



CONFIDENTIAL

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL LCA PHASE 2

SURREY HILLS AONB AREAS OF SEARCH

NATURAL BEAUTY EVALUATION

by

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FIGURES

HDA 1 Study Area, and Existing AONB and AGLV (A1 size 1:80,000 scale map)

HDA 2 Draft LCA Landscape Typologies and Character Areas Map (A1 size 1:80,000 scale map)

HDA 3 Recommended Additional Areas of AONB (A1 size 1:80,000 scale map)

APPENDICES

Appendix A Example evaluation sheet

Appendix B Key to Maps 01 to 27

Maps 01 to 27, showing recommended additional areas of AONB in detail
(A3 size 1:25,000 scale maps)

Maps 01 to 27 are indexed on plans HDA 1 and HDA 3

Appendix C Alison Farmer Associates review of landscape assessments within the AONB, March 2012

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Hankinson Duckett Associates (HDA) was commissioned by Surrey County Council on behalf of the Surrey Planning Officers Association (SPOA) and the Surrey Hills AONB Board in January 2013, to undertake the following three phases of work:

Phase 1: A Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) of the Surrey Hills AONB and adjacent Areas of Search

Phase 2: An evaluation of the natural beauty of those Areas of Search

Phase 3: Extend the LCA to cover the whole of Surrey

- 1.2 This document summaries the findings of the natural beauty evaluation (phase 2), by identifying areas of search which are judged to meet AONB natural beauty criteria, for consideration by Natural England for designation as part of the Surrey Hills AONB.
- 1.3 HDA is a professional landscape consultancy, with expertise also in environmental planning and ecology. We specialise particularly in landscape assessment and landscape planning, using the Countryside Agency's Landscape Character Assessment Guidance and national Countryside Character studies as day to day working documents.

2. ASSESSMENT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 1997, Surrey County Council published a countywide character assessment of Surrey, entitled 'The Future of Surrey's Landscape and Woodlands', which broadly accords with the Countryside Agency's (now Natural England) national character areas and typologies. The landscape assessment of the Surrey Hills AONB was then undertaken in 1998, drawing on the Surrey County Council countywide assessment. These assessments were carried out following the principles set out in the Countryside Agency's landscape assessment guidance that was current at that time (CCP 423).
- 2.2 The Countryside Agency (Natural England) and Scottish Natural Heritage published new Landscape Character Assessment Guidance in 2002. Since then, a number of District level landscape assessments have been carried out, including Guildford in 2006 and Reigate and Banstead in 2008. The 2012 report by Alison Farmer (see Appendix C) considers the Guildford and Reigate and Banstead Assessments, as being evidence of best practice within Surrey.

- 2.3 The draft 2013 Surrey Landscape Character Assessment being prepared by HDA, follows the current 2002 methodology, fits within the framework provided by the national landscape character areas and typology, and draws on existing information contained in the 'The Future of Surrey's Landscape and Woodlands', the AONB assessment and management plan, and the existing District wide Landscape Character Assessments. The 2013 Surrey LCA is compatible with, and incorporates, the 2006 Guildford assessment, with some adjustments to apply the work to a countywide basis.
- 2.4 In accordance with best practice as promoted by the 2002 guidance, the 2013 Surrey LCA maintains a distinction between landscape types and character areas, developing a hierarchical approach as follows:
- Landscape Types - which are generic and share common combinations of geology, topography, vegetation and human influences, e.g. 'Wooded Greensand Hills' or 'Chalk Ridge';
 - Character Areas - which are single and unique, discrete geographical areas of the landscape type, e.g. 'Hindhead Wooded Greensand Hills' or 'Box Hill to Tatsfield Chalk Ridge'.
- 2.5 Landscape Types and Character Areas identified in Phase 1 of the Surrey LCA, covering the Surrey Hills AONB and adjacent Areas of Search, form a framework for the natural beauty evaluation in this report.
- 2.6 Phase 1 Landscape Types and Character Areas have been GIS mapped at a scale of 1:25 000 and are listed in Table 1 below. For ease of reference, plan HDA 2 shows all the Landscape Types and Character Areas at a scale of 1:80,000 on a single A1 size plan.

Table 1

Types	Areas
A: River Floodplain	
A1	Lower Wey River Floodplain
A2	Upper Wey River Floodplain
A3	Guildford Wey River Floodplain
A4	Wey and Arun Canal River Floodplain
A5	River Mole River Floodplain
B: Chalk Ridge	
B1	Hog's Back Chalk Ridge
B2	Albury to Ranmore Chalk Ridge
B3	Box Hill to Tatsfield Chalk Ridge
C: Wooded North Down:	
C1	Merrow and Clandon Wooded North Downs
C2	Effingham Forest Wooded North Downs
C3	Oaken Grove to Ranmore Common Wooded North Downs

Types	Areas
C4	Norbury Park Wooded North Downs
C5	Box Hill to Oyster Hill Wooded North Downs
C6	Banstead Heath Wooded North Downs
C7	Chussex Plain Wooded North Downs
C8	South Caterham Wooded North Downs
D: Open Chalk Farmland:	
D1	Clandon Open Chalk Farmland
D2	Ranmore to Hawk's Hill Open Chalk Farmland
D3	Leatherhead to Epsom Downs Open Chalk Farmland
D4	Epsom Downs Open Chalk Farmland
D5	Alderstead to Hooley Open Chalk Farmland
D6	Caterham to Woldingham Open Chalk Farmland
D7	Woldingham to New Addington Open Chalk Farmland
DW: Chalk Down with Woodland:	
DW1	Tyrrell's Wood to Walton Oaks Chalk Down with Woodland
DW2	Courtlands to Margery Chalk Down with Woodland
DW3	Chaldon Chalk Down with Woodland
DW4	South Woldingham Chalk Down with Woodland
DW5	Forestdale to Woldingham Chalk Down with Woodland
E: Wooded Rolling Claylands:	
E1	Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands
E2	Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands
F: Unsettled Sandy Heath	
F1	Pirbright Common Unsettled Sandy Heath
G: Wooded and Settled Heath	
G1	Worplesdon Wooded and Settled Sand Heath
G2	Wisley Wooded and Settled Sand Heath
H: River Valley Floor	
H1	Send River Valley Floor
H2	Slyfield River Valley Floor
H3	Peasmarsh River Valley Floor
H4	Shalford River Valley Floor
H5	Ash Vale River Valley Floor
I: Greensand Valley	
I1	Tilling Bourne and Pipp Brook Greensand Valley
I2	Pixham to Reigate Greensand Valley
I3	Gatton Greensand Valley
I4	Redhill to Clacket Lane Greensand Valley
J: Mudstone Plateau	
J1	Loseley Mudstone Plateau
K: Wooded Greensand Hills	
K1	Puttenham Wooded Greensand Hills
K2	Chinthurst to Hurt Wood Wooded Greensand Hills
K3	St Martha's Wooded Greensand Hills
K4	Rowledge to Tilford Wooded Greensand Hills
K5	Hindhead Wooded Greensand Hills
K6	Wormley West Wooded Greensand Hills
K7	Wormley East Wooded Greensand Hills
K8	Loxhill to Catteshill Wooded Greensand Hills
K9	Leith Hill to Bury Hill Wooded Greensand Hills
K10	Skimmington Wooded Greensand Hills
K11	Earlswood to Oxted Wooded Greensand Hills

Types	Areas
K12	The Chart Wooded Greensand Hills
L: Open Greensand Hills	
L1	Shackleford Open Greensand Hills
L2	Godalming to Sutton Abinger Open Greensand Hills
L3	West Farnham Open Greensand Hills
L4	Dockenfield to Millbridge Open Greensand Hills
L5	Churt to Hascombe Open Greensand Hills
L6	Bramley West Open Greensand Hills
L7	Shamley Green Open Greensand Hills
L8	Betchworth and Chart Parks Open Greensand Hills
M: Wooded Greensand Plateau	
M1	Frensham to Witley Common Wooded Greensand Plateau
N: Wooded Low Weald:	
N1	Chiddingfold Wooded Low Weald
N2	West Dunsfold Wooded Low Weald
N3	Tugley to Sidney Wood Wooded Low Weald
N4	Pinks Hill to Park Hatch Wooded Low Weald
N5	Grafham to Dunsfold Wooded Low Weald
N6	Dunsfold to Pollingfold Wooded Low Weald
N7	Rowly Wooded Low Weald
N8	Cranleigh to Okewood Wooded Low Weald
N9	Shamley Green to Holmwood Wooded Low Weald
N10	Holmwood Common Wooded Low Weald
O: Low Weald Farmland	
O1	Flanchford West Low Weald Farmland
O2	Flanchford East Low Weald Farmland
O3	South Nutfield to Swaynesland Low Weald Farmland

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The study area is derived from the areas of search identified in Alison Farmer's March 2012 report (see Appendix C). The areas of search consist of all the Surrey Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), along with other adjacent areas, as shown on plan HDA 1.
- 3.2 Landscape character areas identified in the draft 2013 LCA of the Surrey Hills AONB and adjacent Areas of Search (phase 1) prepared by HDA, form a framework for the natural beauty evaluation (see Table 1 above).
- 3.3 Initial field survey points for each of the character areas within the study area were identified, and an evaluation carried out at each location using standard survey and evaluation sheets. An example of the evaluation sheet is included in Appendix A. Findings from the survey points were collated and draft boundaries for areas which were judged to meet the natural beauty criteria (see section 3 below) were drawn. These boundaries were tested and refined through further field assessment, involving HDA staff and Surrey County officers travelling extensively through the study area, resulting in draft areas recommended for inclusion within the Surrey Hills AONB.
- 3.4 Draft recommended areas were presented to the Districts and Boroughs within the study area, including Guildford, Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead, Tandridge, and Waverley. Advice from Surrey County Council, the local authorities, and the AONB board, was considered, which in some instances necessitated further survey work. Refinements were then incorporated into the recommended areas of AONB inclusion.
- 3.5 This document sets out the landscape context of the areas of search and describes how the areas recommended for inclusion within the AONB meet the natural beauty criteria. In some cases, a limited number of areas which do not meet the majority of the natural beauty criteria, but still may warrant inclusion with the AONB, have been identified as secondary potential additional areas for further scrutiny by Natural England.
- 3.6 Areas to be put forward as suitable additions to the Surrey Hills AONB, plus secondary areas, are shown on an overall A1 size map (plan HDA 3) and are summarised in section 5 below, grouped by the main character typology of each area. The prefix of each area code relates to the sheet numbers of the A3 size 1:25,000 maps which are in Appendix B. Area 03-1 for instance, is therefore shown in detail on Map 03.

4. GUIDANCE

4.1 To be included within an AONB, landscape should meet the 'Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000' designation criteria. Natural England's 'Guidance for assessing landscapes for designations as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England' was published in March 2011, and explains the criteria.

4.2 Natural England's guidance states that it 'provides a practical framework for an evidence base which assists in making judgements about natural beauty in a rigorous and transparent way'. The factors which contribute to 'natural beauty' are listed as follows:

- **Landscape quality:** this is a measure of the physical state or condition of the landscape.
- **Scenic quality:** the extent to which the landscape appeals to the senses (primarily, but not only, the visual senses).
- **Relative wildness:** the degree to which wild character can be perceived in the landscape makes a particular contribution to the sense of place.
- **Relative tranquillity:** the degree to which relative tranquillity can be perceived in the landscape.
- **Natural heritage features:** the influence of natural heritage on the perception on the perception of the natural beauty of the area. Natural heritage includes flora, fauna, geological and physiographical features.
- **Cultural heritage:** The influence of cultural heritage on the perception of natural beauty of the area and the degree to which associations with particular people, writers or events in history contribute to such perception.

4.3 Table 2 below sets out the factors and sub-factors identified in the Natural England Guidance as relevant when assessing 'natural beauty' attributes.

4.4 The qualifications of characterisation and natural beauty resulting from the findings of the South Downs National Park inquiries have been incorporated into Natural England's guidance, and include:

- **The 'wash-over' principle:** See paragraph 4.6 below.
- **Identity:** There is no need for a National Park or AONB to display a distinctive or coherent identity. A designation can contain different landscapes so long as the designation as a whole satisfies the natural beauty criteria.
- **Comparisons to 'ordinary countryside':** When applying the natural beauty criteria, comparisons are not to be made to other designated areas, but against the wider currently undesignated 'ordinary' landscape.

Table 2

Factor	Example sub-factor	Example Indicator
Landscape quality	Intactness of the landscape in visual, functional and ecological perspectives.	Characteristic natural and man-made elements are well represented.
	The condition of the landscape's features and elements.	Landscape elements are in good condition.
	The influence of incongruous features or elements (whether man-made or natural) on the perceived natural beauty of the area.	Incongruous elements are not present to a significant degree, are not visually intrusive, have only localised influence.
Scenic quality	A distinctive sense of place.	Landscape character lends a clear and recognisable sense of place.
	Striking landform.	Landform shows a strong sense of scale or contrast.
	Visual interest in patterns of land cover.	Land cover and vegetation types form an appealing pattern or composition in relation to each other and/or to landform which may be appreciated from either vantage point or as one travels through a landscape.
	Appeal to the senses.	Strong aesthetic qualities, reflecting factors such as scale and form, degree of openness or enclosure, colours and textures, simplicity or diversity, and ephemeral or seasonal interest.
		Memorable or unusual views and eye-catching features or landmarks.
Characteristic cognitive and sensory stimuli (e.g. sounds, quality of light, characteristic smells, characteristics of weather).		
Relative wildness	A sense of remoteness.	Relatively few roads or other transport routes.
		Distant from or perceived as distant from significant habitation.
	A relative lack of human influence.	Extensive areas of semi-natural vegetation.

Factor	Example sub-factor	Example Indicator
		Uninterrupted tracts of land with few built features and few overt industrial or urban influences.
	A sense of openness and exposure.	Open, exposed to the elements and expansive in character.
	A sense of enclosure and isolation.	Sense of enclosure provided by (e.g.) woodland, landform that offers a feeling of isolation.
	A sense of the passing of time and a return to nature.	Absence or apparent absence of active human intervention.
Relative tranquillity	Contributors to tranquillity.	Presence and/or perceptions of natural landscape, birdsong, peace and quiet, natural-looking woodland, stars at night, stream, sea, natural sounds and similar influences.
	Detractors from tranquillity.	Presence and/or perceptions of traffic noise, large numbers of people, urban development, overhead light pollution, low flying aircraft, power lines and similar influences.
Natural heritage features	Geological and geo-morphological features.	Visible expression of geology in distinctive sense of place and other aspects of scenic quality.
		Presence of striking or memorable geo-morphological features.
	Wildlife and habitats.	Presence of wildlife and/or habitats that make a particular contribution to distinctive sense of place or other aspects of scenic quality.
		Presence of individual species that contribute to sense of place, relative wildness or tranquillity.
Cultural heritage	Built environment, archaeology and designed landscapes.	Presence of settlements, buildings or other structures that make a particular contribution to distinctive sense of place or other aspects of scenic quality.
		Presence of visible archaeological remains, parkland or designed landscapes that provide striking

Factor	Example sub-factor	Example Indicator
		features in the landscape.
	Historic influence on the landscape.	Visible presence of historic landscape types or specific landscape elements or features that provide evidence of time depth or historic influence on the landscape.
		Perceptions of a harmonious balance between natural and cultural elements in the landscape that stretch back over time.
	Characteristic land management practices.	Existence of characteristic land management practices, industries or crafts which contribute to natural beauty.
	Associations with written descriptions.	Availability of descriptions of the landscape in notable literature, topographical writings or guide books, or significant literature inspired by the landscape.
	Associations with artistic representations.	Depiction of the landscape in art, other art forms such as photography or film, through language or folklore, or in inspiring related music.
	Associations of the landscape with people, places or events.	Evidence that the landscape has associations with notable people or events, cultural traditions or beliefs.

Application of the Guidance

- 4.5 Natural England's guidance explains that a detailed 'field-by-field' evaluation is not appropriate, and in any case would not be practicable within the scope of the brief. Therefore judgements in relation to the criteria are primarily based on the character areas derived from the emerging 2013 Surrey Landscape Character Assessment, taking into account smaller areas where there is noticeable variation in character or the factors which contribute to the natural beauty across a character area. Consideration of single parcels of land may be necessary in a limited number of circumstances where there are particularly notable individual features or where the existing AONB boundary, settlement boundaries and other features such as woodland blocks, road or railways result in tortuous or convoluted boundaries.
- 4.6 The guidance states that there is no requirement for every parcel of land to meet the natural beauty criteria, with the decision to include land that does not itself meet the criteria, depending on the location, scale and effect of that land. The 'washed-over' principle was applied in the Secretary of State's decision on the South Downs National Park and is incorporated into Natural England's guidance, which states that "a designation can 'wash over' (i.e. include) a tract of land even though that land does not itself meeting the designation criteria, even close to the boundary of a designated area". This is particularly relevant where an area which doesn't meet the criteria is surrounded by landscape which does meet the criteria, and forms part of the overall physical or visual continuity. However, if an area is fragmented by land which does not meet the criteria to such an extent that it affects the ability of the whole area to meet the criteria, then the entire evaluation area is unlikely to qualify.
- 4.7 The guidance states that it is not necessary to identify a precise 'hard' boundary for the evaluation areas. However, considering the practicalities of GIS based mapping, consultation with the relevant local authorities and clarification from Natural England, explicit boundaries have been identified following recognisable features on the ground.

5. THE SURREY HILLS LANDSCAPE

- 5.1 The study area is covered by three of England's National Character Areas; the North Downs, Wealdon Greensand and Low Weald, as identified in existing studies and the emerging 2013 Surrey landscape character assessment.
- 5.2 The North Downs provide the dramatic backdrop to the Weald. 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. On the dip slope, to the north, there are intimate dry valleys set within open rolling farmland interspersed with woodland. The acidic drift geology, which overlies the chalk in some areas, gives rise to the heaths and commons which contrast markedly with the surrounding chalk farmland.
- 5.3 Extensive woodlands cover substantial areas of the Wealdon Greensand character area along with important heaths eg. 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.
- 5.4 The Low Weald, to the south of the Greensand Hills, is also heavily wooded, much of it Semi Natural Ancient Woodland, particularly towards the west of the character area. The farmland is typically small scale with irregular field patterns and densely hedged with mixed hedgerows and hedgerow trees. The Wealdon landscape does become less wooded and more open towards the east to give way to a larger scale and more regular Wealdon farmland.
- 5.5 The draft 2013 Surrey Landscape Character Assessment identifies sixteen landscape typologies (see plan HDA 2), derived from three national character areas. A single landscape type 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 uniformly identical, rather that there is a common pattern, which can be discerned. Each landscape typology is then subdivided into several character areas, which are discrete geographic areas that possess the common characteristics described for the landscape type. Each character area has a distinct and recognisable local identity.

6. EVALUATION

6.1 North Downs

- 6.1.1 The North Downs ridge, including the south facing scarp, stretches east to west across the middle of the County. The downs widen northwards to the east of Guildford, to include extensive areas of Wooded North Down, Open Chalk Farmland and Chalk Down with Woodland character types (see plan HDA 2).
- 6.1.2 The majority of the North Downs between Guildford, and the River Mole (which cuts north-south through the Downs between Leatherhead and Dorking), is designated as part of the Surrey Hills AONB, the exception to this being relatively small areas of Open Chalk Farmland to the north. These areas are mainly adjacent to settlement to the north and are subject to urban influence in the form of low density and ribbon development, including paddocks and recreation such as golf courses.
- 6.1.3 The Downs widen further to the east of Leatherhead and Dorking, beyond the River Mole, and include broad wedges of downland between areas of urban settlement, which protrude south into the Downs. There are some large areas of 'Wooded North Downs' landscape type, mainly towards the west and on the higher southern part of the dip slope adjacent to the North Downs ridge. Elsewhere there are expansive areas of large scale 'Open Chalk Farmland' landscape type, interspersed with large areas of smaller scale 'Chalk Down with Woodland'.
- 6.1.4 A significant proportion of the downland between the River Mole and the eastern county boundary is currently outside the Surrey Hills AONB. These areas exhibit varying qualities, and are often subject to human influences, in particular areas of Wooded North Down with their low density settlement and associated small scale land use, and areas of open chalk farmland which adjoin urban settlement to the north and are dissected by major transport routes including the M25 motorway.
- 6.1.5 Main areas of downland which are within the AONB include the ridge and south facing scarp, a large area of wooded downs associated with Box Hill, an area of chalk down with woodland (west of the railway) and open chalk farmland (east of the railway) to the north of Redhill, and an area of open chalk farmland to the east of Caterham, which extends sinuously northwards for a considerable distance from the ridge. Elsewhere the AONB extends a relatively short distance northwards beyond the Downs ridge, into small areas of open chalk farmland and chalk down with woodland.

6.1.6 Areas of downland within the study area which meet the majority of the natural beauty criteria, and therefore are to be put forward as suitable additions to the Surrey Hills AONB, are summarised below, grouped by the main landscape typology of each area. The prefix of each area code relates to the sheet numbers of the 1:25,000 maps which are in Appendix B. Area 03-1 is therefore shown in detail on Map 03.

6.1.7 Open Chalk Farmland

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 03-1

Open Chalk Farmland, east and west of ridge along Croydon Road, to the east of Woldingham.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: D – Open Chalk Farmland

CHARACTER AREA: D7 – Woldingham to New Addington Open Chalk Farmland

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA

Landscape Quality

Significant area of intact, rolling downland landscape with occasional blocks of ancient woodland which follow sinuous lines of topography. Landscape elements are generally in good condition. Incongruous elements include phone masts and a water tower, but have only localised influence.

Scenic Quality

Large scale striking landscape of sinuous fields and woodland blocks on twisting landform giving a distinctive sense of place and visual interest. Memorable views along 'hidden' valleys and eye-catching features, such as Hovings Hole at Warren Farm. Includes picturesque areas of flower meadows and sheep grazing.

Relative Wildness

Limited settlement and few overt industrial or other urban influences. With the exception of Croydon Road, there are a limited number of major roads and large areas where access is limited to tracks and footpaths. Topography and vegetation combine to give a sense of isolation in places, although subtle human intervention in the form of field boundaries and low key farming/grazing is apparent across the majority of the area. There are occasional distant views of London from high ground near the top of the dip slope to the south.

Relative Tranquillity

The majority of the area is peaceful and quiet, with the perception of natural landscape including valleys and wooded ridges. Except for distance aircraft noise, there are limited detractors from tranquillity such as urban development and light pollution. Although abutting the edge of Woldingham to the west, the settlement has limited influence on the area overall.

Natural Heritage Features

Distinctive topography including features such as Hovings Hole, and woodland blocks which respond to topography, add to the sense of place.

Cultural Heritage

Includes a number of traditional farmsteads and associated low key traditional farming practices including downland sheep grazing.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 03-1

Quality of the landscape begins to reduce slightly to the north-west, with some incongruous features along Beech Road, but the boundary is taken to the western part of Washpond Lane to include landform which is contiguous with the topography to the south.

Topography and vegetation along the Roman Road forms a robust boundary to the area along the County boundary to the east.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 05-1

Open Chalk Farmland, south of East Clandon, at the foot of the main dip slope.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: D – Open Chalk Farmland

CHARACTER AREA: D1 – Clandon Open Chalk Farmland

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Arable farmland consistent with adjacent AONB to the south. Includes large rectilinear fields and a few small paddocks, but remaining field boundaries are lined with relatively good condition hedgerows. No overtly incongruous elements present.

Scenic Quality

Lower continuation of the upper rolling dip slope. Less exposed than higher ground within the AONB to the south which has wide-ranging distant views north, but area shares similar striking open landform characteristics.

Relative Wildness

Urban influence increases slightly to the north due the A246 and East Clandon, but the majority of the area has limited human influence, including few roads and dwellings, which results in a moderate sense of remoteness.

Relative Tranquillity

A tranquil area with no internal detracting elements, although perception of traffic noise and human influence increases slightly to the north.

Natural Heritage Features

The area marks the transition to downland from the clay lands to the north.

Cultural Heritage

Farmed downland foot slopes, specific associations unknown.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 05-1

Area gradates to the north to form the foot of the transition from the dip slope of the chalk ridge, down to the rolling clayland. However, the area shares the same underlying characteristics of the more elevated AONB adjacent to the south. Vegetation along the A246 and Blake's Lane forms a robust northern boundary, beyond which urban influence increases.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 06-1

Small area of Open Chalk Farmland, appearing as an anomaly to the AONB boundary to the south of Fetcham.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: D – Open Chalk Farmland

CHARACTER AREA: D2 – Ranmore to Hawk’s Hill Open Chalk Farmland

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Part of pastoral grazing fields which form the AONB to the south of Fetcham. Land parcel in good condition and includes large mature field trees and low clipped hedgerow along the northern field boundary along the A246 road. There are no incongruous elements.

Scenic Quality

The parcel of land is an integral part of wider rural landscape to the south, which rises to form the horizon.

Relative Wildness

Part of two relatively open fields adjacent to the busy A246 and southern edge of Fetcham, although tree cover and domestic boundary vegetation filterers views of suburban dwellings.

Relative Tranquillity

The land itself has no detracting features; however traffic on adjacent A246 limits tranquillity.

Natural Heritage Features

Rising grazed downland.

Cultural Heritage

Farmed downland on the edge of settlement.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 06-1

Area formed by small anomaly in the AONB, defined by the existing AONB boundary and the southern settlement edge of Fetcham.

SECONDARY POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL AREA FOR FURTHER SCRUTINY

AREA 06-2

Small area of Open Chalk Farmland, surrounded by AONB, to the south of Great Bookham.

Included as a secondary area as current land use detracts from an otherwise acceptable landscape.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: D – Open Chalk Farmland

CHARACTER AREA: D2 – Ranmore to Hawk’s Hill Open Chalk Farmland

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA

Landscape Quality

Includes a few minor tree groups and a length of hedge, but there are limited remaining landscape features internally. Consists of equestrian land use, including associated buildings and significant number of paddocks, although these could be considered as temporary in nature.

Scenic Quality

Landform is recognisable as part of the wider undulating downland, however land cover has limited visual interest.

Relative Wildness

Although there are no internal roads and limited settlement, human influence from the equestrian land use and adjacent urban settlement to the north, prevent a sense of remoteness.

Natural Heritage Features

Part of wider downland. Remaining features have limited contribution to sense of place.

Cultural Heritage

Equestrian buildings and land management practices.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 06-2

Small area with landform continuous with surrounding AONB. Defined by the existing AONB boundary and the southern settlement edge of Great Bookham.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 08-1

Small area of Open Chalk Farmland, appearing as an anomaly to the AONB boundary to the south of Rook Lane, west of Chaldon. Suggested realignment of AONB boundary to follow easily recognisable features, rather than cutting diagonally across the middle of fields and woodland.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: D – Open Chalk Farmland

CHARACTER AREA: D5 – Alderstead to Hooley Open Chalk Farmland

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Relatively intact arable farmland with occasional tree groups and hedgerows along field boundaries, and no overly incongruous elements.

Scenic Quality

Recognisable as continuation of gently undulating north-facing farmland, gently sloping down from the dip slope to the south. Fields, hedges and trees provide visual interest.

Relative Wildness

There are no significant roads or settlement within the area, although there is low key human influence in the form of farming, adjacent settlement to the east, and the B2081 to the north.

Relative Tranquillity

Trees and hedges help create a peaceful and quiet landscape. There are few detractors, resulting in a relatively tranquil area.

Natural Heritage Features

Part of wider downland. Landscape features contribute to the sense of place.

Cultural Heritage

Farmed downland, specific associations not known.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 08-1

Area contiguous with AONB to the south. Realignment of boundary along Rook Lane, to form robust edge, rather than cutting across middle of fields/woodland.

6.1.9 Chalk Down with Woodland

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 02-1

Chalk Down with Woodland, stretching north-south from Park Downs to Gatwick Farm, to the south-east of Banstead.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: DW – Chalk Down with Woodland

CHARACTER AREA: DW2 – Courtlands to Margery Chalk Down with Woodland

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA

Landscape Quality

Undulating farmland with a significant amount of intact ancient woodland, in particular the extensive Banstead Wood. No visually intrusive incongruous elements.

Scenic Quality

Complex, striking landform, accentuated by woodland blocks, provides a sense of scale. Topography and vegetation combine to provide dramatic and framed views, visual interest and a recognisable sense of place.

Relative Wildness

Settlement is generally limited to farmsteads. Winding rural lanes and dwellings are secluded by vegetation. Topography and vegetation combine to result in intimate areas with limited human influence. Woodland provides enclosure which gives a sense of remoteness in places.

Relative Tranquillity

Significant areas of woodland contribute to the sense of tranquillity, whilst the B2219 and short stretches of the B2032 and Tattenham Corner railway line which cross through the area are only minor local detractors.

Natural Heritage Features

Farmed and wooded downland, specific associations not known.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 02-1

Area stretches north to incorporate the striking landform and woodland as far north as Park Downs, including Banstead Heath and around Poorfield Wood, The Long Plantation and Mugswell. The landscape gradates to the southwest, with an increase in urban influence towards Kingswood; the boundary includes the better quality landscape to the north and east.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 07-2

Small area of Chalk Down with Woodland, appearing as an anomaly in the AONB boundary to the south-east of Headley. Suggested realignment of AONB boundary to follow easily recognisable features, rather than cutting across the middle of fields and woodland.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: DW – Chalk Down with Woodland

CHARACTER AREA: DW1 – Tyrrell's Wood to Walton Oaks Chalk Down with Woodland

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Small area of arable fields and blocks of intact ancient woodland. No incongruous elements other than a short length of pylon cables which pass overhead.

Scenic Quality

Appealing patchwork of mostly fields and woodland.

Relative Wildness

Except for a large house, stables and an area of paddocks at Queenswood, there is low human influence with no significant roads or settlement across the area. Wooded areas provide enclosure which gives a sense of remoteness in places, and general secluded intimacy across the area.

Relative Tranquillity

Perceptions of natural landscape, birdsong, peace and quiet, and natural-looking woodland result in a tranquil area with few detractors other than minor influence from overhead power lines.

Natural Heritage Features

Includes areas of ancient woodland which contribution to the sense of place, relative wildness and tranquillity.

Cultural Heritage

No associations known for this small area.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 07-2

Area contiguous with AONB to the south. Realignment of boundary along lines of vegetation, to form robust edge, rather than cutting across middle of fields/woodland.

6.1.10 Wooded North Down

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 07-1

Area of Wooded North Down, west of Headley, north and south of the B2033.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: C – Wooded North Down

CHARACTER AREA: C5 – Box Hill to Oyster Hill Wooded North Downs

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA

Landscape Quality

Incorporates extensive areas of intact ancient woodland including Nower Wood, Cherkley Wood and Dean Wood, surrounding local valley feature of unsettled downland fields. No significant incongruous features.

Scenic Quality

Open area along sinuous valley allows appreciation of woodland which accentuates surrounding slopes, providing visual interest and a distinctive sense of place.

Relative Wildness

There are relatively few roads in the area. The B2033 cuts across the area, but is hedge lined and forms a relatively minor influence. The area is largely unsettled with no perception of significant habitation. Woodland and fields have limited human influence, with the main exception being low-key paddock fencing, north of Lodgebottom Road, but these are a temporary land use and there are no associated structures such as stables. Golf course to the north-west is apparent from the woodland edge footpath.

Relative Tranquillity

Fields enclosed by a combination of woodland and topography, and the woodlands themselves result in the majority of the area having high tranquillity. B2033 and low density edge of Headley are minor localised detractors only.

Natural Heritage Features

Extensive ancient woodland makes a particular contribution to distinctive sense of place, relative wildness and tranquillity.

Cultural Heritage

Low key human activity on rolling downland and associations with ancient woodland.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 07-1

The area incorporates significant woodland blocks with open areas in between, consistent with pattern and topography within the AONB to the south.

Cherkley Court

To the west is an area of Open Chalk Farmland, and a small area of Wooded North Down surrounding Cherkley Court.

The intactness of the chalk downland has been substantially reduced by reprofiling to create a golf course, a large tract of woodland has been cleared and remnant parkland disturbed.

The open downland, albeit substantially reprofiled for golf course development, affords views over surrounding countryside and provides a relatively distinctive sense of scale and place. The combination of open downland to the north and remaining tree cover to the south provides a pattern of land cover of some interest, although this has been significantly reduced by work associated with golf course development.

The area, particularly within remaining woodland, is perceived as distant from significant habitation and although the A24 passes near to the north, there are no major transport routes through the area. However, reprofiling of downland and clearance of woodland are obvious human influences which limit the sense of remoteness. Construction activity is currently a detracting influence which limits any tranquillity which tree cover and bird song may contribute towards.

The chalk downland, rising to typical wooded downland to the south, gives a distinctive sense of place, and there are cultural associations with Cherkley Court and remnant parkland, set with downland landscape.

However, work to create a golf course has altered the landscape substantially and reduced its scenic quality and does not currently meet the Natural Beauty Criteria. Therefore the Open Chalk Farmland, and Wooded North Down surrounding Cherkley Court have not been included in area 07-1.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 07-3

Area of Wooded North Down, to the south of Tadworth.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: C – Wooded North Down

CHARACTER AREA: C6 – Banstead Heath Wooded North Downs & C7 – Chussex Plain Wooded North Downs

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Area consisting predominately of intact heath and grassland, with woods and some arable fields, with no overtly incongruous elements. Substantial areas of woodland form a mosaic with grassland and heath.

Scenic Quality

Enclosed areas of heath and grassland provide a distinctive sense of place. Views south across falling landform towards the North Downs. Attractive views across arable landscape, including from Lower Kingswood, with no significant visual detractors.

Relative Wildness

The majority of the area is highly enclosed and remote from significant human influence, with access limited to tracks and footpaths only. Some northern parts of Banstead Heath have a few busy roads and influence from settlement. Sense of remoteness is more limited to the east, with filtered views of Lower Kingswood.

Relative Tranquillity

Enclosed heath and woodland result in high tranquillity across the majority of the area. Tranquillity is reduced slightly to the north by busy roads which cross through the heathland, and urban influence from Lower Kingswood to the east.

Natural Heritage Features

Heath and woodland provide a distinctive sense of place and high scenic quality.

Cultural Heritage

Cultural associations with Banstead Heath, including enclosures and earthworks.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 07-3

Banstead Heath has high quality with its mixture of intact heath, grassland and woodland. However, to the south-west, Walton heath has been significantly degraded by golf course use, with recreation being the dominant characteristic. This western area does not meet the natural beauty criteria and the boundary has therefore been drawn to exclude it. Between Banstead Heath to the north-west, the AONB to the south, and Lower Kingswood to the east, is an area of unsettled fields with no incongruous elements. This area has been included as 'wash-over' between Banstead Heath and the adjacent AONB.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 07-4

Small area of Wooded North Down, to the south of Mogador and the M25.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: C – Wooded North Down

CHARACTER AREA: C7 – Chussex Plain Wooded North Downs

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Consists entirely of woodland on the dip slope at the top of the ridge scarp, consistent with woodland in the AONB to the east. Although bounded by the M25 to the north, there are no incongruous elements apparent internally.

Scenic Quality

Although a uniform land cover, the woodland has aesthetic qualities which appeal to the senses.

Relative Wildness

The woodland is an enclosed area, remote from significant human influence. With access limited to tracks and footpaths only, there is a sense of isolation.

Relative Tranquillity

Tranquillity is reduced to the north by traffic noise from the M25, but woodland with bird song results in tranquillity elsewhere.

Natural Heritage Features

Woodland provides a sense of relative wildness and tranquillity.

Cultural Heritage

No associations known for this small area.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 07-4

Small area of woodland appearing as an anomaly in the AONB boundary, defined by the existing AONB boundary to the south and the M25 to the north.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 09-1

Area of Wooded North Down, to the south of Caterham.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: C – Wooded North Down

CHARACTER AREA: C8 – South Caterham Wooded North Downs

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Area consists predominately of intact ancient woodland, with no overtly incongruous features.

Scenic Quality

Striking, complex sloping topography on the ridge dip slope combines with the woodland which appeals to the senses. Sense of place results from an enclosed and intimate landscape, particularly where woodland and topography combine to create sense of isolation, and peace and quiet.

Relative Wildness

Woodland and topography combine to create sense of isolation with limited human influence. Tree cover obscures dwellings and limits urban influence from the north.

Relative Tranquillity

Topography and woodland, combined with limited detracting elements, result in high tranquillity across the majority of the area.

Natural Heritage Features

Topography and woodland combine to provide a sense of relative wildness and tranquillity.

Cultural Heritage

Cultural associations with ancient woodland.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 09-1

Area defined by the extent of woodland, and excluding development along Harestone Valley Road towards the centre.

6.1.11 Chalk Ridge and Wooded Rolling Claylands

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 12-1

Area of Wooded Rolling Claylands extending down from the Chalk Ridge.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: E – Wooded Rolling Claylands

CHARACTER AREA: E1 – Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA

Landscape Quality

Includes large blocks of ancient woodland, such as Wanborough Wood. Field sizes are relatively large and continuous, following gentle slopes down from the Hog's Back. Occasional glimpses of traffic on the A31 along the Hog's Back, but no significant incongruous elements present in the vicinity.

Scenic Quality

Patchwork of fields and woodland rising gently up the dip slope towards the ridge, form an appealing pattern which can be appreciated as one travels through the landscape, either from the Hog's Back, or from footpaths, tracks and roads to the north.

Relative Wildness

There are few roads, very limited settlement and large areas where access is limited to tracks. This lack of activity, combined with a number of woodland blocks results in a sense of remoteness in most parts. Filtered urban influence from Flexford and Ash Green reduce remoteness slightly to the north.

Relative Tranquillity

Contributors to tranquillity such as birdsong, peace and quiet, and natural-looking woodland dominate minor detractors such as glimpses of vehicles on the A31, to result in a substantially tranquil area.

Natural Heritage Features

Woodland on the gently rising dip slope contributes to the scenic quality of the area.

Cultural Heritage

Historic vernacular buildings at Wanborough Manor.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 12-1

Largely unsettled (with the exception of Wanborough Manor area), sloping dip slope of the chalk ridge to the south. There is a gently sloping transition northwards from the top of the dip slope, but vegetated roadsides, hedged/treed field boundaries, and woodland blocks form a relatively robust east-west northern boundary, beyond which urban influence increase in places.

6.2 Wealden Greensand

- 6.2.1 Wealden Greensand stretches east to west across the County, below the ridge scarp to the north and above the Low Weald to the south. The Greensand underlays a broad tract of land from the western County boundary, encompassing Elstead, Milford, Godalming, Bramley and Gomshall, until it reaches Dorking. Between Dorking and the eastern County boundary, the band of Greensand narrows in width, partially surrounding Reigate, Redhill and Oxted.
- 6.2.2 Between the western County boundary and Dorking, there are extensive 'Open Greensand Hills' and 'Wooded Greensand Hills', with the large areas of woodland present on generally higher ground (see plan HDA 2). Areas of 'Wooded Greensand Hills' form irregular shaped bands mostly to the north of the Greensand near the North Down ridge scarp, and along the southern part of the Greensand forming the boundary to the Low Weald to the south. Topography slackens to form an area of 'Wooded Greensand Plateau' to the west of Milford; a 'Greensand Valley' following the Tilling Bourne and Pipp Brook runs east-west between Shalford and Dorking at the foot of the Chalk Ridge to the north; and 'River Floodplains' form narrow valleys which run down through Guildford along the River Wey, through the Wealden Greensand and down into the Low Weald.
- 6.2.3 The majority of the Wealden Greensand between the western county boundary and Dorking is designated part of the Surrey Hills AONB. The main exceptions to this are a central area surrounded by the towns of Guildford, Bramley, Godalming and Milford, and areas of farmland in the west of the county to the north and south of Farnham.
- 6.2.4 To the east of Dorking, the band of Wooded Greensand Hills narrows to form a prominent wooded ridge from the west of Reigate to the eastern Country boundary. Running east-west between this ridge and the Chalk Ridge to the north, is a broad Greensand Valley feature.
- 6.2.5 The Surrey Hills AONB continues south from the Chalk Ridge into a relatively small proportion of the Wealden Greensand between Dorking and the eastern County boundary. A varying width of the northern part of the Greensand Valley, and a small area of Wooded Greensand Hills at the eastern County boundary, are designated as AONB. The southern part of the Greensand Valley, which has urban influence from surrounding development and transport, along with the detached wooded ridge are outside the AONB,
- 6.2.6 Areas of Wealden Greensand within the study area which meet the majority of the natural beauty criteria, and therefore are to be put forward as suitable additions to the Surrey Hills AONB, are

summarised below, grouped by the main landscape typology of each area. The prefix of each area code relates to the sheet numbers of the 1:25,000 maps which are in Appendix B.

6.2.7 Greensand Valley

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 07-5

Area of Greensand Valley to the west of Reigate.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: I – Greensand Valley

CHARACTER AREA: I2 – Pixham to Reigate Greensand Valley

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA

Landscape Quality

Includes some areas of intact ancient woodland and other tree blocks. The patchwork of fields with woodland, trees and hedges on undulating topography is consistent with rest of Greensand Valley within the AONB to the north and forms part of the wider valley feature which physically and visually connects the chalk ridge (to the north), to the wooded Greensand Hills (to the south). There are incongruous features in the form of quarry workings, but these are visually well contained and do not detract from the surrounding landscape.

Scenic Quality

Undulating rural fields and woodland blocks form an appealing composition, and provide a pleasant experience as travelling through the area, along with framed views of surrounding hills to the north and south, including the striking North Downs ridge. Buckland is an attractive village of largely vernacular architecture, and a central village green and pond.

Relative Wildness

There is obvious human influence in the form of the A25 which cuts through the middle of the area, the North Downs Railway line which runs along the north edge of the area, quarry pits, and groups of dwellings, including at Buckland. However these elements are generally well assimilated into the landscape and have only local influence. Elsewhere human influence is limited to low key farming result in a degree of remoteness.

Relative Tranquillity

Natural-looking woodland, and peaceful areas, contribute to a sense of tranquillity in places, but transport links and dwellings reduce tranquillity locally.

Natural Heritage Features

Woodland and other tree groups such as shaws contribute to the sense of place and enhance scenic quality.

Cultural Heritage

Includes Buckland Conservation Area.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 07-5

Area forms part of the wider visual and physical connectivity with the Downs to the north and Greensand Hills to the south. Although the area includes areas considered as 'wash over', specifically lakes associated with quarries, the area meets the natural beauty criteria, with incongruous elements generally having limited influence on the quality of the landscape.

To the west, urban influence increases and landscape quality begins to reduce, and the western boundary is therefore taken to as far as Buckland.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 13-4

Area of Greensand Valley and River Valley floor to the south of Chilworth. Forms part of a mosaic of landscape types around Chinthurst Hill, along with areas 13-1 and 13-2.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: I – Greensand Valley & H – River Valley Floor

CHARACTER AREA: I1 – Tilling Bourne and Pipp Brook Greensand Valley & – H4 Shalford River Valley Floor

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Area of mainly intact woodland to the west, and arable fields to the east, both falling towards the Tilling Bourne to the north. Area of greensand valley which forms the northern boundary of the mosaic of landscape types around Chinthurst Hill. Intact boundary vegetation is limited in places to the east. A248 road runs along the middle of the woodland to the west, but no overtly incongruous elements elsewhere.

Scenic Quality

Woodland to the west provides visual interest. Sloping, relatively open fields to the east provide setting to more elevated, wooded, hills further east and contribute to an appreciation of the scale and form of surrounding hills.

Relative Wildness

Woodland to the west aids the sense of remoteness, although this is tempered by the influence of the A248 which runs along the middle of the woodland. There is low-key human influence to the east in the form of farming.

Relative Tranquillity

Unsettled fields to the east have no roads and are have a sense of tranquil, although the A248 limits tranquillity to the west.

Natural Heritage Features

Woodland and the sloping nature of the fields to the east contribute to the sense of place.

Cultural Heritage

Includes Wonersh Common.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 13-4

Forms part of a mosaic of landscape types around Chinthurst Hill, along with areas 13-1 and 13-2. Northern boundary drawn to exclude urban land uses to the north. Although including areas considered as 'wash over', such as the corridor along the A248, the area meets the majority of the natural beauty criteria.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 13-5

Small area of Greensand Valley to the north of Chilworth.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: I – Greensand Valley

CHARACTER AREA: I1 – Tilling Bourne and Pipp Brook Greensand Valley

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Area contains some small areas of intact ancient woodland and no incongruous elements.

Scenic Quality

Woodland, ponds and watercourses including the Tilling Bourne, form an interesting pattern of land cover and sense of place, which can be appreciated from footpaths. Land cover appeals to the senses and provides cognitive and sensory stimuli, such as running water and bird song.

Relative Wildness

A short length of the A248 road runs to the south of the area, but is filtered by vegetation and has little influence on the area. Remains of Chilworth gunpowder mill and works, and enchantments to the banks of watercourses, within the woodland are human influences, but relatively subtle. Access within the area is limited to tracks and footpaths, and there is no settlement. Limited access, combined with enclosure provided by tree cover, provides a sense of remoteness.

Relative Tranquillity

Peace and quiet, natural-looking woodland, natural sounds from running water and birds, contribute to a sense of tranquillity. There are no major detractors; the A248 to the south has limited influence.

Natural Heritage Features

Woodland and riparian features contribute to the sense of place and enhance scenic quality.

Cultural Heritage

Includes remains of Chilworth gunpowder works.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 13-5

Small area generally defined by the extent of woodland.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 14-1

Small area of Greensand Valley to the west of Dorking.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: I – Greensand Valley

CHARACTER AREA: I1 – Tilling Bourne and Pipp Brook Greensand Valley

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Area of sloping farmland at the foot of the chalk ridge, includes some intact hedgerows and is visually contiguous with valley landscape to the west.

Scenic Quality

South facing landform at the foot of the chalk ridge, falling to the Pipp Brook, which gives a recognisable sense of place. The landform contrasts with striking views of the chalk ridge scarp to the north, providing a strong sense of scale.

Relative Wildness

Unsettled with no internal roads or public rights of way, but sense of remoteness reduced by glimpses of development to the south and east.

Relative Tranquillity

Presence of stream and natural sounds, but tranquilly reduced by passing trains on the North Downs railway line adjacent to the north, and glimpses of development to the south and east.

Natural Heritage Features

Scarp footslopes with limited tree cover.

Cultural Heritage

Setting to ridge scarp to the north and Milford Court and the Pipp Brook to the south.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 14-1

Pocket of land contiguous with the landscape to the west, defined by the existing AONB boundary to the north and west, Pipp Brook to the south, and the settlement edge to the east.

6.2.8 Open Greensand Hills

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 13-2

Area of Open Greensand Hills to the southeast of Shalford. Along with areas 13-1 and 13-4, forms part of a mosaic of landscape types around Chinthurst Hill.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: L – Open Greensand Hills

CHARACTER AREA: L2 – Godalming to Sutton Abinger Open Greensand Hills

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA

Landscape Quality

Rolling pasture, generally intact hedgerow network and activity managed hay meadows. No incongruous elements.

Scenic Quality

Visually appealing patchwork of fields separated by boundary hedgerows, with wooded backdrop, appreciated from public rights of way across the area, creates a sense of place, particularly in relation to surrounding wooded high ground on the horizon. Views of wooded high ground on the horizon include St Martha's Hill to the north and Blackheath to the east. Includes sunken track with exposed tree roots and natural surfacing.

Relative Wildness

No main roads through the area. Semi-remote, but low key human influences including paddocks, farmstead and well used footpaths. Tree cover and topography combine to detach area from surrounding human activity including roads and settlement. Nearby settlement is filtered by vegetation, including significant areas of recent planting along the western side of Chinthurst Lane.

Relative Tranquillity

Topography and woodland, combined with limited detracting elements and peace and quiet, result in high tranquillity across the area.

Natural Heritage Features

Sunken lane with exposed greensand and tree roots provides visual expression of geology. Hedgerows and tree cover contribute to the sense of place and enhance scenic quality.

Cultural Heritage

Vernacular farmstead buildings.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 13-2

Area defined by the surrounding vegetation and topography, which enclose the area and screen nearby urban influence.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 18-1

Relatively large area of Open Greensand Hills to the south of Farnham.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: L – Open Greensand Hills

CHARACTER AREA: L4 – Dockenfield to Millbridge Open Greensand Hills

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Patchwork of undulating farmland, large mature trees, intact hedgerows and some ancient woodland generally consistent across the area. Landscape features well maintained and no major detracting elements.

Scenic Quality

Fields, mature trees including large majestic Oaks, hedgerows and occasional woodland blocks give an appealing pattern of land cover which can be appreciated from footpaths and lanes, particularly on high ground. The strongly undulating landform provides a sense of scale and sense of place in parts of the area.

Relative Wildness

Access is limited to footpaths across large parts of the area, giving a sense of remoteness in places, although subtle human influence from farming, including scattered farmsteads and the village of Dockenfield, reduces remoteness slightly across most of the area. Winding lanes have minor influence.

Relative Tranquillity

Tree cover, peace and quiet, and natural sounds such as bird song, contribute to a sense of tranquillity. There are no major detractors.

Natural Heritage Features

Some areas of sloping ancient woodland contribute to the scenic quality of the area.

Cultural Heritage

Long history of farming and associated human intervention.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 18-1

Area of consistently undulating landform abutting the existing AONB to the east and the 'South

Downs' National Park to the west. The recommended additional area 'washes over' the settlement of Dockenfield to form a continuous edge with the National Park. The area continues north to the foot of the Wooded Greensand Hills, within which settlement increases significantly. To the south, the area extends as far south as Old Lane, after which the landform begins to fall towards a valley feature along the River Wey.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 19-1

Area of Open Greensand Hills to the southeast of Milford.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: L – Open Greensand Hills

CHARACTER AREA: L5 – Churt to Hascombe Open Greensand Hills

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Pasture on complex topography with significant tree cover across the area, including some ancient woodland such as Parson's Hanger. No major incongruous elements.

Scenic Quality

Complex topography with sunken winding lanes, pasture, ponds and watercourses, and woodland including Parson's Hanger combine to form an interesting pattern of land cover and sense of place, which can be appreciated from footpaths and lanes. There are memorable views and cognitive and sensory stimuli, such as along the watercourse with views up to Parson's Hanger.

Relative Wildness

There is one main lane through the area, which is generally sunken and secluded. Majority of the area has limited access, and settlement is assimilated well into the surrounding landscape by tree cover. The Portsmouth Direct railway line to the west is largely obscured by woodland. Tree cover and topography provide enclosure. Human intervention is obvious in places, but overall the area is imitate and has a degree of remoteness.

Relative Tranquillity

Tree cover, peace and quiet, and natural sounds such as bird song, contribute to a sense of tranquillity. Lanes are sunken and there is limited settlement overall.

Natural Heritage Features

Tree cover on complex topography, in particular Parson's Hanger, contributes to the scenic quality of the area.

Cultural Heritage

Includes Enton Hall and vernacular farmsteads. Associations with Parson's Hanger.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 19-1

Area contiguous with the AONB to the south, defined by the Portsmouth Direct railway line to the west, and the edges of areas which do not meet the natural beauty criteria, including fishing lakes to the north and golf course to the east.

6.2.9 Wooded Greensand Hills

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 09-2

Band of Wooded Greensand Hills stretching east-west from the south-east corner of Redhill to the western edge of Oxted.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: K – Wooded Greensand Hills

CHARACTER AREA: K11 – Earlswood to Oxted Wooded Greensand Hills

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA

Landscape Quality

Typical Wooded Greensand Hills with qualities consistent with areas of Greensand Hills in the AONB. Includes steep winding sunken lanes and areas of intact ancient woodland. There are a few incongruous elements including a golf course, but these have a relatively localised influence.

Scenic Quality

Ancient woodland and prominent landform with steep winding sunken lanes provide visual interest and a very strong sense of place. Enclosed internally by woodland giving a sense of intimacy in most parts, yet elevated position allows panoramic views out in places, including views of the Weald to the south and Greensand Hills and the Downs to the north.

Relative Wildness

Roads and settlement largely obscured by vegetation, although human intervention is noticeable in many areas.

Relative Tranquillity

Woodland aids the tranquillity although tempered by the presence of road traffic and scattered settlement.

Natural Heritage Features

Sunken lanes with striking exposed greensand and tree roots, providing a visible expression of geology and distinctive sense of place and scenic quality.

Cultural Heritage

Elevated settlement and historic buildings such as Oxted Place.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 09-2

Area defined by extent of distinctive wooded Greensand Hills which form a ridgeline feature, detached from the AONB to the north. The characteristics and high scenic quality have sufficient scale and prominence such that Area 09-2 should not be precluded from inclusion within the AONB due to its detached location.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 10-1

Small area of Wooded Greensand Hills at the eastern edge of the County boundary, adjacent to the Kent Downs AONB.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: K – Wooded Greensand Hills

CHARACTER AREA: K12 – The Chart Wooded Greensand Hills

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Includes a small area of intact ancient woodland and some hedgerows. Wooded hills representative of the elements characteristic of the contiguous landscape to the north and east, including Crockham Hill. No overtly incongruous elements.

Scenic Quality

Mosaic of fields, woodland, hedges and other tree groups provide visual interest, appreciated from high ground and public rights of way.

Relative Wildness

No main roads, limited settlement and low key human influence generally, combined with enclosure provided by tree cover, to give a sense of remoteness.

Relative Tranquillity

Peaceful area with no significant detractors.

Natural Heritage Features

Tree cover on sloping topography, contributes to the scenic quality of the area.

Cultural Heritage

Includes historic vernacular manor at Trevereux.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 10-1

Formed by the slopes Crockham Hill, and provides a consistent connection between the Sevenoaks Greensand Ridge of the adjacent Kent Downs AONB to the east, and the Surrey Hills AONB to the north-west.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 13-1

Area of Wooded Greensand Hills formed by Chinthurst Hill, to the south-east of Shalford.

Forms the focus of a mosaic of landscape types around Chinthurst Hill, including areas 13-2 and 13-4.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: K – Wooded Greensand Hills

CHARACTER AREA: K2 – Chinthurst to Hurt Wood Wooded Greensand Hills

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Ancient woodland on elevated setting, maintained as a nature reserve with traditional woodland management. Characteristic of wooded Greensand Hills within the AONB to the east. Folly tower is assimilated into the landscape by surrounding tree cover.

Scenic Quality

Elevated woodland and folly tower which appeals to the senses and results in a distinctive sense of place. There is visual continuity with surrounding AONB with panoramic views of the Greensand Hills from most directions, but no sense of nearby roads and settlement. Forms a characteristic and high quality area of wooded Greensand Hills.

Relative Wildness

Enclosure from woodland, no road access and limited settlement give a sense of remoteness. The settlements of Shalford, Womersley and Bramley are substantially contained by valley floor woodland and do not detract from the rural character of the Hill and its environs.

Relative Tranquillity

Peaceful wooded hill with bird song, and no overtly detracting elements within or surrounding.

Natural Heritage Features

Hill represents visible expression of wooded Greensand Hills from the wider landscape. Woodland contributes to sense of place, remoteness and tranquillity. Woodland managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust.

Cultural Heritage

Traditional woodland management including coppicing and grazing. Includes tower folly.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 13-1

Area formed by Chinthurst Hill and connected to the existing AONB by a surrounding mosaic of landscape types.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 13-3

Area of Wooded Greensand Hills to the east of Wonersh.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: K – Wooded Greensand Hills

CHARACTER AREA: K2 – Chinhurst to Hurt Wood Wooded Greensand Hills

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Includes significant areas of intact ancient woodland, tree lines etc, on undulating topography. Characteristics consistent with wooded Greensand Hills within the AONB adjacent to the east. Includes conference centre and St John's Seminary, which are largely enclosed by well maintained gardens and tree cover, and do not appear as an incongruous element from the surrounding landscape.

Scenic Quality

Woodland blocks, fields and tree lines resulting in an appealing pattern of land cover, and combined with sloping topography provide a sense of place and form a characteristic and high quality area of wooded Greensand Hills.

Relative Wildness

Enclosed and mostly unsettled, with just one short stretch of rural road, resulting in a sense of remoteness.

Relative Tranquillity

Woodland, peace and quiet, and no overtly detracting features results in a tranquil area.

Natural Heritage Features

Landscape represents visible expression of wooded Greensand Hills from the wider landscape to the west, including in views from Chinhurst Hill. Woodland contributes to sense of place, remoteness and tranquillity.

Cultural Heritage

Includes St John's Seminary.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 13-3

Continuation of the Wooded Greensand Hills from the existing AONB adjacent to the east, down to the Greensand Valley, towards Chinthurst Hill.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 15-1

Wooded Greensand Hills to the west of Reigate.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: K – Wooded Greensand Hills

CHARACTER AREA: K10 – Skimmington Wooded Greensand Hills

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Areas of woodland and intervening pastoral and arable fields. Typical Wooded Greensand Hills with qualities of steep winding sunken lanes and areas of (often ancient) woodland. There are a few incongruous elements including a golf course which occupies the majority of Reigate Heath, but these have a relatively localised influence.

Scenic Quality

Ancient woodland and prominent landform with steep winding sunken lanes provide visual interest and a very strong sense of place. Elevated landform allows views out to the north of the striking North Downs ridge, and south out over Wealden and Greensand Valley landscapes.

Relative Wildness

Tree cover gives a sense of intimacy in most parts, yet elevated position allows panoramic over lower ground and hills beyond, including views of surrounding settlement and phone masts in the distance. There is noticeable human influence in the form of a number of roads and scattered settlement, although there are generally well assimilated into the surrounding landscape by tree cover.

Relative Tranquillity

Woodland footpaths including the Greensand Way through Reigate Park, provide a number of enclosed, intimate areas, although tranquillity is reduced by the presence of road traffic and scattered settlement in places.

Natural Heritage Features

Sunken lanes with striking exposed greensand and tree roots, providing a visible expression of geology and distinctive sense of place and scenic quality.

Cultural Heritage

Associations with Reigate Park.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 15-1

Area defined by extent of distinctive wooded Greensand Hills which forms distinctive feature in views from the wider landscape, and provides intervisibility with the North Downs.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 20-1

Small area of Wooded Greensand Hills to the southeast of Godalming.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: K – Wooded Greensand Hills

CHARACTER AREA: K8 – Loxhill to Catteshill Wooded Greensand Hills

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Small area of generally good quality woodland forming contiguous part of Munstead Wood to the east and containing Getrude Jekyll's garden and house designed by Edwin Lutyens.

Scenic Quality

Woodland is relatively uniform in character, but has cognitive and sensory stimuli such as sounds which appeal to the senses.

Relative Wildness

There is a degree of remoteness due to enclosure provided by the woodland a low-key human intervention.

Relative Tranquillity

Tranquil within the woodland, but some detraction due to the perceptions of traffic noise from nearby roads.

Natural Heritage Features

Woodland helps achieve a sense of wildness and tranquillity.

Cultural Heritage

Includes Getrude Jekyll's garden and house designed by Edwin Lutyens

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 20-1

Small area of woodland appearing as an anomaly in the adjacent surrounding AONB. Incorporates site of significant cultural importance.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 20-2

Small area of Wooded Greensand Hills to the south-east of Godalming.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: K – Wooded Greensand Hills

CHARACTER AREA: K8 – Loxhill to Catteshill Wooded Greensand Hills

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Small area of intact ancient hanging woodland and adjunct pasture and no incongruous elements.

Scenic Quality

High scenic quality of ancient 'hanging' woodland.

Relative Wildness

No roads or settlement and limited human intervention result in a sense of remoteness.

Relative Tranquillity

Tranquil wooded area with no detracting elements.

Natural Heritage Features

Iconic hanging woodland.

Cultural Heritage

No associations know for this small area.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 20-2

Small adjustment to what appears as an anomaly in the AONB boundary, to include continuation of distinctive woodland hanger feature.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREAS 23-1 to 24-3

Small areas of Wooded Greensand Hills, appearing as anomalies to the AONB boundary surrounding Haslemere and Hindhead.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: K – Wooded Greensand Hills

CHARACTER AREA: K5 – Hindhead Wooded Greensand Hills

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA**Landscape Quality**

Consists predominately of intact, often ancient, woodland, particularly to the north and west of Haslemere. Characteristic elements are contiguous with surrounding AONB. Limited incongruous elements, with nearby urban development largely obscured by woodland.

Scenic Quality

Part of the distinctive, wooded and sloping setting to Haslemere and Hindhead.

Relative Wildness

Woodland cover aids sense of remoteness in parts, although nearby human influence is often perceivable.

Relative Tranquillity

Influence from nearby development tempers the sense of tranquillity in places.

Natural Heritage Features

Sloping woodland adds to the sense of place, functioning as a setting to settlement.

Cultural Heritage

Association with nearby settlement.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREAS 23-1 to 24-3

These are small adjustments to what appear as anomalies in the AONB boundary, located between the adjacent AONB and the settlement boundary. Mainly wooded areas which are consistent with the surrounding AONB Wooded Greensand Hills.

6.2.10 River Floodplain

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 11-1

Length of River Floodplain formed by the River Wey North Branch, to the east of Compton.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: A – River Floodplain

CHARACTER AREA: A2 – Upper Wey River Floodplain

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA

Landscape Quality

Well vegetated watercourse including wetlands and some ancient woodland. Encompasses some pastoral fields and adjoining isolated dwellings, but no overtly Incongruous elements present.

Scenic Quality

On the eastern side of the river are striking steep greensand slopes with exposed tree roots. This, combined with tree cover which encloses the watercourse, give a distinctive sense of place. The meandering river, trees and wetland vegetation, along with pockets of more open pasture, provide both visual interest and cognitive and sensory stimuli, such as the sound of running water, vegetation rustling, bird song and the smell of riparian vegetation.

Relative Wildness

There are no main roads through the area and only occasional isolated dwellings of vernacular architecture. There is no perception of adjacent housing, including those at the top of the slope to the east. Some low-key human influence in the form of grazing areas in places. Natural looking vegetation along the river encloses the watercourse creating a high sense of intimacy and a degree of remoteness.

Relative Tranquillity

Vegetation along the watercourse has a natural-looking appearance, there is birdsong, natural sounds such as running water. Generally peaceful, tranquil area, with no major detractors. Adjacent Waverley Lane to the west, and railway to the north, are only minor local disturbances.

Natural Heritage Features

Steep slopes with exposed greensand are a visible expression of geology giving a distinctive sense of place along with riparian vegetation which also contributes to the scenic quality and habitat value.

Cultural Heritage

Caves located in the greensand slopes and historic river crossings.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 11-1

Area is well defined along the floodplain as a continuation of the Wey from the existing AONB boundary to as far north as the Alton railway line.

SECONDARY POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL AREA FOR FURTHER SCRUTINY

AREA 13-6

Length of River Floodplain formed by the River Wey and River Wey Navigation, to the south of Guildford.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: A – River Floodplain

CHARACTER AREA: A2 – Upper Wey River Floodplain

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA

Landscape Quality

Characteristic elements of the Wey vary along its length between Guildford and Shalford, and the floodplain is formed of three distinct lengths. The first area, immediately south of Guildford is partly enclosed by riparian vegetation, and the gardens of large houses to the west. Here the floodplain also encompasses areas of meadow adjacent to the east of the river. However there is strong urban influence from settlement to the north, reinforced by domestic boundaries and retaining walls to the west and intensive boating/recreation activity. Further south, beyond the crossing of the North Downs Way, the watercourse is enclosed well by trees, and begins to meander. There are small sand cliffs which give a rural character and eventually the river and navigation temporarily part company. Further south in the third section, which contains St. Catherine's Lock, tree cover reduces giving way to meadow and rough grass, resulting in a more open floodplain than to the north. Here there are views across to the AONB hills within close proximity to the northwest, but there are also intervening incongruous features including a busy railway line and associated infrastructure, adjacent areas of light industry/commercial buildings, telecom masts and other structures. There is no ancient woodland.

Scenic Quality

Trees and riparian vegetation, appeal to the senses in places, but the impact of urban influence and varying land cover reduces scenic quality, and results in a lack of consistency in the quality of the landscape.

Relative Wildness

The northern area is overlooked by the edge of Guildford, with settlement on high ground to the northwest, and is lined by moorings resulting in significant human influence with engine noise from boats and general associated human activity. The central area is enclosed by tree cover and woodland, there are no moorings or settlement, and disturbance is limited to the occasional passing boat, which results in a sense of intimacy and peacefulness. In the southern area, there is significant human influence from surrounding land uses such as the railway and associated

infrastructure, areas of light industry/commercial buildings, telecom masts etc, and, albeit a traditional use, there is also human activity associated with the lock.

Relative Tranquillity

Tranquillity varies along this stretch of the Wey. The central, enclosed area is relatively peaceful with contributors to tranquillity, such as natural looking woodland, and limited detractors. The southern area has a number of detractors such as the busy railway line and light industrial development. To the north, although a traditional waterborne recreation, boating activity has considerable human influence and results in limited tranquillity.

Natural Heritage Features

The varying amount of woodland is relates to the varying scenic quality along the floodplain and provides a wetland habitat in places.

Cultural Heritage

Associations with the historic Wey Navigation and waterborne recreation.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 13-6

The area is mostly defined by the floodplain, beyond which are detracting urban influences.

6.3 Low Weald

- 6.3.1 The Low Weald covers a broad area across the southern part of Surrey. 'Wooded Low Weald' Stretches from Haslemere to Dorking, rising along its northern edge to meet the Greensand Hills. Between Dorking and the eastern County boundary is a band of 'Low Weald Farmland', again rising slight to the north where it joins the Greensand hills (see plan HDA 2).
- 6.3.2 Swathes of undulating, intimate Wooded Low Weald adjacent to the Greensand Hills are included in the Surrey Hills AONB between Haslemere and Dorking. Outside the AONB and further from the Greensand Hills, the distinctive characteristics of Wooded Low Weald begin to dissipate, with field sizes increasing, woodland cover becoming more dispersed, and landform undulating more gently.
- 6.3.3 The Low Weald Farmland to the east of Dorking is detached from the AONB to the north by the intervening greensand valley to the south of the ridge scarp and the band of Wooded Greensand Hills which forms the northern backdrop the low weald. The low weald between Dorking and the eastern County boundary is a farmed landscape with well maintained landscape features such as low clipped hedges, and generally has a higher human influence and less distinctiveness that the Wooded Low Weald to the southwest of Dorking.
- 6.3.4 Areas of Low Weald within the study area which meet the majority of the natural beauty criteria, and therefore are to be put forward as suitable additions to the Surrey Hills AONB, are summarised below. The area prefix relates to the sheet number of the 1:25,000 maps which are in Appendix B. Area 25-1 is therefore shown in detail on Map 25.

6.3.5 Wooded Low Weald

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREA 25-1

Extensive area of Wooded Low Weald, east of Chiddingfold.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: N – Wooded Low Weald

CHARACTER AREA: N2 – West Dunsfold Wooded Low Weald & N3 – Tugley to Sidney Wood Wooded Low Weald

NATURAL BEAUTY CRITERIA

Landscape Quality

Large tracts of intact ancient woodland, along with hangers, winding watercourses and wooded ghylls. Characteristic elements are well represented throughout, although woodland blocks and fields increase in size towards the south. Incongruous elements are not present to a significant degree.

Scenic Quality

Strongly undulating landform, woodland, hangers, winding watercourses and wooded ghylls form a very interesting pattern of land cover and a distinctive sense of place.

There are strong aesthetic qualities, and cognitive and sensory stimuli, including sounds of running water, bird song, and sounds and smell associated with woodland.

Relative Wildness

Undulating topography and woodland combine to produce highly enclosed, intimate landscape, and limit the human influence of limited lanes and settlement, resulting in a sense of remoteness.

Relative Tranquillity

Characteristic landscape elements such as woodland, hangers and ghylls, and peace and quiet combine to result in a tranquil area. Areas of settlement and a limited number of main roads are generally assimilated well into the surrounding landscape by vegetation and topography and are minor detracting elements.

Natural Heritage Features

Elements such as ghylls and hangers, along with ancient woodland result in high scenic quality and contribute to sense of place, relative wildness and tranquillity.

Cultural Heritage

Contains several conservation areas and listed buildings.

SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED WHEN IDENTIFYING EXTENT OF AREA 25-1

The scale of the landscape varies slightly across the area, with larger scale fields and woodland blocks generally to the south, and smaller, more intimate areas to the north. However, the underlying distinctive characteristics meet the natural beauty criteria, and are noticeable higher quality than other Wealden landscapes to the east.

7 SUMMARY

- 7.1 This study has identified significant areas of Downs, Wealden Greensand and Low Weald which meet Natural England's AONB natural beauty criteria.
- 7.2 Areas which meet the criteria within the Downs include large tracts of open rolling downland to the north-east of the study area with striking landform, memorable views and limited human influence, along with more enclosed areas such as Banstead Heath, and areas of secluded, intimate woodland such as Nower Wood. To the north-west, there are areas contiguous with the AONB down the dip slope near Flexford and East Clandon.
- 7.3 Within the Wealden Greensand there are areas of highly distinctive wooded Greensand Hills, with their characteristic tree cover, steeply winding deep sunken lanes with exposed greensand and tree roots, and views out over the Weald and to the Downs. Such strong characteristics and high scenic quality mean that Area 09-2 should not be precluded from inclusion within the AONB due to its detached location. Elsewhere, farmland to the south of Franham with its distinctive mature landscape features and undulating topography, and areas of Greensand Valley with their visual and physical continuity with the surrounding AONB, meet the AONB natural beauty criteria.
- 7.4 There is also a large area of Wooded Low Weald to the east of Chiddingfold which meets the natural beauty criteria. This is an extensive area of undulating and intimate landscape with large areas of ancient woodland, ghylls and limited settlement which have high scenic quality and are highly distinctive.
- 7.5 The study has also identified areas which are considered as 'secondary' areas requiring further scrutiny. These are areas where there is an underlying natural beauty to the landscape but which due to human influences and current land use patterns, do not clearly meet the majority of the criteria.

SEE SEPARATE FILES FOR FIGURES:

HDA 1 Study Area, and Existing AONB and AGLV (A1 size 1:80,000 scale map)

HDA 2 Draft LCA Landscape Typologies and Character Areas Map (A1 size 1:80,000 scale map)

HDA 3 Recommended Additional Areas of AONB (A1 size 1:80,000 scale map)

APPENDIX A

EXAMPLE EVALUATION SHEET

SURVEY REF

Location	Date / time / weather	Photographs

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

County LCA	AONB?	HDA Landscape Type	Code
	Yes No		
District LCA	AONB LCA	HDA Character Area	Code

GEOLOGY

Solid	Drift

LANDFORM

Flat	Strongly rolling	Valley floor/floodplain	Downland
Plateau	Rolling	Steep valley side	Complex topography
Plain	Undulating	Gentle valley side slope	Artificial/man-made
Steep	Gently undulating	Broad valley	Beach – pebble
Upland	Scarp	Narrow valley	Beach – sand
Lowland	Dip slope	Dry valley	Cliff
Other:			

LANDCOVER – tick all that apply: ✓ Occasional ✓✓ Evident ✓✓✓ Conspicuous

Arable	Parkland	Broadleaved woodland	Tree belts / shaws
Pasture	Horticulture	Mixed woodland	Gill / riparian woodland
Mixed farmland	Paddocks	Conifer plantation	Carr
Rough grass / grazing	Set-aside	Hanging woodland	Coppice
Meadow	Common	Orchards	Scrub
Chalk grassland	Green	Scattered trees	Wetland / marsh
Heath	Recreation	Avenues	Open water
Other:			

FIELD PATTERNS – tick all that apply: ✓ Occasional ✓✓ Evident ✓✓✓ Conspicuous

Small	Large	Linear	Irregular
Medium	Geometric	Sinuuous	Regular
Other:			

BOUNDARIES – tick all that apply: ✓ Occasional ✓✓ Evident ✓✓✓ Conspicuous

Hedgerows	Banks	Shelter belt	Wall – rural eg dry stone
Hedgerow trees	Ditches	Fence – rural	Wall – urban
Clipped hedges	Ditches with tree line	Fence – urban	Open
Other:			

DRAINAGE – tick all that apply: ✓ Occasional ✓✓ Evident ✓✓✓ Conspicuous

River	Canal	Reservoir	Marsh / reeds
Stream	Lake	Dry valley	Tidal mudflat
Ditch	Pond	Winterbourne	Salt march
Other:			

ACCESS / COMMUNICATIONS – tick all that apply: ✓ Occasional ✓✓ Evident ✓✓✓ Conspicuous

<input type="checkbox"/>	Motorway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural lanes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public footpath/bridleway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Railway line
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dual carriageway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sunken lanes	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Trail	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pylons / power lines
<input type="checkbox"/>	Major roads	<input type="checkbox"/>	Track	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wide verges	<input type="checkbox"/>	Phone poles / lines
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural roads	<input type="checkbox"/>	Green lane	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lighting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Telecom mast
Other:							

SETTLEMENT / OTHER FEATURES – tick all that apply: ✓ Occasional ✓✓ Evident ✓✓✓ Conspicuous

<input type="checkbox"/>	Town edge	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scattered	<input type="checkbox"/>	Church / chapel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mineral workings – current
<input type="checkbox"/>	Village	<input type="checkbox"/>	Isolated	<input type="checkbox"/>	Graveyard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mineral workings – disused
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hamlet	<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fortifications	<input type="checkbox"/>	Military
<input type="checkbox"/>	Farmsteads	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vernacular	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hill forts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Airfield
<input type="checkbox"/>	Agricultural buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nucleated	<input type="checkbox"/>	Urban	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moats	<input type="checkbox"/>	Commercial
<input type="checkbox"/>	Linear	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manor/parkland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks - historic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Golf course
<input type="checkbox"/>	Low density	<input type="checkbox"/>	Landmark buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks - modern	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other:							

VIEWS**PERCEPTION**

VIEWS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Distant	Framed	Intermittent	Panoramic	Corridor	
SCALE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Intimate	Small	Medium	Large	Vast	
ENCLOSURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Confined	Enclosed	Semi-enclosed	Open	Exposed	
VARIETY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Complex	Mosaic	Varied	Simple	Uniform	
TEXTURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Smooth	Textured	Rough	Very rough		
COLOUR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Monochrome	Muted	Colourful	Garish		
MOVEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Remote	Vacant	Peaceful	Active	Busy	

SURVEY REF

Location			HDA Character Area	Date / time / weather	Photographs
AONB?	Yes	No			

1. LANDSCAPE QUALITY**1.1 INTACTNESS OF THE LANDSCAPE IN VISUAL, FUNCTIONAL AND ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES**

Characteristic natural and man-made elements are well represented throughout.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
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Comments:

1.2 CONDITION OF THE LANDSCAPE'S FEATURES AND ELEMENTS

Landscape elements are in good condition.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
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Comments:

1.3 INFLUENCE OF INCONGRUOUS FEATURES OR ELEMENTS (MAN-MADE OR NATURAL) ON THE PERCEIVED NATURAL BEAUTY OF THE AREA

Incongruous elements are not present to a significant degree, are not visually intrusive, have only localised influence or are temporary in nature.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
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Comments:

2. SCENIC QUALITY**2.1 DISTINCTIVE SENSE OF PLACE**

The Landscape character lends a clear and recognisable sense of place.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
--	-------	---------	----------

Comments:

2.2 STRIKING LANDFORM

The landform shows a strong sense of scale or contrast.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
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There are striking landform types or coastal configurations.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
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Comments:

2.3 VISUAL INTEREST IN PATTERNS OF LAND COVER

Land cover and vegetation types form an appealing pattern or composition in relation to each other and/or to landform which may be appreciated from either a vantage point or as one travels through a landscape.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
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Comments:

2.4 APPEAL TO THE SENSES

There are strong aesthetic qualities, reflecting factors such as scale and form, degree of openness or enclosure, colours and textures, simplicity or diversity, and ephemeral or seasonal interest.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
--	-------	---------	----------

There are memorable or unusual views and eye-catching features or landmarks.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
--	-------	---------	----------

Characteristic cognitive and sensory stimuli (e.g. sounds, quality of light, characteristic smells, characteristics of the weather).	Agree	Partial	Disagree
--	-------	---------	----------

Comments:

3. RELATIVE WILDNESS**3.1 SENSE OF REMOTENESS**

There are relatively few roads or other transport routes.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Location is distant from, or perceived as distant from, significant habitation.	Agree	Partial	Disagree

Comments:

3.2 RELATIVE LACK OF HUMAN INFLUENCE

There are extensive areas of semi-natural vegetation.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
There are uninterrupted tracts of land with few built features and few overt industrial or urban influences.	Agree	Partial	Disagree

Comments:

3.3 SENSE OF OPENNESS AND EXPOSURE

Location is open, exposed to the elements and expansive in character.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
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Comments:

3.4 SENSE OF ENCLOSURE AND ISOLATION

There is a sense of enclosure provided by (eg) woodland, landform that offers a feeling of isolation.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
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Comments:

3.5 SENSE OF THE PASSING OF TIME AND A RETURN TO NATURE

Absence or apparent absence of active human intervention	Agree	Partial	Disagree
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Comments:

4. RELATIVE TRANQUILLITY**4.1 CONTRIBUTORS TO TRANQUILLITY**

Presence and/or perceptions of natural landscape, birdsong, peace and quiet, natural-looking woodland, stars at night, stream, sea, natural sounds and similar influences.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
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Comments:

4.2 DETRACTORS FROM TRANQUILLITY

Presence and/or perceptions of traffic noise, large numbers of people, urban development, overhead light pollution, low flying aircraft, power lines and similar influences.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
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Comments:

5. NATURAL HERITAGE FEATURES**5.1 GEOLOGICAL AND GEO-MORPHOLOGICAL FEATURES**

Visible expression of geology in distinctive sense of place and other aspects of scenic quality.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Presence of striking or memorable geo-morphological features.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Comments:			

5.2 WILDLIFE AND HABITATS

Presence of wildlife and/or habitats that make a particular contribution to distinctive sense of place or other aspects of scenic quality.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Presence of individual species that contribute to sense of place, relative wildness or tranquillity.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Comments:			

6. CULTURAL HERITAGE**6.1 BUILT ENVIRONMENT, ARCHAEOLOGY AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES**

Presence of settlements, buildings or other structures that make a particular contribution to distinctive sense of place or other aspects of scenic quality.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Presence of visible archaeological remains, parkland or designed landscapes that provide striking features in the landscape.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Comments:			

6.2 HISTORIC INFLUENCE ON THE LANDSCAPE

Visible presence of historic landscape types or specific landscape elements or features that provide evidence of time depth or historic influence on the landscape.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Perceptions of a harmonious balance between natural and cultural elements in the landscape that stretch back over time.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Comments:			

6.3 CHARACTERISTIC LAND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Existence of characteristic land management practices, industries or crafts which contribute to natural beauty.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Comments:			

6.4 ASSOCIATIONS WITH WRITTEN DESCRIPTIONS

Availability of descriptions of the landscape in notable literature, topographical writings or guide books, or significant literature inspired by the landscape.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Comments:			

6.5 ASSOCIATIONS WITH ARTISTIC REPRESENTATIONS

Depiction of the landscape in art, other art forms such as photography or film, through language or folklore, or in inspiring related music.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Comments:			

6.6 ASSOCIATIONS OF THE LANDSCAPE WITH PEOPLE, PLACES OR EVENTS

Evidence that the landscape has associations with notable people or events, cultural traditions or beliefs.	Agree	Partial	Disagree
Comments:			

7. SPECIAL QUALITIES

7.1 IF LOCATION IS CURRENTLY WITHIN THE AONB, SUMMARISE ITS SPECIAL QUALITIES

Comments:

7.2 IF LOCATION IS CURRENTLY OUTSIDE THE AONB, SUMMARISE ANY SPECIAL QUALITIES IT HAS IN COMMON WITH EXISTING AREAS OF THE AONB

Comments:

APPENDIX B

KEY TO MAPS 01 TO 27

**MAPS 01 TO 27, SHOWING RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL AREAS OF AONB IN DETAIL
(A3 SIZE 1:25,000 SCALE MAPS)**

MAPS 01 TO 27 ARE INDEXED ON PLANS HDA 1 AND HDA 3

SEE SEPARATE FILES FOR:

Key to Maps 01 to 27

Maps 01 to 27, showing recommended additional areas of AONB in detail
(A3 size 1:25,000 scale maps)

APPENDIX C

**ALISON FARMER ASSOCIATES
REVIEW OF LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENTS WITHIN THE AONB
MARCH 2012**

Alison Farmer Report to Natural England

Surrey Hills Review

2.1 Focus of Boundary Review

The focus of the boundary review was the proposal by the Surrey Hills AONB Partnership to extend the AONB boundary to include land designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). This proposal was supported by the 2007 study by Chris Burnett Associates entitled *Surrey Hills AGLV Review* and a further study in 2010 again by Chris Burnett Associates entitled *Cranleigh, Shamley Green Landscape Assessment* which recommended an additional area beyond the AGLV to also be considered for AONB designation.

2.2 Evidence Reviewed

The following documents were reviewed as part of the work:

Landscape Character Assessment

- *The Future of Surrey's Landscape and Woodlands*, Surrey County Council, 1997.
- *The Surrey Hills Landscape* Countryside Commission 1998.
- *Guildford Borough Landscape Character Assessment*, Land Use Consultants, 2006.
- *Reigate and Banstead Borough Wide Landscape and Townscape Assessment*, W S Atkins, 2008.

Natural Beauty Evaluation

- *Designation History Series: Surrey Hills AONB*, Countryside Commission.
- *Surrey Hills AGLV Review*, Chris Burnett Associates, 2007.
- *Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan*, Surrey Hills Board, 2009.
- *Cranleigh, Shamley Green Landscape Assessment*, Chris Burnett Associates, 2010.

2.3 Landscape Character Assessment - Key Findings

The Future of Surrey's Landscape and Woodlands

This assessment was carried out in 1997. The approach adopted was based on the 1995 landscape assessment guidance and therefore predates the current guidance on character assessment¹. The assessment identified landscape character areas and types. The types are in effect detailed land use types and are not in accordance with best practice. The character areas are based on the National Character Areas². Four NCAs relate to the study area (AONB/AGLV) including Thames Basin Lowlands, North Downs, Wealden Greensand and Low Weald. Within the Surrey assessment these areas are subdivided into County character areas. For each NCA a broad description is given and for each County character area text includes key characteristics, detailed description and management opportunities. Although this assessment is not as detailed as assessments carried out today, and is potentially out of date, it nonetheless provides a reasonable level of detail and a classification which is consistent across the study area.

The Surrey Hills Landscape

This character assessment identified character types and areas and is still referred to in the Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan. It provides a consistent understanding of the character of the AONB landscape and sets out the special qualities of the AONB designation.

This landscape character assessment of the existing AONB is relatively dated and not consistent with the 2002 guidance. It identifies landscape types and areas and relates well

¹ Landscape Character Assessments (2002) Scottish Natural Heritage and The Countryside Agency

² <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/englands/character/areas/default.aspx>

with the earlier Surrey County Assessment. For each character area information on key characteristics, a written description and local management issues is provided. In places further information is also provided on cultural associations and areas of particular value. In its introduction this assessment refers to the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB as a whole which is a useful point of reference in relation to any proposed AONB extension.

The Jigsaw Project, undertaken in 2000, enabled the development of 'significance statements' for the character areas within the AONB which are set out in appendix 1 of the AONB Management Plan (see below)

Guildford Borough Landscape Character Assessment

This assessment covers land within and outside of the AONB for Guildford Borough. It has used the classification for the Surrey Hills AONB and made reference to the Surrey County Assessment. The relationship of the character areas and types identified to these earlier assessments has been recorded. This is an up to date assessment which uses best practice and contains valuable information for informing an assessment of natural beauty. However, it only covers a small part of the AGLV landscape and land beyond the AONB.

Reigate and Banstead Borough Wide Landscape and Townscape Assessment

This assessment covers land within and outside of the AONB for Reigate and Banstead Borough. It has made reference to and nests with the National Character Areas and has also referred to the CBA study. This is an up to date assessment which uses best practice and contains valuable information for informing an assessment of natural beauty in areas beyond the AONB. However, it only covers a small part of the AGLV and therefore study area.

Overall

There is no one up to date reliable landscape character assessment which covers the AONB and adjoining landscape. Of the local Boroughs and Districts only Guildford and Reigate and Banstead have undertaken local character assessments and cover only a small part of the study area. The two assessments which consistently cover the area are the AONB and County Assessments but both are in need of updating. Nevertheless the classification defined within these latter assessments is probably still relatively robust and applicable and could therefore form the basis of defining evaluation areas – see recommendations below and drawing number 1.

2.4 Natural Beauty Evaluation - Key Findings

The Chris Burnett Associates 2007 and 2010 studies predate the published 2011 Natural England Guidance on assessing landscapes for designation. Nevertheless, at the time of preparation guidance on factors which contribute to the value of a landscape were available in published landscape character assessment guidance³.

Study Area and Designation History

The Chris Burnett Associates (CBA) study looked at the background to the AGLV designation and identified that there has been an historical link between the AGLV and AONB designation. However the study does not appear to have consulted the Designation History Series for the Surrey Hills prepared by Ray Woolmore of the Countryside Commission.

The designation history highlights that the Surrey Hills incorporated early (1958) AGLV areas into its boundaries as well as additional areas put forward by Local Authorities during consultation on the proposed AONB boundary. Importantly not all the areas put forward by

³ Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Wales (2002) Scottish Natural Heritage and The Countryside Agency

the Local Authorities were considered worthy of designation by the National Parks Commission (NPC), namely those put forward by Guildford District Council to the north were excluded on the basis of their 'lack of any special landscape value' (para 6 and folio 6). These suggested northern extensions (in part), along with other new areas, were later designated as new AGLV areas during the 1970s and 1980s. It is these latter AGLV areas which formed the 'Study Area' for the CBA study.

The CBA study states in paragraph 2.4 that the criteria for defining the AGLV and AONB were not known. However we do know that the AONB designation was based on the Hobhouse criteria and that these criteria have formed the basis for the now Natural England guidance on designation.

Spatial Framework and Evaluation

The CBA 2007 study used the character assessment for the Surrey Hills AONB (1998) as a baseline (i.e. the key characteristics for each character area were used for comparison to the AGLV) but not as a framework for evaluation. The framework used in the study was based on the separate AGLV areas which were sub-divided into compartments per local authority area (page 53, para 5.12). 24 compartments were identified split between the 6 local authorities. This approach has resulted in the assessment of a large number of small areas.

The assessment was based on character and involved comparing the key characteristics of the AONB character areas with those in the adjacent AGLV compartments. The approach is based on the assumption that landscape character assessment has superseded qualitative assessment (para 5.2), which is not correct.

The extent to which characteristics were shared was graded into identical (green), shared (amber) or few (red). The green areas were recommended for taking forward to be included in the AONB without further assessment while amber and red areas were recommended for further assessment.

The assessment has not use natural beauty factors similar to those set out in the Natural England Guidance and appears to have conflated character and evaluation processes. The assessment also appears to have given insufficient weight to the 'special qualities' which contribute to natural beauty of the area i.e. the reason for AONB designation. Despite this within the analysis (for example table 5.13), issues to do with fragmentation, intactness and condition are discussed and in the summary tables page 37-42 reference is made to 'high, coherent quality' and 'scenic character' and 'scenic quality'. Nevertheless the meaning of these terms is not explicit and the lack of transparency in terms of what factors or indicators have been taken into account is absent, casting doubt on the reliability of the assessment and its conclusions.

In summary the CBA assessment has defined a study area based on the AGLV designation, divided the study area into compartments (based on geographic parcels of AGLV and local authority boundaries) and evaluated these areas (based on shared character) to define candidate areas (green) and areas requiring particular scrutiny (amber/red). The evaluation is primarily based on character and not on an evaluation of factors and indicators which contribute to natural beauty and has low compatibility with the Natural England Guidance.

The study openly acknowledges that it is broad brush and should be followed by further detailed assessment. It did not go as far as defining a proposed boundary to the AONB (para 6.3).

We conclude that while both the studies by Chris Burnett Associates make a comparison between the AONB and adjacent AGLV areas, inevitably they were not informed by the NE Guidance which was not in place at the time they were written. Hence while they include some useful and relevant information, they lack transparency and do not meet the specific requirements of the current guidance.

2.5 Recommendations

As a result of these issues and lack of broad compatibility with Natural England Guidance we would recommend that a new evaluation of the AGLV land is undertaken.

Developing a Framework for Evaluation and Baseline Data

We recommend that a new evaluation seeks to use existing consistent landscape character information as a framework for evaluation. To date this consists of the Surrey County Assessment (1997) and the AONB assessment (1998). These assessments 'nest' with the National Character Areas and with each other. Information contained in these assessments is useful for evaluation although it is accepted that some of the written descriptions are relatively broad brush and that the material is dated. The more detailed and up to date material for the Guildford Landscape Character Assessment (2006) highlights this. We recommend that the Guildford assessment and Reigate and Banstead assessments are used to supplement the earlier assessments for their relevant areas during evaluation - see below.

In addition to the LCA material we recommend that digital data is compiled in a GIS to include the following datasets:

- Landscape designations (AONB and AGLV boundaries)
- Nature Conservation (SAC, SPA, Ramsar, SSSI, NNR, LNR, CWS, RIGS)
- Cultural Heritage (WHS, Register Battlefield, Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings)
- Ancient and Semi-natural Woodland
- Tranquillity mapping
- Commons
- Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)

These datasets provide additional information relevant to the factors which contribute to natural beauty as set out in Natural England Guidance.

When using the existing LCA information care should be taken to cross check compiled information during field work evaluation because it is likely that some material in the assessments is out of date. Ideally, if there are sufficient resources available, there would be sense in updating the character assessments for Surrey County (including the AONB area) to bring it (and the AONB assessment) into line with best practice and to provide additional descriptive material to the same level of detail as the Guildford assessment. However, in the absence of resources the approach recommended above should be sufficient.

Defining Evaluation Areas

We recommend that the evaluation areas should be based on character areas, each of which may include a number of AGLV landscapes, as shown on drawing number 1. Seven evaluation areas have been defined and set out below along with a description of their location, relevant AGLV compartments (as defined in the Chris Burnett study) and relevant landscape character areas (as defined in the County and AONB assessments). It should be noted that the Evaluation Areas include the AGLV areas in their entirety and also extend some way beyond. This is partly because it is not clear what criteria led to the definition of the AGLV areas and the CBA study has highlighted that in some cases land beyond the AGLV may be worthy of designation.

Table 2.1: Recommended Evaluation Areas

Evaluation Area	Description	Corresponding AGLV Compartments as defined in Chris Burnett Associates Study	Relevant landscape character areas to consult during evaluation

		2007	
1. West Surrey Hills	Wey Valley Tributaries around Farnham. Within the AGLV the landscape comprises mainly greensand plateau incised by river valleys.	W1 W2 W3	County Assessment Character Areas: Wealden Greensand Plateau - Shackleford Wealden Greensand Valleys - Puttenham and Seale Adjacent AONB landscape: The Upper Wey, Shackleford and Hog's Back and Puttenham Vale
2. North Downs - north western	Northern fringes to the AONB between Aldershot and Guildford	G1	County Assessment Character Areas: Thames Basin Lowlands - Wanborough Adjacent AONB landscape: Hog's Back and Puttenham Vale
3. North Downs - central	Northern fringes to the AONB between Guildford and Mole Gap	G2	County Assessment Character Areas: Thames Basin Lowlands - Oakham to Clandon Adjacent AONB landscape: Ranmore and Hackhurst
4. North Downs - north eastern	Northern fringes to the AONB between Mole Gap and Limpsfield	EE1 M1 R2 R3 T2 T3	County Assessment Character Areas: North Downs - Woldingham, Chaldon and Box Hill Adjacent AONB landscape: Box Hill to Titsey
5. North Downs - south eastern	Southern fringes to the AONB between Dorking to Limpsfield Chart	M2 R1 T1 T4	County Assessment Character Areas: Wealden Greensand - Holesdale Wealden Greensand - Reigate Greensand Low Weald - Open Weald Adjacent AONB landscape: Box Hill to Titsey
6. Central Surrey Hills	Wey tributary valleys around Godalming, Milford and Wonersh	W4 W5 G3 G4 G5	County Assessment Character Areas: Wealden Greensand Plateau - Shackleford Wealden Greensand Plateau - Witley and Churt Wealden Greensand Valleys - The Upper Wey Leith Hill Greensand Adjacent AONB landscape: Hascombe Witley and Churt The Upper Wey Shackleford Pippbrook and Tillingbourne Leith Hill
7. South Wooded Weald	Southern fringes to the AONB between Chiddingfold and Capel	M3 W7 W6 W8	County Assessment Character Areas: Low Weald - Wooded Weald Adjacent AONB landscape: Chiddingfold Hascombe Wonersh to Holmwood

Undertaking Evaluation Based on Natural England Guidance

We recommend that for, each evaluation area, evidence is compiled for each factor contributing to natural beauty as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Natural England Guidance. The evidence should be set out in easy to follow tables forming a clear and transparent evidence base (refer to example below for Suffolk Coast and Heaths and to work recently undertaken in the North West of England

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/designatedareas/new/northwestdesignationsproject/documents.aspx>).

The Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan sets out the special features (12 in total) within the AONB and their significance and includes aspects such as 'Hills and View', 'Chalk Grassland' and Parkland and Historic Features'. These descriptions are a useful reference point in relation to any proposed AONB extension and along with the key features identified for each of the AONB landscape character areas (refer appendix 1 of the Management Plan) form a useful starting point for evaluating land beyond the AONB in terms of its special qualities and inherent natural beauty.

Importantly the AONB Management Plan makes reference to the AGLV landscapes and states that:

"Significant parts of the Surrey countryside adjacent to the AONB are designated at a county level as Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). These areas act as a buffer to the AONB but they also have their own inherent landscape quality and are significant in conserving the landscape setting of some towns. Although AGLV land is not a national designation with equal status to the AONB, this Management Plan recognises the importance of AGLV land in protecting the integrity of the Surrey Hills AONB landscape, particularly views to and from the AONB. The application of the Management Plan policies and actions to AGLV land will be instrumental in helping to conserve and enhance the Surrey Hills". [page 11 para 1.6.2 - emphasis added]

It should be noted that most of the factors underlined above (with the exception of landscape quality) cannot be taken into account in natural beauty evaluation; they are not among the natural beauty factors detailed in Appendix 1 of the Natural England Guidance on assessing landscapes for designation.

We recommend that information contained in the Guildford assessment and Reigate and Banstead assessments are used to supplement the earlier County and AONB character assessments during evaluation. In particular we recommend that the evidence on 'views', 'local landscape perceptions' as well as 'key positive landscape attributes' in the Guildford assessment is used to inform the evaluation process along with information on the significance of special landscape features set out within the AONB Management Plan.

Similarly the data collected with the GIS can be used to inform evaluation providing additional information relevant to the factors which contribute to natural beauty - further information on SSSI condition should also be consulted along with Conservation Area Appraisals where they exist.

Care should be taken not to include land for designation simply because it acts as a buffer or setting to the AONB landscape or to include land due to development pressure. Land should only be included where there is sufficient weight of evidence that the natural beauty criterion is met.

Following the assessment of the evaluation areas, those areas which have sufficient weight of evidence for designation should go forward as candidate areas. At this stage consideration should be given to whether it is desirable to designate the qualifying areas. Following this a detailed boundary can be defined. It is at this stage, in areas of transitional landscape, that views or 'visual associations' can be taken into account in defining a suitable boundary (Natural England Guidance Appendix 4).