

## Surrey Landscape Character Assessment: **Reigate and Banstead Borough**



**April 2015**

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The Surrey Landscape Character Assessment 2015 incorporates parts of the Guildford Landscape Character Assessment prepared in January 2007 by Guildford Borough Council and Land Use Consultants, modified as appropriate.

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Surrey Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) Map

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Surrey County Council commissioned a review of the Landscape Character of Surrey, to provide a consistent landscape character assessment across the county of Surrey, that accords with current best practice and published guidance for the Landscape Character Assessment. This document contains the parts of the Surrey wide assessment which cover Reigate and Banstead Borough. Written in context with the county-wide Landscape Character Assessment 2015, there are likely to be references to locations outside of Reigate and Banstead Borough within this document.

### Background

- 1.2 In 1997, a landscape assessment was carried out entitled 'The Future of Surrey's Landscape and Woodlands', which covered the Surrey County Council administrative boundary. The approach adopted was based on the 1995 landscape assessment guidance and the Countryside Character map of England (1997), and therefore predates the current guidance on character assessment. The assessment identified 25 County Landscape Areas nesting inside 7 of the National Countryside Character Areas (figure 1). Within the study, each national area was broadly described, with more detail provided for each County Landscape Areas grouped within the National Countryside Character Areas.
- 1.3 The Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally protected landscape which covers 422km<sup>2</sup> of the county (figure 2). It includes part of the North Downs and stretches from Farnham, in the west, around Guildford, Dorking, and Reigate, to Oxted, in the east. In 1998, a landscape character assessment was carried out for the Surrey Hills AONB. The character assessment drew upon the 1997 Surrey County Landscape Assessment and the landscape assessment 'The Surrey Hills Landscape' published by the Countryside Commission in 1998. It identified 13 local landscape character areas, the boundaries of which were derived from the earlier county assessments.
- 1.4 Since the county assessment and Surrey Hills AONB assessment have been completed, a National Landscape Typology has been developed (see figure 3) and was published in 2001 by the Countryside Agency (now Natural England). In some parts of the county, the 1997 Surrey county-wide assessment fits comfortably within the national landscape typology, for example in the North Downs, in other areas there are anomalies which result from the greater level of detail provided by the national typology assessment.
- 1.5 In 2002, the Countryside Agency (now Natural England) and Scottish Natural Heritage published its 'Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland'. The assessment methodology contained within the 2002 guidance was subsequently reaffirmed by National England in October 2014 with publication of 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment', which incorporates the assessment processes set out in the 2002 guidance.
- 1.6 The county of Surrey is made up of 11 Districts and Boroughs. Individually, some districts and boroughs have undertaken landscape character assessments, employing various methodologies, a number of which pre-date the current guidance. Guildford Borough has recently published a series of comprehensive studies in line with Natural England's guidance, which was originally set out in 2002.

### **Aims and Objectives of the Study**

- 1.8 The landscape character assessment presented in this study, sits within the framework provided by the national landscape character areas and the national landscape typologies. The assessment draws on existing baseline information contained in the previous county assessment, the 1998 AONB assessment and management plan, and the existing District and Borough-wide landscape character assessments.
- 1.9 Landscape character assessment is a process by which the key characteristics of an area of landscape can be identified and which contribute to the sense of place of a locality. It is also a tool by which one can achieve an understanding of the landscape today and how it has changed over time. It is as an aid to decision making and the future management of the landscape.
- 1.10 Government guidance requires that Plans, including Local Development Frameworks should be “objective led”. To this end Landscape Character Assessment provides a clear statement of the landscape resource within a Plan area. The Surrey Landscape Character Assessment forms part of the evidence base from which development and management strategies can be derived, with particular reference to the conservation, enhancement or restoration of the landscape. This fulfils one of the core principles in national planning policy to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the requirement for Local Plans to include policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape.

## **2. METHOD STATEMENT**

### **Introduction**

- 2.1 The approach to this study followed best practice promoted by Natural England, as set out in the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (2002), and reaffirmed by Natural England’s 2014 ‘An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment’.
- 2.2 Geographic Information Systems (GIS) has been used to collate and present the graphical data provided as paper mapping within this study. This data will be maintained by Surrey County Council. Public access to the landscape character assessment will be available electronically through county and relevant District/Borough websites.

### **Stage 1: Desk Study/Review**

- 2.3 The initial desk study reviewed the existing landscape character assessments that cover the county. The national framework provided by the Character of England Map (Joint Character Areas) and the National Landscape Typology (landscape character types) set the overall context for the study.
- 2.4 The desk study also reviewed the physical and human influences that have shaped the landscape of the county. Physical influences (natural factors) include geology, soils, landform, drainage, and land cover, which, in turn, have a strong influence on patterns of human occupation and activity. The study also reviewed cultural/social factors such as patterns of settlement and land use, enclosure, and socio-economic and cultural traditions and influences and looked at current change in the landscape and the pressures for change acting on the landscapes of the county.

### **Stage 2: Local Landscape Characterisation**

- 2.5 Overlays of baseline information were produced using GIS mapping for geology, soils, landform, drainage, land cover, environmental designations, land use and historic landscape types/areas

(figures 4-9). Analysis of this range of data, covering both natural and cultural attributes of the landscape, were utilised in the development of draft characterisation prior to field testing.

- 2.6 The draft characterisation stage mapped draft landscape types and landscape character area boundaries and established a detailed methodology for the assessment across the county, in advance of the fieldwork.
- 2.7 The approach taken followed best practice as promoted by Natural England in maintaining a distinction between landscape types and character areas, and developing a hierarchical approach as follows:
- **Landscape Types:** generic, often extensive areas of landscape that share common combinations of geology, topography, vegetation and human influences, e.g. 'Wooded Greensand Hills' or 'Chalk Ridge'.
  - **Character Areas:** which are unique, discrete geographical areas of the Landscape Type, e.g. 'Hindhead Wooded Greensand Hills' or 'Box Hill to Tatsfield Chalk Ridge', which exhibit all, or the majority of, the recognisable characteristics of the Type, depending on the location of the Character Area.

### **Stage 3: Field Survey**

- 2.8 Field survey was used to verify draft landscape type classifications, to identify landscape character area subdivisions and define precise boundaries. The survey was systematic, using written observations, map annotations, and photographs. Standard survey checklists were used to ensure that landscape features and characteristics were recorded in a consistent and objective way. Photographs were used to record general landscape character, key characteristics and specific attributes.
- 2.9 The field survey assessed and recorded each area in terms of the extent and combination of its key characteristics and features as well as the perceptual characteristics of each area. It noted a description of landscape character, a list of landscape elements and characteristics, e.g. settlement form, landmarks and building style and assessed the aesthetic and perceptual factors e.g. pattern, scale, unity, remoteness and tranquillity of the landscape.
- 2.10 The field assessment also reviewed the current condition and management of the landscape.

### **Stage 4: Classification and Description**

- 2.11 A final review of the draft area boundaries was undertaken having regard to the desk research findings, field maps and field record sheets and the guidance on current best practice. Summary descriptions of each landscape type and landscape character area were compiled in accordance with the guidelines.
- 2.12 The landscape character assessment has been mapped at the scale of 1:25,000 and the boundaries to specific areas defined using the level of detail available at this scale. The boundaries selected for landscape types and landscape character areas are firm and recognisable features on the ground and represent a 'best fit' to the change in landscape type or character within an area. Boundaries to landscape character areas are defined but field observation often identifies a gradual transition in landscape character, it seldom changes abruptly.

### **Stage 5: Evaluation and Guidance**

- 2.13 The current status of the elements and features of the landscape was recorded and forces for change noted as examples of past change and the potential pressures for future change. Information from the desk study, fieldwork and consultation with the relevant Local Authorities was used to determine the forces for change. This evaluation identified a number of factors that may have an effect landscape character in future.
- 2.14 An outline landscape strategy was prepared for each landscape type. The strategy addresses the landscape area as a whole and identifies broad objectives for each landscape type. The aim is to set out broad objectives and principles to manage and direct landscape change in order to protect the highest quality and most sensitive landscapes from adverse change and to encourage positive change in weak or degraded landscapes.
- 2.15 For each landscape type there are a set of broad objectives; where individual character areas highlight specific issues of local importance more specific prescriptions are identified. The guidelines indicate the actions required, with reference to the overall landscape objective in order to ensure that distinctive character is maintained. To aid ease of reference the guidelines have been divided into prescriptions related to land management and prescriptions specifically related to development.

## **3. THE SURREY LANDSCAPE**

### **3.1 Introduction**

- 3.1.1 Stretching from the Thames Valley in the north, to the edge of the High Weald in the south-east, the county of Surrey contains a wide variety of landscape types. The county includes significant areas of high quality and attractive landscape, with a quarter of the county designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The county includes six of England's National Character Areas: the Thames Valley, Thames Basin Heaths, Thames Basin Lowlands, the North Downs, Wealden Greensand, the Low Weald and High Weald (see figure 2). The Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty lies at the heart of the Surrey countryside, incorporating parts of the North Downs, the Wealden Greensands and the Wooded Low Weald. The south-eastern corner of the county includes a small section of the High Weald AONB.
- 3.1.2 To the north, the Surrey Hills give way to the Thames Basin, which includes a band of rolling claylands, areas of sandy heath and farmland, and river valley floor and floodplain. Bordering Greater London to the north, some of these areas have undergone significant change, and continue to face considerable pressure from the capital and its immediate hinterland.
- 3.1.3 To the south, between the Surrey Hills AONB and the High Weald AONB, the landscape is dominated by the Low Weald. The Low Weald is deeply rural, sparsely populated and to the west a heavily wooded landscape. Decreasing amounts of woodland are present in the south-east of the county, where the landscape turns to more open Wealden farmland.
- 3.1.4 Watercourses, mostly notably including the Wey and Mole rivers, transverse the county, flowing northwards from the Low Weald, and crossing the Surrey Hills, until eventually reaching the River Thames.
- 3.1.5 Surrey is one of the most densely wooded counties in England, with around 20% woodland cover. A significant proportion of the woodland is identified as ancient (see figure 8). Many areas



of the county are protected by nature conservation designations, including Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which require decision making authorities to consider the effects of development on the habitats of migratory and threatened birds found within the SPAs (see figure 7). SPAs are composed of many individual Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and within Surrey include parts of the South West London Water Bodies SPA, the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, and the Wealden Heaths SPA. Large areas of Surrey are also protected for their habitats as Special Areas of Conservation, and these are Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham, the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment, and Windsor Forest & Great Park.

### **3.2 Surrey Hills AONB**

- 3.2.1 The Surrey Hills AONB was one of the first landscapes in the country to be designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1958. It stretches across the county, meeting with the Kent Downs AONB to the east and the 'South Downs' National Park to the south and west. It includes three of England's National Character Areas: the North Downs, Wealden Greensand and Low Weald (see figure 2).
- 3.2.2 The Surrey Hills AONB lies within one of the most impressive geological features in the British Isles, the wealden uplift. Between 130-65 million years ago the landscape of South-East England was gradually inundated by the sea with the deposition of 800-1000m of sedimentary material. Layers of sand, silt, clay and chalk were laid down and compacted into what is now the wealden clays, the upper and lower greensands and gault clay and chalk. Following a period of uplift (commensurate with the formation of the Alps) the wealden dome was raised above the sea. The dome, some 215km long and up to 80km wide and lying on an east-west axis covered large parts of Kent, Sussex and Surrey. In the succeeding 20 million years the centre of the dome has been eroded to reveal the structure of the present day landscape (see figures 4 and 5).
- 3.2.3 All the rock types found in the wealden dome, with the exception of the Hasting Beds, occur in the Surrey Hills AONB and all have a profoundly different effect on the fabric of the landscape. There is a strong correlation between the geology and the landscape that has developed, which has been accentuated by the relative resistance to weathering of the various rock types.
- 3.2.4 The Surrey Hills has been shaped and used by man for thousands of years. The poor sandy soils of the Greensands and the Heavy clays of the Weald have been difficult to cultivate productively and the area has seen limited settlement. The towns around the AONB, Guildford, Godalming, Haslemere, Dorking and Reigate have all had an influence on the landscape. New roads, rail links and canals cross the Surrey Hills and the demands of growing populations in local towns and London require food, homes and recreation.
- 3.2.5 The countryside has gone through successive phases of agriculture, woodland management and quarrying and the fluctuating fortunes of rural communities has left their mark on the landscape. Although much of the archaeological evidence of early intervention lies undiscovered beneath the woodlands the history of the Surrey Hills can be seen in the architecture and settlement pattern of the area which makes a significant contribution to the landscape character of the AONB and its environs.
- 3.2.6 The most prominent feature of the Surrey Hills AONB is the chalk escarpment which marks the edge of the North Downs along the Chalk Ridge (Type CR) and provides a dramatic backdrop to the Weald to the south. The escarpment runs the length of the AONB, forming The Hog's Back

in the western section. It is generally consistent in height but the steepness of the scarp varies. On the south-facing scarp there is a mosaic of dense woodland, scrub and open downland, the woodland cover being more extensive along the eastern end of the scarp. The escarpment has been eroded by the River Mole to form the impressive and striking chalk cliffs of the Mole Gap above Dorking.

- 3.2.7 To the north of the escarpment, on the chalk dip slope, lies areas of Chalk Down with Woodland (Type CD), Open Chalk Farmland (Type CF), and Wooded North Down (Type CW). Dry valleys and coombes have been formed, set within open rolling farmland interspersed with woodland, whilst elsewhere significant later deposits of clay with flints have produced acid conditions, such as at Ranmore Common and Headley Heath, which contrast markedly with the surrounding chalk farmland.
- 3.2.8 To the south of the escarpment, the relatively soft Folkstone and Sandgate Greensands Beds form the Wooded Greensand Plateau (Type GP) south of Farnham, and also occur in the shallow and low lying Greensand Valley (Type GV) along the Tillingbourne and Pipp Brook. Harder and more resistant Greensand deposits, the Hythe Beds, form the high hills of the Greensand escarpment including the Wooded Greensand Hills (Type GW) at Hindhead, Hascombe and Leith Hill, and Open Greensand Hills (Type GO) to the south of Puttenham. Extensive woodlands cover substantial parts of the Greensand, along with important heaths, such as Thursley Heath. Fields have been carved out of the woodland and heaths fragmenting the landscape in some areas. The settlement within the Greensand Hills is sparse and road access limited to the distinctive sunken lanes which traverse the hills. The lack of access and ancient and tranquil character of the hills provides a tangible sense of remoteness within the area.
- 3.2.9 The weald clays lie at the southern foot of the greensand escarpment as a gently undulating plain. It comprises a mixture of sandstone and clays and mudstones. The soils associated with the weald are heavy and more difficult to work than the lighter soils of the adjacent greensands. The Wooded Low Weald (Type WW) is heavily wooded, much of it Semi Natural Ancient Woodland. The farmland is typically small scale with irregular field patterns and densely hedged with mixed hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

### **3.3 High Weald AONB**

- 3.3.1 The High Weald AONB was designated in 1983. It covers only a small part of Surrey at its south-east corner. The High Weald AONB stretches far into Kent to the east, East Sussex to the south-east, and West Sussex to the south-west.
- 3.3.2 The high weald is underlain by bands of sandstone and clay. Following the wealden dome uplift, the soft clay has been worn away creating a rolling landscape, with the clay forming the low valleys and the harder sandstone forming the high ridges. Elevated sandstone underlays the Wooded High Weald (Type WH) within the south-east corner of Surrey.
- 3.3.3 The high weald is an historic landscape with a mosaic of small irregular fields, abundant woods and hedges, scattered farmsteads and sunken lanes. Steep-sided, wooded gills are a distinctive feature of the area, having been created by streams carving deep, steep sided, channels through the area's hillsides.

### **3.4 Northern Surrey**

- 3.4.1 To the north of the Surrey Hills AONB, lies the broad Thames Basin, occupying the north-western quarter of the county. The North Downs are located both within the Surrey Hills AONB, to the north of Dorking and Reigate and outside the AONB, to the north-east of the county, where urban influences of London increase. Fingers of development, including Leatherhead, Tadworth and Kingswood, Caterham, and Woldingham penetrate southwards into the Downs from the northern edge of the county, and transport routes, in particular the M25 motorway, cut through the downland landscape. Exposed elevated locations within the downs afford extensive views of London to the north, with landmark buildings in the city discernible in the distance.
- 3.4.2 The Thames basin to the north-west of the county, is centred on the floodplains and valley floor associated with the River Thames, the basin is underlain by London Clay with superficial deposits of alluvium and river terrace gravels. The wider Thames Basin rises slightly to the south-west onto sand and gravel terraces, the flood plain being replaced by sandy heaths, woodland and farmland which surround Camberley, Woking and Weybridge. London Clays become exposed to the south to form the rolling claylands which rise to meet the dip slope of the North Downs to the south.
- 3.4.3 The River Thames itself occupies only a small part of the wide flat floodplain. Bordering London to the north, the areas of River Floodplain (Type RF) and adjacent River Valley Floor (Type RV) are characterised by heavy urban influence, including Built Up Areas, roads and gravel workings. A number of large elevated reservoirs, with high, steep and engineered embankments are also a distinctive feature in the area, and as such warrant their own landscape Type (Type RS).
- 3.4.4 Extensive areas underlain by sand and gravel drift geology which is found to the south and west of the River Thames floodplain. The extensive areas of intact heath and common, and large tracts of woodland define the distinct landscape types of Sandy Heath and Common (Type SH), and Sandy Woodland (Type SW). Areas of Sandy Heath and Common include extensive 'secret' areas of heathland used exclusively by the Ministry of Defence, but also popular recreational resources such as Chobham Common. The large tracts of Woodland often consist of plantation and can be dark and secluded. Remaining areas underlain by sand are less intact and have a significantly greater human influence upon them. They are predominately farmland, with varying degrees of settlement and woodland, and as such are classified as Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland (Type SS).
- 3.4.5 Further south, undulating clay lowlands rise up towards the north facing dip slope of the North Downs. Either side of Guildford, there is an extensive band of Wooded Rolling Clayland (Type LF), which comprises a somewhat fragmented mosaic of land cover, including dispersed woodland blocks, pastoral and arable farmland, and parkland. Land cover at the eastern end of the clay lowlands becomes more defined, with either continuous tracts of Clay Woodland (Type LW) or Rolling Clay Farmland (Type LF). Areas of Clay Woodland are largely common land, such as Epsom Common, and their proximity to significant areas of settlement make them valuable recreational resource. Although generally rural, areas of Rolling Clay Farmland have limited woodland cover, and therefore the surrounding settlements exert urban influence upon them.

### **3.5 Southern Surrey**

- 3.5.1 Between the Surrey Hills AONB, to the north, and High Weald AONB to the south-east, the landscape is dominated by the Low Weald. The Wooded Low Weald (Type WW) is an extensive area, stretching east from within the southern parts of the Surrey Hills AONB, along the southern part of the county as far east as Charlwood. The area is underlain by a mixture of sandstone and clays, siltstone and mudstones, and generally has heavy, poorly drained soil, which is nutrient poor and better suited to pasture than arable farming. The area is heavily wooded with small scale farmland of irregular field patterns and densely vegetated boundaries of mixed hedgerows and hedgerow trees. The landscape is sparsely settled, remote and deeply rural in character.
- 3.5.2 The wealden landscape become less wooded and more open towards the east to give way to the larger scale and more regular field patterns of the Low Weald Farmland (Type WF). Towns and transportation routes are set in the landscape, but both the Wooded Low Weald and Low Weald Farmland are predominantly rural landscapes.
- 3.5.3 The river Mole and Wey, wind their way northwards across the county, cutting through the Surrey Hills, including at the dramatic 'Mole Gap', until reaching the Thames. In contrast to the Thames River Floodplain, the upper reaches of these rivers, which run through the low weald, are peaceful and bordered by a narrow floodplain of rural pastoral landscape.

## **4. LANDSCAPE CLASSIFICATION**

- 4.1 Landscape types reflect the dominant influences on landscape character, often combining, geology, landform and landcover. In all cases the name conveys some sense of the character of the landscape.
- 4.2 A single landscape type (excluding Types UE and UW) has broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern in every area where it occurs. This does not mean that it will be identical, rather that there is a common pattern, which can be discerned. The landscape types are further sub-divided into landscape character areas.
- 4.3 Landscape character areas are discrete geographic areas that possess the common characteristics described for the landscape type. Each character area has a distinct and recognisable local identity, and is therefore named to reflect the geographically specific qualities based on a place name or established locality.
- 4.4 The landscape types and character areas for the county are set out as follows. The areas are illustrated on figure 11, which has been prepared on a Geographic Information System (GIS), with mapping undertaken at a scale of 1:25,000.

4.5 The twenty one landscape types which create the unique and distinctive character of the Surrey landscape are listed below, (see figure 10):

CD	Chalk Down with Woodland
CF	Open Chalk Farmland
CR	Chalk Ridge
CW	Wooded North Down
GO	Open Greensand Hills
GP	Wooded Greensand Plateau
GV	Greensand Valley
GW	Wooded Greensand Hills
LF	Rolling Clay Farmland
LR	Wooded Rolling Clayland
LW	Clay Woodland
MP	Mudstone Plateau
RF	River Floodplain
RS	Reservoirs
RV	River Valley Floor
SH	Sandy Heath and Common
SS	Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland
SW	Sandy Woodland
WF	Low Weald Farmland
WH	Wooded High Weald
WW	Wooded Low Weald

4.6 The landscape types listed above frequently adjoin or encircle, but do not include, the Built Up Areas within settlement boundaries. The following landscape type is a group of small individual areas on the edges of, or surrounded by, the Built Up Areas of towns across the county. These are unique areas, with a variety of characteristic and uses, which do not readily fall within the landscape types set out above:

UE	Distinct Areas on the Edge of Urban Areas
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4.7 Additionally, this study has identified and briefly considered, several significant individual green space areas within the county's Built Up Areas of towns across the county. These areas are entirely within the Built Up Areas of settlements and are grouped as the following landscape type:

UW	Significant Greenspaces Within Urban Areas
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## 5. LANDSCAPE TYPES AND CHARACTER AREAS

(See figure 11. For more detail of Reigate and Banstead Borough only, see figure 12.)

- 5.1 For contextual completeness, every landscape type and character area identified in the Surrey Landscape Character Assessment 2015 is listed below. However, landscape types and character areas which are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough are not described in this document, refer to the Surrey countywide document for these areas.

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE CD: CHALK DOWN WITH WOODLAND</b>		<b>see page 20</b>
<b>Character Areas:</b>		
CD1	Ashtead and Woodcote Parks Chalk Down with Woodland*	
CD2	Tyrrell's Wood to Walton Oaks Chalk Down with Woodland	see page 22
CD3	Courtlands to Margery Chalk Down with Woodland	see page 24
CD4	Chaldon Chalk Down with Woodland*	
CD5	South Woldingham Chalk Down with Woodland*	
CD6	Forestdale to Woldingham Chalk Down with Woodland*	
CD7	Tatsfield Chalk Down with Woodland*	
Evaluation and guidance		see page 26

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE CF: OPEN CHALK FARMLAND</b>		<b>see page 28</b>
<b>Character Areas:</b>		
CF1	Clandon Open Chalk Farmland*	
CF2	Ranmore to Hawk's Hill Open Chalk Farmland*	
CF3	Leatherhead to Epsom Downs Open Chalk Farmland	see page 30
CF4	North Looe Open Chalk Farmland*	
CF5	Hooley to Chaldon Open Chalk Farmland	see page 32
CF6	Caterham to Woldingham Open Chalk Farmland*	
CF7	Woldingham to New Addington Open Chalk Farmland*	
Evaluation and guidance		see page 34

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE CR: CHALK RIDGE</b>		<b>see page 38</b>
<b>Character Areas:</b>		
CR1	Hog's Back Chalk Ridge*	
CR2	Albury to Ranmore Chalk Ridge*	
CR3	Box Hill to Tatsfield Chalk Ridge	see page 40
Evaluation and guidance		see page 42

\* These character areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE CW: WOODED NORTH DOWN</b>		<b>see page 46</b>
<b>Character Areas:</b>		
CW1	Merrow and Clandon Wooded North Down*	
CW2	Effingham Forest Wooded North Down*	
CW3	Oaken Grove to Ranmore Common Wooded North Down*	
CW4	Norbury Park Wooded North Down*	
CW5	Box Hill to Oyster Hill Wooded North Down*	
CW6	Banstead Heath Wooded North Down	see page 48
CW7	Chussex Plain Wooded North Down	see page 50
CW8	South Caterham Wooded North Down*	
Evaluation and guidance		see page 52

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE GO: OPEN GREENSAND HILLS</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
GO1	Shackleford Open Greensand Hills*
GO2	Godalming to Sutton Abinger Open Greensand Hills*
GO3	West Farnham Open Greensand Hills*
GO4	Dockenfield to Millbridge Open Greensand Hills*
GO5	Churt to Hascombe Open Greensand Hills*
GO6	Bramley West Open Greensand Hills*
GO7	Shamley Green Open Greensand Hills*
GO8	Betchworth and Chart Parks Open Greensand Hills*
Evaluation and guidance	

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE GP: WOODED GREENSAND PLATEAU</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
GP1	Frensham to Witley Common Wooded Greensand Plateau*
Evaluation and guidance	

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE GV: GREENSAND VALLEY</b>		<b>see page 54</b>
<b>Character Areas:</b>		
GV1	Tillingbourne and Pipp Brook Greensand Valley*	
GV2	Pixham to Reigate Greensand Valley	see page 56
GV3	Gatton Greensand Valley	see page 58
GV4	Merstham to Clacket Lane Greensand Valley	see page 60
Evaluation and guidance		see page 62

\* These character areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.



<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE GW: WOODED GREENSAND HILLS</b>		<b>see page 66</b>
<b>Character Areas:</b>		
GW1	Puttenham Wooded Greensand Hills*	
GW2	Chinthurst to Hurt Wood Wooded Greensand Hills*	
GW3	St Martha's Wooded Greensand Hills*	
GW4	Rowledge to Tilford Wooded Greensand Hills*	
GW5	Hindhead Wooded Greensand Hills*	
GW6	Wormley West Wooded Greensand Hills*	
GW7	Wormley East Wooded Greensand Hills*	
GW8	Loxhill to Catteshail Wooded Greensand Hills*	
GW9	Leith Hill to Bury Hill Wooded Greensand Hills*	
GW10	Dorking Wooded Greensand Hills*	
GW11	Skimmington Wooded Greensand Hills	see page 68
GW12	Earlswood to Oxted Wooded Greensand Hills	see page 70
GW13	The Chart Wooded Greensand Hills*	
Evaluation and guidance		see page 72

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE LF: ROLLING CLAY FARMLAND</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
LF1	Knowle Hill to Leatherhead Rolling Clay Farmland*
LF2	Claygate Rolling Clay Farmland*
LF3	Lower Ashted Rolling Clay Farmland*
LF4	Horton Rolling Clay Farmland*
LF5	Ashted East Rolling Clay Farmland*
LF6	North Farnham Rolling Clay Farmland*
Evaluation and guidance	

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE LR: WOODED ROLLING CLAYLANDS</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
LR1	Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands*
LR2	Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands*
Evaluation and guidance	

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE LW: CLAY WOODLAND</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
LW1	Great Bookham Common Clay Woodland*
LW2	Prince Coverts to Leatherhead Common Clay Woodland*
LW3	Ashted and Epsom Commons Clay Woodland*
Evaluation and guidance	

\* These character areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE MP: MUDSTONE PLATEAU</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
MP1	Loseley Mudstone Plateau*
Evaluation and guidance	

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE RF: RIVER FLOODPLAIN</b>		<b>see page 76</b>
<b>Character Areas:</b>		
RF1	Colne River Floodplain*	
RF2	Ash River Floodplain*	
RF3	Thames River Floodplain*	
RF4	Northern Bourne River Floodplain*	
RF5	Windlebrook and Southern Bourne River Floodplain*	
RF6	Blackwater River Floodplain*	
RF7	Lower Wey River Floodplain*	
RF8	Upper Wey River Floodplain*	
RF9	Wey and Arun Canal River Floodplain*	
RF10	Lower Mole River Floodplain*	
RF11	Upper Mole River Floodplain	see page 78
Evaluation and guidance		see page 80

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE RS: RESERVOIRS</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
RS1	Thames Valley Reservoirs*
Evaluation and guidance	

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE RV: RIVER VALLEY FLOOR</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
RV1	Colne River Valley Floor*
RV2	Thames River Valley Floor*
RV3	Ash River Valley Floor*
RV4	Send River Valley Floor*
RV5	Slyfield River Valley Floor*
RV6	Peasmarsh River Valley Floor*
RV7	Shalford River Valley Floor*
RV8	Badshot River Valley Floor*
Evaluation and guidance	

\* These character areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE SH: SANDY HEATH AND COMMON</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
SH1	Deer Rock Hill Sandy Heath and Common*
SH2	Chobham Sandy Heath and Common*
SH3	Westend and Pirbright Sandy Heath and Common*
SH4	Ash Common to Cobbetthill Sandy Heath and Common*
SH5	Whitmoor Sandy Heath and Common*
Evaluation and guidance	

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE SS: SETTLED AND WOODED SANDY FARMLAND</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
SS1	Cooper's Hill Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS2	Englefield Green West Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS3	Trumps Green to New Haw Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS4	Wentworth to Sheerwater Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS5	Bagshot to Windlesham Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS6	Windlesham Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS7	Windlesham to Knaphill Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS8	Chobham East Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS9	Weybridge South Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS10	Woking to Byfleet Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS11	Pirbright to Hook Heath Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS12	Wyke to Mayford Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
Evaluation and guidance	

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE SW: SANDY WOODLAND</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
SW1	Virginia Water Sandy Woodland*
SW2	Bagshot and Lightwater West Sandy Woodland*
SW3	Foxhill Sandy Woodland*
SW4	Horsell Sandy Woodland*
SW5	Wisley Sandy Woodland*
SW6	Fairmile to Esher Sandy Woodland*
SW7	Deepcut Sandy Woodland*
SW8	Bricksbury Hill to Rowhill Copse Sandy Woodland*
Evaluation and guidance	

\* These character areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE WF: LOW WEALD FARMLAND</b>		<b>see page 84</b>
<b>Character Areas:</b>		
WF1	Dorking to Hookwood Low Weald Farmland	see page 86
WF2	Flanchford to Horley Low Weald Farmland	see page 88
WF3	Horley to Swaynesland Low Weald Farmland	see page 90
Evaluation and guidance		see page 92

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE WH: WOODED HIGH WEALD</b>		
<b>Character Areas:</b>		
WH1	Domewood to Dormansland Wooded High Weald*	
WH2	Dormansland East Wooded High Weald*	
Evaluation and guidance		

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE WW: WOODED LOW WEALD</b>		
<b>Character Areas:</b>		
WW1	Chiddingfold Wooded Low Weald*	
WW2	West Dunsfold Wooded Low Weald*	
WW3	Tugley to Sidney Wood Wooded Low Weald*	
WW4	Pinks Hill to Park Hatch Wooded Low Weald*	
WW5	Grafham to Dunsfold Wooded Low Weald*	
WW6	Dunsfold to Pollingfold Wooded Low Weald*	
WW7	Rowly Wooded Low Weald*	
WW8	Cranleigh to Charlwood Wooded Low Weald*	
WW9	Shamley Green to Holmwood Wooded Low Weald*	
WW10	Holmwood Common Wooded Low Weald*	
Evaluation and guidance		

\* These character areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE UE: DISTINCT AREAS ON THE EDGE OF URBAN AREAS</b>		<b>see page 94</b>
<b>Character Areas:</b>		
UE1	Heathside*	
UE2	Walton Common*	
UE3	Epsom Downs*	
UE4	Burgh Heath	see page 97
UE5	Banstead Downs	see page 98
UE6	Redhill Common	see page 100
UE7	Earlswood Common	see page 102
UE8	Petridgewood Common and Woodland	see page 104
UE9	Holmthorpe Pits and Mercer's Park	see page 106
Evaluation and guidance		see page 109

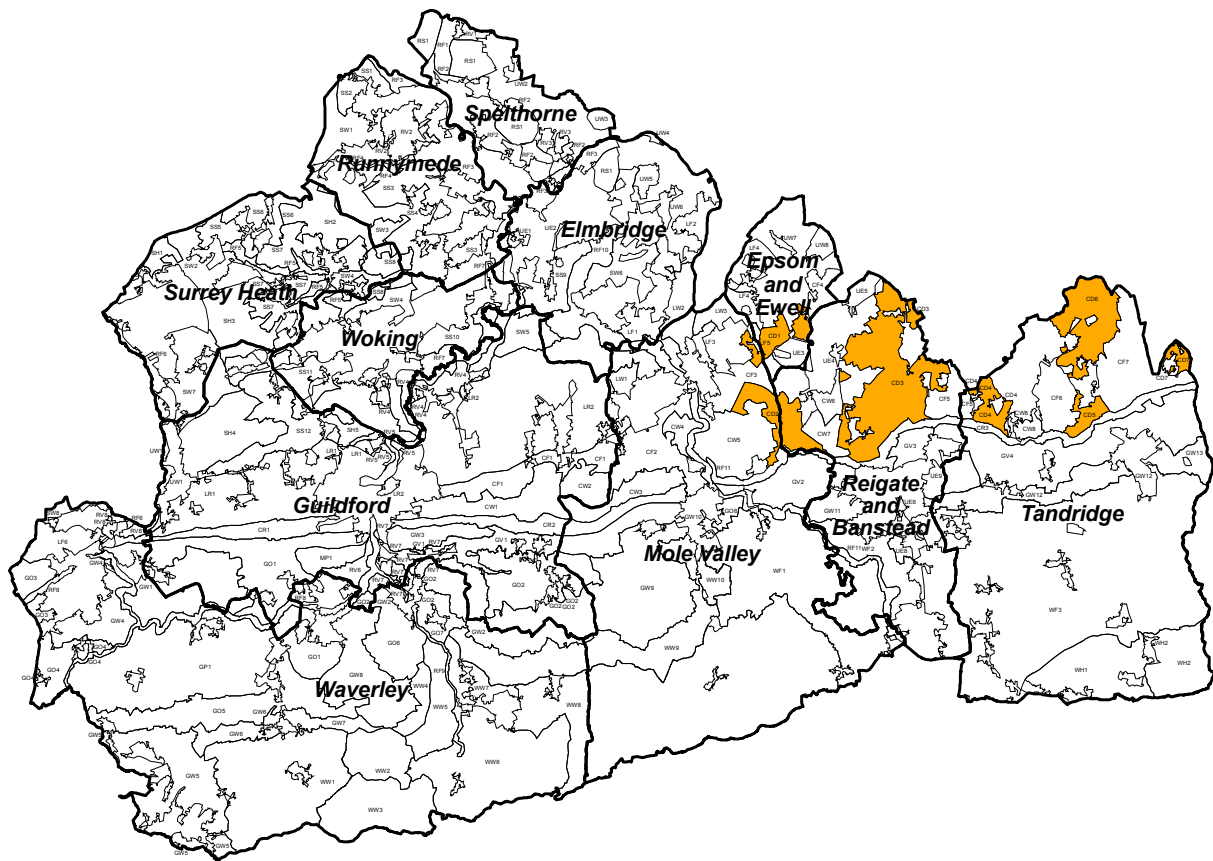
<b>LANDSCAPE TYPE UW: SIGNIFICANT GREENSPACES WITHIN URBAN AREAS</b>	
<b>Character Areas:</b>	
UW1	North Camp to North Town Lakes*
UW2	Princes Lakes*
UW3	Kempton Park*
UW4	Hurst Park*
UW5	Island Barn Reservoir and River Ember*
UW6	Lower Green to Weston Green and Littleworth Common*
UW7	Ewell Hogsmill*
UW8	Nonsuch Park*
Evaluation and guidance	

\* These character areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

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**6. LANDSCAPE TYPES AND CHARACTER AREAS WITHIN REIGATE AND BANSTEAD DISTRICT**

- 6.1 The following pages describe the landscape types and character areas located within Reigate and Banstead Borough. The location and boundaries, and the key characteristics, of each type and area are set out, followed by evaluation and guidance for the type.



## LANDSCAPE TYPE CD: CHALK DOWN WITH WOODLAND

### Landscape Character Areas

CD1	Asstead and Woodcote Parks Chalk Down with Woodland*
CD2	Tyrrell's Wood to Walton Oaks Chalk Down with Woodland
CD3	Courtlands to Margery Chalk Down with Woodland
CD4	Chaldon Chalk Down with Woodland*
CD5	South Woldingham Chalk Down with Woodland*
CD6	Forestdale to Woldingham Chalk Down with Woodland*
CD7	Tatsfield Chalk Down with Woodland*

\* These Character Areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.



## LANDSCAPE TYPE CD: CHALK DOWN WITH WOODLAND

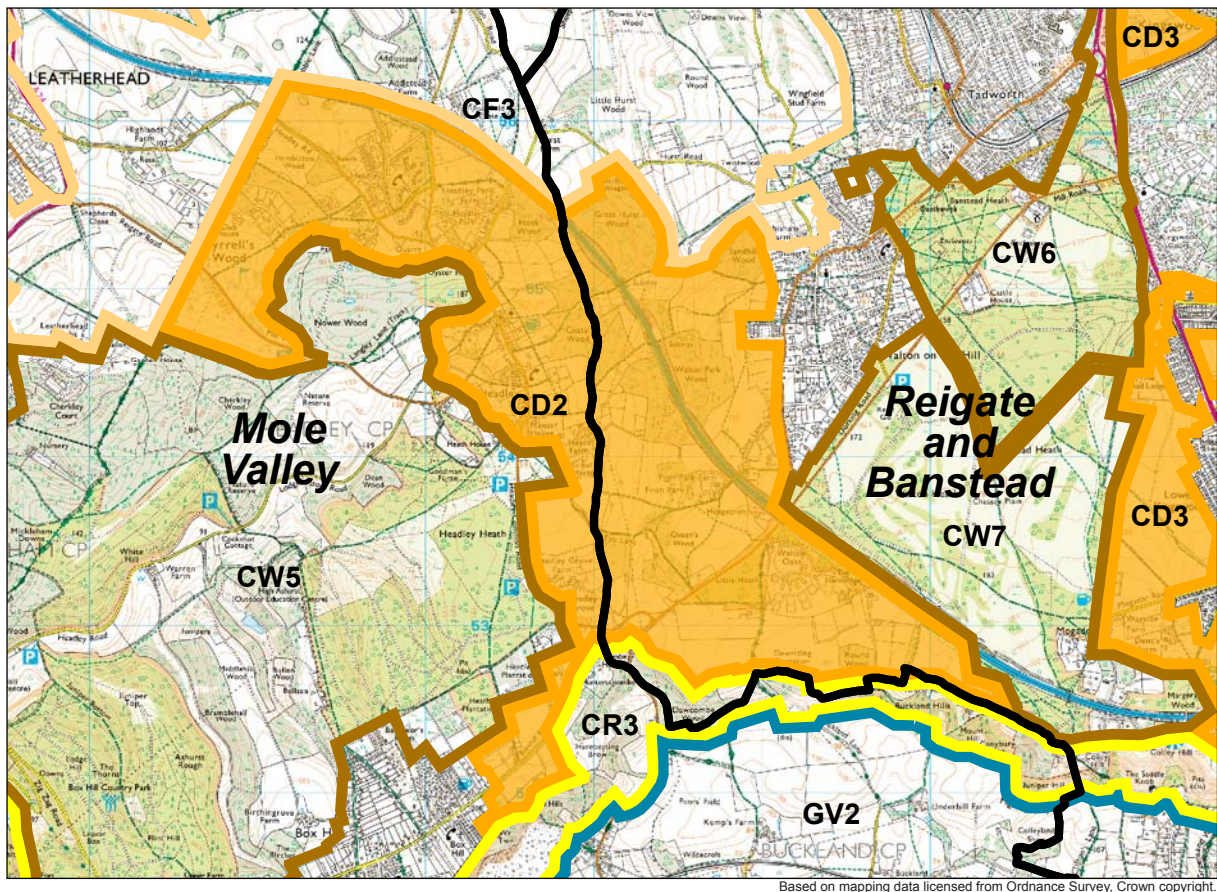
### Location and Boundaries

The Chalk Down with Woodland Type is located to the north-east of the county. Along with areas of Open Chalk Farmland (Type CF) and Wooded North Down (Type CW), it forms part of a wide band of downland, to the north of the Chalk Ridge (Type CR) and the south facing scarp. To the south, the chalk downland gives way to greensand hills and valleys, while to the north, downland turns to rolling clayland. Defined by underlying geology, scale of woodland cover and land use. Boundaries follow easily recognisable features including roads, woodland edges and field boundaries. A relatively limited portion of the Type is within the north-eastern extent of the Surrey Hills AONB.



### Key Characteristics

- Rolling downland, with occasional steep slopes. Landform is generally 100m AOD to 200m AOD in elevation, but up to 250m in some places.
- Consists predominately of a mosaic of medium to small scale fields and woodland.
- Woodland is dispersed, but includes some large blocks, and wide tree belts.
- Fields are predominately pastoral, but small scale paddocks and parcels of land associated with settlement are also a common feature.
- Less intensively farmed than the Open Chalk Farmland Type, with significantly more settlement, including hamlets such as Headley near Walton on the Hill and Farnleigh near Warlingham, other small groups of dwellings, and more isolated scattered farmsteads and houses.
- Elevated locations afford long distance views, often framed by woodland.
- Historic landscapes associated with the management of woodland, grazing of animals and human occupation.



## CD2: TYRRELL'S WOOD TO WALTON OAKS CHALK DOWN WITH WOODLAND

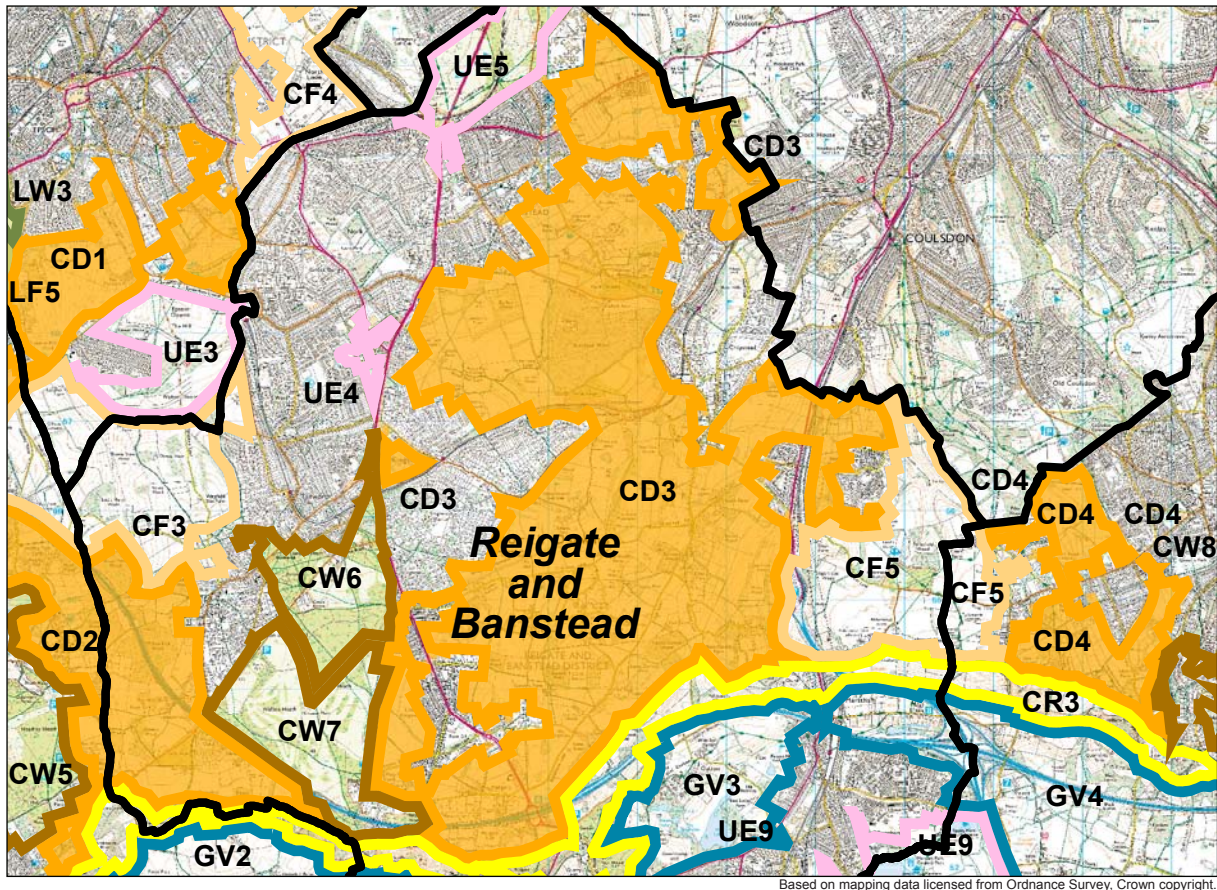
### Location and Boundaries

The Tyrrell's Wood to Walton Oaks Chalk Down with Woodland Character Area stretches east from Leatherhead, roughly parallel to the M25 motorway, between more extensively wooded areas of downland to the south-west, and open chalk farmland to the north, until it meets the top of the chalk ridge scarp to the south. The character area is defined by underlying geology, woodland cover and settlement edges, with boundaries largely follow the edges of woodland, a section of the M25 motorway, settlement, and other easily recognisable features such as field boundaries. The southernmost part of the character area is within the Surrey Hills AONB.

### Key Characteristics

- Elevated chalk downland, based mainly on the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation.
- Undulating, fairly complex landform, becoming more elevated towards the south.
- The southern part of the character area extends into the Surrey Hills AONB.
- Consists predominately of medium scale pastoral fields, occasionally with larger arable fields. There are also areas of small fields such as paddocks, associated with settlement with well vegetated boundaries. Fields are interspersed with woodland blocks, approximately half of which are ancient woodland, along with tree belts and hedgerows. The northern part of the character area contains Tyrrell's Wood golf course.
- Tree cover restricts long distance views in places.

- Roads dissect the northern half of the character area, and although the central part of the character area, largely covered by woodland, is crossed by the M25 motorway, the character area has limited road access. Public rights of way cross the majority of the character area, including part of the Thames Down Link Recreational Path.
- The character area includes a number low density settlements and individual dwellings, along with a business park used for pharmaceuticals research at Walton Oaks located towards the south of the character area. The north-eastern area is less settled, but abuts the western edge of Walton on the Hill.
- Remnants of a parkland landscape around the Headley area.
- The southern end of Walton Heath, is registered as common land, and there is a scheduled monument at Stane Street on the northern edge of the character area.
- The character area includes two small areas designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, including Great Hurst Wood with its semi-natural woodland and rich flora, and the ancient semi-natural woodland of Sandhill Wood. The character area also abuts significant areas of ecological designations, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Special Areas of Conservation to the south.
- Tree cover aids tranquillity although tranquillity and remoteness is reduced by internal and adjacent



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## CD3: HIGH DOWN TO MARGERY CHALK DOWN WITH WOODLAND

### Location and Boundaries

The High Down to Margery Chalk Down with Woodland is a broad swathe of chalk down situated east of Banstead, at the northern end of the county and continuing south to the chalk ridge which straddles the M25. The character area is defined by underlying geology, scale of woodland cover, settlement and topography. The character area's boundary follows the edge settlement and woodland, field boundaries and roads. Southern and south-eastern parts of the character area are within the Surrey Hills AONB.

### Key Characteristics

- Elevated chalk downland with the northern and central areas lying outside the Surrey Hills AONB.
- Underlain by the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation.
- Consists of medium and small scale pastoral field with good hedgerow structure across the majority of the character area. Includes some blocks of ancient woodland, including Banstead Wood and Ruffett Wood to the north. To the south woodland blocks are smaller and more regular in size. Tree cover, within hedgerows increases to the south with well vegetated small, to medium parcels of land associated with low density settlement.
- Some open views, particularly from the higher ground to the north-west and south. Whilst long distance views are possible from higher ground, views often interrupted or framed by woodland blocks or tree belts towards the central and western parts of the character area.

- The A217 and a short stretch of the M25 motorway, including junction 8, pass through the south-western corner of the character area. The M23 motorway and A23 define the south-eastern edge of the character area. The A23 and a short stretch of the Brighton Mainline railway run north-south along a valley in the north-east corner of the character area. A significant network of other roads and lanes criss-cross the character area. There is also a comprehensive network of public rights of way.
- Large parts of the character area boundary, particularly to the west, abut Built Up Areas. Within the character area, there are small hamlets and individual dwellings, particularly to the south, as well as farmsteads, and Banstead Place used for medical and rehabilitation purposes.
- Flatter areas to the north are occupied by golf courses.
- The village of Lower Kingswood is surrounded by the western part of the character area.
- The character area includes the High Road, Chipstead Conservation Area and part of the Elmore Road, Chipstead Conservation Area. Part of the Park Road and Mint Road Banstead Conservation Area is also within the character area.
- A small number of woodland blocks and an area of species rich chalk grassland are designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. The northern part of the character area includes the Chipstead Downs Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- A predominately rural landscape, with some tranquil and remote areas, but land use, including settlement and the road network reduce overall tranquillity and remoteness across the character area generally and more particularly to the north.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE CD: CHALK DOWN WITH WOODLAND EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### Key positive landscape attributes

The key positive features that contribute to the character of the area and that should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Rolling small-medium scale downland.
- Mosaic of woodland, pasture and low-key settlement.
- Blocks of woodland including ancient woodland and tree belts.
- The network of hedgerows with hedgerow trees.
- Remnant chalk grassland.
- Historic settlements designated as Conservation Areas.
- A network of rural roads and lanes.
- Distant views from elevated southern areas, occasionally framed by tree cover, including views over chalk scarp and greensand hills to the south.
- Role of the area as a relatively rural backdrop to the claylands to the northwest and built up areas to the northeast.
- Historic land and field patterns, field systems, and monuments.

#### Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures

##### *Past Change*

- Loss of areas of chalk grassland.
- Hedgerow and hedgerow trees losses, resulting from poor management of remaining hedgerows.
- Increase of settlement, including proliferation of low density dwellings along roads and expansion/development of villages.
- Increase in horse paddocks with consequent subdivision of the fields and installation of shelters.
- Development of golf courses.

##### *Future potential forces for change*

- Loss of areas of chalk grassland.
- Further loss of hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees.
- Loss of key views.
- Pressure for ribbon development along lanes, increase of individual dwellings and decline in importance of historic settlement cores.
- Pressures for further conversion of agricultural landscapes to horse paddocks with subsequent subdivision of fields, potential damage and loss of parkland trees, installation of associated ancillary buildings and structures.
- Conversion of agricultural land uses for new golf courses.
- Increasing traffic on narrow rural road network leading to urbanisation of rural roads through kerbing, additional lighting and signage.
- Pressure for development of road infrastructure.

### GUIDANCE

#### Landscape Strategy

The landscape strategy for the Chalk Down with Woodland Type is to conserve the rural mosaic of fields and woodland whilst resisting increase in urbanisation through further ribbon development and horse paddocks. Opportunities for enhancement are in management of the hedgerow network and the variety of woodland.

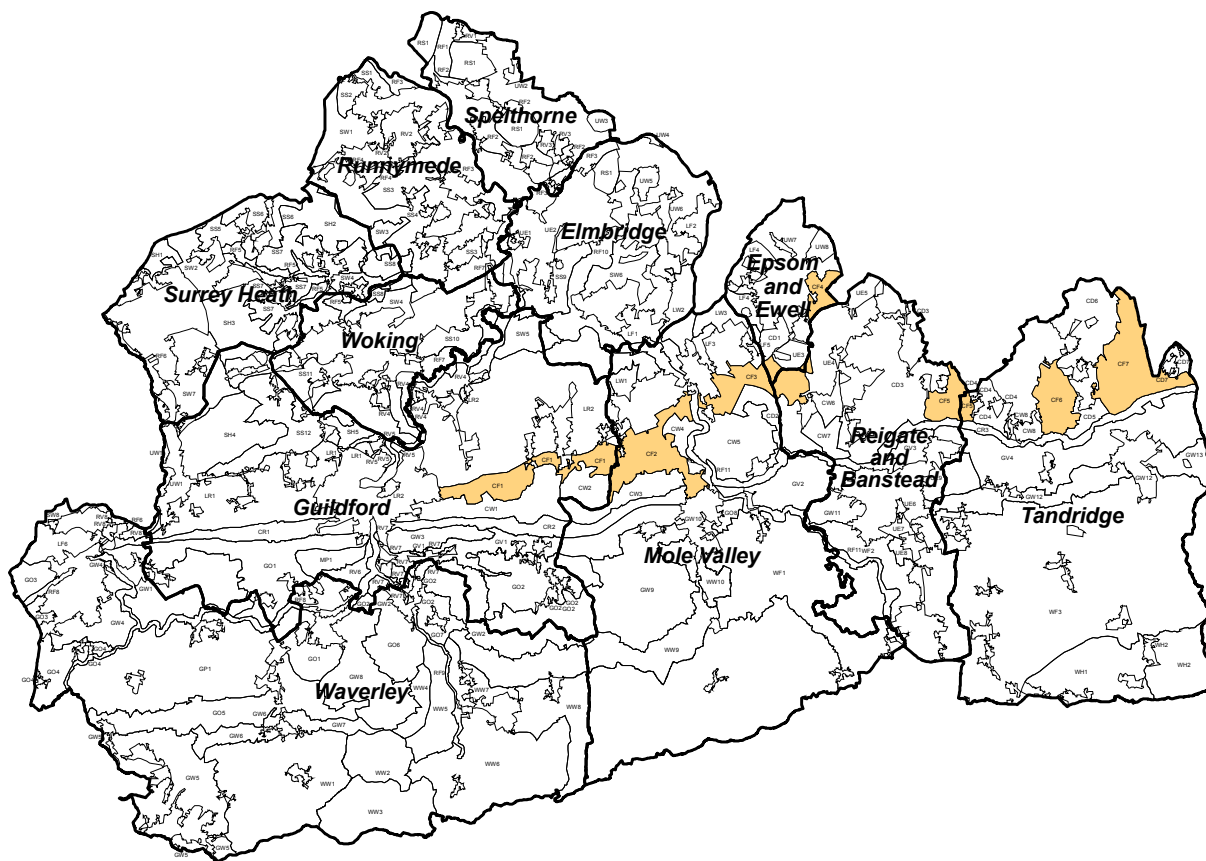
## **Landscape Guidelines**

### ***Land Management***

- Encourage landowners to maintain an appropriate management regime using traditional farming techniques where these will conserve and enhance key landscape features such as hedgerows, chalk grassland and woodlands.
- Conserve and enhance connectivity of areas of high biodiversity and key positive landscape attributes. This character type coincides with the Surrey's North Downs biodiversity opportunity area.
- Raise awareness of the historic dimension and underlying archaeology of the landscape to landowners including the field patterns and woodlands. Conserve historic elements of the landscape.
- Conserve, enhance and restore the woodlands through effective long term management and replanting to retain their varied character and their ecological value.
- Ensure consistent management and restocking of hedgerows.
- Encourage appropriate siting and management of horse paddocks, for instance in utilising existing hedges or planting new native hedges as boundary treatments and resist fencing small areas of land out of keeping with the scale of surrounding field patterns.
- Encourage the use of suitable fence styles, in keeping with the local style or material, including metal park fencing where a local parkland character creates precedence.
- Avoid development of permanent exercise areas and siting of exercise equipment such as treadmills, pens, and jumps where this is visually intrusive on the landscape.

### ***Built Development***

- Limit expansion of settlement, through ribbon development along rural lanes, and conserve existing historic settlements and farmsteads.
- Retain natural buffers and boundaries to settlements using existing landscape features and characteristics. To protect existing green gaps between settlements and prevent urban sprawl from the outer suburbs of London and existing urban settlements from merging.
- Encourage any new built development to respect locally distinctive settlement patterns, employ locally characteristic building forms and include sympathetic contemporary architecture, through high quality detailing, architectural features, and use of natural building materials. Refer to Surrey design guides; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association) and Building Design in the Surrey Hills (Surrey Hills AONB).
- Retain woodland that screens development and consider opportunities for further such linear tree belt planting to enhance rural views and to better integrate development into the rural area.
- Conserve the rural roads lanes, minimising small-scale incremental change such as signage, fencing and kerbing, or improvements to the road network which could change their character and protecting the sunken lanes from damage through over use.
- Resist urbanisation of roads within settlements or as part of new development through encouraging appropriate surfacing of existing pavements, enhancing the immediate landscape setting and ensuring minimum clutter including inappropriate boundary fences and entrance features.
- Ensure that road lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing 'dark skies' on the ridge slopes and skyline.
- Promote the use of traditional signage features with particular regard to local style and materials.



## LANDSCAPE TYPE CF: OPEN CHALK FARMLAND

### Landscape Character Areas

CF1	Clandon Open Chalk Farmland*
CF2	Ranmore to Hawk's Hill Open Chalk Farmland*
CF3	Leatherhead to Epsom Downs Open Chalk Farmland
CF4	North Looe Open Chalk Farmland*
CF5	Hooley to Chaldon Open Chalk Farmland
CF6	Caterham to Woldingham Open Chalk Farmland*
CF7	Woldingham to New Addington Open Chalk Farmland*

\* These Character Areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.



## LANDSCAPE TYPE CF: OPEN CHALK FARMLAND

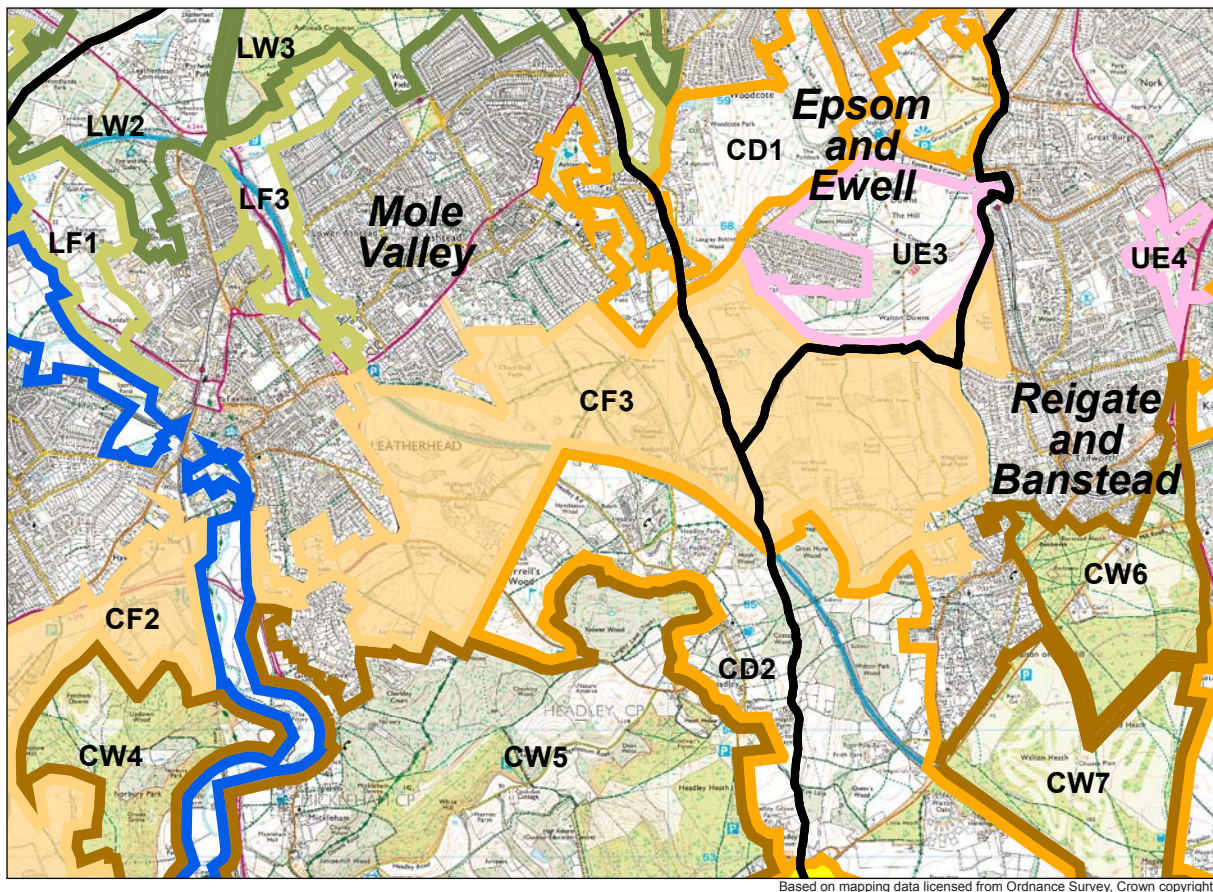
### Location and Boundaries

The Open Chalk Farmland Landscape Type comprises a number of Character Areas extending across the central and north-eastern part of the County, and are interspersed with areas of Chalk Down with Woodland (Type CD) and Wooded North Down (Type CW). The boundaries are based on the changes in geology, scale of landscape and land cover. Parts of the Type are within the northern and eastern extents of the Surrey Hills AONB.



### Key Characteristics

- Founded on chalk, forming the lower slopes of the dip slope of the North Downs.
- Predominantly open pastoral farmland of large scale fields with occasional woodland plantations.
- Linear pattern of settlement with dwellings lining rural lanes and sunken roads, and some large scattered farmsteads.
- Dramatic views up over the area to the Wooded Chalk Downs on the higher slopes to the south.
- Provides a rural unsettled backdrop to lower areas to the north.



## CF3: LEATHERHEAD TO EPSOM DOWNS OPEN CHALK FARMLAND

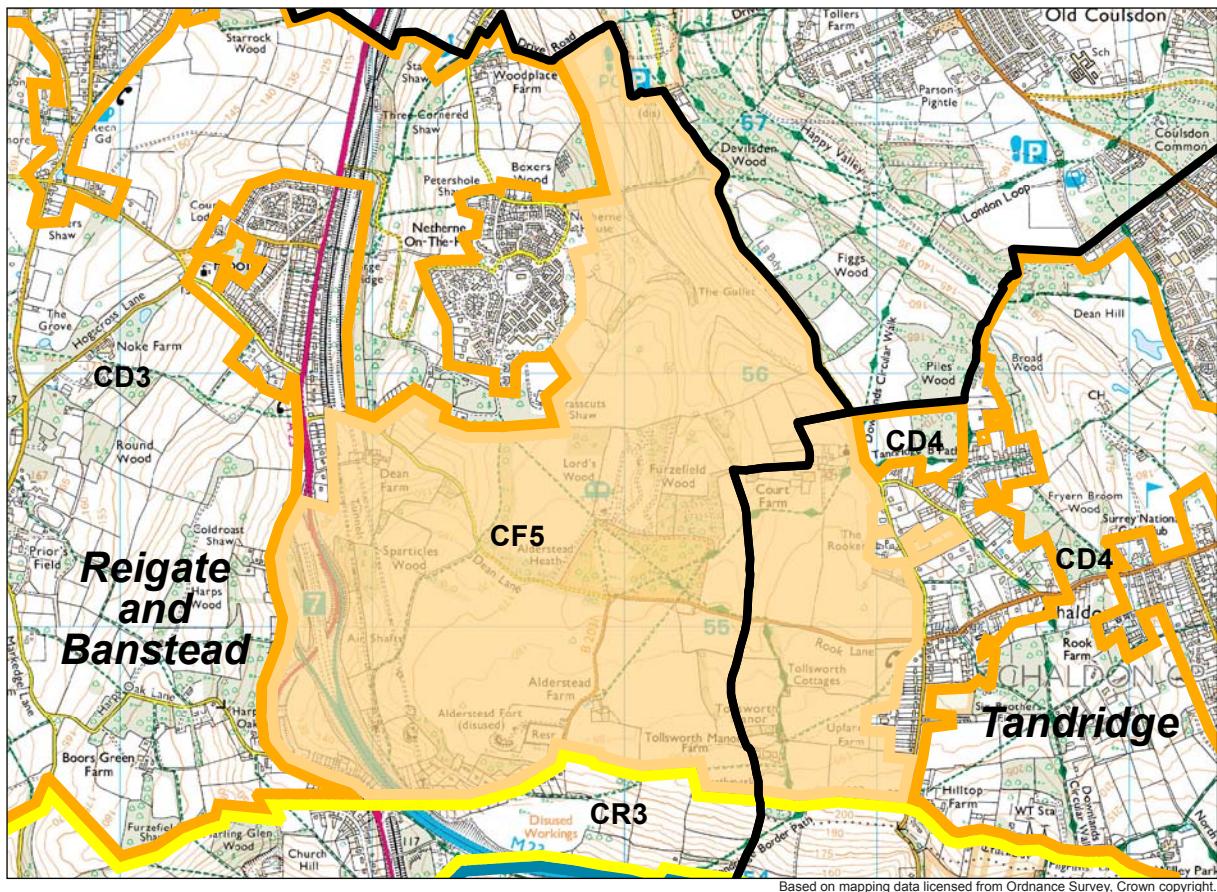
### Location and Boundaries

The Leatherhead Downs Open Chalk Farmland Character Area is an area of open chalk downs surrounded by more wooded areas and settlement, and lies to the east of the River Mole River Floodplain. Boundaries follow the edges of settlement, woodland, floodplain, and easily recognisable features such as roads. The character area is outside the Surrey Hills AONB, but abuts it to the west.

### Key Characteristics

- Elevated chalk downland, underlain by the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation.
- Undulating landform, generally facing north, with the western part of the character area turning to face west and form the eastern slopes of the River Mole River Floodplain. In the north, topography falls towards a local valley feature around Langley Vale and Walton Downs.
- Consists of large scale, arable fields with some hedged field boundaries and occasional small groups of mature trees.
- Relatively open landscape across the character area with long distance views across the downs. Occasional blocks of woodland and some significant hedges and tree belts result in some localised enclosure.
- Includes and abuts the M25 motorway to the south and the A24 and B2033 cut through the character area, but otherwise there are a relatively limited number of roads/lane across the character area. Access to a number of areas limited to minor tracks and rights of way. Public rights of way cross the character area and connect with the Thames Down Link Recreational Path at the western edge of the character area.

- Settlement is limited to isolated farmsteads and other occasional dwellings, including Downside Manor, and a small service area off the A24; influence from settlement surrounding the character area is generally limited.
- A rural, relatively tranquil landscape, providing open aspect between the south of Leatherhead and more wooded areas beyond. Western part of the character area provides a sloping setting to the River Mole River Floodplain.
- The character area includes an enclosure scheduled as an ancient monument at South Tadworth Farm, at the west of the character area.
- A number of woodland blocks are designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, including areas designated for their ancient semi-natural woodland and ground flora.
- Large scale landscape with a sense of remoteness. Limited settlement and road network aids tranquillity, particularly towards the centre of the character area.



## CF5: HOOLEY TO CHALDON OPEN CHALK FARMLAND

### Location and Boundaries

The Hooley to Chaldon Open Chalk Farmland Character Area is an area of open chalk downland, adjoining the chalk ridge scarp north of Merstham. The area is defined by the top of the scarp to the south, the M23 and A23 corridor and the western edge of Caterham. The southern and western parts of the character area are within the Surrey Hills AONB.

### Key Characteristics

- Chalk downland, underlain by the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation.
- Complex undulating landform including local ridges and valleys to the north with gently undulating topography to the south. Southern part of the character area generally rises to meet the ridge scarp to the south.
- Consists predominately of medium-scale arable fields, with some small-scale fields/paddocks associated with areas of settlement. There are a few small wooded areas, including some ancient woodland, such as Furzeffield Wood and the wooded Alderstead Heath, and intact hedges in places.
- Field sizes become larger and are almost entirely arable within the south-western corner of the character area.
- Long distance views are possible across the character area, including along the northern valley feature, although topography and vegetation combine to limit views in places. High ground affords distant views of the London skyline, with iconic buildings such as 'The Shard' visible.
- The M23 motorway, A23 and Brighton Mainline railway (albeit mostly in tunnel) form a transport corridor which forms the western edge of the character area. A significant network of other roads and

lanes criss-cross the character area.

- There is a comprehensive network of public rights of way, including the Tandridge Border Path and Downlands Circular Walk Recreational Paths which cross through the eastern end of the character area.
- Alderstead Heath is Open Access Land and registered as common land.
- At the western edge of the character area, are the earthworks of the Surrey Iron Railway and the disused Alderstead Fort, both of which are scheduled monuments.
- A small number of woodland blocks and an area of species rich chalk grassland are designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. The character area borders Netherne-On-The-Hill and the Netherne-On-The-Hill Conservation Area, to the west, and Chaldon and Chaldon Conservation Area to the east. Settlement within the character area is limited to a small secluded group of dwellings and farm buildings such as Woodplace Farm to the north, and around Tollsworth Manor to the east.
- A predominately rural landscape, with some tranquil and remote areas.
- Grasscuts Shaw is designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest for its ancient semi-natural woodland.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE CF: OPEN CHALK FARMLAND EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### Key positive landscape attributes

The key positive features that contribute to the character of the area and that should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Pattern of rolling large-scale fields.
- Hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Remnant chalk grassland.
- Woodland including ancient woods, plantations, regenerated woodland on common land and quarries and shaws, and occasional linear 'hangers' on local north-south valley sides, particularly within Caterham to Woldingham Open Chalk Farmland (Area CF6) and Woldingham to New Addington Open Chalk Farmland (Area CF7), to the east of the County.
- Limited settlement, connected by a network of rural roads, including narrow sunken lanes.
- Open views across uninterrupted undulating landform to woodland.
- Role of the area as a rural backdrop to the claylands to the northwest and built up areas to the northeast.
- Historic field patterns, trackways and parkland.

#### Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures

##### *Past Change*

- Loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees plus poor management of remaining hedgerows.
- Loss of areas of chalk grassland due to conversion to improved pasture.
- Increase in scrub establishment.
- Conversion of fields for horse paddocks with consequent subdivision of the fields and installation of shelters.
- Expansion of villages.
- Past quarrying of slopes now abandoned.
- Development of golf courses.

##### *Future potential forces for change*

- Pressure for expansion and infill of settlement along lanes, expansion of individual dwellings and a higher density of building plots.
- Further loss of hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees.
- Pressures for further conversion to horse paddocks with subsequent subdivision of fields, potential damage and loss of parkland trees, installation of associated ancillary buildings and structures.
- Increasing traffic on narrow rural road network (including sunken lanes) leading to damage to the structure of the sunken lanes urbanisation of rural roads through kerbing, additional lighting and signage.

### GUIDANCE

#### Landscape Strategy

The landscape strategy for the Open Chalk Farmland is to conserve the open character of the area, retaining the sparsely settled ambiance, rural sunken lanes and remaining hedgerow boundaries, woodland plantations, shaws and remnant chalk grassland. Elements requiring enhancement are the hedgerows and hedgerow trees while any increase in horse paddocks and further settlement needs to be carefully managed to retain the area's distinctive rural character.

## **Landscape Guidelines**

### ***Land Management***

- Encourage landowners to maintain an appropriate management regime using traditional farming techniques where these will conserve and enhance key landscape features such as hedgerows, chalk grassland and woodlands.
- Conserve and enhance connectivity of areas of high biodiversity value and key positive landscape attributes. This landscape character type coincides with Surrey's North Downs biodiversity opportunity area.
- Raise awareness of the historic dimension and underlying archaeology of the landscape to landowners including the field patterns and woodlands. .
- Conserve, enhance and restore the woodlands through effective long term management and replanting to retain their character and their ecological value.
- Promote traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing with local landowners and the farming community.
- Encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands.
- Promote the use of locally appropriate species such as oak, beech, hazel and yew within woodlands and hedgerows.
- Encourage consistent management and restocking of hedgerows and nurture new hedgerow trees to maintain stock.
- Conserve and enhance the areas of chalk grassland, including the removal of scrub, and consider opportunities to extend and link fragmented sites.
- Encourage appropriate surfacing, materials and signage for footpaths to retain the rural, unsettled character of the landscape.
- Encourage appropriate siting and management of horse paddocks, for instance in utilising existing hedges or planting new native hedges as a boundary treatment. Avoid fencing small areas of land in this landscape type.
- Encourage the use of suitable fence styles, in keeping with the local style or material, including metal park fencing where a local parkland character creates a precedent.
- Avoid development of permanent horse exercise areas and siting of exercise equipment such as treadmills, pens, and jumps where this is visually intrusive on the landscape.
- Encourage sensitive design and management of new land uses such as golf courses to retain and existing landscape features and promote the restoration or planting of key landscape features and species rich chalk grassland.

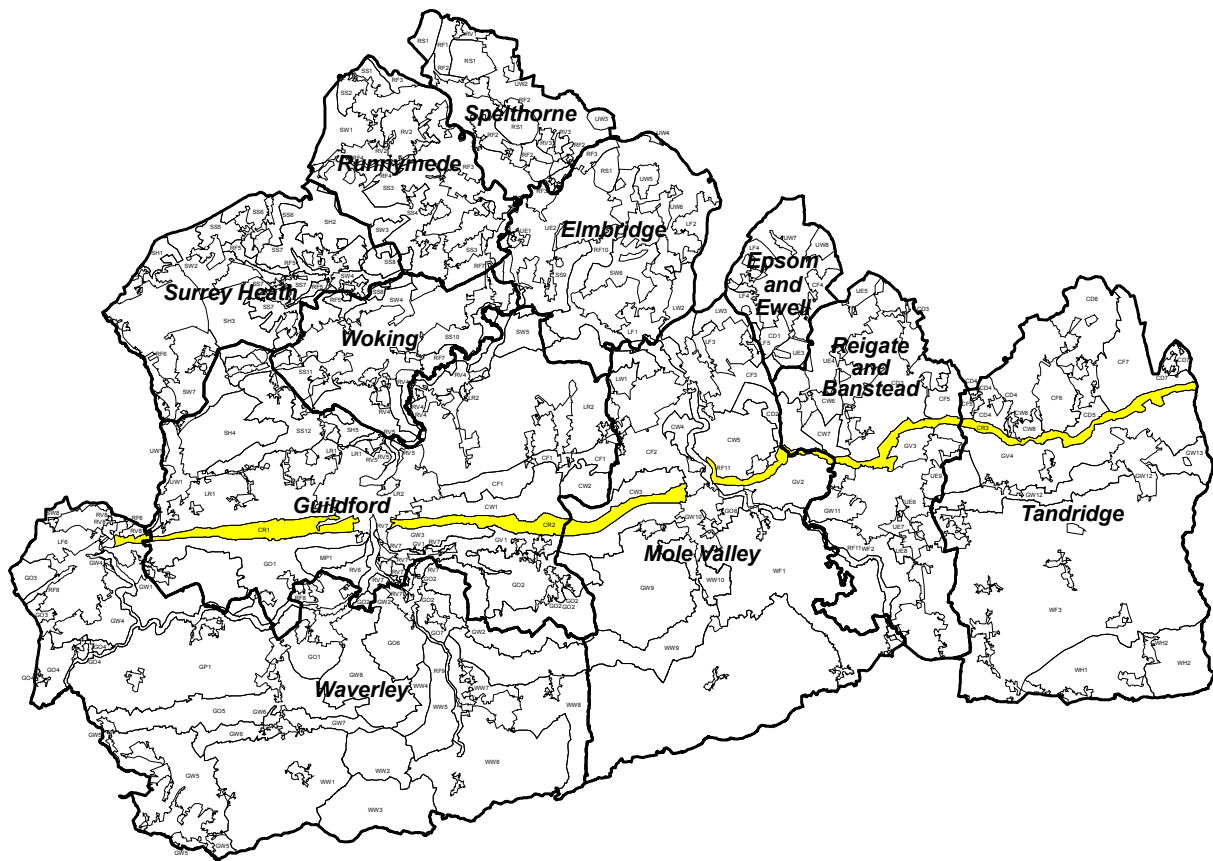
### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the sense of an open unsettled landscape, and maintain open views across uninterrupted rolling landform. Any development located to minimise visual impact on the landscape .
- Encourage any new built development to respect local characteristics, including support of sympathetic contemporary architecture, through high quality detailing, architectural features, and use of natural building materials. Refer to Surrey design guides; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association) and Building Design in the Surrey Hills (Surrey Hills AONB).
- Ensure any new large-scale structures to respect the area's rural context through appropriate form, scale and materials.
- Avoid the location of any new large mass of development or bulky structures where they would be visually intrusive. Subject any development to rigorous landscape and visual impact assessment, site carefully, and design to minimise impact, particularly regarding issues of intrusive colour and glare, and integrate with the area's rural context.
- Retain woodland that screens development and consider opportunities for further tree belt planting to enhance rural views and to better integrate development into the rural area.

- Ensure that infill or further development along the tree lined sunken lanes conserves their distinctive rural character.
- Conserve the rural roads and sunken lanes, minimising small-scale incremental change such as signage, fencing or improvements to the road network which could change their character and protecting the sunken lanes from damage through over use.
- Resist urbanisation of roads within settlements or as part of new development through encouraging appropriate surfacing of existing pavements, enhancing the immediate landscape setting and ensuring minimum clutter including inappropriate boundary fences and entrance features.
- Ensure that road schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing 'dark skies' on the unsettled ridge slopes.
- Promote the use of traditional signage features with particular regard to local style and materials.



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## LANDSCAPE TYPE CR: CHALK RIDGE

### Landscape Character Areas

CR1	Hog's Back Chalk Ridge*
CR2	Albury to Ranmore Chalk Ridge*
CR3	Box Hill to Tatsfield Chalk Ridge

\* These Character Areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE CR: CHALK RIDGE

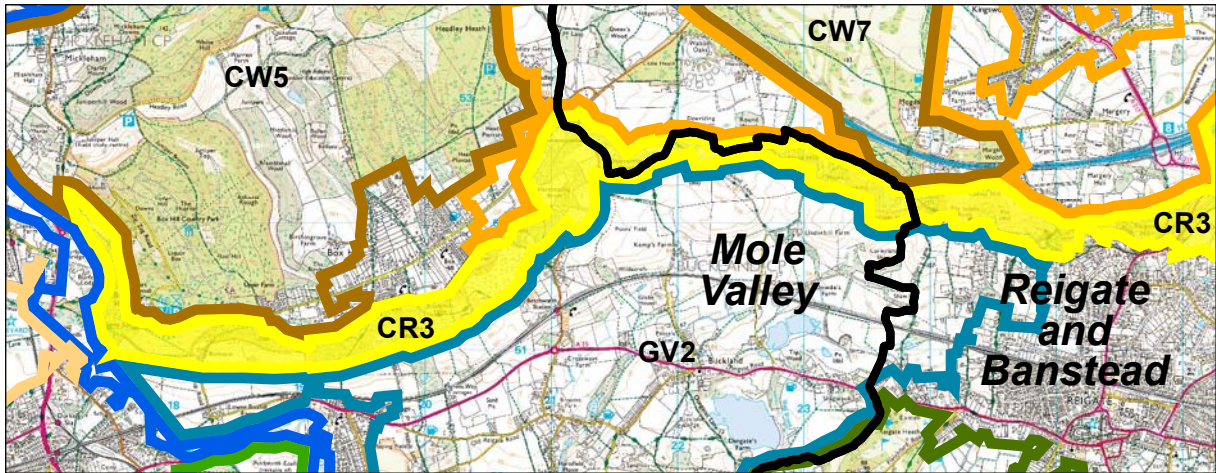
### Location and Boundaries

The three areas in the Chalk Ridge Type form a narrow belt of land running east-west across the centre of the county, between the wooded chalk downs and rolling claylands to the north and the open and wooded Greensand Hills to the south. The boundaries of these areas are based on the underlying geology and topography and follow the edge of roads, tracks and contours.

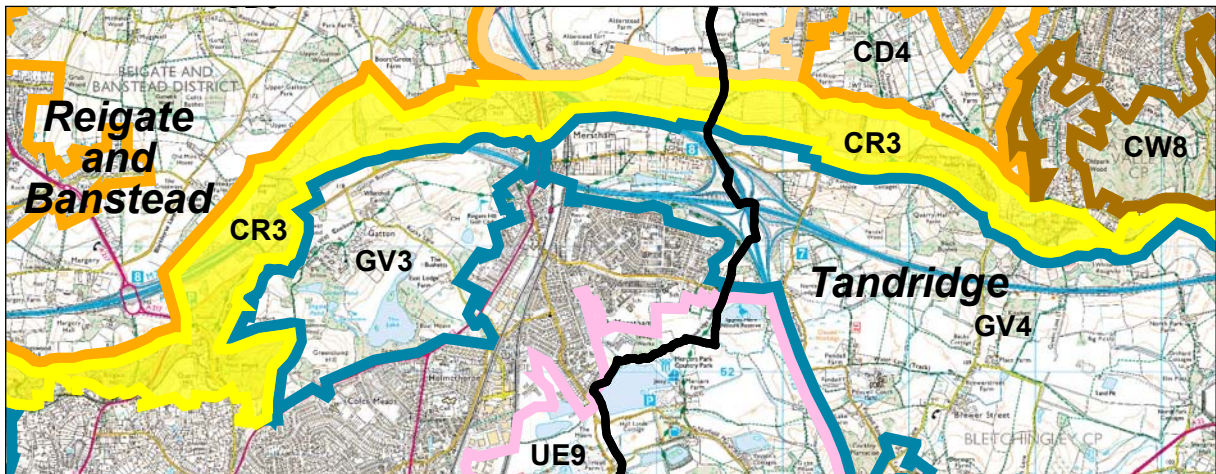


### Key Characteristics

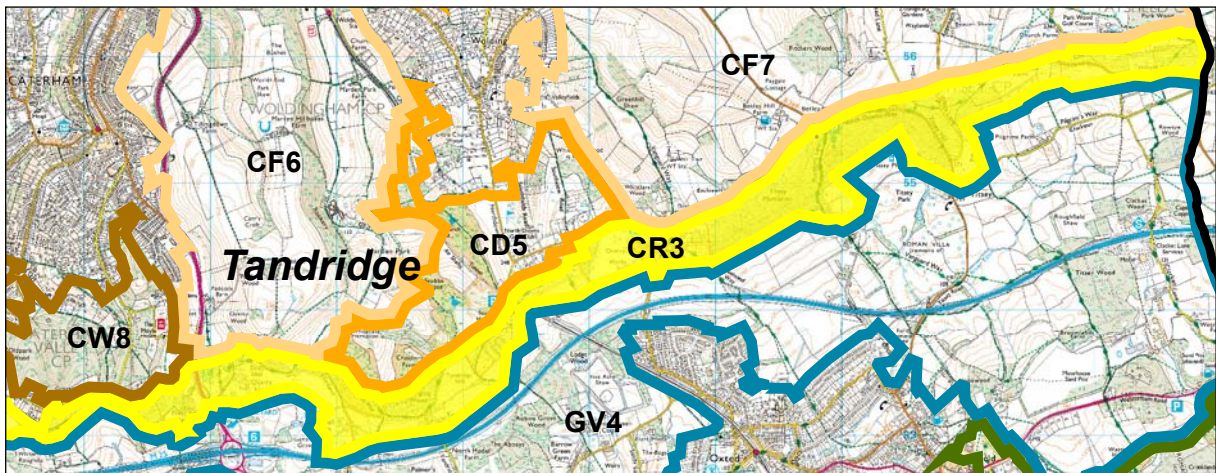
- Steeply rising slopes of the North Downs forming a dramatic chalk ridge, and iconic part of the Surrey Hills AONB.
- Clay deposits sit over the chalk along the eastern section of the scarp, supporting the growth of large areas of deciduous woodland.
- There are large fields of arable and pasture on the slopes with woodland blocks particularly to the east and small areas of chalk grassland along the ridge top.
- Sparse settlement pattern of hamlets, scattered farmsteads and substantial houses.
- A historical line of communication and defence with numerous vantage points.
- A peaceful rural landscape providing panoramic views from the rising slopes and ridge top and forming a backdrop to the surrounding lower land and towns including Guildford, Dorking, Reigate, Redhill and Oxted.
- Historic trackways joining notable viewpoints with strong cultural and recreational associations.
- Historic landscapes associated with human occupation, cultivation of woodland and industrial activity.



Continues below



Continues below



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## CR3: BOX HILL TO TATSFIELD CHALK RIDGE

### Location and Boundaries

The Box Hill to Tatsfield Chalk Ridge is a narrow scarp slope. The aspect of the slope varies, but overall it is south facing. The boundary of the character area broadly coincides with the change from chalk to greensand to the south, and by the top of the scarp slope. For very short stretches the character area immediately abuts Reigate to the south, and Caterham to the north. The character area lies within the Surrey Hills AONB.

## Key Characteristics

- A steep chalk scarp slope to the south of the elevated North Downs to the north.
- Based on a number of chalk formations, including the Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation.
- The eastern and western parts of the slope are heavily wooded, and include some areas of ancient woodland. Occasional small scale, irregular shaped fields of pasture with thick hedgerows and tree belts, including Ash and Field Maple. The central section of the character area, north of Redhill, has more open, larger scale, arable fields, with more limited areas of woodland.
- Sloping landform affords wide views over the greensand hills to the south, including expansive views from Reigate Hill, and provides a dramatic backdrop to landscape to the south.
- The North Downs Way National Trail runs along the length of the character area, alternating between the foot and top of the scarp, and connects with a number of other rights of way which cross the character area, including the Greensand Way Recreational Path. Nearby car parks aid recreational use.
- A number of lanes weave across the character area, and the M25 motorway runs roughly parallel to the ridge along most of its length within the character area. The M25 and M23 both cut across the scarp slope toward the middle of the character area, north of Redhill.
- There is limited settlement, which includes isolated farmsteads, and occasional hamlets including part of Merstham Village Conservation Area in the west.
- A series of larger adjacent settlements including Dorking, Reigate Redhill and Godstone and Oxted follow in parallel to the line to the south of the scarp. The character area also touches the edge of Caterham north of Godstone. The presence of these larger urban areas are apparent from a number of vantage points along the chalk scarp.
- The character area includes part of historic Lower Gatton Park and part of Titsey Place Park. A number of scheduled monuments are also present including Reigate Fort, War Coppice Hill Fort and lime kilns, such as at Oxted chalkpit.
- A combination of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, and Special Areas of Conservation cover a large portion of the character area. There is also a Local Nature Reserve at Hill Park near Tatsfield at the eastern end of the character area.
- A rural, unsettled, dramatic landscape with peacefulness and tranquillity aided by woodland cover. The sense of tranquillity is reduced slightly towards the middle of the character area due to the visually intrusive motorway intersection and a reduction in woodland cover.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE CR: CHALK RIDGE EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### Key positive landscape attributes

The key positive features that contribute to the character of the area and that should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Iconic chalk spine through the county, with panoramic views from the ridgeline over the greensand hills and low weald to the south, including popular, and well known, viewpoints such as at Newlands Corner, Ranmore Common, Box Hill, Colley Hill and Gravelly Hill.
- Series of views linked by well connected public rights of way network including the North Downs Way which meanders between Chalk Ridge (Type CR) and Wooded North Down (Type CW).
- Rural, often wooded and unsettled, backdrop to views from surrounding rural landscape and settlement.
- Areas of open sloping downland and ancient woodland.
- Intact, varied pattern of fields, often created by hedges and hedgerow trees running across the slopes
- Areas of remnant chalk grassland.
- Combes and dry valleys.
- Sparse settlement, largely of traditional farmsteads.
- Rural roads and lanes, often sunken, which wind up slopes.
- Along the Hogs Back to the west, a balance of linear tree belts on ridge top providing screening of the A31 with the provision of views out from the road.
- Clay deposits over chalk supporting large areas of woodland along the eastern end of the scarp. An almost continuous chain of deciduous woodland drapes over the top of the scarp. Woodland encloses open areas of grassland or arable farmland below.
- Historic landscapes associated with woodland management, human occupation and industrial activities.

#### Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures

##### *Past Change*

- Loss of hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees plus poor management of remaining hedgerows.
- Loss of chalk grassland.
- Lack of active management leading to loss of biodiversity value and historic interest of the woodlands.
- Redundant quarries, and active workings such as at Oxted chalkpit.
- Clusters of telecom masts on the ridge line.
- Developments of Dorking and Guildford divide the chalk ridge around the Rivers Wey and Mole where they cut through the North Downs.
- Proximity of Reigate and Redhill to chalk spine between Colley Hill and Gatton.
- North-south transport corridor A24, M23 and A22 form barriers to east-west connections. .
- Development of A31, and M25 motorway and connecting major roads which run along or cut across the ridge.
- Development of the A31 in the west of the character area, including its development as a dual carriageway, and increasing speed and volumes of traffic creating a general barrier to north-south movement. M25 crosses and runs parallel with character area in the eastern section affecting tranquillity.

### ***Future potential forces for change***

- Possible pressures for the urbanising and further road development along the M25, and A31 and connecting major roads, including further lighting and development such as services. Road safety screens along the A31 which are highly visible along the ridge line and affect the availability of viewpoints along the A31. Noise and views of the M25 affects the tranquillity of the eastern section.
- Increasing traffic on the rural tracks and roads running across the ridge leading to urbanisation through kerbing, lighting and signage.
- Pressure for widening/improvements to footpaths, further recreational facilities such as car parks and viewing places along the ridge top, and increasing use of footpaths and Open Access Land.
- Further loss of chalk grassland, hedgerows and hedgerow trees, and linear tree belts in places
- Addition of new telecom masts and continuing addition to existing.
- Continuation of chalk quarrying at Oxted chalkpit.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

Maintain the wide and far ranging views from the many viewpoints along the ridge line and the sparse settlement. The field pattern and hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees should be conserved while there is potential to enhance and reinforce some of the hedgerows. The remnant areas of chalk grassland should be conserved and opportunities taken to extend and link these isolated areas. Conserve the open nature of the landscape which forms a backdrop to the surrounding rural areas, and towns and villages that run parallel with the chalk ridge such as Guildford, Dorking, Redhill and Reigate, Godstone and Oxted. The chalk ridge contains the Hog's Back landscape to the west, and the open nature should be conserved, in particular where it forms the setting to Guildford.

### **Landscape Guidelines**

#### ***Land Management***

- Encourage landowners to maintain an appropriate management regime using traditional farming techniques where these will conserve and enhance key landscape features such as the existing field pattern, hedgerows and woodland, in particular beech trees and woodland.
- Conserve and enhance connectivity of areas of high biodiversity value and key positive landscape attributes. This area coincides with the Surrey's North Downs biodiversity opportunity area.
- Encourage consistent and appropriate management, reinforcement, and restocking of hedgerows.
- Balance screening of the arterial A-Roads and M25 with retaining key views out from the ridge.
- Conserve, enhance and restore small woodlands through effective long term management and replanting.
- Control invasive species in woodland such as sycamore and rhododendron ponticum.
- Promote traditional woodland management techniques with local landowners and the farming community.
- Encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands.
- Promote the use of locally appropriate species such as oak, beech and yew.
- Reduce conifer planting on the scarp.
- Conserve and enhance the areas of chalk grassland and consider opportunities to extend and link fragmented sites.
- Raise awareness of the historic dimension of the landscape, and underlying archaeology to landowners.
- Encourage appropriate siting and management of horse paddocks.
- Seek appropriate siting of facilities for leisure and tourism through visitor management plan to predict and support appropriate levels of circulation and movement patterns.

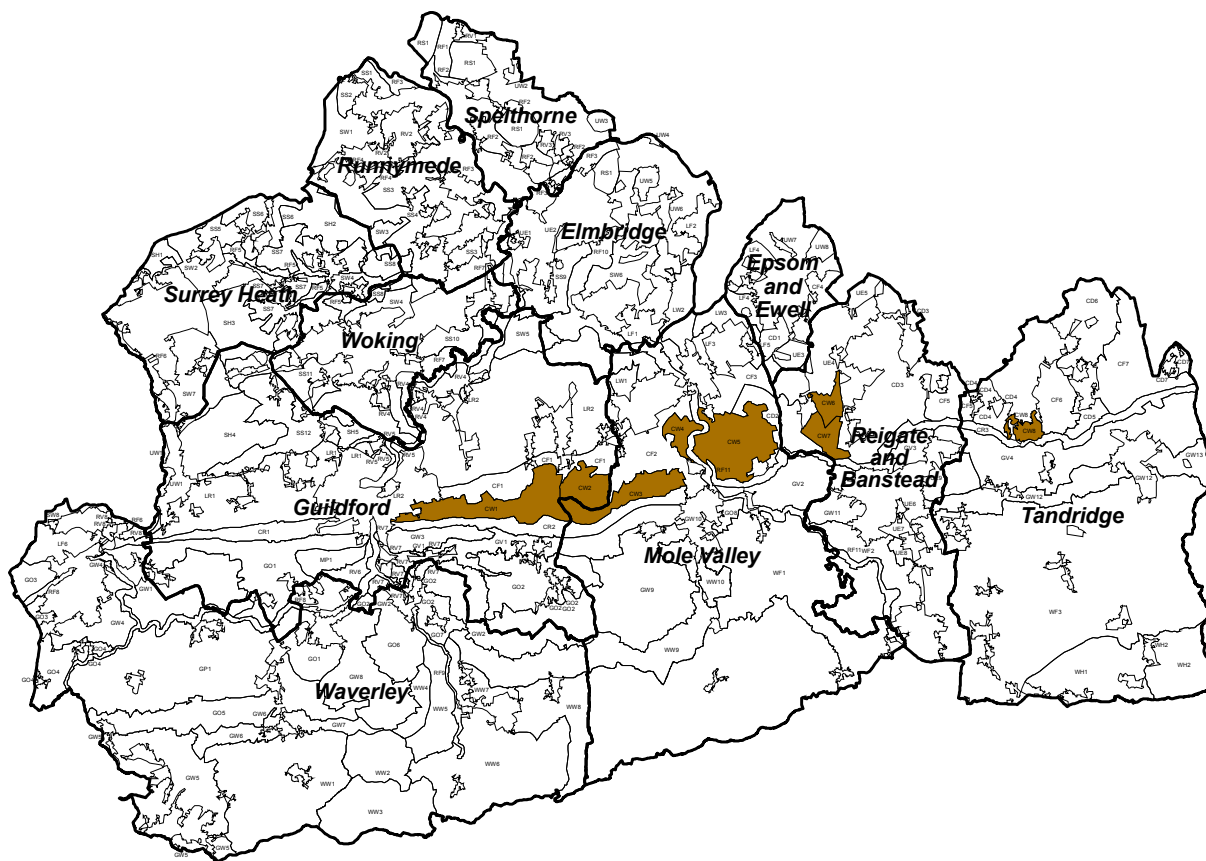
- Resist the loss of rural character through the spread of urbanising features associated with leisure use such as car parks on the ridgeline.
- Encourage appropriate surfacing, materials and signage for footpaths and car parks to retain the rural, unsettled character of the landscape.
- Protect important views and maintain areas of open, undeveloped skyline.

### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the sense of a rural, sparsely settled area with visible development limited to occasional traditional farmsteads. Refer to Surrey design guides; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association) and Building Design in the Surrey Hills (Surrey Hills AONB).
- Resist the spread of settlement up the slopes from the foot of the ridge.
- Aim to utilise existing masts in preference to the erection of new tall structures.
- Consider the impact of development in adjacent areas in views from the ridgeline. Maintain the rural setting and containment of villages at the foot of the ridge.
- Protect landscape character and quality from further negative impact of transport networks including the introduction of signs, gantries and lighting columns that impact on local distinctiveness, and work to foster local distinctiveness where standard design criteria creates a lack of variation and 'urbanisation' of rural roads.
- Conserve the rural roads minimising small-scale incremental change such as signage, fencing or improvements, which would change their character.
- Ensure that road lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing 'dark skies' on the ridge slopes and skyline.
- Promote the use of traditional signage features with particular regard to local style and materials.
- Promote appropriate management of car parks, rest areas and viewpoints by land owners and support sense of ownership through the encouragement of stakeholder or local community adoption of areas.



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## LANDSCAPE TYPE CW: WOODED NORTH DOWN

### Landscape Character Areas

CW1	Merrow and Clandon Wooded North Down*
CW2	Effingham Forest Wooded North Down*
CW3	Oaken Grove to Ranmore Common Wooded North Down*
CW4	Norbury Park Wooded North Down*
CW5	Box Hill to Oyster Hill Wooded North Down*
CW6	Banstead Heath Wooded North Down
CW7	Chussex Plain Wooded North Down
CW8	South Caterham Wooded North Down*

\* These Character Areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE CW: WOODED NORTH DOWN

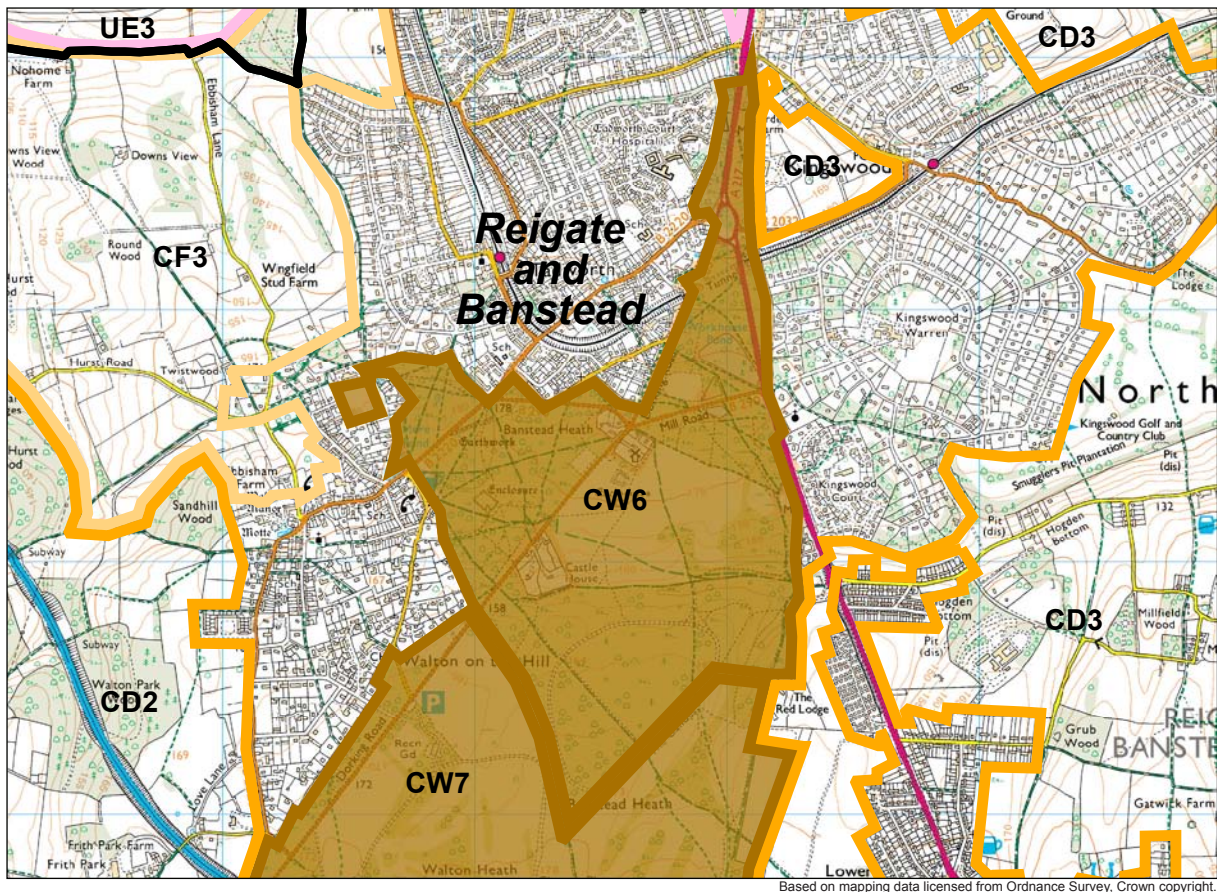
### Location and Boundaries

The Wooded North Down landscape Type includes a band of land to the north of the chalk ridge, east of the Guildford. Part of the wider downland, the Type becomes dispersed to the east, separated by areas of Chalk Down with Woodland (Type CD) and Open Chalk Farmland (Type CF). The majority of the Type is located on the upper slopes of the dip slope of the North Downs. The boundaries of the areas are based on geology, topography and land cover and follow roads, tracks, footpaths, contours and the edge of woodland blocks. A significant portion of the Wooded North Downs Landscape Type forms part of the Surrey Hills AONB.



### Key Characteristics

- Underlain by chalk with drift deposits of sand and gravel, and clay with flints. A peaceful, secluded landscape of wooded slopes rising to meet the ridgeline to the south.
- Mosaic of mixed woodland blocks, including areas of ancient woodland, and open grazed pastoral farmland.
- Sparse settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and large houses which sit into the slopes and combe valleys.
- Historic landscape pattern associated with management of woodland, trackways, and grazing of animals.



## CW6: BANSTEAD HEATH WOODED NORTH DOWN

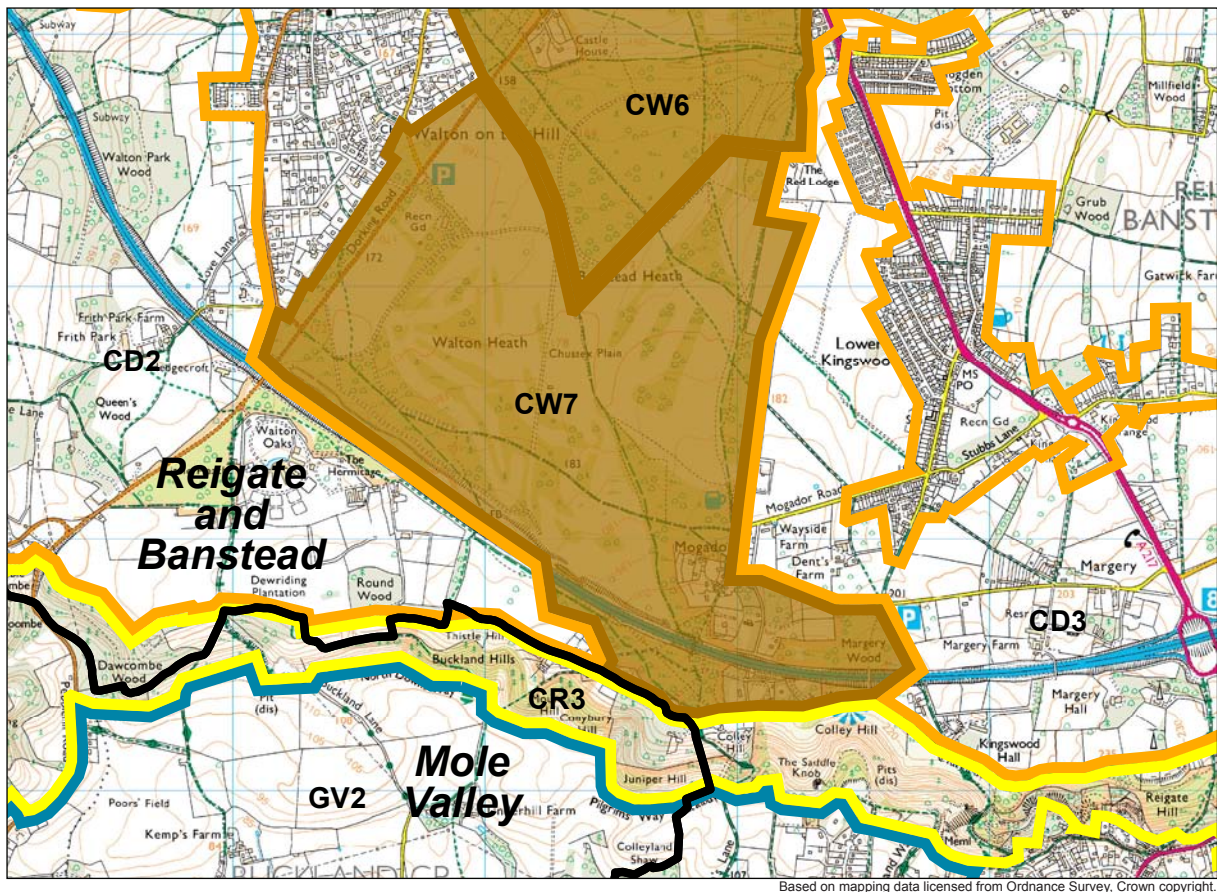
### Location and Boundaries

The Banstead Heath Wooded North Down is to the south and west of Kingswood. The area is bounded by Walton on the Hill to the west and Tadworth to the north. Boundaries follow the edge of settlements, woodland and heathland. The character area is outside the Surrey Hills AONB, which is located nearby to the south.

### Key Characteristics

- Elevated, gently rolling downland, underlain by Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation.
- Landform falls from the north before rising up on the dip slope to the south.
- The character area includes significant areas of heath scrub and grassland, and woodland, including Oak and Birch.
- Woodland cover provides enclosure and restricts views across the majority of the character area however, gaps in woodland cover alongside the central heathland area, allow some more distant views.
- The character area has very limited settlement, but abuts the Walton on the Hill Conservation Area to the west and urban areas to the north.
- A number of long, straight roads pass through the northern part of the character area, including the A217. Public rights of way criss-cross the woodland and heath.
- The area includes a grade II listed cast iron electricity substation and several earthworks listed as scheduled monuments.
- The majority of the character area is registered as common land.

- The majority of the character area is designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest, designated for its large mosaic of oak-birch woodland, acid grassland, remnant heathland, scrub and several ponds.
- Most of the character area is relatively peaceful and tranquil due to woodland cover and limited settlement, although roads and adjacent Built Up Areas are a distraction, particularly to the north.



## CW7: CHUSSEX PLAIN WOODED NORTH DOWN

### Location and Boundaries

The Chussex Plain Wooded North Downs is a heath and wooded area to the south of Tadworth, on the dip slope, within the wider chalk North Downs. The area is bounded by Walton on the Hill to the west, and the M25 motorway and the ridge scarp to the south. Boundaries follow the edge of settlement, woodland and heathland, and the M25. The south-easternmost portion of the character area is within the Surrey Hills AONB.

### Key Characteristics

- Elevated, gently rolling chalk downland, underlain by Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation, which meets the top of the ridge scarp at the south-east corner of the Character Area.
- The Character Area includes significant heath and woodland, much of which is included within the Walton Heath golf courses. There are also small areas of pasture and paddocks.
- Woodland cover provides enclosure and restricts views across the majority of the Character Area however, gaps in woodland cover, including the golf course, allow some more distant views. Colley Hill, in the south-eastern corner of the Character Area offers extensive views south to the west of Reigate.
- The Character Area is mostly unsettled, but abuts the Walton on the Hill Conservation Area to the west, and includes Mogador in the south-east corner.
- The A217 passes the western edge of the Character Area, but the majority of the Character Area is without significant roads. Public rights of way cross the woodland and heath.
- The whole Character Area is registered as common land.

- Almost the entire Character Area (north of the M25) is a Site of Nature Conservation Interest, designated for its large mosaic of oak-birch woodland, acid grassland, remnant heathland, scrub and several ponds.
- The Character Area is relatively peaceful due to woodland cover and a lack of roads or settlement, however the sense of remoteness and tranquillity is substantially tempered by presence of golf courses across the area.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE CW: WOODED NORTH DOWN EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### Key positive landscape attributes

- Varied woodlands, including extensive tracts of ancient woods, plantations and wooded heathland, with the attendant biodiversity and historic value.
- Peaceful, mostly secluded landscape with limited settlement.
- Pockets of farmland enclosed by woodland.
- Pronounced ridge which functions as a rural wooded backdrop to lower areas to the north, with unsettled skyline in most places.
- Rural roads and sunken lanes, overhung by trees, create tunnelled views through the woodland.
- Ridge provides views, largely framed by woodland, over the greensand hills and low weald to the south, and over the claylands to northwest.
- Access to public panoramic viewpoints such as at Newlands Corner, Ranmore Common, Box Hill, Colley Hill and Gravelly Hill by a well connected public right of way network, including the North Downs Way which meanders between the Chalk ridge (Type CR) and Wooded North Down (Type CW) landscape types.
- Ridge tops framing the Mole Gap.
- Historic landscape pattern of trackways and woodland associated with woodland management and movement of animals.

#### Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures

##### *Past Change*

- Loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Loss of chalk grassland and heathland through regenerated woodland or conversion to arable and improved pasture.
- Loss of well managed beech woodland and increase in conifer plantations.
- Increased use of the area for leisure leading to the creation of car parks and picnic areas (suffering problems with fly tipping), and golf courses.

##### *Future potential forces for change*

- Further loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Use of farmland for horse pasture with consequent subdivision of the fields and installation of shelters.
- Pressure for further recreational facilities such as car parks and viewing points along the ridge top and increasing use of footpaths and Open Access Land.
- Fragmentation of woodland ownership and lack of traditional management of woodland.
- Pressure for further expansion of settlement.
- Increasing traffic on narrow rural lane including sunken lanes leading to damage to the structure of the lanes and urbanisation through kerbing, additional lighting and signage.
- Recreation pressure including cycling, both on and off road.

### GUIDANCE

#### Landscape Strategy

The strategy for Wooded North Down landscape is to conserve the peaceful, rural landscape with large tracts of ancient woodland. Opportunities for enhancement are restocking hedgerows and ensuring management of varied woodlands to conserve their ecological and historic interest.



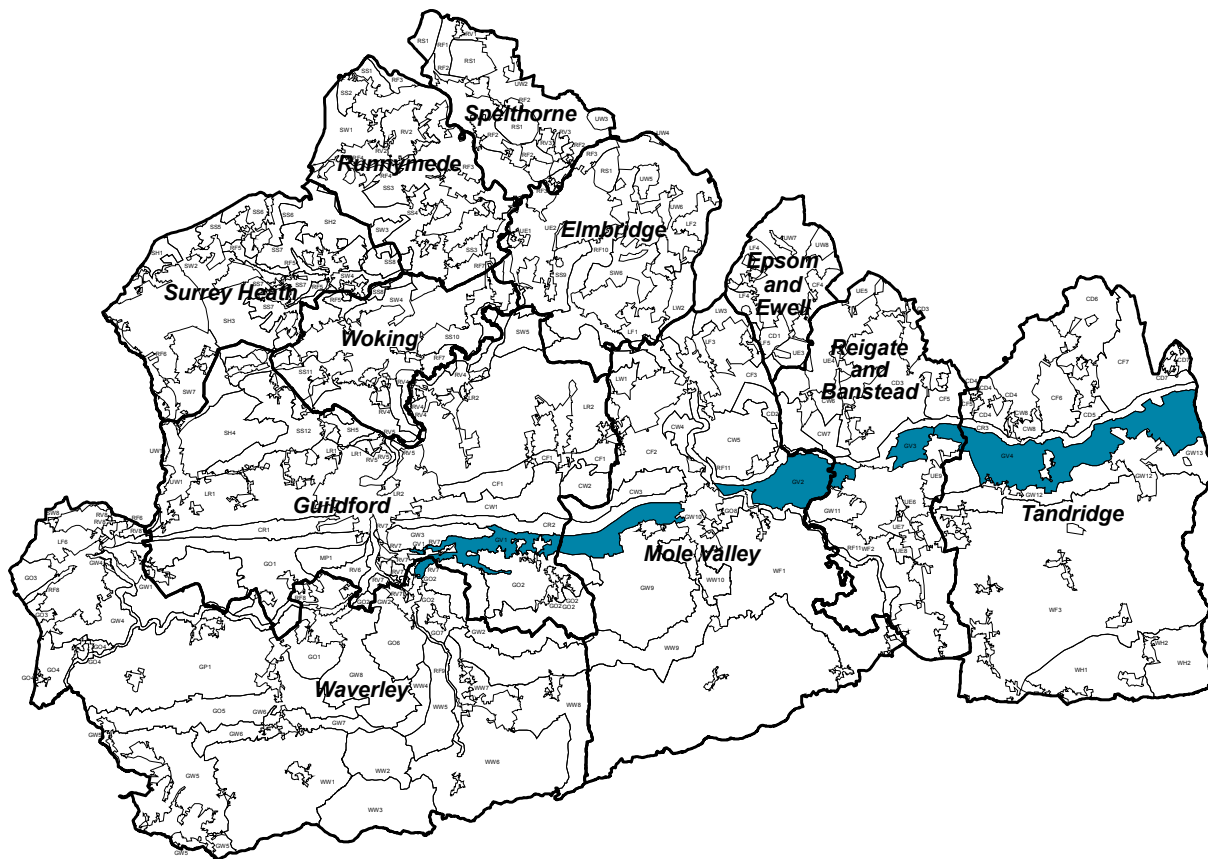
## **Landscape Guidelines**

### ***Land Management***

- Encourage landowners to maintain an appropriate management regime using traditional farming techniques where these will conserve and enhance key landscape features such as hedgerows, chalk grassland and woodlands.
- Conserve and enhance connectivity of areas of high biodiversity and key positive landscape attributes. This landscape character type coincides with Surrey's North Downs biodiversity opportunity area.
- Raise awareness of the historic dimension, and underlying archaeology of the landscape to landowners including the field patterns, trackways, and woodlands. Conserve the historic elements of the landscape.
- Conserve, enhance and restore the woodlands through effective long term management and replanting to retain their varied character and their ecological value.
- Promote traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing with local landowners and the farming community.
- Encourage sustainable woodland and the use of locally appropriate species such as oak, beech, ash, hazel and yew within woodlands and hedgerows.
- Ensure consistent management and restocking of hedgerows.
- Seek appropriate siting of facilities for leisure and tourism through visitor management plan to predict and support appropriate levels of circulation and movement patterns, especially in relation to the SAC designation at the Mole Gap, and value of its habitats.
- Resist the loss of rural character through the spread of urbanising features associated with leisure use such as car parks.
- Encourage appropriate surfacing, materials and signage for footpaths such as the North Downs Way and car parks to retain the rural, unsettled character of the landscape.
- Removal of fly tipping.
- Encourage appropriate siting and management of horse paddocks, for instance in utilising existing hedges or planting new native hedges as boundary treatments and resist fencing small areas of land out of keeping with the scale of surrounding field patterns.
- Encourage the use of suitable fence styles, in keeping with the local style or material, including metal park fencing where a local parkland character creates precedence.
- Avoid development of permanent exercise areas and siting of exercise equipment such as treadmills, pens, and jumps where this is visually intrusive on the landscape.

### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the sense of seclusion.
- Maintain the existing dispersed pattern of settlement of farmsteads avoiding expansion of settlements into wooded character areas.
- Maintain the wooded and undeveloped skyline.
- Conserve the rural roads and sunken lanes, particularly the strong pattern created by narrow, treed lanes, minimising small-scale incremental change such as signage, fencing, domestic access or improvements to the road network which could change their character and protecting the sunken lanes from damage through over use.
- Ensure that road lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing 'dark skies' on the ridge slopes and skyline.
- Promote the use of traditional buildings materials and signage features with particular regard to local style and materials. Refer to Surrey design guides; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association) and Building Design in the Surrey Hills (Surrey Hills AONB).



## LANDSCAPE TYPE GV: GREENSAND VALLEY

### Landscape Character Areas

GV1	Tillingbourne and Pipp Brook Greensand Valley*
GV2	Pixham to Reigate Greensand Valley
GV3	Gatton Greensand Valley
GV4	Merstham to Clacket Lane Greensand Valley

\* These Character Areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE GV: GREENSAND VALLEY

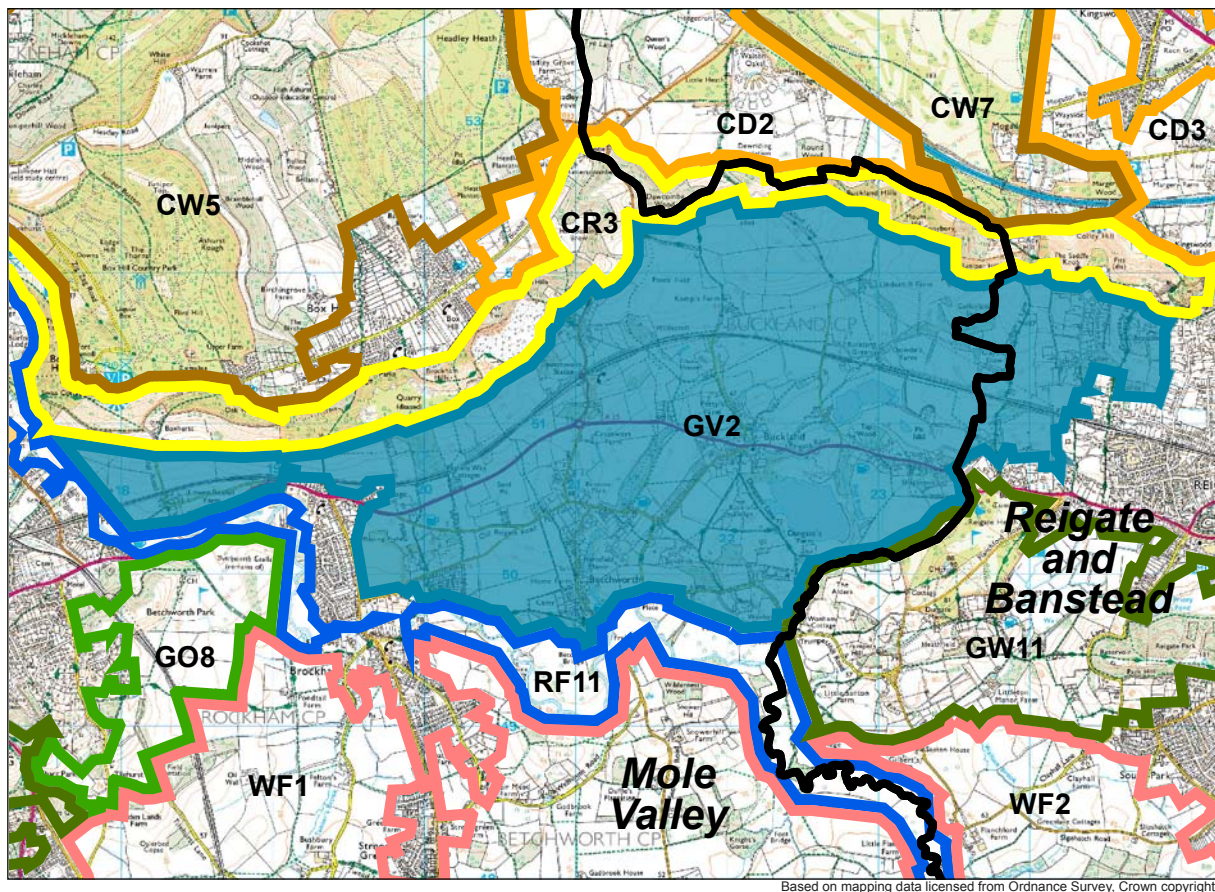
### Location and Boundaries

The Greensand Valley Type runs broadly east-west along the southern foot of the North Downs ridge scarp slope between Guildford and Oxted. Between Guildford and Dorking, the Greensand Valley is relatively narrow, associated with the Tillingbourne River and Pipp Brook. To the east of Dorking the Greensand Valley broadens and encompasses land between the more elevated greensand hills to the south and the North Downs to the north covering an area referred to as the Vale of Holmesdale. The Vale is divided by Redhill and Reigate, and then continues between Redhill and around Godstone and Oxted, following the foot of the North Downs in to neighbouring Kent. Boundaries are based on topography and land cover marking the transition from the open valley sides to the wooded hills to north and south.



### Key Characteristics

- Valley based on greensand with alluvium, diamicton and sand and gravel drift geology.
- Moderately flat or gently undulating farmland enclosed by the North Downs scarp to the north and the hills of the greensand ridge to the south.
- The area is crisscrossed the headwaters of a number of important river catchments. The Pipp Brook which flows in to the River Mole, the Tillingbourne which flows in to the Wey, and the River Eden
- Presence of the Tillingbourne with ponds, streams and weirs and the Pipp Brook with lakes, ponds and streams.
- The Tillingbourne, flowing west, is set within an intimate, small scale valley floor with a chain of historic villages set amongst pastures, woodland and parkland.
- The Pipp Brook, flows east to the River Mole around Westcott and through Dorking.
- The headwaters of the River Eden flows south from Godstone and Oxted towards Edenbridge in Kent.
- Semi-enclosed area with rural views to the open pastoral valley sides, the North Downs scarp and the wooded slopes of the greensand hills.
- Contains east west transport links running parallel with the scarp to the north.
- Historic landscape pattern based on mixed farming on the easily cultivated lighter soils between the chalk of the North Downs and the heavier clay soils of the low weald.



## GV2: PIXHAM TO REIGATE GREENSAND VALLEY

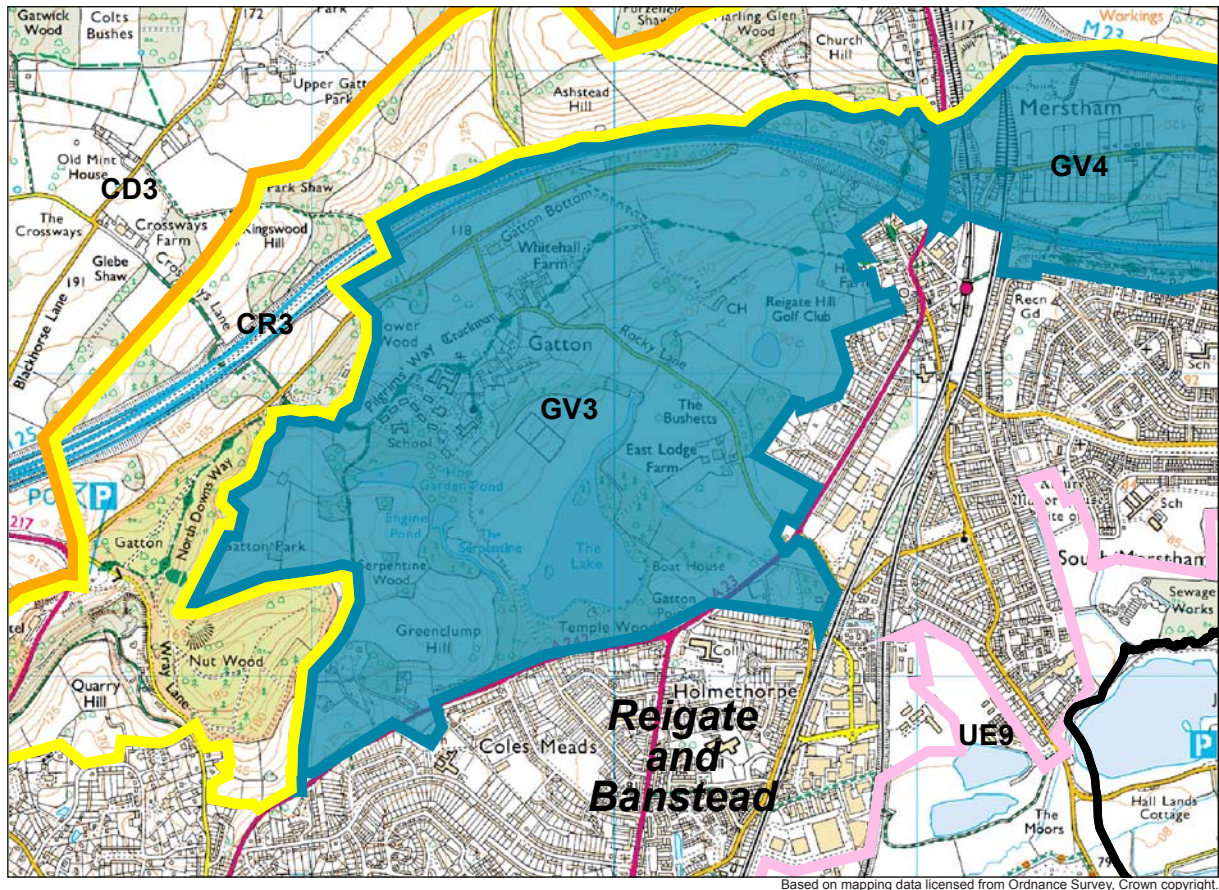
### Location and Boundaries

The Pixham to Reigate Greensand Valley Character Area is located to the west of Reigate, at the foot of the chalk ridge scarp to the north. It is defined by underlying geology, and topography. The boundary follows recognisable features such as roads and field boundaries. The northern section of the character area is within the Surrey Hills AONB.

### Key Characteristics

- Underlain mainly by the Upper Greensand Formation Siltstone and Sandstone, and Folkestone Formation Sandstone, with areas of Gault Formation Mudstone.
- Wider, less well defined valley landform than the Tillingbourne and Pipp Brook Greensand Valley to the west.
- Undulating topography, generally south facing as it descends from the scarp to the north, but then rises again along the southern boundary of character area to meet the wooded greensand hills at Skimmington and the River Mole floodplain and the low weald to the south-west.
- Small water courses, water bodies and ponds. Larger open water areas resulting from restored mineral workings around Buckland.
- The character area includes medium scale arable fields with limited hedgerows along boundaries, giving way to smaller pastoral fields to the south with an increase in tree cover. There are paddocks associated with dwellings within the southern and eastern part of the character area. The character area includes a number of active and former quarry pits.
- There are relatively limited areas of woodland, including Ash and Field Maple.
- Northerly views from the character area include the North Downs ridge and scarp.

- The A25 runs east-west through the middle of the character area linking to minor roads across the area. There is a network of public rights of way, including the North Downs Way National Trail and Greensand Way Recreational Path. The North Downs railway line passes east-west through the character area and Betchworth railway station is located adjacent.
- Includes the villages of Betchworth and Buckland, and abuts the western edge of Reigate. Elsewhere, particularly to the south, there are a number of small groups of houses and more isolated dwellings and farmsteads.
- The character area includes the Buckland Conservation Areas and parts of the Betchworth, and Flanchford Road and Colley Lane Reigate, Conservation Areas. A number of lime kilns at Betchworth Quarry are scheduled monuments, and there are bowl barrows in Reigate Heath which are also scheduled as ancient monuments. There is also a Grade II listed building at Skimmington.
- A relatively rural character area, becoming more remote and tranquil to the north, but settlement limits tranquillity and remoteness to the south.



## GV3: GATTON GREENSAND VALLEY

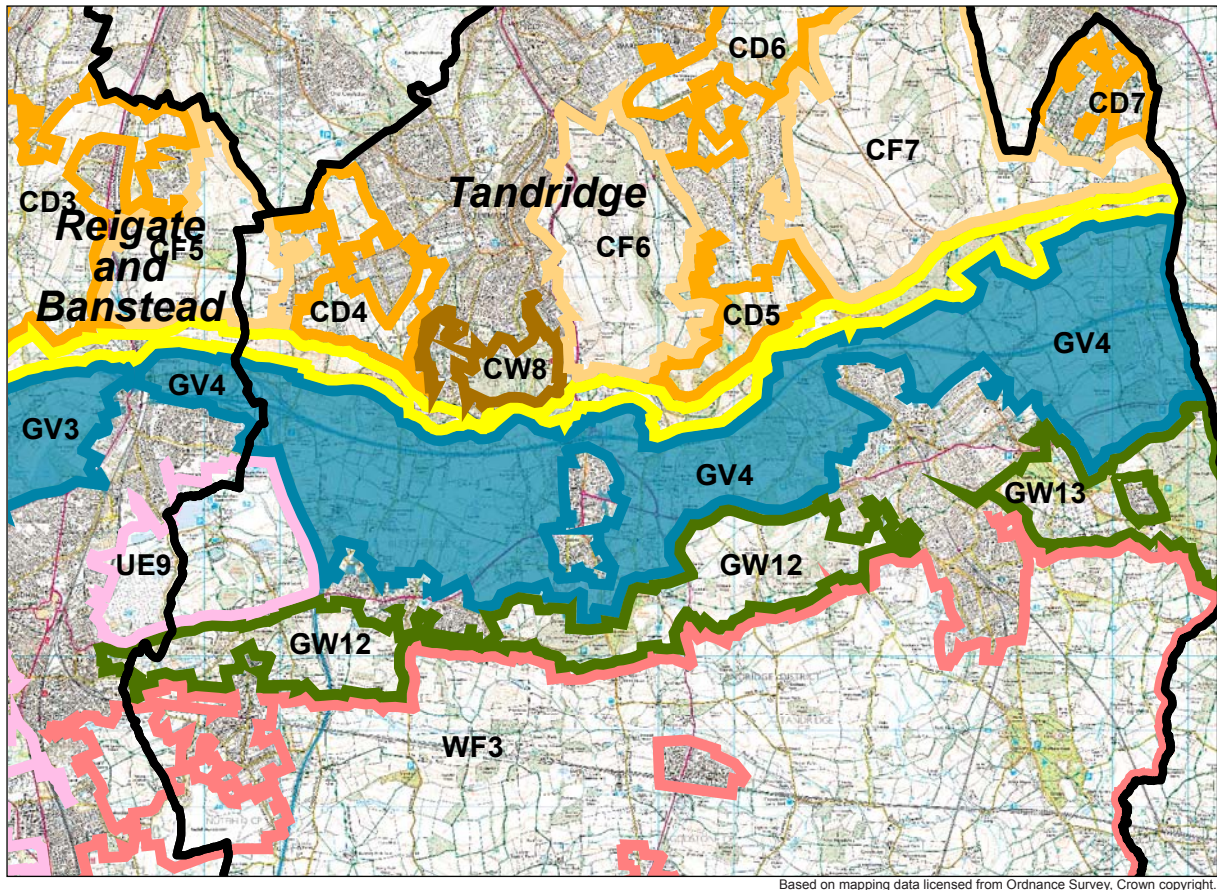
### Location and Boundaries

The Gatton Greensand Valley Character Area is located to the north of Redhill, at the foot of the chalk ridge scarp to the north. It is defined by the change in underlying geology and topography to the north and west, and by the edge of Built Up Areas to the south and east. The boundary follows a combination of recognisable features such as roads, woodland edges and field boundaries. The character area is almost entirely within the Surrey Hills AONB.

### Key Characteristics

- The eastern end of the wider greensand valley, underlain mainly by Upper Greensand Formation Siltstone and Sandstone, along with areas of Gault Formation Mudstone. Rises on south-east facing topography to meet the chalk ridge scarp to the north.
- The character area is largely pastoral, with remnant parkland, lakes, Reigate Hill golf course, and areas of woodland, including an area of ancient woodland to the south. There are trees within fields and well maintained hedgerow along vehicle routes and some field boundaries.
- The Pilgrims Way Recreational Path crosses through the northern part of the area on high ground, but there are limited public rights of way within the central and southern parts of the character area.
- The M25 runs along the northern end of the character area, and the A23/A242 skirt the southern edge of the character area. The few internal roads have limited influence – Gatton Bottom is screened from the majority of the character area to the south by roadside vegetation and Rocky Lane is narrow and low key.

- There are views from open areas of the rising ground to the north. The chalk ridge scarp is most visible from the northern end of the character area, but is seen in context with moving traffic along the M25 motorway below. Woodland screens the A242 and Redhill to the south, but there are filtered views of adjacent housing to the east.
- The grade II listed Lower Gatton Park occupies the western two thirds of the character area. The Church of St Andrew in the centre is grade I listed.
- Grounds of the Royal Alexandra and Albert School are designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest for its mosaic of woodland and grassland.
- A relatively rural, but gentrified, character area. A pleasant landscape with areas of high scenic quality, but surrounding road and settlement influences, and land use, reduce the sense of remoteness in places. Parts of the character area remain relatively private due to school grounds and golf course.



## GV4: MERSTHAM TO CLACKET LANE GREENSAND VALLEY

### Location and Boundaries

The Merstham to Clacket Lane Greensand Valley is a broad character area running east-west in the eastern part of the county, between the chalk ridge to the north and more wooded greensand hills to the south. It is defined by the underlying geology, degree of woodland cover and the edges of Built Up Areas. The boundary follows settlement edges, and other recognisable features such as woodland, roads and field boundaries. Northern section at the eastern end of the character area is within the Surrey Hills AONB.

### Key Characteristics

- Underlain by Folkestone Formation Sandstone, with areas of Gault Formation Mudstone to the north.
- Undulating landform, rising up to meet the chalk ridge scarp to the north and wooded greensand hills to the south.
- The predominant land use consists of medium-large scale, open arable fields, but there is a mixture of other uses including, generally smaller pastoral fields, large scale sand quarry workings, golf courses, road and motorway corridors and settlement.
- Blocks of woodland occur across the character area, with more substantial areas of woodland to the west of Oxted. Hedgerows line field boundaries, but are limited in some places with larger arable fields. Smaller parcels of land associated with settlement often have good tree cover. There is ancient woodland, the size and occurrence increasing at the eastern end of the character area.
- Northerly views from the character area include the chalk ridge scarp.



- The M25 motorway runs along the length of the northern edge of the character area. Junctions 6, 7 and the Clacket Lane services, of the M25 are located within the character area. A limited number of roads, including the A25 and rural lanes cross the character area.
- A comprehensive network of public rights of way criss-cross every part of the character area, including the Tandridge Border Path, Greensand Way and Vanguard Way Recreational Paths and the North Downs National Trail.
- The character area includes the village of Godstone and settlements such as Merstham, and wraps around Oxted and Bletchingley. Elsewhere, there are isolated dwellings and farmsteads, with settlement becoming more limited at the eastern end of the character area. Merstham is a linear, low density settlement designated as a Conservation Area, and is encircled by motorway, road and rail routes at the north-west corner of the character area.
- There are a number of other Conservation Areas, including Pendell Court and Place Farm and Brewer Street, at the western end of the character area, and Godstone in the centre of the character area. The character area includes a small area of registered common land at Clacket Common in the eastern end of the character area, a few scheduled monuments, and part of the historic park/garden at Titsey Place.
- There are a number of small woodland areas designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. A few larger blocks of woodland are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, around Titsey Woods.
- Relatively rural landscape, with tranquilly and remoteness varying across the Character Area due to the degree of urban influence from settlement and roads.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE GV: GREENSAND VALLEY EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### **Key positive landscape attributes**

The key positive features that contribute to the character of the area and that should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Enclosed intimate valley floor landscape west of Dorking.
- Between east of Dorking and Oxted, wider valley floor of undulating farmland from foothills of North Downs.
- Dramatic views of North Downs scarp slope
- Open pastoral, unsettled lower slopes of valley sides.
- Views across pastures to wooded hills of North Downs to north and Greensand hills to south, often simultaneously.
- Varied woodland including valley floor woods and ancient woodland.
- Watercourses and water bodies associated with River Eden, Tillingbourne and Pipp Brook
- River Tillingbourne and linked historic remnants of former industries such as gunpowder manufacturing, mill ponds, fishing lakes, weirs and watercress beds.
- Historic parks and gardens forming large blocks of landscape with a parkland character.
- Historic village centres and manors.

#### **Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures**

##### ***Past Change***

- Loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Decline in active management of woodland and fragmentation of farmland.
- Introduction of horse paddocks.
- Considerable areas of mineral extraction with exposed sand working faces.
- Open water areas as a result of wet restoration of old mineral sites.
- Expansion of villages along roads and on the lower slopes of the valley to north and south threatening the open rural views and the individual identity of the settlements.
- Growth of car based tourism and visitor pressure on villages, particularly along the A25 such as at Shere, Buckland and Bletchingley.

##### ***Future potential forces for change***

- Further loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Fragmentation of farmland and farm holdings.
- Increase in demand for horse paddocks with associated infrastructure such as fencing and shelters.
- Pressures of increased recreational use, and for more fishing lakes.
- Activities around mineral extraction and restoration of the landscape.
- Upgrading of rural roads through additional kerbing and signage to accommodate increasing traffic volume.
- Pressure for further residential development within and around the villages.
- Erosion of distinctive architectural forms and character within settlements.
- Continuing traffic congestion.
- Introduction or upgrading of urban road lighting schemes
- Development creating a higher density of built elements within existing plots resulting in changes in the character of village structure over the long term.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The landscape strategy for the Greensand Valley is to conserve the rural character of the open pastoral valley sides, the historic village cores, the varied water bodies, the historic parks and gardens and the views to the wooded backdrop of the greensand hills and chalk downs. Elements in need of enhancement include the hedgerows and management of the woodlands.

### **Landscape Guidelines**

#### ***Land Management***

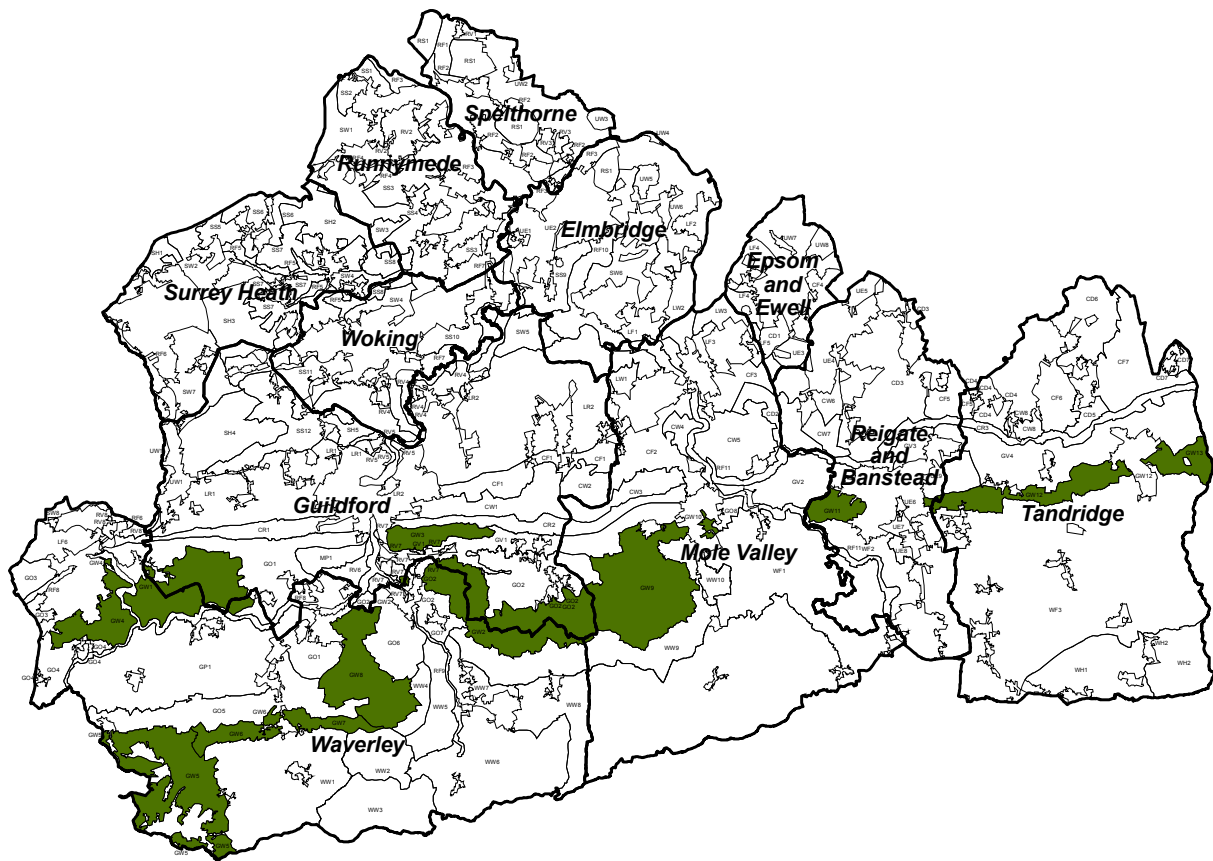
- Encourage landowners to maintain an appropriate management regime using traditional farming techniques where these will conserve and enhance key landscape features such as the hedgerows and woodlands.
- Encourage consistent management and restocking of hedgerows.
- Nurture new hedgerow trees.
- Promote restoration and traditional management techniques for woodlands and species rich grassland with local landowners, horse owners and the farming community.
- Encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands.
- Fragments of ancient woodland extend across the valley floor. Encourage traditional management techniques such as coppicing where appropriate to maintain the character and ecological interest of the woodlands such as Colyers Hanger near Guildford, Holehill Copse near Dorking, Colley Copse near Reigate, and Titsey Wood .
- Promote the use of locally appropriate species such as oak, hazel and birch and alder along the river edge.
- Encourage sensitive restoration of the landscape following mineral extraction.
- Enhance or link areas of high biodiversity value and positive landscape attributes where there is opportunities through landscape restoration and land management. Character Area GV4 coincides with Surrey's Wealden Greensand biodiversity opportunity area WG11.
- Raise awareness of the historic dimension of the landscape to landowners including the designed landscapes, woodlands and features connected to the river such as fishponds and watercress beds.
- Conserve and, where appropriate, encourage repair of the historic designed landscape to maintain and restore key elements such as avenues, woodland blocks, designed views and boundary features.
- Encourage understanding and conserve archaeological, historical and cultural aspects of the landscape. .
- Encourage sensitive design and management of horse paddocks for instance in retaining hedges and resist development of other facilities such as manèges that would affect the rural character of the area.
- Conserve the diverse water bodies along the valley floor including historic feature such as fish ponds, leats and mill ponds.
- Conserve and enhance the open views up to wooded ridge of chalk ridge to the north and greensand hills to the north and south.
- Seek to conserve and enhance the low key, rural character of the many footpaths and occasional small car parks through the encouragement of appropriate surfacing, materials and signage.

#### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the historic cores of the villages along the valley floor (such as Gomshall, Shere, Albury, Buckland, Betchworth, Bletchingley, Godstone and Church Town) with particular regard to the proportion and scale between elements and their settings.

- Retain the character of the individual settlements avoiding merging these through dense linear development along roads, for instance between Albury and Chilworth, Betchworth and Buckland, and Bletchingley and Godstone. But also between smaller settlements and the larger urban areas of Dorking, Redhill and Reigate.
- Seek to incorporate traditional building materials with vernacular building styles. Refer to Surrey design guides; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association) and Building Design in the Surrey Hills (Surrey Hills AONB).
- Encourage any new built development, to respect local character, including support of sympathetic contemporary architecture, through high quality detailing, architectural features, and use of natural building materials.
- Promote the use of appropriate plant species and boundary treatments at village edges to better integrate development into the adjacent rural character.
- Maintain the open character of the valley sides with their sparse settlement of farmsteads.
- Improve understanding of the general pattern of settlements and their relationship to the landscape and ensure that new development is sympathetic to the wider pattern of settlement.
- Conserve the rural roads and sunken lanes minimising small-scale incremental change such as signage, fencing or improvements to the road network which would change their character.
- Work to foster local distinctiveness in villages where standard design criteria creates a lack of variation and 'urbanisation' of rural roads. Seek to 'downgrade' main roads through village centres, enhancing the immediate landscape setting and ensuring minimum clutter through encouraging appropriate surfacing of existing pavements, quality signage and reduced speed limits where possible.
- Ensure that road lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the surviving 'dark skies' in the valley floor and ridge slopes – ensure any lighting proposals are essential and assessed for their visual impact in order to conserve the existing 'dark skies', especially on the ridge sides and skyline.
- Promote the use of traditional signage features with particular regard to local style and materials.
- Discourage inappropriate siting and management of horse paddocks, and utilise existing hedges or planting new native hedges as boundary treatments.
- Encourage the use of suitable fence styles, in keeping with the local style or material, including metal park fencing where a local parkland character creates precedence.
- Avoid development of permanent exercise areas and siting of exercise equipment such as treadmills, pens, and jumps where this is visually intrusive on the landscape.
- Encourage sustainable tourism and investigate further traffic management schemes in villages in association with schemes to improve visitor management, access and interpretation.

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## LANDSCAPE TYPE GW: WOODED GREENSAND HILLS

### Landscape Character Areas

GW1	Puttenham Wooded Greensand Hills*
GW2	Chinthurst to Hurt Wood Wooded Greensand Hills*
GW3	St Martha's Wooded Greensand Hills*
GW4	Rowledge to Tilford Wooded Greensand Hills*
GW5	Hindhead Wooded Greensand Hills*
GW6	Wormley West Wooded Greensand Hills*
GW7	Wormley East Wooded Greensand Hills*
GW8	Loxhill to Catteshail Wooded Greensand Hills*
GW9	Leith Hill to Bury Hill Wooded Greensand Hills*
GW10	Dorking Wooded Greensand Hills*
GW11	Skimmington Wooded Greensand Hills
GW12	Earlswood to Oxted Wooded Greensand Hills
GW13	The Chart Wooded Greensand Hills*

\* These Character Areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE GW: WOODED GREENSAND HILLS

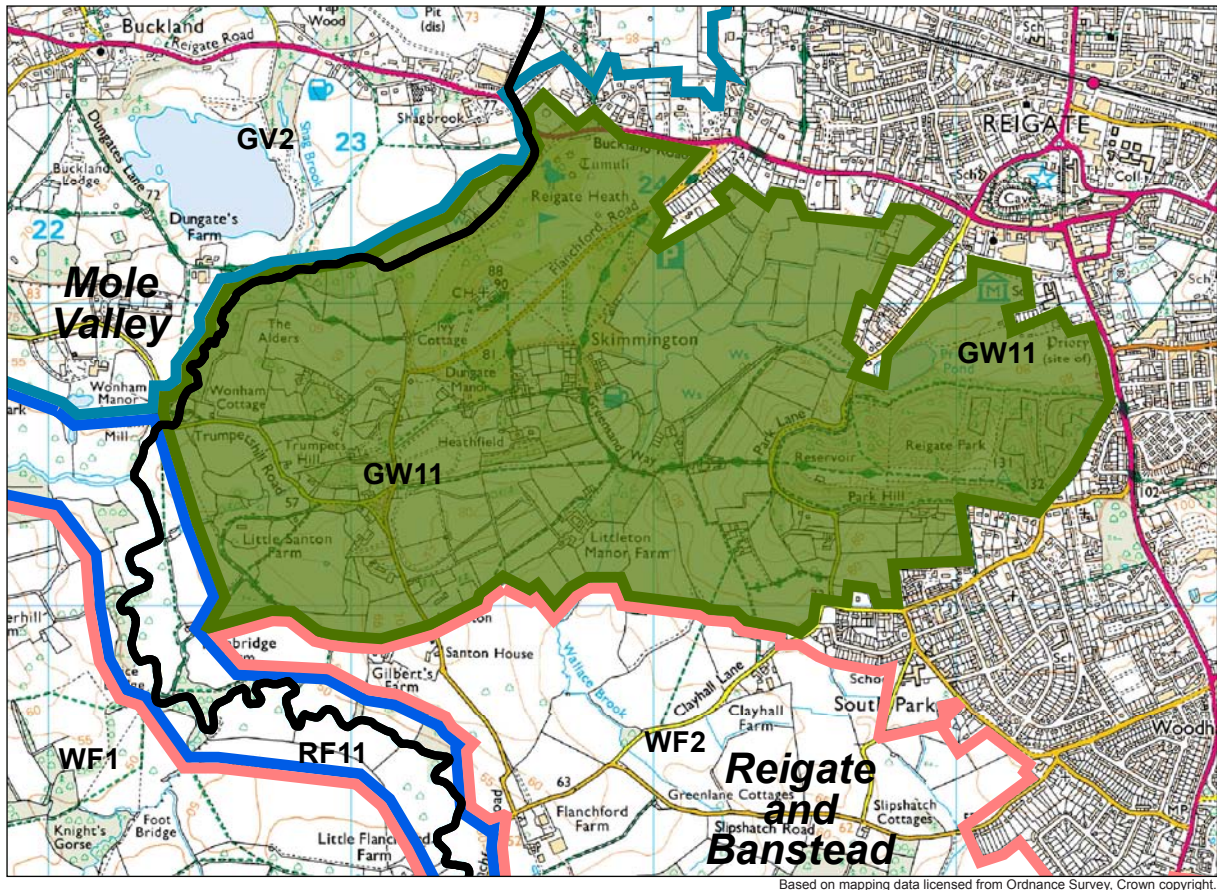
### Location and Boundaries

The Wooded Greensand Hills Type contains Character Areas sited largely on the southern part of the greensand, with Open Greensand Hills (Type GO) generally to the north, and often marks the boundary between the Greensand and the Low Weald to the south. Boundaries are based on underlying geology, landform and the wooded land cover and broadly following contours and the edges of woodland blocks.



### Key Characteristics

- Undulating hills based on greensand.
- A secluded landscape dominated by woodland, with areas of pasture and open heathland.
- Sparsely settled with scattered farmsteads and small cottages along rural lanes.
- Incised, sunken, often steep, winding lanes, with exposed roots and sandy soil to roadside banks. Overhanging surrounding tree cover results in a tunnel effect along the lanes.
- Peaceful, remote landscape with a high sense of enclosure, yet often with contrasting panoramic views out over lower ground which aid the appreciation of the elevated nature of the Landscape Type and its prominence in the local landscape.
- Historic landscape pattern associated with animal husbandry and movement, and woodland management.



## GW11: SKIMMINGTON WOODED GREENSAND HILLS

### Location and Boundaries

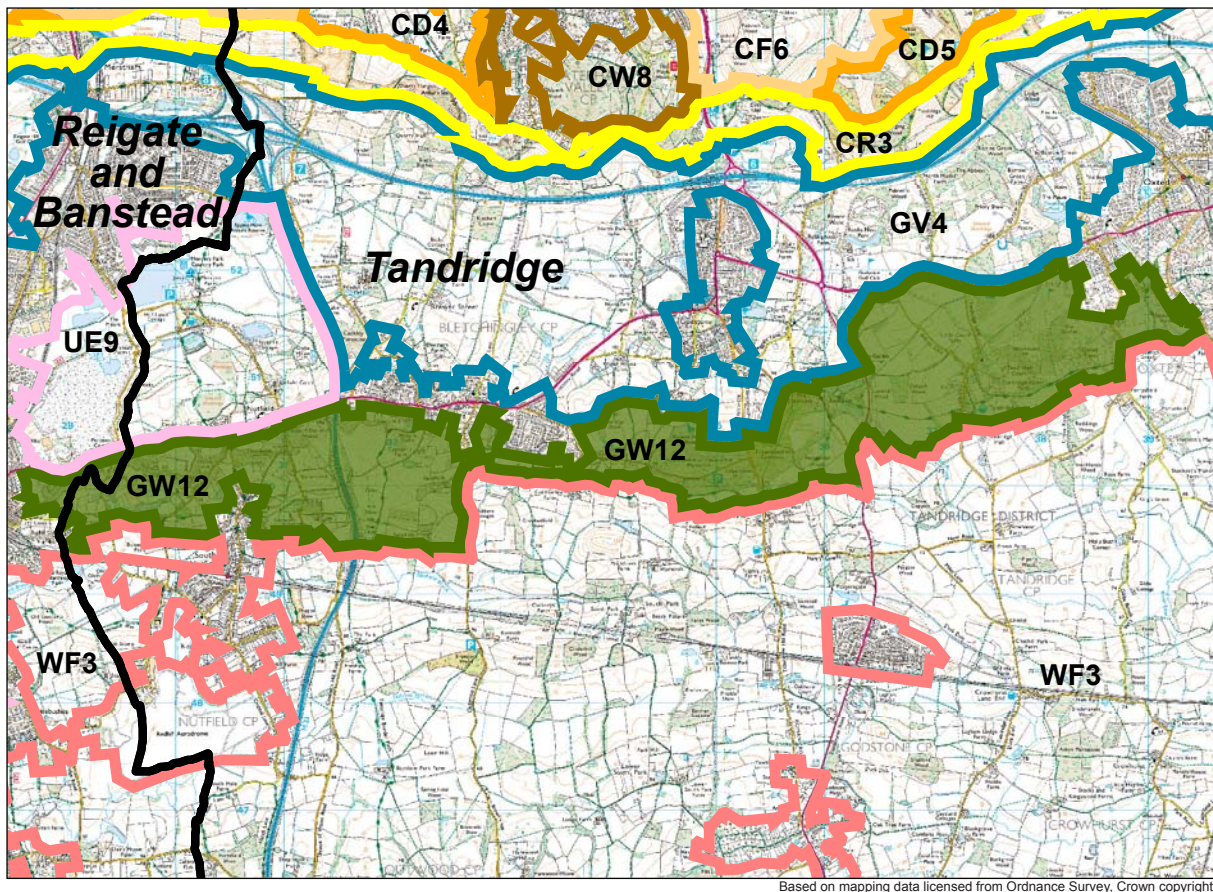
The Skimmington Wooded Greensand Hills Character Area is a relatively small character area to the west of Reigate, located between the more open greensand valley to the north and the lower wealden landscape to the south. The area is defined by the underlying geology, topography and woodland cover, with boundaries following roads, field boundaries and edges of woodland. The character area is outside the Surrey Hills AONB and located between the edge of the valley of the River Mole and Reigate.

### Key Characteristics

- Underlain by Folkestone Formation Sandstone, Sandgate Formation Sandstone and Mudstone, and Hythe Formation Sandstone.
- Undulating hills above the low weald to the south. Rises to high points at Reigate Park, to the east, and Trumpets Hill, to the west, which surround lower lying ground towards the central northern area of the character area. The orientation of slopes varies, but slopes at the southern part of the character area face south towards the low weald.
- Prominent wooded hillsides viewed from within the surrounding low weald farmland and greensand valley areas, rising to a point marked by the windmill at Reigate Heath.
- Less extensively wooded than many other areas of wooded greensand hills, but includes blocks of woodland and heath, along with areas of small-medium scale fields, with hedges and tree belt boundaries. The central northern part of the character area also encompasses an area of lower lying ditched lined pasture.



- Tree cover encloses some parts of the character area, but views to the wider landscape, framed by woodland are often possible, particularly from elevated locations. There are panoramic views over the surrounding landscape and Reigate, from the Greensand Way as it passes along the top of Reigate Park.
- Minor roads, cross the character area, and include Park Lane with its deeply sunken lengths with high roadside earth banks and exposed tree roots. Roads on gentler topography within the western part of the character area are generally less enclosed.
- There is a good network of public rights of way across the majority of the area, including the Greensand Way Recreational Path.
- The character area borders the towns of Reigate to the east, and includes a number of scattered farmstead and large dwellings, particularly within the southern part of the character area.
- The character area forms the eastern edge of valley of the River Mole. The elevated nature of the greensand hills creates a slightly more undulating character to valley side along this section.
- There is a relatively large area of registered common land at Reigate Heath to the north-west of the character area. The character area also includes a small part of the Flanchford Road and Colley Lane Reigate Conservation Area, and the Reigate Town Centre Conservation Area overlaps slightly into the character area. There are a number of bowl barrows in Reigate Heath which are scheduled as ancient monuments, and a Grade II listed building at Skimmington.
- The northern part of the character area contains a number of ecological designations including Reigate Heath, which is a large block of lowland heath designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Local Nature Reserve. Reigate Park is designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest.
- A rural, fairly peaceful character area, although remoteness is reduced by influence of surrounding Built Up Areas and internal settlement. Pasture toward the central northern part of the character area provides a relatively rural setting to the Conservation Areas to the north. Reigate Park provides a prominent wooded hill setting to Reigate.



## GW12: EARLSWOOD TO OXTED WOODED GREENSAND HILLS

### Location and Boundaries

The Earlswood to Oxted Wooded Greensand Hills Character Area is a narrow linear character area between Redhill and Oxted, running east-west between more open greensand hills and vale to the north and the lower wealden landscape to the south. The area is defined by the underlying geology, topography and woodland cover, with boundaries following roads, field boundaries and edges of woodland. The character area is outside the Surrey Hills AONB.

### Key Characteristics

- Based on Hythe Formation Sandstone, along with areas of Sandgate Formation Sandstone and Mudstone.
- A narrow undulating ridgeline and hills above the low weald to the south, and generally higher than the more open greensand hills to the north. Rises to a number of high points along the ridgeline including Steners Hills, Tilburstow Hill, Beechwood Hill and Limpsfield Chart .
- The hills are a prominent feature in views from the chalk ridge to the north.
- Predominately wooded, including blocks of ancient woodland, interspersed with areas of medium-sized arable fields, mostly with intact hedge and tree belt boundaries. Ribbons of woodland are located along the ridges and upper slopes. The western end of the character area includes areas of small scale pasture, paddocks and occasionally larger arable fields, with tree groups, individual mature large trees within fields. The far eastern end of the character area includes a golf course.
- Tree cover encloses parts of the character area, but there are also panoramic views to the wider landscape, framed by woodland, from elevated locations and gaps in tree cover.

- A significant number of roads, including the M23, cross the character area (largely north-south). Most roads are enclosed by roadside tree cover, and in places, such as along Cooper's Hill Road, include narrow sunken lanes with dramatic steep roadside banks with exposed earth and tree roots.
- The Greensand Way Recreational Path runs the length of the character area and connects with other public rights of way in the character area. The south-western edge of the character area abuts the Redhill to Tonbridge railway line and is adjacent to Nutfield railway station.
- The character area borders the towns of Earlswood and Oxted to the east and west, and wraps around the edges of the villages of Bletchingley and South Nutfield. Except for the small settlement of Tandridge. There is limited settlement within the eastern half of the character area. The western half however, contains scattered farmstead and dwellings.
- The character area includes some areas of registered common land, including Tilburstowhill Common, part of the Broadham Green and Spring Lane Conservation Area, and an Iron Age fort in Castlehill Wood, which is a scheduled monument. Nutfield Priory and lake are located at the western end of the character area.
- The Godstone Ponds in the centre of the character area are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and Graham Hendry Wood is designated a Site of Nature Conservation Interest for its semi-natural ancient woodland.
- To the east of Oxted, the ridge of wooded greensand hills becomes wider and more densely wooded and this continues in to Kent. This outcrop of Greensand exhibits many of the characteristics of the wooded greensand hills Landscape Type but here these elevated woodland areas are known as Charts.
- A rural, fairly peaceful character area, although remoteness is reduced by influence of surrounding settlement.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE GW: WOODED GREENSAND HILLS EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### Key positive landscape attributes

The key positive features that contribute to the character of the area and that should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Peaceful, often remote, largely unsettled character.
- Series of undulating wooded ridges and hills that run as a parallel ridgeline to the North Downs chalk scarp across Surrey.
- Forms the southern backdrop to line of settlements that sit parallel with the chalk scarp
- Function as wooded skyline in views from surrounding areas, particularly the wooded hill tops between Limpsfield and Redhill, and to the west of Reigate.
- Mixed woodlands including many ancient woodlands, and woodland on the tops of high ground.
- Open heathland of high ecological value.
- Areas of pasture with largely intact hedgerows on lower slopes.
- Rural roads and lanes often highly enclosed by tree cover, and including distinctive, steep, narrow, winding sunken lanes, with deep roadside banks of exposed earth and tree roots.
- Generally limited settlement.
- Prominent historic buildings and monuments, including Hascombe Hill Iron Age fort, and windmills at Ewhurst and Reigate Heath.
- Wide views out over the surrounding landscape, particularly from viewpoints at the edges of the area.
- Series of notable viewpoints with numerous cultural connections and often referred to in literature such as Leith Hill, Gibbet Hill, and around Limpsfield Chart.
- The Devil's Punchbowl at the western extent with its strong historical and cultural associations, and other areas of dramatic landform.
- Leith Hill with its prominent tower, the highest point in the South East with panoramic views across the weald.
- Reigate Heath with panoramic views, especially of the chalk scarp, and collection of scheduled monuments.
- Wooded charts and commons around Limpsfield Chart.
- A well established rights of way network, including the Greensand Way following the greensand ridge and linking notable viewpoints.

#### Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures

##### *Past Change*

- Regeneration of woodland on heathland/commons.
- Loss or poor management of hedgerows in farmland areas.
- Loss of beech coppice.
- Pressure on rural lanes from vehicular use.
- Loss of settlement distinctiveness.
- Increasing in recreational use including car parking.
- Conversion of fields for horse paddocks with consequent subdivision of the fields and installation of shelters.
- Telecommunications masts
- Mineral extraction and restoration of landscape.

### ***Future potential forces for change***

- Further regeneration of woodland on surviving heathland.
- Further loss of hedgerows.
- Pressures for further conversion to horse paddocks.
- Increased leisure use of public rights of way network and Open Access Land.
- Increased traffic on rural roads and sunken lanes leading to urbanisation through kerbing, lighting and signage and damage to the banks of the sunken lanes.
- Pressure for expansion of settlement, further telecommunications infrastructure and quarrying.
- Restoration of old mineral sites.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The landscape strategy for the Wooded Greensand Hills is to conserve the remote and relatively unsettled, rural landscape with its varied woodland, areas of open heathland, rural lanes, and views over wider landscape to the south. Elements to be enhanced and conserved are field boundaries, woodland and heathland, and the sunken rural lanes.

### **Landscape Guidelines**

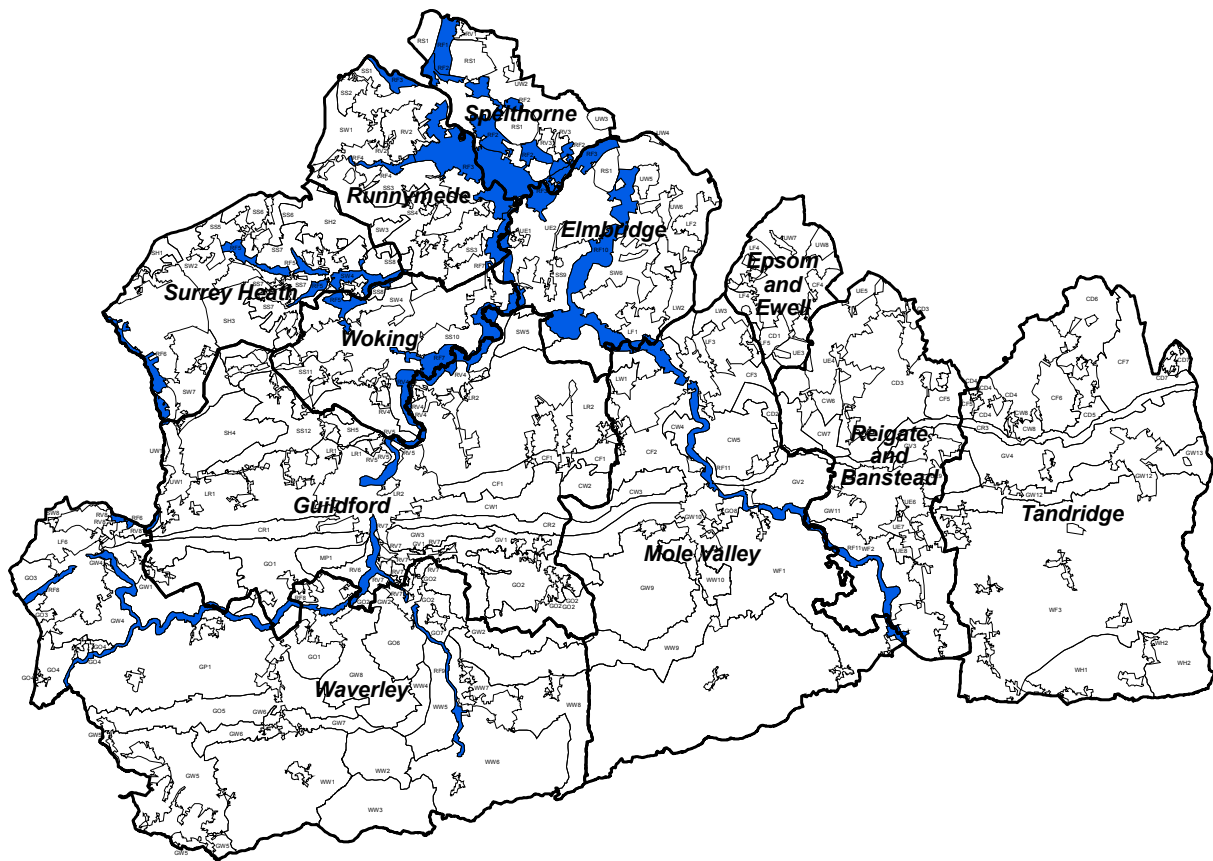
#### ***Land Management***

- Encourage landowners to maintain an appropriate management regime using traditional farming techniques where these will conserve and enhance key landscape features such as the woodlands, heathland, common, pastures, species rich chalk grassland, hedgerows, and parkland.
- Conserve the heathland habitats, preventing further encroachment by woodland and taking opportunities to restore and extend these habitats.
- Enhance or connect fragmented areas of high biodiversity value or positive landscape attributes through opportunities in landscape restoration or changes in land management. This landscape type coincides with Surrey's Wealden Greensand biodiversity opportunity area.
- Encourage consistent management and restocking of hedgerows.
- Protect sunken lanes
- Manage trees and woodlands to ensure that key views are retained, such as from Tilburstow Hill.
- Promote traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing with local landowners and the farming community where appropriate to maintain the varied character of the woodlands.
- Encourage understanding and conserve the historic elements of the landscape.
- Protect and manage beech coppice.
- Encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands.
- Promote the use of locally appropriate species such as oaks, Scots pine, alder and yew.
- Ensure that infrastructure supporting leisure activities (such as car parking, signage, seating and dog bins) is sensitively designed and placed to conserve the rural, undisturbed character of the area.
- Retain and enhance public rights of way.
- Encourage sensitive design and management of horse paddocks for instance in retaining hedges and resist development of other facilities such as manèges that would affect the rural character of the area.
- Seek to conserve and enhance the low key, rural character of the footpaths through the encouragement of appropriate surfacing, materials and signage.
- Maintain unsettled wooded skyline.
- Consider mitigation such as woodland planting to reduce the visual impact of quarrying.
- Promote nature conservation on golf courses.

### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the secluded, largely unsettled landscape.
- Conserve the distinctive pattern and character of existing settlements and historic buildings and their settings.
- Encourage use of traditional building materials and signage, with particular regard to local style and materials. Refer to Surrey design guides; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association) and Building Design in the Surrey Hills (Surrey Hills AONB).
- Conserve the rural roads and sunken lanes minimising small-scale incremental change such as signage, fencing, new domestic access or improvements to the road network which would change their character and take measures to protect the banks of the sunken lanes and the tracks from damage by vehicles.
- Ensure infill development is sensitive to tree lined sunken lane boundaries and conserves and protects the distinct character of the area.
- Conserve and protect the distinct relationship and character between historic cores of towns and villages and the surrounding countryside.
- Conserve areas of undisturbed wooded skyline.
- Ensure that lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing 'dark skies' within this sparsely settled area.
- Oppose the erection of further tall structures where they would be visually dominant, and aim to utilise existing masts in preference to the erection of new ones. Ensure sympathetic siting and design of new features where erection is necessary.
- Seek to conserve the surrounding character and key landscape features within areas of sand extraction and reinstate landscape elements following restoration of worked sites.
- Conserve rural buildings.

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**LANDSCAPE TYPE RF: RIVER FLOODPLAIN**

**Landscape Character Areas**

RF1	Colne River Floodplain*
RF2	Ash River Floodplain*
RF3	Thames River Floodplain*
RF4	Northern Bourne River Floodplain*
RF5	Windlebrook and Southern Bourne River Floodplain*
RF6	Blackwater River Floodplain*
RF7	Lower Wey River Floodplain*
RF8	Upper Wey River Floodplain*
RF9	Wey and Arun Canal River Floodplain*
RF10	Lower Mole River Floodplain*
RF11	Upper Mole River Floodplain

\* These Character Areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.



## LANDSCAPE TYPE RF: RIVER FLOODPLAIN

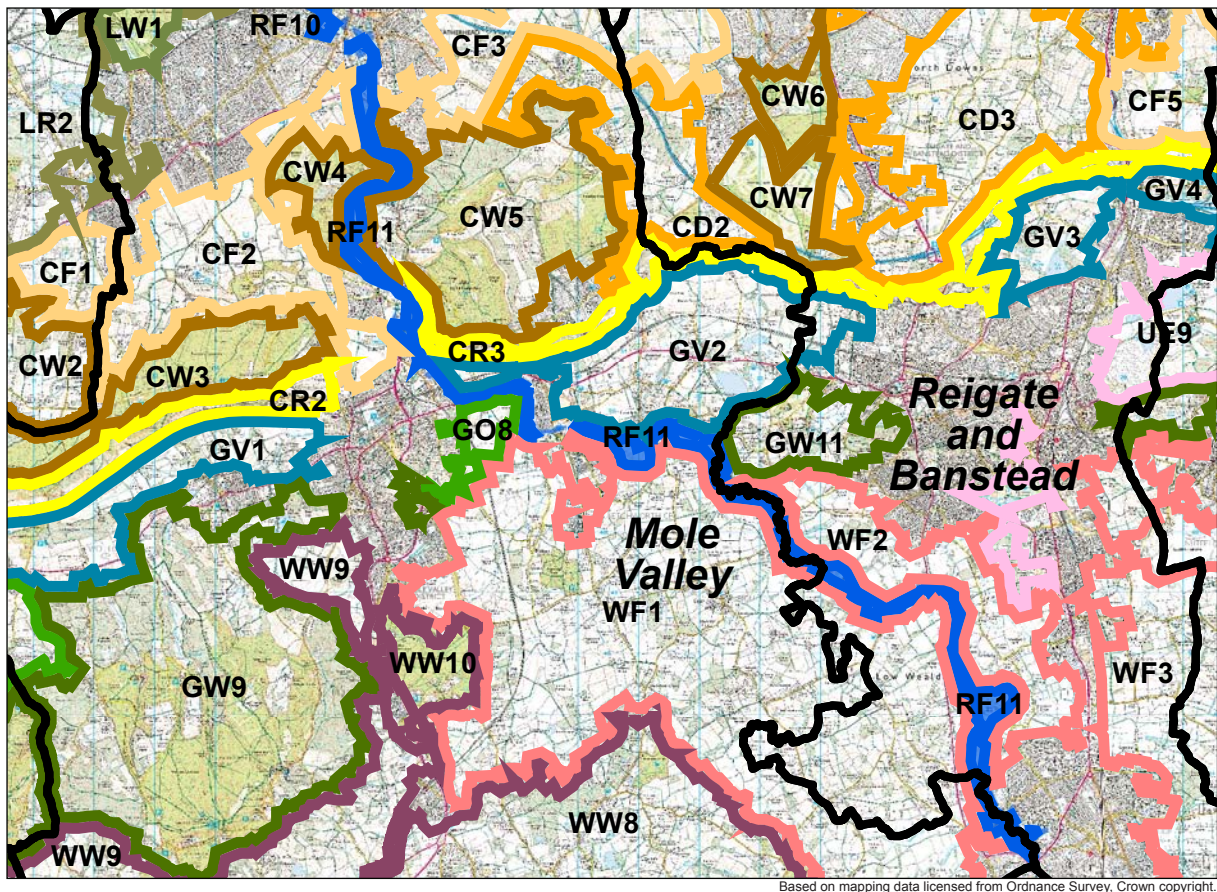
### Location and Boundaries

The River Flood Plain Landscape Type consists of low lying river terraces and valley bottoms following the courses of the rivers throughout the county. To the north, these include the wide floodplain of the Thames, along with associated tributaries including the Colne and Ash. The Wey and Mole have narrower floodplains snaking south towards the southern corners of the county. Boundaries are generally determined by the edge of the floodplain, as defined by the Environment Agency's Flood Zone 2, which equates to land having between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding. The boundaries are generally taken to the nearest recognisable identifiable feature such as field boundaries and roads, however in some limited instances, such as where there are no nearby recognisable features on the ground, the boundaries follow a contour.



### Key Characteristics

- Low lying level areas of flood plain situated on alluvial deposits.
- Presence of water in the form of rivers, with channels, open water bodies and drainage ditches.
- Pastoral land use often with meadows grazed by cattle.
- In character areas to the north, in particular the Thames River Floodplain (Area RF3), there are significant internal and surrounding urban influences including Built Up Areas, roads and utilities.
- character areas to the south of the Thames, have few buildings apart from those associated with the river, such as mills and lock keepers cottages, plus some encroachment by large industrial units in urban areas. There is a rich ecology with areas of wetland, unimproved meadows, riparian woodland and ditch line willows.
- Historical defence lines with associated World War II structures.
- Historic importance of the Wey Navigation built in the 17th century and central to the development of Guildford, now owned by the National Trust and designated as a Conservation Area.



## RF11: UPPER MOLE RIVER FLOODPLAIN

### Location and Boundaries

The Upper Mole River Floodplain is a narrow character area, running roughly north-west from the edge of the county near Horley, close to where the river rises, to the southern edge of Leatherhead. The boundary of the character area broadly follows the edge of the flood zone, although where possible, the boundary is taken to nearby easily recognisable features such as roads or field boundaries. Between Brockham and Leatherhead, the Mole flows through the Surrey Hills AONB.

### Key Characteristics

- The northern part of the character area is underlain by Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation, Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation, West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation and Zig Zag Chalk Formation solid geology, with Alluvium superficial deposits. To the south, the character area is underlain by weald Clay Formation Mudstone solid geology, with Alluvium superficial deposits.
- Flat, low lying flood plain of the River Mole. The settlement of Brockham divides the character area into two parts (north and south). The northern part of the character area forms the floor of the 'Mole Gap' which cuts through the North Downs of the Surrey Hills AONB, bounded by Box Hill to the east and Norbury Park to the west. The southern part of the character passes through the low weald farmland over impermeable wealden clays.
- In the upper floodplain the river twists and meanders in a wide corridor, but does not have the same multiple channels of the Lower Mole. The valley floor contains channels and streams and small water bodies often linking to the river.

- The floodplain near Betchworth forms the boundary between the open greensand hills to the north and the low weald farmland to the south.
- Consists mainly of pasture, with riparian vegetation including large mature trees. Fields are irregular, small to medium scale, with some hedges, ditches and tree lines. The character area includes occasional arable fields and incorporates occasional remnant parkland, with areas of large individual mature trees within fields.
- There are small blocks of ancient woodland within southern part of the character area.
- Relatively open, with some long distance views along the length of the flood plain, including prominent views of the North Downs.
- Major roads, including the A24, A25 and A246, the Leatherhead to Horsham railway line, the North Downs Way National Trail, the Thames Down Link and Mole Gap Recreational Paths and other rights of way, all cross the northern part of the character area. Access into the southern part of the character area is more limited, with two minor road bridge crossings and occasional footpaths which link to the Greensand Way Recreational Path.
- Settlement occurs occasionally within the northern part of the character area. To the south, the character area includes part of Brockham Conservation Area and part of the Betchworth Conservation Area which incorporates Betchworth Bridge, and a very limited number of dwellings.
- Burford Bridge Hotel is situated in the northern part of the character area. The historically important hotel has cultural associations with a number of well-known writers.
- The northern part of the character area is part of a dramatic landscape cutting through the North Downs, at the Mole Gap. The gap also forms a corridor for strategic and rail infrastructure which tempers the tranquillity and remoteness in places. The character area is less dramatic to the south of the chalk ridge and becomes more tranquil and remote to the south of Brockham.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE RF: RIVER FLOODPLAIN EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### Key positive landscape attributes

The key positive features that contribute to the character of the area and that should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Peaceful, often secluded, pastoral landscapes, along meandering watercourses of the Mole, Wey and canals, contrast with the suburban and urban character of The Thames and its tributaries.
- Wide river valleys associated with their meandering watercourses.
- Dramatic landscape along the River Mole where it cuts through the downs.
- Riparian vegetation and land use, such as waterside meadows, wet woodland (eg Alder), varied grassland and occasional marsh of biodiversity interest.
- River Wey, River Wey Navigation, restored sections of the Wey and Arun Canal, River Mole, and multiple channels and waterbodies.
- Areas of intact pattern of ditches with ditchline willows.
- Often grazed by cattle, particularly the Upper Wey River Floodplain (Area RF8).
- Largely unsettled, undisturbed ambiance with woodland belts screening development on the edges of the area particularly directly to the south of Guildford.
- Historic pattern of development and infrastructure linked to the waterways, particularly infrastructure of the Wey Navigation and restored parts of the Wey and Arun Canal (locks and connected buildings).
- Rural roads with narrow stone bridges.
- Attractive islands, moorings and riverside settlement within the Thames River Floodplain area
- Setting to the historically significant Runnymede.
- Provides amenity space for urban areas within the northern part of the County and major settlements of Dorking and Guildford through which they flow.
- Provides recreation opportunities for rural access through the river valleys.

#### Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures

##### *Past change*

- Decline in active management of meadows and pasture on the floodplain and conversion to improved grassland.
- Fragmentation and decline of agricultural holdings.
- Extensive gravel extraction with restoration to open water.
- Encroachment by scrub into meadows.
- Lack of pollarding and loss of boundary willows.
- Introduction of horse grazing.
- Abandonment and infilling of the Wey and Arun Canal.
- Impact of development in adjacent areas.
- Encroachment of development on to valley floor.
- Development of transport corridor along River Mole through gap in the North Downs.
- Urbanisation and fragmentation within more urban areas to the north of the County.

##### *Future potential forces for change*

- Decline in active or traditional management of meadows and pastures.
- Decline in active or traditional management of meadows and pastures.
- Further fragmentation of agricultural land.
- Loss of over-mature willows and field trees.
- Pressure for intensification of horse grazing with further horse paddocks and consequent subdivision of fields and installation of shelters.
- Pressures for tourism/leisure infrastructure, including that generated from continuing restoration of the Wey and Arun Canal, which would affect the peacefulness of the character area.

- Pressures for development at the margins of the area, particularly near Guildford, Godalming, Farnham, Bramley, Cranleigh, Leatherhead and Dorking, where views of development would affect the rural, secluded character of the flood plain and from adjacent high level topography.
- Pressure for further development within the Thames and Blackwater floodplains.
- Potential for intensification of transport related activity along the River Mole where it forms a corridor through the downs.
- Pressure to upgrade rural roads and replace narrow stone bridges due to increase in traffic.
- Activities around sand and stone extraction in the Thames and Ash floodplains, and restoration of landscape.
- Abstraction, or reduced rainfall patterns creating more frequent water shortages throughout river catchment area.
- Increasing pressure for urbanisation of areas to the north of the County and along river valley sides.
- Intense rainfall patterns causing rivers to rise suddenly.
- Schemes to alleviate flood risk.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The strategy for River Floodplain is to conserve the rural, secluded areas of landscape with its river channels, pastures, wetlands and woodland, along with historic infrastructure and buildings associated with the Wey Navigation and the Wey and Arun Canal, and resist further development within the Thames and Blackwater floodplains. Elements to be enhanced are the management of the pastures, woodlands and ditchline willows associated with the river corridors, and continued restoration of the Wey and Arun Canal.

### **Landscape Guidelines**

#### ***Land Management***

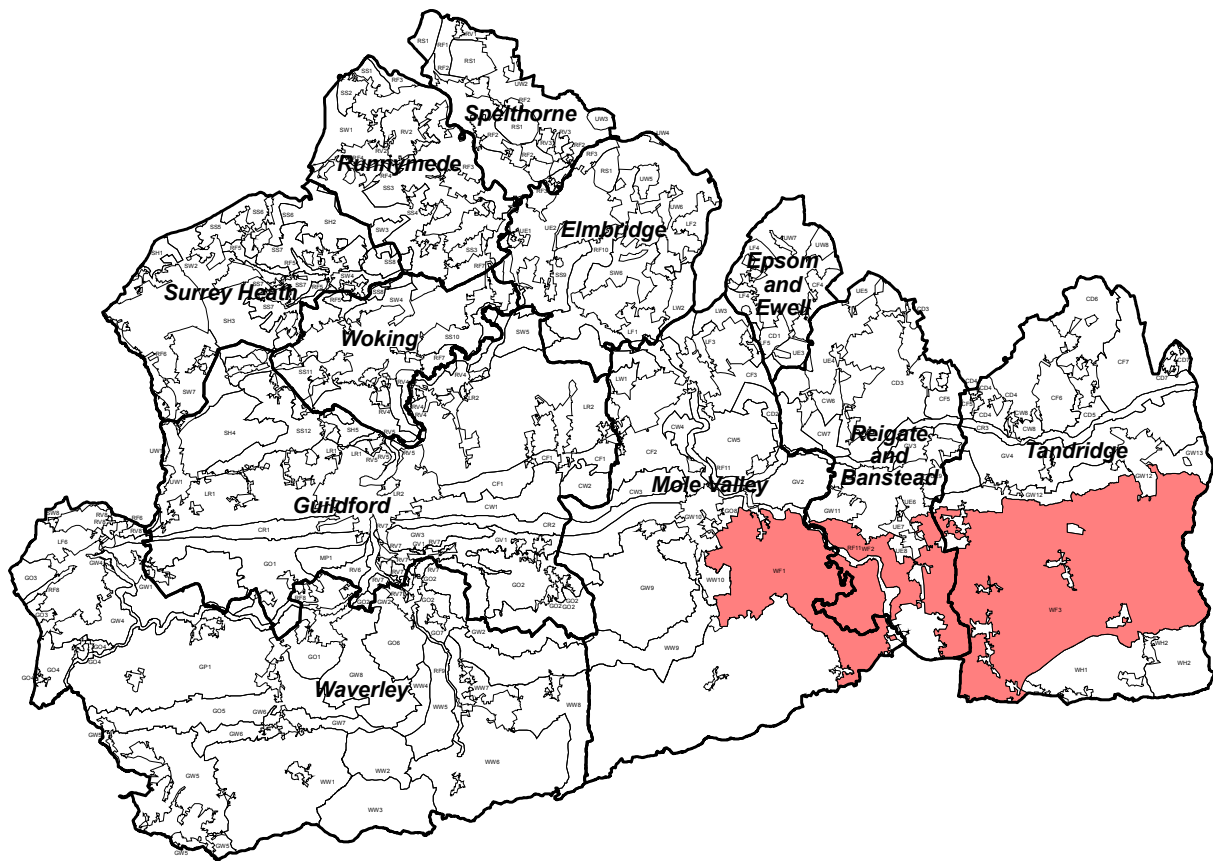
- Encourage landowners to maintain an appropriate management regime using traditional farming techniques, to conserve and enhance key landscape features such as relatively small-scale irregular field pattern, hedgerows and hedgerow trees, ditches and ditchline willows, meadows and wetlands.
- Conserve and enhance the waterside meadows and pastures with cattle grazing management, and resist the improvement of grasslands and drainage schemes which could disturb the characteristic landcover, vegetation or adversely affect ecological value.
- Protect the course of the Wey and Arun Canal to allow full restoration.
- Restoration and enhancement of worked out gravel pits. This character area type coincides with the Surrey's Rivers and Thames Valley biodiversity opportunity areas.
- Enhance A24 landscape through the Mole Gap. This area coincides with the Surrey's Rivers and North Downs biodiversity opportunity areas with potential to enhance or link together areas of high biodiversity in these areas.
- Promote strategies for the Thames and Blackwater floodplains avoiding inappropriate increase in development.
- Conserve and enhance the natural corridor and the rural setting of the Rivers Wey, Mole and Blackwater, particularly where they extend through urban areas. Ensure physical and biodiversity links to river valley character areas (Type RV) are maintained.
- Seek to ensure infrastructure associated with horses is sympathetic to the landscape character, e.g. sensitively designed fencing, and resist intensification of paddocks within the area.
- Conserve, enhance and restore riparian woodland, the stock of individual field and riverbank trees, and the blocks and bands of woodland at the edge of the area that screen development.
- Promote traditional woodland management techniques with local landowners and the farming community.
- Encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands and the use of locally appropriate species such as willows, alder and oak trees.

- Seek to conserve and enhance the distinctive low key, rural character of leisure facilities such as the North Downs/Pilgrims Way, the Downs Link, the Wey Navigation towpath, Mole Gap Trail and other public footpath/bridleways or cyclepaths which cross the area, through the encouragement of appropriate surfacing, materials and signage.
- Seek appropriate siting of facilities and new access links for leisure and tourism through visitor management to support appropriate levels of circulation and movement patterns of different user groups.
- Encourage conservation of historic landscape pattern of meadows and waterways, and understanding of underlying archaeology.

### ***Built Development***

- Ensure any new development is sensitively sited and designed with, scale, form and detailing, including materials, which conserve the historic character and settlement pattern of the area. Refer to Surrey design guides; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association) and Building Design in the Surrey Hills (Surrey Hills AONB) where rivers flow through the greensand hills and chalk downs.
- Retain the largely undisturbed, rural character of the Wey and Mole valleys.
- Avoid any development on the course of the Wey and Arun Canal which would hamper full restoration.
- Avoid intensification of transport related development along the River Mole where it forms a corridor through the downs.
- Avoid inappropriate increase in development within the Thames and Blackwater floodplains.
- Avoid the location of any new large mass or bulky structures where overly visually intrusive on this character area. Subject any development to rigorous landscape and visual impact assessment, site carefully, and design to minimise impact and integrate with the rural context.
- Encourage the continuing provision of suitable native boundary tree belts to existing adjacent large scale development to reduce adverse impact on this sensitive character area and reduce glare and mass from long-distance viewpoints.
- Resist potential mineral workings on the plateau adjoining the Upper Wey River Floodplain (Area A2) which could adversely affect the landscape character
- Promote appropriate scale and form of boundary treatment to avoid negative visual impact of inappropriate boundaries on the rural character of the flood plain.
- Encourage the retention of woodland planting that screens settlement and roads adjacent to the area and consider additional planting to screen existing or new development that intrudes in rural views.
- Conserve the rural roads and small bridges minimising small-scale incremental change such as signage, fencing or improvements to the road network or bridges which would change their character.
- Resist urbanisation of roads through encouraging appropriate surfacing of existing pavements, enhancing the immediate landscape setting and ensuring minimum clutter.
- Ensure that lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing 'dark skies' in the largely unsettled floodplain.
- Promote the use of traditional or rural signage features with particular regard to local style and materials.

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## LANDSCAPE TYPE WF: LOW WEALD FARMLAND

### Landscape Character Areas

WF1	Dorking to Hookwood Low Weald Farmland
WF2	Flanchford to Horley Low Weald Farmland
WF3	Horley to Swaynesland Low Weald Farmland



## LANDSCAPE TYPE WF: LOW WEALD FARMLAND

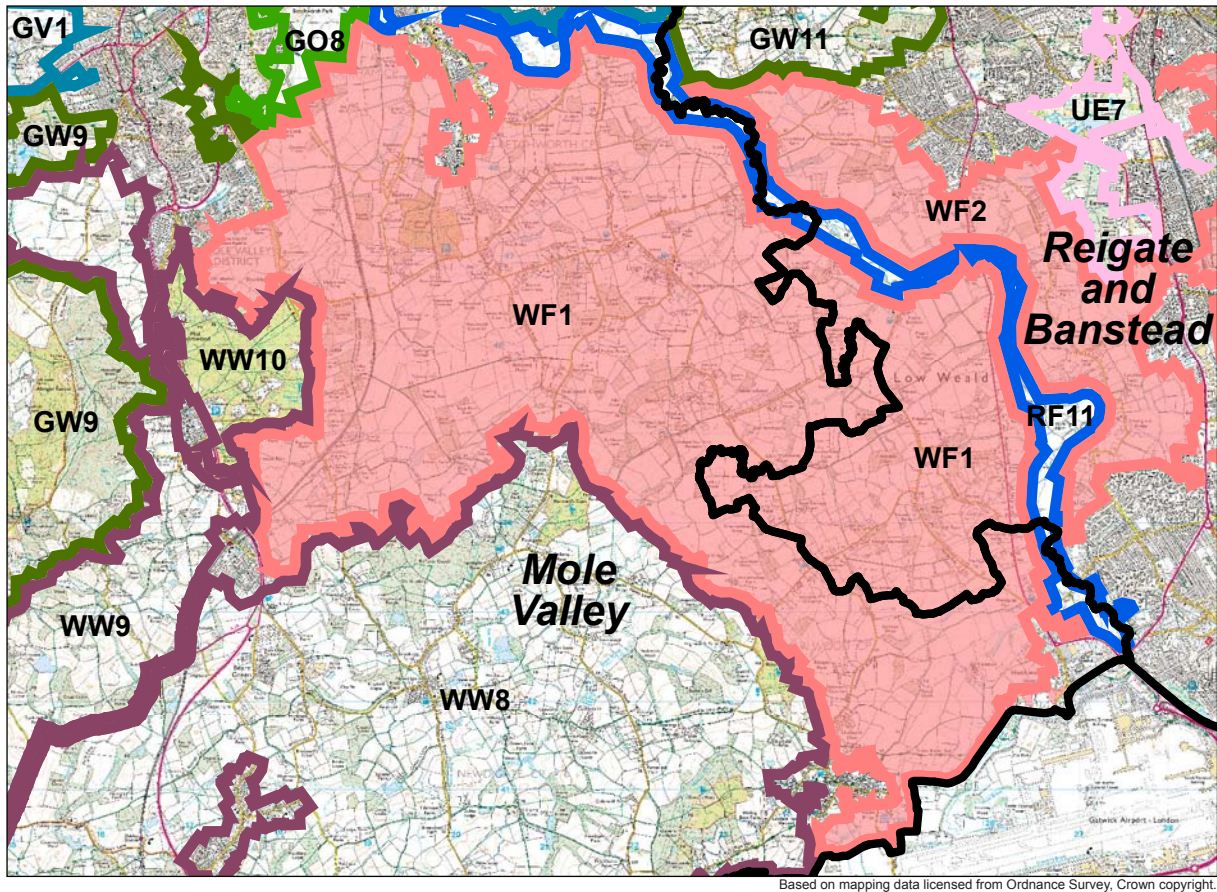
### Location and Boundaries

Located to the south-east of the County from Dorking to the eastern County boundary, the character area lies below the greensand hills and chalk downs to the north. Defined by underlying geology and land use, boundaries follow easily recognisable features including roads and field boundaries.



### Key Characteristics

- Lowland weald, gently undulating between roughly 50m AOD and 100m AOD.
- Predominately farmland, with larger scale fields than the Wooded Low Weald (Type WW) to the west.
- Includes a well-developed hedgerow network and shaws, although generally intensively managed.
- Mature trees are often found within fields, but mature trees within the hedgerow network are relatively limited, particularly in comparison with the Wooded Low Weald (Type WW) to the west.
- Isolated farmsteads and sporadic small groups of rural dwellings pepper the area. The eastern area bordering Kent has very limited settlement, while to the west, ribbon development of houses along roads is more frequent.
- Crossed by network of watercourse and brooks feeding in to the River Eden and Mole.
- Historic landscape pattern associated with farming and grazing of animals.
- Long distance views framed by vegetation are possible, particularly from more open, elevated locations, including views of the greensand hills and Chalk Ridge to the north.



## **WF1: DORKING TO HOOKWOOD LOW WEALD FARMLAND**

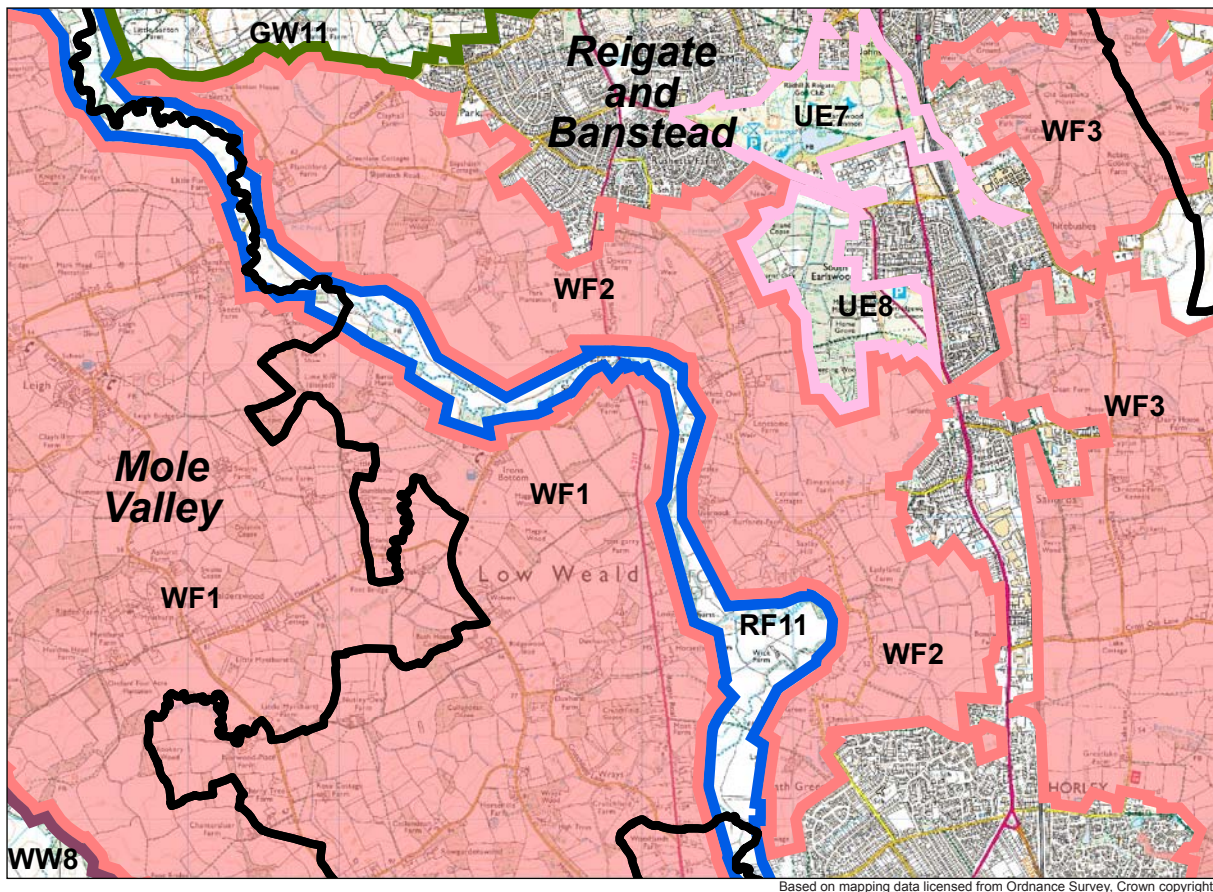
### **Location and Boundaries**

Dorking to Hookwood Low Weald Farmland is a large character area, stretching south-east from Dorking to the County boundary near Gatwick Airport. Its boundaries are defined by underlying geology and hydrology, and include the transition to the River Mole River Floodplain to the north and east. The western boundary marks a gradual transition to the more wooded, smaller scale wooded low weald to the west. The boundary follows easily recognisable features such as roads, field boundaries wooded edges, and occasionally settlement edges. The character area is outside the Surrey Hills AONB, but a short length of its western boundary abuts the AONB to the west.

### **Key Characteristics**

- A low lying landscape underlain by Wealden Group Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone solid geology.
- Landform is gently undulating. The low weald farmland rises to meet the wooded low weald to the west at a maximum height of approximately 90m AOD. Land drains to the north and east via the Gad Brook and Deanoak Brook into the River Mole.
- The farmland landscape is an irregular pattern of medium, occasionally large scale, arable fields. The smaller pastoral fields are located along watercourses, and there are paddocks and small holdings associated with farmsteads and settlement.
- There are well maintained hedgerows, but with fewer trees in the hedgerows than the wooded low weald to the west. Woodland blocks, including ancient woodland, are dispersed and relatively small.
- There are unconstrained views, occasionally framed by woodland, across the character area, with a more open feel than the less maintained and more treed wooded low weald to the west.

- The A217 runs north-south through the western part of the character area. In the rest of the character area the road network consists of a network of hedge lined rural road and lanes criss-cross the area. The Leatherhead to Horsham railway line sweeps through the western end of the character area.
- There is a good network of public rights of way.
- Farmsteads are scattered across the character area, and there are small groups of houses, and villages, such as Leigh. Occasional ribbon development along roads, such as at Nalderswood, have a suburban feel, with well-maintained gardens and boundaries including clipped hedges.
- Leigh is a designated Conservation Area, and includes the medieval moated site at Leigh Place, which is a scheduled monument. A number of grade II farm houses and agricultural buildings dot the area.
- There are a few small areas of register common land, including Holmwood Common, and The Green at Leigh. There are also a limited number of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, including Brown's Copse and Crutchfield Copse.
- A generally peaceful and attractive landscape, providing an undisturbed setting to River Mole, with views across the Weald from more elevated areas. Although low-key, settlement and roads are obvious human influences and limit the sense of remoteness. The character area has less woodland, simpler and less dramatic topography, and appears more maintained than the Wooded Low Weald (Type WW) to the west, consequently it feels less wild and remote than the wooded low weald.



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## WF2: FLANCHFORD TO HORLEY LOW WEALD FARMLAND

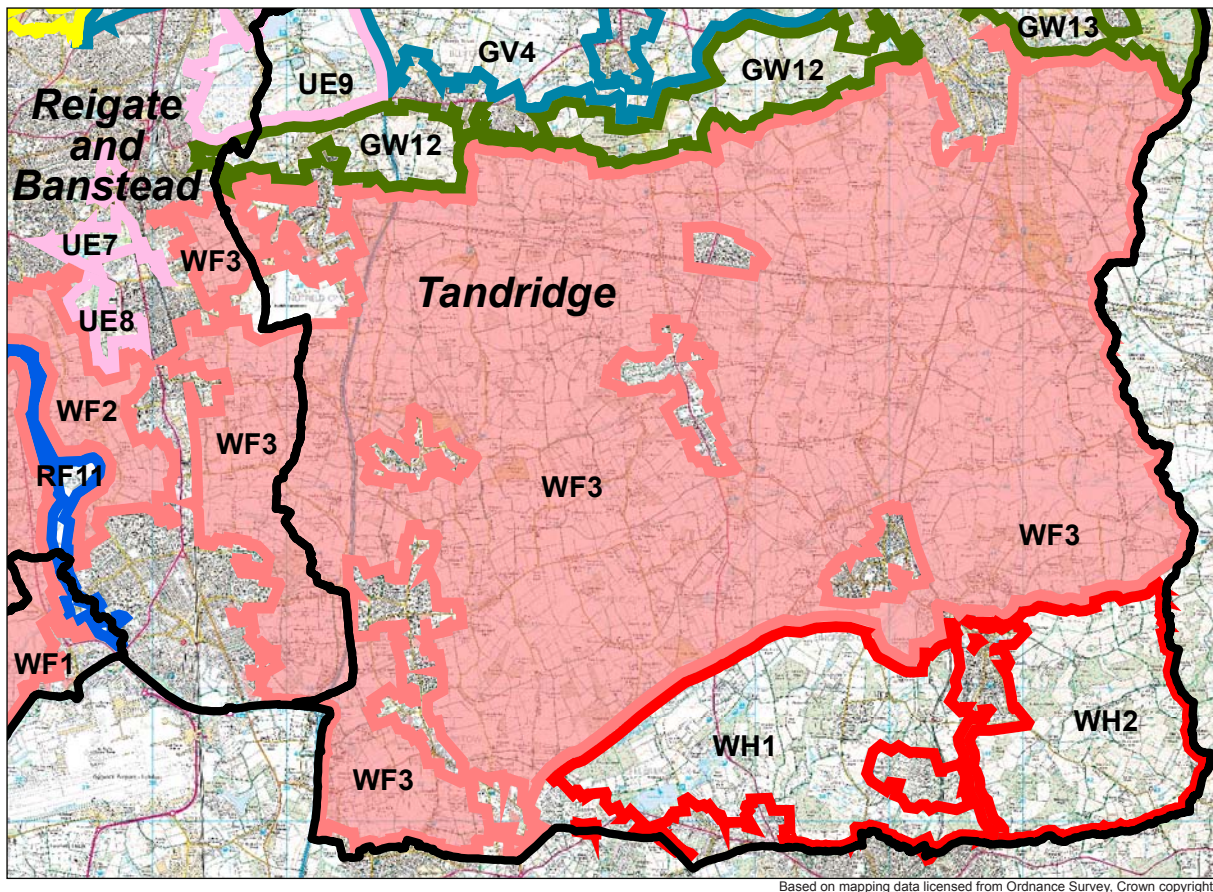
### Location and Boundaries

The Flanchford to Horley Low Weald Farmland runs along the eastern side of the River Mole floodplain. It is defined by underlying geology, the River Mole River floodplain to the west and constrained by Built Up Areas to the east. The boundary follows easily recognisable features such as roads and field boundaries. The character area is outside the Surrey Hills AONB.

### Key Characteristics

- A low lying landscape, underlain by Wealden Group Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone solid geology.
- Landform is very gently undulating, which rises up from the River Mole to meet the greensand hills to the north.
- The character area includes a number of winding streams including the Wallace Brook, Earlswood Brook, and Salfords Stream, which issue into the River Mole. In addition, the area is characterised by drains and mill ponds.
- The character area consists predominately of medium to large scale arable fields with well-maintained hedges. There are a few isolated woodlands, the most significant of which is Slipshatch Wood, registered as ancient woodland and includes a small area of conifer plantation.
- There are fairly uncontained views, occasionally framed by woodland, across the character area.
- Rural lanes cross the majority of the character area.
- Public rights of way link across the character area, from settlements to the east, to and across the River Mole. Public rights of way are limited in some areas, particularly to the north.

- There is ribbon development along Lonesome Lane, and low density houses at Saxley Hill. With street lighting, signage and fencing, these areas have the appearance of low density extensions to nearby settlements of Horley and Salfords.
- There are Sites of Nature Conservation Importance in the character area, including Slipshatch Wood, and Bolters Wood. New Pond Farm/Felland Copse, and small parts of Home Grove link across with Character Area UE8.
- Roads, settlement (mainly to the south) and adjoining Built Up Areas reduce the sense of tranquillity and of remoteness of the area. Although relatively peaceful, providing an undisturbed setting to River Mole.
- The character area has less woodland, simpler topography and appears more maintained than the Wooded Low Weald (Type WW) to the west of the County, and consequently feels less wild and remote than the wooded low weald.



## WF3: HORLEY TO SWAYNESLAND LOW WEALD FARMLAND

### Location and Boundaries

The South Nutfield to Swaynesland Low Weald Farmland Character Area is an extensive area of low weald farmland which stretches from Horley and Redhill in the west, to the county boundary with Kent in the east. It is defined by the change in underlying geology to the north from clays to greensand, rising to the high weald to the south and the county boundary to the east. Settlement to the west including Earlswood, South Earlswood, Salfords, and Horley, form an almost continuous line of settlements along the A23 and define the extent of the character area to the west. The character area encloses the settlements of Smallfield, Outwood, South Godstone, Blindley Heath, and Lingfield, and adjoins South Nutfield and the south of Oxted. The boundary follows recognisable features such as roads and field boundaries. The area is outside the Surrey Hills AONB, but borders the High Weald AONB to the south-east.

### Key Characteristics

- A low lying landscape, underlain by Wealden Group Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone solid geology.
- Landform is broadly undulating, and falls towards winding water courses, such as Ray Brook and the River Eden, which flow east into Kent, and form minor local valley features across the character area. Wooded gills are also present, such as Putney Gill, Hookstile Gully. Landform rises to the north to meet the greensand hills which form the northern boundary, and to the south to meet the high weald.
- The character area consists predominantly of medium-large, arable fields, along with occasional areas of smaller pastoral fields.

- There is generally a consistent network of well-maintained hedges across the character area, dispersed blocks of woodland (often ancient woodland), and an area of more extensive ancient woodland in the north-east of the character area, including Honesland Wood, Little Earls Wood, Great Earls Wood and Staffhurst Wood. The hedgerow pattern breaks down in a few places, such as towards the central, southern part of the character area. There are a few, usually well vegetated, parcels of land, including paddocks, associated with dispersed farmstead and dwellings.
- There are views across the majority of the character area, although woodland occasionally obscures longer distance views.
- A network of minor roads and rural lanes, often lined with well-maintained hedges, cross the character area. There is a comprehensive network of public rights of way, including the Vanguard Way Recreational Path and the Tandridge Border Recreational Path.
- The East Grinstead and Uckfield branches of the Oxted railway line, cross the character area, and the Redhill to Tonbridge railway line, including the Bletchingley tunnel, runs east-west through the northern part of the character area. Godstone and Lingfield railway stations are located adjacent to the character area.
- The character area wraps around several Built Up Areas, including Outwood, Smallfield, South Godstone, Blindley Heath and Lingfield, as well as the southern end of South Nutfield and Oxted.
- Within the character area, there are scattered farmsteads, attractive scattered settlements, church yards and mills, as well as some dense areas of ribbon development along minor roads, but overall there is limited settlement across the area, with particularly limited settlement in the south-eastern part of the character area.
- There are some areas of registered common land within the character area, namely Outwood Common, Blindley Heath, Staffhurst Wood, and Itchingwood Common. There are also a few listed buildings, schedules ancient monuments and Conservation Areas across the character area.
- The character area contains a number of areas designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, including semi-natural woodland, plus a small number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest and local nature reserves, around Oxted and Lingfield and at Blindley Heath which is the best known example of relict damp grassland on Weald Clay in Surrey.
- A relatively peaceful landscape with limited settlement, particularly to the east, with a slightly higher sense of tranquillity than the low weald farmland west of the Mole floodplain. The character area has less woodland, simpler topography and overall appears more maintained than the Wooded Low Weald (Type WW) to the west.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE WF: LOW WEALD FARMLAND EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### Key Positive Landscape Attributes

- Unsettled, peaceful, gently undulating and open farmland landscape.
- Rural views, often framed by tree cover, across the Wealden farmland and to wooded hills to the north.
- High density of hedgerows and small blocks of woodland.
- Dispersed blocks of, often ancient woodland, connected by hedges.
- Small to medium sized fields, divided by strong network of well maintained and connected hedges.
- Network of rural lanes, mostly hedge lined.
- Dorking to Hookwood Low Weald Farmland (Area WF1) and Flanchford to Horley Low Weald Farmland (Area WF2) provide undisturbed setting to River Mole.
- Horley to Swaynesland Low Weald Farmland (Area WF3) provides rural setting and catchment around the River Eden.
- Attractive scattered settlements churchyards and mills.

#### Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures

##### *Past Change*

- Intensification of farming resulting in loss of woodland, and boundary loss including hedgerows.
- Loss of hedgerow trees and over intensive clipping of hedgerows.
- Increased car and rail commuter activity. Along M23, A22 towards M25 and Crawley/Gatwick area. Commuting on rail line towards London.
- Pressure on rural lanes from vehicular use.
- Excavations for building materials – brick and tile works.
- Horse paddocks, and steeplechase and point-to-point racing industry.

##### *Future potential forces for change*

- Further loss/decline of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Potential for increased intensification of agriculture.
- Urban extensions to the southern extent of Redhill and Reigate.
- Pressure for increase in around smaller settlements, including redevelopment of farmsteads, and agricultural buildings.
- Increasing traffic on the rural tracks and roads leading to urbanisation through kerbing, lighting and signage.
- Demand for horse paddocks.
- Gatwick and related pressures from development and noise.
- New agricultural buildings and activities from farm diversification.
- Energy schemes.

### GUIDANCE

#### Landscape Strategy

The landscape strategy for the low weald farmland is to conserve its peaceful, unsettled character, whilst promoting traditional management of woodlands and hedgerows including restoration of hedgerow trees.



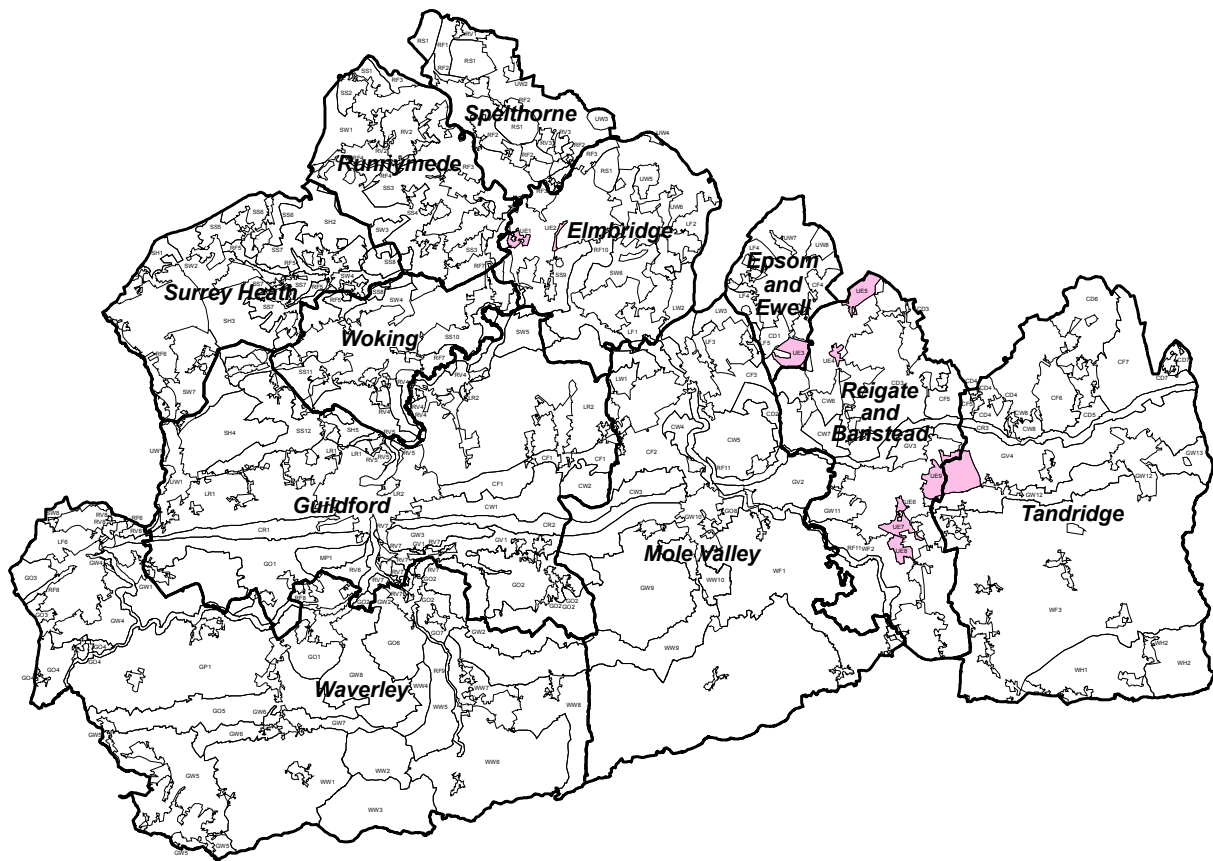
## **Landscape Guidelines**

### ***Land Management***

- Protection and management of ancient woodlands.
- Encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands, and the use of locally appropriate species.
- Encourage traditional management and restocking of hedgerows, including hedgerow trees.
- Encourage understanding of the historic dimension of the landscape with landowners, and conserve existing historic field pattern.
- Conserve riverside trees.
- Seek to conserve and enhance the low key, rural character of the footpaths through the encouragement of appropriate surfacing, materials and signage.
- Enhance the urban fringe and suburban landscape.
- Conserve and maintain the hedgerow field boundaries and the connectivity and quality of the network.
- Conserve and enhance the natural and vegetated character of River Mole and River Eden and their tributaries. This character area type coincides with Surrey's Rivers biodiversity opportunity area.

### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the rural, largely unsettled landscape.
- Conserve the pattern and character of existing settlements, resisting spread and coalescence of settlement.
- Conserve and enhance the landscape setting to villages and edge of settlement.
- Any new development should conserve the enclosure and vegetated character of the surrounding landscape.
- Built form to be integrated by woodland edges, shaws, hedgerows and open areas linked to the existing network.
- Ensure new development respects existing rural characteristics and conserves distinctive open areas, greens and commons.
- Encourage and new built development including sympathetic contemporary architecture to respect local characteristics, through high quality detailing and use of local pattern and building materials. Refer to Surrey design guidance; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association).
- Ensure farmstead or other agricultural conversions are sensitive to surrounding landscape, with consideration given to design of new domestic curtilages and boundary treatments.
- New transport or other infrastructure to be integrated in to the landscape by careful siting and additional planting that respects the scale and pattern of the landscape.
- Ensure new development does not impact on the existing 'dark skies' within this sparsely settled area. Ensure design of lighting and signage respects rural location, biodiversity and dark skies area.
- Encourage the use of appropriate surfacing, materials and signage for public rights of way footpaths, and cycle ways to minimise the impact on the landscape and character of the open countryside.



## LANDSCAPE TYPE UE: DISTINCT AREAS ON THE EDGE OF URBAN AREAS

### Landscape Character Areas

UE1	Heathside*
UE2	Walton Common*
UE3	Epsom Downs*
UE4	Burgh Heath
UE5	Banstead Downs
UE6	Redhill Common
UE7	Earlswood Common
UE8	Petridgewood Common and Woodland
UE9	Holmthorpe Pits and Mercer's Park

\* These Character Areas are outside Reigate and Banstead Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

## **LANDSCAPE TYPE UE: UNIQUE AREAS ON THE EDGE OF URBAN AREAS**

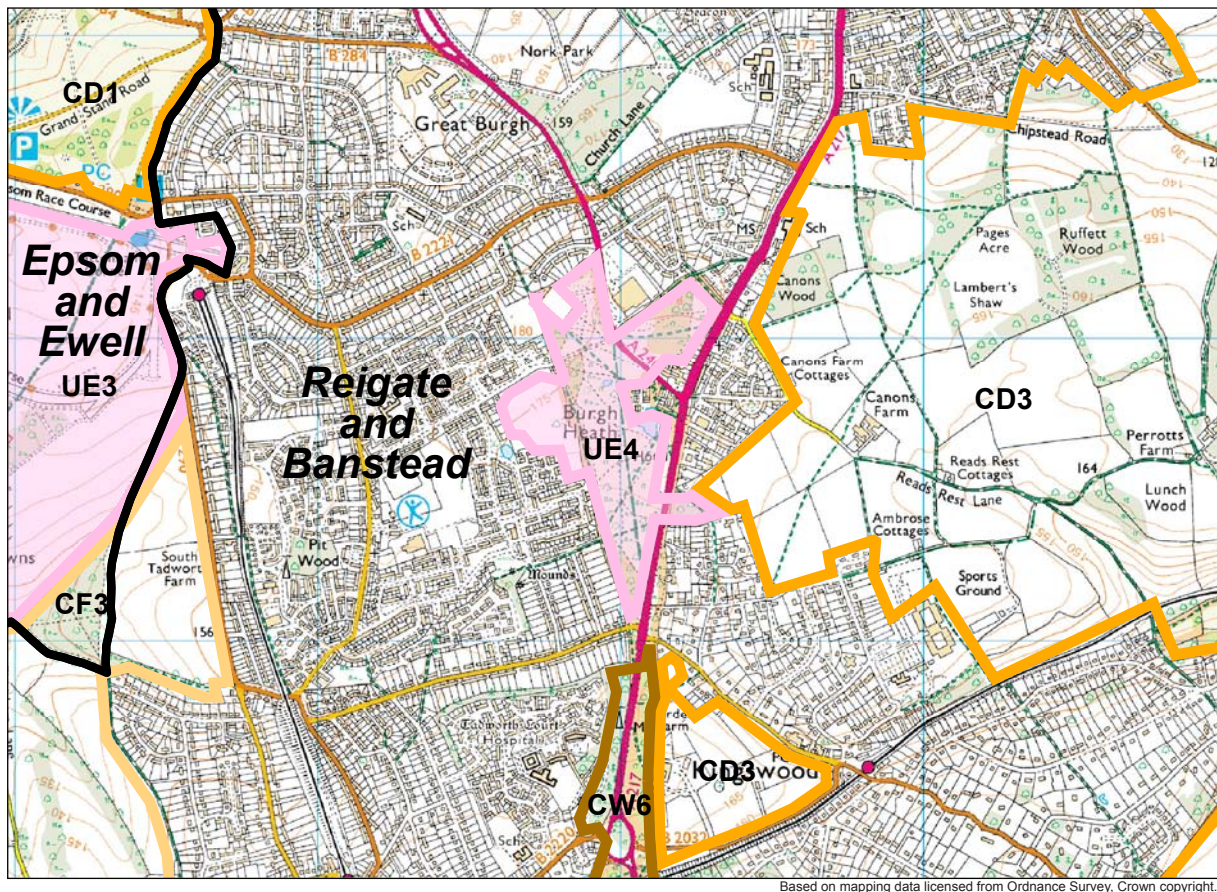
### **Location and Boundaries**

A group of small individual areas on the edges of, or surrounded by, the Built Up Areas of towns across the County.

### **Key Characteristics**

- Unique areas, with a variety of characteristic and uses, which do not readily fall within the broader character types set out in the preceding sections of this document.
- On the edges of towns, often entirely enclosed by Built Up Areas, the majority of these areas have significant human intervention, and frequently provide outdoor amenity for the surrounding population.
- Although often enclosed by urban areas, they maintain physical and visual connections to the wider landscape.
- Provide landscape setting to adjacent urban areas and settlements.
- These areas are also characterised by having high biodiversity value and potential, close to Built Up Areas.

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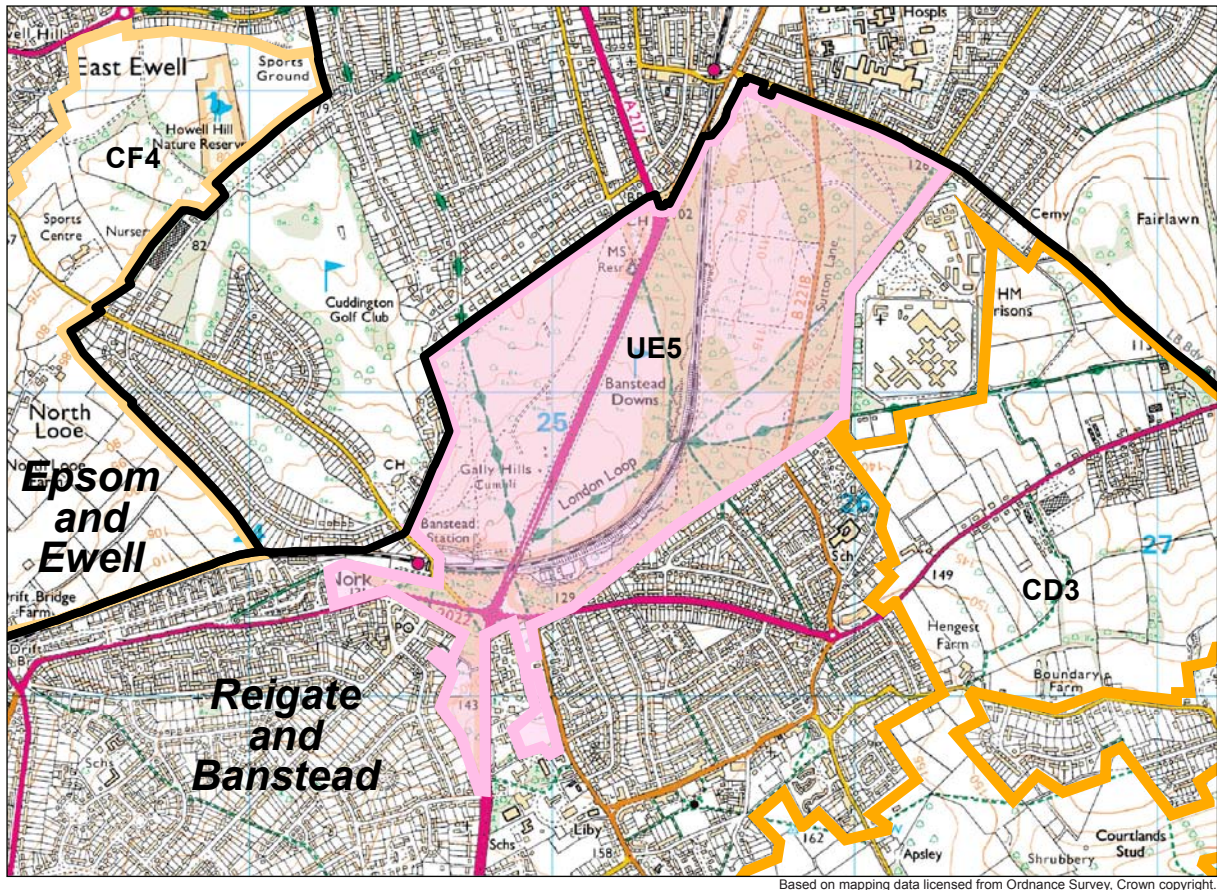
### UE4: BURGH HEATH

#### Location and Boundaries

The Burgh Heath Character Area is located to the south of Banstead. It is almost entirely surrounded by the Built Up Area of Burgh Heath. The vast majority of the boundary therefore follows the Built Up Area edge.

#### Key Characteristics

- Underlain by Thanet Formation Sand solid geology.
- The landform is relatively flat, but rising very slightly overall towards the north.
- The area consists predominately of wooded common, a few small clearings, including a pond, and an arable field.
- Burgh Heath is Open Access Land and is criss-crossed by numerous public rights of way which continue into the surrounding Built Up Areas.
- There are only two short length of roads crossing the character area, and no settlement.
- Views are contained by tree cover, giving an intimate feel to the area.
- Burgh Heath is registered as Common Land and is designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest.
- Designated as Burgh Heath Site of Nature Conservation Importance.
- Woodland and a limited amount of urban influence, gives a sense of tranquillity, particularly valuable given the suburban context.
- The area is a good recreational resource, with its public rights of way links into the surrounding Built Up Areas.



## UE5: BANSTEAD DOWNS

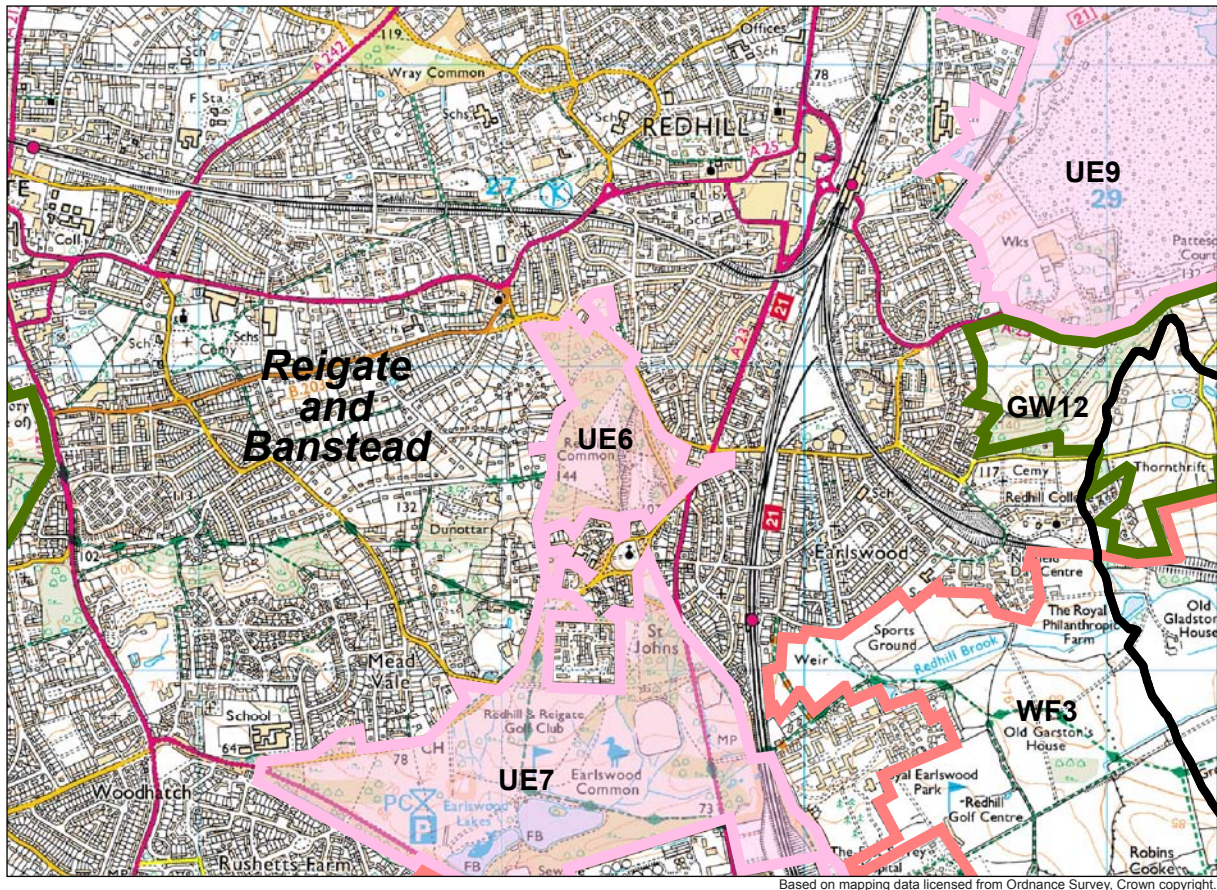
### Location and Boundaries

The Banstead Downs Character Area is located to the north of Banstead. It is almost entirely surrounded by the Built Up Areas Banstead and Greater London. The majority of the boundary therefore follows the Built Up Area edge.

### Key Characteristics

- An undulating landform, rising to the east. Underlain by chalk geology.
- The area consists predominately of wooded downland, with scrubby areas, and clearings forming common land within the western part of the character area. A golf course is carved out of the woodland within the western part of the character area.
- The area is almost entirely Open Access Land and is crossed by a number of public rights of way, including the London Loop Recreational Path, with connections to the surrounding Built Up Area, and the countryside to the east.
- The A217 dual carriageway and B2218 cross the character area, but both are largely screened by tree cover. The Epsom Downs railway line also curves through the character area, and is screened by lineside vegetation and woodland beyond. Banstead railway station is adjacent to the south-west and connects to public rights of way through the area.
- There is no significant settlement on the downs.
- Views are generally contained by tree cover, giving an intimate feel to the area, although there are also views across clearings and along golf course fairways to the nearest woodland, including across rough ground from slightly elevated ground to the east.

- Banstead Downs is registered Common Land and is designated as both Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.
- Golf and transport corridors reduce the sense of tranquillity and remoteness in places, but the area is a well-connected recreational resource, and provides a relief to the surrounding urban areas.



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## UE6: REDHILL COMMON

### Location and Boundaries

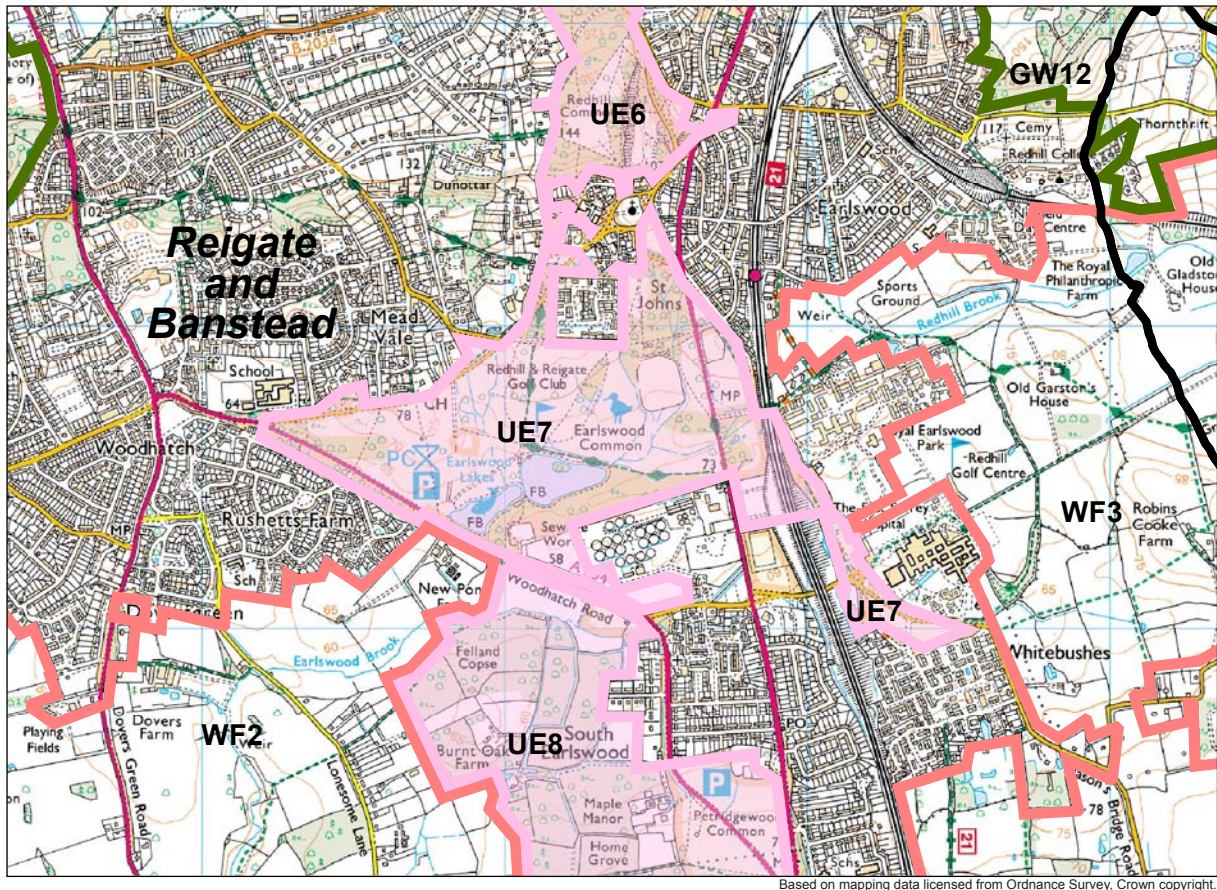
The Redhill Common Character Area is a small area of open land located to the south of Redhill. It is surrounded by the Built Up Areas Redhill and Earlswood. The majority of the boundary therefore follows the Built Up Area edge.

### Key Characteristics

- Underlain by Greensand geology, rising up to a high point of 144m AOD within the southern part of the character area.
- Includes some steep wooded slopes.
- Annexed from the wider band of Wooded Greensand Hill to the east and west by the surrounding Built Up Areas.
- The area consists predominately of woodland, with occasional clearings, including at the top of the hill in the southern part of the character area.
- From the top of the hill there are impressive wide ranging views over the low weald to the south and areas of settlement, including the nearby spire of St. Johns Church. Within the woodland views are restricted by tree cover, giving an intimate, secluded feel.
- Sandpit road runs along the contours within the eastern part of the character area and is enclosed by roadside vegetation and topography.
- Almost the entire character area is Open Access Land, with tracks and occasional public rights of way through the woodland and up to the hill within the southern part of the character area.
- Redhill Common is registered as Common Land and abuts the Linkfield Street and Shaws Corner Conservation Areas to the north, and St. John's Conservation Area to the south.



- A pocket of sloping woodland with both intimate areas and an elevated viewpoint with open views to the south. Forms a tongue of open land in to the Built up area of Redhill and provides a distinctive outdoor resource close to its centre, with links to further landscape to the south.



## UE7: EARLSWOOD COMMON

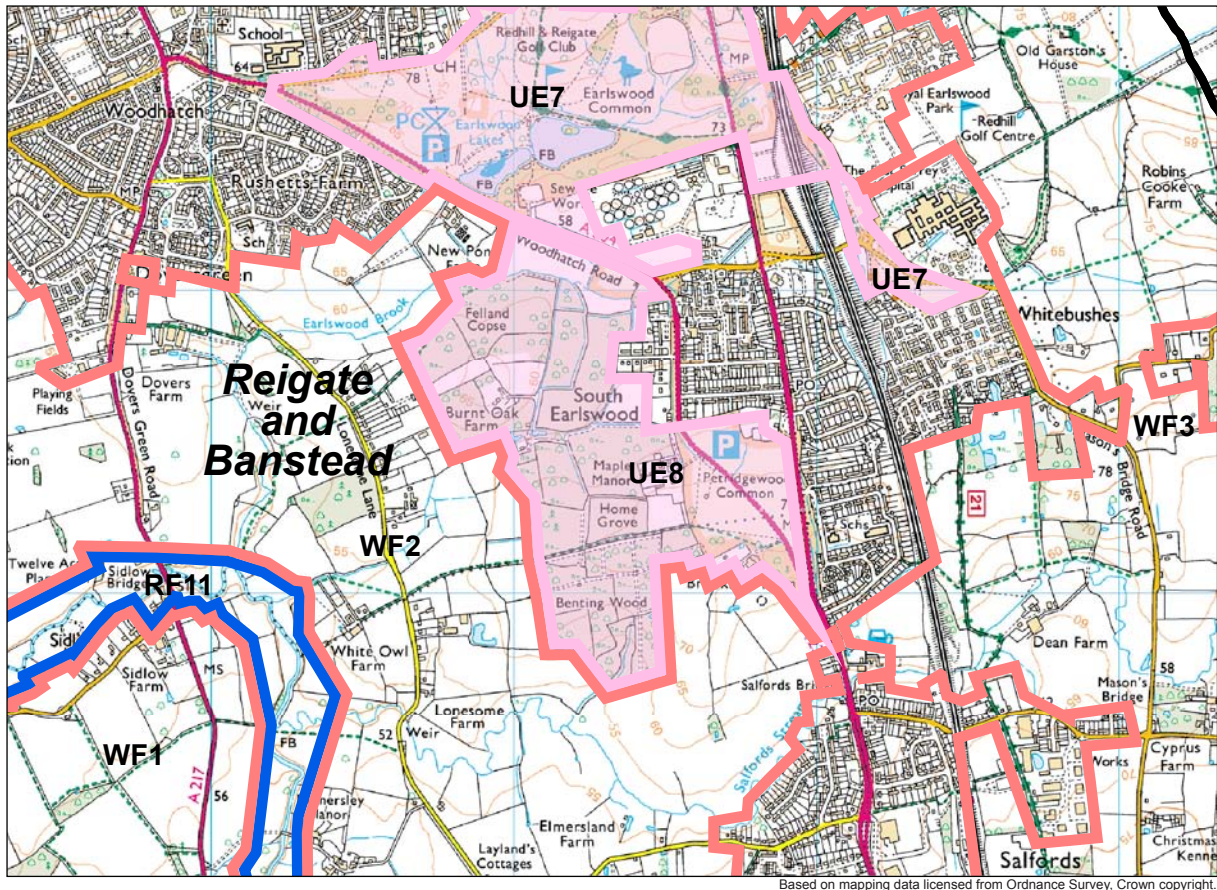
### Location and Boundaries

The Earlswood Common Character Area is located to the south of Redhill. It is surrounded by the Built Up Areas Redhill and Earlswood. The majority of the boundary therefore follows the Built Up Area edge, plus Woodhatch Road to the south.

### Key Characteristics

- Located at the northern edge of the low weald, gradually rising to meet the greensand hills to the north.
- Earlswood Common is Open Access Land, but occupied by a golf course set within woodland.
- The golf course has a strong influence on the majority of the character area, with large areas of woodland developed on the common land off the fairway.
- Other open areas, include, in particular the large Earlswood Lakes.
- Houses, filtered by tree cover, face onto the common in places. Tree cover at the perimeter of the character area screens views of surrounding Built Up Areas generally, including a sewage works adjacent to the south. There are occasional glimpses of the wider rural landscape to the south, but layers of tree cover obscure the majority of distant views.
- A thin strip of mainly wooded Earlswood Common, called Whitbushes, remains to the east, between South Earlswood and The East Surrey Hospital. It buffers the roads and roundabout through this part of the character area from surrounding houses at the hospital.
- The northern part of the character area includes houses and St. Johns Church within the St. John's Conservation Area, but elsewhere the common is unsettled.

- The Greensand Way Recreational Path crosses through the character area into the adjacent Built Up Areas and onto the wider countryside. There is a lakeside car park and minor visitor facilities at the southern end of the Common.
- Roads, albeit partly obscured by tree cover, edge and cross the character area in a number of places.
- Almost the entire character area is registered as Common Land, and there is a bowl barrow schedule ancient monument on Earlswood Common to the south-west of the character area. The majority of the common is designated a Site of Nature Conservation Interest and a Local Nature Reserve.
- The area is a valuable outdoor resource for the surrounding population, with woodland providing secluded areas. However, the land use and other surrounding and internal human influences limit the sense of remoteness and give Earlswood Common more of a public amenity feel than the less disturbed Redhill Common to the north, and more rural character area to the south.



## UE8: PETRIDGEWOOD COMMON AND WOODLAND

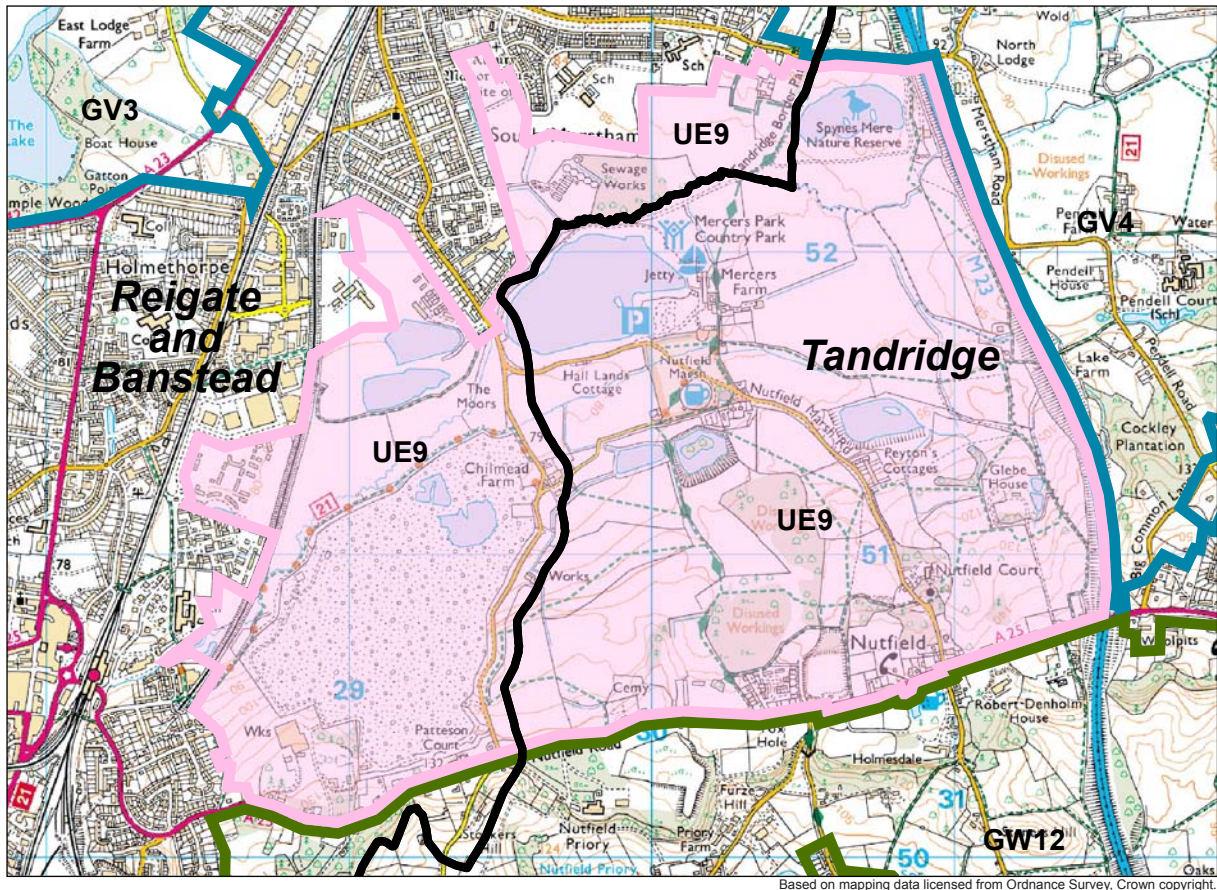
### Location and Boundaries

The Petridgewood Common and Woodland Character Area is located west of South Earlswood, to the south of Redhill. Boundaries follow the edge of the Built Up Area to the east and the edges of woodland elsewhere.

### Key Characteristics

- A gently undulating area, abutting South Earlswood to the east.
- Part of the wider low weald, but extensively wooded in contrast to the more open surrounding farmland. Approximately half the woodland is recorded as Ancient Woodland.
- Surrounded by woodland on three sides, Petridgewood Common is an open area of registered Common Land which adjoins the treed edge of South Earlswood to the east.
- There are occasional small areas of pasture within the woodland and a very limited number of secluded dwellings, including Owl Manor. Pylons and overhead cables cut through the middle of the woodland.
- Two public rights of way cross through the woodland, providing access to the woodland, as well as linking settlement to the east with the wealden Landscape to the west and onto the River Mole. Petridgewood Common is Open Access Land and has a car park.
- 'A' roads cross and edge Petridgewood Common, but within the woodland vehicle access is limited to private tracks.
- Views are intimate within the woodland. There are more open views across Petridgewood Common, but these views include glimpses of vehicles moving along roads and the filtered edge of South Earlswood.

- A significant proportion of the character area, including both the woodland and Petridgewood Common, is designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, for its woodland and semi-improved grassland. Felland Copse and Benting Wood make up a large block of ancient woodland immediately south of Reigate.
- Petridgewood Common is a traditional common bounded by houses, where human influences including road traffic limits the sense of remoteness and tranquillity. The largely unsettled woodland however is tranquil. Overall the character area is a valuable outdoor recreational resource with common land, woodland and links between Built Up Areas and the wider countryside.



## UE9: HOLMTHORPE PITS AND MERCER'S PARK

### Location and Boundaries

The Holmthorpe Pits and Mercer's Park Character Area is located to the west of Redhill. The boundary is defined by the Built Up Area of Redhill and South Merstham to the west and north, the M23 motorway to the east and the A25 road to the south. The far north-east corner of the area is within the Surrey Hills AONB.

### Key Characteristics

- Part of the wider Greensand Valley which runs broadly east-west along the southern foot of the North Downs ridge scarp slope.
- The original undulating landform has been significantly altered by human intervention.
- The land use consist of large areas quarried for sand, currently at various stages of 'restoration'. A number of pits form lakes, which provide recreation at Mercer's Park Country Park, nature reserves and a fishing lake. Areas of arable and pastoral fields are interspersed between the pits. There are some areas of wet woodland to the south on the sites of disused gravel workings
- The small village of Nutfield is located along the A25 at the southern edge of the character area, and there are small areas of settlement off Nutfield Marsh Road, including a pond, an inn and a cricket ground next to Nutfield Marsh Common in the middle of the character area.
- Mounding and planting designed to screen quarry working enclose views in places, but elsewhere there are views across lakes and open fields with the North Downs ridge scarp glimpsed in the distance. There is intervisibility with the North Downs to the north, but the area is seen in context with the Built Up Area of Redhill to the west.

- The Tandridge Border Path Recreational Route crosses north-south through the middle of the character area and connects to public rights of way, increasing in number towards the south and Nutfield. Mercer's Park Country Park provides recreation within the northern part of the character area. A limited number of rural lanes cross the area. Short stretches of railway cross the western end of the character area adjacent to the built up end of Redhill.
- Nutfield Marsh Common is Open Access Land and registered as Common Land. The majority of the character area is designated as the Holmethorpe Sandpits Complex Site of Nature Conservation Interest, for its important bird habitats
- Substantial human intervention has altered the natural landform, but through wetland restoration now provides significant biodiversity and recreation opportunities. Ongoing restoration at Patteson Court landfill site will restore landform along the valley side which joins the greensand ridge of character area GW12 to the south.

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## LANDSCAPE TYPE UE: DISTINCT AREAS ON THE EDGE OF URBAN AREAS EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

Although varied, all these character areas provide pockets of quality landscape, of historic importance or importance for existing biodiversity and biodiversity potential, adjoining Built Up Areas or settlements. They provide open areas, often intensively managed for public access, recreation or sport, but still remain rural or natural in character. They provide a natural landscape setting to the adjoining settlements or Built Up Areas. They also provide a visual link or physical bridge to the wider landscape, and share many of the key characteristics of their respective surrounding landscapes. The natural character is in direct contrast to the adjoining dense urban areas of the adjoining settlements.

- **UE1:** This area could act as a gateway to the Wey valley, but unfortunately there are no external links westwards from the Open Access Land. However, this area coincides on the western edge with Surrey's Rivers biodiversity opportunity area R04 and provides potential as a biodiversity link to the Wey.
- **UE2:** Currently there is limited use as a recreation resource, given the density of the woodland, but provides an attractive finger of wooded common land extending through a dense urban area and linking to the Mole Valley to the south-east.
- **UE3:** Although intensively managed for the racing industry this area combines with adjacent Areas CD1 and CF3 to provide large open area of farmed downs landscape between settlements, with views out to the wider landscape. Fragments of a chalk grassland exist on the perimeter of the racecourse.
- **UE4:** An area of wooded common designated for a variety of habitats including woodland, grassland and ponds. Connects to the wider wooded landscape to the south. A direct formal link to the wider countryside to the east would further improve connectivity and further enhance local walking recreation.
- **UE5:** Although managed as a gold course and public open space Banstead Downs is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, important for chalk flora and plant species, including a number of locally rare plants.
- **UE6, UE7 and UE8** coincide with Surrey's Low Weald biodiversity opportunity area LWO7 which is a series of connected wooded commons extending as a wedge in to the south of Redhill. The acid soils supporting various types of woodland, including ancient woodland.
- **UE9:** This area coincides with Surrey's Wealden Greensand biodiversity opportunity area WG11 which is a mixture of floodplain grazing marsh, woodland and heathland.

### GUIDANCE

- Conserve and enhance biodiversity value of remnant habitats, and key landscape characteristics that are identified as priority habitats.
- Seek opportunities to link existing habitats through habitat restoration.
- Protect and enhance the landscape setting to adjacent settlements and urban areas.
- Maintain physical links and open views to the wider landscape.
- Maintain and enhance the network of public access, whilst ensuring significant biodiversity value and resource of these areas is sensitively managed and protected.
- Encourage understanding of the biodiversity and historic elements of the landscape.
- Conserve the historic elements of the landscape as remnants of an older landscape.