

January 2007

# Guildford Landscape Character Assessment & Guidance

## Final Report

### Volume 2: Rural-Urban Fringe Assessment



Prepared by  
Guildford Borough Council  
and Land Use Consultants



# **GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**

## **RURAL-URBAN FRINGE ASSESSMENT**

### **FINAL REPORT**

**Prepared by  
Guildford Borough Council  
and  
Land Use Consultants**

**January 2007**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Land Use Consultants (LUC) prepared an original technical report, as part of an integrated assessment of the character of the rural landscape, the rural-urban fringe and the townscape of Guildford on behalf of Guildford Borough Council. The Land Use Consultants team consisted of Kate Ahern, Jane Wilson, Rebecca Knight and Frances Curtis.

The study has been steered by officers from Guildford Borough Council (GBC); Kay Munt, John Davey, Lesley Waddell and Jo Bell and from Surrey County Council; Mike Dawson, and Dave Symonds. The GIS mapping was produced by Sue Rudd of Guildford Borough Council, and the illustrative maps for this report were developed from the GIS information by Paul Bodill of Guildford Borough Council.

GBC has provided additional information within the text and added comments from stakeholder consultation. The final report therefore represents the combined work of LUC and GBC.

# I. INTRODUCTION AND CLASSIFICATION HIERARCHY

---

## THE GUILDFORD BOROUGH LANDSCAPE

- I.1 Guildford Borough presents a very varied and dynamic landscape as shown by the presence of four different countryside character areas at the national level (see **Figure I.1**). Its landscapes vary from the lowland heaths within the 'Thames Basin Heaths' to the chalk downland on the Hog's Back ridge of the North Downs. These landscapes form an important setting to the historic settlement of Guildford in the centre of the borough and to the urban area of Ash and Tongham to the west.
- I.2 **Figure A** shows the context for the borough, including land designated as the green belt and the boundary of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which covers much of the south of the borough.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- I.3 There are a number of different landscape assessments covering Guildford Borough. However, these were produced at different times and to different methodologies. This assessment has been produced using the current guidance on landscape character assessment and with the benefit of information not previously available such as the Historic Landscape Character Assessment of Surrey.
- I.4 The study takes a three-tiered approach with the borough-wide study forming the context and framework for the more detailed urban-fringe and townscape assessments (see **Figure B**). Together, these linked assessments provide a comprehensive, integrated characterisation of the borough to fulfil the objectives of the study, which are:
  - to provide a tool for decision making in the development control process;
  - to inform planning policy formation;
  - to guide landscape management decisions;
  - to form an information source for Guildford's two Area Action Plans.

Landscape Character Assessment is a tool for identifying the features which give a locality its sense of place, to help understand what the landscape is like today, how it came to be like that, and how it may change in the future as an aid to decision-making. It is endorsed within national Planning Policy under *PPS1: Delivering*

*Sustainable Development<sup>1</sup>, PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas<sup>2</sup>, the Companion Guide to PPS22: on Renewable Energy<sup>3</sup>, the Manual for Streets<sup>4</sup>, and the draft South East Plan<sup>5</sup>.*

- I.5 Government guidance requires that Plans, including Local development Frameworks (LDF's) should be “objective led” and to this end the LCA provides within its guidelines a clear statement of what needs to be done to deliver outcomes from development and management, regarding the conservation, enhancement or restoration of the landscape. Therefore character has become a significant material consideration in planning policy formation.
- I.6 It is proposed that in Guildford Borough, this work will be an important part of the evidence base supporting the policies within the Guildford Local Development Framework (GDF) and will therefore be an initial information source for individual planning applications and a material consideration when considering development proposals. The LCA will need to be used in conjunction with the saved policies of the Local Plan, the emerging GDF, and other adopted planning policy and guidance.
- I.7 First and foremost, the LCA will be an important tool to use when developing and assessing planning proposals. LCA delivers a suite of tools that can be used, and take forward a character-led approach to determining a spatial framework for application across a wide range of planning issues within the Borough, informing development location, transport and communications, recreation, biodiversity etc.
- I.8 LCA is also of value to the Community Planning process and the sustainability agenda generally. Since the adoption of Guildford's Local Plan and Community Plan (both 2003), the promotion of landscape as an asset and an opportunity, and not simply as a constraint, has been further considered where; ‘characterisation is used to help in accommodating necessary change without sacrificing local character’. It is therefore

---

<sup>1</sup> 17. Protection and Enhancement of the Environment; Planning Policy Statement I: National Planning Policies, ODPM, 2004

<sup>2</sup> Key Principles iv, 12. Design and Character of Rural Settlements, 15. Countryside Protection and Development in the Countryside, 26. The Countryside around Urban Areas and 32. Equine related activities: PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, ODPM, 2004

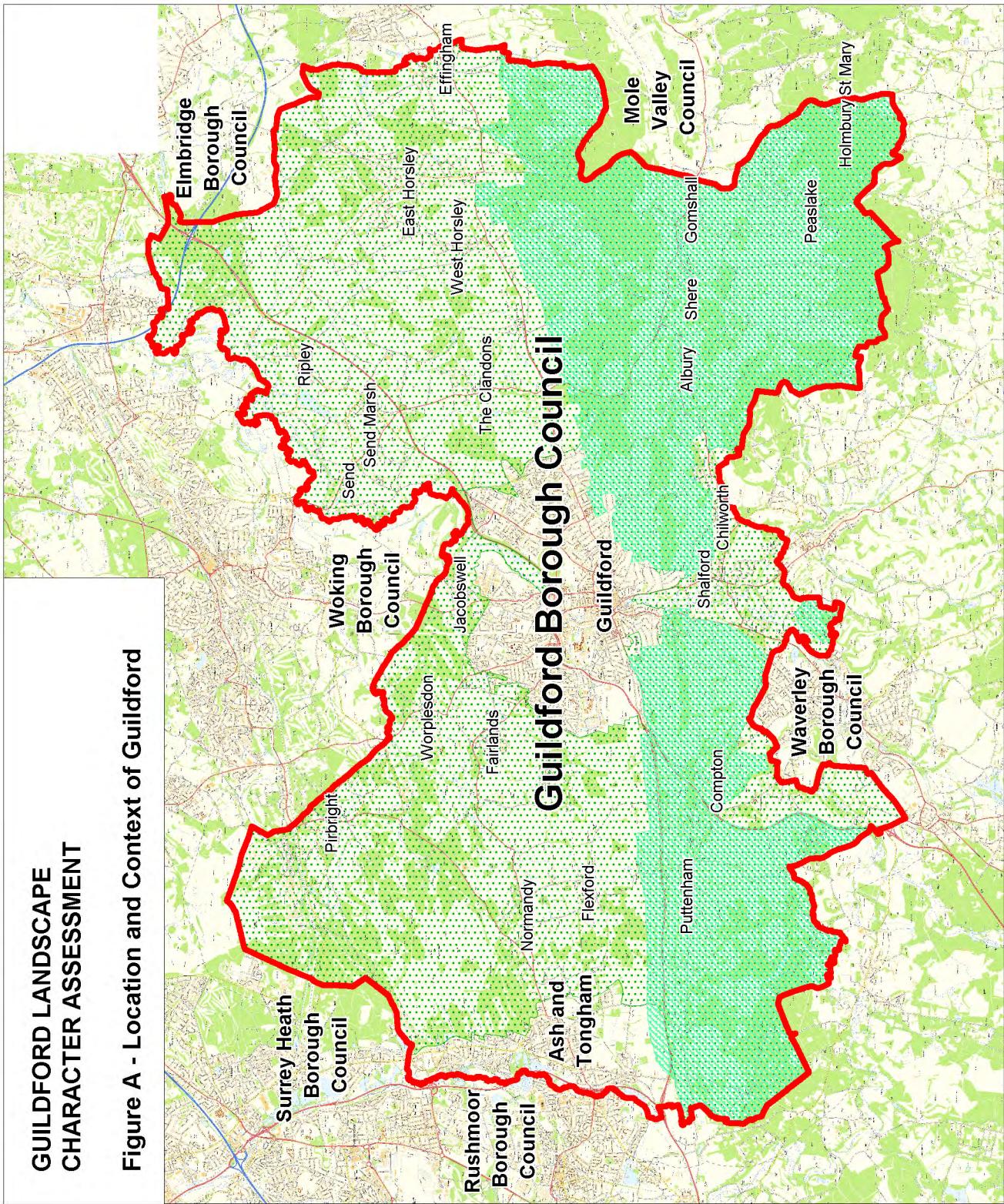
<sup>3</sup> The Wider Landscape, Landscape Character and Landscape Sensitivity, Planning for Renewable Energy: A Companion Guide to PPS22, ODPM, 2004

<sup>4</sup> 2.32-2.35 Place; Manual for Streets, Department for Transport, 2007

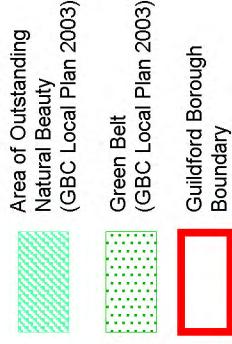
<sup>5</sup> D7 Landscape and Countryside Management; The Draft South East Plan, South East England regional Assembly, 2006

## GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

**Figure A - Location and Context of Guildford**



### Legend



Area of Outstanding  
Natural Beauty  
(GBC Local Plan 2003)

Green Belt  
(GBC Local Plan 2003)

Guildford Borough  
Boundary

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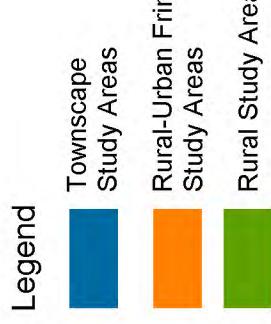
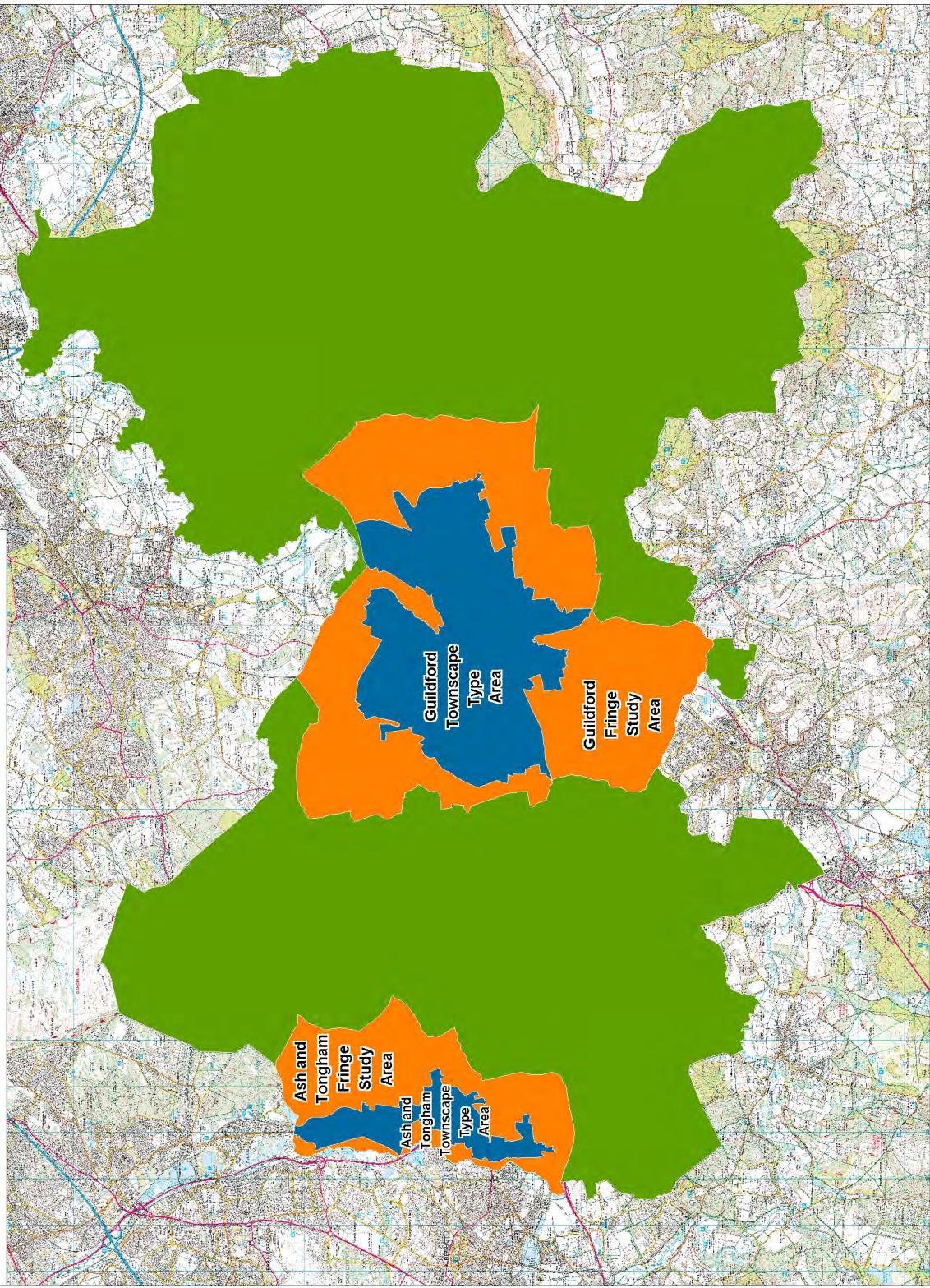
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**GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**Figure B**  
**Rural, Rural-Urban Fringe and Townscape Study Areas**



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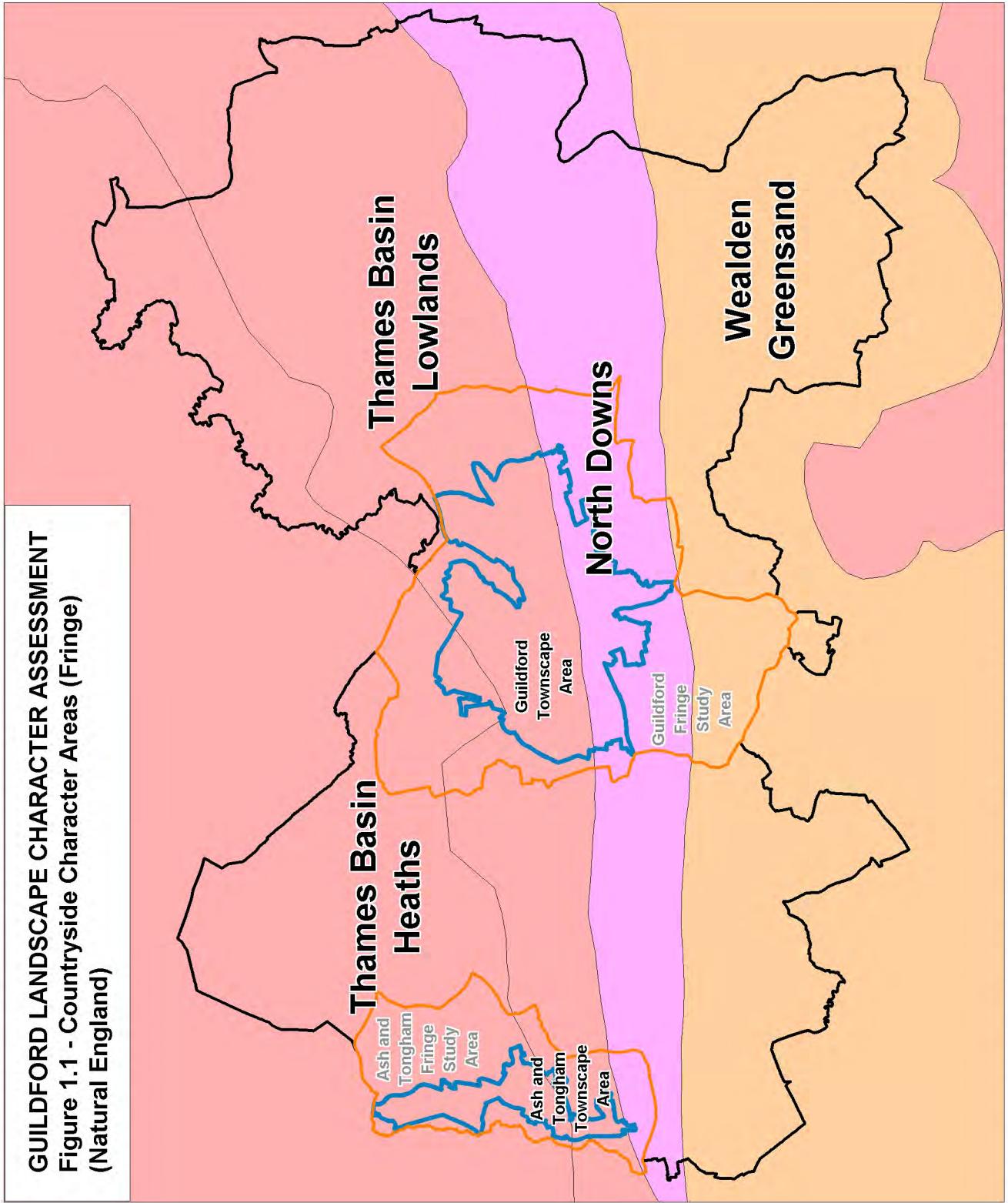
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## GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

### Figure 1.1 - Countryside Character Areas (Fringe) (Natural England)



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#### Legend

	Guildford Borough Boundary
	Thames Basin
	North Downs
	Wealden Greensand
	Townscape Study Areas
	Rural-Urban Fringe Study Areas

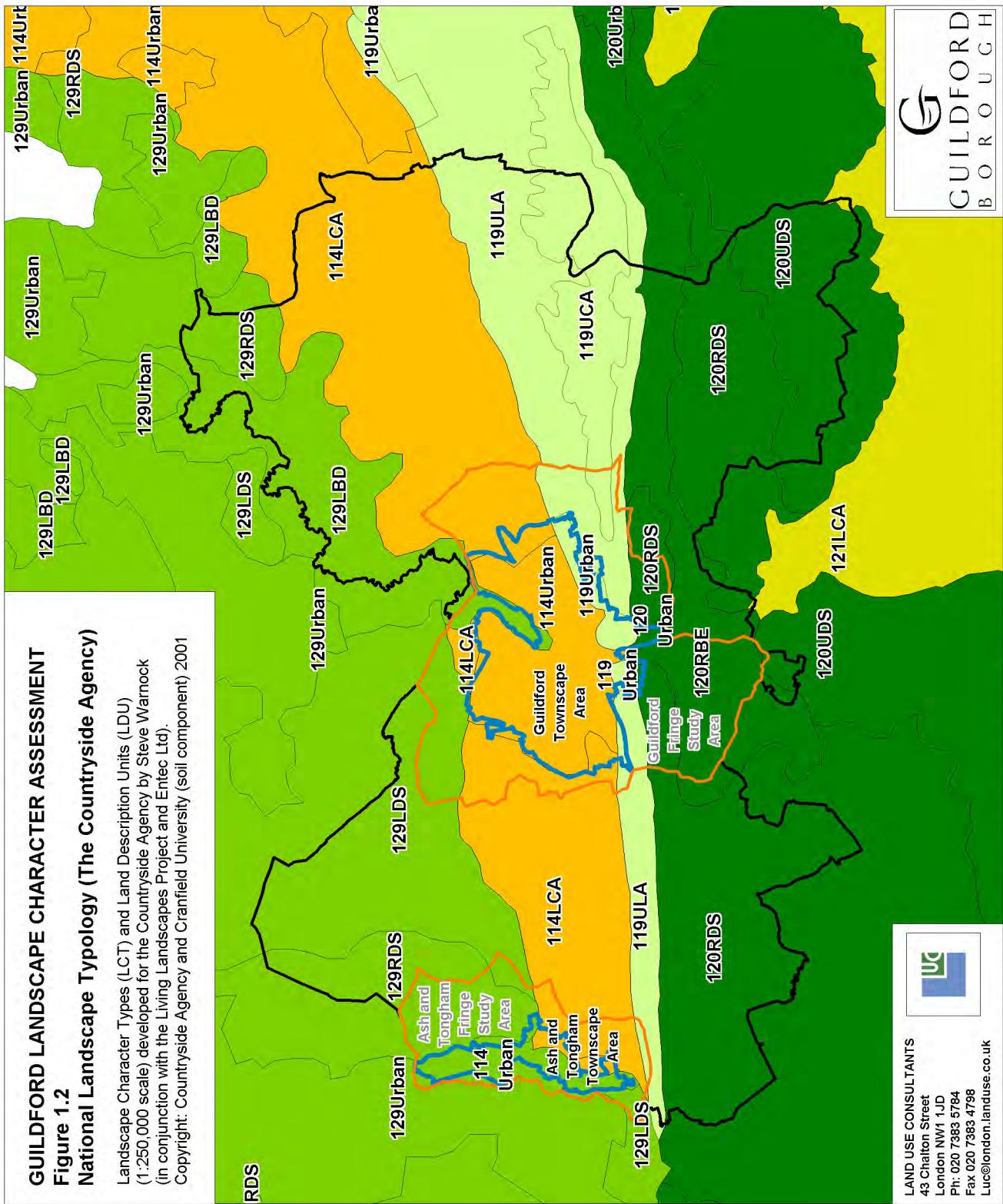
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**GUILDFORD**  
B O R O U G H

**GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**Figure 1.2**  
**National Landscape Typology (The Countryside Agency)**

Landscape Character Types (LCT) and Land Description Units (LDU)  
(1:250,000 scale) developed for the Countryside Agency by Steve Warnock  
(in conjunction with the Living Landscapes Project and Entec Ltd).  
Copyright: Countryside Agency and Cranfield University (soil component) 2001



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**Table I: Landscape Character Assessment Context – Relationship of Guildford Borough Landscape Types and Character Areas to Surrey County and AONB Landscape Character Assessments**

<b>Countryside Character Areas (National)</b>	Thames Basin Heaths				
<b>Surry County LCA Areas</b>	Lower Wey		Bagshot and Pirbright	Worplesdon	Painshill
<b>Surrey Hills AONB</b>	n/a		n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Guildford Borough Landscape Type</b>	A: River Floodplain	H: Gravel Terrace	F: Unsettled Sandy Heath	G: Wooded and Settled Heath	
<b>Guildford Borough Character Area</b>	A1: Lower Wey River Floodplain	H1: Send Gravel Terrace	F1: Pirbright Common Unsettled Sandy Heath	G1: Worplesdon Wooded and Settled Heath	G2: Wisley Wooded and Settled Heath

<b>Countryside Character Areas (National)</b>	Thames Basin Lowlands		North Downs				
<b>Surry County LCA Areas</b>	Wanborough	Ockham and Clandon	Hog's Back	Ranmore and Hackhurst Downs			
<b>Surrey Hills AONB</b>	n/a	n/a	North Downs: Hog's Back and Puttenham Vale	North Downs: Ranmore and Hackhurst			
<b>Guildford Borough Landscape Type</b>	E: Wooded Rolling Claylands		B: Chalk Ridge		C: Wooded Chalk Downs	D: Open Chalk Farmland	
<b>Guildford Borough Character Area</b>	E1: Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands	E2: Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands	B1: Hog's Back Chalk Ridge	B2: Albury and Hackhurst Chalk Ridge	C1: Merrow and Clandon Wooded Chalk Downs	C2: Effingham Forest Wooded Chalk Downs	D1: Clandon Open Chalk Farmland

<b>Countryside Character Areas (National)</b>	Wealden Greensand				
<b>Surry County LCA Areas</b>	Upper Wey	Pipbrook and Tillingbourne	Shackleford		Leith Hill

<b>Surrey Hills AONB</b>	Greensand Valley: The Upper Wey	Greensand Valley: Pipbrook and Tillingbourne	Greensand Plateau: Shackleford		North Downs: Hog's Back and Puttenham Vale	Greensand Hills: Leith Hill	
<b>Guildford Borough Landscape Type</b>	A: River Floodplain	I: Greensand Valley	K: Wooded Greensand Hills	L: Open Greensand Hills	J: Mudstone Plateau	K: Wooded Greensand Hills	L: Open Greensand Hills
<b>Guildford Borough Character Area</b>	A2: Upper Wey River Floodplain	II: Tilling Bourne Greensand Valley	K1: Puttenham Wooded Greensand Hills	L1: Shackleford Open Greensand Hills	J1: Loseley Mudstone Plateau	K2: Winterfold Wooded Greensand Hills/ K3: St Martha's Wooded Greensand Hills	L2: Peaslake Open Greensand Hills

Table 2: Relationship of types and areas between the three levels of assessment

Rural Landscape Type	A: River Floodplain			B: Chalk Ridge	
Rural Character Area	A1: Lower Wey River Floodplain	A2: Upper Wey Floodplain	A3: Guildford Wey Floodplain	B1: Hog's Back Chalk Ridge	B2: Albury and Hackhurst Chalk Ridge
Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area	A1: Lower Wey Rural-Urban Fringe	A2: Upper Wey Rural-Urban Fringe		B1: Hog's Back Rural-Urban Fringe	B2: Pewley Albury Downs Rural-Urban Fringe
Townscape character area	I2A: River Wey		2A: Settled Wey	3A: West Guildford 6A: Farnham Road 7A: Guildown 8A: Guildford Park/Onslow Village	7B: Warwick's Bench

Rural Landscape Type	C: Wooded Chalk Downs		D: Open Chalk Farmland
Rural Character Area	C1: Merrow and Clandon Wooded Chalk Downs	C2: Effingham Forest Wooded Chalk Downs	D1: Clandon Open Chalk Farmland
Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area	C1: Merrow Downs Rural-Urban Fringe		D1: Clandon Open Chalk Farmland Rural-Urban Fringe

Townscape character area	1A: Guildford Historic core 6D: Charlottesville 7B: Warwick's Bench 7E: Epsom Road 8H: Pewley Hill 9G: St Luke's Square		1A: Guildford historic core 3B: North Guildford 6D: Charlottesville 7C: Merrow 7E: Epsom Road 8I: Merrow 9F: Box Grove
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Rural Landscape Type	E: Wooded Rolling Claylands		F: Unsettled Sandy Heath
Rural Character Area	E1: Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands	E2: Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands	F1: Pirbright Common Unsettled Sandy Heath
Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area	E1: Rydes Hill-Fairlands Rural-Urban Fringe (Guildford Rural-Urban Fringe) E1: Tongham Rural-Urban Fringe (Ash and Tongham Rural-Urban Fringe)	E2: Clandon Rural-Urban Fringe	F1: Ash Common Rural-Urban Fringe
Townscape character area	5D: Tongham Village 5C: Ash Street 6B: Guildford Barracks 8A: Guildford Park/Onslow Village 8B: Westborough/Woodbridge Hill 8C: Stoughton 8D: Park Barn 8E: Bellfields 8K: Ash Estate 8L: Tongham Estate 9A: Park Barn/Rydes Hill 9B: Chitty's 9C: Queen Elizabeth Park 9L: Ash Street (South) 9N: Tongham 10A: University of Surrey 10B: Royal Surrey County Hospital 11A: Cathedral Hill/Middleton Industrial Estates	4C: Burpham Village 6C: Stoke Fields 7D: Abbotswood 7E: Epsom Road 8F: Burpham 8G: Bushy Hill 8J: Ash Vale Estate 9D: Burpham Common 9E: Merrow 9N: Tongham 10D: Guildford College/Stoke park	

Rural Landscape Type	G: Wooded and Settled Heath		H: Gravel Terrace					
Rural Character Area	GI: Worplesdon Wooded and Settled Heath	G2: Wisley Wooded and Settled Heath	H1: Send Gravel Terrace	H2: Slyfield Gravel Terrace	H3: Peasmarsh Gravel Terrace	H4: Shalford Gravel Terrace	H5: Ash Vale Gravel Terrace	
Rural-urban Fringe Character Area	GI: Worplesdon Rural-Urban Fringe (Guildford Rural-Urban Fringe) GI: Wyke Rural-Urban Fringe (Ash and Tongham Rural-Urban Fringe)			H2: Slyfield Rural-Urban Fringe	H3: Artington Terrace Rural-Urban Fringe	H4: Shalford Terrace Rural-Urban Fringe	H5: Blackwater Valley Rural-Urban Fringe	
Townscape character area	5B: Ash Village 9L: Ash			I1B: Slyfield Green		7B: Warwick 's Bench	5A: Ash Vale 8J: Ash Vale Estate 9H: Station Road East 9K: Lakeside Estates 9N: Tongham 10E: Ash Vale School 11E: Nexus Park	

Rural Landscape Type	I: Greensand Valley	J: Mudstone Plateau	K: Wooded Greensand Hills			L: Open Greensand Hills	
Rural Character Area	II: Tilling Bourne Greensand Valley	J1: Loseley Mudstone Plateau	K1: Puttenham Wooded Greensand Hills	K2: Winterfold Wooded Greensand Hills	K3: St Martha's Greensand Hills	L1: Shackleford Open Greensand Hills	L2: Peaslake Open Greensand Hills

Rural-urban Fringe Character Area		J1: Loseley Mudstone Plateau Rural- Urban Fringe			K3: The Chantry Rural- Urban Fringe	LI: Brabhoeuf Manor- Mount Browne Rural-Urban Fringe	
Townscape character area					7B: Warwick's Bench	4A: St Catherine's Historic Village Core	

proposed that local policies should be strengthened accordingly and expand upon existing safe-guarded local plan policies.

## CLASSIFICATION HIERARCHY

- I.9 The various existing character assessments covering the Borough form the context for this study. The Countryside Character map of England was launched in 1997 and this provided the basis for the Surrey County landscape character assessment undertaken in 1997. The landscape assessment of the Surrey Hills AONB was then undertaken in 1998 which drew on Surrey County Council's county landscape assessment. These assessments were carried out following the principles contained in the Countryside Agency's landscape assessment guidance that was current at that time (CCP 423).
- I.10 In 1999 the Interim Landscape Character Assessment Guidance was produced by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage and three years later, in 2002, the final guidance<sup>6</sup> was published. This indicated the need to review the existing character assessments against the new methodology.
- I.11 Since the County Assessment and Surrey Hills AONB Assessment have been completed the national landscape typology has been developed (see **Figure I.2**). In some parts of the borough the Surrey County Assessment fits comfortably within the national landscape typology, for example in the Thames Basin Lowlands and the North Downs. However, in other parts of the borough the national landscape typology provides a greater level of detail than the county landscape character areas, for example:
- the 'Ranmore and Hackhurst Downs' character area where the national typology distinguishes between the farmed chalk downland and the higher wooded downs; and
  - the 'Western Surrey' character area where the national landscape typology distinguishes between the slightly higher land to the west of the District bordering Ash and Tongham and the lower lying areas to the east.
- I.12 Most recently the borough has been included in the historic landscape characterisation of Surrey.
- I.13 This new assessment follows the most updated methodology, fits within the

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<sup>6</sup> The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (CAX 84).

framework provided by the national landscape character areas and typology and draws on existing information contained in the county assessment, AONB assessment and management plan, and the historic landscape characterisation.

**Table 1** shows the relationship of the rural character types and areas in this study to the AONB and county assessments.

I.14 This study takes the assessment of the Guildford Landscape further, with integrated studies at three levels:

- the 1:25,000 scale assessment of the rural landscape of the whole borough;
- the 1:10,000 scale assessment of the rural-urban fringe;
- the 1:10,000 scale study of townscape character.

I.15 A detailed methodology for the assessment is given in the following chapter. For ease of reference **Table 2** gives a summary of all three levels of assessment showing how the Rural Assessment landscape types and character areas relate to the Rural-Urban Fringe and the Townscape character areas.

## **2. METHOD STATEMENT**

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1. The approach to this study followed best practice as promoted by the Countryside Agency in the *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland* (2002) but also required development of new ways of working due to the three tiered approach linking the rural landscape with the rural-urban fringe and the townscape of the borough. This methodology was developed in close co-operation with the client steering group.
- 2.2. The Project Design is shown in **Figure C**.
- 2.3. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was used throughout the study as the tool for collating, manipulating and presenting data and Guildford Borough Council undertook the majority of this element of the work including the digitisation of boundaries and devising the methodology for presenting the character assessment within the council's GIS system as an effective tool for use by council officers.

### **STAGE I - CHARACTERISATION**

#### **Desk Study/Review**

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

#### **Draft Characterisation**

- 2.6. The draft characterisation stage of the work mapped draft character area boundaries at each scale, and established a hierarchy of assessment in the borough, in advance of the fieldwork. The draft borough-wide landscape classification assimilated and

updated existing landscape assessments covering the borough (*The future of Surrey's landscape and Woodlands* Surrey Council [1997] and *The Surrey Hills Landscape* Countryside Commission [1998]) to refine boundaries within Guildford Borough at 1:25,000.

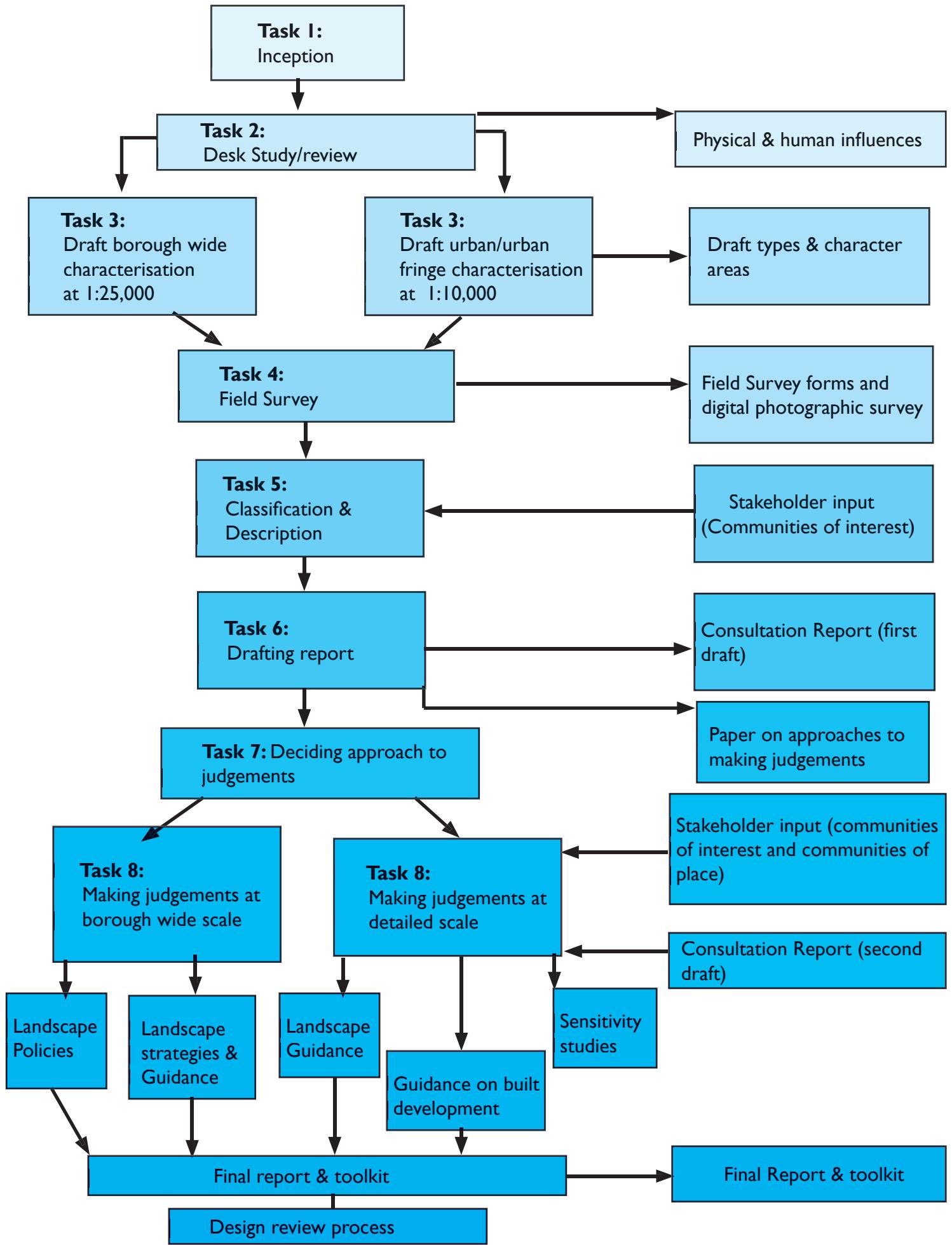
- 2.7. The approach followed best practice as promoted by the Countryside Agency in the *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland* (2002) in maintaining a distinction between landscape types and character areas, and developing a hierarchical approach as follows:
  - **Landscape Types** - which are generic and share common combinations of geology, topography, vegetation and human influences, e.g. 'River Flood Plain' or 'Greensand Valley';
  - **Character Areas** - which are single and unique, discrete geographical areas of the landscape type, e.g. 'Lower Wey River Floodplain' or 'Tillingbourne Greensand Valley'.
- 2.8. For the purposes of the borough wide rural assessment emphasis was placed upon the definition and subdivision of the landscape at a scale of 1:25 000 and at the Landscape Character Area scale i.e. the identification of particular geographical areas of distinctive landscape.
- 2.9. The more detailed rural-urban fringe and townscape classifications used the borough-wide landscape character areas as a framework. Draft townscape and rural-urban fringe characterisations were produced at 1:10,000 scale for testing in the field. The rural-urban fringe characterisation focussed on character areas while the more close grained townscape assessment focussed on townscape types. The townscape classification also took into account the residential character types identified in the Guildford residential design guide.

## Field Survey

- 2.10. The field survey was used to check draft classifications (as initially defined by the desk study), to identify additional character area subdivisions and define precise boundaries. The survey was rigorous and systematic using written observations, map annotations, and photographs. Standard survey checklists adapted to each level of classification were used to ensure that landscape features and characteristics were recorded in a consistent and objective way. A copy of a field survey sheet for this assessment is included in **Appendix 2**. Photographs were used to record character, attributes and distinguishing features.

**Figure C: Project Design**

Inputs/Outputs



- 2.11. The field survey assessed and recorded each area in terms of its key characteristics and features as well as perceptual characteristics. It also assessed the current state of the elements and features of the landscape/townscape and evidence of forces for change which, when considered together, allowed guidelines for conservation, management and enhancement to be established.
- 2.12. The rural-urban fringe field survey provided:
- a note on how representative the area was of the underlying rural character description;
  - a description of the role of the area in the landscape setting of Guildford or Ash and Tongham related to views and visual connection, topographical and landscape features and gateways;
  - a description of the nature of the existing urban edge;
  - observations on condition, pressures and management needs of the landscape.

### **Classification and Description**

- 2.13. Having reviewed the desk research findings, field maps and field record sheets the various classifications were finalised and the descriptions compiled in accordance with the guidelines in the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (2002).
- 2.14. The **rural-urban fringe assessment** is also at character area level although at a more detailed scale and gives a general character description, a note on how representative the rural-urban fringe area was of the broader rural character area, and descriptions of the character of the urban edge and the role of the area in the landscape setting of Guildford.
- 2.15. **A note on boundary lines:** The precision of boundaries drawn around landscape character areas and types varies with the scale and level of detail of the assessment. The rural assessment has been mapped at the scale of 1:25,000 and the rural-urban fringe and townscape assessments at 1:10,000 which means that they are suitable for use at these scales.
- 2.16. In reality landscape character rarely changes abruptly and the boundaries indicated in the Guildford Landscape Character Assessment therefore sometimes represent zones of transition in character relating to changes in topography, geology soils, cultural patterns, land use etc. rather than marked changes on the ground. In practice boundaries of this nature have been drawn to follow physical or mapable

features such as roads, lanes or field boundaries which provide ‘best fit’, for example in the rural assessment the boundary between *E1: Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands* and *G1: Worplesdon Wooded and Settled Sand Heath* which largely follows the line of the A323.

## STAGE 2 – EVALUATION

### Approach to Judgements

- 2.17. The approach to making judgements was determined by the need to meet the objectives of the two scales of assessment:
- to inform the emerging spatial strategy for Guildford;
  - to provide a context for individual planning applications;
  - to provide land management guidance; and
  - for the more detailed assessments to inform the area action plans and determine the zone of influence for Guildford’s urban fringe landscapes.
- 2.18. The approach has been informed by current best practice and in particular the new approaches being developed for identifying landscape sensitivity and capacity being promoted through the Countryside Agency’s recent Topic Paper 6<sup>7</sup>.
- 2.19. For the rural-urban fringe assessment more detailed information was collated on the current state of the elements and features of the landscape and evidence of forces for change. Information on inherent sensitivities (landscape and visual) as well as specific sensitivities in relation to built development was gathered to inform guidance on the location and design of built development and allow the work to feed into decisions on housing allocations. The evaluation focussed on:
- defining **significant landscape attributes**, positive characteristics and features that are important to the landscape character of each area;
  - outlining **key vulnerabilities and sensitivities** in relation to landscape change; and
  - **guidance** giving an overall management aim for the character area and specific guidelines for **land management** and **built development**.

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<sup>7</sup> Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2004) Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland - Topic Paper 6: Techniques for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity.

## **STAGE 3 - TOOLKIT AND DESIGN REVIEW**

- 2.20. Toolkit and design review process will be undertaken following consultation.

## **STAGE 4 – CONSULTATION**

- 2.21. Stakeholder consultation is key to the success of landscape character assessment. The approach in this study follows that proposed by the landscape assessment guidance to engage both communities of place and communities of interest. This two stage approach takes the form of initial fact finding and understanding special values with communities of interest, followed by wider public consultation with communities of place.

### **Consultation with Communities of Interest**

- 2.22. At the outset of the study we consulted with communities of interest. This included statutory agencies (e.g. English Heritage, English Nature, Environment Agency) relevant NGO's and neighbouring authorities. Consultation was by letter followed up by telephone interview, and assisted in the initial characterisation as well as allowing us to pick up on forces for change that were not evident from the field.

### **Consultation with Communities of Place**

- 2.23. Formal Consultation with Communities of Place was undertaken by Guildford Borough Council as a Guildford Development Framework public consultation in line with its Statement of Community Involvement. Comments from Communities of Place were invited after distribution of the Draft Report on disk, through the Council's website and for viewing in several public buildings throughout the Borough.
- 2.24. In addition, a more informal form of consultation was developed by Guildford Borough with a series of postcards depicting character area photographs and their descriptions for all 3 levels of the characterisation, which were distributed at major public events such as the County Show and Farmers Markets. Called Viewpoint\* What's Yours? The postcards were designed for use as a normal postcard by removing a tear-off section although they also allowed for the return of a postcard to the Council with observations of people's favourite viewpoints and landscapes. Responses were crucial in providing objective information for inclusion within the landscape perception sections of this report.
- 2.25. Written responses received through formal consultation were catalogued through the Council Committee Reporting structure and, where appropriate, changes were incorporated into the text of the Final Report.

### **3. THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OF GUILDFORD AND ASH AND TONGHAM**

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- 3.1. This chapter provides a short overview of the setting of the two main settlement areas within Guildford Borough, to provide the context for the assessment of the rural-urban fringe. It is based on the study area defined by the Borough Council covering the land extending from the immediate settlement edge for about 2–5km into the surrounding rural landscape, representing the area considered to be under most pressure for change.
- 3.2. As background context **Figure 3.1** provides an Extract of Surrey Historic Landscape Characterisation showing the Guildford Rural-Urban Fringe Area. **Figure 3.2** is an Extract of Surrey Historic Landscape Characterisation showing the Ash/Tongham Rural-Urban Fringe Area

#### **THE SETTING OF GUILDFORD**

##### **Settlement Origin**

- 3.3. The town of Guildford lies to the north of the North Downs and is centred on the Wey where the river carves a gap through the chalk ridge. The town originated at this valley gap – a site that provided a corridor for communication but could also be easily defended. As its name suggests Guildford was a key fording point of the Wey – and provided a crossing point for the ancient trackways that followed the chalk ridge.

##### **Landform and Geology**

- 3.4. The geology and resultant landform create the distinctive landscape setting of Guildford. Immediately south of the town, the elevated chalk of the North Downs is a dominant feature providing a strong rural backdrop of downland meadows and woodland in views from the town centre. Here, the downs have a distinct ridge-like form rising smoothly up from the London Clay to a height of about 100m and fall to the south to meet the Greensand, which rises as wooded hills adjacent to the chalk. The River Wey carves a gap through the ridge and the chalk and greensand terminate as steep bluffs overlooking the river. To the north the river meanders across the London Clay, which forms a typical undulating lowland landscape of farmland, woodland and parkland. The river has a flat alluvial pastoral floodplain bordered by slightly raised river terrace deposits, which have provided drier land for settlement and communication routes. To the north and west of the town the lighter, sandy soils of the Bagshot Sands Beds form low hills and are characterised by

a distinctive landscape of wooded and heathland commons.

## Historic Environment

- 3.5. The strategic importance in military terms of Guildford's unique topographical location is underpinned by several long-distance fortifications and communications chains which join Guildford to its surrounding countryside. On the North Downs ridge is the 1820's semaphore line from London to Portsmouth and a chain of Victorian forts (Henley Fort and Pewley Down Forts), and numerous pillboxes of the World War II 'GHQ stop line' along the River Wey and the Greensand Ridge.

The rural urban fringe of Guildford contains several Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM) most located on the high ground created by the North Downs or Greensand Ridge, the most noteworthy being, St Catherine's Chapel on the crest of St Catherine's Hill to the south of the town, the nineteenth century fort at Henley Fort on the eastern end of the Hog's Back overlooking Guildford. To the west Manor Farm SAM is the remains of the moated site of site of a Manor House associated with the Royal Park of Guildford, a medieval deer park established by Henry II in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century remaining in royal ownership for some 500 years. The landscape to the north and west of Guildford with its informal commons contains remnants of the former Royal Park; today, the park pale defines part of the western edge of the town. Designed parks and gardens of note include Clandon Park to the east of Guildford, which is on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens (Grade II), while to the south-west Loseley Park, is an (unregistered) although locally important parkland landscape of Elizabethan origins.

- 3.6. The extract of the Historic Landscape Characterisation carried out by Surrey County Council indicates the historic character and time depth of the wider landscape around Guildford including the water meadows of the Wey Valley, the heathlands to the north- west and the varied origin of the field patterns.

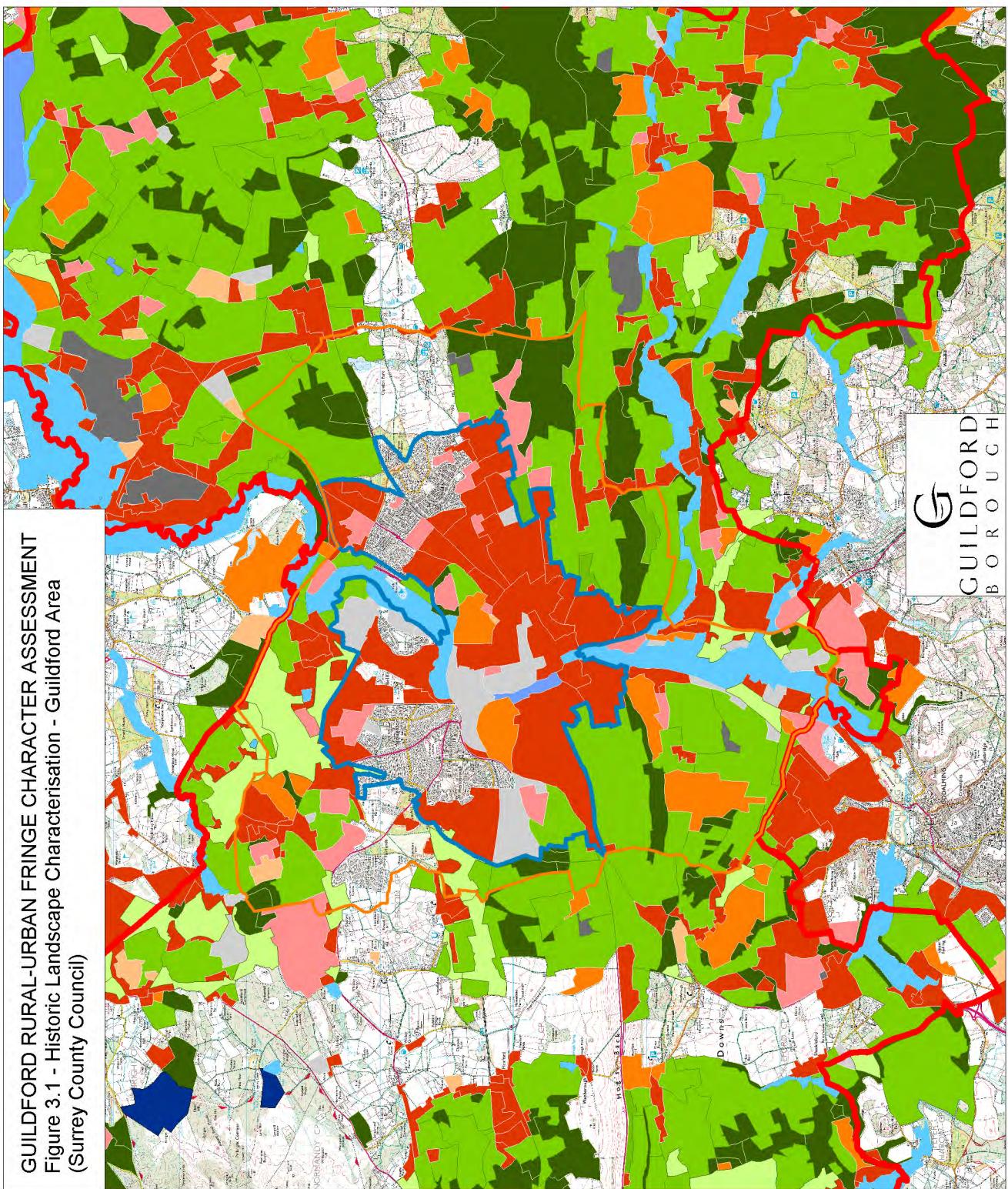
In 1945 it was noted by Brian Leighton in his Guildford Survey that Guildford had been spared from extensive bomb damage although there were slums, which needed to be dealt with. According to Leighton's Survey the principal aim of the plan in 1945/6 was to; '*tidy up building development on the perimeter and keep inviolate the surrounding agricultural land, as well as downland and woodland, thus providing a marked contrast between built-up and rural areas.*'(p.4)<sup>12</sup>

Brian Leighton's Guildford Survey also stressed that the High Street should continue

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<sup>12</sup> Leighton, B (1945) A Guildford Survey

**GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**Figure 3.1 - Historic Landscape Characterisation - Guildford Area**  
(Surrey County Council)



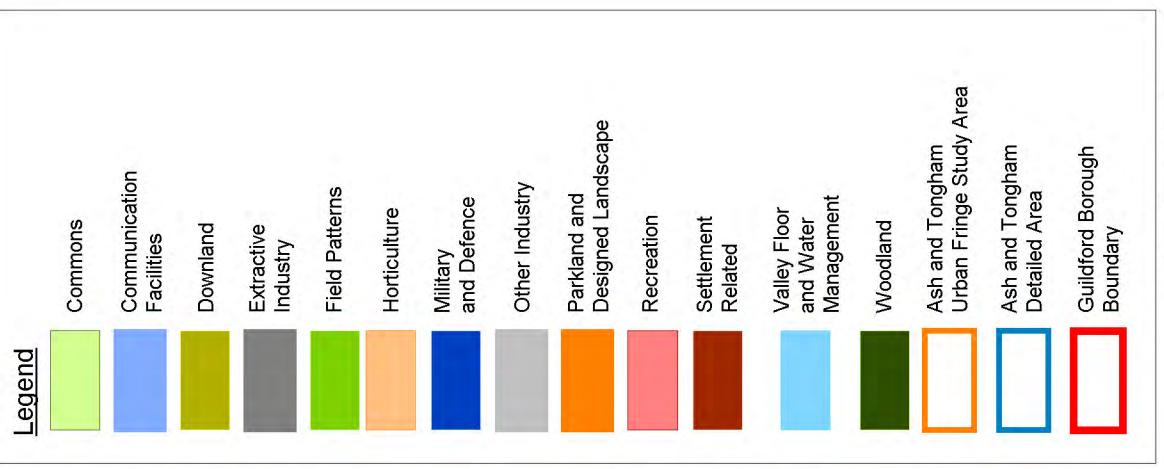
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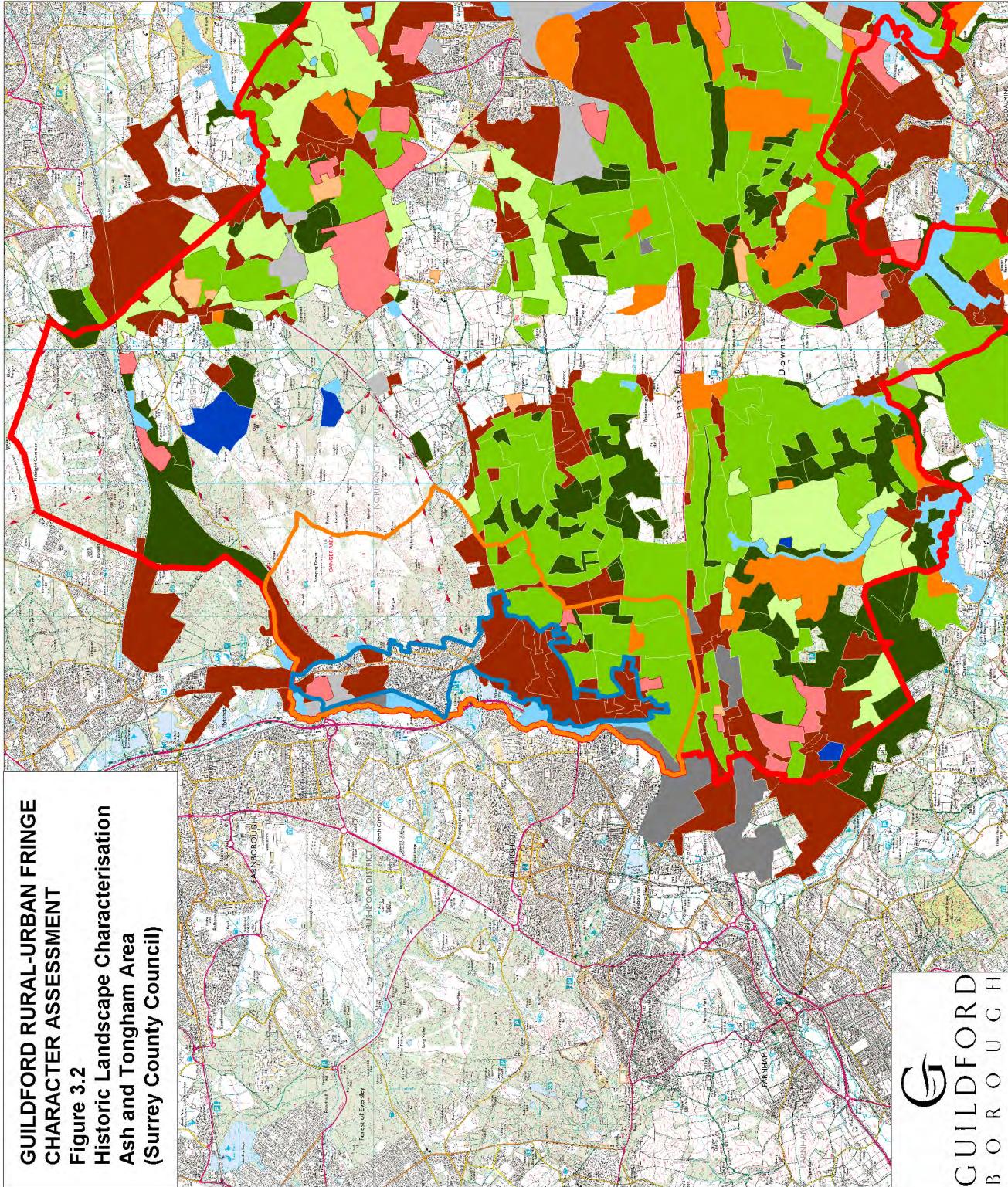
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**G**  
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as the centre of Municipal life. Leighton discusses the religious and educational development with the technical college to acquire University status. Light industries were to be located on specified areas avoiding further heavy industry.

- 3.7. In his plan of 1946<sup>13</sup>, Jellicoe refers to expensive development being concentrated on the south and east sides of Guildford town centre whilst scattered cheap buildings were concentrated on the west and north-eastern sides. Jellicoe suggested that the edges of the town be kept surrounded by agricultural land and that the main areas of post war settlement should be around the cores of Onslow, Stoughton, Bellfields, Burpham and Merrow. The 1945 survey outlines the importance of preserving the open spaces at Stoke Park, Merrow Downs, Pewley Hill, Chantry Woods and Shalford Park as well as removing the industrial zone to the north of the bypass which ought to revert back to open meadow land. These areas are important today in creating the rural landscape context of Guildford.
  
- 3.8. After the Second World War many towns and cities continued to meet their housing needs in low-density peripheral estates and many of these now extensively provide an urban boundary between Guildford and its fringe landscape. In Guildford large post-war estates were developed to house the rising population at Bellfields and Park Barn. The 1945 Survey of Guildford noted that '*much of the inter war housing was put up sporadically without fostering it into a community estate and with vacant plots of land left to spoil*' and identified Stoke Hill Housing estate as an opportunity area to '*develop a neighbourhood unit converting it into a garden village with houses along curving tree lined streets having access to a range of local amenities and with extensive tree planting to soften the built form*'.

### Biodiversity

- 3.9. The varied geology has resulted in diverse habitats within the rural – urban fringe of Guildford, ranging from heathland to chalk grassland and ancient woodland. To the north of the town Whitmoor Common SSSI covers an extensive area of heathland mixed with woodland, grassland and open water. The site forms part of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA).
- 3.10. A large number of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) occur in close proximity to the town and contribute to the varied landscape setting. These include

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<sup>13</sup> Jellicoe G.A, July 1946 – An outline plan for Guildford prepared for the Municipal Borough Council.

extensive areas of downland, woodland and scrub on the North Downs. The open chalk grassland is a particularly important feature at the Merrow to Clandon Downs (which also includes two Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological (RIGS) sites at Newlands Corner), Pewley Down, and The Mount - all key sites overlooking Guildford.

The rural landscape of the River Wey valley, itself a Conservation Area with various SSSI and SNCI designations, forms two important green wedges deep into the heart of the urban area and provide a series of contrasting habitats which include a mosaic of grassland, fen and meadow of the Wey Valley, plus areas of ancient woodland and commons and heathland to the west of the town around Rydeshill.

### **Planning Context**

- 3.11. The landscape to the south of the town forming part of the North Downs is designated for the national quality of its landscape and forms part of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Subject to the most rigorous protection, development inconsistent with the primary aim of conserving the existing landscape character will not be permitted. A local landscape designation an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) also highlights the landscape deemed of county importance where current planning policy provides that development should have regard to the conservation and enhancement of the existing landscape character. At this present time the AGLV policy is saved within the GDF although it should be noted that local landscape designations may be phased out in the emerging spatial planning system<sup>8</sup>.

For the most part the landscape designations extend to the immediate edge of residential development and the majority of the AONB and AGLV cover the same geographical area. Within AONBs planning decisions should have regard for their setting and where the AGLV sits beyond it, this in some sense provides a buffer to the AONB. Areas beyond the AONB but within the AGLV are the Wey Valley to the south as it extends into the town from around Shalford, the grassland ridge to the east of Henley Mount, and along the majority of the north-facing dip slope of the North Downs from Tongham to East Horsley. It should be noted that this assessment is concerned primarily with Landscape Character, rather than with landscape quality or value. Issues of quality or value will be relevant when LCA is used to inform decision-making, but the LCA methodology itself seeks to distinguish between the identification of landscape character and assessing the quality or value of

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<sup>8</sup> 24. Local Landscape Designations; PPS7: Sustainable development in Rural Areas, ODPM, 2004

that character.

- 3.12. The whole of the rural-urban fringe study area is within the Metropolitan Greenbelt, the boundary of which has been drawn tightly along the edge of the built up area, restricting further outward growth of the town. The 2003 Local Plan removed land at Manor Farm from the Green Belt to permit the expansion of the University of Surrey and their second campus, which includes teaching facilities, new staff and student residencies, sport facilities and informal open space, is presently being constructed.

The rural-urban fringe study area includes Conservation Areas along the line of the Wey Navigation, at Littleton and St. Catherine's

The International Habitats Directive provides protection for the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) from the adverse affects of increasing the local population close to the heathland and associated increased pressures for recreation, due to its international importance for three rare heathland bird species (Dartford Warbler, Woodlark and Nightjar). Development is currently subject to a local Interim Avoidance Strategy, requiring the provision of developer funding to upgrade facilities on alternative non-SPA recreational sites, and this should be recognised as a potential future pressure for change throughout the Borough.

Any recreational proposals should take account of the landscape strategy guided by existing landscape character, and good practice management and development guidelines contained within this assessment. A future strategic approach to the provision of alternative green space to direct the pressure of extra visitors from new development close to the heath is being developed regionally, in light of the South East Plan Examination (February 2007).

### **Landscape Assessment Context**

- 3.13. The detailed rural-urban fringe study has been undertaken in the context of the wider assessment of the rural landscape of Guildford Borough. The setting of the town encompasses a great diversity of landscape types, resulting from the varied underlying geology of greensand, chalk, clay and sands. These outcrop in close proximity forming narrow bands in a roughly horizontal north-south alignment creating a series of distinct landscapes types adjoining the town. A wide variety of landscapes can therefore be experienced in close proximity to the town, varying from the densely wooded greensand hills at the Chantries, the open chalk grassland of Merrow Downs and the Hogs Back, the pastoral floodplain of the River Wey and the distinctive heaths and commons the north and west of Guildford. For the most

part these landscapes have a strong rural character contrasting with and providing containment and setting for the adjacent townscape. The more elevated land of the Chalk and Greensand has a particularly important role in creating the visual setting and rural backdrop to the town.

## **THE SETTING OF ASH AND TONGHAM**

### **Settlement Origin**

- 3.14. The settlements of Ash and Tongham have grown up on the lowland on the eastern edge of the Blackwater Valley between Aldershot and Guildford. The Blackwater River forms the boundary between Surrey and Hampshire and the valley provides an important open gap between Ash/Tongham and the military town of Aldershot to the west.
- 3.15. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Ash and Ash Vale and Tongham were still small rural villages. Ash, Ash Vale and Tongham grew as a result of the arrival of the railway line in 1849 and the army in 1853 who used Ash Common as a training ground. The new stations, located at Ash and Ash Vale formed a focus for new settlement and houses were built along the main approaches to the stations in a linear formation. The population of the area continued to rise with the building of inter-war and post-war estates and the villages have merged and spread out across the surrounding lowland area to the north, east and south.

### **Landform and Geology**

- 3.16. The urban areas of Ash and Tongham lie within a lowland landscape of London Clay to the south and undulating sands to the north. These give rise to the two distinct landscapes of farmland and woodland on the clays around Ash Green and the sandy heaths and woodlands of the military ranges, as at Ash Common. To the west the Blackwater River has an alluvial floodplain bordered by river terrace deposits, which have been extensively worked. In contrast to the lowland landscape the chalk ridge of the Hog's Back forms a dominant backdrop in views to the south.

### **Historic Environment**

- 3.17. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within this study area. The line of the Basingstoke Canal and associated built features such as the aqueduct are of considerable historic interest and are designated as a Conservation Area. The moated site at Ash Manor (north of Ash Green) is a County Site of Archaeological Importance.

- 3.18. The Historic Landscape Characterisation indicates the historic character of the wider landscape around Ash and Tongham, highly influenced by its military and defence heritage, notably on the unenclosed heathland, and also through varied field patterns and former parkland associated with Poyle Park. There are a number of small areas of land classified as having medium to large regular fields.

### Biodiversity

- 3.19. The majority of the north west rural-urban fringe (east of Ash Vale) is jointly designated as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) a Special area of Conservation (SAC), and Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), with the *Ash to Brookwood Heaths SSSI* forming part of the largest area of dry heathland remaining in the London Basin. To the west, the Blackwater Valley restoration of former gravel working has created a landscape of considerable local nature conservation interest (including three SNCI) with parks and Nature Reserves providing a valuable education and recreation resource.
- 3.20. The remainder of the study area is farmland, a mix of arable and grassland, with much of the grass managed by horse grazing. This area includes two important nature conservation sites - Ash Meadows Green SNCI to the immediate south of Ash is a series of semi-improved mesotrophic meadows. To the south at the foot of the Hog's back Poyle Park Wood (SNCI) is an ancient semi-natural ash-field maple-hazel coppice woodland.

### Planning Context

- 3.21. To the south of Tongham the Hog's Back ridge forms part of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Area of Great landscape Value (AGLV), a local landscape designation, extends northwards across Poyle Park to the southernmost settlement edge of Tongham.
- 3.22. The land to the north-east of Ash, running approximately from Keogh Barracks to A323 is within the Metropolitan Greenbelt, the boundary of which has been drawn tightly along the edge of the built up area, restricting further outward growth of the town. The remainder of the land within the rural-urban fringe study area is identified on the Local plan as Countryside beyond the Greenbelt. The line of the Basingstoke Canal and part of its setting, for example Great Bottom flash is a Conservation Area. The entire area to the west of the settlement is identified as Protected Open Space forming part of the Blackwater Valley.

### Landscape Assessment Context

3.23. The detailed rural-urban fringe study of Ash and Tongham has been undertaken in the context of the wider assessment of the rural landscape of Guildford Borough. The setting of the urban area is essentially a lowland landscape encompassing the River Blackwater and associated terrace to the west, with the claylands to the south east and distinctive stretches of heath (predominantly in military use) to the west and north west.

## 4. GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE CLASSIFICATION

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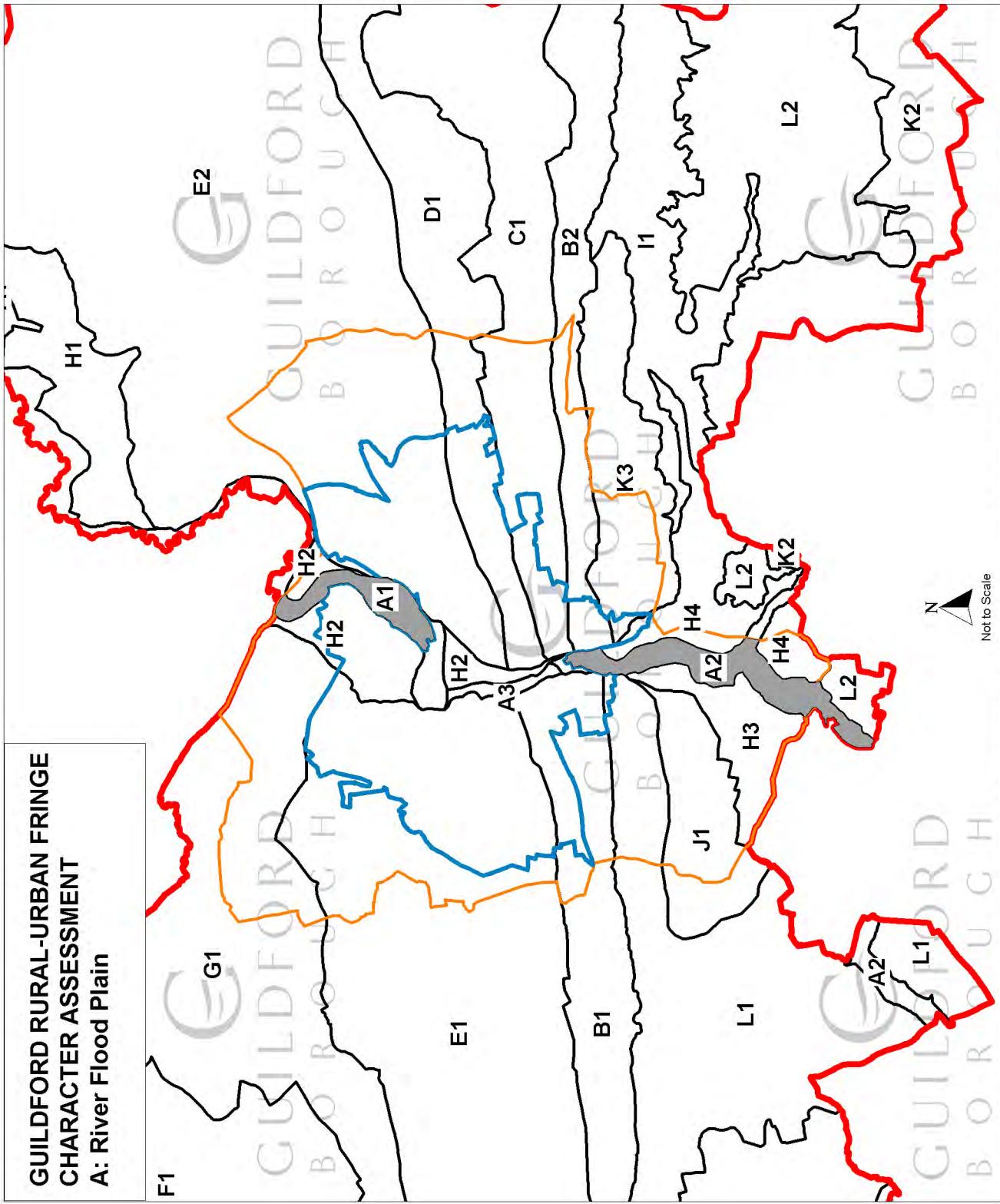
- 4.1. The rural-urban fringe classification is founded on the rural assessment and **Table 3** below shows how the two levels are related in the Guildford fringe area. The rural-urban fringe character areas are illustrated on **Figure 4.1: Guildford Rural-Urban Fringe Classification**. This mapping has been prepared on a Geographic Information System (GIS), with mapping undertaken at a scale of 1:10,000.

**Table 3: Guildford Rural-Urban Fringe Classification**

RURAL CHARACTER AREA	RURAL-URBAN FRINGE CHARACTER AREA
<b>Landscape Type A: River Floodplain</b>	
A1: Lower Wey River Floodplain	<b>A1: Lower Wey Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
A2: Upper Wey River Floodplain	<b>A2: Upper Wey Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
<b>Landscape Type B: Chalk Ridge</b>	
B1: Hog's Back Chalk Ridge	<b>B1: Hog's Back Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
B2: Albury & Hackhurst Chalk Ridge	<b>B2: Pewley-Albury Downs Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
<b>Landscape Type C: Wooded Chalk Downs</b>	
C1: Merrow and Clandon Wooded Chalk Downs	<b>C1: Merrow Downs Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
<b>Landscape Type D: Open Chalk Farmland</b>	
D1: Clandon Open Chalk Farmland	<b>D1: Clandon Open Chalk Farmland Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
<b>Landscape Type E: Wooded Rolling Claylands</b>	
E1: Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands	<b>E1: Rydeshill-Fairlands Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

RURAL CHARACTER AREA	RURAL-URBAN FRINGE CHARACTER AREA
E2: Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands	<b>E2: Clandon Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
<b>Landscape Type G: Wooded and Settled Sandy Heaths</b>	
G1: Worplesdon Wooded and Settled Sandy Heaths	<b>G1: Worplesdon Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
<b>Landscape Type H: Gravel Terrace</b>	
H2: Slyfield Gravel Terrace	<b>H2: Slyfield Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
H3: Artington Gravel Terrace	<b>H3: Artington Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
H4: Shalford Gravel Terrace	<b>H4: Shalford Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
<b>Landscape Type J: Mudstone Plateau</b>	
J1: Loseley Mudstone Plateau	<b>J1: Loseley Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
<b>Landscape Type K: Wooded Greensand Hills</b>	
K3: St Martha's Wooded Greensand Hills	<b>K3: The Chantries Rural-Urban Fringe</b>
<b>Landscape Type L: Open Greensand Hills</b>	
L1: Shackleford Open Greensand Hills	<b>L1: Braboeuf Manor / Mount Browne Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**A: River Flood Plain**



**Legend**

- River Flood Plain
- River Flood Plain A1: Lower Wey
- River Flood Plain A2: Upper Wey
- LCA Rural Landscape Classifications
- Guildford Detailed Area
- Guildford Urban Fringe Study Area
- Guildford Borough Boundary

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# **CHARACTER AREA AI: LOWER WEY RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type 1:50,000	Character Area 1: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area 1:10,000</b>
A: River Floodplain	AI: Lower Wey River Floodplain	<b>AI: Lower Wey Rural Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Character Area covers the floodplain of the River Wey to the north of Guildford. It runs roughly from Stoke Mill House on Woking Road, within the town in the south, to Clay Lane at Jacob's Well, which forms the approximate boundary of the rural-urban fringe study area in the north. The rising land of the river terrace deposits form the boundaries to the west, with the A3 forming a hard boundary of the higher land to the east and an industrial estate and sewage works to the west.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

The River Wey is a distinctive river floodplain landscape within the rural- urban fringe of Guildford, which extends deeply into the heart of the town. It is confined to either side by development on the elevated river terraces, although for the most part development is slightly removed from the boundary and is screened by a succession of woodlands and tree cover, particularly in summer. The river follows a relatively wide winding course, with the Wey Navigation in places within a separate channel on the edge of the floodplain. The Wey was one of the first rivers to be made navigable (1653), with the waterway linking Guildford to the Thames and as such is of considerable historic interest and designated as a Conservation Area. The channels are bordered by a relatively wide, flat floodplain landscape of level, grazed meadows divided by ditches and channels, with pollarded willows and poplars, plus an extensive area of open water on the eastern side of the river. Of particular significance is the expanse of fen swamp. The whole area is an SNCI and forms a substantial area of open access space.

Visibility into and across the floodplain landscape is limited from within the urban fabric, apart from occasional glimpses of the river, for example at the road crossing at Stoke Mill as large stretches of the embanked A3 lie directly to the south. The greatest visual and physical interaction is at Slyfield industrial estate, due to its raised terrace location and large

# **GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE TYPE A: River Flood Plain**

## **A1: Lower Wey Rural-Urban Fringe**



## **A2: Upper Wey Rural-Urban Fringe**



shed units, which are visually prominent from within the floodplain. The area is, however, accessible by foot from the town centre along the towpath following the Navigation, with further access provided at Riverside Park Nature Reserve. A long distance view towards the cathedral is a feature on the towpath, from just south of Clay Lane.

There is a notable absence of development within the character area apart from structures associated with river management including Stoke Mill (now offices) locks, weirs and sluices. A line of pylons runs across the floodplain and is a dominant feature. Overall, the character area presents a typical intact floodplain landscape of river channels, open water, meadows and pollards. It provides an oasis of rural tranquillity, which despite the proximity of the urban area and main roads (A3) is essentially secluded and largely hidden from urban influences. The A3 embankment itself separates the floodplain from the surrounding urban landscape, although traffic noise, and night time lighting has an impact on the secluded character of the valley. The open rural views across the landscape and absence of visual intrusion of development from beyond are critical to the character of the Lower Wey.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** This part of the Lower Wey River Floodplain is representative of the wider rural character, although with greater urban influences particularly the A3 which although not visible from within the valley is a dominant feature.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins the following townscape character areas:

4C: Burpham Village

7D: Abbotswood

9D: Burpham

10D: Guildford College Stoke Park

All these townscape areas are located to the east of the A3 and therefore do not have a direct visual or physical connection with the river floodplain. To the west, the suburb of Bellfields extends down to the floodplain – this part of the river valley has been included within the townscape assessment. Here, back gardens form a hard suburban boundary.

The river floodplain provides an effective limit to urban development and creates an important ‘green wedge’ into the town. The floodplain is confined by rising land of the gravel terraces and these have been subject to intensive development with the sewage works and industrial estate (Slyfield Industrial Estate) to the west and the A3(T) forming a hard boundary to the east. However, despite its proximity, development is currently rarely

visible from the floodplain itself, being largely screened by thick hedgerow and tree belts, particularly in summer. Similarly, there are virtually no views into the valley from surrounding areas. The A3, located on an embankment on the edge of the floodplain does not provide any glimpses into the floodplain, although traffic noise is audible from within the valley.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

As noted above, this area cannot generally be perceived from within the urban area and despite the major gateway of the A3 running on an embankment on the western edge of the floodplain there are no views into the valley setting. People travelling by car on the A3 have no perception that they are within Guildford until they reach the A3/A25 junction. A key feature of this approach to Guildford, are the channelled views along the elevated road corridors to the cathedral dramatically located on Stag Hill. Historically, however the river and Navigation Channel would have been a major gateway within Guildford providing access to and from the town with the River Thames and London. The Navigation had a significant influence on local history, commerce, townscape and landscape and is central to Guildford's heritage.

The river and its associated floodplain have a vital role in the landscape setting of Guildford. In addition to being of great historic significance, it provides an essentially rural tranquil landscape almost to the heart of the town centre, with the floodplain itself forming an effective limit to development. It provides good opportunities for recreational access from the town to enjoy and appreciate an uninterrupted landscape within the rural urban fringe and along the Lower Wey as far as the Thames.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within A1: Lower Wey River Floodplain, which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- The river channel and the Wey Navigation – historic significance as one of the first British rivers to be made navigable (historic gateway and links with the Thames);
- The traditional floodplain landscape features of grazed meadows and pastures, wet fen, drainage channels and pollards – a rural area infiltrating the townscape;
- Habitat mosaic and biodiversity interest associated with the waterways, meadows, pastures, fen swamp and ditches (Riverside Park Local Nature Reserve);

- The sense of a secluded, tranquil rural character contained and screened from the surrounding urban area;
- The landmark view towards the cathedral, from the towpath;
- Access and rights of way including the tow path and recreational opportunities associated with the river (boating and fishing).

## **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

Large parts of the area are identified as floodplain and therefore have a high degree of protection from development. The entire area is also identified on the Local Plan as part of the River Wey Corridor, which is the subject of an Environmental Strategy prepared by the National Trust, recognising the historic significance of the Navigation, its local importance and its environmental sensitivity. Although development is not a key issue within the character area, it is vulnerable particularly as a result of changing management and in particular the need to retain an intact floodplain landscape. The area is particularly vulnerable to changes on the adjacent gravel terraces, notably intrusion of large industrial infrastructure at Slyfield and potential requirement for residential development (Slyfield Area Action Plan). The tranquil ‘rural’ character of the area is disrupted by the noise and moving traffic of the A3 and also especially vulnerable to small scale changes, such as encroachment on to back gardens and imposition of suburban features, and over-intensification of recreational uses within the open access area of Riverside Park, including insensitive levels and siting of access, signage, furniture and interpretation facilities.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve the traditional floodplain landscape of the Lower Wey valley, and its secluded rural character and to recognise the historic significance of the Wey in relation to Guildford. The recommendations of the National Trust Management Strategy for the Wey Navigation should be followed.

Management of A1: Lower Wey River Floodplain Rural Urban Fringe should consider the following guidelines:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

- Conserve the Wey corridor as an oasis of calm and tranquillity in close proximity to the urban area.

- Conserve the flood meadows and wet fen vegetation and associated habitat mosaic and manage invasive species.
- Conserve and manage the woodland and screening at the interface with the urban area—so that the area remains as a contained rural landscape.
- Seek opportunities to provide and promote better connections between the valley and the surrounding townscape e.g. through new footpath links.

### **Built Development**

- Maintain the open undeveloped character of the floodplain.
- Conserve historic structures and buildings, and their setting associated with the Wey Navigation.
- Consider the impact of any change on the adjacent gravel terraces on the character of the floodplain, in particular the imposition of lighting, which would affect the ‘rural’ dark skies and habitat biodiversity.
- Ensure that any development within the surrounding townscape areas respects the rural character of the valley setting. Development should not visually intrude on the valley setting and the thick screening woodlands and hedgerows should be conserved and reinforced.
- Where infill or back garden development occurs ensure that design, layout, boundary treatment and associated infrastructure accord the treatment of development forming the setting of Conservation Areas. Encourage sensitive and consistent use of materials reflecting the historic character (such as brick, render, clay tile and slate) to increase the unity of the area.
- Encourage sensitive and consistent use of boundary materials appropriate to the character of the area for instance brick walls or carefully designed metal fencing. Preserve and encourage restoration of rural character of riverbank through residential areas.
- Encourage use of hedges, and boundary shrub and tree planting particularly along the immediate river corridor using native species to reinforce the rural character and improve visual and acoustic screening from adjacent roads.
- Resist the loss of key landscape features or character through spread or ‘urbanising’ features such as inappropriate surfacing (such as metalled footpaths), materials, signage or construction of suburban-style boundaries.

- Ensure that infrastructure to support public enjoyment (paths, seats, bins and lighting) are kept to a minimum and carefully designed and placed to conserve the rural tranquillity of the riverside spaces.

# **CHARACTER AREA A2: UPPER WEY RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type 1:50,000	Character Area 1: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area 1:10,000</b>
A: River Floodplain	A2: Upper Wey River Floodplain	<b>A2: Upper Wey Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Character Area covers the floodplain of the River Wey to the south of Guildford. It forms a fairly wide flat floodplain in the south, narrowing to a narrow ‘gorge’ like gap where the river cuts through the North Downs ridge to the north. The slightly elevated river terrace deposits create the boundaries of the floodplain landscape to the east and west.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

The distinctive river course and floodplain to north and south of Guildford town centre is one of the key landscape assets of the borough creating a tranquil, pastoral character in close proximity to and accessible from the town centre. The river flows in a broad, meandering channel, and along several sections within a separate channel to the Wey Navigation. The Navigation is owned by the National Trust, and is the key component of the landscape. The water is accessible along the unmetalled towpath providing opportunities for fishing, walking and permissive cycling. The river is accessed by a variety of private means including, recreational boating and barges, row boats, and canoes, which bring a sense of activity, movement and colour to the river corridor in strong contrast to the tranquil, pastoral landscape of the surrounding floodplain.

Adjoining the river is a relatively level landscape with meadows and pastures separated by ditches and channels, with belts of riparian woodland which adjoin the river. Much of the area is currently designated as AGLV, creating a wedge of landscape, which is bounded by, and largely comparable with the adjacent AONB. It is also mainly SSSI, with both Wey Meadows and Broadford Bridge, designated for their diversity of habitats including water meadows, swamp fen and wet woodland. Much of the land to the south of Guildford is owned by Guildford Borough Council and has historical associations with the now demolished Shalford Park. There is a notable absence of built structures within the area,

apart from structures associated with water management such as St Catherine's Lock, Unstead Lock, lock keepers cottages and associated sluices and weirs. This contrasts with the highly visible large-scale office and commercial infrastructure, which is developing along the adjoining (H3) river terrace (along the Portsmouth Road).

The whole area is of historic significance, with the Wey being one of the first rivers to be made navigable. An Act of Parliament in 1760 authorised the Godalming Navigation – a further 7 km upstream connecting to the completed Navigation at Guildford. Here, at the bottom of Ferry Lane a footbridge has replaced a ferry. At this point, the North Downs and Pilgrims Way long distance footpaths converge at the riverbank by a small stream, to cross the river by footbridge at one of its traditional crossing points, which together with the steep sandstone slopes of St. Catherine's Hill and summit chapel to the west and Shalford Park to the east create an area of strong historic resonance. Views across the floodplain to and from St. Catherine's Hill are a notable feature.

Glimpses of unique buildings through and above trees create local landmarks including the verdigris copper spire of St Mary's in Shalford and the bargate/clunch chapel on St Catherine's Hill.

In contrast to the absence of settlement is the railway infrastructure, which crosses the valley on embankments (including one dismantled line which has recently been refitted with a new bridge to accommodate a new circular cyclepath link) plus minor road crossing of the valley, for example the A248 at Broadford.

The low lying, flat topography of this area provides views to the surrounding woodland belts and ridges creating a strong sense of enclosure and containment within the valley. This is tempered by occasional long, open views from roads and footpaths across the expanse of flat meadowland along the valley floor.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** This part of the Upper Wey River Floodplain is highly representative of the wider rural character area.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins the following townscape character areas:

4A: St Catherine's Historic Village Core

2A: Settled River Wey Corridor

7B: Warwick's Bench Garden suburb

7A: Guildown Garden Suburb

To the north the river flows through the historic core of the town, and here, is included in the townscape assessment.

The river floodplain is principally bordered by the river terraces (H3 and H4), which are included in the rural-urban fringe assessment, although contain considerable development.

Woodland belts and hedgerows largely screen views to the Guildford urban edge from the river floodplain, particularly in the summer months creating a sense of enclosure and contributing to the contained, secluded character of the valley. The river floodplain itself provides an effective limit to urban development and it forms an important green wedge into the town. Elevated river terraces to the east and west, confine the floodplain, and these have been partially developed, with large scale business park, industrial and commercial development and park and ride facility characteristic of the terrace at Artington (H3) to the west. In summer, when trees are in leaf, this development is not especially prominent in views from the valley floor. However, in winter the developments are visually prominent; lighting at night-time also impacts on the rural, secluded ambience of the valley. Infrastructure elements crossing the valley, such as the roads and railways are also partially screened by woodland. During the twentieth century periods of garden suburb residential development took advantage of the rising topography of the chalk downs, and to a lesser extent the Greensand Ridge, to give elevated expansive views across the area to the south. On the north west edge of the valley in area 7A: *Guildown Garden Suburb* gardens of large detached houses run down to the river, for example along the Meadows and Flower Walk. To the east, in area 7B: *Warwicks Bench* the rising wooded slopes are dotted with a low density of large detached houses which overlook the valley. Several chalk quarries of medieval origin are present with high levels of tree cover in the redundant quarries contributing to the wooded character of these overlooking slopes. Exposed chalk faces are visible in some long distance views.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

This area is of immense historic significance to the landscape setting of Guildford. To the north the river cuts a narrow ‘gorge’ through the North Downs and is crossed by the ancient chalk routeway of the Pilgrim’s Way, with the river crossing providing the impetus for the growth of the town. The river and later the Navigation would also have been a major gateway to Guildford.

Today, the river and associated floodplain is vital to the setting of the modern town, providing not only an historic link but also a tranquil, pastoral setting infiltrating the town, with the floodplain forming an effective limit to development. The river also provides an important setting to the landmark of St. Catherine’s Hill. There are good opportunities for

recreational access out of from the town, for boating on the river, walking and permissive cycling along the miles of towpath and adjoining pathways.

## EVALUATION

### Key Positive Landscape Attributes

The key positive landscape attributes within A2: Upper Wey River Rural-Urban Fringe which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- The River Wey and navigation with its historic significance as one of the first British rivers to be made navigable and providing links with the Thames;
- The crossing of the River Wey by the Pilgrim's Way at narrow Gorge where the Wey cuts through the chalk and sandstone of the North Downs;
- The traditional floodplain landscape features of grazed meadows, drainage channels, ditches, marginal wetland planting and riparian tree belts;
- Habitat mosaic and biodiversity interest, including the Wey Valley Meadows SSSI with a range of grassland, meadow and wetland areas;
- Structures associated with water management, in particular St Catherine's Lock;
- Recreational usage, including boating on the river, plus the towpath and footpath network;
- The strong secluded, tranquil character in close proximity to the urban area;
- Role in providing a setting for the town and St. Catherine's Hill.

### Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures

The majority of the area is identified as floodplain and has a high degree of protection from development. The area is also defined on the Local Plan as part of the River Wey Corridor, included in an Environmental Strategy prepared by the National Trust recognising its historic significance, local importance and environmental sensitivity. The area is a subject of a specific local plan policy (Policy G11) to protect the river corridor. Although development within this area is not a key issue, the surrounding landscape, notably the river terraces is vulnerable to change which is having an impact on the setting of the river corridor and its tranquil character.

The surrounding steep hillsides populated by low-density garden suburbs, which overlook the river floodplain on both sides of the valley, are characterised by their wooded or highly

treed nature. This unique topography provides long distance views and reverse views from much of the town towards attractive wooded slopes and feature hillsides opposite. These encircling woodlands and hillsides give the town centre a special character, which is distinctively linked, both physically and visually, to the town's surrounding and underlying rural character. Intensification of the mass of built form through continuing re-development of residential properties within these areas will significantly affect and threaten this character area. In addition, the environmental quality of the River Wey is vulnerable to the intrusion of modern buildings and parked cars adjacent to the river.

Another particular pressure relates to the Surrey Waste Plan, which has identified several sites for waster storage, transfer, and recycling facilities within the adjacent townscape and river terrace landscapes at Peasmash.

The area's proximity and accessibility from Guildford makes it highly susceptible to over-intensification of general use of towpaths and local pathways. Greater recreational pressures and their associated requirements for upgraded facilities and accelerated erosion could also threaten the tranquil character. At St Catherine's Hill the loss of the upper soil levels and vegetation is a key concern, which has allowed the erosion of the sandy banks that border the river, and is being accelerated by unrestricted public access, which should be addressed.

The landscape is also vulnerable to changes in management which would threaten the intact floodplain landscape. There is a need to sustain management (including grazing), control invasive species and ensure retention and renewal of over mature trees.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve the traditional floodplain landscape of the Wey valley, with its tranquil, secluded, pastoral character, recognising its historic and natural significance. The area should continue to provide an 'undeveloped' rural landscape between Guildford and Godalming. The recommendations of the National Trust Management Strategy for the Wey Navigation should be followed.

Management of A2: *Upper Wey Rural Urban Fringe* should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

#### **Land Management**

- Conserve the Wey corridor as an oasis of calm and tranquillity in close proximity to the

urban area.

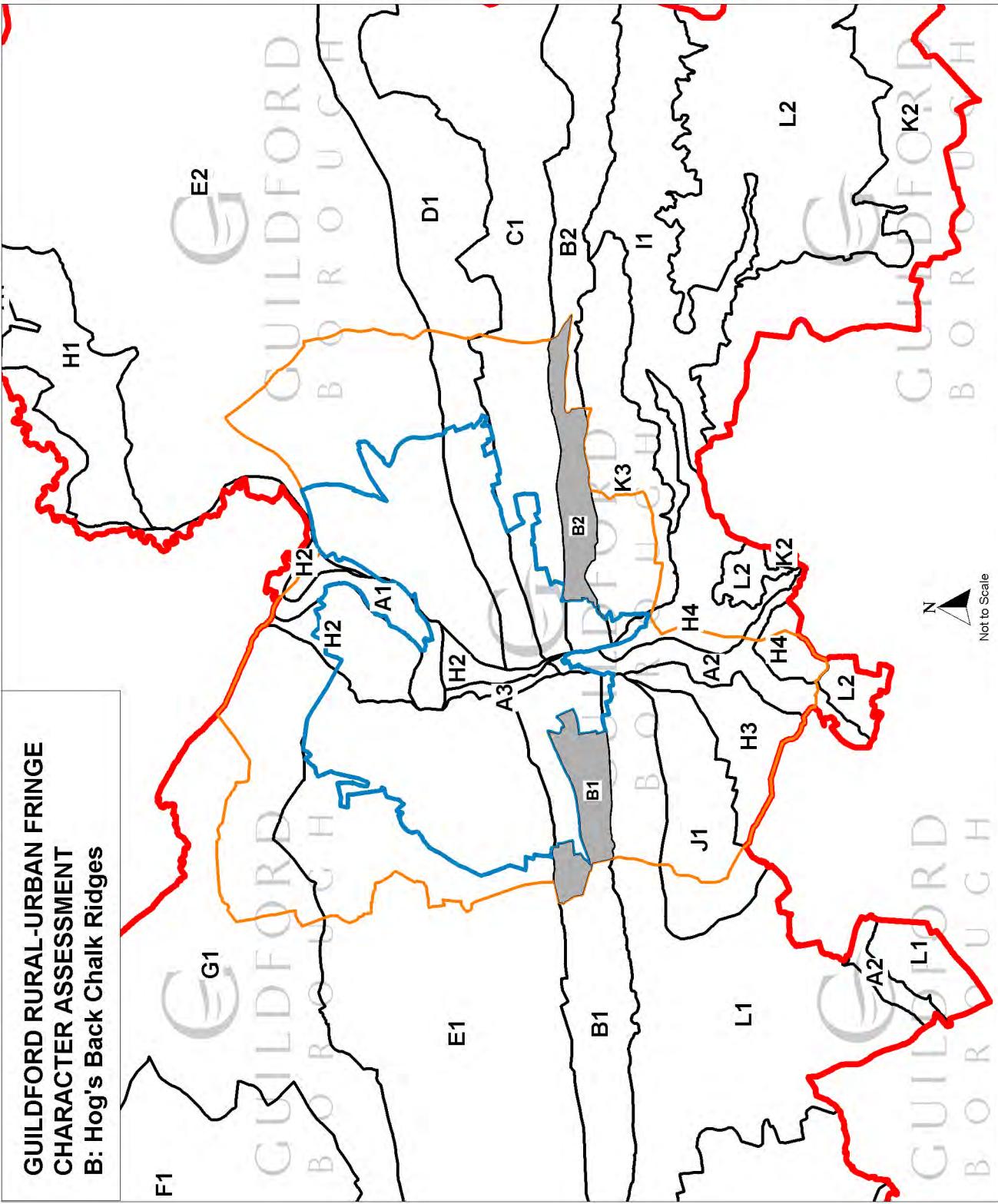
- Conserve the characteristic elements of the floodplain landscape including meadows, grazed pasture, fen swamp, wet woodland and mature trees including pollard. Continue to implement a grazing regime to maintain the character of the meadows and manage invasive species.
- Retain open views across the floodplain.
- Ensure protection of river banks, particularly those vulnerable to erosion, notably the sandy bedrock of the Greensand.
- Conserve and manage the woodland and screening at the interface with the urban area and especially on the edges of the gravel terraces – so that the valley remains as a contained, rural landscape.
- Manage recreational use to ensure it does not disrupt the tranquil character of the valley or result in landscape impacts such as erosion. Seek opportunities to provide new links and connections through the valley.
- Encourage appropriate tree management to ensure views to focal point buildings remain, however balance this with the need to conserve the protective screening trees give to these buildings from any surrounding urban features.

### ***Built Development***

- Maintain the open and undeveloped character of the floodplain.
- Conserve and protect historic structures and features associated with the Wey Navigation such as locks and sluices. Resist any development that would compromise the setting of such structures.
- Consider the impact of any change on the adjacent gravel terraces on the character of the floodplain, in particular the imposition of lighting, which would affect the ‘rural’ dark skies.
- In particular seek to ensure that large scale facilities associated with recycling, storage, transfer or processing of waste, which require modern, purpose designed buildings, do not intrude on the tranquil floodplain landscape.
- Ensure that any development within surrounding townscape areas respects the setting of the valley. Development should not visually intrude and the screening woodlands and hedgerows should be conserved and reinforced.

- Resist the loss of key landscape features or character through spread or ‘urbanising’ features such as inappropriate surfacing (such as metalled footpaths), materials, signage or construction of suburban-style boundaries.
- Ensure the visual impact of lighting schemes is assessed and resist inappropriate or overly damaging schemes to the rural character or ‘dark’ skies

**GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT  
B: Hog's Back Chalk Ridges**



**Legend**

- Chalk Ridges
- B1: Hog's Back
- B2: Pewley Albury Downs
- Guildford Detailed Area
- Guildford Urban Fringe Study Area
- Guildford Borough Boundary
- LCA Rural Landscape Classifications

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# GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE TYPE B: Chalk Ridge

## B1: Hog's Back Rural-Urban Fringe



## B2: Pewley-Albury Downs Rural-Urban Fringe



# **CHARACTER AREA BI: HOG'S BACK RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type	Character Area	Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area
B: Chalk Ridge	BI: Hog's Back Chalk Ridge	<b>BI: Hog's Back Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Hog's Back forms the western part of a narrow chalk ridge that extends to the west and east of Guildford. The ridge is cut by the River Wey, resulting in steep slopes rising up to either side of the town. Character Area BI considers the ridge immediately west of Guildford. The area is largely within the Surrey Hills AONB, with the exception being a block of land adjoining the urban edge immediately east of Henley Fort.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

The narrow chalk ridge of the Hog's Back extends eastwards terminating in steep bluffs rising above the River Wey on the edge of Guildford, with key views over the town and to the cathedral, and panoramic views encompassing much of Surrey and the Thames Basin towards London. The ridge and northern slopes contain an important area of species rich chalk grassland at The Mount, a small area of ancient semi-natural woodland and a nineteenth century fortification at Henley Fort (Scheduled Ancient Monument). The southern slopes dip down to a valley forming the junction with the Greensand Hills and are actively farmed in arable crops. Henley Grove is a small area of ancient woodland associated with the Fort, while further west Sunnydown plantation is a mixed woodland block on the ridge. To the west the area is dominated by the infrastructure associated with the A3 and A31, with visual and audible impact. A small outlying part of the character area extends north of the road junction. This area slopes northwards, presently with arable crops forming an open backdrop to the sports facilities at Manor Park, University of Surrey, although currently being developed as the University's second Campus to provide a new complex of residential and teaching blocks, a large-scale covered sports centre and formal and informal sports facilities. This area contains an important hedgerow boundary indicative of the boundary of the former Royal Park of Guildford, a hunting park, established by Henry II (1154 – 89) and remaining in royal ownership until 1624.

Good access links with the adjacent urban area include a number of public rights of way, including a track leading into the residential development at Guildown Avenue and a distinctive chalk trackway along the ridge top, which marks the ancient main road approach into the town centre from the west, linking into the bottom of the High Street as it approaches Town Bridge, plus open access land on the chalk downland. On the lower slopes bordering the Farnham Road is an area of allotment gardens. In combination, these features create a valued recreation resource.

Development is limited to a number of telecom masts on the ridgetop, a covered reservoir and the education centre at Henley Fort. The elevation, 360-degree panoramic views of Guildford Town Centre and the surrounding countryside distinctive chalk grassland turf create an area with a strong sense of place and, despite background road noise, it provides a peaceful oasis in close proximity to the urban area. Views over to the north of the A3 provide a strong visual link with the open landscape around the Cathedral on Stag Hill.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** This part of the Hog's Back is highly representative of the wider rural character area. However, the absence of the main ridge top road (A31) in this area makes it, in comparison, a more tranquil landscape. The views across Guildford and to the Cathedral are a distinctive feature of the rural –urban fringe landscape.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins the following townscape character areas:

7A: Guildown

8A: Onslow Village

10A: University of Surrey

The character area is permeated by residential development of Onslow Garden suburb, which extends out onto the lower northern slopes of the chalk ridge. Low rise, low density residential development also forms the town edge to the east. Thick hedgerows and garden trees screen the boundaries of the residential areas, so for the most part development is not visible, although some are more severe for example at Mountside, with residential development ending as stark, hard edge to the open chalk grassland of The Mount. Here, intensification of development through infill within back gardens has created a harsh, dense urban edge. On the southern slopes an intact managed arable landscape extends up to the urban boundary of Guildown.

To the west the junction of the A31 and the A3 meet at the boundary of the urban fringe

area, with a large cutting and overpass visually dominating the landscape and traffic noise clearly audible.

The sloping topography will allow extensive views over the high-density, high rise residential/faculty areas of the new University campus, in effect creating a strong urban edge closer to the fringe boundary, however, this will be to some extent buffered from the surrounding fringe by the woodland blocks of Strawberry Copse and Manor Grove and a reduction in density of developments to the south. The creation of new formal sports pitches will interrupt the existing local topography and rural character with the introduction of several artificial grass terraces, artificial surfaces and high-level lighting. The impact of this development on the surrounding area and the visual connection with the Cathedral on Stag Hill will be considerable however, a new area of chalk grassland for open recreational access with tree groups and clumps will wrap around the southern and western boundaries of the site, mitigating these views over time.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

The Hog's Back has a vital role in providing a dramatic landscape setting to Guildford, with the town originating at the crossing of the Wey, where the river cuts through the ridge. The steep slopes rising from the River Wey and distinctive elevated ridge landform provides a natural containment for, and backdrop to, the lower lying town centre and allows panoramic views across Guildford, to the Cathedral. Conversely, there are key views out from the town centre (High Street and North Street) to the steeply rising slopes forming the western end of the Hog's Back ridge. These create an open backdrop, and a strong rural context to the town. On the southern slopes, the intact managed arable landscape extends up to residential development at Guildown. To the north the arable slopes north of the A3/A31 provide an important open backdrop to the emerging Manor Park site.

The distinctive linear ridge of the Hog's Back brings the nationally designated landscape of the North Downs almost to the heart of the town. It offers good recreation and access links with the surrounding urban area providing a rural 'oasis' in close proximity to the developed area.

Farnham Road is an important southern gateway, leading down directly into the town centre from the A3 and A31. The Hog's Back ridge provides an open, rural setting on the southern side of this road. To the north, this rural character is complemented by the thickly hedged back garden boundaries of properties in Onslow Village.

## EVALUATION

### Key Positive Landscape Attributes

The key positive landscape attributes within BI: Hog's Back Rural – Urban Fringe should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Distinctive ridge landform and elevated topography;
- Open and wooded backdrop and containment for Guildford;
- Key rural views out from the town centre (High Street and North St), with the rising slopes and woodland providing an important backdrop;
- Key view from the ridge top to Stag Hill plus wider panoramic views;
- Species rich chalk grassland and ancient woodland habitats;
- Scheduled Ancient Monument plus ancient chalk trackways;
- Remnant features associated with the medieval royal park of Guildford (boundary hedgerow);
- Access and recreation opportunities (Open Access land and rights of way network) - links into the town and out to the wider Surrey Hills;
- Special function as a high quality and peaceful landscape in close proximity to the urban area;
- Contribution to character of the Farnham Road Gateway to Guildford;
- Role of arable slopes in forming an open backdrop to the Manor Park site;
- An intact managed agricultural landscape on the southern ridge slopes, and a strong urban boundary.

### Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures

The area is largely designated as AONB and therefore has a considerable degree of protection from adverse change. Key vulnerabilities and sensitivities primarily relate to the need to continue appropriate land management, for example ensuring the resources to continue active management of the chalk grassland. Future changes in agriculture could also have an impact on the intact managed agricultural landscape of the southern slopes with potential for a shift to a more urban fringe character either as unmanaged (set aside land) or pressures for subdivision of land and creation of small plots or paddocks. The landscape is

especially sensitive and vulnerable to intensification of recreation use and potential cluttering of recreational infrastructure that could detract from the essentially rural character. Good management will need to be sustained to avoid urban fringe pressures.

Pressures for new development is likely to be low, given the outstanding landscape character of the area and its role in the setting of Guilford, although there may be vulnerable to small scale extensions to residential development on the lower slopes (not AONB), with piecemeal loss of greenbelt through edge of town infill.

A greater intensity of development in the back gardens of Guildown Avenue could result in other changes such as greater traffic on the narrow green lane leading to Henley Fort with pressure for road improvements that would detract from the rural character.

The proposed floodlit sports facilities at Manor Park will potentially have high levels of impact on this area and their future operation should be carefully managed to keep this to a minimum.

The setting of Guildford and the AONB are both highly sensitive to any small scale, incremental change. Development pressures may particularly relate to intensification of existing uses, for example requirements for additional masts/vertical structures and greater activity and use in relation to the existing buildings. Any form of development on this sensitive ridge/skyline has the potential to be highly visible in views.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve and enhance the rural character and high quality landscape of the Hog's Back Rural – Urban Fringe and its role in providing the setting to and views from Guildford. Future management should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

- Continue and ensure long term appropriate management of the chalk grassland to conserve and enhance the habitat and species diversity. Consider opportunities to introduce grazing management.
- Continue and ensure long term appropriate management of the semi-natural woodland to conserve and enhance the habitat and species diversity, where appropriate restoring to semi-natural conditions. Seek to encourage sustainable and habitat diverse woodlands.

- Ensure recreation management conserves the rural character of the area and does not contribute to cluttering of the landscape with signage and other small infrastructure elements. Site furniture such as bins and benches should be sensitively located.
- Consider opportunities to reveal and interpret the Scheduled Monument at Henley's Camp.
- Manage and retain the hedgerow network particularly in relation to the edge of the urban areas.
- Seek to ensure that the agricultural land remains in active agricultural management, through promotion of agri-environment schemes and encourage farming techniques that retain/reinstate key landscape features.

### ***Built Development***

- Maintain the essentially undeveloped, rural character. Avoid intensification of use in relation to existing buildings (Henley's Fort) and potential adverse affects, for example access via. the ridge top rural track.
- Avoid further tall vertical structures on the ridge top where they will be visually dominant and potentially impact on important views from Guildford and where they would adversely affect views from the wider landscape. Aim to utilise existing masts in preference to the erection of new ones.
- Maintain the leafy, rural character of Farnham Road as it dips down to Guildford town centre. Ensure the hedge boundaries are retained and discourage construction of hard boundaries such as railings or close-board fencing to properties.
- Where development does occur promote the use of locally appropriate plant species and boundary treatment at urban edges to provide better integration with the surrounding rural area.
- Conserve the low-key character of the road/chalk trackway that extends from the urban edge onto the ridge top.
- Ensure the visual impact of lighting schemes is assessed and resist inappropriate or overly damaging schemes to the rural character or 'dark' skies

# **CHARACTER AREA B2: PEWLEY-ALBURY DOWNS RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type	Character Area	Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area
B: Chalk Ridge	B2: Albury and Hackhurst Chalk Ridge	<b>B2: Pewley – Albury Downs Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Pewley – Albury Downs form part of the chalk ridge that extends east – west across Guildford Borough. The ridge is cut by the River Wey, resulting in steep slopes rising up to either side of the town. Character Area B2 considers the ridge and south facing scarp slope immediately east of Guildford. The area is entirely within the Surrey Hills AONB.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

The narrow chalk ridge extends eastwards from the edge of Guildford forming part of the North Downs. In this area the combination of tree/hedgerow cover and development, largely restrict views out, although exceptions are the panoramic views across Guildford and the Thames Basin from Pewley Downs. Further east at Newlands Corner there are also extensive views southwards across the Tillingbourne Valley. Characteristic chalk turf is limited to isolated sites on the steep slopes; Pewley Downs with a mix of species rich chalk downland and scrub supports a range of wildflowers and butterflies and provides an excellent wildlife resource on the immediate edge of Guildford. Albury Downs to the east also contains areas of open chalk downland on the steep slopes of the southern scarp, along with areas of woodland (the latter being mainly within character area C1). Both sites have open access and provide an important recreation resource in close proximity to the town. A historic ridge top path/lane, former Drove Road, leads directly from the town via Pewley Down to the extensive open land and woodlands at Newlands Corner. The North Downs Way National Trail also runs along the ridge top in the eastern most part of the area.

Numerous native mixed hedgerows form the boundaries to the open spaces of the downs, fields and public footpaths, providing a strong sense of enclosure for adjacent paths and generally blocking views to the north from the North Downs Way. The diagonal footpath leading down from Pewley Down south-east towards Farthing Copse is a particularly strong feature. Apart from the isolated downland and woodland sites, the ridge is largely under

arable crops, in medium to large fields, surrounded by low, intermittent hedgerow boundaries. Currently there are also a number of fields, to the west of Halfpenny lane mainly within the tenure of the Council owned Tyting Farm, which are not actively managed, forming areas of 'set aside' very visible in views to the steep ridge sides.

The western part of the ridge is strongly influenced by its proximity to Guildford with White Lane along the ridge lined by large detached houses set within extensive gardens and enjoying the rural views out. Houses are of various styles and age, with some redevelopment of older properties evident. The development is generally well screened by mature hedgerow and garden trees in views to the ridge, although further redevelopment, which intensifies densities, increases building mass or removes this cover, could disturb this balance. This area has an exclusive, private character. Other than this residential area, settlement is very limited.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** The rural-urban fringe character area is representative of the wider rural character area, with its distinctive ridge landform and presence of open chalk downland, woodland and agricultural land. To the west, the residential development along the ridge top and panoramic views over Guildford from Pewley Down are indicative of the proximity to the town.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The interface with the town is short, and the area only physically adjoins one townscape character area:

#### 7B: Warwick's Bench

The elevated landform, however ensures a strong visual link with other urban edges such as views from Pewley Hill to the allotment gardens and residential development at 8H: Pewley Hill.

The interface with the existing urban edge is formed by low-density suburban development of large detached houses set within gardens climbing the southern ridge slopes. The topography and elevation makes this townscape area very visible for example in views from the Greensand hills to the south or the higher land west of the River Wey. However, it is not especially visible or easy to perceive from within the character area, with the boundary being formed by trees and garden screening abutting directly into managed agricultural land. Pewley Down, an area of species-rich chalk grassland extending to the immediate edge of the town is an important and valuable feature.

## **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

The Pewley to Albury Downs chalk ridge has an important role in the landscape setting to Guildford, with the town originating at the crossing of the Wey, where the river cuts through the ridge. The elevated landform provides a natural containment for the lower lying town centre and allows panoramic views (from Pewley Down) across Guildford. Much of this area with its south facing slopes, is however, not generally evident in views out from the town centre, which lies to the north-west.

The distinctive linear ridge brings the nationally designated AONB landscape of the North Downs to the immediate edge of the town. It also offers good recreation and access links with the surrounding urban area and provides traditional chalk landscape and scenery.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within B2: Pewley – Albury Downs Rural – Urban Fringe which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Distinctive ridge landform and elevated topography;
- Species-rich chalk grassland habitat at Pewley Down and Albury Downs;
- Panoramic views from the ridge top across Guildford (Pewley Down) and the Tilling Bourne Valley (Newlands Corner);
- Ancient chalk trackways - Drove Road and route of The North Downs Way;
- Access and recreation opportunities (Open Access land and rights of way network) - links into the town and out to the wider Surrey Hills;
- Special function as a high quality and peaceful rural landscape in close proximity to the urban area;
- An essentially intact managed agricultural landscape on the ridge slopes.

### **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

The area is wholly designated as AONB and therefore has a considerable degree of protection from adverse change. Key vulnerabilities and sensitivities primarily relate to the need to continue appropriate land management, for example ensuring the resources to continue active management of the chalk grassland. Future changes in land ownership and agriculture could also have an impact on the intact managed agricultural landscape with potential for a shift to a more urban fringe character either as unmanaged (set aside land) or

pressures for subdivision of land and creation of small plots or paddocks. Such changes in land use on the slopes would have a high visual impact. The landscape is also sensitive and vulnerable to intensification of recreation use and potential cluttering of recreational infrastructure that could detract from the essentially rural character.

Pressures for further development are likely to be low. This area is, however, especially vulnerable to changes in the character of existing development, particularly the low density residential development along the ridge top which, may be under pressure for redevelopment at a higher density either as larger single dwellings or flats, or with creation of further building plots within existing gardens. Currently, the ridge top developments are set within spacious gardens and well screened by trees. Intensification of development could result in taller buildings rising above the tree line and removal of garden vegetation, which currently provides screening, thus opening up views and changing the perception of a rural landscape. Similarly a greater intensity of development could result in other changes such as greater traffic on the narrow rural lane (Drove Way) with pressure for road improvements that would detract from the rural character. The ridge is highly sensitive to any form of development, which would be visible in views.

Newlands Corner has become one of the main focuses for short stay recreation, and has become a popular stop-off point for car tourists and motorbikes. The re-development of the information centre and café here will further reinforce this. The impact of increasing car-bourne visitors and the adjacent A25, with high levels of traffic and main road paraphernalia, on the tranquillity of this area is an issue, and creates an unwelcome intrusion to pedestrian movement along the Drove Way into the landscape to the east beyond.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve and enhance the rural character and high quality landscape of the Pewsey – Albury Downs Rural – Urban Fringe. Future management should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

- Continue and ensure long term appropriate management of the chalk grassland to conserve and enhance the habitat and species diversity. Consider opportunities to introduce grazing management, where practical, and seek opportunities to extend the habitat beyond the current small isolated sites.

- Ensure recreation management conserves the rural character of the area and does not contribute to cluttering of the landscape with signage and other small infrastructure elements.
- Resist the loss of key landscape features or character through spread or ‘urbanising’ features such as inappropriate surfacing (metalled footpaths), materials, signage or construction of suburban-style boundaries.
- Aim to manage high levels of recreational use in ‘honey pot’ areas such as Newlands Corner, through an appropriate visitor management plan, and seek to avoid damage or visual intrusion through intensified facilities to other more sensitive sites.
- Manage and retain the hedgerow network particularly in relation to the edge of the urban areas.
- Encourage landowners to ensure that agricultural land remains in active agricultural management, through promotion of agri-environment schemes and encourage farming techniques that retain/reinstate key landscape features.
- Protect important views such as those over Guildford from Pewley Down and over the Tillingbourne Valley from Newlands Corner. Ensure these are not obscured by vegetation growth and consider opportunities to open up further lost views from the ridge top.

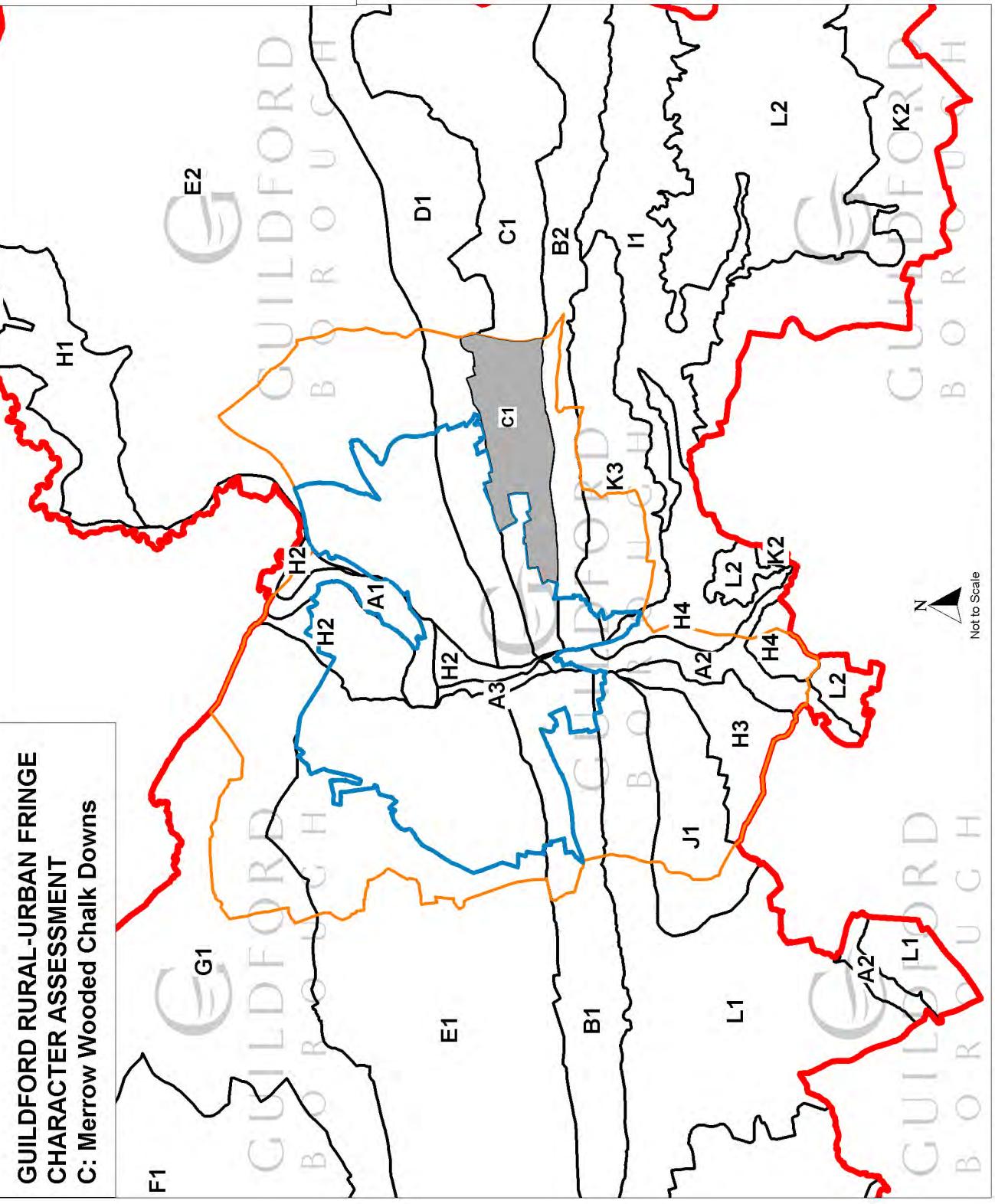
### ***Built Development***

- Maintain the essentially undeveloped, rural character, with development limited to low-density residences along part of the ridge top.
- Avoid intensification of the existing ridge top development and consider wider implications of redevelopment on the rural landscape, for example traffic pressures on the rural lanes.
- Seek to protect garden trees and boundaries that provide screening.
- Where development does occur promote the use of locally appropriate plant species and boundary treatment at urban edges to provide better integration with the surrounding rural area.
- Conserve the historic character of the rural lane (Drove Way) that runs along the ridge. Conserve pedestrian access out along the ridge from Guildford.
- Protect important views such as those over Guildford from Pewley Down and over the

Tillingbourne Valley from Newlands Corner. Consider the impact of any development within these key views.

- Oppose development of tall vertical structures, such as masts and towers, on the ridge top where they will be visually dominant and adversely affect views from the wider landscape.

**GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**C: Merrow Wooded Chalk Downs**



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**Legend**

- Wooded Chalk Downs
- C1: Merrow Downs
- Guildford Detailed Area
- Guildford Urban Fringe Study Area
- Guildford Borough Boundary

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**GUILDFORD**  
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Not to Scale

# GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE TYPE C:Wooded Chalk Down

## C1: Merrow Downs Rural-Urban Fringe



# **CHARACTER AREA CI: MERROW DOWNS RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type	Character Area	Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area
C: Wooded Downs	CI: Merrow and Clandon Wooded Downs	<b>CI: Merrow Downs Rural Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Merrow Downs form part of the north facing dipslope of the chalk ridge extending east of Guildford. Character Area C2 refers to the slopes immediately east of Guildford forming an open backdrop to much of the north east part of the town, and rolling down from the escarpment and ridge top (character area B2). The area is entirely within the Surrey Hills AONB.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

Gently undulating, this landscape slopes down from the ridge top and escarpment, to the south (character area B2). The area is composed of three main land uses – open common (grassland), agricultural land and broadleaved woodland, each occurring as extensive blocks, rather than as a mosaic. Merrow Downs, a registered common and SNCI, occupies much of the character area comprising an extensive area of open grassland, mixed broadleaved woodland (oak/ash and hazel coppice) and natural regeneration yew/box stands, unimproved chalk swards and scrub. Formerly the site of Guildford race course, much of the area is now part of Guildford Golf Club. From the more open areas there are panoramic views across the north-east part of the town and beyond. Part of the hills and ridge at Merrow Golf Course, form a backdrop in views from Clandon Park to the north.

Characteristic chalk grassland and unimproved pasture is associated with the steeper slopes of Merrow Downs, which includes two regionally significant stretches of chalk turf. Much of the common is longer ‘amenity’ grassland contrasting with the more manicured landscape associated with the golf course. An ancient burial ground (of high archaeological potential) is located on the western edge of the area. The area provides an important recreation resource with numerous informal access networks across the common connecting into the urban area, plus rights of way. The combination of open access and golf course results in much of the area being perceived as a leisure landscape.

The area is characterised by the sparse settlement, with the only buildings associated with Warren Farm and Burwood Farm. Widely accessible by foot, road access is limited to a minor lane (Trodd's Lane) although used by high levels of vehicles to access western Guildford from the A25, and recently subject in part (mainly within the residential section which falls within D1) to an urban speed reduction scheme. The absence of settlement and road access contributes to the informal, quiet character of the area.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** The rural-urban fringe character area is representative of the wider rural character area, with its rolling dipslope landform and mix of land uses. However, the extent of open land and informal/formal recreation use distinguishes the rural-urban fringe from the wider rural area, which is dominated by larger areas of woodland cover. The views to the immediate urban edge and over the north east suburbs of Guildford also give this area a greater connection with the town.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area has an extensive urban edge and adjoins six townscape character areas:

7B: Warwick's Bench

7C: Merrow Garden Suburb

7E: Epsom Road

8H: Pewley Hill

8I: Merrow interwar /post-war estate

9E: Merrow Common

9G: St Luke's Square

The interface with the existing urban edge is formed by a mix of residential suburbs of different ages (representing 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> century development):

The town edge, for the most part, is created by back gardens, usually with fenced boundaries. A feature of this area is the way that residential streets extend up the lower slopes, terminating at the open land. The open landscape of Merrow Downs is an important feature in channelled views between residential terraces up these roads as well as providing an open backdrop and skyline for the wider suburban area. From this open area reverse panoramic views across to north-west Guildford towards the Cathedral are available.

In one area (7E) suburban development has extended out along part of the upper slopes. The development is highly visible and prominent on an otherwise undeveloped skyline.

However, the greatest significant impact upon the area's rural character has occurred with the recent development of St Luke's Square, which through the creation of a single unrelieved terrace has introduced a highly urbanising feature upon the urban boundary that is incongruous with the adjacent screened residential mass.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

The Merrow Downs dip slope provides an open rural backdrop and skyline over much of the north-east part of Guildford. It has a particularly important function in relation to development south of the Epsom Road, with the open crest rising above residential development on the lower slopes and glimpsed in views along roads. The elevated landform of the chalk downs provides natural containment to the town and limit to development. It brings the nationally designated AONB landscape of the North Downs to the immediate edge of the town. It also offers good recreation and access links with the surrounding urban area and provides an important informal recreational landscape.

Trodd's Lane passes through the area, linking the A25 and Dorking and carrying high levels of traffic. Currently the lane is 'rural' in character and forms an indistinct 'gateway' to Guildford.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within C1: Merrow Downs Rural – Urban Fringe which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Distinctive undulating dipslope landform providing an open backdrop to north west Guildford;
- Significant areas of chalk grassland and coppice woodland habitat at Merrow Downs;
- Local views out across north west Guildford plus local views and glimpses from the urban area out to the Merrow Downs;
- Common land with open access, numerous access connections with the urban area, plus network of rights of way – creating an important informal recreation landscape.

### **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

The area is wholly designated as AONB and therefore has a considerable degree of protection from adverse change. Key vulnerabilities and sensitivities primarily relate to the need to continue appropriate land management, for example ensuring the resources to

continue active management of the chalk grassland. Future changes in agriculture could also have an impact on the agricultural landscape with potential for a shift to a more urban fringe character either as unmanaged (set aside land) or pressures for subdivision of land and creation of small plots or paddocks. The landscape is also sensitive and vulnerable to intensification of recreation use and potential cluttering of recreational infrastructure that could detract from the essentially open, informal rural character.

Pressures for further built development is likely to be low given the status of the land as an AONB. High levels of traffic on Trodd's Lane, exacerbated by the indistinct gateway to Guildford, is a key issue.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve and enhance the character of the Merrow Downs. Future management should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

- Continue and ensure long term appropriate management of the chalk grassland to conserve and enhance the habitat and species diversity. Consider opportunities to extend and link areas of chalk grassland habitat.
- Ensure recreation management conserves the essentially rural open character of the area and does not contribute to cluttering of the landscape with signage and other small infrastructure elements.
- Manage and retain the hedgerow network and remnant hedgerow trees.
- Seek to ensure that the agricultural land remains in active agricultural management, through promotion of agri-environment schemes to land owners and encourage farming techniques that retain/reinstate key landscape features.
- Research the historic landscape and consider opportunities to reinstate landscape features on the slopes, formerly important in views from Clandon Park.

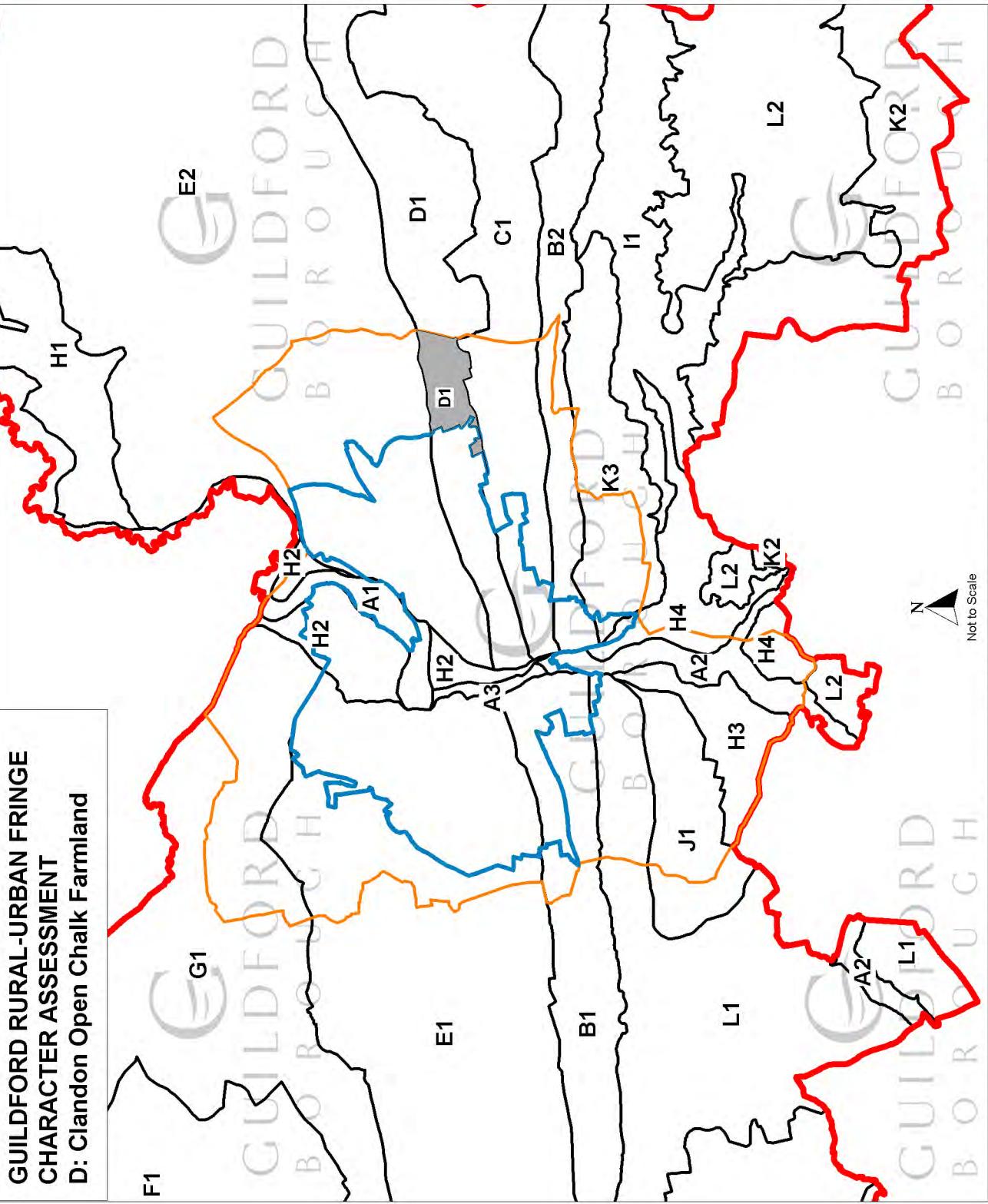
#### ***Built Development***

- Maintain the open character and contrast with the densely built up urban area.
- Resist intensification or extension of the existing skyline development and consider

opportunities to enhance the edges of this development, for example by woodland screening.

- Oppose development of tall vertical structures, such as masts and towers, on the ridge top where they will be visually dominant and adversely affect views from the wider landscape.
- Consider the impact of any change on the ridge or slopes in views up from Clandon Park.
- Seek to maintain the essentially rural character of Trodd's Lane in association with any necessary schemes to manage traffic levels and speed. Assess any proposals for visual impact of lighting schemes. Encourage appropriate surfacing, enhancing the immediate landscape setting and ensuring minimum clutter.

**GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT  
D: Clandon Open Chalk Farmland**



- Legend**
- Open Chalk Farmland
  - D1: Clandon Open Chalk Farmland
  - LCA Rural Landscape Classifications
  - Guildford Detailed Area
  - Guildford Urban Fringe Study Area
  - Guildford Borough Boundary



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# **GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE TYPE D: Open Chalk Farmland**

## **D1: Clandon Open Chalk Farmland Rural-Urban Fringe**



# **CHARACTER AREA DI: CLANDON RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type	Character Area	Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area
D: Open Chalk Farmland	DI: Clandon Open Chalk Farmland	<b>DI: Clandon Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** Clandon Open Chalk Farmland is a small character area on the lower slopes of the chalk dipslope east of Guildford. The Epsom Road marks the northern boundary, with the southern boundary formed by the golf course on Merrow Downs (C1) which is within the Surrey Hills AONB. Residential development on the edge of the town forms the boundary to the west and the area extends eastwards to encompass woodland, plantation at Shere Road. The lower hill slopes form a backdrop to Clandon Park, to the north.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

This small character area forms part of the lower dipslope of the chalk and descends as a gentle slope to meet the clays to the north. The eastern part of the area is under oak/beech woodland cover, with the main part of the character area comprising approximately four medium sized arable fields enclosed by thick, tall hedgerows. The hedgerows are distinctive for their mature oak and coniferous trees (pines). The ornamental species, plus remnant areas of flint wall may be indicative of links to the Capability Brown designed landscape of Clandon Park (the estate now in dual ownership of Lord Onslow, with the immediate estate around the house owned and partially covenanted from Lord Onslow by the National Trust,), which lies immediately to the north. The presence of the Henchley Gate on the Epsom Road and a corresponding trackway leading up the lower dipslope towards Merrow Downs suggests that this area formed part of the wider estate landscape. Today, the fields are in arable land use, although appear unmanaged or 'set aside', with chalk and flints clearly showing through the ploughed soil.

Further features include a cricket ground adjoining the Epsom Road and a disused chalk pit (Duke of Onslow Pit), now valued for its rare plant species, and as a Regionally Important Geological Site. The only development presently within the area is the pavilion associated with the cricket ground and a pair of cottages. There is one footpath along the western

edge, otherwise the area is inaccessible, with views into the area limited by the thick hedgerow cover.

The character of this area is set to alter quite dramatically with the open arable fields earmarked for a new Park and Ride car park, a Golf Clubhouse and golf course. It will be important to ensure that any change is sympathetic to existing character and to manage and enhance the landscape to provide a strong rural context. The development of the car park and golf club should include careful design and detailing of all hard landscaping and buildings, and a comprehensive landscape plan to integrate the site into the surrounding rural area.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** The rural-urban fringe character area is a very small part of a much wider rural character area, although it shares essential features including views up to the wooded downs and functioning as a backdrop to the lower lying claylands.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area has a short urban edge and adjoins one townscape character area, on the western edge, namely:

#### 7C: Merrow Garden Suburb

Here, large detached residences set within spacious gardens create the urban edge. The development edge, is not discernable from within the character area with fields extending up to the boundary and houses screened by a mix of hedgerows and garden trees.

With the proposed development of the car park and golf club, urbanising elements including buildings, access roads, car parking and lighting will be extended into the character area. To provide some measure of integration this development should include careful detailing of all hard landscaping and any buildings, and a comprehensive landscape plan to provide high level screening of the sites from the surrounding rural area is imperative.

There is the opportunity for the golf course design to take its lead from both the site's existing landscape features and patterns, the surrounding chalk downland character, and the historic open parkland landscape of Clandon Park to create a course which reintroduces a suitable landscape of species rich chalk grassland and small tree groups and clumps.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

The lower slopes of the dipslope are not a prominent landform feature, being largely hidden and screened by hedgerow cover. This area is not apparent in views when travelling along the Epsom Road, for example. The Epsom Road itself is a gateway into Guildford and the strong hedgerow boundaries help convey the impression of an intact rural area extending to

the development boundary. In the past this area is likely to have had a landscape function in relation to Clandon Park to the north, although this has since been lost.

## EVALUATION

### Key Positive Landscape Attributes

- The key positive landscape attributes within D1: Clandon Open Chalk Farmland Rural – Urban Fringe which should be conserved and enhanced are:
- Function in the backdrop view from Clandon Park and remnant features including ornamental trees and flint wall foundations;
- Biodiversity and geodiversity interest associated with the chalk pit;
- Strong, thick hedgerow cover and hedgerow trees forming field boundaries, including distinctive ornamental species;
- Thick hedgerows contributing to the ‘green’, rural approach to Guildford along the Epsom Road.
- View along Epsom Road to the church spire (Merrow).

### Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures

Unlike much of the rural-urban fringe of Guildford, the absence of AONB designation and areas of common land means that this area is especially vulnerable to change. Current proposals include a Park and Ride scheme and golf course (including club house and health club). The landform of gentle slopes of the lower dip slope combined with the considerable screening afforded by the hedgerow cover suggest that this area is relatively less sensitive compared to other areas on the edge of Guildford, providing the most sensitive aspects are conserved and enhanced.

## GUIDANCE

### Landscape Strategy

The overall management aim is to conserve and enhance the character of the Clandon Open Chalk Down. Future management should consider the following:

### Landscape Guidelines

#### *Land Management*

- Manage and retain the hedgerow network and remnant hedgerow trees (including

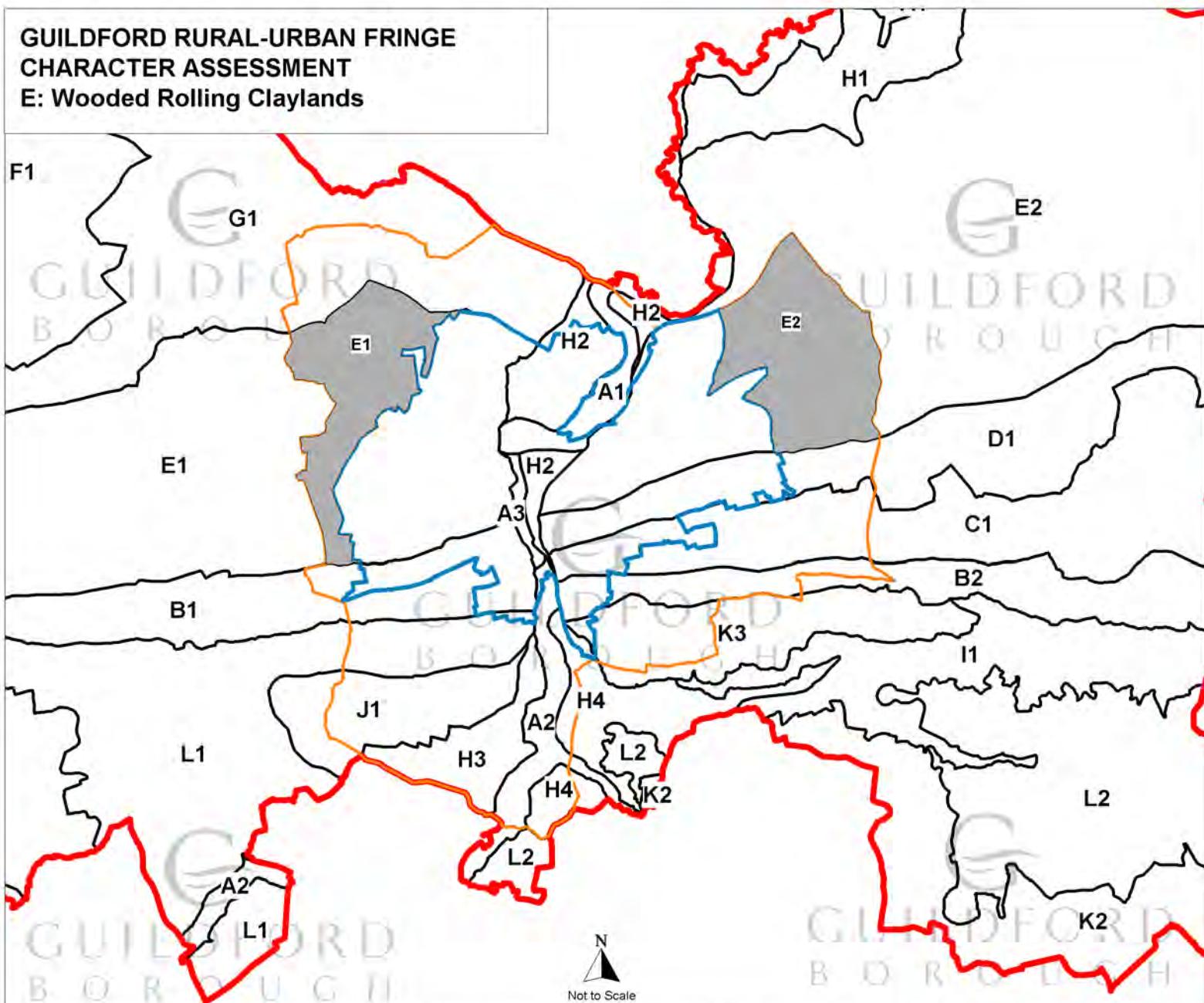
coniferous species) and in particular its function in providing screening and containment from the Epsom Road.

- Seek to ensure that retained agricultural land remains in active agricultural management, through promotion of agri-environment schemes and encourage farming techniques that retain/reinstate key landscape features.
- Research the historic landscape and consider opportunities (with Lord Onslow and the National Trust) to restore lost, senescent or deteriorating landscape features on the dip slope of the Downs to the South, formerly important in views from Clandon Park. There are also particular opportunities in relation to proposed golf courses.
- Conserve the biodiversity, geodiversity and historic interest of the Duke of Onslow chalk pit.
- Consider opportunities for chalk grassland restoration particularly in conjunction with the new golf course.

### ***Built Development***

- Maintain the open character of the upper slopes which form the transition with Merrow Downs (AONB) and are important in the view from Clandon Park.
- Reinforce existing boundary planting and ensure that any future development is screened by appropriate landscape buffer zones which incorporate hedgerow cover and tree belts. Consider further boundary tree planting, including species, which are found in existing hedgerows.
- Respect the features associated with the historic designed landscape and promote reinstatement of designed landscape features.
- Consider the impact on the setting of, and views from Clandon Park, in relation to any proposed change.
- Conserve the rural character of the Epsom Road approach to Guildford. Seek to avoid excessive signage, entrance splays and lighting associated with the Merrow Park and Ride and proposed new golf course/club which would create a more urban setting.
- Ensure integration of any new development with the landscape setting, including careful detailing and a comprehensive plan.

**GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**E: Wooded Rolling Claylands**



**Legend**

- Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands  
E1: Rydes Hill - Fairlands
- Ockham & Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands  
E2: Clandon Rural-Urban Fringe
- LCA Rural Landscape Classifications
- Guildford Detailed Area
- Guildford Urban Fringe Study Area
- Guildford Borough Boundary

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# **GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE TYPE E:Wooded Rolling Claylands**

## **E1: Rydeshill-Fairlands Rural-Urban Fringe**



## **E2: Clandon Rural-Urban Fringe**



# **CHARACTER AREA EI: RYDESHILL - FAIRLANDS RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type 1:50,000	Character Area 1: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area 1:10,000</b>
E: Wooded Rolling Clayland	EI: Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands	<b>EI: Rydeshill- Fairlands Rural- Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Character Area covers the rural urban fringe west of Guildford extending from the Royal Surrey Hospital site and Rydeshill on the urban edge, encompassing the small commons that characterise the landscape to the west of Guildford and the satellite suburb of Fairlands. The southern boundary is the A31 and the northern boundary of the character area is formed by the Aldershot Road marking the transition with the sandy heaths and common around Worplesden.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

This part of the rural-urban fringe comprises a narrow band of low-lying clay land west of Guildford. It is a relatively level, flat landscape and therefore cannot generally be perceived from within the urban area, apart from glimpses along roads or between houses. Although not visible from public roads the area retains strong visual and cultural links with Stag Hill and Guildford Cathedral. The chimney, associated with the hospital is a further dominant feature in views.

The area has a strong historic character forming part of the former Royal Park of Guildford, a medieval deer park established by Henry II in the 12th century and remaining in royal ownership for some 500 years. The former park pale now defines the western edge of Guildford, with remnant landscape features including woodland sites at Strawberry Grove and hedgerow boundaries representing the former extent of the park. The core part of the area from Fairlands to Broad Street is now characterised by extensive areas of common land. Following 'disembarkments' these areas would have once been grazed by commoner's stock with close links to the adjacent villages. Today, this is a low-key 'unstructured' landscape of grassland, with areas of regenerating scrub, birch and oak/ash woodland and some forestry plantations. Small ponds dot the surface and connecting drainage ditches

resulting from former clay pits and imparting a local lush, wetland character. Surrounding the common land is an agricultural landscape of smallholdings with small fields, bounded by thin hedgerows and fences predominantly in pasture with some managed by horse grazing and others unmanaged with long grass. Mature hedgerow trees, where they remain, are an important feature. Further elements and features include the extensive woodland blocks of Strawberry Grove, an ancient and replanted woodland and Manor Copse to the south, which have an important function in relation to the urban boundary and screening the new University Manor Park Campus. To the north the golf course is a dominant land use.

Settlement essentially follows a common land pattern of loose, linear red brick development alongside roads facing directly onto the commons or greens, plus the more recent suburban development at Fairlands. It also includes some large farm complexes and occasional grander old houses. Market Garden and nursery establishments are a further feature.

The commons provide an important resource to local people with a number of small footpaths weaving through the urban area and across the commons. All the commons are designated as Open Access land and are well used for walking and horse riding.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** This part of Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands is to an extent representative of the wider rural character area, although with a greater degree of influence of the urban edge including suburban settlement at Fairlands. Other distinguishing features include the generally level topography and extensive areas of open and wooded common land.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins the long western edge of Guildford, encompassing the following townscape character areas:

8A: Guildford Park/Onslow Village

8B: Westborough/Woodbridge Hill

8D: Park Barn

9A: Park Barn/Rydeshill

9B: Chitty's

10A: University of Surrey

10B: Royal Surrey Hospital Site

The western urban edge of Guildford has considerable variety and includes low-density

suburban residential development, institutions, plus the large-scale development at Surrey Research Park. The interface with the urban edge is varied – in the middle section around Ryde's Hill it created by the edge of the commons. A feature of particular importance is the small fingers of common land such as Chitty's Common, which extend into the urban fabric. For the most part, the transition to the residential development is marked by back garden boundaries, which abut directly onto the common land and or farmland. The southern part of the area borders the large-scale development at The Surrey Research Park. Here the large woodland blocks of Strawberry Grove, Dean Bottom and Manor Grove have an important function in screening and containing this development from the wider countryside. In the northern part of the area, a range of smaller scale mixed land uses including small holdings, nursery gardens and rifle range form a variable urban fringe landscape on the edge to the east of Tangle Lane. It is likely that much of this area is owned by developers with a view to gaining future planning permission which has contributed to its 'unmanaged character'.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

Characterised by its level, low-lying topography, this area cannot generally be perceived from within the urban area, apart from occasional glimpses along roads or between houses. Although not visible from public roads there are likely to be key views towards Guildford Cathedral from within parts of this area. The common land is extremely important in containing residential sprawl and creating the sense of a quick transition from the town to rural landscape. It is also important in maintaining the open informal 'unstructured' landscape between the town and newer outlying suburbs such as Fairlands and extended commons settlements such as Broad Street. The fingers of common land that permeate the urban fabric, such as at Chitty's Common are a particularly distinctive feature.

Within the southern part of the area, the large woodland blocks of Strawberry Grove, Dean Bottom and Manor Grove have key role in screening and containing large-scale development associated with the Surrey Research Park from the wider countryside.

The area acts as a low key local gateway to the suburban edges of Guildford, primarily via minor roads and rural lanes (although these frequently carry heavy traffic). The area also includes the A323 and on the northern boundary, the A322 as well as the railway line.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within E1: E1: Rydeshill- Fairlands Rural – Urban Fringe which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Remnants of the cultural landscape associated with the medieval Royal Deer Park;
- The presence of historic common land – conserving the distinctive open ‘unstructured’ rural character in immediate proximity to and infiltrating the urban edge and providing separation from historic settlement at Wood Street;
- Common land with open access and numerous rights of way providing linkages with and through the urban area – a valuable recreation and community resource;
- Historic and habitat values associated with the common land (and potential to enhance character and biodiversity through management);
- The quick transition from urban to rural and low key urban edge;
- Glimpses to the rural landscape from the urban fabric, plus local views from within the area to the Cathedral;
- Large woodland blocks of Strawberry Grove, Dean Bottom and Manor Grove and their function in screening and containing development at the Surrey Research Park; from the wider countryside.

### **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

Large parts of the area are identified as Common Land giving a high degree of protection from development, although conversely this may increase pressures on the surrounding marginal farmland making it more vulnerable to change through development or new land uses such as golf courses. The extensive constraints surrounding much of Guildford, suggests that this area will continue to be under pressure for change. It will be important to ensure that any change is sympathetic to existing character and to manage and enhance the landscape to provide a strong rural context.

Currently, a key issue concerning the character of the area relate to its management. Within the commons, some are actively managed while parts appear unmanaged and vulnerable to adverse change with a consequent reversion to scrub and woodland. Similarly, much of the agricultural land appears to be marginal (held by developers with a view to obtaining planning permission) and no longer actively farmed, with fields reverting to long grass or used as paddocks. In some areas horse grazing works well in the context of the surrounding common land. By comparison, other areas have a scruffy, neglected appearance with weedy pastures, loss of hedgerow boundaries and replacement with a mix of fencing and barbed wire with consequent decline in visual amenity and creating a more typical urban fringe landscape. The area is also vulnerable to the loss of historic landscape features (such as those associated with the medieval Royal Park) due to lack of understanding of their

significance within the landscape.

The informal rural character area is also vulnerable to intensification of recreational pressures resulting in a more parkland character with urban style furniture and infrastructure (such as bins, benches and hard car parking).

The role of the area as a low-key gateway to the suburban edge of Guildford, with minor roads and lanes is also vulnerable. High traffic levels of the roads have already resulted in the erosion of edges particularly on the common land and there may be pressures for more formal road widening, requiring the imposition of highways signage and infrastructure, which would change the distinctive informal, rural character of this edge and create a more ubiquitous peri-urban landscape. The smallholdings and nursery/market garden establishments that characterise the northern urban edge are also vulnerable to re-development.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve the informal rural character of the area created by the mix of common land and farmland and the sense of a rapid transition from residential area to open countryside, with a low key, small- scale urban edge. The aim should be to reinforce and upgrade marginal land that is no longer in active agricultural management so that it contributes to the rural setting to Guildford. Management of EI: Ryeshill – Fairlands Rural Urban Fringe should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

- Continue and ensure long term management of the Common Land to maintain the essentially open character and balance of scrub and tree cover. Consider opportunities to reintroduce grazing management (through a scheme with commons in adjacent character areas) and potential for recreation of heathland.
- Seek to improve understanding of the Royal Deer Park as a historic landscape and conserve remnant landscape features.
- Continue and ensure appropriate long term conservation management of the woodland blocks to the south of the area, including providing sufficient buffer zones from development, to enhance habitat value and ensure function as screening and containment for the large scale development at UNIS Manor Park and the Surrey

Research Park is maintained. Ensure all ancient woodland is maintained and enhanced by appropriate management, where appropriate restoring to semi-natural conditions and seek to encourage sustainable and habitat diverse woodlands.

- Ensure good recreation management (through a visitor management plan) to conserve the informal, rural character of the commons and seek to avoid cluttering the landscape with urban style park furniture, infrastructure, inappropriate surfacing, materials and signage.
- Promote good management of horse pastures so that land is presented as an intact, managed rural landscape as opposed to marginal fringe land awaiting development.
- Manage, retain and where appropriate seek to reinstate the hedgerow network on areas of agricultural land and promote development of mature hedgerow trees. Give especial priority to those fronting settlements, roads and footpaths.

### **Built Development**

- Conserve the rural setting and retain the loose linear character of settlement on the edges of common land and resist infilling, extensions or backland development, which would change the historic character.
- Promote the use of appropriate native plant species and boundary treatments at urban edges to better integrate development with the adjacent common land character.
- Resist any development which would result in loss/fragmentation of common land or erosion of its setting or ecological value.
- Conserve key views towards Stag Hill and Guildford Cathedral and maintain an open uncluttered setting for this landmark. In this respect large-scale, vertical development will not normally be appropriate in relation to the existing low-rise urban edge.
- Conserve the open rural gaps between Guildford and outlying suburbs such as Fairlands and Wood Street Village.
- Consider opportunities for better integration of the suburb at Fairlands.
- Conserve the essentially rural character of the roads and lanes that cross the area and avoid upgrading, widening and imposition of formal highways infrastructure and clutter that would create a more urban approach to Guildford. In particular retain the soft verges that characterise the roads as they pass through areas of common land.
- Retain the essentially low key, low rise residential suburban edge to Guildford.

- Redundant nursery and other sites may present an opportunity for redevelopment, but this should be undertaken with regard to the informal rural character of the area. Large scale or tall developments are unlikely to be appropriate given the scale of the existing urban edge. Rural boundaries fronting the roads should be maintained avoiding the creation of hard boundaries/fencing, car parking or wide kerbed entrance splays.
- The marginal farmland within this area is likely to be under considerable development pressure. Any development must respect the local character as outlined above. Opportunities to integrate the development with the existing character of the area may include:
  - sensitive lighting and avoiding excessive signage;
  - creation of small woodland, hedge boundaries to provide local screening;
  - maintaining the ‘rural’ character of the road network and minimising elements such as roundabouts, traffic lights and excessive signage which would impose a more urban character;
  - considering potential for creating new areas with a ‘common’ land character integrated with the development;
  - ensuring good management of adjacent land to provide an intact rural context.

# **CHARACTER AREA E2: CLANDON RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type 1:50,000	Character Area 1: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area 1:10,000</b>
E: Wooded Rolling Clayland	E2: Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands	<b>E2: Clandon Rural- Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Character Area covers the rural urban fringe east of Guildford extending from the A3(T) in the north to the A246 Epsom Road in the south, encompassing Clandon Park and surrounding rural area. The village of West Clandon and the Clandon Road form the eastern rural boundary.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

This part of the rural-urban fringe comprises an undulating clay land east of Guildford lying below the footslopes of the North Downs. Much of the land forms part of the Clandon Estate, consequently there is very little road access through the area and it remains a largely intact rural landscape, bisected by the rail line. The area includes an extensive woodland block to the north encompassing Frithys and Cotts Woods, surrounded by a mix of arable and pasture farmland. To the south the landscape is dominated by the Capability Brown designed landscape. Now managed by the National Trust, in trust from Lord Onslow, vehicular public access, this southern part of the area enjoys views up towards the rising chalk ridge of the North Downs. Two small areas of wooded common land adjoin and infiltrate the urban edge at Merrow Common and Copse Edge at Burpham.

Internally within the area built development is limited to the historical buildings at Clandon Park, including the mansion in the far south-east corner of the modern-day park designed by Venetian architect Leoni in 1731, accessed by the main vehicular entrance into National Trust portion of Clandon Park and the garden centre from The Street in West Clandon,

the original and now unused entrance into the park is marked by twin classical lodges (designed by Capability Brown in 1776) and ornamental ironwork gates leading from the Epsom Road/Park Lane junction along the lime avenue lined original coaching drive to the main house, and the C17 Temple Court with a farm and walled garden complex including a

listed barn and dovecot, now accessed from the Henchley Gate entrance.

There are in addition four farm complexes at Manor Farm, Nutbourne Farm, Nut Hill Farm and Gosden Hill Farm. The area is bisected by the Guildford – London rail line. A line of pylons are a dominant feature crossing the northern part of the area.

Residential properties lining The Street (A247) in West Clandon form the easternmost boundary of the area. Covered by a conservation area, which also extends into Clandon Park to cover the main house itself, their back gardens abut the park boundary separated in part from the main body of the park by linear woodland blocks.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** The Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands is representative of the wider rural character area.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins the long eastern edge of Guildford formed by the following townscape character areas:

8F: Burpham

9E: Merrow Common

7C: Merrow

11C: Merrow Common Industrial Estate

The eastern urban edge of Guildford is primarily low density residential suburban development, the exception being an isolated area of industrial infrastructure at Merrow Depot, adjoining the rail line. The urban edge is well contained, for example to at Park Lane it is lined to the east by a thick hedgerow limiting views into Clandon Park and containing/screening the parkland landscape from the urban edge. To the north the presence of commons provide a more relaxed edge immediately adjoining and infiltrating the urban fabric. The commons are important in providing an informal rural landscape and recreation and access opportunities, with a number of footpaths as well as being confirmed as Open Access Land.

Overall the urban area is well contained and the landscape retains an intact, managed character.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

The presence of Clandon Park has ensured that this part of the fringe retains and intact managed rural character extending right up to the urban edge. The Park has provided an

effective limit to eastwards expansion of the town. The area provides a good rural setting to the town and has an important role in providing a clear gap between the town and the outlying villages (West Clandon) is important.

To the north of the area the substantial woodland blocks of Frithy's and Cotts Woods effectively physically and visually separate the northern portion of West Clandon from the urban edge of Guildford.

There is very little direct access into the urban area from the west, excepting the major route of the A3(T) forming the boundary to the north and the A246 forming the boundary to the south. Both roads are screened and contained by hedgerow planting and apart from the aural impact of the A3 have relatively little impact on this area. The A3 is a major road gateway to Guildford and the area forms a strong rural setting along the road corridor.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within E2: Clandon Rural – Urban Fringe which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- The historic estate at Clandon with its designed Capability Brown landscape and mansion and setting;
- Presence of historic common land on the urban edge;
- The extensive woodland blocks at Frithy and Cotts Wood;
- The sense of an intact, managed farmed rural landscape and absence of visible urban development;
- Function in providing a clear separation between Guildford and West Clandon.

### **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

Clandon Park covers the entire area south of the rail line and forms a high quality landscape with a high degree of protection from development. However the separate land ownership and management of the parkland and piecemeal introduction of various new land uses and public vehicular accesses are threatening the integrity of the historic designed landscape. In particular the designed tree groups, and avenues and individuals, are showing signs of damage, over-maturity and decline.

Future proposals for development of new facilities, access or regeneration of farm buildings are probable and should be developed under the guidance of a conservation management

plan for the entire estate to provide guidance on suitable land use and management practices, looking to conserve existing historical landscape features and restore those that have declined or have lost their integrity, and provide a coherent integrated approach for vehicle access into and through the site. Localised issues and conflicts in visitor access to separate areas of the park, presently unsatisfactory, should also be addressed.

The area to the north, part of the wider Clandon Estate, is presented as intact managed farmland and woodland; this area is however vulnerable to changes in farming with the possibility that it could become more marginal with land in the future left unmanaged or divided into paddocks.

As one of the few less constrained areas on the edge of Guildford, this northern part of the character area is also vulnerable to development pressure and land at Gosden Hill Farm is held by developers with a view to obtaining planning permission for an urban extension to Guildford. In this case, the key will be to ensure development is sympathetic to the existing character and to manage and enhance the landscape to provide a strong rural context.

The development of a seasonal weekend car-boot event at Nutbourne Fruit Farm, accessed off the A3 generates high levels of vehicular traffic.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve the overall, managed rural landscape on the eastern edge of Guildford and the strong sense of containment of the urban edge.

Management of E2: Clandon Rural Urban Fringe should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

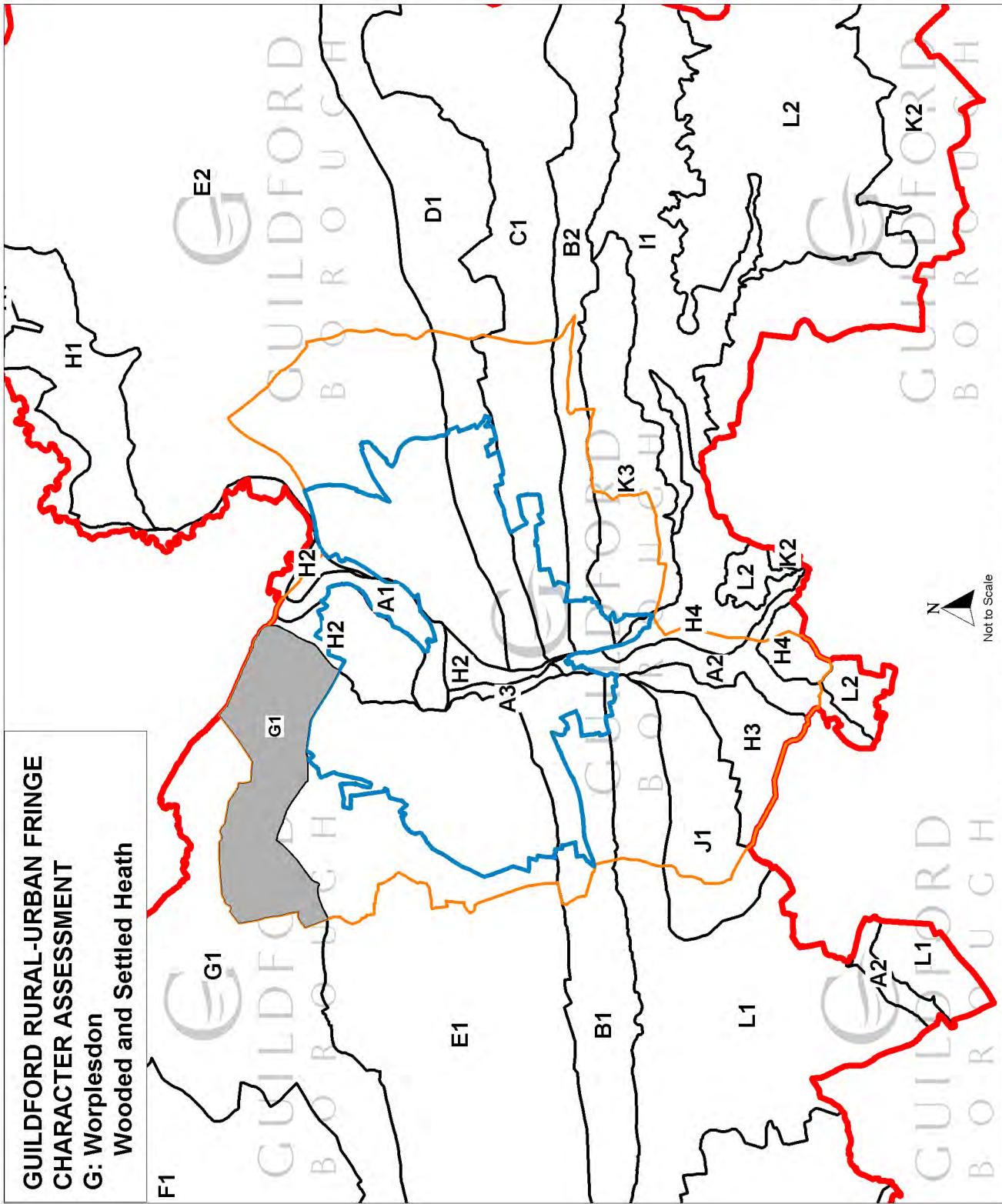
- Continue and ensure long term management of the small areas Common Land in the northern part of the area and their function in relation to the urban edge.
- Continue and ensure appropriate long term management of the woodland blocks to the north of the area and particularly conserve potential function for screening, containment of development. Seek to encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands.
- Continue active management of the agricultural land and particularly seek to conserve and restore the hedgerow network and promote development of mature hedgerow trees. In particular encourage management and reinforcement of hedgerow and tree belts along the A3 boundary to the north.

- Conserve the Capability Brown designed landscape at Clandon Park and conserve the setting of and views from the historic parkland. Seek to encourage restoration of historic landscape features. Particularly encourage research the historic landscape of Clandon Park and consider opportunities (with Lord Onslow and the National Trust) to restore lost, senescent or deteriorating landscape features both within the rump estate itself and on the dip slope of the Downs to the South, formerly important in views from Clandon Park, Encourage an estate management plan which works to bring together appropriate land and activity management of the historic landscape including all disparate activities and development within the park and considering the need for new access requirements with regard to historical access points.

### ***Built Development***

- Respect the setting of Clandon Park and links with the wider landscape (outlying farms).
- Conserve the built character, form and setting of the existing farm building complexes.
- Conserve a clear rural gap and sense of separation from the outlying village of West Clandon. Conserve the existing settlement pattern and the rural setting of settlements.
- Conserve the rural character and setting of the A3 corridor and approach to Guildford.
- Conserve the existing woodland blocks and their function in providing screening and containment and consider opportunities to extend woodland blocks in association with any future change.
- Recognise the importance of the small commons on the urban edge and consider opportunities to extend this landscape in relation to any future change.

**GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**G: Worplesdon**  
**Wooded and Settled Heath**



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# **GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE TYPE G:Wooded & Settled Sandy Heath**

**GI:Worplesdon Rural-Urban Fringe**



# **CHARACTER AREA GI: WORPLESDON RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type 1:50,000	Character Area 1: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area 1:10,000</b>
G: Wooded and Settled Sandy Heaths	GI: Worplesdon Wooded and Settled Sandy Heaths	<b>GI: Worplesdon Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Character Area covers the rural-urban fringe north west of Guildford forming part of the London Basin. It encompasses the distinctive sandy heaths and commons and small fields extending north and west of the urban edge (Juniper Close) and includes the settlements of Worplesdon and Jacob's Well, plus the agricultural college at Merrist Wood. The gravel terraces of the River Wey form the eastern boundary.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

The Worplesden Sandy Heaths form a distinct landscape to the north west of Guildford comprising a mosaic of heath and wooded common land interspersed with areas of pasture and horse grazing, historic settlement (Worplesden) and the residential suburb at Jacob's Well. The low lying area provides a strong contrast to the chalk landscapes to the south of the town.

The commons are mostly designated as SSSI (Whitmoor Common) and contain a patchwork of woodland, scrub and more open heathland. This is an ancient landscape with Bronze Age Round Barrows (SAM) and boundaries indicative of early use of this area. Originally a more extensive open heathland landscape, it would have been managed by local commoners with grazing rights. Decline in grazing has resulted in a more mixed land cover mosaic of scrub, heath and woodland. Today, it is being actively managed to link and extend the heathland. Where the commons adjoin the urban area they have an important function in containing the urban edge and providing a rapid physical and visual transition between town and country. As common land with open access status they provide a valuable recreational resource for the town and are well used for walking and horseriding. The extensive informal landscape is partially fragmented by the road and rail corridors which pass through it.

The area is distinctive for the general absence of settlement with occasional cottages accessible along tracks and unmade roads that cross the area. The buildings are typical of common edge settlement. In the western part of the area is Worplesden, a loosely knit historic settlement on a low hill, with the agricultural college at Merrist Wood and farmland to the west.

**Representativeness of the Landscape Type:** The area is representative of the landscape type although the strong heathland and woodland common character is more distinct within this area.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins the north western edge of Guildford formed by two townscape character areas:

8E: Bellfields

9C: Queen Elizabeth Park

The north western urban edge of Guildford is undistinguished comprising inter-war/ post war suburbs and more recent residential estates with low rise suburban housing. Back gardens and fences from the interface with urban areas, although at Juniper Close houses front directly onto Stringer's Common. The wooded commons have an important function in helping screen and integrate urban development within the rural setting and conserving a distinctive landscape character in immediate proximity to the urban edge. The commons also provide extensive recreation and access opportunities, with a number of footpaths as well as being confirmed as open access land.

The roads that cross the area extend urban infrastructure into the common land landscape.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

Characterised by its level, low-lying topography, this area cannot generally be perceived from within the urban area, likewise the urban edge is rarely visible from within the area. The common land is extremely important in containing residential sprawl and creating the sense of a quick transition from the town to rural landscape.

Gateways to Guildford include the rail line, which runs within an intact woodland/heathland corridor and roads (Salt Box Road, Clay Lane and Jacob's Well Road). These are busy local roads, rather than major gateways to the town. They result in considerable urban infrastructure such as roundabouts and junctions in the wider rural setting beyond the urban edge.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within GI Worplesdon Rural – Urban Fringe which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Whitmoor Common and Pirbright Common SPA – internationally important habitats;
- The commons with their habitat mosaic of heathland, woodland and scrub - biodiversity and historic interest, plus importance for recreation;
- Remnant historic landscape features including the Bronze Age barrow, plus more subtle features indicating the history of use and management of this area;
- The strong and distinctive landscape character on the edge of the town and strong contrast and abrupt transition between the compact densely developed urban area and an unsettled rural common land.

### **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

Large parts of the area are identified as Common Land (also SPA - internationally important for wildlife) giving a high degree of protection from development (although part of the area is identified as a potential corridor for future Park and Ride Schemes, with associated landscape impacts notably introduction of lighting into the rural landscape). Management of the commons is key to the character of this landscape, with the need to ensure appropriate long term management to maintain a balance between open heathy areas and woodland and to conserve the informal appearance of the landscape.

The informal rural character area is also vulnerable to intensification of recreational pressures resulting in a more parkland character with urban style furniture and infrastructure (such as bins, benches and hard car parking).

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve the informal rural character of the area created by the mix of common land and farmland and the sense of a rapid transition from residential area to open countryside, with a low key, small scale urban edge. Management of GI: Worplesdon Rural-Urban Fringe should consider the following:

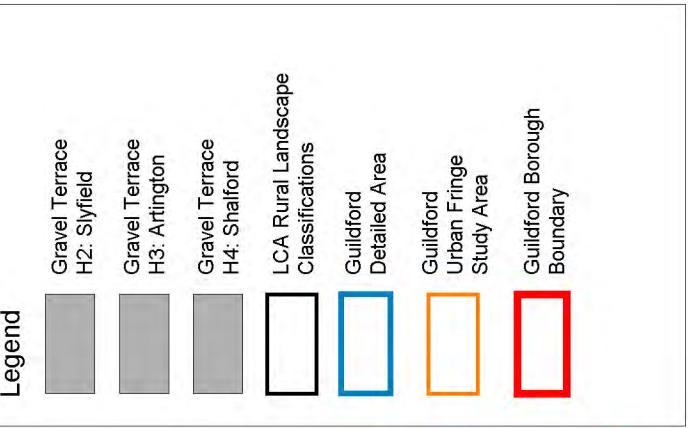
## **Landscape Guidelines**

### ***Land Management***

- Continue and ensure long term management of the Common Land to maintain the essentially open character and balance of scrub and tree cover. Continue the programme of management to extend and link heathland habitats and consider opportunities to reintroduce grazing management.
- Ensure good recreation management (through a visitor management plan) to conserve the informal, rural character of the commons and seek to avoid cluttering the landscape with urban style park furniture, infrastructure, inappropriate surfacing, materials and signage.
- Conserve and enhance historic landscape features and their setting.
- Seek to ensure management of the areas of agricultural land and pasture.

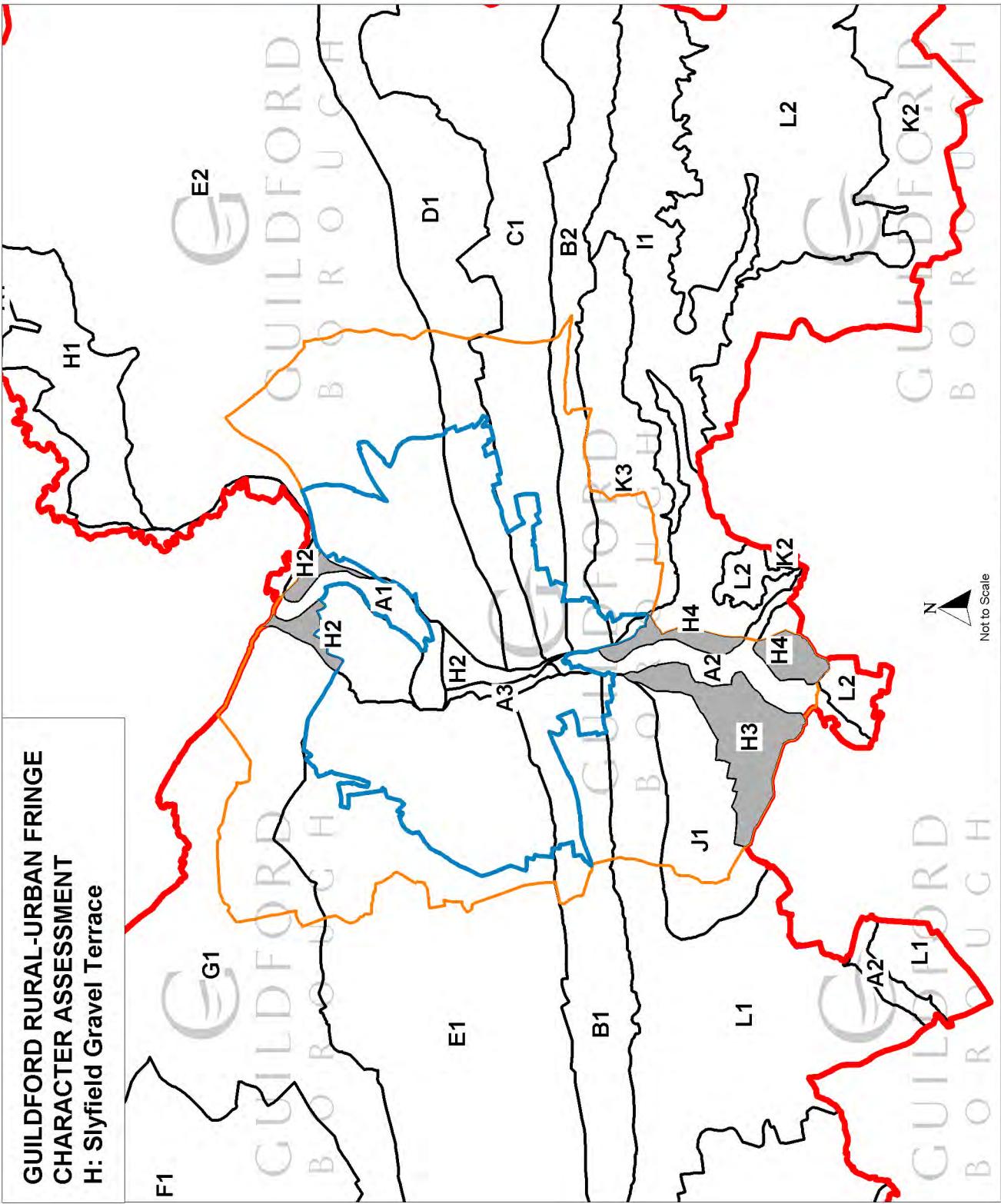
### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the abrupt transition between the densely developed urban area and essentially unsettled rural area.
- Conserve the woodland, which provides screening in relation to the urban edge.
- Consider opportunities to enhance the character of the roadscape through the area, for example road infrastructure being better integrated with the surrounding rural area.
- Retain the essentially low key, low rise residential suburban edge to Guildford.



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# GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE TYPE H: Gravel Terrace

## H2: Slyfield Rural-Urban Fringe



## H3: Artington Rural-Urban Fringe



# **GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE TYPE H: Gravel Terrace**

## **H4: Shalford Rural-Urban Fringe**



# **CHARACTER AREA H2: SLYFIELD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type I:50,000	Character Area I: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area I:10,000</b>
H: Gravel Terrace	H2: Slyfield Gravel Terrace	<b>H2: Slyfield Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Character Area covers the rural-urban fringe bordering the floodplain of the River Wey around Slyfield. It encompasses a small area of agricultural land to the north and west of the Slyfield Industrial Estate. The northern boundary is formed by woodland belts associated with Sutton Park, effectively the borough boundary and extends as narrow gravel terrace on either side of the Wey Floodplain.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

A relatively small character area this area provides a distinct landscape on the edge of the river floodplain. The terraces are slightly elevated slightly above the floodplain and contain the lower lying landscape. To the west made ground creates a more abrupt transition although this is largely screened by vegetation. The terraces have become the focus for industrial development, notably the Slyfield Industrial Estate, which dominates the eastern terrace. There are glimpses to the edge of the industrial estate from Jacobswell Road, and although the development is largely concealed within wider views, for example from the floodplain long distance views from elevated positions such as the North Downs are also available. A greater diversity of land cover is present in the northern part of the area including pastures and small paddocks associated with Burpham Court Farm and mixed woodland at Jacobswell forming part of the Sutton Park estate which lies to the north. To the west of Slyfield industrial estate is a small area of open common land linking into Stringer's Common (Character Area E1).

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

The area has an important role in relation to the setting of the Wey; although much of the terrace is developed, dense vegetation growth on the edge of the terraces provide strong visual containment. Clay Lane is a minor local gateway into Guildford and in this area the plantations associated with Jacobswell and presence of fields and grazing animals provide a

semi rural approach. The A320 Woking Road is a busy north south through route linking Guildford to Woking and beyond, and also provides the only access into the heavy vehicular reliant Slyfield Industrial Estate. For the majority of its length within this area it is set within a strong landscape corridor which screens it from adjacent residential areas. Although, the poor quality of some of the 'fringe' farmland and pressures for redevelopment of farm building to commercial uses create a distinctly urban fringe character.

The landscape of the gravel terrace does have an important role in creating a clear 'gap' and sense of separation between the town and the outlying settlement at Jacobswell, with the agricultural land and woodland belts providing a strong rural context for the residential area.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The urban edge is formed by one character area, namely IIC: Slyfield Industrial Estate. Apart from occasional glimpses to industrial buildings, for example from Clay Lane, this area is essentially screened and concealed from the wider gravel terrace.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within H2: Slyfield Gravel Terrace which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Woodland belts at Jacobswell forming part of Sutton Park – historic value and landscape function;
- Areas of common land to the west linking to Stringer's Common;
- Farm buildings at Burpham Court Farm;
- Function as rural gap between Guildford and the outlying residential area at Jacobswell;
- Skyline backdrop to south created by long distance views across to North Downs
- Function in providing containment and context for the River Wey and in particular the importance of woodland and screening belts along the edge of the terrace.

### **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

The area is especially vulnerable and sensitive to change and could very quickly change to a landscape perceived as part of a continuous urban area and extension of Guildford. Key vulnerabilities and sensitivities primarily relate to the need to retain intact managed agricultural landscape as the context to development and as the setting to the Wey

floodplain. The area has already assumed more an urban fringe character with paddocks and horse grazing and farm buildings converted to commercial uses. Further potential forces for changes are recognised through the Slyfield Area Action Plan, which sets out development opportunities for the area including extension of the Industrial Estate and residential development, and the Surrey Waste Plan, which notes potential locations for a recycling facility site. Vehicular traffic levels are high both as through traffic and accessing Slyfield Industrial Estate.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve the area as an open landscape continuous with the adjacent to the River Wey and gap between Guildford and outlying residential areas. There are considerable opportunities to enhance the landscape setting and approach to the town. Management of H2: Slyfield River Terrace Rural Urban Fringe should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

- Ensure long term protection and management of the commons and woodland belts that contribute to the rural character.
- Conserve and enhance features associated with Sutton Park Estate.
- Maintain and enhance the tree belts and screening on the edge of the terrace and along transport corridors and ensure that these continue to provide screening of industrial development and roads.
- Consider opportunities for landscape enhancement along Clay Lane, for example restoration of the hedgerow network to present a more intact landscape and promote good management of horse pastures.

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

- Conserve the area as a gap between the town (Slyfield industrial estate) and Jacobswell
- Conserve the ‘rural’ setting of Clay Lane and Jacobswell Road.
- Ensure development of the gravel terrace, for example Slyfield Industrial Estate does not impinge on the setting of the Wey Corridor.

- Avoid the location of any new large mass or bulky structures where overly visually intrusive on the adjacent A1: Lower Wey character area. Subject development to rigorous landscape and visual impact assessment, site carefully, and design to minimise impact and integrate with the area's rural context.
- Ensure that any new large-scale development does not impact adversely on rural views particularly from the *Lower Wey Floodplain*, landmark views, or to and from long-distance views and viewpoints of the North Downs.
- Promote appropriate scale and form of boundary treatment to avoid negative visual impact of inappropriate boundaries on the rural character of the flood plain.
- Encourage the retention of woodland planting that screens development and roads (particularly the A3) adjacent to the area and consider additional planting of appropriate broadleaf species to screen existing or new development that intrudes in rural views.
- Ensure that lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing 'dark skies' in the largely unsettled floodplain adjacent.

# **CHARACTER AREA H3: ARTINGTON RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type I:50,000	Character Area I: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area I:10,000</b>
H: GravelTerrace	H3: Artington Gravel Terrace	<b>H3: Artington Rural- Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Character Area covers rural-urban fringe on the river terrace bordering the western edge of the floodplain of the Upper River Wey, to the south of Guildford town centre. It forms a relatively narrow linear strip of land running approximately from St. Catherine's Hill in the north to Broadwater in the south. A western extension of the gravel terrace continues to the south of Loseley Park forming a more open agricultural landscape at the foot of the trees and wooded slopes associated with the Estate.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

Bordering the floodplain of the Wey to the south of Guildford, this area of gravel terrace is essentially an arable landscape with large fields of cereal crops enclosed by hedgerows. Much of the land forms part of the wider Loseley Estate. Superimposed on the agricultural land is a more modern landscape of large scale development including business parks, industrial estates and park and ride, with some smaller areas of residential development. The new development and park and ride are very visible changes in the landscape – glare from parked cars being prominent in views from beyond the area, such as from Pewley Hill.

In parts the residential areas relate to (former) common land as at Oakdene Road. Here, common edge development has been consolidated and the adjacent open space along the A3100 is managed as amenity grass/formal parkland, an area of wet woodland occurs on common land at Peasmarsh. There are also significant areas of woodland in public ownership between the A3100 and the railway line. The wide grass verges along parts of the road, provide a further reference to the historic character, although they are not as prominent or evident as on Shalford river terrace to the east of the Wey floodplain.

Other large scale land uses include Guildford Crematorium and sports ground. The Guildford – Goldalming rail line provides containment to the east and limits access from the

terrace to the floodplain, although there are a number of key footpath links. The western extension of the gravel terrace forms flat agricultural land at the foot of Loseley Park and includes part of a former avenue/entrance to the house as well as a lane (Stakescorner Road) providing tourist/recreation access to the Estate.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** This part of River Terrace is representative of the wider rural character area, however it has recently also acquired a distinct urban character relating to the presence of large scale development.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

On the immediate edge of the town (4A St. Catherine's), the area is not gravel terrace as it is underlain by Greensand of St. Catherine's Hill.

Although there is only a relatively short boundary with the existing urban edge of Guildford (as defined by this study), the character area does contain a substantial amount of urban development relating to Guildford and in particular large scale 'out of town' developments servicing the town centre such as the park and ride, crematorium, plus new business parks and industrial estates.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

The area plays a role in the setting of Guildford, with the drier land of the terraces likely to have long formed an important communications route. Today, the A3100 is a busy road and provides the main link between Godalming and Guildford. In the past, the road was a key north south route between London and the south coast (Portsmouth) with Guildford forming a half way on the route, with the town forming the point at which three routes from the south coast converge. The area also aligns a main rail corridor. From the road, the open spaces, woodland at Peasmash, grass verges and glimpses to the wider agricultural land are important landscape characteristics. The elevated river terrace also plays an important role in providing the context and setting to this part of the Wey Navigation and floodplain.

The presence of the extensive 'out of town' development has however overridden the local detail of the landscape and the approach to Guilford is being further eroded by numerous large colourful business park signs, corporate names, and standard business park architecture and landscape treatments, with associated highways improvements. These features are indicative of Guildford's thriving business economy and its function as a successful modern town, however they have also created a more ubiquitous approach to the town centre and threaten the rural gap and separation between Guildford and Godalming.

## EVALUATION

### Key Positive Landscape Attributes

The key positive landscape attributes within H3: Artington Terrace Rural – Urban Fringe which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Presence of common land at Peasmash plus associated woodland and open spaces;
- Local access routes (footpaths) to the Wey Floodplain;
- Glimpses of the wider agricultural landscape and key open views, for example to the Greensand Hills at Compton;
- To the west linkages to Loseley Park;
- Areas on intact arable farmland enclosed by hedgerows and including some mature hedgerow trees.

### Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures

The area is a landscape of change; much of the area is developed and therefore is no longer a ‘fringe’ landscape but essentially part of the expanding town of Guildford. In this context, the remaining intact agricultural land is especially vulnerable and sensitive to adverse change. The hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees are particularly important in views from the road, as are the small areas of open land and commons (Peasmash) and their role in contributing to the rural setting of the Wey corridor. The area is vulnerable to intense development pressures that could create the perception of a continuous and expand urban area. Future proposals include expansion of the Park and Ride facility.

As a result of the local topography, long distance-elevated viewpoints are available across this area and recent development within this area is conspicuous in its degradation of the area’s predominantly rural surroundings. Careful consideration needs to be given to further screening and softening of the existing development which is intensifying the urbanisation of this corridor and appropriate boundary and internal landscape treatments of future development, both from within the character area and from adjacent sensitive character areas and viewpoints, namely *Pewley-Albury Downs Rural Urban Fringe* and *Upper Wey Rural Urban Fringe*. Careful cons

## GUIDANCE

### Landscape Strategy

The overall management aim is to enhance the character of the area as the setting and

approach to the historic town, as well as the setting for modern development. Management of H3: Artington River Terrace Rural Urban Fringe should consider the following:

## **Landscape Guidelines**

### ***Land Management***

- Ensure long term protection and management of the commons (Peasmash) and grass verges and areas of open space such as Unstead Woods.
- Conserve glimpses to the agricultural land, which provides the context for modern development and conserve key views to the wider rural area for example towards the Loseley Estate, or Compton on the Greensand Hills, or towards the Hog's Back.
- Conserve the intact agricultural character with fields in active agricultural use, with well managed hedgerows and hedgerow trees forming boundaries.
- Maintain and enhance physical connectivity with the adjacent Wey Navigation and floodplain.
- Consider opportunities for more naturalistic planting around modern development and seek to avoid colourful ornamentals or bunding that creates a more urban setting.
- Retain the wide grass verges that exist along parts of the A3100 and consider opportunities to recreate these features in relation to new development.
- Conserve the function of the area as a setting for the River Wey and consider the impact on any development on views from the Wey corridor.
- Consider opportunities for reinstatement of the historic landscape and features/planting relating to Loseley Park.
- Seek to retain the rural character of the lane (Stakescorner Road) providing visitor access to the Estate and resist urban features including kerbing, widening and bollards.

### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the intact agricultural context to developments.
- Consider function of the area as a setting for the Wey corridor and ensure that development does not impinge on views from the valley. Consider the impact of any change on the gravel terrace on the character of the floodplain, including the impact of further lighting which could give rise to light pollution
- Maintain the strong rural context in relation to the existing urban edge at St.

Catherine's.

- Seek to influence a strategy for signage along the road approach to Guildford, so that the large number of development sites and associated signage do not combine to create a confusing image.
- Restrict urbanising influences in association with new and existing development, particularly lighting and signage and encourage native planting to maintain the rural context and setting – ensure that new development is well screened and landscaped to create visual softening from long distance views.

# **CHARACTER AREA H4: SHALFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type 1:50,000	Character Area 1: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area 1:10,000</b>
H: Gravel Terrace	H4: Shalford Gravel Terrace	<b>H4: Shalford Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Character Area covers rural-urban fringe on the river terrace bordering the eastern edge of the floodplain of the Upper River Wey, to the south of Guildford town centre. It forms relatively narrow linear strip running from Shalford Park in the north to Broadford in the south, with a small outlying area around Trunley Heath and Unstead sewage works to the south.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

The gravel terrace bordering the floodplain of the River Wey to the south of Guildford forms an informal, piecemeal landscape comprising a mix of open land, blocks of residential development, commons, parkland, allotments and industrial uses (e.g. waterworks, sewage works and gravel pit/tip). At the northern end the small tributary of the Tilling Bourne crosses the terrace, as does the historic route of the Pilgrim's/North Downs Way to the crossing point of the Wey. The slightly elevated terrace provides the backdrop to the eastern side of the Wey and the context for the main road route of the A281 (Horsham Road). The area has a distinct historic character created by the presence of informal open areas of common land, churches within their setting of yew trees and enclosed graveyards, mature ornamental trees and distinctive built elements associated with Shalford Park. The two churches – St Mary's with a distinctive copper spire and the tower and large central lychgate of Shalford Parish Council Chapel provide landmark features along the road. An 18<sup>th</sup> century mill is located on the Tillingbourne on the boundary of the character area. Residential development includes occasional grander red brick Georgian houses, a row of picturesque white cottages and the war memorial forming part of the Conservation Area near Shalford Mill and lines of houses bordering commons. Historic inns occur at intervals often set back from the road with wide grass/commons frontages suggesting that this was a former important coaching route. Superimposed on this historic pattern is a more modern landscape including blocks of 1970s and 1980's residential development and industrial uses,

plus a caravan/mobile home park.

Through and between the areas of development a semi-rural landscape persists with footpaths and tracks extending from the small commons and providing physical and visual access to the secluded floodplain landscape of the Wey, for example to St. Catherine's Lock. Dogley Lane Path/Scholar's Way allows footpath access along the length of the terrace into Guildford town. To the north, Shalford Park forms an extensive open landscape and provides some key corridor views towards historic buildings such as The Castle, in the centre of Guildford. The area created as parkland in the 18<sup>th</sup> century for Shalford House, is now managed as a public park with extensive areas of amenity grassland, although the presence of ornamental trees and features such as the brick boundary, embankments and lodges along the A281 are indicative of a former parkland landscape. Shalford Common (SNCI) is registered common land, with open access rights and comprises a mix of informal grassland and regenerated woodland. The outlying area at Trunley Heath includes former sand and gravel works (tip), the Godalming Wetland nature reserve at Unstead sewage treatment works, plus marginal areas of horse grazing. The Unstead site is an SNCI and consists of a series of water treatment lagoons with open water and marginal fen communities of considerable importance to birds.

Overall, this is a fragmented and very mixed fringe landscape with blocks of development infiltrated and permeated by rural paths and small open commons. There appears to be limited land in agricultural use/management within the area.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** This part of River Terrace is representative of the wider rural character area, with its mix of open commons and development, and strong relationship with the river.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The northern part of the terrace adjoins one townscape character area:

#### **7A: Warwick's Bench**

Shalford Road forms the boundary with the garden suburb in the northern part of the character area. Here, the road is partly sunken, confined between steep wooded embankments. This feature may relate to the former extent of Shalford Park. Today, it effectively conceals residential development (to the east) and Shalford Park (to the west) on the approach to Guildford.

Although there is only a relatively short boundary with the existing urban edge of Guildford (as defined by this study), the character area does contain a substantial amount of urban development that has spilled out from Guildford. While older properties are haphazardly

located on the edge of commons, newer development has tended to form rigid blocks or lines, with little reference to context and often with harsh urban boundaries forming the interface with the surrounding landscape.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

The area plays a role in the setting of Guildford. The A281 (Horsham Road) was a key route to the town and continues to serve a local function. From the road, the open grass verges and small commons are an important landscape element and help break up the perception of a more continuous urban area. The narrow road and wooded embankments associated with Shalford Park are a particularly valuable feature in this respect, in effect creating the impression of a rural character extending almost to the centre of Guildford. The elevated river terrace also plays an important role in providing the rural context and setting to this part of the Wey Navigation and floodplain.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within H4: Shalford Rural – Urban Fringe, which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Function in contributing to a semi-rural setting ‘green’ setting to the Wey floodplain;
- Presence of landmark churches and their setting of enclosed graveyards and yew trees;
- The more extensive registered commons at Shalford plus the informal open common and wide grass verges that flank the road;
- The historic pattern and form of settlement with common edges houses, grand red brick houses and lines of cottages;
- Visual and physical (footpath) access to the secluded landscape of the River Wey;
- Informal lanes and tracks along the terrace providing access into Guildford;
- The short stretch of the North Downs Way to the crossing over the river;
- The Tilling Bourne;
- The extensive open space at Shalford Park and views to the historic centre of Guildford;
- The semi-rural character along the A281 and particularly the wooded embankments that enclose the road at Shalford Park.

## **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

The area is especially vulnerable and sensitive to adverse change and could very quickly change to a landscape perceived as part of a continuous urban area and extension of Guildford. Key vulnerabilities and sensitivities primarily relate to small commons, grass verges and open land that exist between developments. These 'gaps' do not all have formal protection as registered common land and are therefore vulnerable to development as well as smaller scale incremental change such as the creation of car parks and recycling facilities that create more typical urban fringe character. Today, the historic origins of the landscape can still be perceived, although further development could obscure these references by imposing a more homogenous, ubiquitous landscape on the fragmented, piecemeal mix which creates the current character of the area.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve the informal, historic character with piecemeal development permeated by areas of open 'common' land creating a 'semi-rural' approach to Guildford. The links with the adjacent landscapes of the River Wey and Greensand Hills (The Chantry) should be conserved. Management of H4: Shalford River Terrace Rural Urban Fringe should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

- Ensure long term protection and management of the commons, grass verges and open spaces that exist between areas of development.
- Protect the churches and their setting and conserve these churches as focal point in local views, for example from the A281.
- Maintain visual and physical connectivity with the adjacent Wey Navigation and floodplain. Retain woodland and screening in views from the Wey, in relation to development on the terrace.
- Conserve the function of the area as a setting for the River Wey and consider the impact on any development on views from the Wey corridor.
- Conserve and consider opportunities to restore and enhance the historic parkland landscape at Shalford Park, for example recreating the historic pattern of planting.
- Retain the wooded embankments which characterise the edges of the A281 on the

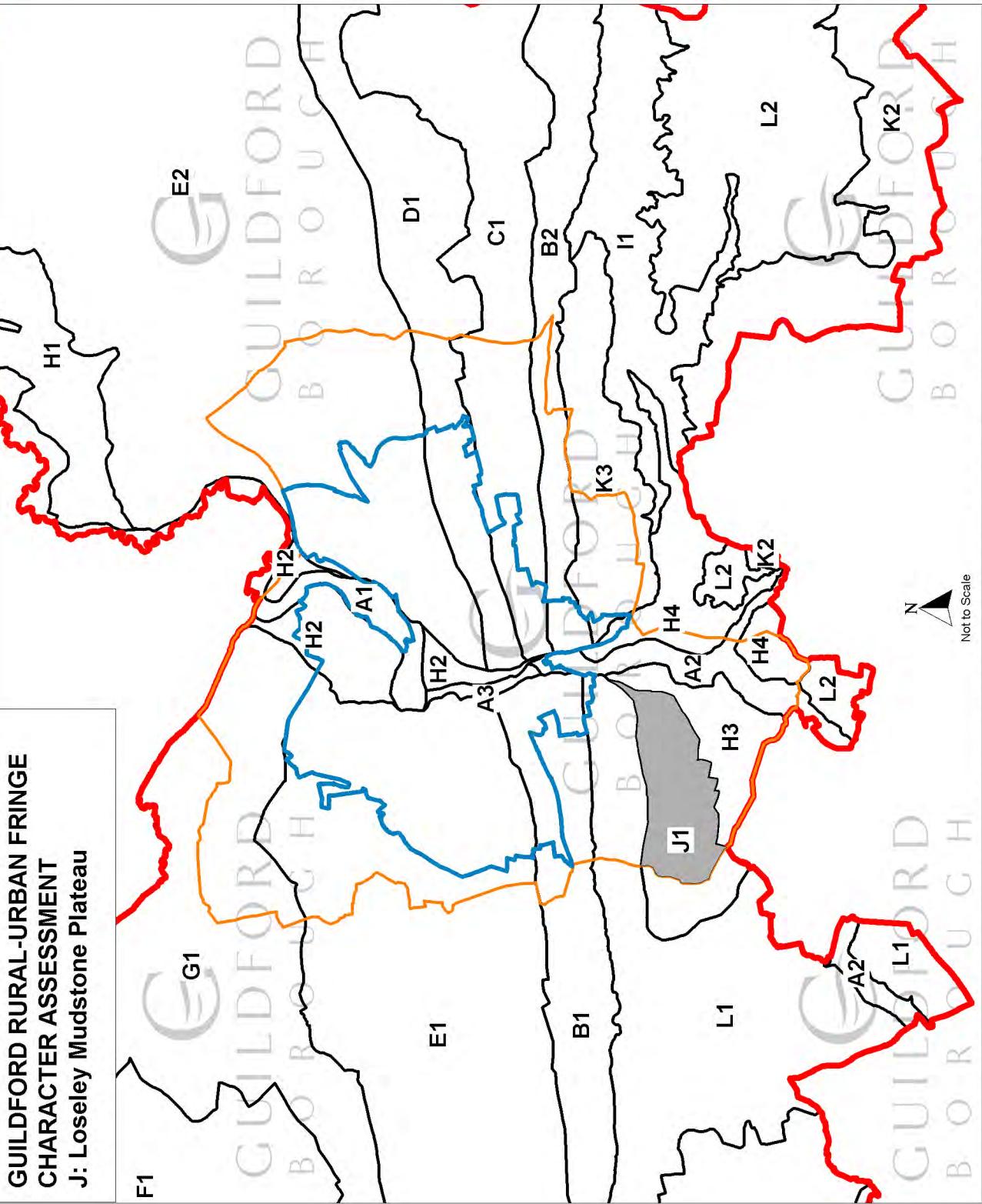
boundary of Shalford Park.

- Continue to manage areas of wetland nature reserve associated with the sewage works.
- Seek to conserve the surrounding character and key landscape features within areas of sand and gravel extraction and ensure appropriate restoration and reinstatement of landscape elements.

### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the informal character of development, permeated by open gaps and open spaces. A continuous developed frontage along the A281 would create a very different character and the perception of an extended urban area.
- Ensure development does not impinge on the rural setting of the River Wey.
- Conserve the wooded embankments along the Shalford Road, which provide effective containment of the urban edge (garden suburb).
- Conserve the character and setting of the historic properties along the A281. Conserve the setting of landmark features such as the churches.

**GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**J: Loseley Mudstone Plateau**



**Legend**

Mudstone Plateau	LCA Rural Landscape Classifications
J1: Loseley	Guildford Detailed Area
	Guildford Urban Fringe Study Area
	Guildford Borough Boundary

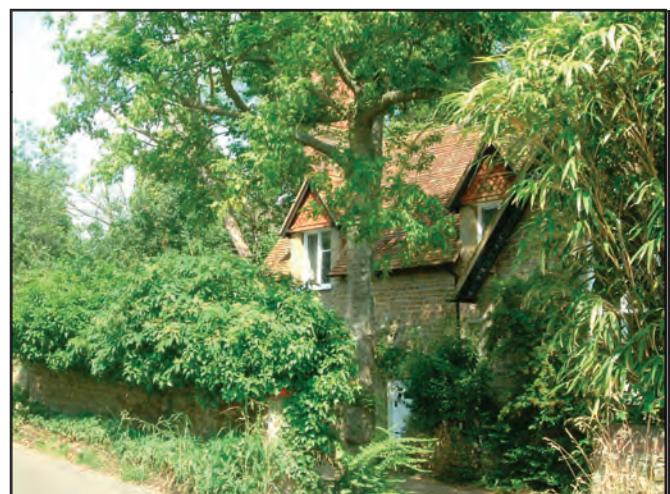
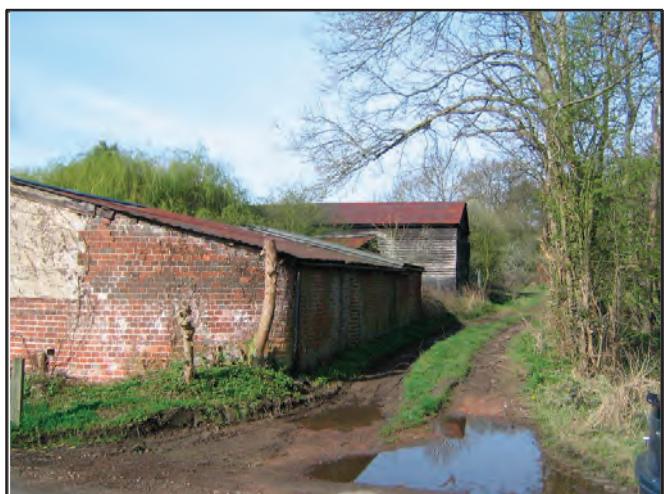
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**G**  
**GUILDFORD**  
**BOROUGH**

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# GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE TYPE J: Mudstone Plateau

## J1: Loseley Mudstone Plateau



# **CHARACTER AREA JI: LOSELY RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type	Character Area	Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area
J: Mudstone Plateau	Jl: Loseley Mudstone Plateau	<b>Jl: Loseley Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

The entire character area is within the rural-urban fringe study area and is therefore included in this document (and not in volume 1: Rural Assessment). The area is located south-west of Guildford, centred on an area of Mudstone geology, which dips gently to the south from the Greensand Hills which form a wooded ridge to the north. It is bounded to the west by the Greensand Hills at Compton and to the east and south by the river terrace deposits of the Wey Valley. It is wholly within the Surrey Hills AONB and forms part of an open agricultural and parkland landscape between Guildford and Godalming.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

**Location and Boundaries:** The area is characterised by the underlying clay Mudstone geology, encompassed by the wooded Greensand Hills to the north and falling away to the terraces of the River Wey to the south. The character area is dominated by Loseley House (Grade I Listed building) its surrounding gardens, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century parkland and the wider estate. The area comprises an essentially agricultural, predominantly pastoral, landscape, within medium-large fields enclosed by hedgerows. Woodland plantations and parkland trees create a more enclosed character associated with Loseley. The mansion, built in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century, is recorded by Pevsner to be the best house of its date in the country.

Loseley House and gardens are open to the public – and it is an important tourism and recreation attraction in Surrey. From the house, there are good views across the estate and up to the wooded ridge of the Greensand hills to the north. Elsewhere, access within the landscape is limited, with few lanes as at Stakescorner Road and Polsted Lane. Settlement is similarly limited to estate farms and the small hamlet at Littleton, with its distinctive cottages and church. The small farmsteads and groups of buildings across the Estate are significant features in the landscape. Close to Brickfield Farm former clay pits are present (now disused). To the west the character area extends to include part of Compton

– an attractive village essentially associated with the wooded greensand hills. Overall the area is an intact, quiet rural landscape.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** The entire character area is contained within the rural – urban fringe.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area does not join any townscape character areas. However, new development (business parks and commercial enterprises) has taken place on the river terrace (character area H3) to the south east and this has extended the urban area of Guildford southwards.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

The area is an historic, rural landscape occupying the land rolling down from the dramatic chalk and greensand hills to the north and the River Wey to the south. It is important in providing a rural backdrop in views from the more developed river terraces and has a valuable functional role in separating Guildford from the northern edge of Goldalming (Farncombe).

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within J1: Loseley Mudstone Plateau Rural – Urban Fringe, which should be conserved and enhanced, are:

- Local rural views up the gently sloping landform to the wooded ridge of the Greensand Hills;
- Loseley House, gardens, parkland and wider estate land and associated buildings and features;
- Function in providing an intact rural landscape between Guildford and Goldalming (Farncombe);
- Quiet, intact rural character;
- Woodland shelterbelts and copses;
- The rural lanes.

### **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

The area is entirely designated as AONB and therefore has a considerable degree of

protection from adverse change. Key vulnerabilities and sensitivities primarily relate to the need to continue appropriate land management and ensure that the area retains its function and appearance as an intact rural pastoral landscape. There is clearly development pressure as noted by modern residential extensions at Compton and large scale commercial/industrial development on the adjacent river terrace. The character of the few rural lanes is also vulnerable particularly as a result of high volumes of recreational traffic.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve the rural character of JI: Loseley Mudstone Plateau and its role in providing an intact rural landscape between Guildford and Godalming. Future management should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

- Continue and ensure appropriate long term management of the woodlands and plantations on the hill slopes and associated with the estate. Seek to encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands.
- Encourage management and retention/restoration of the hedgerow network including the retention and management of standard trees.
- Seek to ensure continuing management and restoration of the historic parkland landscape associated with Loseley.
- Maintain rural views across the rural landscape to the wooded greensand hills.
- Maintain the character of the quiet rural lanes and in particular seek to manage pressures associated with high recreational use

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

- Maintain the essentially undeveloped, rural character.
- Conserve the character of the small farmsteads and groups of buildings associated with Loseley Estate.
- Conserve the character of the rural lanes. Resist urbanisation and pressures for widening, kerbing, signage, traffic calming etc which would change the rural character.
- Consider effect of development on the adjacent river terrace – retain rural views out

from the river terrace and rural views from Loseley.

## GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

### K: The Chantry

#### Wooded Greensand Hills

F1

G1

E1

B1

L1

L1

J1

H3

A2

L1

H2

A3

A2

H4

L2

H4

L2

K2

K2

E2

D1

C1

B2

L2

K2



Not to Scale

### Legend

Wooded Greensand  
Hills  
K3: The Chantry

LCA Rural Landscape  
Classifications

Guildford  
Detailed Area

Guildford  
Urban Fringe  
Study Area

Guildford Borough  
Boundary

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Luc@london.landuse.co.uk



# GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE TYPE K:Wooded Greensand Hills

## K3:The Chantries Rural-Urban Fringe



# **CHARACTER AREA K3: THE CHANTRIES RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type 1:50,000	Character Area 1: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area 1:10,000</b>
K: Wooded Greensand Hills	K3: St. Martha's Wooded Greensand Hills	<b>K3: The Chantries Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The Character Area covers the rural urban fringe east of Guildford where the distinctive ridge of the Greensand Hills meets the urban edge at the garden suburb of Warwick's Bench. It abuts a relatively small area of the urban edge and extends eastwards as far as Halfpenny Lane. The extensive woodland block of The Chantries dominates the area, with the southern boundary formed by East Shalford Lane.

The character area is wholly within the Surrey Hills AONB

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

The distinctive belt of Greensand runs across the borough, in close association with the chalk. Here, it forms an attractive wooded landscape extending right to the edge of the urban area. It is an elevated landscape with the slopes rising steeply from the north and south to form a prominent hill landform with a summit at about 130m AOD. The elevated landform and continuous woodland cover make The Chantries area very prominent in views from and across the suburban edges of Guildford and notably from areas to the west of the historic centre. The extent of woodland cover means there are relatively few reciprocal views out across the surrounding landscape, although there are some important local views from the woodland edge to the chalk ridge that extends to the north (B2) and views from East Shalford Lane westwards to the elevated chalk ridge at Henley Fort on the Hog's Back (B1). A local view from East Shalford Lane to the copper spire of the church at Shalford is a further local feature.

The extensive woodland block of the Chantries, is a dominant feature and occupies the upper slopes and hilltop. It is of considerable historic interest with associated myth and legend. In comparison the lower slopes are agricultural, primarily arable but with a substantial part appearing unmanaged or set- aside – and being particularly prominent in

long range views towards the area. Here, the hedgerows provide an important visual and ecological link with the woodland up the upper slopes.

In this area, the rural landscape extends right to the edge of residential development and forms an intact rural wooded backdrop to development. A small, informal sandy car park and associated areas of open grassland commons, at Echo Pit Lane facilitates access to the Chantries and its extensive network of rights of way. The route of the North Downs Way (National Trail) runs across the ridge within a distinctive wooded ‘holloway’ and dips down through the urban edge to cross the River Wey. The area is well used by local walkers and horse riders, as well as walkers on the long distance footpath. By comparison there is no road access into the area, which contributes to the strong rural and peaceful character. Minor rural lanes and local tracks form the boundaries of the area.

Settlement is confined to the urban area, with red brick farm buildings along East Shalford Lane (Manor Farm and Halfpenny Farm) being the only visible development.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** This part of Wooded Greensand Ridge is representative of the wider rural character area, with its heavily wooded character, mix of arable land, extensive public access (but absence of vehicular access), views across valleys to the adjacent chalk ridges and its essentially quiet, rural character. The edge of the urban area has very little influence of the rural character of the fringe.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins one townscape character area:

#### **7B: Warwick’s Bench Garden Suburb**

Adjoining the residential garden suburb of Warwick’s Bench, the urban edge comprises low-density housing of a range of styles including 1930’s arts and craft and more recent black weatherboard. Houses are generally set within large gardens, often with beech hedgerow boundaries. The presence of small areas of open common land along Echo Pit Lane (the western boundary) contributes to the informal rural character of the urban edge. To the south, along Shepherds Way, a line of bungalows and low-rise housing have lawns fronting directly onto the lane with a mature hedgerow and the rising slopes of the agricultural land immediately beyond.

The attractive urban edge created by the juxtaposition of a very strong rural landscape with the adjacent residential development is, however, marred by some modern influences including close board fencing boundaries forming a much harsher division between the rural and urban area and introduction of security measures such as gates and lighting which create a more dominant and intrusive suburban character.

## **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

An important and historic long distance route (the North Downs Way) runs across the Greensand hills and at this point the route dips down to cross the River Wey. Today, the area is distinguished by the absence of roads and therefore retains a strong rural character. The prominent hill landform and continuous woodland cover clothing the upper slopes makes this area particularly important in relation to the setting of Guildford. The uninterrupted woodland is a distinctive feature in comparison to some other elevated areas on the edge of Guildford where roofs and the upper stories of large houses punctuate the tree canopy. In addition, there are a number of surprising local views from within the urban area out towards the Chantries, such as those from suburbs on the western edge of Guildford at Guildown Garden suburb, where the distinctive hill landform and woodland cover provide an important rural backdrop.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within K3: The Chantries Rural – Urban Fringe which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- The continuous, uninterrupted woodland cover clothing the summit and upper slopes;
- The prominent and distinctive hill landform and its presence in views from the town, suburbs and adjacent rural areas;
- Intact hedgerows bounding farmland on the lower slopes linking into the hilltop woodland;
- The attractive suburban edge and contrast presented by the intact rural character juxtaposed with development;
- The North Downs Way National Trail (following a sunken holloway) plus network of recreational routes;
- Informal areas of common land around Echo Pit Lane;
- Historic and habitat values associated with The Chantries woodland;
- Views out to the elevated chalk ridge and local views such as to St. Mary's church in the Wey valley.

### **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

The area is wholly within the Surrey Hills AONB and therefore has considerable protection

from development. Key vulnerabilities and sensitivities primarily relate to the need to continue appropriate land management. The unmanaged or set aside land on the southern slopes is very visible in long distance views and appears as a degraded landscape detracting from the overall rural character. This is especially noticeable since long distance views only incorporate the hill and slopes and do not include the urban edge on the lower lying land. Management is required to prevent further deterioration of this land and in particular to retain the network of hedgerows that link into the woodland on the hilltop. The landscape is especially sensitive and vulnerable to intensification of recreation use and potential cluttering of recreational infrastructure that could detract from the essentially rural character, for example by creation of a more formalised car park and entrance to Chantries Wood.

Pressures for new development are likely to be low, given the outstanding landscape character of the area and its role in the setting of Guilford. Nevertheless, small-scale incremental changes could change the character of the interface of the urban and rural area creating a more overtly suburban character, through construction of hard garden boundaries and requirements for lighting and security infrastructure.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve the intact wooded-rural character of the area created by the mix of extensive and continuous woodland on the hilltop and agricultural land on the lower slopes forming a rural backdrop in views from parts of Guildford. The aim should be to conserve this area as a quite, peaceful rural landscape with plentiful opportunities for informal recreation and an absence of roads and settlement. Management of K1: The Chantries Rural Urban Fringe should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

- Continue long-term management of The Chantries woodland and ensure that it remains as a continuous uninterrupted woodland cover. In this highly visible hilltop site, particular care will be required in relation to felling any parts of the plantation woodland and potential visual effects. Encourage sustainable multi-purpose woodlands.
- Maintain the informal character of Echo Pit Road with the small roadside commons.
- Seek to ensure that the agricultural land remains in active agricultural management, through promotion of agri-environment schemes and encourage farming techniques that

retain/reinstate key landscape features. In particular consider the important function of the agricultural land in views to the slopes.

- Conserve, manage and restore the hedgerow network on the agricultural land on the lower slopes to enhance visual and ecological function and connectivity with the hill top woodland.
- Ensure good recreation management to conserve the informal, rural character and resist the loss of key landscape features or character through spread or 'urbanising' features such as inappropriate surfacing (metalled footpaths), materials, signage or construction of suburban-style boundaries.

### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the existing urban edge and the juxtaposition of the rural and urban landscape.
- Conserve the essential rural character of The Chantries created by the absence of development and road access.
- Conserve the low key rural character of the roads and lanes that form the boundaries of this area and avoid upgrading, widening and imposition of formal highways infrastructure.
- Seek to limit suburbanising elements on the urban edge (lighting, fencing etc) that detract from the rural character of the area.

**GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**L: Braboeuf Manor**  
**Open Greensand Hills**

F1

G1

E1

B1

L1

L1

H3

A2

H4

A2

H4

L2

K2

L2

K2

H1

E2

D1

C1

B2

L2



Not to Scale

**Legend**

Open Greensand Hills  
L1: Braboeuf Manor -  
Mount Browne

LCA Rural Landscape  
Classifications

Guildford  
Detailed Area

Guildford  
Urban Fringe  
Study Area

Guildford Borough  
Boundary

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# GUILDFORD LANDSCAPE TYPE L: Open Greensand Hills

## L1: Brabhoeuf Manor – Mount Browne Rural-Urban Fringe



# **CHARACTER AREA LI: BRABOEUF MANOR – MOUNT BROWNE RURAL–URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

<b>Landscape Type</b>	<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area</b>
L: Open Greensand Hills	LI: Shackleford Open Greensand Hills	<b>LI: Braboeuf Manor - Mount Browne Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The rural-urban fringe forms the eastern edge of the wider rural character area, adjoining suburbs to the south west of Guildford town centre and extending to River Wey floodplain. It is a linear area following the extent of the east-west Greensand geology forming a valley and low hill at the base of the chalk ridge of the Hog's Back. The area is almost entirely within the Surrey Hills AONB, apart from a small block of undesignated farmland adjacent to new residential development on the edge of Guildford (at Woodcote Road).

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

The distinctive Greensand geology outcrops at the foot of the chalk and here extends eastwards across St. Catherine's Hill terminating as a steep sandy slope above the banks of the River Wey. The area comprises an agricultural (arable) valley at the foot of the chalk with the landform rising to a distinct wooded ridge. The area is of considerable historic interest, with the ridge carrying the Pilgrim's way to the crossing of the Wey. St. Catherine's Hill on the banks of the river is an important landmark, with the ruins of the 13<sup>th</sup> century St. Catherine's Chapel on the summit. The hill can be seen from across the valley and this view is celebrated in historic landscape prints. The summit also provides surprising views out across Guildford and the rural landscape to the east, within this otherwise enclosed character area. The ridge is extensively wooded with mixed woodland plantations at West Warren, East Warren, Pilgrim Wood, plus woodland belts and plantations surrounding Mount Browne and Braboeuf Manor to the east. By comparison the lower slopes and valley are very open, with a swathe of large arable fields enclosed by low hedgerows and occasional mature hedgerow trees.

Institutions set within the historic manor buildings of former estates dominate the eastern part of the character area (adjacent to the town) and are contained by a sandstone wall

boundary on the west, effectively separating them from the wider area. Braboeuf Manor and Mount Browne house the College of Law and Surrey Police HQ respectively and include historic buildings, modern extensions and accommodation blocks, car parking and sports facilities. The Braboeuf Manor site is designated as a Conservation Area.

The institutions on the eastern part of the Greensand are private and access is limited. Within the wider area public access is provided by Pilgrims Way and North Downs Way, which roughly follow the ridge. Otherwise access is limited to Sandy Lane - a narrow rural lane, which runs from Loseley Park, skirting the boundary of the institutions towards the town. In parts this is a characteristic sunken sandy lane cutting through the Greensand, overhung by banks and trees. Towards the town it is lined by large detached residential houses, set back from the road with strong hedge and tree boundaries. Here, there are some good views from the road towards the wooded hills on the eastern side of the River Wey (townscape character area 7B). Apart from the houses along the lane and blocks of residential development associated with the institutions, settlement is limited to an isolated farm and cottage within the valley.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** The rural-urban fringe is representative of the wider rural character area (Shackleford Open Greensand Hills), with its sparse settlement and narrow sunken lane. However, the presence of hilltop warrens and woodland create a more enclosed character. In addition, the private institutional landscape on the edge of Guildford, plus residential development along Sandy Lane distinguish it from the wider area, although this edge retains a strong intact rural character.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins the following townscape character areas:

4A: St. Catherine's village

7A: Guildown.

The area of St. Catherine's Hill forms a strong rural setting for the edge of St. Catherine's a village on the edge of Guildford, with an area of open grassland adjoining the small scale cottages along Ferry Lane and urban edge at Sandy Lane. The area has a strong historic resonance, with St. Catherine's Hill and chapel lying close to route of the North Downs/Pilgrim's Way at the point where it dips form the Greensand to cross the River Wey.

To the north the area abuts the newer residential development joining the garden suburb. Here, recent development has extended out along the lower slopes of the chalk, on the edge of the greensand, and forms an abrupt boundary overlooking the intact arable farmland

which flows right up to the urban edge. In places colourful garden species have been planted to form a new low boundary with the agricultural land. There are some valuable local views from this area across to the extensive woodland area (The Chantries) on hills to the east of Guildford. These long rural views give the impression of a continuous rural area.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Guildford**

The presence of the Pilgrims Way indicates the historic role in of these hills providing an important routeway across the Borough, with Guildford growing up around a crossing of the River Wey. Although the wooded hills are not widely visible in views from Guildford, they have an important functional role in providing natural containment for the town and together with the Loseley Estate to the south present an intact rural landscape between Guildford and Godalming.

In conjunction with the Hog's Back, this area brings the nationally designated landscape of the North Downs to the edge of the town.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within L1: Braboeuf Manor Rural-Urban Fringe which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Distinctive landform with wooded slopes and agricultural valley;
- The historic routes of The Pilgrims Way and North Downs Way and Wey crossing;
- St. Catherine's Hill and Chapel, plus views to and from this landmark feature;
- Local views to the wooded hills to the east of Guildford (The Chantries);
- Function in providing an intact rural landscape between Guildford and Goldalming;
- The historic buildings and features associated with the estates (Conservation Area);
- The narrow rural lane - Sandy Lane.

### **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

The area is largely designated as AONB and therefore has a considerable degree of protection from adverse change. Part is also designated as a Conservation Area. Key vulnerabilities and sensitivities primarily relate to the need to continue appropriate land management and ensure that the area retains its function and appearance as an intact rural landscape extending right up to the urban edge. On the arable land there is potential for a

shift to a more urban fringe character either as unmanaged (set aside land) or pressures for subdivision of land and creation of small plots or paddocks.

Within the small area that is not designated as AONB, adjacent to the existing urban edge, pressure for development is likely to be high. While small urban extensions may be acceptable there is a clear need to conserve the wider rural setting of managed farmland.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve the rural character and high quality landscape of the Braboeuf Manor - Mount Browne Rural-Urban Fringe and its role in providing the setting and containment to Guildford and creating an intact rural landscape between Guildford and Godalming. Future management should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

- Continue and ensure appropriate long term management of the woodlands and plantations on the hill slopes and associated with the estates. Seek to encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands.
- Encourage landowners to manage and retain/restore the hedgerow network particularly in relation to the edge of the urban areas.
- Encourage landowners to ensure that agricultural land remains in active agricultural management, through promotion of agri-environment schemes and encourage farming techniques that retain/reinstate key landscape features.
- Maintain views to and from the landmark of St. Catherine's Hill.

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

- Maintain the essentially undeveloped, rural character.
- Conserve the character of Sandy Lane - ensure garden hedge boundaries are retained. Resist urbanisation and pressures for widening, kerbing, signage, traffic calming etc. which would change the rural character.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape forming the setting to St. Catherine's village.
- Ensure any future small scale residential extensions enhance the urban edge and

interface with the agricultural land - consider opportunities for planting and screening, using locally native species.

## 5. ASH AND TONGHAM RURAL-URBAN FRINGE

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- 5.1. The rural-urban fringe classification is founded on the rural assessment and **Table 4** below shows how the two levels are related in the Ash and Tongham fringe area.

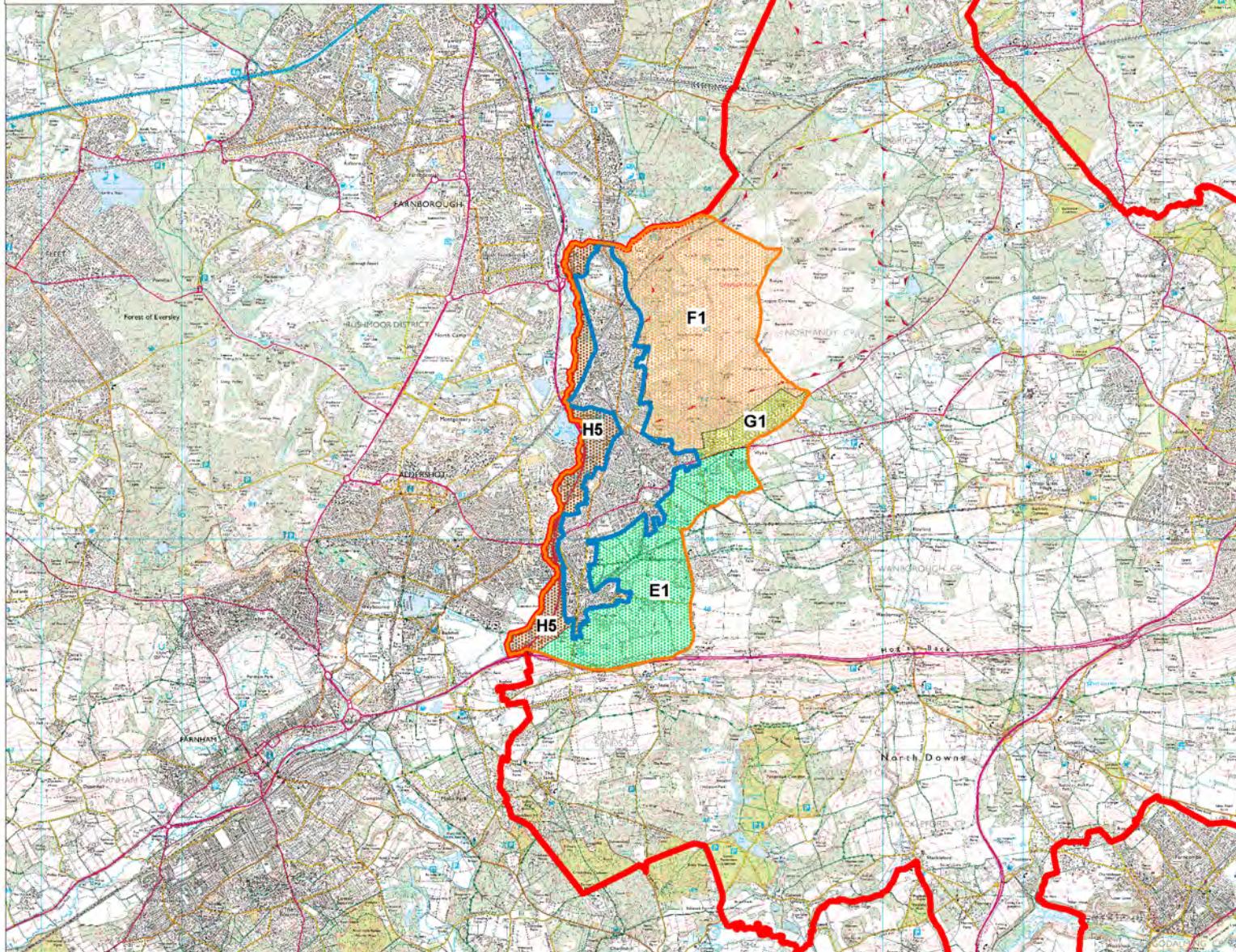
The rural-urban fringe character areas are illustrated on **Figure 5.1:**

**Ash/Tongham Rural-Urban Fringe Classification.** This mapping has been prepared on a Geographic Information System (GIS), with mapping undertaken at a scale of 1:10,000.

**Table 4: Ash/Tongham Rural-Urban Fringe Classification**

Rural Character Area	Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area
Landscape Type E: Wooded Rolling Claylands	
E1: Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands	E1: Tongham Rural-Urban Fringe
Landscape Type F: Unsettled Sandy Heath	
F1: Pirbright Common Unsettled Sandy Heath	F1: Ash Common Rural-Urban Fringe
Landscape Type G: Wooded and Settled Sandy Heaths	
G1: Worplesdon Wooded and Settled Sandy Heaths	G1: Wyke Rural-Urban Fringe
Landscape Type H: Gravel Terrace	
H5: Blackwater Valley Gravel Terrace	H5: Blackwater Valley Rural-Urban Fringe

## ASH and TONGHAM RURAL-URBAN FRINGE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT - Figure 5.1



### Legend

- Ash and Tongham Detailed Area
- Wooded Rolling Claylands E1: Tongham
- Unsettled Sandy Heath F1: Ash Common
- Woods and Settled Heath G1: Wyke
- Gravel Terrace H5: Blackwater Valley
- Guildford Borough Boundary
- Ash & Tongham Rural Urban Fringe Study Area

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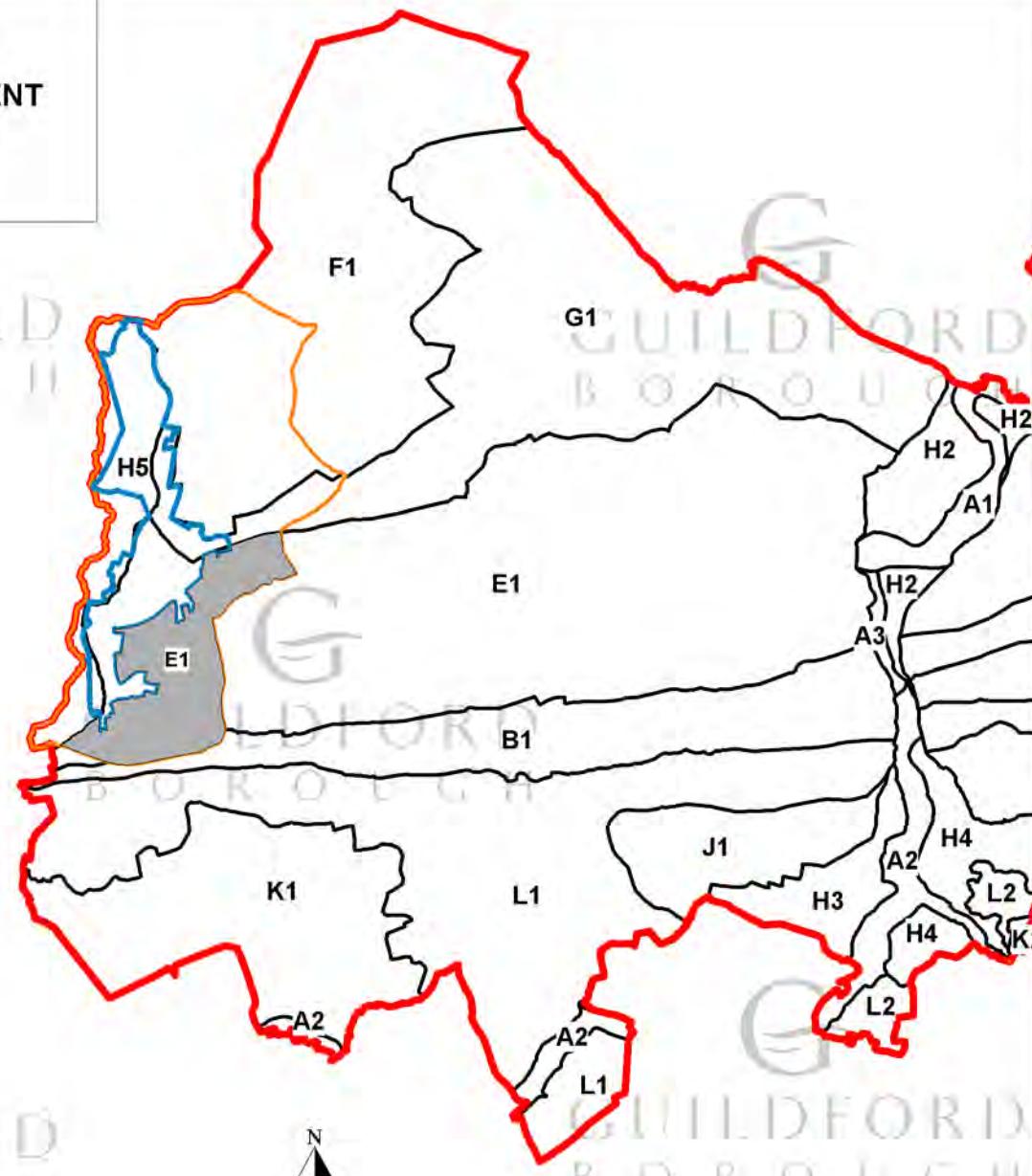
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**ASH AND TONGHAM  
RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**E: Wanborough伍德ed  
Rolling Claylands**



**Legend**

- Wanborough伍德ed Rolling Claylands
- E1: Tongham Rural-Urban Fringe
- LCA Rural Landscape Classifications
- Ash and Tongham Detailed Area
- Ash and Tongham Urban Fringe Study Area
- Guildford Borough Boundary

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## **LANDSCAPE TYPE E: Wooded Rolling Claylands**

### **E1: Tongham Rural-Urban Fringe**



# **CHARACTER AREA EI: TONGHAM RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type I:50,000	Character Area I: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area I:10,000</b>
E: Wooded Rolling Clayland	EI: Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands	<b>EI: Tongham Rural- Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** This Character Area covers the southern and eastern edge of Ash and Tongham extending from the A31 in the south to Guildford Road in the north. The eastern boundary of the rural urban fringe runs along White Lane and Ash Green Road. The southern boundary has been extended to incorporate a small area of the Hog's Back (BI).

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

This part of the rural-urban fringe comprises a large area of rolling clayland to the east of Tongham. It is dominated by mixed farmland, including pastures and arable land. The area around Poyle Park is former parkland now converted to arable farmland. Large fields characterise the area but fields subdivided as horse paddocks are also in abundance and are particularly characteristic at the urban edge along with areas of scrub vegetation. The area includes hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland belts, particularly along the edges of roads, including some woodland coppice along Ash Green Road and White Lane. The woodland belts and hedgerows have an important screening function in relation to the urban boundaries and the edge of residential estates.

The rural urban fringe area is heavily influenced by the presence of road and railway networks, with the A31 running along the southern edge and providing elevated views back across the fringe landscape. Railways also dissect the area. The historic pattern of settlement comprises scattered farmsteads and their associated outbuildings built of brick and stone, weatherboard and corrugated iron. There are some fine architectural examples of historic farm buildings at West Wyke Farm. Overlaid on the historic pattern is more recent linear development along the roads that cross the area. Along Poyle Lane and The Street linear development includes large-scale buildings and institutions, such as the Manor

Farm and ambulance service building south of Tongham. An isolated residential development is located at Wyke, whilst the western edge of Ash Green has begun to grow towards Ash in line with the old Ash Green Track. In other areas, the urban edge is quite abrupt and back gardens boundaries face directly onto pastures and arable fields.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** Tongham Rural Urban Fringe is not representative of the wider rural character area. The urban edge has considerable influence on the character of this landscape and the presence of linear sprawl, unmanaged fringe land and horse paddocks have created a landscape which have diluted the more typical character than in other parts of this character area.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins the following townscape character areas:

5D: Tongham Village

8L: Tongham Estate

9L: Ash

9K: Lakeside Estates

5B: Ash Village

The southern tip of Tongham and the western edges of Ash and Tongham are predominantly characterised by inter war/post war suburbs and post 1960s residential estates. Some variety is provided by the edges of Victorian/Edwardian villages at Ash and Tongham but they themselves are also interspersed with high-density modern developments.

The elevated land of the *Hog's Back Chalk Ridge*, provides some views to the urban edge but otherwise woodland belts and hedgerows screen local views. The urban edge can generally only be perceived from approach roads such as Poyle Road which supports intermittent views to the edge and The Street which provides a linear extension of the urban edge.

The interface with the urban edge is varied and often abrupt, for the most part marked by back garden boundaries, which abut directly onto the farmland, which is frequently unmanaged or in a poor condition.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Ash and Tongham**

At the immediate urban edge extensive areas of unmanaged farmland, scrub vegetation, poor condition regenerative woodland and horse paddocks create a landscape setting of

poor condition for parts of Ash and Tongham, although in other areas hedgerows and woodland provide a degree of screening and containment. It is noticeable that traditional or active management of much of the more marginal land held by property developers is at very low levels.

## EVALUATION

### Key Positive Landscape Attributes

The key positive landscape attributes within EI: Tongham Rural Urban Fringe which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Traditional farmsteads and associated structures (in particular medieval barns and shelters);
- Mature woodland blocks and belts - in particular ancient woodland at Bin Wood, plus hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Recreation grounds at urban edge providing green finger/connection between urban and more rural areas and containing development;
- Tracks and footpaths providing public access to open countryside.

### Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures

Much of this rural urban fringe area already appears to be in poor condition (Held by developers) with poor quality horse pastures, unmanaged agricultural land and regenerating scrub creating a degraded landscape setting. The key sensitivities include:

- Views from the Hog's Back;
- Woodland belts, hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- The setting of historic farm buildings.

## GUIDANCE

### Landscape Strategy

The overall management aim is to enhance character to provide a strong landscape setting for the southern and eastern edge of Ash and Tongham. A particular need is to reinforce and upgrade management of land that is no longer actively farmed. Management of EI: Tongham Rural-Urban Fringe should consider the following:

## **Landscape Guidelines**

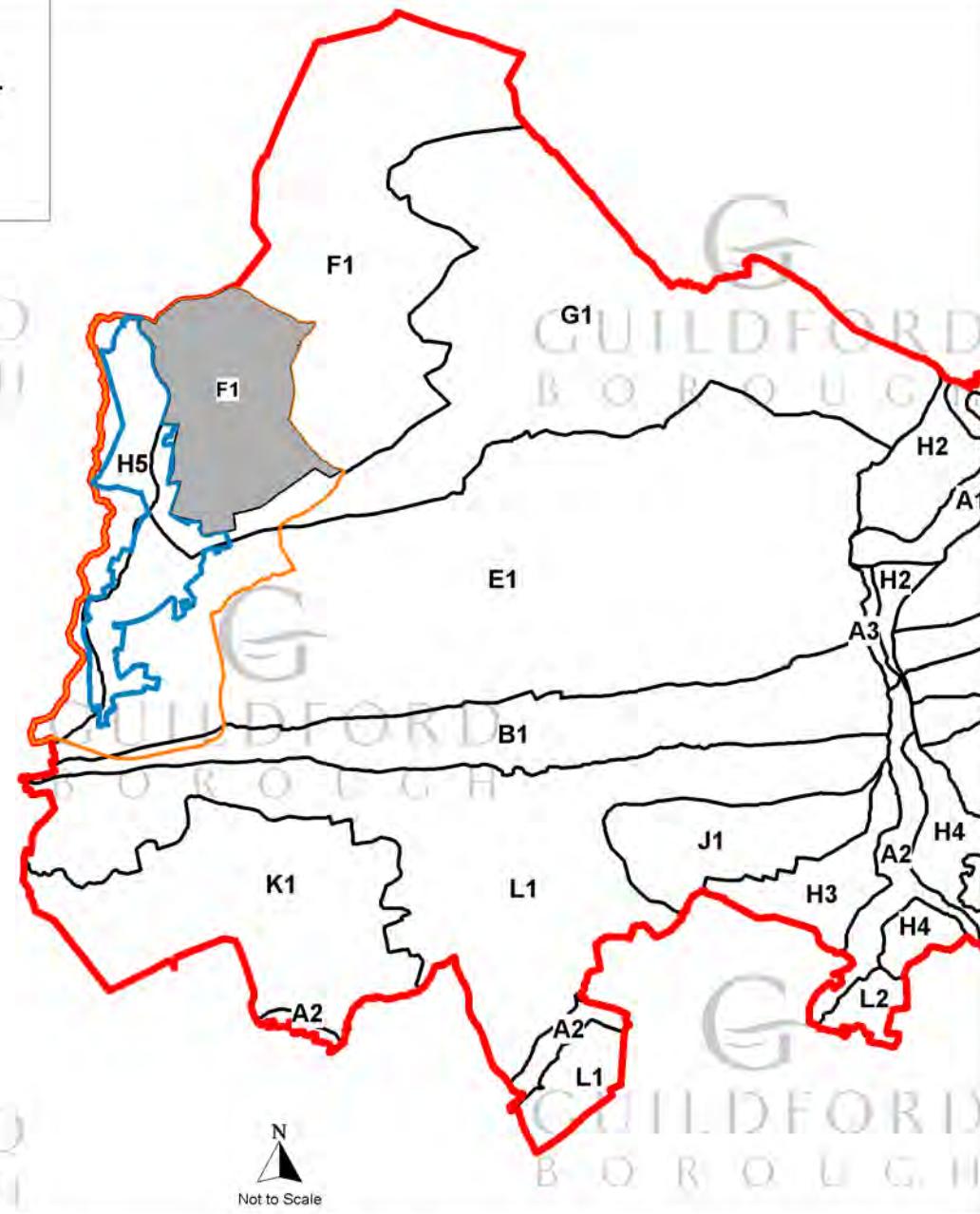
### ***Land Management***

- Conserve, enhance and restore woodland blocks through effective long term management. Promote traditional woodland management regimes with local landowners and encourage creation of sustainable multi-purpose woodlands.
- Conserve and enhance the hedgerow network and hedgerow trees, particularly in proximity to the urban edge where hedgerows can provide a strong landscape pattern and framework.
- Encourage landowners to ensure that former active agricultural land remains in, or returns to, active agricultural management through promotion of agri-environment schemes, or encourage active land management that retains/reinstates key landscape features.
- Protect the integrity of the *Hog's Back Chalk Ridge* avoiding any development, which would conceal views to the surrounding area and be prominent in views to the slopes.
- Ensure guidance is provided and adhered to for the grazing of horse pastures, as well as boundary treatment, to encourage some consistency and to enhance the condition of pastures at the urban edge.
- Maintain access to public footpaths and trackways from residential areas.

### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the character, built form and setting of historic farm buildings.
- Conserve existing woodland blocks and the hedgerow framework in relation to any new development.
- Consider opportunities to enhance the character of the urban edge, for example new woodland planting or the creation of new 'greens' and 'commons'.
- Maintain existing rights of way connecting the rural fringe into the urban area.
- Ensure appropriate siting of formal recreational facilities and good recreation management to conserve the informal, rural character of the urban edge.

**ASH AND TONGHAM  
RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**F: Ash Common**  
**Unsettled Sandy Heath**



Legend	
	Unsettled Sandy Heath F1: Ash Common
	LCA Rural Landscape Classifications
	Ash and Tongham Detailed Area
	Ash and Tongham Urban Fringe Study Area
	Guildford Borough Boundary

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## LANDSCAPE TYPE F: Unsettled Sandy Heath

### F1: Ash Common Rural-Urban Fringe



# **CHARACTER AREA FI: ASH COMMON RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type 1:50,000	Character Area 1: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area 1:10,000</b>
F: Unsettled Sandy Heath	FI: Pirbright Common Unsettled Sandy Heath	<b>FI: Ash Common Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** Centred on Ash Common, this is an extensive character area covering the entire western edge of Ash Vale.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

The rural-urban fringe to the east of Ash Vale is characterised by a vast area of sandy heath and common with dense mixed woodland plantations. The land cover combined with slight undulations in landform, create an intimate inward looking landscape. Military firing ranges are the primary function for this space and have been present since 1871. There is consequently little public access into the area contributing to its secretive, secluded character. There are occasional intermittent views through woodland at the urban edge, for example along Enfield Road into the military ranges.

Heathland vegetation and coniferous plantations dominate this area. Ash Common is included in the *Ash to Brookwood Heaths SSSI* (also a SPA) forming part of the largest area of dry heathland remaining in the London Basin. Lakes and flashes are an important feature of the SSSI. In the north western part of the area the Basingstoke Canal runs along the urban edge.

Settlement is absent from this rural-urban fringe area owing to its function as military ranges. Late 20<sup>th</sup> century military barracks are present in the north of the area, contained by a railway line on and embankment. This development is heavily enclosed by woodland belts and therefore is not perceptible from either within the rural-urban fringe or the adjacent urban area.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** Ash Common Rural-Urban Fringe is representative of the wider rural character area, with its combination of plantation woodland, heathland, absence of settlement and military use.

## **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins the following townscape character areas:

5A: Ash Vale

7F: Horseshoe Lane

9I: Station Road East

5B: Ash Village

9J: Ash Vale

This rural urban fringe area abuts the urban edge of Ash Vale and Ash and is unified by dense woodland blocks and the barriers created by the canal, road and tracks. This abrupt urban edge is characterised by a number of post 1960s residential estates as well as Victorian/Edwardian Villages and a Garden Suburb at Horseshoe Lane. Roads are often informal, unmade or gravelled. For the most part the urban edges comprise private gardens backing directly onto woodland. The wooded landscape of the rural urban fringe cannot generally be perceived from within the urban area, with the exception of one area along Ash Hill Road. There is very limited connectivity between the urban edge and the adjacent landscape with no roads passing through the area. Some residential roads as well as recreation grounds, such as Coronation Gardens have pathways which permit access to the commons although this is restricted by the firing ranges.

## **Role in the landscape setting of Ash and Tongham**

The repetition of woodland and heathland around the edge of dwellings provides a unified and distinct edge to the east of Ash Vale. The wooded landscape is detached and separated from the urban edge by its military function, with little connectivity between the two areas. There are no gateways to Ash through the area and for the most part it is a hidden, self-contained landscape.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within F1: Ash Common Rural-Urban Fringe should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Mixed woodland blocks creating intimate enclosed landscape and of rich biodiversity value;
- Heathland vegetation and its species diversity as recognised in its inclusion in the Ash to

*Brookwood Heaths SSSI (SPA);*

- Unsettled character apart from development attached to military use;
- Local tracks and footpaths to Ash Common;
- Basingstoke Canal and associated water bodies.

## **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

Continuing military use of this area means that it is not vulnerable to development pressures at present. Designation as an SSSI (cSAC) also confers a degree of protection. The most sensitive element is the undeveloped and ‘natural’ character of the landscape, which is to a large extent protected by military use but could be vulnerable to adverse change if this use is intensified.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve and enhance the distinctive, unsettled, woodland and heathland landscape. Management of *F1: Ash Common Rural-Urban Fringe* should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

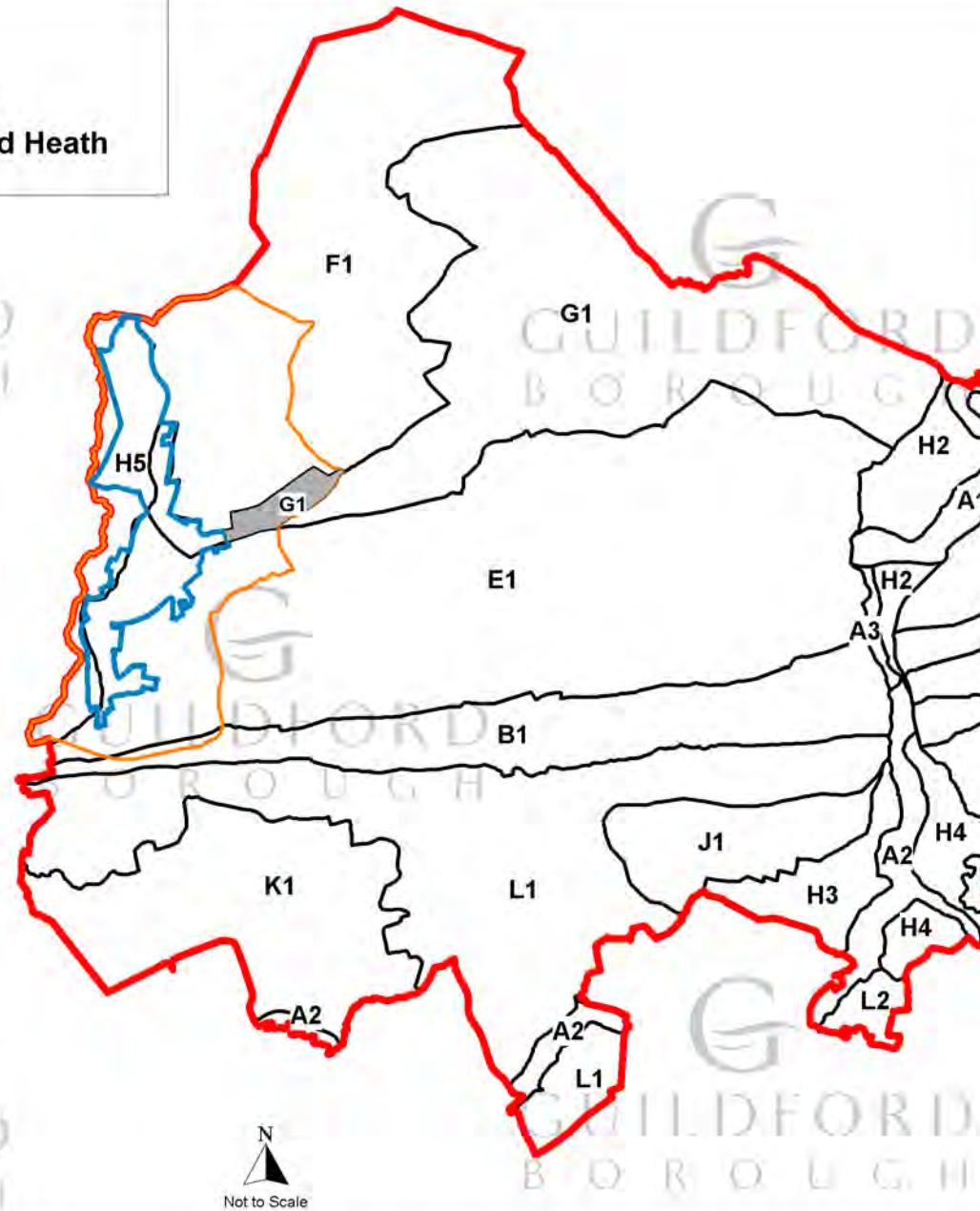
#### ***Land Management***

- Conserve and enhance mature woodland blocks and belts for instance through measures to diversify tree species in the plantations increasing biodiversity value.
- Protect the integrity of heathland habitats and seek opportunities to extend and link areas of heathland, in association with felling of plantation woodland.

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

- Conserve the integrity of the urban edge by retaining the informal character of houses and their settings in residential closes and roads. Resist infill development that would create a denser settlement pattern.
- Encourage sensitive boundary treatment at the edge of back gardens. Encourage use of locally native species in these areas rather than harsh urban style boundaries.

**ASH AND TONGHAM  
RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**G: Wyke Wooded and Settled Heath**



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## **LANDSCAPE TYPE G: Wooded and Settled Sandy Heaths**

### **GI: Wyke Rural-Urban Fringe**



# **CHARACTER AREA GI: WYKE RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type 1:50,000	Character Area 1: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area 1:10,000</b>
G: Wooded and Settled Sandy Heath	GI: Worplesdon Wooded and Settled Sandy Heath	<b>GI: Wyke Rural- Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** This is a small character area on the eastern edge of Ash around Wyke based on the heaths and plantations of Wyke Common, where they are interspersed with small cottages and farms. It covers a narrow landscape area extending north of the A323 (Guildford Road) and A324 (Pirbright Road) to the military ranges of character area F1.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

The area is characterised by its densely wooded character with pockets of more open ‘heathland’ vegetation, interspersed with settlement. It is located immediately to the south of the *Ash to Brookwood Heaths SSSI*. Settlement in the area is largely set against a backdrop of 19<sup>th</sup> century woodland plantations.

Settlement is in the form of large detached houses, cottages and farms set back from the A323 on large plots within a densely wooded context. Towards the urban edge there is a block of post-war and Victorian residential development. The settlement is separated from the edge of Ash, with a narrow part of Wyke/Ash Common extending between Ash and Nightingale Road.

The densely wooded character means that views to and from the urban edge from within the rural-urban fringe area are limited. The A323, which links Guildford and Ash and Tongham provides corridor views to the urban edge of Ash.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** Wyke Rural Urban Fringe is representative of the wider rural character area with large woodland and heathland blocks, interspersed with settlement.

## **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins one townscape character area:

5B: Ash Victorian/Edwardian Village.

The eastern edge of Ash is characterised by a Victorian/Edwardian Village with terrace and semi-detached properties set along gravel roads and with back gardens abutting Wyke/Ash Common. Roadside settlements along the A323 include Victorian terraces with ground floor shops.

The interface with the urban edge is short with the woodland of Wyke/Ash Common extending to the back gardens of houses to the north of the A323. Wyke/Ash Common provides strong containment to the urban edge. However, when travelling along the A323 the edge of Ash may not be distinct, with roadside settlement creating the impression of a more extended urban area.

## **Role in the landscape setting of Ash Tongham**

*GI: Wyke Rural-Urban Fringe* provides a wooded setting for the eastern edge of Ash, with a distinct historic pattern of settlement pre-dating the growth of Ash.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within *GI: Wyke Rural Urban Fringe*, which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Traditional farm buildings and cottages set within the wooded context;
- Mature woodland blocks and 19<sup>th</sup> century heathland plantations;
- Area of Wyke/Ash Common at urban edge providing containment on the eastern edge of Ash and separation from settlement in the rural-urban fringe;
- Footpath west of Nightingale Road providing public access to Wyke and Ash Commons.

### **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

The area is vulnerable to the intensification of development particularly along the roadside creating the impression of an extended and continuous urban area of Ash. Intensification and infill of modern development would also erase the historic pattern of settlement with its mix of cottages and farms and result in the loss of the wooded setting on the east of Ash. The road that crosses the area between Ash and Guildford is vulnerable to urbanisation of

infrastructure and increased levels of traffic.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to conserve and enhance the character of this fringe landscape, respecting the integrity of traditional farms and their wooded settings.

Management of GI: *Wyke Rural-Urban Fringe* should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

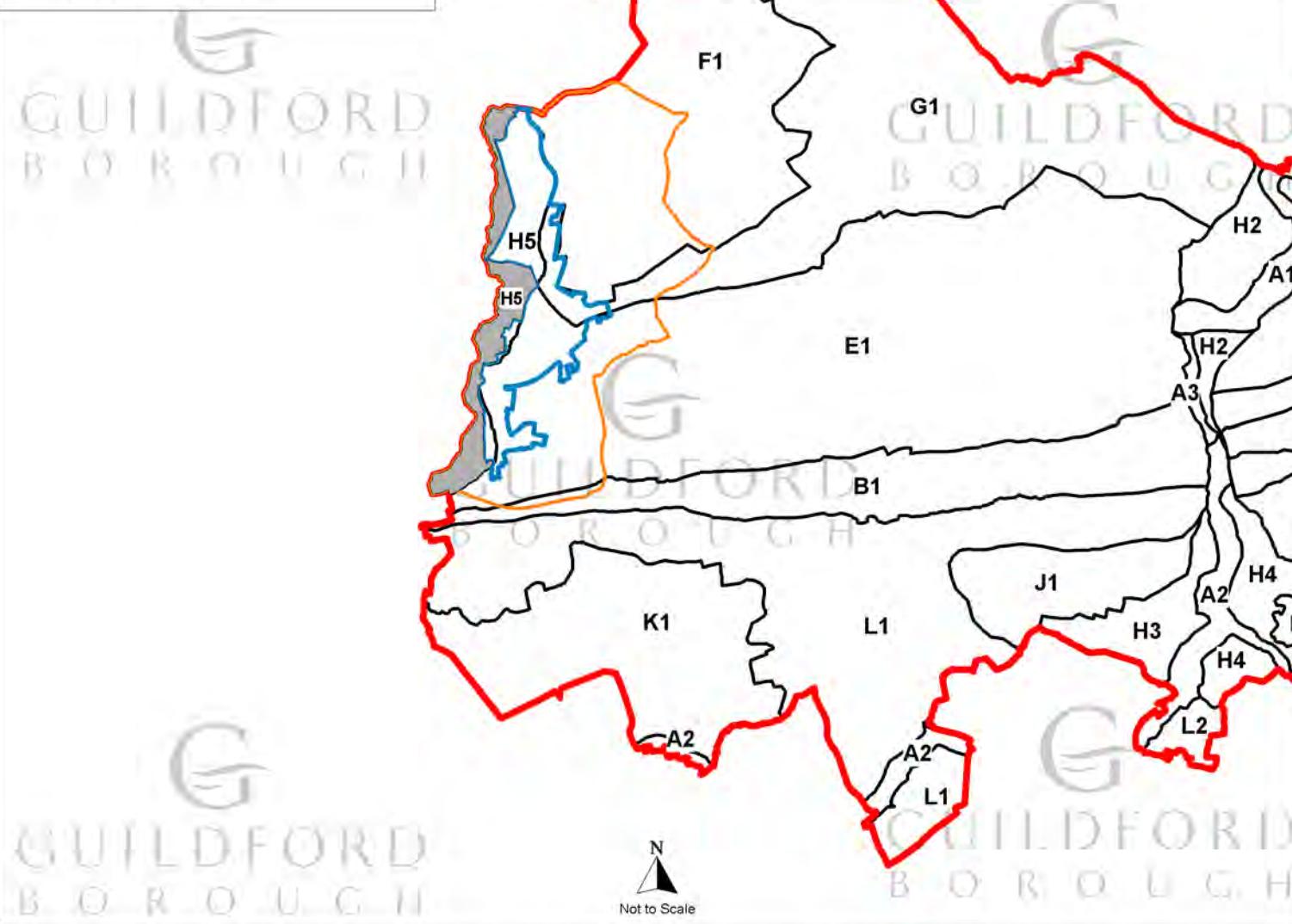
#### ***Land Management***

- Conserve and enhance mature woodland and 19<sup>th</sup> century plantations, most notably Rand's Plantation as the setting for the rural urban fringe. Encourage sustainable felling and replanting regimes, avoiding the creation of large areas of clear fell.
- Resist further urbanisation of road infrastructure. Encourage appropriate surfacing, edge treatment and enhancement of the immediate landscape setting, ensuring minimum 'clutter'.
- Maintain access to public footpath at western edge of Nightingale Road.

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

- Conserve and maintain the historic pattern of farms and cottages. Infilling or intensification of development would lead to a loss of the historic character and merging of settlement with the urban edge.
- Conserve the area of Wyke Common, which extends to the urban edge of Ash and provides separation between Ash and the roadside settlement typical of commons.

**ASH AND TONGHAM  
RURAL-URBAN FRINGE  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**  
**H: Blackwater Valley  
Gravel Terrace**



**Legend**

- Gravel Terrace  
H5: Blackwater Valley
- LCA Rural Landscape Classifications
- Ash and Tongham Detailed Area
- Ash and Tongham Urban Fringe Study Area
- Guildford Borough Boundary

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## **LANDSCAPE TYPE H: Gravel Terrace**

### **H5: Blackwater Valley Rural-Urban Fringe**



# **CHARACTER AREA H5: BLACKWATER VALLEY RURAL-URBAN FRINGE**

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## **Guildford BC Assessment Hierarchy**

Landscape Type I:50,000	Character Area I: 25,000	<b>Rural-Urban Fringe Character Area I:10,000</b>
H: Gravel Terrace	H5: Blackwater Valley Gravel Terrace	<b>H5: Blackwater Valley Rural-Urban Fringe</b>

**Location and Boundaries:** The course of the Blackwater River delineates the boundary of the district with Rushmoor District. The character area covers the area to the west of Ash and Tongham to the district boundary. It extends from Tongham Road and the A31 in the south to Grove Farm in the north.

## **DESCRIPTION**

### **Landscape Character**

Based on the underlying gravel terraces, this character area is distinct in that it also covers part of the valley floor, with the Blackwater River running north south and defining the western boundary of the area. It is a linear landscape based on the terraces adjoining the river.

The gravel terrace landscape has undergone considerable change and modification as a result of past gravel extraction, with former workings now dominated by open water forming a string of lakes along the length of the terrace, adjacent to the river. Older workings have substantially regenerated, with scrub and woodland on the margins and form a series of nature reserves and recreational spaces. Lakeside Park is a 20-hectare park and Local Nature Reserve, which lies at the heart of the Blackwater Valley containing a mosaic of broadleaf woodland, meadows, a lake and a series of small ponds supporting a diversity of flora and fauna species. Willow Park, Tongham Community Wood and a number of other waterside parks are also provide a valuable education and recreation resource. Extensive areas of marsh and rough grazing land provide the context for the expansive areas of open water. Fields enclosed by hedgerows and hedgerow trees create a more traditional agricultural landscape in the southern part of the character area.

The River Blackwater on the boundary is not a significant feature of the wider landscape. However in the central part of the area the Basingstoke Canal is an important historic

feature crossing the Blackwater on an aqueduct.

Apart from the gravel workings, there is a notable absence of built development within this character area, limited to sewage works and a railway station and industrial buildings in the northern part of the area. Settlement is almost entirely absent with the exception of a small residential area at Cumberlands Avenue, where 1960's bungalows extend onto the terrace. The area is however dissected and fragmented by rail and road infrastructure. Rail lines form a stark boundary and physical barrier with the urban edge of Ash and the A331 forms a hard edge to the west. The road has a major influence within the area particularly to the south where it fragments the landscape and includes a main interchange with the A3. To the north, there is a major interchange with the A3011 – providing road access to Ash to the east and Farnborough to the west.

The main roads pass through the landscape rather than provide access into it, with local access limited to one road at Lakeside Road. Access by foot is however possible within the numerous nature parks in the area and there is also a cycle route through the valley. Together, these provide a valuable local recreation resource.

**Representativeness of the Rural Character Area:** This part of the *Blackwater Valley Gravel Terrace* covers the whole of the rural character area. It is not representative of the generic landscape type, due to the dominance of gravel working, unsettled character and inclusion of the floodplain in immediate proximity to the river. This is the only river terrace relating to the Blackwater River, with other terraces in the landscape type bordering the River Wey.

### **Character of the existing urban edge**

The area adjoins the following townscape character areas:

5D: Tongham Victorian/Edwardian Village

9N: Tongham Post 1960s residential estate

8L: Tongham interwar/post war estate

8K: Ash Interwar/post-war estate

9I: Station Road East

9K: Lakeside Estates

11D: Nexus Park

10E: Ash Vale School.

Many of these townscape areas have little connection with the terrace landscape due to the barriers created by the rail lines and major roads on the edge of the terrace. For other areas back gardens abut the boundary.

Views across the terrace are limited with dense woodland blocks and belts screening views of the urban edge and providing the framework for the green corridor.

### **Role in the landscape setting of Ash and Tongham**

*H5: Blackwater Valley Rural-Urban Fringe* provides a green corridor and separation on the western side of Ash and Tongham and a buffer to the merging of development between Aldershot and Ash. The Blackwater River marks the borough and county boundary and maintains an unsettled ‘rural’ corridor between Surrey and Hampshire. The road and rail infrastructure on the boundaries of the area create physical barriers, so that much of the valley is inaccessible and contained.

The Blackwater Valley is important to the setting of Ash and Tongham and distinguishes it from the eastern edge of Aldershot. It provides a green corridor and tranquil setting with considerable biodiversity and recreation value.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Key Positive Landscape Attributes**

The key positive landscape attributes within *H5: Blackwater Valley Rural-Urban Fringe*, which should be conserved and enhanced are:

- The Blackwater River and its importance as the demarcation of the Surrey and Hampshire boundary;
- Role of the area as a green corridor providing physical separation between Ash/Tongham and Aldershot/Farnborough;
- The regenerated gravel workings with their mix of scrub and woodland cover plus extensive areas of open water – education, recreation and biodiversity values;
- Accessibility for recreational pursuits including walking and fishing;
- Pastures and hedgerow boundaries at southern extent of rural-urban fringe which link with the adjacent rural urban fringe area *E1: Tongham Rural-Urban Fringe*;
- The Basingstoke Canal and associated features such as the aqueduct;
- The secluded, tranquil character, screened from the surrounding urban area.

## **Forces for Change/Sensitivities/Pressures**

The area is vulnerable to further gravel extraction that could create a landscape completely dominated by water. Further built development is limited both as a result of the valley context and the relative inaccessibility created by the road and rail infrastructure bounding the area. The immediate A331 road corridor may, however, be vulnerable to development. The future landscape of this area will be determined by its management, and particularly the need to achieve a balance of open water and land, and to manage natural succession. The promotion and importance of the area for recreation will also be critical.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The overall management aim is to protect and conserve the natural character of the Blackwater River Valley and its value as a green buffer zone and providing physical separation between the edges of Ash and Aldershot. Management of H5: *Blackwater Valley Rural Urban Fringe* should consider the following:

### **Landscape Guidelines**

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

- Maintain and protect the green corridor, and seek to reduce dominance of road and railways, for example through further woodland screening.
- Continue to promote and manage recreational use of the area.
- Ensure appropriate land management to maintain biodiversity interest and a range of stages of natural succession from open water to woodland. Manage invasive species.
- Retain and manage the scrub and woodland cover which provides screening of urban areas, notably the A331.
- Enhance character of farmed pastures to south of area, encouraging the restocking and management of gappy hedgerows.

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

- Maintain the open and unsettled character of the valley and its function in providing physical separation and a green gap between Ash/Tongham and Aldershot/Farnborough.
- Ensure that any development within surrounding areas respects the setting of the green corridor and ensure that development does not visually intrude on the landscape.

## **APPENDIX I**

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## **APPENDIX 2**

## **GUILDFORD RURAL-URBAN FRINGE: FIELD SURVEY SHEET**

Sheet No: \_\_\_\_\_ Photograph Nos: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Direction of view: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

OS Grid Reference: \_\_\_\_\_ Weather: \_\_\_\_\_

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<b>BOROUGH LANDSCAPE TYPE:</b>	<b>BOROUGH CHARACTER AREA:</b>
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### **RURAL-URBAN FRINGE SUBDIVISIONS AT 1:10,000 (if any):**

**LANDSCAPE TYPE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA:** \_\_\_\_\_

**If sub-divisions exist what determines them? (differences in habitat types, land use, condition, quality etc.)**

### **Brief Description of Borough Landscape Character Area:**

### **DESCRIPTION/ REPRESENTATION OF WIDER LCA**

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**How is the rural fringe similar or different to the wider Borough landscape character area description?**

**Is the rural fringe representative of the wider LCA?**

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## ROLE IN THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OF GUILDFORD

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**Important landscape features that contribute to the setting of Guildford:**

**Locally important views and visual connections**

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**Important topographical features**

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**Important landscape features e.g. woodland/common etc.**

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**Local gateways into Guildford**

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## NATURE OF THE EXISTING URBAN EDGE

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**Is the existing urban edge integrated successfully into the landscape?**

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**Does the urban edge have a good relationship with its landscape setting?**

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**Which urban edges should be conserved?**

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**Is there room for improvement of the urban edge through additional development/ landscape improvement?**

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**BUILT/ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Timber-frame	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brick - traditional	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stone
<input type="checkbox"/>	Weatherboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brick - modern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flint	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conglomerate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thatch

<input type="checkbox"/>	Tile
<input type="checkbox"/>	other
<input type="checkbox"/>	other

**Notes on built character of the urban edge**

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## CONDITION OF THE RURAL-URBAN FRINGE

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## PRESSURES ON THE RURAL-URBAN FRINGE

### **Development/ recreational pressures?**

## **Other pressures, threats and issues?**

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## GUIDANCE ON LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

## **Agriculture, field patterns and boundaries, trees and woodland, historic landscape etc.**

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## GUIDANCE FOR BUILT DEVELOPMENT

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## **APPENDIX 3**

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Definition
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum (sea level).
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – a statutory national landscape designation.
Ancient woodland	Woods that are believed to have been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD.
Assart	The informal inclosure of private farmland by encroachment into woodland or heath.
Built Form	The characteristic nature of built development.
Character of England Map	A map developed by English Heritage, English Nature and the then Countryside Commission that divides England into Joint Character Areas.
Characteristic	A distinctive element of the landscape that contributes to landscape character for instance a particular hedgerow pattern or sense of tranquillity.
Communities of interest	Groups that have an interest in the landscape including government departments, statutory agencies, adjoining local authorities, and local interest groups such as environmental groups and landowner or farming organisations.
Communities of place	Groups or individuals who live or work in a particular area or visit it.
Condition	A judgement on the intactness and condition of the elements of the landscape.
Conserve	Strategy where the emphasis is conservation of existing character and of particular features that contribute to this character.
Coppice	A traditional form of woodland management where trees (commonly hazel) are cut regularly on a cycle to promote growth from their bases.
Create	A strategy that provides the opportunity to create or accelerate change towards a new positive landscape character.
Deerpark	Enclosed private hunting ground.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Enhance	Strategy where the emphasis is on restoring elements that have been lost or declined and on enhancing character. This may include improvements to landscape management practices and the introduction of positive new elements or features.
Forces for change	These are both positive and negative factors that are known to or have potential to act on the landscape, including agricultural management issues, policy and development pressures.
Ghyll	Steep sided valley woodland (generally ancient woodland).
Guidelines	Guidelines outline the actions required to ensure that distinctive character is maintained.
Inclosure/Enclosure	The placing in private hands of land to which there was previously common rights; the merging of strip fields to form a block surrounded by hedges.
Joint Character Areas (national/regional)	Areas defined by broadly similar cultural, historical, wildlife, landscape and natural characteristics.
Landscape character	The distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular landscape and how these are perceived. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.
Landscape character areas	Single unique areas that are the discrete geographical area of a particular landscape type.
Landscape character types	Distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historic land use and settlement pattern.
Restore	A strategy which focuses upon restoration or renewal of landscape features or characteristics that have been or are currently being lost or degraded, alongside active management of the remaining resource.
Sensitivity	A judgement of how sensitive or vulnerable a landscape component is to change.
Shaw	A strip of woodland forming the border of a field.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Significant landscape attributes	Positive features and characteristics that are important to landscape character.
Skyline	The outline of a range of hills, ridge or group of buildings seen against the sky.
Strategy	Principles to manage and direct landscape change for a particular landscape type or character area including identification of any particular management needs for specific elements.
Strength of character	A judgement on how distinctive and recognisable the pattern is that defines the character of the landscape. This includes the combination of physical and cultural attributes and the sense of place that they evoke.
Strengthen	A strategy which focuses upon strengthening the existing characteristics of the landscape character through improvements to landscape management practices.
Townscape character	The distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular urban area and how these are perceived. This reflects land use and urban morphology as well as the underlying landscape character.
Townscape character areas (borough level)	Single unique areas that are the discrete geographical area of a particular townscape type.
Townscape character types (borough level)	Distinct types of townscape that are relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the urban area or the country, but share broadly similar combinations of land use and urban morphology.
Urban/Townscape morphology	The form and structure of the urban area/townscape including for instance street pattern, scale and density of buildings, focal points and landmarks, and views and visual sequences.