- 4.2 The study area has been determined through desk-based studies, reviews of aerial mapping, published landscape character assessments and fieldwork. With reference to **Figure I**, the study area covers a 1.5km radius from the Site, extending to:
- Goldstone, to the north of the Site;
 - East street and part of the Ash Levels to the east of the Site;
 - Fleming Road, to the south of the Site; and
 - Ash to the west of the Site.
- 4.3 The above study area is assessed as being proportionate to the Proposed Development. Any perception of the Proposed Development from beyond the study area would not result in landscape and visual effects due to the combination of distance, intervening features and the existing perception of Ash.
- 4.4 The following section summarises the key landscape features across the study area in relation to the Site.

Landform and Hydrology

- 4.5 To the north of the Site, the landform falls gradually from Sandwich Road towards the A257, which is situated at around 15m AOD. The landform continues to fall gradually to the north of the A257 towards Cooper Street and Goldstone, which are situated between 5-10m AOD, above the plains of the Goshall Stream.
- 4.6 To the east of the Site, the landform falls remains at a similar gradient and topographic position as the Site, with localised level change in proximity to Saunders Lane. To the east of Saunders Lane, the landform falls consistently towards Each End which is situated between 5-10m AOD.
- 4.7 To the south of the Site, the landform rises across residential properties to the south of New Street to form a localised plateau. The landform then falls relatively steeply from this plateau towards low lying land to the south of Ash, situated at around 5m AOD, which extends to Fleming Road, at the southern edge of the study area.
- 4.8 To the west of the Site, the landform is very gently undulating, falling towards Cherry Garden Lane and the junction of Sandwich Road and New Street at around 18m AOD, whilst remaining relatively elevated at around 20m AOD across the recreation grounds in the northern part of Ash.

- 4.9 Ash is therefore situated across a localised ridgeline, with the landform transitioning gradually to lower lying land to the north of the A257, in contrast to a steeper and more pronounced transition to lower lying land to the south of Ash. The Site forms part of a localised plateau along this ridge and is situated at the same topographic position as existing residential land uses across the eastern part of Ash.

Settlement Pattern and Land Use

- 4.10 The western part of Ash is concentrated between The Street and the A257, via Chequer Lane. The forms of the settlement pattern is a broadly triangular arrangement of residential development, along with recreational land uses via sport pitches. The eastern part of Ash, including the Site, is also broadly triangular in form, defined by the alignments of Sandwich Road and New Street.
- 4.11 At the eastern edge of Ash, the settlement pattern is formed by ribbon development which does not extend to the north of Sandwich Road, whereas development extends to the south of New Street, and intermittently to Moat Lane and Coombe Lane.
- 4.12 Residential building heights are generally two storey, but there are a variety of building styles and materials, reflecting the historic evolution of Ash. There is contemporary residential development currently under construction at White Post Farm, to the west of the Site, adjacent to Sandwich Road.

Vegetation Patterns

- 4.13 The arable land use across the study area results in a generally open character to much of the study area. However, there are substantial areas of vegetation which provide enclosure to the landscape. In proximity to the Site this includes the established trees adjacent to the A257. To the north of the A257 there is are established roadside trees and hedgerows, along with fields divided by hedges.
- 4.14 To the east of the Site, there is vegetation within the gardens of residential properties, with several established trees across the open space within Collar Makers Green. There are also established tree belts and a small woodland between Collar Makers Green and Saunders Lane, to the east of Ash, with the tree belts extending to the junction of Sandwich Road and the A257. The field pattern to the east of Ash is mainly open in character with small scale tree belts around East Street and Sandwich Lakes.
- 4.15 To the south of the Site, there are established trees dividing the fields between New Street and Moat Lane. The lower lying fields to the south of Ash are generally open in character, with small woodlands and tree groups adjacent to the watercourses and ditches.
- 4.16 To the west of the Site, the vegetation is concentrated around the edge of Ash and adjacent to roads and lanes. There are established trees and hedgerows across the fields to the south of Gilton, where there is an increase in orchards in contrast to the arable landscape across the remainder of the study area.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and Access

4.17 With reference to on-line mapping³ there is an extensive network of PRoW bordering Ash and across the study area. PRoW in proximity to the Site are:

- PRoW (public bridleway) 0009/EE466/1, 50m to the north-west of the Site, extending between Sandwich Road and the A257;
- PRoW (footpath) 0009/EE465/1, 400m to the north-west of the Site, extending between Ash and the A257;
- PRoW (footpath) 0009/EE106/1 and (footpath) 0009/EE53A/2, 250m to the north-west of the Site, extending between PRoW (footpath) 0009/EE465/1 and the A257;
- PRoW (footpath) 0009/EE108/A/1, 200m to the east of the Site, extending between Sandwich Road and New Street;
- PRoW (footpath) 0009/EE111/1, 70m to the south-east of the Site, extending to the south of New Street; and
- PRoW (footpath) 0298/EE114/4, 800m to the south-east of the Site, across lower lying land to the south of Ash.

4.18 As set out in the preceding chapter, the Site is not crossed by any PRoW and therefore does not form part of the linkages with these routes.

4.19 There are pavements adjacent to New Street and Sandwich Road providing pedestrian access to the centre of Ash to the west of the Site.

Designations

4.20 There are no statutory landscape designations within the study area.

4.21 Ash Conservation Area is approximately 160m to the west of the Site, covering land between no.26 New Street and the junction with Sandwich Road and New Street. The Conservation Area also extends in a linear alignment adjacent to the High Street, within Ash, including St Nicholas's Church (Grade I), which is approximately 620m to the west of the Site. There is no Conservation Area Appraisal for the Conservation Area.

4.22 No. 50 New Street, adjacent to the southern part of the Site, is a Grade II listed building. With reference to the on-line listing⁴, the architectural details of the building are noted rather than any wider association with the landscape or the Site.

³ Kent County Council Public Rights of Way, <https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/countrysideaccesscams/standardmap.aspx>

⁴ Historic England, List UID: 1070218, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1070218?section=official-list-entry>

- 4.23 There is no ancient woodland in proximity to the Site, nor across the study area.
- 4.24 Designated green spaces within Ash include PRoW (public bridleway) 0009/EE466/1, 50m to the north-west of the Site, extending between Sandwich Road and the A257; the amenity landscape area within Collar Makers Green to the east of the Site and the recreational grounds in the northern part of the village.

Character of the Night Sky

- 4.25 The Campaign for the Protection of England on-line mapping⁵, illustrates the level of radiance (night-lights) that shine up into the night sky. The following extract from the on-line mapping illustrates the Site (red dot) as being within an area of 'brighter' night sky (yellow hatch), which also extends across the residential areas to the west of the Site.

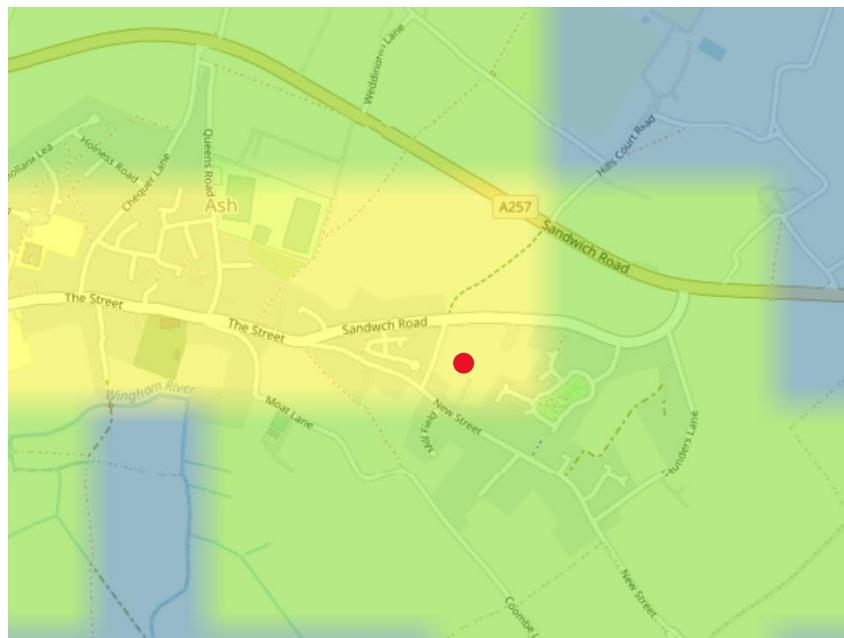


Image 4-1: Extract of the Campaign for the Protection of England night-sky mapping with the centre of the Site illustrated via a red dot

- 4.26 There are lighting columns within the Site, although most of the Site is not lit. The Site is therefore assessed as being within an area of Zone E3: Suburban lighting district.

⁵ Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, <https://www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/>

5.0 PUBLISHED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENTS

5.1 The Site is covered by several published landscape character assessments and related studies, with the relevant aspects summarised below and set out in full in **Appendix II**.

National

Natural England, National Character Area 113: North Kent Plain (NCA 113)

5.2 The Site and study area are covered by NCA 113, which is characterised by the published study as an open, low and gently undulating agricultural area, along with a strong urban influence.

5.3 In relation to the Site and the study area, the relevant key characteristics of NCA 113 are:

- *“An open, low and gently undulating landscape, characterised by high quality, fertile, loamy soils dominated by agricultural land uses; and*
- *Large arable/horticultural fields with regular patterns and rectangular shapes predominating, and a sparse hedgerow pattern.”*

5.4 Relevant Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO) include:

“Protect and enhance the strong character and heritage of the urban areas. Plan for the creation of significant new areas of green space and green corridors to provide a framework for new and existing development in urban areas and along major transport routes.” (SEO 4)

County

Landscape Assessment of Kent, Landscape Character Areas (LCA)

5.5 The Site and study area are covered by LCA: East Kent Horticultural Belt which as per the following extract from the published studies covers Ash and the surrounding landscape.

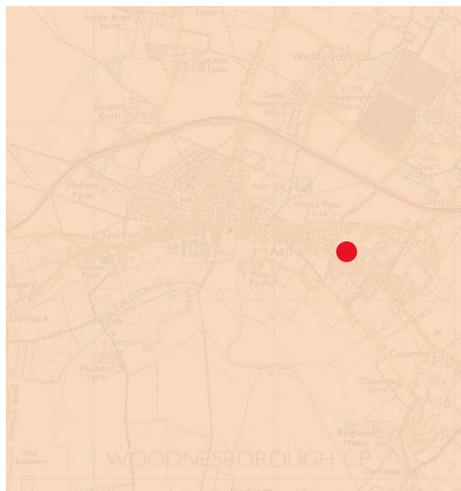


Image 5-1: Extract of the Landscape Assessment of Kent, 2004, with the Site illustrated by the red dot and LCA: East Kent Horticultural Belt illustrated by the orange hatch.

5.6 The following stated characteristics features of the LCA are relevant to the study area:

- *“Enclosed by hedgerows and shelterbelts;*
- *Medium scale;*
- *Gradually sloping or flat;*
- *Regimented, intensive feel to farmland.”*

5.7 The published study assesses the condition of the LCA as ‘moderate’, due to a combination of few detracting features, a coherent pattern of elements but variable cultural integrity.

5.8 The published study assesses the sensitivity of the LCA as ‘low’, due to a weak sense of place, moderate visibility and insignificant landform.

5.9 The stated landscape actions are based on a strategy of ‘create and reinforce’. The actions relevant to the Proposed Development are ensuring new hedges are of sympathetic species.

Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation, 2001⁶

5.10 This publication sets out the historic landscape types across Kent to assist in the production of Historic Landscape Character Assessments.

Kent Design Guide⁷

5.11 This sets out ‘good design’, including for respecting context and character and using landscape character assessments as part of the iterative design process.

District

Dover Landscape Character Assessment, 2006⁸

5.12 This publication is still part of the stated evidence base; however it has been superseded by the following 2020 Landscape Character Assessment.

Dover Landscape Character Assessment, 2020⁹

5.13 With reference to the following extract of the published study, the Site is covered by Landscape Character Type (LCT) D: Horticultural Belt and LCA D2: Ash Settled Horticultural Belt. The northern and south-west parts of the study area are covered by LCA D1: Preston and LCA D3: Staple Farmlands.

⁶ Kent County Council, https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/kent_hlc_2014/downloads.cfm

⁷ Kent County Council, Kent Design Guide, <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/regeneration-policies/kent-design-guide>

⁸ Dover District Council, Landscape Character Assessment,

⁹ Dover District Council, Landscape Character Assessment, <https://www.doverdistrictlocalplan.co.uk/uploads/pdfs/landscape-character-assessment-2020.pdf>

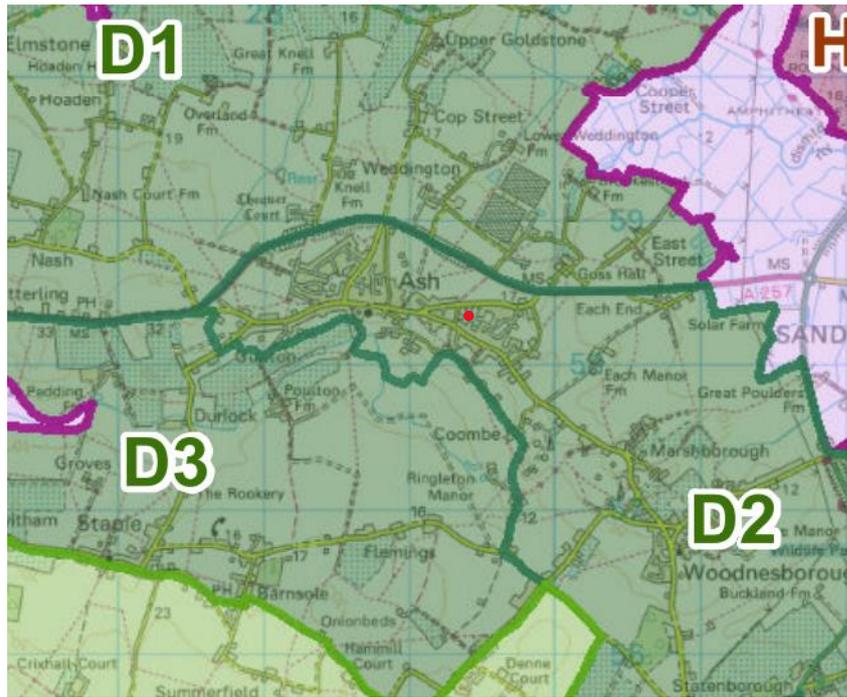


Image 5-2: Extract of the Dover Landscape Character Assessment, 2020, with the Site illustrated by a red dot.

LCA D2: Ash Settled Horticultural Belt

5.14 The LCA is described by the published study as:

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

“Despite the predominant agricultural land use, the landscape is strongly influenced by urban elements, including settlement...”

5.15 With reference to **Appendix II**, the relevant stated key characteristics of LCA D2 are:

- *“Landform gradually sloping from the Ash Ridge, although for the most part perceived as being relatively flat. Churches on the ridgetops are landmark features in wider views;*
- *Good quality agricultural soils supporting a variety of agricultural land uses, including arable, orchards, vineyards, and some pasture;*
- *Large amalgamated arable fields dominate to the north and south...;*
- *Moderate tree cover with several small woodlands and copses and native hedgerows, added to by poplar and alder windbreaks, orchard plantations and highways structural planting;*
- *A range of settlement including the relatively large village of Ash...;*
- *A number of principal roads, including the A257, A256 and A258...;*
- *Conservation area designations associated with the historic areas of settlement at Ash...;*
- *A dense network of PRow that connect the various settlements and roads and provide public access to the agricultural land;*

- *Strongly influenced by development including settlement, busy roads, electricity pylons...;*
- *A strong sense of openness within the larger arable fields, whereas around orchards and within the smaller scale pasture fields there is a sense of enclosure due to tall hedgerows and windbreaks;*
- *Greater levels of woodland cover on the Ash Ridge creates a sense of enclosure, in particular around Coombe. This contrasts with long views out towards Sandwich and Thanet and south across the Staple Farmland; and*
- *Built-up edge of settlements and/or scattered farmsteads generally evident in views; oast houses and large black timber barns are a distinctive feature of the agricultural landscape.”*

5.16 The stated ‘key sensitives and values’ of the LCA relevant to the Proposed Development are:

- *“Forms the rural setting of conservation areas and listed buildings – settlements along the ridge; and*
- *Openness and long views which are vulnerable to changes. Importance of churches at Ash and Marshborough as landmark features in long views across the landscape.”*

5.17 The stated development management is:

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

Local

Ash Character Assessment, draft 2018¹⁰

5.18 The Ash Character Assessment has identified a number of village and rural character areas with the intention to guide future development, so that it is suited to the local character.

Ash Village Character Areas

5.19 As illustrated by the following extract of the published study, most of the Site is within Character Area 4: Sandwich Road, with the southern part of the Site within Character Area 5: New Street. To the east of the Site is Character Area 10: Collar Makers Green and to the west of the Site is Character Area 3: Brewery Area.

¹⁰ Ash Parish Council, <https://ashparishcouncil.gov.uk/ndp-evidence/ash-character-assessment-oct-2018-draft/>



Image 5-3: Extract of the Ash Neighbourhood Plan Village Character Areas, with the centre of the Site as a red dot

Character Area 4: Sandwich Road

5.20 Most of the Site is within Zone 2, in which the published study notes there are views across open fields and the following key characteristics:

- “An area of ribbon growth along the main route to Sandwich which shows the organic growth of the village; and
- Green and natural features dominate much of the area, as open farmland to the north (N2) gives an immediate connection to the surrounding countryside and wildlife.”

Character Area A5: New Street

5.21 The southern part of the Site is within the character area. Stated key characteristics include:

- “Housing of varying styles and ages from Victorian to twentieth century has slowly formed a linear layout on plots of varying sizes.”

Ash Rural Character Areas

5.22 With reference to the following extract of the published mapping land to the south of Ash is within Character Area N1: South Rural Strip and land north of the Site and Sandwich Road is identified as Character Area N2: North Rural Strip. Land to the north of the A257 is within Character Area R1: Ash Horticultural Belt.

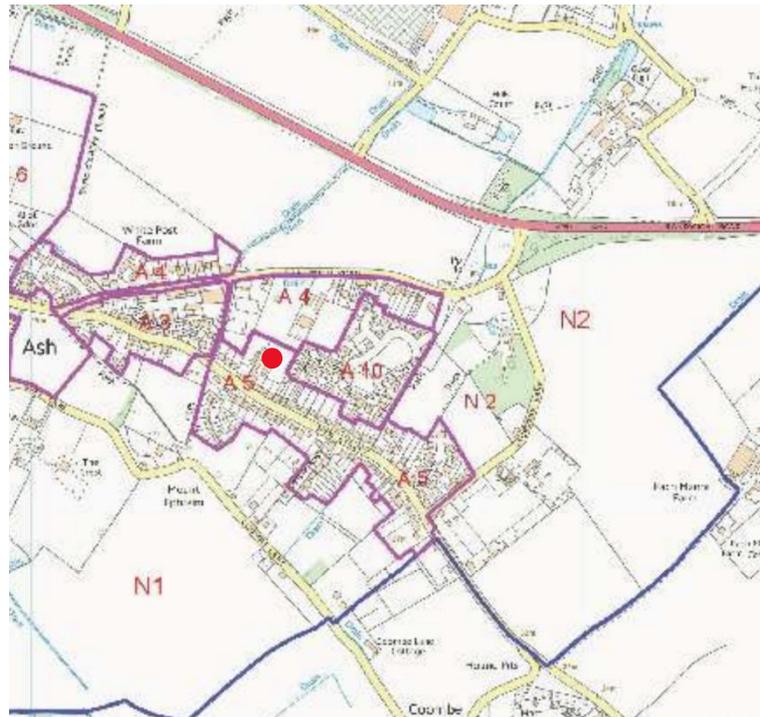


Image 5-4: Extract of the Ash Neighbourhood Plan Rural Character Areas, with the centre of the Site as red dot

Character Area N1: South Rural Strip

5.23 The character area is noted as a flat area of land from which there are good views.

Character Area N2: North Rural Strip

5.24 This area is noted as the land between the village and the treeline of the A257, which forms a buffer between the road and the village.

Character Area R1: Ash Horticultural Belt

5.25 This is noted as an agricultural area of varying field sizes and tree cover, along with greenhouses.

Landscape Summary

5.26 The following table summarises the landscape receptors for the assessment and their sensitivity, which is set out in full in **Appendix IV**.

Table 5-1: Landscape Receptor Summary

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity
The Site	Low
NCA 113: North Kent Plain (covers the Site)	Medium
Kent LCA: East Kent Horticultural Belt (covers the Site)	Medium
LCT D: Horticultural Belt (covers the Site)	Medium
LCA D1: Preston	High
LCA D2: Ash Settled Horticultural Belt (covers the Site)	Medium

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity
LCA D3: Staple Farmlands	High
Character Area 3: Brewery Area	Medium
Character Area 4: Sandwich Road (covers the central and northern parts of the Site)	Low
Character Area 5: New Street (covers the southern part of the Site)	Low
Character Area 10: Collar Makers Green	Low
Character Area N1: South Rural Strip	High
Character Area N2: North Rural Strip	High
Character Area R1: Ash Horticultural Belt	High

6.0 VISUAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1 As set out in the methodology, the LVA includes an assessment of the likely changes to people’s views (visual receptors) due to the Proposed Development. The identification of people’s views is based upon a representative range of differing groups, e.g. residents, recreational users or motorists.
- 6.2 The identification of representative views is a two stage process, which as set out below includes desk-based reviews and fieldwork from publicly accessible locations.

Stage 1: Desk-based reviews and Zone of Theoretical Visibility Mapping

- 6.3 From a review of the relevant published studies, the Ash Neighbourhood Plan and its evidence base¹¹, sets out a number of key views across the village, as per the following extract of the published study.



Image 6-1: Extract of the Key Views identified within the Ash Neighbourhood Plan, with the centre of the Site illustrated by a black dot

- 6.4 Those in proximity to the Site are set out in the following table:

Map 6 Key Views	LVA Commentary
No.1 Sandwich Road filed gate, looking west	The published photograph demonstrates that the view is across the fields to the north of the Site, forming part of character area N1, towards the recreation ground and the Site is therefore not within the direct field of view. From the fieldwork the height of the vegetation screened views across the landscape. This location is therefore not included in the visual appraisal.

¹¹ Ash Parish Council, <https://ashparishcouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Ash-NDP-Key-Views-Nov-2019.pdf>

Map 6 Key Views	LVA Commentary
No.2 Sandwich Road bus shelter, looking north	Whilst the location is opposite the northern edge of the Site, the orientation of the view within the evidence base document is looking north-west, away from the Site and across the fields forming part of character area N1. Due to the proximity of the location to the Site, viewpoint 1 has been included in the visual appraisal, which accounts for this view.
No.3 A257 end PRoW EE466, looking south-east	The evidence base photograph does not include the Site, being focused on the existing residential properties at the edge of Ash; although from along the PRoW the northern edge of the Site is visible. Therefore, viewpoint 2 has been included to capture this view.
No.4 A247 end of PRoW EE466, looking west	The orientation of the view within the published study is not towards the Site and therefore this location has not been included as the Proposed Development would not alter this view, nor views towards the Church of St Nicholas.
No.5 Middle of PRoW EE466, looking north-west.	The orientation of the view within the published study is not towards the Site and therefore this location has not been included as the Proposed Development would not alter this view towards the recreation ground.
No.6 A257 end of PRoW EE465, looking south-east.	This view is included in the visual appraisal as viewpoint 8, as views extend towards the Site, although the intervening undulating landform largely truncates longer distance views.

6.5 With reference to **Figure 1: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)**, a ZTV was generated to review the theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development. The ZTV modelled the proposed massing within the Site at 10.5m in height, in relation to a person's height across the study area. The ZTV includes the existing landform, but omits the existing vegetation and buildings, so as to represent a 'bare-earth' model, in accordance with GLVIA 3. Whilst the bare-earth ZTV is 'unrealistic' due to omitting existing features, it represents a precautionary approach in identifying an initial starting point for the identification of locations to visit during the fieldwork.

6.6 With reference to **Figure 1: Zone of Theoretical Visibility**, the mapping indicated the theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development extending across:

- Most of the northern part of the study area, due to the Site's relatively elevated position in relation to lower lying land to the north of Sandwich Road and the A257;
- Existing residential land uses in the eastern part of the Ash, but not across the wider eastern part of the study area, due to the intervening landform between the Site and Each End;
- Most of the southern part of the study area, due to the relatively elevated position of the Site in relation to lower lying landform to the south of Ash; and
- Most of the western part of the study area, due to this part of the landscape being at a similar elevation to the Site.

Stage 2: Fieldwork

6.7 Fieldwork has been undertaken from publicly accessible locations in October 2022 to review the ZTV and identify a representative range of visual receptors (people's views) with corresponding photography from publicly accessible locations (viewpoints). The locations of these viewpoints are

illustrated on **Figure 1: Zone of Theoretical Visibility**, with the following section describing the views in relation to the photographs presented in **Figures 2-6**.

- 6.8 **Viewpoint 1** is taken from the bus shelter adjacent to Sandwich Road, opposite the northern edge of the Site. The view is representative of motorists on the approach to Sandwich, transport users at the bus stop and in part view no.2 of the Ash Neighbourhood Plan. The view demonstrates that the height of the existing hedgerow along the northern edge of the Site truncates views across the remainder of the Site and the wider landscape to the south. Properties nos. 51 to 53, forming the north-west edge of the Site, are visible at close range, forming a small extent of massing of low architectural quality, within a well vegetated roadside approach to Ash, and a break in the roadside development. The Site is also not directly within the orientation of the view identified in the Ash Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.9 **Viewpoint 2** is from PRoW (public bridleway) 0009/EE466/1, 150m to the north of the Site. The view is representative of recreational users and view no.3 of the Ash Neighbourhood Plan. The view demonstrates that the Site is in a relatively elevated position in relation to the receptor and that the Site is seen in the context of ribbon development adjacent to Sandwich Road, including residential two storey properties. Views across the Site are screened by the tall hedgerow along the northern edge of the Site, although the upper canopies of trees within the Site are visible. Properties nos. 51 to 53, forming the north-west edge of the Site, are visible at close range, forming a small extent of massing of low architectural quality. The composition of the view also includes the upper parts of the Church of St Nicholas, but not within the same orientation of the view as the Site. The church is seen in the context of contemporary residential development under construction at the northern edge of Ash, also adjacent to Sandwich Road. The Site is also not directly within the orientation of the view identified in the Ash Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.10 **Viewpoint 3** is taken from the A257, 250m to the north of the Site. The view is representative of motorists. The view demonstrates the height and density of the roadside vegetation which screens views towards the Site overall from the wider landscape to the north of the Site. The exception is a channelled view across the alignment of PRoW (public bridleway) 0009/EE466/1, which extends to residential land uses adjacent to Sandwich Road and the hedgerow along the northern boundary of part of the Site. Views across the wider landscape to the south of the Site are truncated by the properties and vegetation adjacent to Sandwich Road. whilst the visibility of the Site would increase in winter, it would remain seen in the context of existing residential land uses adjacent to Sandwich Road, which would similarly become more visible and part of the skyline.
- 6.11 **Viewpoint 4** is taken from Collar Makers Green, 170m to the east of the Site. The view is representative of residents and recreational users of the open space. The view demonstrates that the Site is not visible, due to the density of intervening two storey residential properties.
- 6.12 **Viewpoint 5** is taken from New Street, 5m to the south of the Site. The view is representative of residents adjacent to the Site and motorists. The view demonstrates that the composition of the view

consists of two storey buildings of varying architectural styles and materials, forming a consistent scale and mass adjacent to New Street. The exiting access point into the Site enables channelled views through the Site and the associated vegetated, but longer distance views across the wider landscape are truncated by the vegetation. Similarly, the perception of the remainder of the Site is negated by the proximity of residential properties adjacent to New Street.

- 6.13 **Viewpoint 6** is also taken from New Street, 75m to the south-west of the Site, at the junction with Cherry Garden Lane. The view is representative of motorists and pedestrians. The view demonstrates the rise in gradient across the eastern part of Ash, such that the Site is not visible, being situated beyond the intervening roadside hedgerows and properties adjacent to New Street.
- 6.14 **Viewpoint 7** is taken from Cherry Garden Lane, 45m to the west of the Site. The view is representative of residents and motorists along the lane. The view demonstrates the density of the vegetation adjacent to the lane, which screen views of the Site. The exception is at the entrance to the property, which enables views eastwards, but the Site is not discernible due to the height and density of outbuildings within the grounds of the property, which form the skyline.
- 6.15 **Viewpoint 8** is taken from PRow (footpath) 0009/EE465/1, 530m to the north-west of the Site. The view is representative of recreational users and view no.6 within the Ash Neighbourhood Plan. The view demonstrates that the gently undulating landform across the fields in the foreground of the view reduces the visibility of existing properties adjacent to Sandwich Road, such that only the upper elevations and roof lines of properties at the eastern edge of Ash are visible. Similarly, only the upper parts of the roof lines of the large shed to the east of the Site are visible. The vegetation within the Site is visible, forming part of the skyline, although seen in the context of residential development across the background of the view.
- 6.16 **Viewpoint 9** is taken from PRow (footpath) 0009/EE107/2, 385m to the west of the Site. The PRow forms part of the same route as PRow (footpath) 0009/EE465/1 (viewpoint 8), between Ash and the A257. The view is representative of recreational users and demonstrates that the Site is not visible in summer due to the density of intervening vegetation.
- 6.17 **Viewpoint 10** is taken from PRow (footpath) 0298/EE114/4, 1km to the south-west of the Site. The view is representative of recreational users across the flat and low lying plains to the south of Ash. The view demonstrates that the Site is not visible, due to being situated beyond the ridgeline and the intervening vegetation, undulating landform properties in Mill Field Road. The Site is also not within the orientation of views of the Church of St Nicholas.

Visual Summary

- 6.18 From the fieldwork, the visibility of the Site is substantially less than indicated by the ZTV. This is due to the height of the residential land uses to the east, south and west of the Site, along with the established vegetation adjacent to the A257 and Cherry Gardens Road.

- 6.19 Due to these existing features, the visibility of the Site is concentrated to between Sandwich Road and the A257 to the north of the Site and from along New Street and Cherry Gardens Road to the south and west of the Site respectively.
- 6.20 Within these views, the Site is seen in the context of existing residential land uses adjacent to Sandwich Road. There are also no longer distance views beyond the Site, due to the density of existing buildings, landform and vegetation.
- 6.21 The Site is not visible from the wider landscape to the north of Ash due to the density of the intervening vegetation. Similarly, the Site is not visible from the wider landscape to the south of Ash, due to being situated beyond properties across the ridgeline to the south of New Street.
- 6.22 The Site is also not visible from Ash Conservation Area, nor directly within views of the Church of St. Nicholas from along Sandwich Road or the wider landscape.
- 6.23 In relation to the 'key views' identified in the Ash Neighbourhood Plan, from locations to the north and north-west of the Site, the Site is in a relatively elevated position in relation in the composition of the view, but is seen in the context of ribbon development adjacent to Sandwich Road, including residential two storey properties.
- 6.24 From the above, the following table sets out the visual receptors taken forwards for the assessment of visual effects and their associated sensitivity, which is set out in full in **Appendix V**.

Table 6-1: Visual Receptor Summary

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity
1A. Motorists and pedestrians along Sandwich Road	Medium
1B. Residents adjacent to Sandwich Road east of the Site	High
2. Recreational users of PRow (public bridleway) 0009/EE466/1	High
3. Motorists on the A257	Low
4A. Residents at Collar Makers Green	Medium
4B. Recreational users of Collar Makers Green open space	Medium
5A. Motorists and pedestrians along New Street	Medium
5b. Residents adjacent to the Site on New Street	Medium
6. Residents to the west of the Site on New Street	Medium
7. Residents adjacent to Cherry Gardens Lane	Medium
8. Recreational users on PRow (footpath) 0009/EE465/1	High
9. Recreational users on PRow (footpath) 0009/EE107/2	Medium
10. Recreational users on PRow (footpath) 0298/EE114/4	High

7.0 RELEVANT POLICY

7.1 The following section summarises the policies relevant to landscape and visual matters, with the policies set out in full in **Appendix III**.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2021

7.2 The relevant NPPF¹² policies are paragraphs:

- 8 - outlining that the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainable development;
- 92 - outlining the use of street layouts which allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods;
- 124 – which outlines that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account promoting regeneration and change;
- 125 – which sets out area-based character assessments can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently;
- 126 - in respect of achieving well-designed places;
- 130 – requiring planning decisions to ensure that development will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, including being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history;
- 131 – in relation to the importance of trees within development;
- 132 – requiring early consideration of design quality and engagement with communities;
- 134 – which sets out that significant weight should be given to development which promotes high levels of sustainability and help raises the standard of design in an area, as long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of the area; and
- 174 – requiring planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)

7.3 The following PPG are relevant to landscape and visual matters:

- Design: process and tools (2019¹³), which explains the processes and tools that can be used through the planning system and how to engage local communities effectively;
- Light Pollution (2019)¹⁴, which advises on how to consider light within the planning system;

¹² Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, NPPF, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

¹³ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, PPG Design, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/design>

¹⁴ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, PPG Light Pollution, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/light-pollution>

- Natural Environment (2019)¹⁵, which explains key issues in implementing policy to protect and enhance the natural environment, including green infrastructure and biodiversity.

National Design Guide, 2021

- 7.4 This guide¹⁶ illustrates how well-designed places can be achieved in practice, based upon ten characteristic ‘themes’, including context, identity and nature.

DOVER DISTRICT POLICY

Dover District Local Plan, Regulation 19 Submission, 2022

- 7.5 The Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan¹⁷ sets out the vision, strategic objectives and overarching development strategy for future growth in the District over the period to 2040. The Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan is published for public consultation for 7 weeks from the 21st of October to the 9th of December.

- 7.6 The draft Local Plan states:

“The Ash Neighbourhood Plan(2021) make a number of site allocations in Ash. Given this no further site allocations are proposed here. The Local Plan should however be read in conjunction with the Ash Neighbourhood Plan.”

- 7.7 The relevant Strategic Policies (SP) are:

- SP1: Planning for Climate Change, which sets out measures for new development to mitigate and adapt to climate change;
- SP2: Planning for Healthy and Inclusive Communities, which includes for all new development to achieve a high quality design and include new green infrastructure;
- SP3: Housing Growth, which sets out provision for additional homes in the district, including via allocated sites;
- SP4: Residential Windfall Development, which permits development within a number of settlements, including Ash, subject to a range of criteria, including conserving and enhancing the existing landscape character;
- SP14: Enhancing Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity, which sets out that new development will be required to improve the wider ecological networks; and

¹⁵ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, PPG Natural Environment, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment>

¹⁶ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

¹⁷ Dover District Council, <https://www.doverdistrictlocalplan.co.uk/get-involved>

- SPI5: Protecting the District’s Historic Environment, which sets out existing assets should be conserved and enhanced.

7.8 The relevant Development Management Policies are:

- CCI: Reducing Carbon Emissions, in respect of reducing carbon emissions;
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction, to ensure new development adhere to principles of sustainable design and climate change;
- CC3: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development, whereby development should not result in significant harm to the landscape character;
- CC8: Tree Planting and Protection, in respect of protecting existing trees and increasing the number of additional planted trees;
- PMI: Achieving High Quality Design, Place Making and provision of Design Codes, to ensure new developments are of the highest quality;
- PM2: Quality of Residential Accommodation, which sets out a range of measures for new residential development;
- PM3: Providing open Space, which sets out quantity and access standards;
- NE1: Biodiversity Net Gain, which sets out requirements for new development in respect of biodiversity net gain;
- NE2: Landscape Character and the Kent Downs AONB, in respect of new development respecting and reflecting the character of the landscape in which it is located; and
- HE1: Designated and Non-designated Heritage Assets, regarding conserving and enhancing existing assets.

Dover District Council Core Strategy, 2010

7.9 The Core Strategy¹⁸ sets out the Council’s overall ambitions and priorities for the District, which include creating a coherent network of green infrastructure.

7.10 With reference to the on-line mapping¹⁹, the Site is within the defined settlement boundary, which extending along Sandwich Road to the north of the Site and beyond residential properties and along part of New Street to the south of the Site.

7.11 Relevant ‘drivers for change’ include:

- *“climate change; and*
- *Place-shaping - commercial pressures can easily result in development that lacks individuality and sense of place. Cumulatively this can erode the character of an area. The Strategy needs to ensure that development creates*

¹⁸ Dover District Council, <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Regeneration/PDF/Adopted-Core-Strategy.pdf>

¹⁹ Dover District Council, adopted policies map, https://maps.dover.gov.uk/webapps/Adopted_Policies_Map/

or reinforces an appropriate sense of place and local distinctiveness through design and quality measures...

7.12 The relevant policies are:

- CP4: Housing Quality, Mix, Density and Design;
- CP7: Green Infrastructure Network;
- DMI5: Protection of the Countryside; and
- DMI6: Landscape Character.

7.13 In respect of Policy DMI6: Landscape Character, this states:

“Development that would harm the character of the landscape, as identified through the process of landscape character assessment will only be permitted if:

i. It is in accordance with allocations made in Development Plan Documents and incorporates any necessary avoidance and mitigation measures; or

ii. It can be sited to avoid or reduce the harm and/or incorporate design measures to mitigate the impacts to an acceptable level.”

Dover District Council Land Allocation Local Plan, adopted 2015

7.14 This Plan sets out specific sites which are suitable for housing. The Site is covered by Policy LA21, with the relevant LVA aspects of the planning policy stating:

“iii. the impact of development on the setting of the village and wider landscape is minimised through the siting, massing and scale of new buildings; and

iv. the existing boundary hedgerows and vegetation are retained and enhanced as part of the development.”

7.15 The Inspector’s report²⁰ for the Plan noted of the Site that:

“As the site is enclosed on three sides by existing development, with Sandwich Road marking the northern boundary, it would not intrude on the surrounding countryside.”

Saved Policies of the Dover District Local Plan 2002

7.16 The following saved policies are relevant to landscape and visual matters:

- CO8: Development which would adversely affect a hedgerow; and
- ER6: Light Pollution.

²⁰ Inspector’s Report, <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Regeneration/PDF/Inspectors-Report-Complete.pdf>

Ash Neighbourhood Plan, 2021

7.17 The Ash Neighbourhood Plan sets out development guidance and is used alongside the adopted planning documents in respect of planning applications in Ash. The Site is within the Plan area.

7.18 Relevant stated objectives are:

- Objective 1: Environmental (landscape, open spaces, biodiversity and climate change), which seeks to protect the historic landscape and heritage, as well as address climate change through sensitive site developments and good design;
- Objective 2: Housing, requirements, design, built environment, site allocations, sustainability and climate change resilience, which sets out the requirement for sustainable development in the parish.

7.19 As set out in the visual appraisal, the Plan includes a number of key views across the village.

7.20 With reference to **Appendix III**, relevant policies are:

- Policy ANP1: Development in the countryside
- Policy ANP2: Designated local green spaces, which sets out that development proposals that result in any harm to their character will not be supported;
- Policy ANP3: Green and open spaces in new developments, requiring new development to provide appropriate green spaces;
- Policy ANP4: Biodiversity, requiring development to provide net gains of biodiversity;
- Policy ANP5: Climate Change, requiring development to meet a range of criteria in support of a positive strategy towards climate change;
- Policy ANP6: Developments and Conservation, which requires development to demonstrate a high standard of design;
- Policy ANP7a) Agri / Cowans land brought forward from DDC 2015 Land Allocation, which sets out a range of development criteria. The supporting policy text also notes the importance of creating a soft edge to Ash and the importance of the height of building to avoid any detrimental impact on the setting of the village or wider landscape.

8.0 LIKELY EFFECTS

- 8.1 As set out in the assumptions, the assessment is undertaken for year 1 (winter), when deciduous vegetation is not in leaf and at year 15, when all vegetation is in leaf. The year 1 assessment is based upon the 2 options for the Diagrammatic Zonal Site Plan (DZSP), included in **Appendix VI**. The year 15 assessment is based on the illustrative layouts, also included in **Appendix VI**.

LANDSCAPE EFFECTS YEAR 1

Year 1 Site Landscape Character Effects

- 8.2 At the Site level, both options of the DZSP would result in an evident change to the Site's landscape character through the introduction of residential land uses across the northern and southern parts of the Site, resulting in new massing, movement and activity within the Site and altering the existing open character across most of the Site.
- 8.3 Both options of DZSP would result in the removal of the no.51 New Street and the replacement with a new conservation led designed building, which is considered to be beneficial due to the low scenic quality of the existing building. No.52 New Street would be retained, reflecting the existing character and scale of massing along the southern edge of the Site.
- 8.4 Along Sandwich Road, both options of the DZSP would remove nos. 51 to 53 Sandwich Road, either as part of the proposed new residential massing or associated access. This is considered to be beneficial due to the low scenic quality of the existing buildings.
- 8.5 Both options of the DZSP would include a central green area, with associated LEAP and biodiversity zones. This is assessed as improving the recreational value of the Site and the opportunities for biodiversity.
- 8.6 The extent of the residential massing in the southern part of the Site for both options of the DZSP would reflect the spatial extent of development adjacent to Pippin Close, to the east of the Site, and existing residential land uses to the west of the Site. This massing would also be set back from the existing building alignment along New Street and behind the existing hedgerow adjacent to Sandwich Road, subject to access. This hedgerow would also be positively managed.
- 8.7 Along the southern edge of the Site, the proposed access would widen the existing access from New Street, with additional highways related infrastructure through new pedestrian footpaths for both options of the DZSP.
- 8.8 At the northern edge of the Site, option 1 of the DZSP would result in a greater reduction of the existing boundary vegetation in comparison to option 2 of the DZSP, which would utilise the existing access into nos. 51 to 53 Sandwich Road.

- 8.9 For both options 1 and 2 of the DZSP, the change in land use, new massing and activity would result in a high impact to the Site character, regardless of the access options. In relation to the low sensitivity of the Site, the effect at year 1 would be moderate adverse.
- 8.10 Option 2 is the more beneficial access option as it would retain a greater extent of the existing vegetation and utilise an existing access point. In respect of the specific vegetated character of the northern edge of the Site, option 2 would result in a low impact and a minor adverse effect. Option 1 would result in a medium impact due to a greater amount of vegetation removal and a moderate adverse effect.

Year 1 Published Landscape Character Effects

National Character Area 113: North Kent Plain (NCA 113)

- 8.11 The Proposed Development would introduce additional residential land uses within the character area, but set within the existing residential settlement pattern, being physically contained by residential land uses and existing road networks. Therefore, the Proposed Development would not alter any of the relevant key characteristics of NCA 113.
- 8.12 The Proposed Development would respond positively to the stated guidance in protecting and enhancing the strong character and heritage of the urban area in landscape character terms through the removal of no.51 New Street and its replacement with a new conservation led designed building in respect of its proximity to the Grade II listed building to the west of the Site.
- 8.13 The Proposed Development would also respond positively to the guidance of creating new areas of green space within the urban area via the central green area presented in both options of the DZSP.
- 8.14 The scale and extent of the Proposed Development would be very small in relation to the wider geographic area of the NCA. In combination with the Proposed Development being situated within Ash, the impact of both options of the DZSP would be none at year 1. The effect at year 1 for both options of the DZSO would be neutral. This accounts for both access options, as the potential difference in vegetation removal and access would be too small in scale alter the character of the NCA.

Kent KCA: East Kent Horticultural Belt

- 8.15 Like the impacts to NCA 113, the Proposed Development would not alter any of the stated key characteristics of the East Kent Horticultural Belt by being situated within Ash and the existing settlement pattern. The scale and extent of the Proposed Development would also be very small in relation to the geographic extent of the character area, such that the impact at year 1 would be non and the effect at year 1 would be neutral. This effect would be the same for either of the DZSP options, due to the very small scale of the proposed access and associated vegetation removal.

Dover Landscape Character Assessment

LCA D2: Ash Settled Horticultural Belt (LCA D2)

- 8.16 The Proposed Development would be located in the north-west part of the character area, within Ash and along the Ash Ridge. The impacts would reflect those stated at the Site level, with the Proposed Development being perceived as part of Ash and physically contained in relation to the wider parts of the character area by existing residential and transport land uses.
- 8.17 In relation to the key characteristics of LCA D2, the alteration to landform within the Site would not alter the key characteristics of sloping landform across the Ash Ridge. The location and scale of the proposed massing within the Site would also not alter the perception of the Church of St Nicholas from across LCA D2.
- 8.18 Whilst the vegetation along the northern edge of the Site forms part of the vegetated character of Sandwich Road, it is not considered to be representative of the stated structural highways planting, which is reflected in the established trees adjacent to the A257. Therefore, whilst option 1 of the DZSP would remove part of the existing vegetation along the northern edge of the Site, it would not alter this stated key characteristic of LCA D2.
- 8.19 The Proposed Development is assessed as responding positively to the stated 'key sensitivities and values' of the LCA by being integrated within an existing ridgeline development. The removal of no.51 New Street and its replacement with a new conservation led designed building in respect of its proximity to the Grade II listed building to the west of the Site.
- 8.20 The Proposed Development is also considered to respond positively to the stated development management guidance through the central green area within the DZSP, which would provide a well-structured landscape framework. The siting of the Proposed Development within Ash would also avoid linear development along connecting roads between Ash and other settlements within the LCA.
- 8.21 Due to the small scale and extent of the Proposed Development in relation to the geographic extent of the LCA and that the perception of the Proposed Development would be in the context of Ash and the exiting settlement pattern, the impact of both options of the DZSP would be very low at year 1. The effect would be negligible adverse.
- 8.22 For all other character areas within the study area, there would be no change to their physical landscape features, due to the Proposed Development being located in Ash. The perception of the Proposed Development would be in the context of Ash, such that the impact at year 1 would be none and the effect would be neutral for either option of the DZSP.

Ash Character Assessment

Character Area 4: Sandwich Road – Zone 2

- 8.23 The proposed residential zones and central green area would be located in character area 4. This would result in a change in land use and reduction in the open character to a part of the character area, with additional massing, movement and activity.
- 8.24 However, the Proposed Development would reflect the residential character of the character area and the ribbon spatial pattern of development to the south of Sandwich Road, where residential land uses face farmland between Sandwich Road and the A257.
- 8.25 The Proposed Development would result in additional massing along the entrance road to Ash; but the scale and height of the proposed massing would reflect that of existing two storey properties at the eastern part of the character area. With reference to the following visual assessment, the Proposed Development would not impact views across the fields to the north of Sandwich Road, nor views towards the Church of St Nicholas.
- 8.26 Therefore, the Proposed Development is considered to retain the stated key characteristics of the character area.
- 8.27 Option 1 of the DZSP would result in the removal of a greater amount of the roadside vegetation in comparison to Option 2, which would utilise the existing access, but both options would be in relative proximity to the bus shelter. Both options would also positively manage the retained hedgerow in addition to establishing a new central green area, to reflect the stated characteristics of green and natural features within the character area.
- 8.28 Both options of DZSP are assessed as resulting in a medium impact to character area due to the change in land use and introduction of new massing and associated movement and activity, resulting in a minor adverse effect.

Character Area 5: New Street

- 8.29 The removal of the no.51 New Street and the replacement with a new conservation led designed building along with the widened access and new footpaths would be located in character area 5. This is considered to be beneficial due to the low scenic quality of the existing building. No.52 New Street would be retained, reflecting the existing character and scale of massing within this part of the character area.
- 8.30 The proposed residential massing within character area 4 (the remainder of the Site) would be perceived due when adjacent to the Site along New Street, but it would not impact any wider perception of the landscape and character area. The proposed access options of the DZSP would therefore not be perceived from the character area.

- 8.31 The beneficial change from the removal of the existing building and opportunity for the conservation led design is assessed as resulting in a very low impact to the character area and a negligible beneficial effect.

Character Area N2: North Rural Strip

- 8.32 The Proposed Development would not alter any of the physical landscape features of the character area due to not being located directly within its geographical extent. The Proposed Development would be perceived from within the character area, with the proposed massing extending above the roadside hedgerows, along with the movement into the Site via the proposed access options, resulting in an increased to the developed setting and context of the character area. However, Sandwich Road would continue to provide a defined physical and perceived divide between the Proposed Development the character area.
- 8.33 The Proposed Development would be perceived in the context of existing residential land uses and movement of vehicles along existing roads, which are noted are within the published study. With reference to the following visual assessment, the visibility of the Proposed Development would be very localised, such that the key views across the Richborough and Pegwell Bay would not be impacted.
- 8.34 Due to the perception of the Proposed Development remaining within that of the existing settlement pattern and the function of the character as a 'buffer' between Ash and the wider landscape remaining, the impact to the character area would be low. The perception of the Proposed Development would be greater with option 1, such that the effect would be minor adverse. For option 2, with the greater amount of retained vegetation, the effect would be negligible adverse.

Character Area R1: Ash Horticultural

- 8.35 There would be no physical change to the character of the area, which covers land to the north of the A257. The perception of the Proposed Development would be very localised to along the A257, with the Proposed Development perceived in the context of Ash, such that there would be no impact and no effect to the character area at year 1.

Other Ash Published Character Areas within the Study Area

- 8.36 With the Proposed Development located within Ash, bound by existing residential and transport land uses, and perceived in this context, there would be no impact, nor effect to the remaining Ash Landscape Character Areas identified within the study area.

YEAR 15 LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

- 8.37 Compared to the year 1 assessment, the existing vegetation across the study area would be in leaf. The assessment is also based on the Proposed Site Plan which illustrate one way the Proposed Development.

Year 15 Site Landscape Character Effects

- 8.38 At the Site level, the impacts of the Proposed Development would reflect that of the year 1 assessment, via an evident change to the Site's landscape character through the introduction of residential land uses across the northern and southern parts of the Site, resulting in new dwellings, movement and activity within the Site and altering the exiting open character across most of the Site.
- 8.39 Both options of Proposed Site Plans would result in a new vegetation framework across the Site, consisting of street trees and new planting between the hedgerow on the northern edge of the Site and the proposed residential dwellings. There would also be new planting and a waterbody in the central part of the Site as part of the biodiversity zone, which would improve the opportunities for biodiversity in comparison to the existing landscape features within the Site.
- 8.40 The proposed alignment of dwellings in the northern part of the Site would reflect the ribbon arrangement of residential land uses adjacent to Sandwich Road. In the southern part of the Site, there would be an improved vegetation structure via the proposed planting between the conservation led designed building and New Street. The perception of the residential land uses across the remainder of the Site from New Street would also be reduced by the street trees adjacent to the internal road network.
- 8.41 At the northern edge of the Site, option 1 of the Proposed Site Plan would enable retainment of the existing hedgerow to most of the road frontage, including opposite the bus stop. Option 2 would retain a greater amount of the existing hedgerow and enable a more contiguous vegetation structure along the roadside.
- 8.42 For both options 1 and 2 of Proposed Site Plan, the change in land use, new massing and activity would result in a high impact to the Site character, regardless of the access options. In relation to the low sensitivity of the Site, the effect at year 1 would be minor adverse in comparison to the moderate adverse effect predicted at year 1. This is due to the reduced massing, high architectural quality proposed in the Design and Access Statement and the increased vegetation structure in comparison to the DZSP.
- 8.43 In respect of the specific vegetated character of the northern edge of the Site, option 2 would result in a negligible impact and a negligible effect. Option 1 would result in a low impact due to a greater amount of vegetation removal and a minor adverse effect.

Year 15 Published Landscape Character Effects

National Character Area 113: North Kent Plain (NCA 113)

- 8.44 The impacts would reflect those stated at year 1, remaining a very small part of the NCA, such that the effect at year 15 would remain neutral.

Kent KCA: East Kent Horticultural Belt

- 8.45 Like the impacts to NCA 113, the Proposed Development would not alter any of the stated key characteristics and the effects would remain neutral, like the year 1 assessment.

Dover Landscape Character Assessment

LCA D2: Ash Settled Horticultural Belt (LCA D2)

- 8.46 Compared to the year 1 assessment, the perception of the Proposed Development would reduce due to the proposed planting along the northern edge of the Site, in both options of the Proposed Site Plan, and the reduced massing in comparison to the DZSP. The Proposed Development would retain a permanent change in land use, like at year 1, such that the impact would remain very low, but professional judgement considers that there would be no effect to the character area at year 15.

Ash Character Assessment

Character Area 4: Sandwich Road – Zone 2

- 8.47 Like the year 1 assessment, the Proposed Development would retain the stated key characteristic of the character area. The perception of the Proposed Development would reduce due to the establishment of the proposed planting across the Site, including for both options of the Proposed Site Plan.
- 8.48 Both options of DZSP are assessed as resulting in a low impact to character area due to the change in land use and introduction of high quality architectural design set within a new landscape framework, resulting in a negligible adverse effect.

Character Area 5: New Street

- 8.49 With reference to the Proposed Site Plan, the beneficial change from the removal of the existing building and opportunity for the conservation led design would remain like at year 1. The main change from the DZSP would be the new landscape structure to New Street and reduced perception of the residential land uses across the remainder of the Site. The Proposed Development would therefore result in a low impact to the character area and a minor beneficial effect at year 15.

Character Area N2: North Rural Strip

- 8.50 The perception of the Proposed Development would reduce due to the intervening vegetation being in leaf and the establishment of the proposed planting along the northern edge of the Site (for both options of the Proposed Site Plan). The perception of the proposed massing would also reduce, due to the reduction in scale of the residential land uses, set within a new landscape framework in comparison to that illustrated on the DZSP.

- 8.51 Therefore, like at year 1, there would be no physical change to the landscape features within the character area and the Proposed Development would remain perceived in the context of Ash. The perception of the Proposed Development would be greater with option 1, due to less retained vegetation and that option 2 provides more opportunities for new planting along the boundary of the Site. For option 1, the impact would be very low and the effect would be negligible adverse, whereas for option 2, there would be no impact and the effect would be neutral.

Character Area R1: Ash Horticultural

- 8.52 The perception of the Proposed Development would reduce due to the intervening vegetation being in leaf and there would be no change to the character of the area at year 15.

Other Ash Published Character Areas within the Study Area

- 8.53 With the Proposed Development located within Ash, bound by existing residential, transport land uses and enclosed to a greater degree than at year 1 by the establishment of new planting, there would be no impact, nor effect to the remaining Ash Landscape Character Areas identified within the study area.

Landscape Effects Summary

- 8.54 The following table summarises the landscape effects at year 1 (winter) and year 15 (summer) of operation.

Table 8-1: Landscape Effects Summary

Landscape Receptor	Year 1 Effect Option 1	Year 1 Effect Option 2	Year 15 Effect Option 1	Year 15 Effect Option 2
The Site	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
The Site Hedgerows	Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible Adverse
NCA 113: North Kent Plain (covers the Site)	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Kent LCA: East Kent Horticultural Belt (covers the Site)	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
LCT D: Horticultural Belt (covers the Site)	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
LCA D1: Preston	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
LCA D2: Ash Settled Horticultural Belt (covers the Site)	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Neutral	Neutral
LCA D3: Staple Farmlands	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Character Area 3: Brewery Area	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Character Area 4: Sandwich Road (covers the central and northern parts of the Site)	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse
Character Area 5: New Street (covers the southern part of the Site)	Negligible Beneficial	Negligible Beneficial	Minor Beneficial	Minor Beneficial
Character Area 10: Collar Makers Green	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Character Area N1: South Rural Strip	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Character Area N2: North Rural Strip	Minor Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Neutral
Character Area R1: Ash Horticultural Belt	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

- 8.55 From the above table, either option of the DZSP would result in a high impact at the Site level due to the obvious change in land use and the introduction of new massing. This would be common for the redevelopment of any generally open land. Option 1 of the DZSP would result in a greater adverse effect to the existing hedgerow along the northern edge of the Site in comparison to option 2, due to the increased amount of removal; however both options would result in a similar moderate adverse effect at the Site level due to the new massing, movement and activity.
- 8.56 The physically and visually contained position of the Site, within the settlement boundary and bordered by residential and transport land uses would negate any 'important' adverse landscape effects to the published landscape character areas. This is because the DZSP would not alter any of the stated key characteristics of the published studies and its perception would be in the context of existing ribbon development within the eastern part of Ash. The removal of no.51 New Street and the replacement with a new conservation led designed building, is considered to be beneficial.
- 8.57 The Proposed Site Plans represent one way in which development at the Site could progress. They demonstrate a new vegetation framework across the Site, consisting of street trees and new planting between the hedgerow on the northern edge of the Site and the proposed residential dwellings in addition to the central space indicated on the DZSP. Due to the reduced massing and increased vegetation structure of the Proposed Site Plans, the predicted landscape effects would reduce at year 15, due to the reduced perception of the Proposed Development and the high design standards illustrated in the Design and Access Statement.

VISUAL EFFECTS

Year 1 Visual Effects

- 8.58 There would be close range views of the proposed massing in the northern part of the Site for motorists and pedestrians on Sandwich Road (viewpoint 1), particularly when adjacent to the Site. The Proposed Development would result in a more developed skyline in contrast to the open character of the Site and existing residential development adjacent to Sandwich Road. Views would remain to the south of Sandwich Road, across the fields and towards the centre of Ash, due to the proposed massing being set back from the edge of the Site. Similarly, the key composition of the view towards Ash identified in the Ash Neighbourhood Plan was not be impacted.
- 8.59 The proposed massing would be located beyond the retained hedgerow in option 2 of the DZSP, which would provide a degree of softening to the lower parts of the massing in comparison to option 1, which locates some massing adjacent to the road. The visibility of option 1 of the DZSP would also be slightly greater than option 2 from along Sandwich Road due to the access road enabling views through the central part of the Site and the greater reduction in roadside vegetation. However, these would be very channelled and transient views for motorists and pedestrians. At year 1 the impact for either

option 1 is assessed as high due to the proximity of the receptors. However, the effect for option 1 is assessed as major adverse and the effect for option 2 is assessed as moderate adverse.

- 8.60 For residents along Sandwich Road to the east of the Site, there would be oblique views of the proposed massing in the northern part of the Site, as the orientation of the properties is northwards, not towards the Site. The massing would not truncate any longer distance views across the landscape due to the rising vegetated landform already truncating views. The access options would not be visible and therefore the impact for either option would be low, with the effect assessed as minor adverse.
- 8.61 To the north of the Site, from along PRow (public bridleway) 0009/EE466/1 (viewpoint 2), the change to the composition of the view would be similar to that for motorists and pedestrians along Sandwich Road. More of the upper elevations of the massing would be visible overall, due to the slightly elevated position of the Site in relation to the receptor, although the massing would be seen in the context of existing ribbon development. The proposed massing for either option would result in a more developed skyline. The proposed massing would not impact any longer distance views across the wider landscape to the south of the Site, as these are already truncated by the rising vegetated landform. Similarly, Neither of the DZSP options would directly impact the composition of the view identified within the Ash Neighbourhood Plan, which is focused on the existing properties to the east of the Site. Option 1 would result in a slightly greater visibility of the proposed massing due to the reduction in the roadside hedgerow, access and massing adjacent to Sandwich Road. Option 2 would soften views of the lower parts of the massing to a greater extent than option 1 due to the increased retention of the continuous roadside vegetation. The visibility of both access options would be seen in the context of vehicles on Sandwich Road. Therefore, the impact for either option is assessed as high, with the effect for option 1 predicted to be major adverse and the effect for option 2 predicted to be moderate adverse.
- 8.62 From along the A257 (viewpoint 3) there would be channelled open and largely filtered views of the proposed massing in the northern part of the Site due to the density of the intervening roadside vegetation. In the context of existing development adjacent to Ash and the transient nature of the receptor, the impact would be low and the effect is assessed as adverse for either of the options.
- 8.63 There would be channelled views of the upper elevations of the Proposed Development from Collar Makers Green (viewpoint 4), seen between the roof lines of intervening residential properties, such that the impact to the composition of the view would be very low for either of the options, as the proposed access into the Site would not be visible. The effect at year 1 for either option would be negligible adverse. For residents adjacent to the Site on Pippin Close, the massing would be visible at close range, resulting in a high impact and major adverse effect for either option.
- 8.64 From along New Street (viewpoint 5), the removal of no.51 New Street is assessed as being beneficial to the view due to the low scenic quality of the existing building. Views would extend along the proposed access road to new residential massing within the Site which would result in a more

developed composition, but reflect the scale of existing properties along New Street. Whilst the Proposed Development would truncate views across the Site, longer distance views across the wider landscape would not be impacted and neither of the proposed access options would be visible. The impact at year 1 is assessed as high for either option of the DZSP and the effect is assessed as moderate adverse due to the balance between views of new massing and an improved architectural form via the conservation led design to the new building replacing no.51 New Street.

- 8.65 For residents on New Street opposite the Site, tall evergreen hedging would largely screen direct views of the proposed massing, such that views would be oblique. View of no.52 New Street would remain, with an improved scenic quality to the view via the conservation led design to the new building replacing no.51 New Street. The proposed access would reflect existing views of the existing access, with new massing seen in the context of existing properties along New Street, although set back within the Site. The impact is therefore assessed as medium for either DZSP option and the effect would be minor adverse.
- 8.66 To the west of the Site (viewpoint 6), the slightly undulating landform and orientation of the view would reduce the visibility of the proposed development to the upper elevations of the proposed massing in the southern part of the Site. This massing would be seen in the context of existing properties, such that the impact to the view would be very low for either option as the access into the Site would not be visible. The effect would be negligible adverse.
- 8.67 For residents adjacent to Cherry Gardens Lane (viewpoint 7), the massing in the southern part of the Site would be visible, forming a more developed skyline for either of the options. The proposed access would not be visible. The impact would be medium and the effect would be moderate adverse for either of the options.
- 8.68 For recreational receptors on PRow (footpath) 0009/EE/465/1 (viewpoint 8), the upper parts of the proposed massing in the northern part of the Site would be visible above the intervening undulating landform. The main composition of the view identified in the Ash Neighbourhood Plan from this location would remain across the fields to the south of the Site. The proposed massing for either option would be seen beyond and adjacent to existing residential massing. The massing within option 1 would be more visible than option 2, due to the gap in the existing hedgerow and massing adjacent to Sandwich Road. However, due to the distance from the Site and the intervening features, the impact for both options is assessed as medium and the resulting effect would be moderate adverse.
- 8.69 For recreational users on PRow (footpath) 0009/EE107/2 (viewpoint 9), the density of the intervening buildings and vegetation would reduce the visibility of the proposed massing in comparison from PRow (footpath) 0009/EE/465/1 for either option. The proposed access points into the Site would not be discernible, such that the impact for either option is assessed as low and the effect would be minor adverse.

- 8.70 For recreational users to the south of Ash, along PRoW (footpath) 0298/EE114/4 (viewpoint 10), the Proposed Development would not be visible due to the intervening elevated landform and buildings, such that the impact would be none and the effect would be neutral.

Year 15 Visual Effects

- 8.71 Compared to the year 1 assessment, the vegetation across the study area would be in leaf, along with the proposed planting illustrated on the Proposed Site Plan. The proposed massing within the Site would also be less visible due to the individual properties and new landscape structure in comparison to the massing illustrated on the DZSP, such that in general, the visibility of the Proposed Development would decrease at year 15.
- 8.72 Although close range views of the proposed massing in the northern part of the Site would remain for motorists and pedestrians on Sandwich Road (viewpoint 1), both options of the Proposed Site Plans illustrate the proposed massing being set back from Sandwich Road, This positioning of residential massing, in combination with the roadside hedgerow and new planting within the Site being in leaf would reduce the visibility of the proposed massing in comparison to year 1. There would also be more visual permeability across the Site and across the skyline due to the gaps between the properties as illustrated on either of the Proposed Site Plans.
- 8.73 The visibility of option 1 of the Proposed Site Plan would be slightly greater than option 2 from along Sandwich Road due to the access road enabling views through the central part of the Site and the proximity of nos. 51 to 53 to the receptor; although this would reflect the principle of views of existing properties at this location. At year 1 the impact for option 1 is therefore assessed as reducing to medium, whereas for option 2, the increased screening and more continuous hedgerow and planting within the view would reduce the impact to low. In relation to the transient nature of the receptor, the effect at year 15 for option 1 would be moderate adverse and for option 2 would be minor adverse.
- 8.74 For residents along Sandwich Road to the east of the Site, the visibility of the Proposed Development would reduce due to the garden vegetation in leaf, along with the proposed planting across the Site. The impact would reduce to very low for either of the options, with the access not being visible. The effect for either option would reduce to negligible adverse at year 15.
- 8.75 To the north of the Site, from along PRoW (public bridleway) 0009/EE466/1 (viewpoint 2), the change to the composition of the view would be similar to that for motorists and pedestrians along Sandwich Road, There would be softening and filtering to views of the upper elevations of the massing due to the proposed planting being in leaf. Option 1 would retain a slightly greater visibility of the proposed massing, whereas option 2 would provide a greater degree of softening to views due to the increased retention of the roadside vegetation and proposed planting. Both access options would be visible and seen in the context of vehicles on Sandwich Road. Therefore, the impact for option 1 is assessed as

medium, with the resulting effect being moderate adverse. For option 2 the impact is assessed as low, with the resulting effect as minor adverse.

- 8.76 From along the A257 (viewpoint 3) there would be channelled views of the proposed massing, but the impact would be very low due to the transient nature of the receptor, such that the effect is assessed as negligible adverse for either of the options.
- 8.77 From Collar Makers Green (viewpoint 4), with the Proposed Site Plan setting the proposed massing back from the boundary of the Site, the visibility of the proposed massing would reduce such that there would be no change to the composition of the view from the open space and the impact is assessed as none, with the effect assessed as neutral for either option. For residents in Pippin Close, the reduced massing and set back from the boundary of the Site, along with the intervening garden vegetation being in leaf would reduce the impact to low and the effect to minor adverse for either of the options.
- 8.78 From along New Street (viewpoint 5), views into the Site would be reduced by the establishment of the proposed planting for either option of the Proposed Site Plan. The beneficial change identified at year 1 would remain, along with a higher scenic quality to the proposed massing, such that the impact would be low and the effect would be negligible adverse.
- 8.79 For residents on New Street opposite the Site, tall evergreen hedging and garden vegetation would largely screen direct views of the proposed massing, which along with the proposed planting being in leaf within the Site would reduce the effect to negligible adverse.
- 8.80 To the west of the Site (viewpoint 6), the Proposed Development would not be visible due to the intervening vegetation being in leaf and the effect would be neutral for either option.
- 8.81 For residents adjacent to Cherry Gardens Lane (viewpoint 7), the visibility of the massing in the southern part of the Site would reduce in comparison to the DZSP due to the set-back from the receptor and the new landscape framework within the Site. The impact would reduce to low and the effect would reduce to minor adverse for either option.
- 8.82 For recreational receptors on PRow (footpath) 0009/EE/465/1 (viewpoint 8), the upper parts of the proposed massing in the northern part of the Site would be softened by the establishment of the proposed planting. Option 2 would enable a more continuous planting across the northern edge of the Site and softening of views of the proposed massing in comparison to option 1. Therefore the impact in relation to option 1 is assessed as low, with a minor adverse effect. For option 2, the impact is assessed as very low and the effect is assessed as negligible adverse.
- 8.83 For recreational users on PRow (footpath) 0009/EE/107/2 (viewpoint 9), the density of the intervening buildings and vegetation and the establishment of the proposed planting would screen views of the Proposed Development for either option. The effect is assessed as neutral.

- 8.84 For recreational users to the south of Ash, along PRow (footpath) 0298/EE114/4 (viewpoint 10), either option of the Proposed Development would remain not visible due to the intervening elevated landform and buildings. The effect is assessed as neutral.

Visual Effects Summary

- 8.85 The following table summarises the visual effects at year 1 (winter) and year 15 (summer) of operation.

Table 8-2: Visual Effects Summary

Visual Receptor	Year Effect Option 1	Year Effect Option 2	Year Effect Option 1	Year Effect Option 2
1A. Motorists and pedestrians along Sandwich Road	Major Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse
1B. Residents adjacent to Sandwich Road, east of the Site	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse
2. Recreational users of PRow (public bridleway) 0009/EE466/1	Major Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse
3. Motorists on the A257	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse
4A. Residents at Collar Makers Green	Major Adverse	Major Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
4B. Recreational users of Collar Makers Green open space	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Neutral	Neutral
5A. Motorists and pedestrians along New Street	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse
5b. Residents adjacent to the Site on New Street	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse
6. Residents to the west of the Site on New Street	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Neutral	Neutral
7. Residents adjacent to Cherry Gardens Lane	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
8. Recreational users on PRow (footpath) 0009/EE465/1	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Neutral	Neutral
9. Recreational users on PRow (footpath) 0009/EE107/2	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse		
10. Recreational users on PRow (footpath) 0298/EE114/4	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

- 8.86 From the above table, the DZSP would result in adverse effects to a number of close range visual receptors; which is a common result of new development in proximity to existing residents and road networks. The pertinent matter is that the proposed massing would be seen in the context of existing residential land uses and that it would not be directly within any of the focal points of Ash Neighbourhood Plan 'key views'.
- 8.87 Option 1 of the DZSP would result in greater adverse visual effects due to the increased visibility of the massing via the access road and increased removal of the roadside hedgerow in comparison to option 2. However, the views of the proposed access options would be from transient users, moving through the landscape on roads and PRow, where the context of the view is already defined by vehicles on Sandwich Road.

- 8.88 By year 15 and with reference to the Proposed Site Plan, the visual effects would reduce due to the establishment of new planting across the Site and the intervening vegetation in leaf. Like at year 1, the visual effects would be very localised to the Site, with option 2 resulting in less adverse change to greater amount of new planting along the northern edge of the Site, such that there would be no 'important' visual effects at year 15 as a result of this option.

CHARACTER OF THE NIGHT SKY

- 8.89 The Proposed Development would introduce new lighting within the Site via residential land uses and the associated movement of vehicles and their headlights. However, as the Site is located within an E3 lighting zone, the additional lighting from the Proposed Development would not alter the overall character of the night sky.

RESPONSE TO POLICY

- 8.90 The following section sets out the Proposed Development's response to the relevant policies identified in the baseline.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 8.91 The DZSP would respond positively to environmental objectives of sustainable development through the provision of the central green space, retention and management of the existing hedgerow along the northern edge of the Site (to varying extents dependant on the option) and new biodiversity area. As illustrated by the Proposed Site Plans, the proposed development would be set within a new landscape framework across the Site, including street trees in accordance with NPPF paragraph 131.
- 8.92 Through development of an allocated site, which is bound by residential and transport land uses within Ash, the layout and massing would function well to the area and be sympathetic to the local character and history in respect of NPPF paragraph 130.
- 8.93 The Proposed Site Plan demonstrates one way in which the proposed layout could be implemented and with reference to the Design and Access Statement accounts for local building character. With the conservation led design of the new building in the southern part of the Site, the Proposed Development can raise the standard of the design in the area in response to paragraph 134.

Dover District Local Plan, Regulation 19 Draft, 2022

- 8.94 As illustrated by both options of the DZSP, the existing hedgerow along the northern edge of the Site can be retained to varying degrees, with new planting across the Site illustrated on the Proposed Site Plan. This would respond positively to Policy CC8: Tree Planting and Protection, as a means of increasing tree cover across the Site and the eastern part of Ash.

8.95 The central green space illustrated in DZSP also responds positively to Policies PMI, PM2 and PM3, along with the identified improvements to biodiversity responding positively to Policy NE1.

8.96 The LVA has assessed the Proposed Development in relation to the Dover Landscape Character Assessment and predicts no residual effect to the landscape character in response to Policy NE2. This is due to the Proposed Development forming a very small physical change, to an allocated part of the character area and being perceived in the context of Ash. The Proposed Development is also considered to respond positively to the stated development management guidance through the central green area within the DZSP, which would provide a well-structured landscape framework.

Dover District Council Core Strategy, 2010

8.97 The Proposed Development similarly responds positively to Policy CP7: Green Infrastructure.

8.98 In respect of Policy DMI6: Landscape Character, the LVA predicts that the Proposed Development would not harm the landscape character, beyond the evident change at the Site level. This is due to the Site being allocated and within Ash, bordered by residential and transport land uses and incorporating mitigation. This mitigation includes removal of existing buildings of a low scenic quality, conservation led development, new green spaces and retention of the existing hedgerows, specially via option 2 of the DZSP. The resulting landscape effects are considered to be at an acceptable level, such that there are no 'important' landscape effects.

Dover District Council Land Allocation Local Plan, adopted 2015

8.99 In respect of Policy LA21, the LVA predicts that the impact of the Proposed Development on the setting of the village and wider landscape has been minimised by the siting and scale of the massing, such that it would be perceived only very locally to the Site and in the context of existing ribbon development in the eastern part of Ash.

8.100 Option 2 of the DZSP is assessed as more beneficial in landscape and visual terms due to the greater retention of the existing boundary hedgerow; but both options retain and positively manage the existing vegetation structure overall. This aids in reducing the perception and visibility of the proposed massing.

Saved Policies of the Dover District Local Plan 2002

8.101 The two options presented on the DZSP would aim to retain the existing hedgerow on the northern edge of the Site as far as practicable, given the requirements for access. Both options would positively maintain the hedgerow with opportunities for new planting as illustrated on the Proposed Site Plans. The Proposed Development would therefore respond positively to saved policy CO8.

- 8.102 The lighting within the Proposed Development would not alter the environmental lighting zone across Ash, due to the existing levels of lighting. The Proposed Development therefore responds positively to saved policy ER6.

Ash Neighbourhood Plan, 2021

- 8.103 As illustrated by the DZSP, the Proposed Development would incorporate a new green space between the residential massing, as a positive response to policy ANP3 and the requirement for new green spaces within development. This green space would also enable biodiversity opportunities as stated on the DZSP in response to Policy ANP4.
- 8.104 In respect to Policy ANP7, either option of the DZSP would retain the existing hedgerow as practicable, with the Proposed Site Plans illustrating the additional landscape structure to the northern and southern edges of the Site. Therefore, the DZSP layout enables the provision of a soft edge to the Site. The height of the proposed massing on the DZSP would not impact the setting of the village, nor the wider landscape, due to being contained by existing residential development and road networks. Any perception of the Proposed Development would be in the context of existing residential land uses in Ash, with the key rural buffer between the Site and the A267 remaining via the fields to the north of Sandwich Road and the density of existing vegetation adjacent to the A267.

9.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Baseline

- 9.1 Ash is situated across a localised ridgeline, from which the landform transitions gradually to lower lying land to the north of the A257, in contrast to a steeper and more pronounced transition to lower lying land to the south of Ash. The Site forms part of a localised plateau along this ridge and is situated at the same topographic position as existing residential land uses across the eastern part of Ash.
- 9.2 The Site is allocated for residential development and is enclosed by residential land uses to the east, south and west and Sandwich Road to the north. Dover District Council made a temporary Tree Preservation Order (TPO) ref: TPO/22/00016 on the 4th October 2022. However, the Site is perceived as part of the settlement pattern, bound by residential and transport land uses and the rural character is due to the fields to the north of the Site.
- 9.3 The Site is covered by several published landscape character assessments. At the district level, the Site is within LCA D2: Ash Settled Horticultural Belt. This is noted by the published study as an area where the “*landscape is strongly influenced by urban elements, including settlements.*” The Site is not representative of any of the stated key characteristics of the LCA, due to being within Ash.
- 9.4 At the local level, most of the Site is covered by the Ash Character Assessment Area 4: Sandwich Road, with the southern part of the Site within Character Area 5: New Street. Rural land to the north of the Site and Sandwich Road is covered by N2: North Rural Strip, which is noted as forming the ‘buffer’ between the A257 and the village.
- 9.5 Views of the Site are concentrated to between Sandwich Road and the A257 to the north of the Site and from along New Street and Cherry Gardens Road to the south and west of the Site respectively.
- 9.6 Within these views, the Site is seen in the context of existing residential land uses adjacent to Sandwich Road. The Site is not visible from the wider landscape to the north of Ash due to the density of the intervening vegetation. Similarly, the Site is not visible from the wider landscape to the south of Ash, due to being situated beyond properties and the ridgeline.
- 9.7 The Site is also not visible from Ash Conservation Area, nor directly within views of the Church of St. Nicholas from along Sandwich Road or the wider landscape.
- 9.8 In relation to the ‘key views’ identified in the Ash Neighbourhood Plan, from the north and north-west of the Site, the Site is not the focus of the views within the images presented in the evidence base documents. From the fieldwork, whilst the Site is visible from these locations, it is seen in the context of ribbon development adjacent to Sandwich Road, including residential two storey properties.

Diagrammatic Zonal Site Plan (DZSP) Effects

- 9.9 Either option of the DZSP would result in a high impact at the Site level due to the obvious change in land use and the introduction of new massing, activity and movement. This would be common for the redevelopment of any generally open land.
- 9.10 Option 1 of the DZSP would result in a greater adverse effect to the existing hedgerow along the northern edge of the Site in comparison to option 2, due to the increased amount of removal; however both options would result in a similar moderate adverse landscape effect at the Site level due to the change in land use.
- 9.11 The physically and visually contained position of the Site, within the settlement boundary and bordered by residential and transport land uses, would negate any 'important' adverse landscape effects to the published landscape character areas. This is because the DZSP would not alter any of the stated key characteristics of the published studies and its perception would be in the context of existing ribbon development within the eastern part of Ash. The removal of no.51 New Street and the replacement with a new conservation led designed building, is considered to be beneficial to the character of the street scene.
- 9.12 The DZSP would result in adverse visual effects to a number of close range visual receptors; which is common for new development in proximity to existing residents and road networks. The pertinent matter is that the proposed massing would be seen in the context of existing residential land uses and that it would not be directly within any of the focal points of Ash Neighbourhood Plan 'key views'.
- 9.13 Option 1 of the DZSP would result in greater adverse visual effects due to the increased visibility of the massing via the access road and increased removal of the roadside hedgerow in comparison to option 2. However, the views of the proposed access options would be from localised transient users, moving through the landscape on roads and PRoW, where the context of the view is already defined by vehicles on Sandwich Road.
- 9.14 The DZSP would not be visible from the wider landscape due to the scale and height of the massing being screened by the intervening buildings and vegetation, particularly those to the east and south of the Site, as well the density of the vegetation adjacent to the A267, even in winter.

The Proposed Site Plan Effects

- 9.15 The Proposed Site Plans represent one way in which development at the Site could progress. They demonstrate a new vegetation framework across the Site, consisting of street trees and new planting between the hedgerow on the northern edge of the Site and the proposed residential dwellings in addition to the central space indicated on the DZSP. Due to the reduced massing and increased vegetation structure of the Proposed Site Plans, the predicted landscape effects would reduce at year

15, due to the reduced perception of the Proposed Development and the high design standards illustrated in the Design and Access Statement.

- 9.16 Similarly, the visual effects would reduce due to the establishment of new planting across the Site and the intervening vegetation in leaf. Like at year 1, the visual effects would be very localised to the Site, with option 2 resulting in less adverse change to greater amount of new planting along the northern edge of the Site, such that there would be no 'important' visual effects at year 15 as a result of this option.

Conclusion

- 9.17 The DZSP would respond positively to environmental objectives of sustainable development through the provision of the central green space, retention and management of the existing hedgerow along the northern edge of the Site (to varying extents dependant on the option) and new biodiversity area.
- 9.18 In respect of Dover District Council Policy DMI6: Landscape Character, the LVA predicts that the Proposed Development would not harm the landscape character, beyond the evident change at the Site level. This is due to the Site being allocated and within Ash, bordered by residential and transport land uses and incorporating mitigation. This mitigation includes removal of existing buildings of a low scenic quality, conservation led development, new green spaces and retention of the existing hedgerows as practicable, particularly via option 2 of the DZSP, to retain a soft edge to the Site.
- 9.19 The height of the proposed massing on the DZSP would not impact the setting of the village, nor the wider landscape, due to being contained by existing residential development. Any perception of the Proposed Development from the localised area to the north of the Site, would be in the context of existing residential land uses in Ash. The key rural buffer between the Site and the A267 would remain via the fields to the north of Sandwich Road and the density of existing vegetation adjacent to the A267.
- 9.20 The resulting landscape and visual effects from the DZSP are considered to be at an acceptable level, such that the Proposed Development can be accommodated within the existing landscape and visual context of Ash, justifying the allocation of the Site.

10.0 APPENDIX I: LVA METHODOLOGY

10.1 The method of landscape and visual appraisal for the Proposed Development has been devised to address the specific issues raised by a development of this scale and nature. The methodology draws upon the following established best practice guidance:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013).
- Landscape Institute Assessing Value outside of national designations (2021).
- Landscape Institute Guidance Note 06/19 2019: Visual Representation of Development Proposals.

10.2 The scope of the assessment has been determined through desktop study, fieldwork and using professional judgement. A study of the landscape components, character and views within the Site and surrounding area has been carried out. This is presented in relation to:

- Site context;
- Topography;
- Vegetation;
- Access routes - roads, railways, public rights of way and access;
- Settlement and land-use;
- Landscape character; and
- Representative views.

10.3 This is supported by tables, drawings and photographs as appropriate. This baseline study forms the basis of the assessment of the potential effects of the Proposed Development. This assessment has been undertaken by means of both desk study and a site visit, which was carried out in October 2022. The description of landscape character and views has been based on the conditions found at that time.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

10.4 This methodology identifies potential landscape character and visual receptors within the Study Area in order to establish the baseline conditions. The approach to this assessment is based on the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and is outlined below:

- The sensitivity of the receptor is derived from the value and susceptibility of the receptor.
- The potential magnitude of impact is described as High, Medium, Low, Very Low or None based criterion.

- The assessment of effects is derived through a combination of sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impact associated with the Proposed Development, defined as Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible or Neutral; and
- These effects are then described as important or not important in relation to the definitions.

Landscape Character Assessment Methodology

The Nature of the Landscape Receptor (Sensitivity)

10.5 The sensitivity of a landscape receptor is defined via a combination of their landscape value and susceptibility.

Landscape Value

10.6 The value of the landscape receptor is based upon the consideration of any landscape designations and the criteria outlined in GLVIA 3 Box 5.1 along with consideration of LI Technical Note assessing landscape value outside of designated landscapes:

- Quality (condition).
- Scenic quality;
- Rarity;
- Representativeness;
- Conservation Interests;
- Recreation value;
- Perceptual aspects; and
- Associations.

10.7 From the consideration of these factors, an assessment of the landscape value is based upon the criteria outlined in Table 10-1.

Table 10-1: Landscape Value Criteria

Value	Criteria
Very High	The receptor may be internationally designated or exhibit the most of the key features of a nationally designated landscape.
High	The receptor is likely to be highly valued for one or more of its attributes and may be protected by a statutory landscape designation. The landscape receptor may contain elements/features that could be described as unique; or are nationally scarce; or mature vegetation with provenance such as ancient woodland. Mature landscape features which are characteristic of and contribute to a sense of place and illustrates time-depth in a landscape and if replaceable, could not be replaced other than in the long term.

Value	Criteria
Medium	The receptor is likely to have a positive landscape character but could include some areas of alteration/degradation/or erosion of features; and/or perceptual/aesthetic aspects. The receptor may have some vulnerability to change; and/or features/elements that are locally commonplace; unusual locally; or mature vegetation that is in moderate/poor condition or readily replicated. The receptor is likely to be valued at a district or local level only.
Low	The receptor is likely to be undesignated and with little recognised value. Areas which are relatively commonplace in character with few/no notable features and/or landscape elements/features that make a contribution to local distinctiveness.
Very Low	The receptor is likely to be a detracting feature, damaged or eroded or is considered not to contribute positively to the landscape.

Landscape Susceptibility

- 10.8 GLVIA 3 defines landscape susceptibility as “the ability of a defined landscape receptor to accommodate the specific Proposed Development without undue negative consequences.” (within the GLVIA 3 glossary) and also as “the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.” (GLVIA pages 88 and 89).
- 10.9 Table 10-2 sets out the criteria for landscape susceptibility.

Table 10-2: Landscape Susceptibility Criterion

Susceptibility	Criteria
Very High	The landscape is likely to have a very strong pattern / texture or unique and/or rare and intact and/or with a no ability to accommodate change.
High	The landscape is likely to have a strong pattern / texture or is a simple but very distinctive landscape and essentially intact and/or with a small ability to accommodate change.
Medium	The landscape is likely to have a moderate pattern / texture or is simple but distinctive and mostly intact and/or reasonably tolerant of change.
Low	The landscape is likely to have a weak pattern / texture and or is simple but not distinctive and may already be partially degraded with common/ indistinct features and minimal variation in the landscape pattern and/or tolerant of substantial change.
Very Low	The landscape is likely to have a damaged or a substantially modified pattern / texture and/or able to accommodate change.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 10.10 Table 10-3 sets out the criteria for landscape sensitivity, resulting from the combination of the landscape value and landscape susceptibility.

Table 10-3: Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Criteria
Very High	A designated landscape that is highly valued and is likely to be fully representative of the designations, such that it is susceptible to very small changes only.
High	A valued landscape, whether through landscape designations or distinctive components and characteristics, susceptible to small changes.
Medium	Landscape with some value (including designated landscapes), but of relatively common components and characteristics, reasonably tolerant of changes.
Low	Landscape of limited value, relatively inconsequential components and characteristics, unlikely to be designated, the nature of which is potentially tolerant of substantial change.
Very Low	Very low or no value, a degraded landscape or landscape with very few or no natural or original features remaining and not designated, such that it is tolerant of change.

Landscape Nature of Effect (Magnitude of Impact)

- 10.11 The magnitude of impact is determined by considering the following aspects of the Proposed Development to derive an overall magnitude of change, as set out in Table 10-4 Landscape Impact.

Table 10-4: Landscape Magnitude of Impact

Landscape Impact	Criteria
High	The total or major loss or alteration of key characteristics or the addition of new features or components that would substantially alter the character or setting of the area.
Medium	The partial loss or alteration of characteristics or the addition of new features or components that would alter the character or setting of the area.
Low	The limited loss or alteration of components or the addition of new features or components that reflect the character or setting of the area.
Very Low	Virtually imperceptible loss or alteration or addition of new features or components that overall retain the character or setting of the area.
None	No change to the character or setting of the area.

Visual Appraisal Methodology

The Nature of the Visual Receptor (Sensitivity)

- 10.12 In line with GLVIA 3, visual sensitivity is a combination of the value of the view, combined with the susceptibility of the viewer to the particular or specific change arising from the Proposed Development.

Visual Value

10.13 Table 11.5 sets out the criteria and descriptions for visual value.

Table 11-5: Visual Value

Value	Criteria
Very High	A view which is recognised as 'iconic' and/or a specific visitor attraction or fully representative of a designated landscape.
High	A recognised high-quality view, likely to be well frequented and/or promoted as a beauty spot/visitor destination; a view with strong cultural associations (recognised in art, literature or other media); a view which relates to the experience of other features, for example heritage assets in which landscape or visual factors are a consideration; and a view which is likely to be an important part of or primary reason for the receptor being present at the location.
Medium	A view, whilst it may be valued locally, is not widely recognised for its quality or has low visitor numbers. The view has may have cultural associations. An attractive view which is however unlikely to be the receptor's primary reason for being there.
Low	An ordinary, but not necessarily unattractive view, with no recognised quality which is unlikely to be visited specifically to experience the views available. Although the view may be appreciated by receptors, it is typically incidental to the receptor's reason for being there.
Very Low	A poor quality or degraded view which is unvalued or discordant and is unlikely to be the receptor's reason for being there. A view which detracts from the receptors experience of being there.

Visual Susceptibility to Change

10.14 Table 11.6 outlines the relevant criteria and descriptions.

Table 11.6 Visual Susceptibility

Susceptibility	Criteria
Very High	Visitors to iconic view locations.
High	Residents at home; people engaged in outdoor recreation, whose attention/interest is likely to be focused on the landscape or particular views, including strategic/ popular public rights of way; visitors to heritage assets or other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience; communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents and travellers on identified scenic routes which people take to experience or enjoy the view.
Medium	Travellers on road, rail, or other transport routes who anticipate some enjoyment of landscape as part of the journey but where the attention is not primarily focused on the landscape; users of Public Rights of Way or where the attention is not focused on the landscape; and schools and other institutional buildings and their outdoor areas, play areas.

Susceptibility	Criteria
Low	Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes not focused on the landscape/particular views e.g., on motorways and “A” road or commuter routes; and people engaged in outdoor sport/recreation which does not involve/depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape.
Very Low	People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work/activity and not their surroundings.

Visual Sensitivity

- 10.15 From the consideration of the visual value and visual susceptibility, the visual sensitivity of a receptor is classified as per Table 11.7:

Table 11.7 Visual Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Criteria
Very High	Activity specifically focused on a designated or iconic view.
High	Activity resulting in a particular interest or appreciation of the view (e.g. residents or people engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is focused on the landscape) and/or a high value of existing view (e.g. a designated landscape, unspoilt countryside or conservation area designation).
Medium	Activity resulting in a general interest or appreciation of the view (e.g., residents or people engaged in outdoor recreation that does not focus on an appreciation of the landscape, residents) and/or a medium value of existing view (e.g., suburban residential areas or intensively farmed countryside).
Low	Activity where interest or appreciation of the view is secondary to the activity (e.g., people at work or motorists travelling through the area) and/or low value of existing views (e.g., featureless agricultural landscape, poor quality urban fringe).
Very Low	Activity where interest or appreciation of the view is inconsequential (e.g., people at work with limited views out, or drivers of vehicles in cutting) and/or very low value of existing view (e.g., Industrial areas or derelict land).

Visual Nature of Effect (Magnitude of Impact)

- 10.16 The following factors are considered to determine an overall visual magnitude as set out in Table 11-8.

Table 11.8 Visual Impact

Visual Impact	Criteria
High	Extensive change to the composition of the existing view (e.g., widespread loss of characteristic features or the widespread addition of new features within the view) and/or high degree of exposure to view (e.g., close, direct or open views).

Visual Impact	Criteria
Medium	Partial change to the composition of the existing view (e.g., loss of some characteristic features or the addition of new features within the view) and/or medium degree of exposure to the view (e.g. middle-distance or partially screened views).
Low	Subtle change to existing view (e.g., limited loss of characteristic features or the addition of new features within the view) and/or low degree of exposure to view (e.g., long-distance, substantially screened or glimpsed views).
Very Low	Barely perceptible change to the existing view and/or very brief exposure to view.
None	No change to the view.

Classification of Landscape and Visual Effects

- 10.17 The overall significance of landscape and visual effects has been derived by considering the combination of the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the Proposed Development. A guide to these combinations to determine importance is set out below in Table 11.9.
- 10.18 Where the guide allows for a choice (e.g. major or moderate) a reasoned explanation is provided in the assessment narrative for the single effect, i.e. major.

Table 11.9 Classification Guide for the Importance of Landscape and Visual Effects

Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact				
	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	None
Very High	Major	Major	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Neutral
High	Major or Moderate	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Minor or Negligible	Neutral
Medium	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Minor or Negligible	Negligible	Neutral
Low	Moderate or Minor	Minor	Minor or Negligible	Negligible or Neutral	Neutral
Very Low	Minor or Negligible	Negligible	Negligible or Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

- 10.19 Major or moderate effects are considered important, with minor, negligible and neutral of lesser importance.
- 10.20 A description of the landscape and visual importance of effects is set out in Table 11-10.

Table 11.10 Landscape and Visual Importance of Effects

Effect	Landscape Effect	Visual Effect
Major beneficial	Where the Proposed Development substantially improves the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape and/or	Where the Proposed Development results in a pronounced improvement to the existing view

Effect	Landscape Effect	Visual Effect
	enriches the quality or characteristic features.	
Moderate beneficial	Where the Proposed Development largely improves the characteristic of the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, and/or quality or characteristic features.	Where the Proposed Development results in a notable improvement to the existing view.
Minor beneficial	Where the Proposed Development partially improves the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, and/or quality or characteristic features	Where the Proposed Development causes a partial improvement to the existing view.
Negligible beneficial	Where the Proposed Development causes a very slight improvement to the existing landscape.	Where the Proposed Development causes a barely perceptible improvement to the existing view
Neutral	No change to the landscape character or landscape features.	No change to the view.
Negligible adverse	Where the Proposed Development causes a very slight deterioration to the existing landscape.	Where the Proposed Development causes a barely perceptible deterioration to the existing view
Minor adverse	Where the Proposed Development partially deteriorates the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, and/or quality or characteristic features.	Where the Proposed Development causes a partial deterioration to the existing view.
Moderate adverse	Where the Proposed Development largely deteriorates the characteristic of the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, and/or quality or characteristic features.	Where the Proposed Development results in a notable deterioration to the existing view.
Major adverse	Where the Proposed Development substantially deteriorates the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape and/or quality or characteristic features.	Where the Proposed Development results in a pronounced deterioration to the aesthetic quality or composition of the existing view.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

10.21 The ZTVs prepared for the LVA and presented on Figure 1 has been prepared using ESRI ArcMap and OS Terrain 5m.

The Study Area

10.22 The Study Area has been defined as a 1.5km radius from the centre of the Site. This has been selected through ZTV analysis fieldwork, an analysis of topographic maps, aerial photography and investigation into the existing landscape character studies. This distance also takes into consideration the scale and nature of the Proposed Development and is considered to be proportionate. Furthermore, it is regarded those views of the Proposed Development beyond this distance would not be readily discernible to the naked eye. If distant views were achievable, the detail would be subject the influence of atmospheric conditions and would occupy such a small proportion of the field of view to be of no visual effect.

Photography

10.23 Photographs are used as a tool within this appraisal. They assist in demonstrating the existing baseline and reinforcing judgements made within the assessment. Photographs have only been taken from places which are publicly accessible, although some receptors within private places are given consideration. In these cases, professional judgement is made on the evidence available, such as topographic information, adjacent views, views from within the Site looking towards the receptors, etc. The camera used was a high-resolution digital Cannon EOS 6D MKII. The camera and tripod were set at a height of 1.60m above the ground. These heights were chosen at the designated viewpoints to represent eye-level and gain the best possible full view, free of immediate obstructions. All photographs (unless specifically stated) are taken with a focal length equivalent to 50mm on a 30mm film camera, as this is considered to be the most accurate representation of the view as seen by the naked human eye. The time, date and camera position for each viewpoint was recorded in the British National Grid and Level Datum using GPS with an accuracy of $\leq 3\text{m}$. The photographs are intended to show a clear line of sight towards the Site, as well as illustrating the local context. Generally, clear weather conditions and times of day were attained, which presented legible views. All photographs were taken in accordance with the Type I Images within the 'Visual Representation of development proposals', Technical Guidance Note Advice Note 06/19, September 2019 by the Landscape Institute.

Character of the Night Sky

10.24 The LVA identifies the existing character of the night sky via a review of relevant publications and night-time fieldwork. The classification of the environmental lighting zones is derived from the Institution of Lighting Professionals Table 2: Environmental Zones, as set out below.

Table 10-5: Environmental Lighting Zones

Zone	Surrounding	Lighting Environmental	Examples
E0	Protected	Dark	Astronomical Observable dark skies, UNESCO starlight reserves, IDA dark sky places
E1	Natural	Dark	Relatively uninhabited rural areas, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, IDA buffer zones etc
E2	Rural	Low district brightness	Sparsely inhabited rural areas, village or relatively dark outer suburban locations.
E3	Suburban	Medium district brightness	Well inhabited rural and urban settlements, small town centres of suburban locations
E4	Urban	High district brightness	Town / City centres with high levels of night-time activity

11.0 APPENDIX II: EXTRACTS OF PUBLISHED STUDIES

Statements of Environmental Opportunity:

- **SEO 1:** Maintain the historic character and long tradition of a farmed landscape, creating habitats to establish more resilient and coherent ecological networks within the farmed and peri-urban areas, benefitting biodiversity and geodiversity, and helping to regulate water and soil quality. Protect traditional practices including the longstanding associations of the fruit belt, maintaining a strong sense of place and reinforcing Kent's reputation as the Garden of England.
- **SEO 2:** Plan for and manage the effects of coastal change, by allowing the operation of natural coastal processes and improving the sustainability of current management practices, to maintain and enhance the local landscape character and the area's biodiversity assets. This can lead to habitat creation, flood-risk reduction to built-up areas, and opportunities for recreational activity.
- **SEO 3:** Protect the distinct wooded areas of the landscape, particularly through the management of nationally important, ancient semi-natural woodlands, increasing the area of broadleaved woodland where appropriate, while increasing the connectivity of the mosaic of associated habitats notably wooded heath and semi-improved grassland while enhancing the recreational resource.
- **SEO 4:** Protect and enhance the strong character and heritage of the urban areas. Plan for the creation of significant new areas of green space and green corridors to provide a framework for new and existing development in urban areas and along major transport routes.

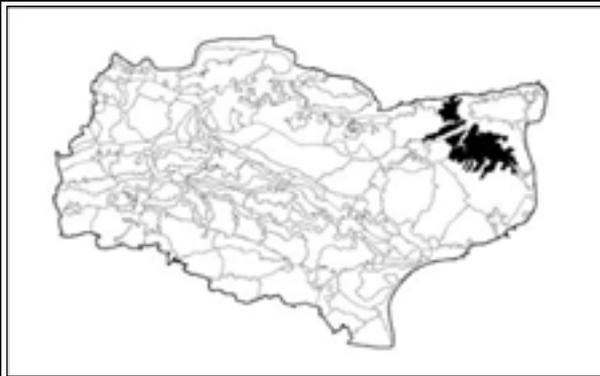


Blean Woods is one of the few areas in Britain that supports the heath fritillary butterfly.

Key characteristics

- An open, low and gently undulating landscape, characterised by high-quality, fertile, loamy soils dominated by agricultural land uses.
- The area's geology is dominated by Palaeogene clays and sands, underlain by the Chalk.
- Geologically a chalk outlier – and historically an island separated from the mainland by a sea channel – Thanet forms a discrete and distinct area that is characterised by its unity of land use, arising from the high-quality fertile soils developed in thin drift deposits over chalk.
- A diverse coastline (both in nature and orientation), made up of cliffs, intertidal sand and mud, salt marshes, sand dunes and shingle beaches. Much of the coastal hinterland has been built on, and the coast itself has been modified through the construction of sea walls, harbours and piers.
- Large arable/horticultural fields with regular patterns and rectangular shapes predominating, and a sparse hedgerow pattern.
- Orchards and horticultural crops characterise central and eastern areas, and are often enclosed by poplar or alder shelterbelts and scattered small woodlands.
- Woodland occurs on the higher ground around Blean and in smaller blocks to the west, much of it ancient and of high nature conservation interest.
- The Stour and its tributaries are important features of the eastern part of the NCA, draining eastwards into the North Sea, with associated wetland habitats including areas of grazing marsh, reedbeds, lagoons and gravel pits. The River Medway cuts through the NCA as it flows into the Thames Estuary.
- Other semi-natural habitats include fragments of neutral, calcareous and acid grassland, and also heathland.
- The area has rich evidence of human activity from the Palaeolithic period. Key heritage assets include Roman sites at Canterbury, Reculver and Richborough; the Historic Dockyard at Chatham; military remains along the coast; and historic parks and buildings.
- Large settlements and urban infrastructure (including lines of pylons) are often visually dominant in the landscape, with significant development around Greater London and the Medway Towns, as well as around towns further east and along the coast. Major rail and road links connect the towns with London.

EAST KENT HORTICULTURAL BELT



This generally flat, farmed character area is derived from the Tertiary Beds, most notably the Thanet Beds in east Kent that overlie the chalk. This is a mixed landscape that fringes the chalk lands on their northern boundary east of Herne Bay, around Maypole, Hersden, Stodmarsh, Wingham, Ash and Woodnesborough. The belt ranges from three to seven kilometres wide and corresponds approximately to the 10-40m contours.

The Tertiary Beds are fine-grained grey and brown sands with local silty clays. Elsewhere, Head Brickearths, derived from loamy parent-rock such as the Thanet and Sandgate Beds, and also from Aeolian origins, are found extensively in association with the Thanet Beds around Wickhambreaux, Wingham Green, Littlebourne and Patixbourne, corresponding to many of the former fruit-growing areas. Extensive deposits of Head Brickearths are found north of Ash, around Knowlton, and at Worth.

These drifts have produced deep silty soils, often affected with groundwater. Areas of waterlogging occur south of Wingham and Ash. Those soils with groundwater problems traditionally support cereals, potatoes and field vegetables. Significant areas of orchard and horticultural crops occur on the better drained, higher grade soils at East Stourmouth, Preston, Elmstone, Westmarsh, Upper Goldstone and Perry and to the east at Woodnesborough.

Market gardening was first brought to the Sandwich area in Kent by the Flemish in Tudor times, and there are still farmhouses of Dutch style to be seen.

A very small pocket of hops can still be found south-east of Shatterling, but this is now a rare feature of this landscape. Some of the orchards north of Ash are now being grubbed up and the growers are diversifying, for example into viticulture; changing the character of the countryside in this area.

Otherwise the area is mainly large-scale arable with limited grassland around Richborough, Wingham, Stodmarsh, Upstreet, Maypole and Ford south-east of Hunters Forstal. In the 1960s there was a greater scattering of pasture and a wider spread of orchard. It is now mostly an open landscape which slopes gently down to the adjacent marshland and the river valley of the Stour. Views are often very long, for instance from the Roman road at Hersden across to Thanet, and from Grove Hill across to Stodmarsh and the Stour valley.

Many of the villages such as Chislet, Stodmarsh, Upstreet, Wingham, Wickhambreaux, and Ickham are of historic interest, as are the bigger settlements such as Ash and Sandwich. Wingham was formerly a small market town with houses dating from the 13th century. It is a simple one-street town, lacking a wide market place or a square.

Settlements are often found on the boundaries of parishes, indicating shared, or intercommonable pasture within formerly wooded country. Examples of this are at Twitham, which runs across the parishes of Wingham and Goodnestone. The borough and manor of Tickenhurst (the young goats wood) was situated partly in Heronden in Eastry and partly in Hammill in Woodnesborough, divided between two parishes.

Between Wingham and Ash is an enclosed and secluded landscape with occasional fruit and even hops scattered among the arable fields. A small-scale agricultural landscape persists around small hamlets with hedged lanes, shelterbelts and a narrow twisting road network.

The landscape is increasingly open east of Ash with long views to Richborough Power Station. The few undulations disappear, field boundaries are less in evidence, and the landscape becomes increasingly level as it grades towards the Wantsum and Lower Stour Marshes.

Small pockets of industry do occur such as the proposed business use for the old Chislet and Betteshanger Collieries.

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EAST KENT HORTICULTURAL BELT

PHOTOGRAPH



CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

Enclosed by hedgerows and shelterbelts, medium scale, gradually sloping or flat. Some contained, small-scale landscapes in the central area. Long views from higher ground. Coastal and marsh edges. Diverse agriculture with vineyards, soft fruit, orchards and glasshouses. Small isolated linear villages, some piecemeal development along roads based on original small hamlets or farms. Isolated, square, buff-coloured farm cottages. Very narrow winding roads following the field and drainage pattern. Regimented, intensive feel to the farmland. Some blocks of unmanaged land, particularly towards the marginal wetlands.

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Condition

The landscape pattern continues to reflect small-scale fields of mixed use, enclosed by shelterbelts. Although increasing arable cultivation is now opening up the landscape, there are few detracting features. The area is known for ancient and historic settlement sites, but this element is not apparent in the existing small farming hamlets. The intensive agricultural and horticultural use of the farmland, in addition to limited natural habitats and some loss of vegetative field boundaries means that the ecological value is weak.

Sensitivity

The small scale farming pattern and small hamlets retain some historic elements, but there is little visual reinforcement of the area's former ancient settlement pattern or the marginal land on the edge of the former sea channel. The mix of building styles and the variability and complexity of land use tend to dilute the sense of place. The landscape is open, with very little tree cover - middle distance views are common, with some longer views reaching over the edge of the marsh.

LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

- Create a new landscape pattern to embrace the evolving intensified and fragmented land use.
- Create nuclei of distinctive small-scale landscape within the more open farmland.
- Reinforce the historic enclosure and drainage pattern by managing existing shelterbelts and enhancing drainage channels and wetland.
- Ensure that new shelterbelts/hedges are of sympathetic species.
- Reinforce the character of the marsh-edge, creating wetland areas.

CONTEXT

Regional: North East Kent

Condition

good	REINFORCE	CONSERVE & REINFORCE	CONSERVE
moderate	CREATE & REINFORCE	CONSERVE & CREATE	CONSERVE & RESTORE
poor	CREATE	RESTORE & CREATE	RESTORE
	low	moderate	high

Sensitivity

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Condition Moderate.

Pattern of elements:	Coherent.
Detracting features:	Few.
Visual Unity:	Unified.
Cultural integrity:	Variable.
Ecological integrity:	Weak.
Functional Integrity:	Weak.

Sensitivity Low.

Distinctiveness:	Indistinct.
Continuity:	Historic.
Sense of Place:	Weak.
Landform:	Insignificant.
Extent of tree cover:	Open.
Visibility:	Moderate.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

CREATE AND REINFORCE.

- Create nuclei of small-scale landscapes within the area
- Reinforce drainage patterns and shelterbelts as functional and visual elements within the landscape
- Create an edge to the marsh areas by encouraging the development of wetland areas

[previous <<](#)

LCT D: Horticultural Belt



Landscape Character Areas

The Horticultural Belt is subdivided into three LCAs:

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

LCA D1: Preston Horticultural Belt

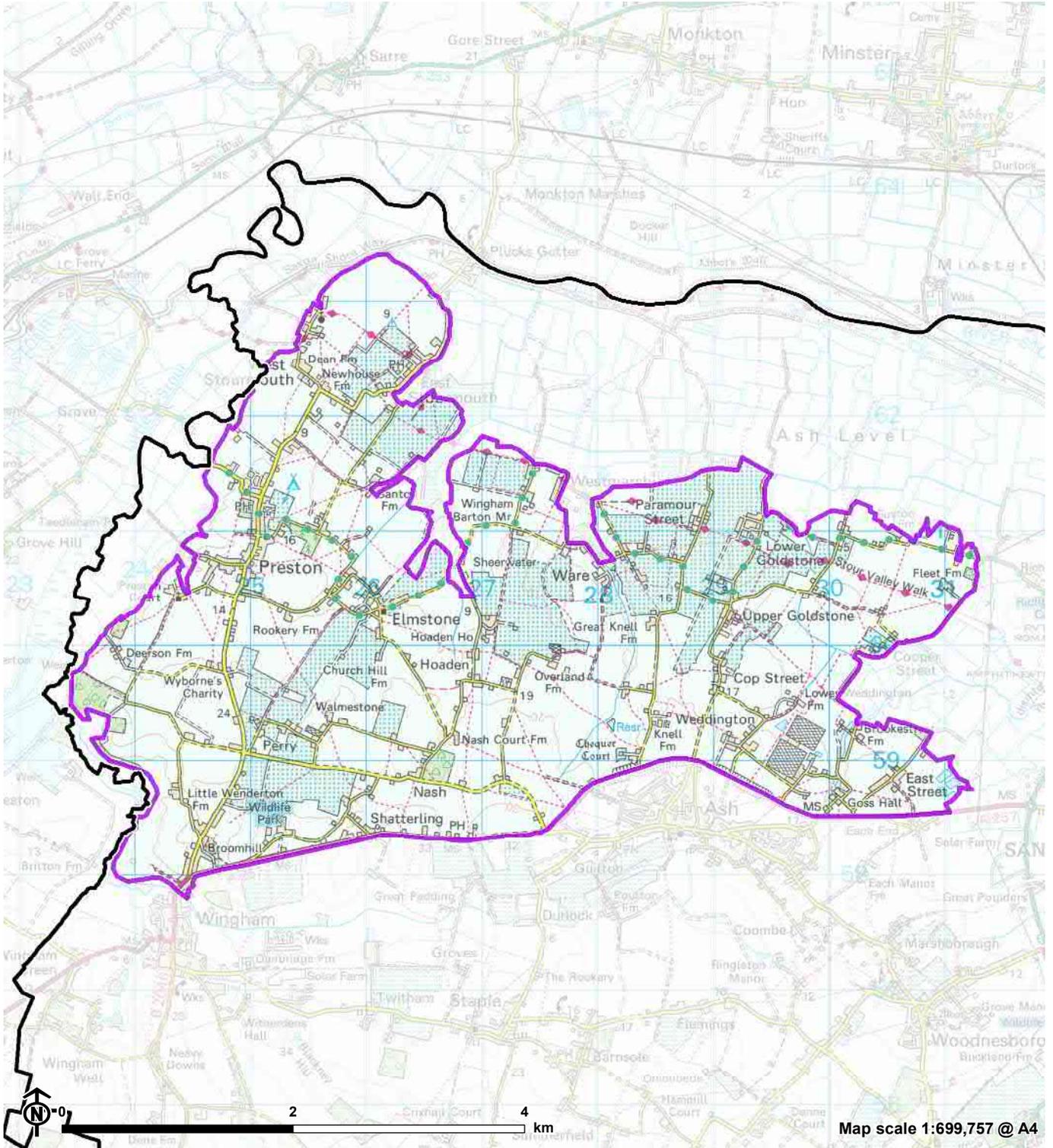
Location and Summary

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

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



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



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Source: DDC, LUC

D1 - Preston

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Key Characteristics

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

Natural Influences

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

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

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

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

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

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



Valley seepages adjoining Ash Levels to the north

Cultural Influences

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

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

The principal roads within the LCA are the A257, which runs east-west along the southern boundary; and Preston Road, which runs north-south through Preston to the west. Elsewhere the LCA is traversed by a network of narrow lanes and tracks, which largely follow a north-south and east-west axes. The north-south axis reflects the route old 'drove roads',

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

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

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

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

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



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

Perceptual Influences

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

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

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

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



Orchard fruit grown under polytunnels

Landscape Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

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

Landscape Strategy

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

Guidance

Landscape Management

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

Development Management

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

LCA D2: Ash Settled Horticultural Belt

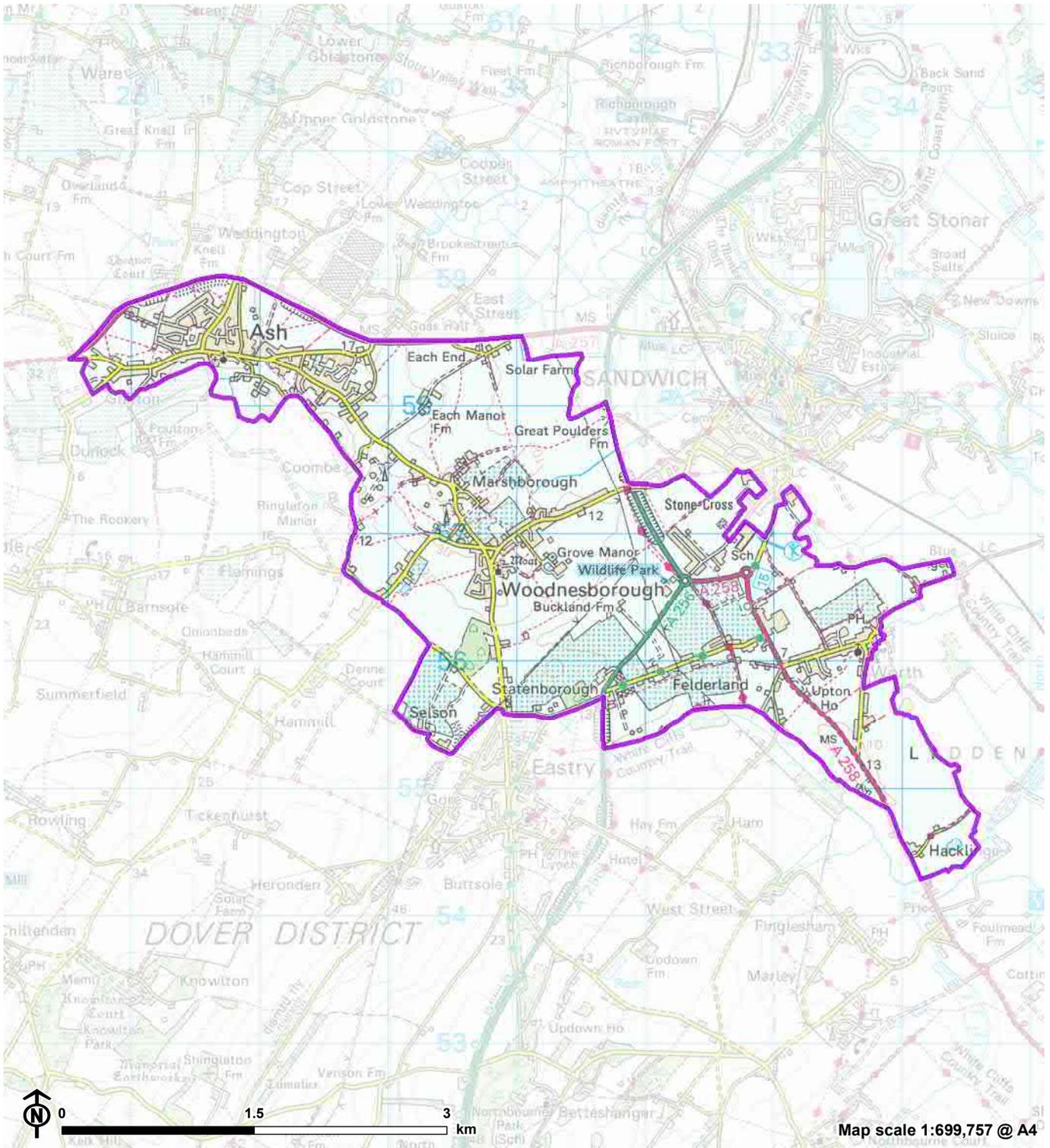
Location and Summary

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

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



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

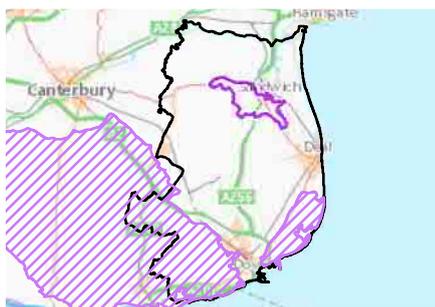


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Source: DDC, LUC

D2 - Ash

-  Dover district
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Key Characteristics

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

Natural Influences

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

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

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

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



Horticultural production near Felderland

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

Cultural Influences

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

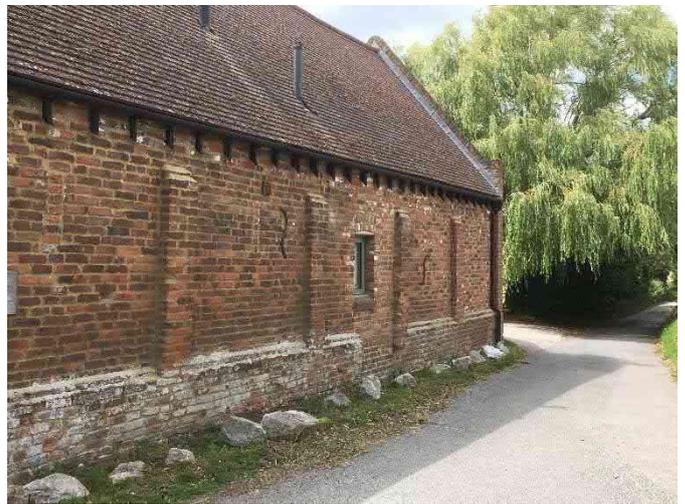
Fields vary in size depending on their use. Arable cultivation generally occurs within large, open rectilinear or irregular-shaped fields defined by low banks, ditches and/or low gappy hedgerows with very few mature trees. Orchards tend to be within smaller sized geometric fields, often enclosed by post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

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

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

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

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



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

Perceptual Influences

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

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

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

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



Flower growing on rich soils near Poulders

Landscape Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

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

Landscape Strategy

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

Guidance

Landscape Management

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

Development Management

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

LCA D3: Staple Farmlands

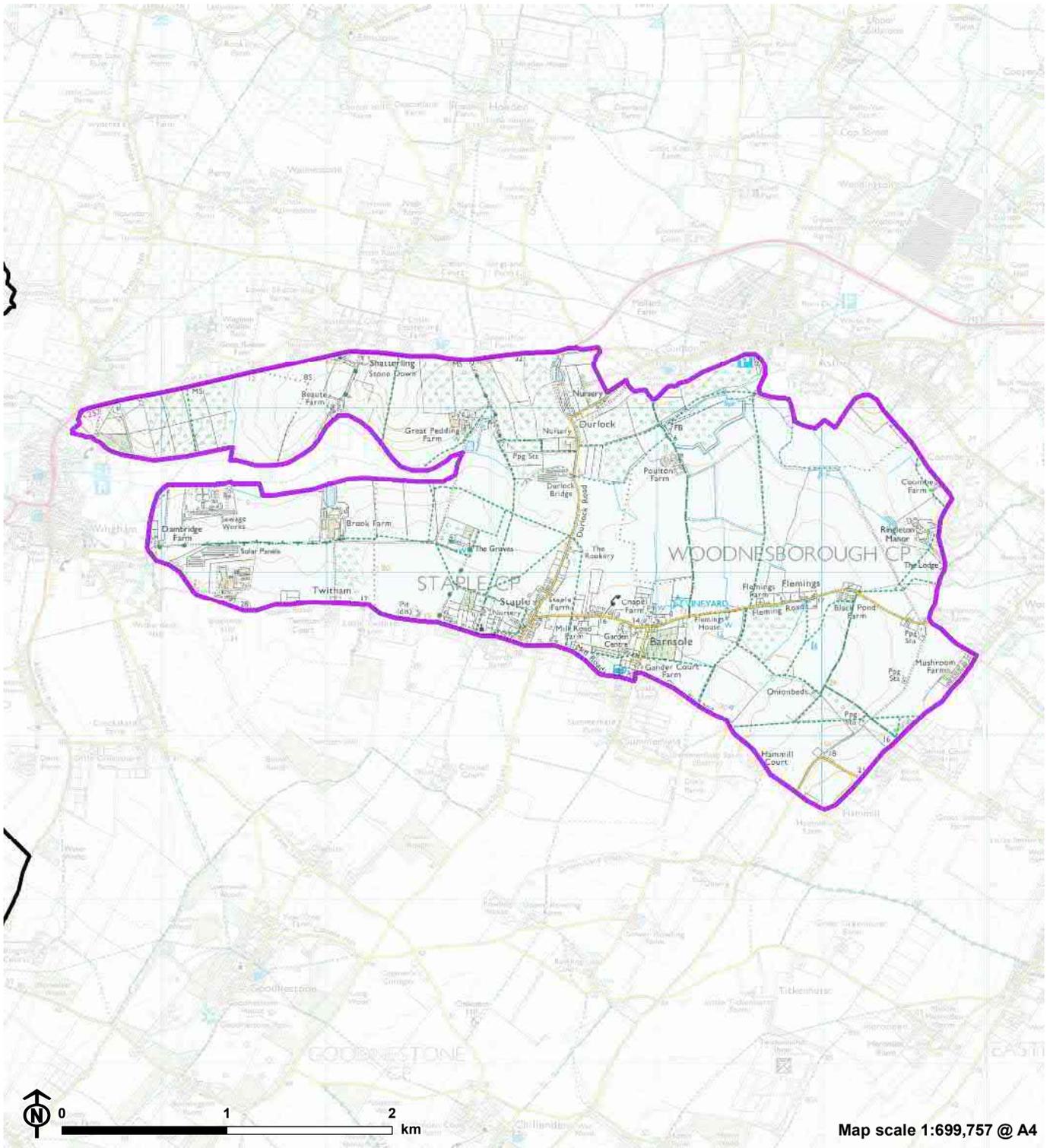
Location and Summary

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

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



Arable fields and oast houses at Staple Farm

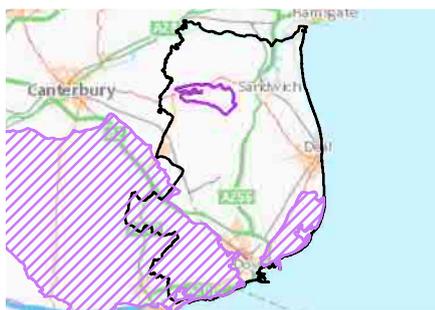


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Source: DDC, LUC

D3 - Staple Farlands

- Dover district
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Key Characteristics

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

Natural Influences

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

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

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



Church of St James, Staple (Grade I listed)

Cultural Influences

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

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

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

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

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



Orchard at Flemings

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

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

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

Perceptual Influences

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

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



Arable farming north of Staple

Landscape Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

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

Landscape Strategy

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

Guidance

Landscape Management

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

Development Management

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



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A3 Brewery Area	
Location	This triangular area is bordered to the north by Sandwich Road and to the south by Street Field (Jack Foat Trust land). Cherry Garden Lane, an old sunken village lane, forms the eastern boundary. Part of this area is within the third conservation area in the village.
Topography	The area is flat with a substantial incline which proceeds eastwards.
Land use	It is essentially a residential area. The Old Rectory is the only business in this area providing employment as a care home.
Layout	Building plots of varying sizes cover the entire area.
Roads, Streets and routes	Sandwich Road was built in the eighteenth century and was later a turnpike road. This area is bisected by New Street, the main route to Sandwich from the thirteenth century to the eighteenth century. Both roads are very busy and constricted by parking, especially around the junction in front of Street End House. Many of the older houses have no off-street parking. New Street is at its narrowest in this section and is potentially dangerous to both cyclists and pedestrians, as there is no easy footway.
Spaces	There are no open public spaces within the area. It is adjacent to Street Field which is an open, green field owned by the Jack Foat Trust for community use.

<p>Buildings</p>	<p>This is a historic region with much heritage. Most of the area is associated with Gardners Brewery, which had an oast house at one time at the western end. The brewery in its turn was once Ash Workhouse converted to a brewery in 1837.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The row of small nineteenth century cottages along the Sandwich Road were once part of a second brewery, eventually absorbed by Gardners along with the old public house the First and Last which is now a house.  <p style="text-align: right;">Paradise Row – old brewery cottages</p> <p>The Brewery site became an industrial business in 1968 and was then redeveloped in 1990's as Gardners Close. This is a residential development with a variety of housing styles sympathetic to the area. It is accessed from Sandwich Road.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;">Gardners Close – new development on brewery site</p> <p>Most buildings are two storey houses of brick, with some wood faced.</p> <p>The buildings along New Street are of varying ages, modern infill and some bungalows between nineteenth housing and cottages.</p>
<p>Landmarks</p>	<p>Street End House at the junction of Sandwich Road and New Street is a landmark, built in the 1760's, probably to replace Hills Court Manor house. At the other end by Cherry Garden Lane junction, the nineteenth century Old Rectory is also a landmark.</p>
<p>Green and natural features</p>	<p>There is easy access to the rural strip (N1) south of the village. There is also a small green in Gardners Close.</p>
<p>Streetscape</p>	<p>There is only limited pavement on this section of New Street. There are pavements on this side of Sandwich Road.</p>
<p>Views</p>	<p>On the edge of the area, there are pleasant views out of the village, to the open countryside to the south through Street Field. There are clear views of St Nicholas Church from the junction with Sandwich Road, The Street and New Street.</p>
<p>Key Characteristics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A pleasant area of well-kept housing with easy access to the north rural strip (N1). There are good rural views of open countryside to the south from the southern edge. This is an area with much industrial heritage mainly associated with the Ash Gardners Brewery which started in the mid 1800's in the converted workhouse. This part of the area is within a conservation area. It is bordered on the north side by the busy Sandwich Road and forms a triangular area between this road and New Street with Street Field bordering the southern edge. Parking is a problem in this area. It is a residential area with plots of varying sizes much of it on the old brewery site. The newest houses were built in the twenty first century in Gardners Close, with nineteenth century cottages along the Sandwich road. A mix of ages and styles are found along the lower end of New Street. Street End House (1760's) and the Old Rectory (1800's) are the two landmark buildings.

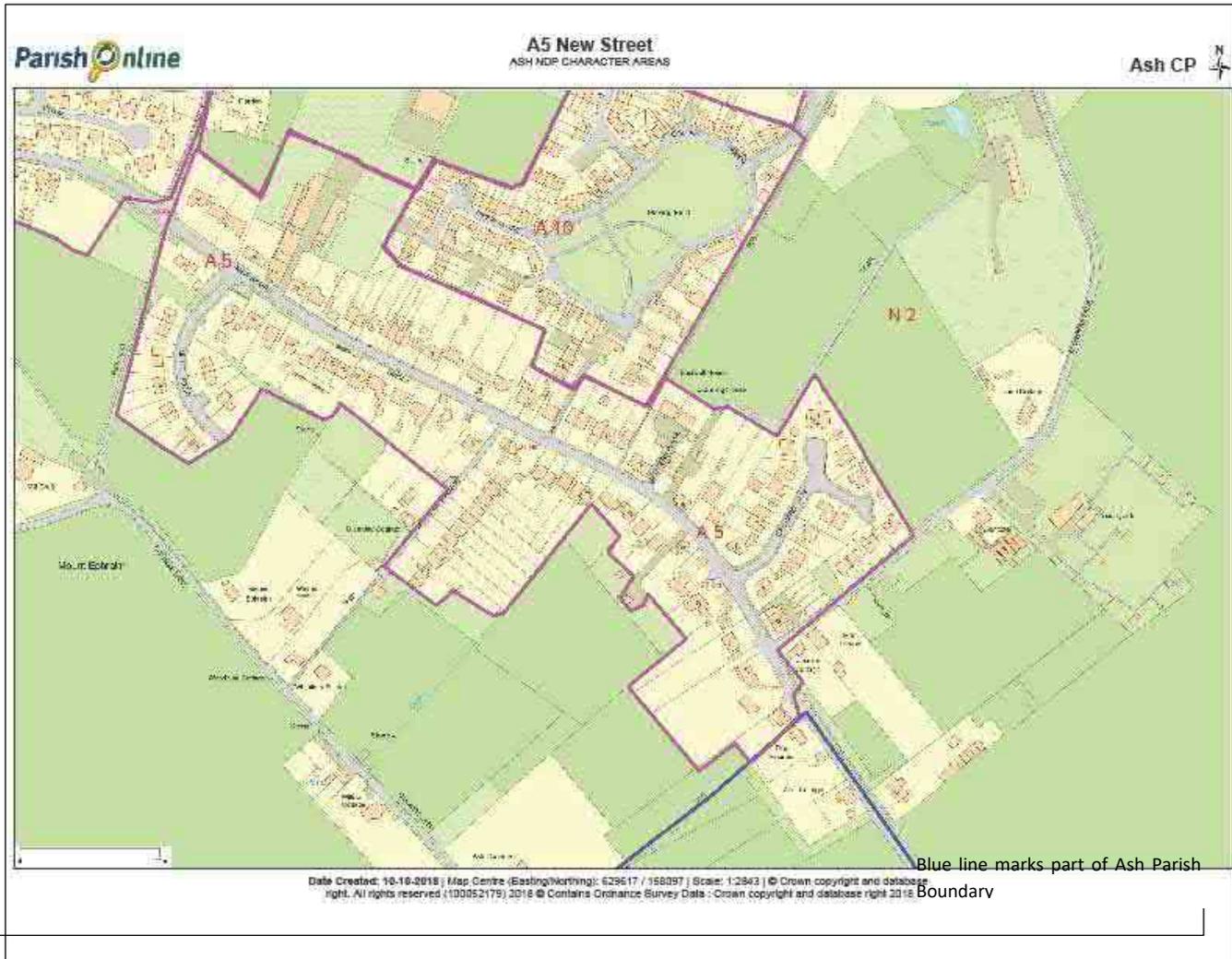


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A4 Sandwich Road	
Location	This is the north east entrance to Ash village.
Topography	It is fairly flat with a slight gradient sloping down towards the A257 bypass.
Land use	Mixed – residential, commercial.
Layout	<p>This is divided into two zones facing Sandwich Road.</p> <p>Zone 1 is the area nearest the village consists of White Post Gardens, a cul-de sac. It is adjacent to the disused farm buildings of White Post Farm which are in the third conservation area. There is also a linear row of housing facing the old brewery</p> <p>Zone 2 is on the south side of Sandwich Road facing the open farm land of N2. This is a ribbon, linear strip of residential properties with short front and long back gardens, dominated by a partly, disused agricultural business site with some commercial premises still in use, adjacent to an old orchard which backs onto New Street area (A5).</p>
Roads, Streets and routes	Sandwich Road links the area with the village, where it meets the junction with New Street and The Street and to the eastern exit onto the A257 bypass. Zone 1 is within the 30 mph speed limit, whereas Zone 2 is an open road speed limit (60 mph).
Spaces	<p>The entrance to Hills Court Nature Trail (a Public Right of Way).</p> <p>There is a bus shelter owned by the Parish Council providing covered seating.</p>

<p>Buildings</p>	 <p>New houses on Sandwich</p> <p>The housing in White Post Gardens and the row facing the old brewery is mid twentieth century.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are bungalows and semi-detached housing, apart from the nineteenth century farmhouse and The Gables of a similar age opposite Cherry Garden Lane. <p>The south facing row beyond the lane is mainly nineteenth century and early twentieth century.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are of mixed age and styles.  <p>Sandwich Road - end of the village</p>
<p>Landmarks</p>	<p>Open fields at the north east entrance onto Sandwich Road maintaining the rural feel of the village.</p>
<p>Green and natural features</p>	<p>These areas are dissected by Public Rights of Way and therefore country walks are within easy reach.</p> <p>The green and natural features dominate the area.¹⁹ The trees and vegetation in the gardens and surrounding land support a good population of birds, such as woodpeckers, thrush, sparrows and finches as well as pipistrelle and common bats. There are wild flowers and hedgerow fruit.</p>
<p>Streetscape</p>	<p>There are good pavements along the road which is in good repair. Street lighting is adequate for a country area. Property walls and hedges provide a pleasant streetscape.</p>
<p>Views</p>	<p>Two aspects dominate the views. Firstly, the views across open fields. This produces the opportunity to experience lovely sunsets and creates the feeling of open country life. Secondly, looking into the village, the St Nicholas Church spire is the dominant feature and an inspiring view.</p>
<p>Key Characteristics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An area of ribbon growth along the main route to Sandwich which shows the organic growth of the village. • There is an inner zone on the north side of the road with a row of mainly twentieth century housing facing the old Brewery cottages of the (A3) zone. • An outer zone of housing on the south side of the road faces the open farmland of (N2). • It is mainly a residential area with an old commercial area in the outer zone. • It shares the heritage of the Brewery area (A3), as there was another brewery at White Post Farm which was eventually bought up by Gardners Brewery. This is within the conservation area. • Green and natural features dominate much of the area, as open farmland to the north (N2) gives an immediate connection to the surrounding countryside and wildlife. • A special interest is the Dot moth in possibly its only natural habitat. • The views across the open fields are an essential part of the rural character of the village. • The view along the approach to the village gives a historic view of the St Nicholas Church spire.

¹⁹ Ash NDP Green Space Assessment sites – Hills Court Nature Trail



A5 New Street	
Location	This is the south east entrance to the Ash village from the road to Woodnesborough along to Cherry Garden Lane.
Topography	New Street follows a gentle gradient rising from the village centre then levelling out.
Land use	Residential along with the premises of a white goods business and a home based metal worker.
Layout	A ribbon, linear development of various housing styles along New Street. Mill Field has a regular form with a consistent building line. Orchard Way has a more irregular form. The unadopted road, Langdon Avenue, has a consistent building line with a variety of styles.
Roads, Streets and routes	This is an old road established in the fifteenth century to link up with the causeway road from Sandwich via Each End road (now a private road). It is the main route to Woodnesborough where the open road speed limits drops to 30 mph just before the first houses which are in the Parish of Woodnesborough. It has only two junctions at Cherry Garden Lane and Saunders Lane which both connect to Sandwich Road. There are two cul-de sacs (Mill Field and Orchard Way) and an unadopted road, Langdon Avenue, off New Street.

	A footpath east of 94 New Street also connects with Sandwich Road. Other Public Rights of Way connect to the open countryside to the south.
Spaces	A small area with a bench, grass and trees, is maintained by the Jack Foot Trust at the junction with Millfield.
Buildings	<p>The houses are of Victorian, Edwardian and twentieth century in age.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mixture of detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows. They all have long back gardens. • There are two older houses, Ivy Cottage dated 1696 and number 73, an early eighteenth century house. <p>There are three small housing groups coming off New Street.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millfield has a regular and consistent style. This development was built by Sanctuary Housing and provides social housing. Note: this is an exception site and outside the settlement boundary of Ash village. • Langdon Avenue has a consistent building line with front and rear gardens. • Orchard View is a small estate of twentieth century bungalows, set back from the road with front and rear gardens.
Landmarks	None
Green and natural features	Many of the houses have hedges and pleasant front garden planting.
Streetscape	<p>There are pedestrian pavements on north side from number 120 to Cherry Garden Lane and on the south side from number 63 past Cherry Garden Lane. After this pedestrian access is more difficult through area A3.</p> <p>It is well lit for its entire length.</p>
	 <p>New Street going east out of the village</p>
Views	Many houses have excellent first floor views out of the village, towards Manston and the Thanet coast, and for those on the south side towards open country views of Staple and Chillenden.
Key Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ribbon development along the road to Woodnesborough and Eastry has formed a fairly quiet residential area although traffic can be fast enough to be a problem at times. • Housing of varying styles and ages from Victorian to twentieth century has slowly formed a linear layout on plots of varying sizes. There are also three small housing groups coming off New Street. • There is no large commercial development. • There is easy access to open countryside to the south (N1) with excellent views over this area. • It is a well-lit road with pavements other than the western end which has a difficult access to The Street especially for pedestrians.



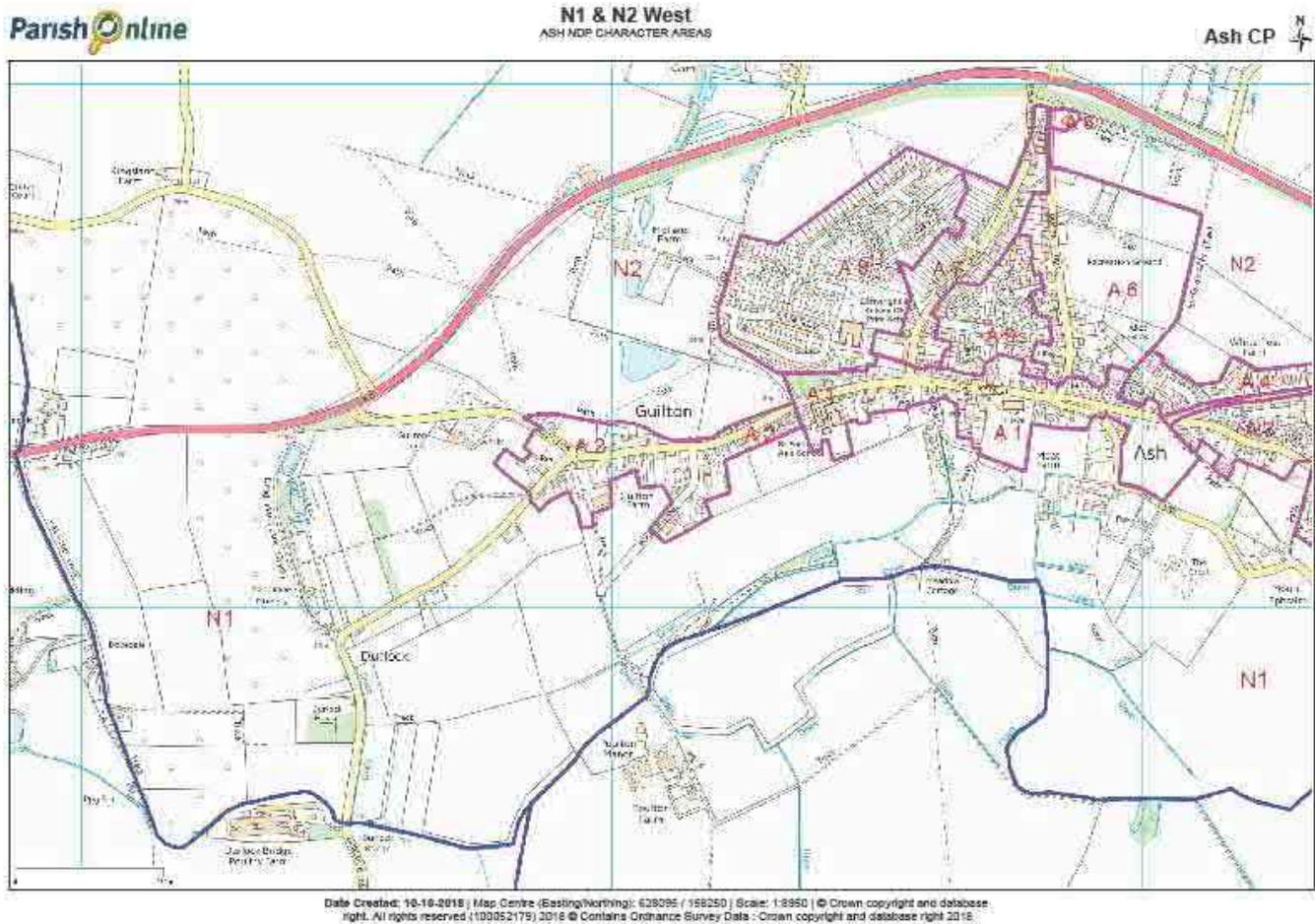
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A10 Collar Makers Green	
Location	Between the eastern end of New Street (A5) and Sandwich Road (A4) at the far eastern edge of the village. It is ¾ mile from the Ash village centre.
Topography	Flat site.
Land use	Residential - it was previously agricultural land.
Layout	A private estate built in 2000 and consists of approximately eighty houses on plots of various sizes. The majority of the houses are built close to the road.
Roads, Streets and routes	It is a large, residential mainly ‘commuter’ estate built around a central green, with several cul-de-sacs, named after apple varieties, running off it. The access road leads onto Sandwich Road and directly to the eastern A257 bypass. There is limited off-street parking. There are Public Rights of Way from the estate on to both Sandwich Road and New Street which give easy access to open countryside.
Spaces	The central green provides an estate amenity of greenery and a play area maintained by the estate residents.
Buildings	Houses of varying sizes and all of a modern, pleasant design. There are large detached houses, some semi-detached and some social housing. Many houses have no off-street parking.



	It is a twenty first century, pleasant, privately developed, estate owing little to village heritage or design apart from its name.
Landmarks	None
Green and natural features	<p>The central green²⁴ creates an open green space and is a welcome contrast to the buildings.</p> 
Streetscape	This area is well lit and pavements line all the roads
Views	There are no views out of the estate.
Key Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A twenty first century estate at the east end of Sandwich Road with housing of pleasant modern styles, ranging from family homes and executive houses, to small, semi-detached and social housing. • The housing is built around a central green maintained by the estate, with cul-de-sacs coming off it. • There is quick access to the eastern end of the A257 Bypass. • It is not within easy walking distance from the village centre. There is easy access to the surrounding countryside.

²⁴ Ash NDP Green Spaces Assessment sites – Collar Makers Green



Note: Please view N1 and N2 West and East Maps together to view the extent of the respective areas.

N1 South Rural Strip		
Location	This is the area between the ridge top of the village and New Street and the Parish boundary (blue line) to the south and is outside the village settlement boundary. Guiton (road) from the A257 to the edge of A2 Guiton has been used as the dividing line in the west.	Maps Pgs 34 and 36
Topography	South facing slope of the Wingham Stream flowing towards Wingham.	
Land use	Agricultural, recreational Much of this land is quite wet and drained by dykes. The eastern higher end is mainly arable. Central area is flat and drained by the Wingham Stream, much of it is the Ten Acre Field owned by the Jack Foat Trust for the use and amenity of the community. Discovery Field is also owned by the Trust and is situated by Moat Lane. Orchards from Pudding Lane to Durlock occupy land that was once devoted to hops. The only hop garden left in the parish is at Pedding on the western boundary.	
Layout	Open fields with sporadic housing. There are five new houses built on the unadopted road leading off Pudding Lane.	
Roads, Streets and routes	It is cut by Coombe Lane to the east and Poulton Lane and Durlock Road to the west. To the east of the field (Street Field) fronting onto The Street, (Jack Foat Trust land), the land rises to the site of the old Mount Ephraim windmill.	

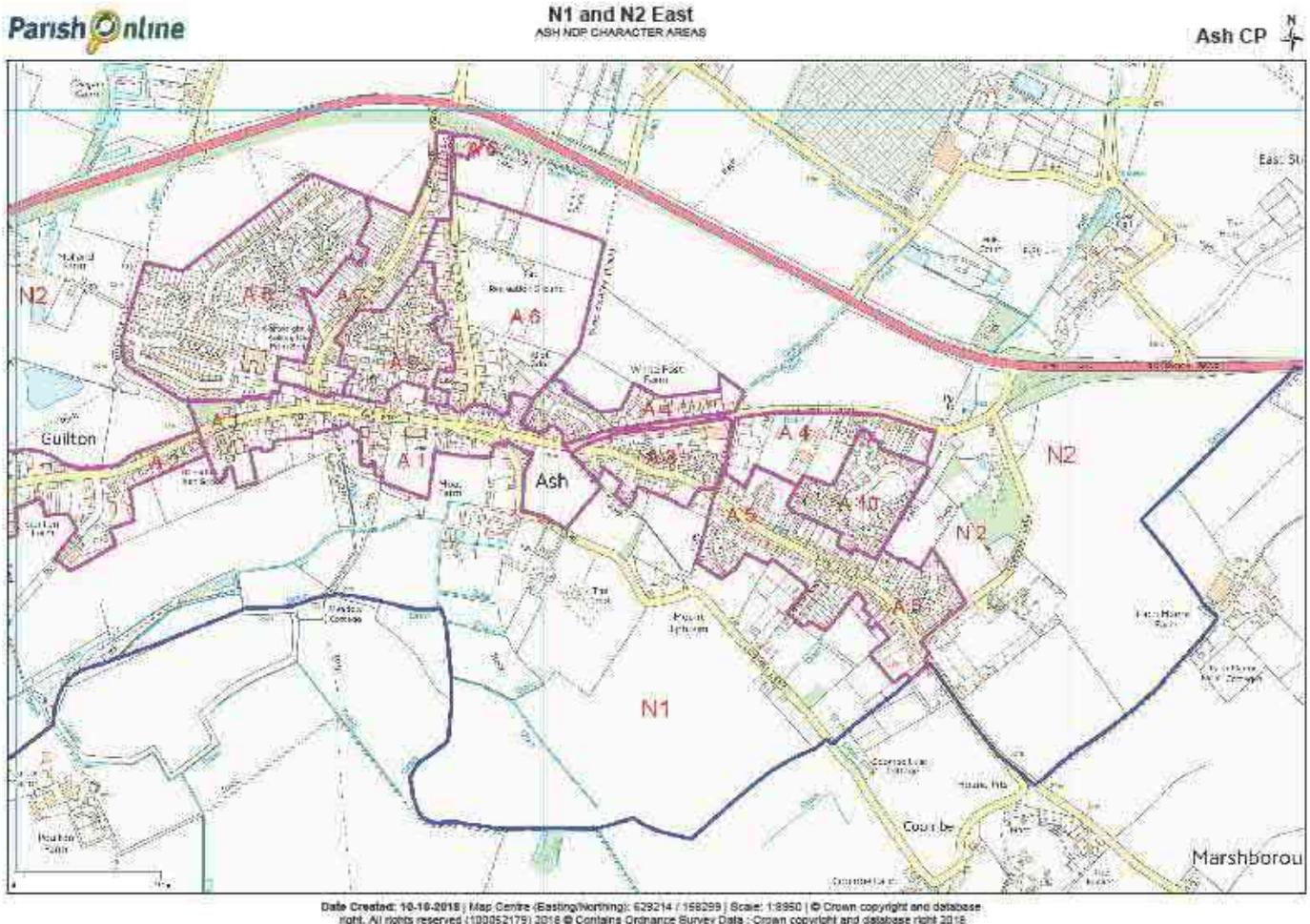
	<p>Moat Lane leads down from the village, now a narrow sunken lane but the road to Sandwich in mediaeval times. and then becomes Coombe Lane cutting through south facing arable land.</p> <p>Below St Faith's school playing field is Jack Foat Trust land, dedicated to providing the village with green space. It follows the line of the old East Kent Light Railway (closed in 1951) from the bottom of Pudding Lane where Ash Halt was situated to Poulton Lane.</p> <p>Major east west Public Rights of Way from the village of Ash to the east (EE114, EE119A, EE118 and EE124). Public Rights of Way from the village access the area via Pudding Lane or Ship Yard</p>
Spaces	<p>The Ash Bowls Club is on the south side of Moat Lane.</p> <p>The Jack Foat Trust Land (10 Acre Field) is open green space for the use of the community. This and the numerous PROWs crossing this area are heavily used.</p>
Buildings	<p>There are few buildings.</p> <p>Scattered housing follows the line of Coombe Lane, some more recent, some nineteenth century cottages.</p> <p>Moat Farm is below the St Nicolas Church Yard.</p> <p>Durlock Road has some detached, scattered housing.</p>
Landmarks	<p>10 Acre Field – see Spaces (above) and Green and Natural Features (below)</p>
Green and natural features	<p>Jack Foat Trust land:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discovery Field²⁵ abutting Street Field which borders The Street - Ten Acre Field²⁶ south of Pudding Lane <p>This whole strip is favoured by walkers and offers wide views to St Nicholas Church and out of the village to the Staple road to the south.</p> <p>Due to the varied habitats of streams, trees, orchard land and wetter stream-sides, it attracts much birdlife and other wildlife.</p> 
Streetscape	<p>There are no pavements or street lighting on Moat Lane or Coombe Lane.</p>
Views	<p>Wide open rural views from all directions.</p> <p>To the north, looking into Ash village there are clear views of St Nicholas Church.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">View from Moat Lane looking south out of the village</p> 
Key Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is part of the east to west valley of the Wingham Stream, sloping to the south from the ridge top of Ash village. • There is open arable land to the eastern end and orchards and hops at the western end. • Jack Foat Trust land provides green, open accessible space for local residents. There is also land used for sports. • Wildlife habitats occupy much of the central area, supporting a diversity of plant and wild-life. • There is scattered housing along the minor roads cutting through the area.

²⁵ Ash NDP Green Spaces Assessment Site – Discovery Field (Street Field)

²⁶ Ash NDP Green Spaces Assessment Site – 10 Acre Field

- The line of the old East Kent Light Railway follows the line of the valley cutting east to west across this rural strip.
- It is a popular with local walkers and has with wide views.

N2 NORTH RURAL STRIP



Note: Please view N1 and N2 West and East Maps together to view the extent of the respective areas.

N2 North Rural Strip		
Location	This is the flat area between the village and the noise protective bank and treeline of the A257 bypass. Gilton (road) from the A257 to the edge of A2 Gilton has been used as the dividing line in the west. The Ash Parish Boundary (blue line) in the south.	Maps Pgs 34 and 36
Topography	It rises from the Sandwich Road end westwards and eastwards. To the west are the higher points of Chequer Lane and Gilton, where it looks down slightly towards the village of Ash on the south side of the ridge. To the east it rises to the higher ground cut by Saunders Lane which runs through to New Street (A5). This land then slopes to the north east towards the marshland which the A257 bypass crosses as it goes towards Each End.	
Land use	Agricultural, recreational	
Layout	It is all Grade 1 agricultural land, primarily used for arable and vegetable crops. Much of it, forms part of the farms on the north side of the bypass.	

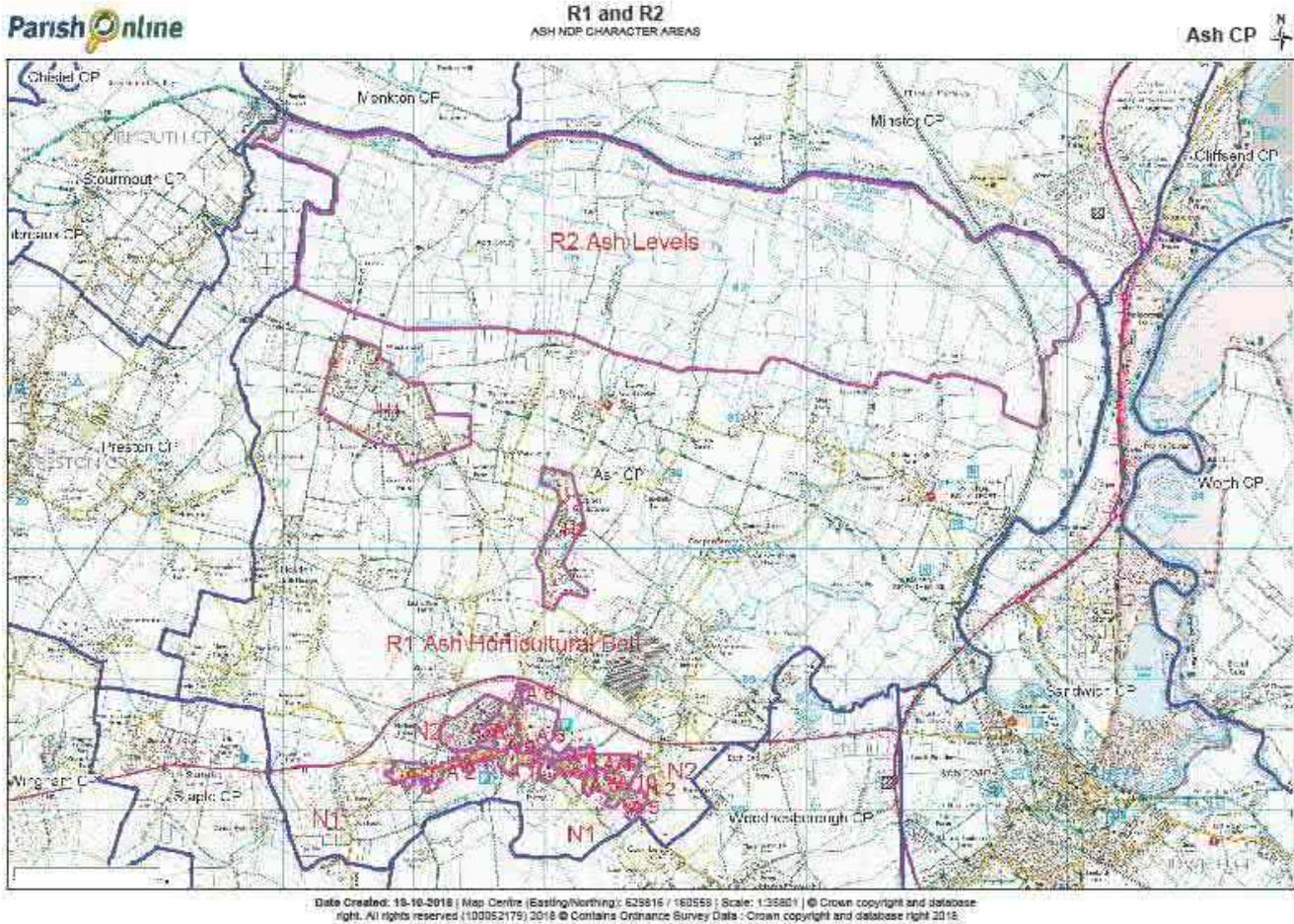
	<p>This strip allows the village of Ash to meld well into the surrounding countryside. To the east is Saunders Wood.</p>
<p>Roads, Streets and routes</p>	<p>This strip is cut by Chequer Lane and Sandwich Road as they join the A257 bypass. Public Rights of Way link the village to the rural land to the north of the bypass (N2). These footpaths are Burfords Alley and the continuation of the old lanes, Molland Lane and Hills Court Road, cut off by the building of the A257 bypass in 1993.</p> <p>The roads are heavily used exits from the village, and the public footpaths are very popular giving immediate access to green space.</p>  <p>View looking back towards Sandwich Road. The line of trees in the foreground mark the old Hills Court Road now a PRow (bridleway).</p>
<p>Spaces</p>	<p>Saunders Wood, owned by Kent County Council, marks the old road between Ash and Sandwich before the A257 bypass and is a small woodland habitat rich in tree species, birds and other wildlife.</p>
<p>Buildings</p>	<p>There are few buildings in this area. They are the old farm buildings at Molland Farm and one historic building, Molland House is on the site of one of the mediaeval manors of Ash.</p>
<p>Landmarks</p>	<p>The eastern end beyond Saunders Wood is likely to be underlain by a Roman settlement, which was partly exposed during the building of the Each End section of the bypass.</p>
<p>Green and natural features</p>	<p>Saunders Wood²⁷ (see Spaces and Landmarks above) Hills Court Nature Trail²⁸</p>
<p>Streetscape</p>	<p>See Chequer Lane (A7) and Sandwich Road (4) for the description of these two roads that cut the area. There are no other roads in this area.</p>
<p>Views</p>	 <p>From the boundary with the Ash Recreation Ground there are open field views back to Sandwich Road.</p> <p>From the eastern end beyond Saunders Wood there are wide views towards Richborough and Pegwell Bay.</p> <p>From the Gilton end, there are long views across to the north Kent coast at Reculver, and views to the south towards Staple, as the bypass goes along the ridgetop towards old Sandy lane, the end of this section.</p>
<p>Key Characteristics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is open agricultural land of Grade A quality, forming a buffer between the A257 bypass and the Ash village. • Trees and wildlife habitat are found along the old Hills Court Road (EE466) and in Saunders wood. • There are few buildings other than old farm buildings and Molland House, a listed building on the site of one of the twelve mediaeval manors of Ash. • There is an ancient Roman settlement site beneath the eastern end of the A257 bypass and adjacent fields.

²⁷ Ash NDP Green Spaces Assessment sites – Saunders Wood

²⁸ Ash NDP Green Spaces Assessment sites – Hills Court

- There are much used walking routes from the Ash village giving access to R1 and R2
- There are good views in all directions especially at the Guilton end.

R1 ASH HORTICULTURAL BELT



R1 Ash Horticultural Belt	
Location	This area lies north of the Ash village, between the Ash A257 bypass and the Ash Levels (R2).
Topography	<p>The topography is relatively flat, the land sloping gently from 30m at Guilton and Shatterling, towards the marshland of the Ash Levels at 4m above sea level. The area is drained by streams and dykes to the Ash Levels and eventually the River Stour.</p> <p>- The geology is predominately head brickearth overlying and Thanet sands Woolwich beds of mixed clays and sands. Soils are mainly deep, well, drained, fine and silty. They are mainly Agricultural Grade 1 soils which is the basis of this agricultural region.²⁹</p>

²⁹ Dover-District-Landscape-Character-Assessment 2006 Horticultural Belt Pg 15

<p>Land use</p>	<p>Commercial: Agriculture - This area is one of predominant agricultural use, with orchards, greenhouses, vegetables and arable land. Other- some home based businesses varying from physiotherapy to builders and a cattery, all rely heavily on good broadband connections. - a number of holiday cottages.</p>  <p>View over the orchards looking towards the A257</p>
<p>Layout</p>	<p>The fields vary in shape and size according to the land use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Top fruit orchards tend to be within smaller fields, enclosed by poplar or alder windbreaks and low mesh fencing. Apple and pear trees and blackcurrants are planted in a linear formation providing a sense of pattern and order in the countryside. - Arable fields are larger and more open, crops include cereals, potatoes, root crops, brassicas and rapeseed. - There is a large area of glasshouses at Weddington, generally well hidden in the landscape and using eco-friendly methods. - Small enclosed pasture paddocks are situated near settlements and are mostly horse paddocks. <p>Note: Within this area, there are two larger hamlets, Westmarsh and Ware (H1) and Cop Street, Upper Goldstone and Lower Goldstone (H2) covered in separate assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are other smaller hamlets of linear settlement such as Hoaden, Paramour Street and Guston.  <p>Potato field on Cop Street</p>
<p>Roads, Streets and routes</p>	<p>Winding narrow lanes dissect the countryside along field boundaries, often enclosed by hedgerows. A comprehensive network of Public Rights of Way (footpaths and some bridleways) cross the region. It is an area much used by walkers and cyclists who like the lanes and the gentle gradients. There is also a National Cycle Route 1.</p>
<p>Spaces</p>	<p>There are no public open spaces.</p>
<p>Buildings</p>	<p>There are many houses and farmsteads scattered along the lanes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of these date from 1700's and 1800's showing a variety of styles often incorporating Kentish vernacular architecture with Kent peg tiles. • The most notable listed buildings derive from the mediaeval manors scattered across this area and show a range of ages within one building, especially Wingham Barton Manor at Westmarsh, Paramour Grange at Paramour Street, Uphousden, Chequer Court (a Scheduled Monument) and Gosshall.
<p>Landmarks</p>	<p>Wingham Barton Manor; Paramour Grange.</p>
<p>Green and natural features</p>	<p>There is a small green, public space by Westmarsh Village Hall. Hedgerows of native species and windbreaks give a strong sense of enclosure in many places. Tree cover is apparent with hedgerow trees, small copses such as Thorntree Wood and an area of planted woodland at Nash. Species include hawthorn, ash, oak, hazel and elm. These areas, along with the roadside verges, create a diversity of habitats and plant life attracting a wide range of wildlife.</p>

Streetscape	There are no pavements or street lighting on the narrow rural lanes.
Views	Good long-distance views are found from the higher land by the A256. Reculver and the sea can be seen from the Gilton / Shatterling end. Pegwell and the sea from the top of Cop Street Road near the bypass.
Key Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a large part of the Parish between the A257 bypass and Ash Levels. It has relatively flat topography, sloping northwards from the ridge top of the Ash village towards Ash Levels. • It is a rich agricultural area used especially for horticulture and fruit orchards. • There are many hamlets large and small (H1, H2) and scattered housing along the winding narrow lanes. • There are many old buildings reflecting styles back to the manorial age from the 1600's to 1900's. These include including Manors at Westmarsh, Paramour Grange at Paramour Street, Uphousden, Chequer Court and Gosshall. • There are few new builds. • The narrow winding lanes are often bordered by native hedgerows and trees and these along with an excellent public rights of way network are much used by walkers and cyclists. • There are varied habitats supporting a diverse variety of wildlife.

R2 THE ASH LEVELS

R2 Ash Levels		
Location	Ash Levels is the marshland of the former Wantsum Sea Channel which forms the northern end of the Parish, lying between the Ash horticultural belt and the River Stour.	Map Pg 38
Topography	The area is characterised by topography and geology. It is low lying floodplain, just above sea level and flat. This provides a strong visual element. The geology is marine(estuarine) alluvium, producing a seasonally wet deep clayey soil. ³⁰	
Land use	<p>Commercial – Agriculture</p> <p>Farmland is used as permanent and improved pasture near the river for sheep and cattle. The better drained land is used for combinable crops.</p> <p>Groundwater is controlled by ditches and pumps.</p>	

³⁰ Dover-District-Landscape-Character-Assessment 2006 Ash Level Pg 16, Pg 28

<p>Layout</p>	<p>The drainage ditches run along the field boundaries providing a strong pattern to the landscape, along with the Richborough stream on the southern boundary.</p> <p>There are very few buildings creating a horizontal landscape with little to interrupt the view.</p>	 <p>Richborough Stream</p>
<p>Roads, Streets and routes</p>	<p>There are no roads other than the small stretch of the Richborough Road connecting up to Richborough Castle on its isolated higher land. The main access being straight ancient drove roads created for herding animals.</p> <p>The few footpaths generally lead from drove roads following field edges. The exception is the Saxon Shore Way a long-distance Public Right of Way following the River Stour popular with walkers and members of the boating club situated on the river bank.</p> <p>The railway from Minster to Sandwich cuts across the eastern end of the area.</p> <p>The small hamlet of Richborough on the higher ground is most easily accessed via Sandwich.</p>	
<p>Spaces</p>	<p>There are no public open spaces.</p>	
<p>Buildings</p>	<p>There is little development other than the odd shed.</p>	
<p>Landmarks</p>	<p>The landmark of the Roman fort of Richborough Castle, a Scheduled Monument which is owned and maintained by English Heritage is situated on an island rising out of the marsh and separating the Goshall valley from the main marsh. It is a major tourist attraction but accessed more easily from Sandwich.</p> <p>The drained marshes are a key feature of the area.</p>	
<p>Green and natural features</p>	<p>This is an important area for wildlife as it is a corridor and SSSI impact zone for SSSI sites at Pegwell Bay to the Stodmarsh Nature Reserve. Marsh harriers, swans, waders and wildfowl are often seen, and sea birds fly overhead. The hawthorns, willows, elder, blackthorn and bramble of the hedgerows and dyke edges along with the sedges and reedmace attract many small birds. Many dykes are quite live with water plants and water life.</p>	
<p>Streetscape</p>	<p>There are no roads (apart from a short stretch of Richborough Road which has no pavements or street lighting).</p>	
<p>Views</p>	<p>This is a landscape with views over two miles or more in distance northwards to the Isle of Thanet and wide attractive views in all directions.</p>	
<p>Key Characteristics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the flat alluvial marshland of the old Wantsum Channel now crossed by the River Stour which forms part of the Ash Parish boundary. • The wetland of this floodplain has been artificially drained and is now farmland with pasture and wide, open arable fields. • There are no through roads only old drove roads leading into the marsh and public rights of way. • There are no buildings or settlements in this wet area. • It is an area rich in wildlife, forming part of the Stour Valley corridor. • The eastern end is dominated by the Richborough Castle on its former island, an English Heritage site, accessed mainly from Sandwich. • This has considerable leisure value e.g. the long distance path, boats, wildlife and the Richborough Roman Fort. • There are wide, far-reaching views in all directions. 	

12.0 APPENDIX III: RELEVANT POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

12.1 Paragraph 8(c) states:

“an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

12.2 Paragraph 92 states:

“Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.”

12.3 Paragraph 124 states:

“Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;

b) local market conditions and viability;

c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;

d) the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and

e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.”

12.4 Paragraph 125 states:

“Area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places. Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. In these circumstances:

a) plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. This will be tested robustly at examination, and should include the use of minimum density standards for city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. These standards should seek a significant uplift in the average density of residential development within these areas, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate;

b) the use of minimum density standards should also be considered for other parts of the plan area. It may be appropriate to set out a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, rather than one broad density range; and

c) local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards).”

12.5 Paragraph 126 states:

“The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.”

12.6 Paragraph 130 states:

“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁹; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”

12.7 Paragraph 131 states:

“Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined⁵⁰, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.”

12.8 Paragraph 132 states:

“Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.”

12.9 Paragraph 134 states:

“Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or

b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”