

# **Land between Ockham Lane and Wisley Airfield**

Consultation Representation

## **Appendix on Landscape and Visual Matters**

9<sup>th</sup> May 2018

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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1. Brief

- 1.1.1. Landscape Visual Limited was instructed by the consortium of landowners who collectively own the land between Ockham Lane and Wisley Airfield ('the Site', as shown on Figure 1 in Annex 1) to prepare a statement on landscape and visual matters to inform the Examination in Public of the Guildford Borough *Proposed Submission Local Plan* (June 2017).
- 1.1.2. Landscape Visual Limited is a Landscape Institute registered practice which specialises in landscape planning. This report has been prepared by a director of the practice who is a chartered landscape architect (CMLI) with 15 years' experience of landscape and visual assessment.
- 1.1.3. The work has involved desk study and site visits to inform consideration of the landscape and visual consequences of allocation of the Site. This report is not a landscape and visual appraisal or impact assessment.

### 1.2. Background

- 1.2.1. The planning history and context is set out in CBRE's Hearing Statement.
- 1.2.2. From a landscape perspective, the key background is that the Site is part of the strategic allocation for Wisley Airfield (Policy A35). A plan showing the allocation is shown on page 228 of the *Proposed Submission Local Plan* (June 2017).
- 1.2.3. Outline planning permission for a new settlement at Wisley Airfield (15/P/00012) has been refused by Guildford Borough Council (GBC) predominantly on the grounds of inability to demonstrate very special circumstances to outweigh harm to the Green Belt. The refusal is subject to an appeal (APP/Y3615/W/16/3159894), which is pending determination following a public inquiry in autumn 2017.

## 2.0 Landscape Baseline

### 2.1 The Surrounding Area

- 2.1.1. The description of the Site and Surrounding Area makes reference to Plans and Site and Viewpoint photos which are all contained in Annex 1 of this document.
- 2.1.2. The Site lies to the north-east of Ockham, which is a dispersed rural settlement (Figure 1). The Ockham Conservation Area extends approximately 1.3 km from Ockham Park in the west to School Farm and Bridge End in the east. The north-eastern Conservation Area boundary adjoins the Site either side of Hatch Lane and takes in Bridge End House and Yew Tree Cottages and the dwellings to the south of Ockham Lane (Figure 3).
- 2.1.3. The surrounding area contains a relatively dense network of public rights of way, including those which follow the Site boundaries and run through the Site, and many across Wisley Airfield (Figure 4a). There is Access Land to the north-west towards the A3, this area being a fragment of Wisley Common. There is more Access Land to the north of the airfield at Wilderness Woods.
- 2.1.4. The Site forms part of the *Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands* Landscape Character Area (LCA LR2)<sup>1</sup>. The LCA description is included in full in Annex 2 of this document.
- 2.1.5. The Site and surrounding area display some of the key characteristics of the *Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands* LCA. The gently rolling lowland landscape supports pastoral and arable farming, as well as diversified rural uses such as horse grazing and plant nurseries. Fields can be medium to large in scale but this varies depending on local topography.
- 2.1.6. The airfield plateau has an open and large-scale character. This contrasts with much of the LCA. This character extends over the upper slopes of the Site. The more open character is partly the result of hedgerow removal as is acknowledged

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<sup>1</sup> Surrey County Council, 2015. Surrey Landscape Character Assessment: Guildford Borough.

in GBC's *Green Belt and Countryside Study* (2013). Lower-lying areas near Ockham have a smaller field size and more intricate scale and pattern.

- 2.1.7. As is reflected in the description for the *Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands* LCA, nearby road infrastructure dissects the landscape. Traffic on these main roads is audible from the Site, diluting the perception of the peaceful rural landscape which can be evident within the wider LCA.

## **2.2. The Site**

- 2.2.1. The Site is comprised of fields to the east and west of Hatch Lane. The Lane gives access to Bridge End Farm and Old Farm and continues northwards over the disused Wisley Airfield as Bridleway 16. The Site excludes the house at Bridge End Farm and Old Farm and the paddocks to its south and south-east.
- 2.2.2. The Site's boundaries to the north and north-east are fenced, with some areas of remnant hedgerow to the west and a belt of approximately twenty poplar trees to the north of the Bridge End farmyard (site viewpoint (SV) 1). The northern boundary is followed by Footpath 13a (SV3). The south-eastern boundary largely follows Ockham Lane (SV5). The south-western boundary follows Hyde Lane (Byway 544), which is low-lying and relates to the valley floor landscape to its west.
- 2.2.3. The Site occupies the southern part of the plateau occupied by the former Wisley Airfield and sloping ground to Ockham Lane. The highest part of the Site is to the north-east corner (ca. 43 m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD)). The lowest part is towards the south-western boundary with Hyde Lane (Byway 544) at ca. 27 m AOD. The land slopes most steeply to Hyde Lane, where the tapered end of the western Site field slopes at gradients of up to ca. 12 per cent (SV8). The eastern end of the Site slopes more gently towards Ockham Lane (up to ca. 5 per cent gradient) (SV4).
- 2.2.4. The current land use is mainly agricultural, with cattle grazing predominating on the western and northern parts of the Site. Equestrian uses, including horse

paddocks and a flood-lit riding area occupy the eastern part of the Site (SV4 and 6).

2.2.5. The main tree and hedgerow vegetation on the Site relates to historic field boundaries and is found primarily on the lower, sloping areas (SV4, 5 and 6). There is less vegetation towards the airfield plateau, particularly to the north-eastern boundary (SV3). Field size is larger towards the plateau and smaller towards Ockham Lane. Boundaries are generally straight and indicate a parliamentary enclosure field pattern. There is some evidence of boundary removal over the 19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries and the existing northern ownership boundary is not thought to wholly correspond to the former parliamentary enclosure boundaries.

2.2.6. The pasture to the south and south-west of Bridge End Farmhouse contains clumps of mature trees which are significant local landscape features (SV7).

2.2.7. Bridge End Farm, Old Farm, and some of the associated barns are red-brick buildings consistent with other dwellings locally. Little Upton and Little Upton Cottages are located on gently sloping ground towards the eastern end of the Site.

### **2.3. Views from the Site**

2.3.1. The Site's topography lends itself to southwards views, although views are also available to the north, east and west.

2.3.2. Views from the Site take in a landscape of a well-wooded appearance to the south. From the northern parts of the Site and the southern edge of the airfield plateau, there are distant views to the elevated horizon of the Surrey Hills AONB to the south (viewpoints A and D). This horizon is continuously wooded. The Site also offers near views over the lower-lying surroundings to the south (SV4, 6, 7 and 8), whereas the topography is such that these views are not widely available from the airfield.

2.3.3. *'Views to the unsettled rural backdrop of the chalk ridge to the south'* are a positive

landscape attribute of the *Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands* LCA, and these are present locally.<sup>2</sup>

- 2.3.4. The Wisley Airfield is visible from northern parts of the Site. The airfield slopes slightly to the north, with views extending only as far as the woodland on its northern side.

## 2.4. Views to the Site

### Extent of Views to the Site

- 2.4.1. Zone of Theoretical Visibility plans (ZTV) of reference points on the site have been prepared. Figures 5a and 5b show a ZTV of reference points at 10 m above the existing site<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.4.2. The principal pattern is that *theoretical* visibility is shown from the airfield plateau and from the rolling landscape to the south to approximately 1.5 km from the Site. Beyond this distance, the ZTV covers patches in an arc of ca. 60 degrees in a southerly direction, with visibility being limited by both rolling topography and woodland.
- 2.4.3. In the low-lying area to the south between Ockham and West Horsley, woodland, shaws (strips of woodland), hedgerows and field trees are landscape features. Site work confirms that the ZTV exaggerates views in this area (see also paragraph 2.4.9).<sup>4</sup>
- 2.4.4. There would potentially be views from the ridgeline of the Surrey Hills AONB. This landform is at distances of ca. 7 km and above from the Site. As is notable

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<sup>2</sup> Tyler Grange also report on local stakeholders identifying views to the North Downs as important (Tyler Grange, September 2014. *Former Wisley Airfield, Ockham Parish: Landscape and Visual Implications of Allocating the Former Wisley Airfield for a New Settlement North of Ockham*. Document submitted as evidence at Appeal APP/Y3615/W/16/3159894)

<sup>3</sup> Corresponding to estimated height of a two-storey house with pitched roof with an allowance / contingency to accommodate slope and setting of finished floor levels.

<sup>4</sup> In the LVIA submitted with the 15/P/00012, the applicant's landscape consultant concluded that there would be '*limited views from Ockham Village*' of that proposed and more extensive development, and that '*views from Ockham Village and Ockham Road North are predominantly screened by intervening mature tree belts and garden vegetation*'. (Wisley Airfield, ES Chapter 11 paragraph 11.5.22, Davies Landscape Architects).

in views from the Site, the north-facing slopes of the AONB are within the *Wooded Chalk Downs* Landscape Character Type. The predominance of woodland would be expected to limit views to the landscape to the north. When visible, the Site would form a background feature in views. The Site is not visible from the North Downs Way due to topography.

### **Viewpoint Photographs**

- 2.4.5. Viewpoint photographs have been taken to illustrate the character of the surrounding landscape and the nature of views to the Site.
- 2.4.6. The Site is visible from the rights of way which cross it, including Bridleway 16 (SV1) and Footpath 15 (SV8) and those along all of its boundaries, including Footpath 13, 13a, Byway 544 and Ockham Lane (SV3 and SV4). These routes would give near views of any development.
- 2.4.7. Further from the Site, views are possible from most of the routes on Wisley Airfield (viewpoints A and D). The topography of the airfield slopes to the north (as illustrated by viewpoint B) so that the Site fields are not visible from Footpaths 15, 16 and 19 or Bridleway 544 towards the northern edge of the airfield, although boundary features such as the row of poplars are visible (viewpoint E). These routes would potentially offer views of development on the Site, with development on the airfield also being visible.
- 2.4.8. Landform rises to the east of the Site towards Hatchford. There are few publicly accessible areas in this locality from which views to the Site are possible. The extent of views in this direction is marked by a minor ridgeline followed by Bridleway 70 on the western edge of Hatchford. To the east of this landform, no views are available towards the Site and surrounding area. The Site is only identifiable from the NATS beacon which lies ca. 130 m from the north-eastern boundary. The Site fields and features on the Site are screened by the woodland and trees which characterise the view in the direction of the Site (viewpoint F). It is unlikely that development on the Site would be visible from this area. Development on the airfield would feature more noticeably in views.



- 2.4.9. Woodlands, shaws, hedgerows, and hedgerow and field trees influence the availability of views from the landscape to the south. From the low-lying landscape around Ockham, views to the Site tend to be screened or heavily filtered by trees in and around the village. A knoll between Chestnut and Appletree Farms and the low-lying landscape near Hyde Lane also contributes to screening. The western end of the Site is visible from this knoll (viewpoint C). This landform contributes to the screening of views from the western part of Ockham including the Conservation Area around Church End and Ockham Park.
- 2.4.10. The *Wooded Rolling Claylands* landscape to the south contains woodland, shaws, hedgerows, and field and hedgerow trees. These features screen views to the Site (viewpoints G, H and J). From the east of the south-eastern end of the Conservation Area (viewpoint G) on Footpath 28 near School Farm, the tops of the chimneys of Bridge End farmhouse and the roofs of buildings at Little Upton are visible above or through gaps in this vegetation. A minimal area of pasture is visible to the west of Little Upton. From further south (viewpoint H) on Footpath 29, the site is entirely screened by shaws. Viewpoint J on Footpath 30 has a slightly elevated position near South End Farm and looks north-east over the Ockham Conservation Area. The Site is screened by shaws, woodland and parkland trees. Viewpoints H and J illustrate the abundance of trees and woodland in and around Ockham Conservation Area.
- 2.4.11. It is probable that development could be accommodated with very little effect on views from the *Wooded Rolling Claylands* landscape to the south. In most cases, no development would be visible due to a combination of topography and the vegetation in the landscape, including that in and around Ockham Conservation Area.
- 2.4.12. From distant viewpoints in the Surrey Hills AONB, the site forms a minor, background component of views (viewpoint K). At distances of ca. 7 km, development on the Site would not give rise to perceptible changes in views.

## 3.0 Landscape and Visual Considerations

### 3.1. Overview

3.1.1. The following sections highlight key constraints and opportunities for the Site and surrounding area, based on a preliminary, high-level review of landscape and visual factors.

### 3.2. Wisley Airfield Site

3.2.1. The site is part of the allocation for Wisley Airfield (Policy A35), for which a new settlement has been proposed. The appeal for GBC's refusal of the Wisley Airfield proposal is currently being determined.

3.2.2. Public rights of way 13, 13a, 15, 16, 19 and 544 run through or along the Site and connect with the airfield.

3.2.3. An approach to masterplanning and landscape strategy which integrates with that taken towards the Wisley Airfield settlement should be adopted, while acknowledging any differences in local character, opportunities and constraints.

### 3.3. Local Character

3.3.1. Both the Site and the airfield are part of the *Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands* LCA. This LCA covers a large area between Guildford, Leatherhead and Cobham. Local variations in character within the LCA and near to the Site are important.

3.3.2. There is continuity in local character between the northern part of the Site and the airfield, which together occupy the same plateau and have an open, largely unvegetated character, with long views to the south. The southern, sloping part of the Site has a different character to the plateau. This lower part of the Site is more secluded due to the lower elevation and increased screening from vegetation, including trees on the edge of the Conservation Area and along the Hyde Lane byway. The sensitivity of different parts of the Site would need to be addressed in any landscape framework and masterplanning work.

### 3.4. Vegetation

- 3.4.1. The Site contains some vegetation which is significant in terms of local landscape character. This includes the clumps of mature trees in the pasture to the south of Bridge End Farm; mature trees on a former field boundary to the west of the Farm; field oaks to the south of Little Upton; and hedgerow vegetation to the west of Little Upton. There is also remnant hedgerow vegetation on the western section of the northern boundary.
- 3.4.2. The wooded character of the surrounding area means that shaws, hedgerows with trees, and woodland are appropriate measures to screen built development. These elements are identified in the strategy for *Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands* LCA as elements to be enhanced<sup>5</sup>. Extensive planting has the potential to alter distant views to the south from the open airfield plateau.

### 3.5. Views

- 3.5.1. The distant views to the south from parts of the Site are part of the local character and could be drawn on as part of any development proposal.
- 3.5.2. Views from the *Wooded Rolling Claylands* landscape to the south towards the Site are a potential sensitivity. The susceptibility of these views to harm is significantly reduced by the abundance of woodland, shaws, hedgerows and hedgerow and field trees in the landscape. Viewpoints G, H and J illustrate the paucity of open views to the Site due to this vegetation. With an appropriate landscape framework steering development on the Site, it is probable that all development could be screened from the wider landscape to the south with the exception of near views from the knoll to the north of Appletree House (viewpoint C).
- 3.5.3. Careful consideration of development scale and extent in relation to topography and existing and proposed vegetation on the Site and in the surrounding area

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<sup>5</sup> And note that in the LVIA submitted with the 15/P/00012, the applicant's landscape consultant judged Bridge End Farm's northern boundary with the airfield as being 'weak' (Wisley Airfield, ES Chapter 11, Figure 12 prepared by Davies Landscape Architects).

would nevertheless be required.

### **3.6. Settlement Pattern**

- 3.6.1. Development at the airfield and on the Site would change the existing settlement pattern in the *Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands* LCA (*...scattered farmsteads, grand houses in parkland and large extended villages...*).
- 3.6.2. Careful consideration would be required in terms of landscape and masterplan design mitigation. The edges of proposed development would need to reflect a transition from new masterplanned development to the surrounding area.

### **3.7. Ockham Conservation Area**

- 3.7.1. The Site shares a boundary with the eastern end of the Ockham Conservation Area<sup>6</sup>. Limited views to the Site are possible only from the eastern end of the Conservation Area in the vicinity of Bridge End and Hatch Lane.
- 3.7.2. Woodland and trees in and around the Conservation Area contribute to its character. This vegetation lends a somewhat enclosed character to much of the Conservation Area so that there are few views in the direction of the Site.
- 3.7.3. From Ockham Lane, Ockham Road North and Alms Lane, views are screened by trees and woodland.
- 3.7.4. From the western end of the Conservation Area around Ockham Park House (grade II with grade II\* listed stables) and the Church of All Saints (grade I), parkland trees screen views to the north-east.
- 3.7.5. The abundance of vegetation in and around the Conservation area would help reduce intervisibility with the Site, in combination with any planting measures which would be likely to form part of a landscape framework for the Site.

### **3.8. Summary of Key Landscape and Visual Considerations**

- 3.8.1. The approach to the Site should:

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<sup>6</sup> For photos of the Conservation Area, see Annex 1.

- Integrate with the approach taken to the proposed new settlement on Wisley Airfield as appropriate.
- Develop a landscape strategy and masterplan which addresses local character, both in terms of areas of plateau character, and the character of the lower, sloping parts of the Site.
- Take advantage of the existing public rights of way which cross the Site and airfield.
- Retain those existing trees and hedgerows which are important features.
- Draw on the wooded character of the surrounding landscape to devise an appropriate landscape framework to screen built development, supplementing the role of existing vegetation.
- Address views to and from the site. Views from the Site to the Surrey Hills AONB are part of the local character. Views to the Site are reduced by the abundance of woodlands, shaws and trees in the landscape to the south, and also the potential role these features could have in a landscape framework for the Site.
- With regards to settlement pattern, give careful consideration to landscape and masterplan design mitigation.
- Consider the interface with the eastern end of Ockham Conservation Area.

## 4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1.1. Development on the Site would transform its character. While these direct landscape effects would be locally significant, changes should be capable of being mitigated with an appropriate landscape framework which addresses sensitivities of different parts of the Site and draws on the surrounding landscape for a palette of mitigation measures. These measures might include restoration of field boundaries or planting of new boundaries in keeping with the published strategy for the *Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands* LCA which contains an abundance of woodland, shaws, trees and hedgerows. The edge of the airfield plateau and northern part of the Site offer distant views southwards some of which might be retained with development of the Site.
- 4.1.2. Due to the wooded and rolling character of the host LCA, the extent of any indirect effects would be local, affecting the landscape in the immediate surrounding area only. More widespread effects would not arise. Indirect effects on the Surrey Hills AONB would be negligible.
- 4.1.3. The character of the *Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands* LCA is such that views to the Site are generally only available within the immediately surrounding area. From the low-lying landscape to the south, an abundance of woodland, shaws, trees and hedgerows screens views to the Site. Views from the south are nevertheless a potential sensitivity which would need to be considered throughout masterplanning and design stages.
- 4.1.4. The Site shares a boundary with the north-eastern end of the Ockham Conservation Area. Part of the wider character of the Conservation Area is the woodland and trees in and around it. This character means that there would be no views from the western part of the Conservation Area near Ockham Park, or from the Conservation Area along most of Ockham Lane, Alms Road, or Ockham Road North. The Site would be partially visible from the rear of the Bridge End part of the Conservation Area only (i.e. the very north-eastern end) due to its proximity. The interface between the Site and Conservation Area

would therefore require careful treatment in terms of landscape design and masterplanning. With a diligent approach to local character, development should be possible without harmful landscape or visual effects.

- 4.1.5. Development on the Site would be expected to come forward in conjunction with more extensive changes on Wisley Airfield. Notwithstanding the potential benefits of an integrated approach to plan for wider landscape change, the Site does have potential to come forward as an individual and separate development. Guidelines set out in Section 3.8 would be relevant in either scenario.
- 4.1.6. The overall conclusion based on this high-level review is that, while development on the Site would bring about notable change locally, these changes should not result in landscape harm either to the Site or its surroundings if a diligent approach were taken to masterplanning and landscape design.

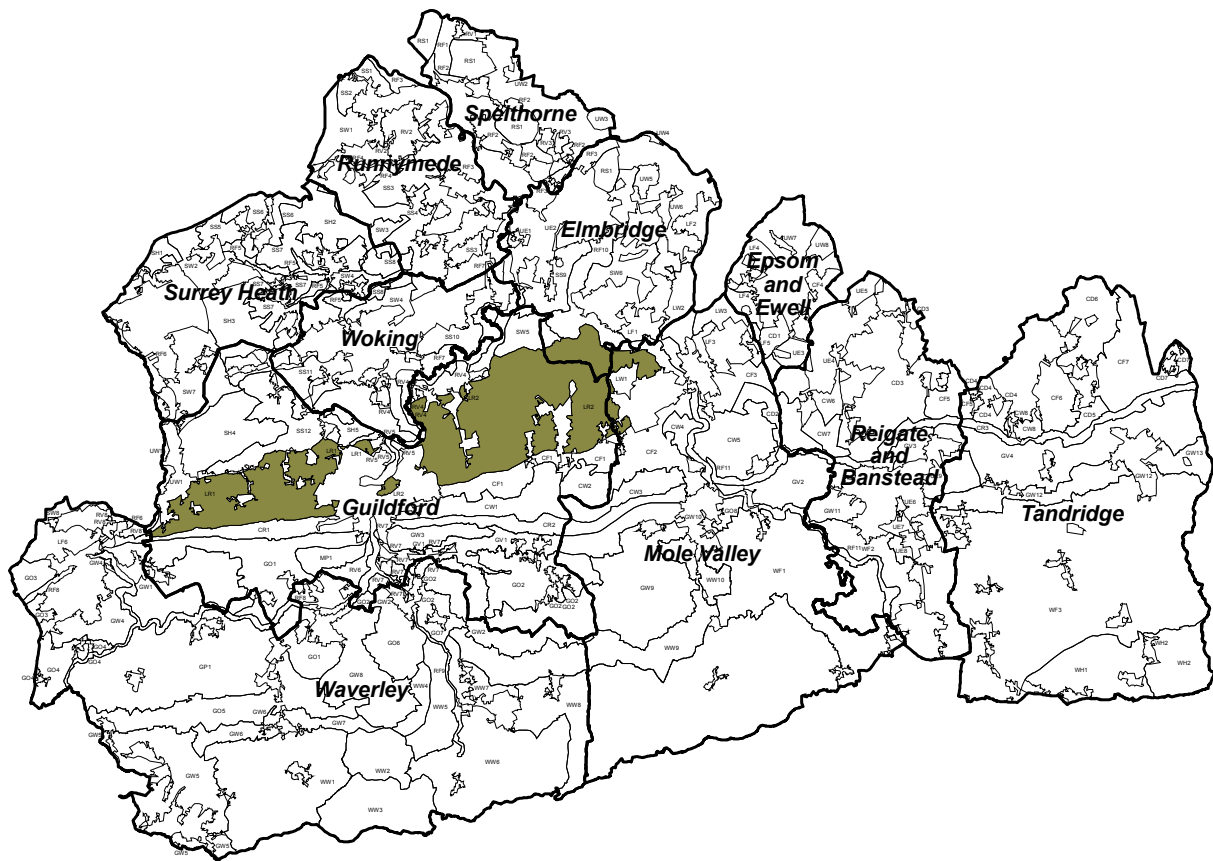
## Annex 1

Annex 1 to this report contains the Plans and Photographs referred to in this document and is a separate A3 document.



## Annex 2

Annex 2 on the following pages contains the description for the *Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands* LCA (Surrey County Council, 2015. *Surrey Landscape Character Assessment: Guildford Borough*).



**LANDSCAPE TYPE LR: WOODED ROLLING CLAYLANDS**

**Landscape Character Areas**

LR1	Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands
LR2	Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands

## LANDSCAPE TYPE LR: WOODED ROLLING CLAYLANDS

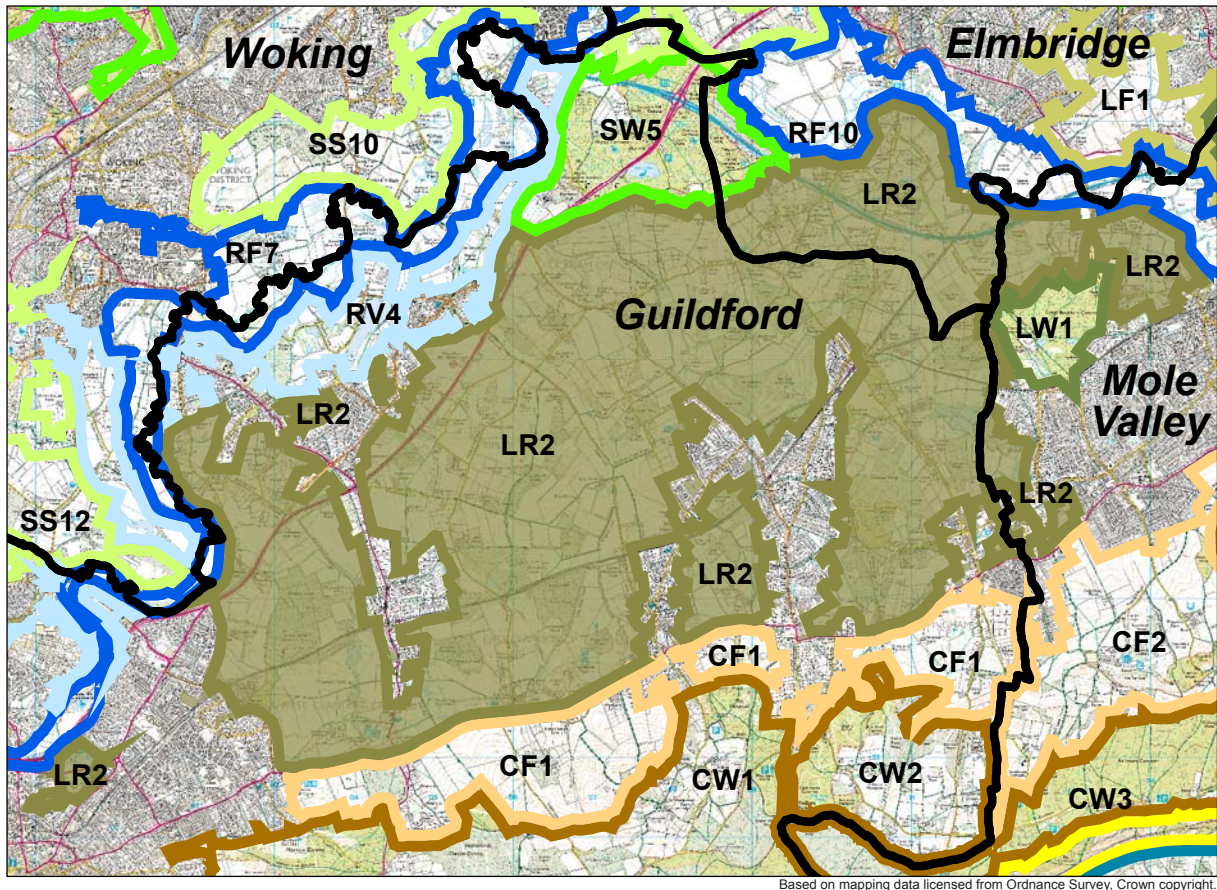
### Location and Boundaries

The two areas in the Wooded Rolling Claylands Landscape Type form a broad band running east-west, either side of Guildford. Boundaries are based on the underlying geology marking the transition from the clay to the higher ground of the chalk to the south and the sand or gravel to the north.



### Key Characteristics

- Gently rolling lowland based on the London Clay Formation.
- A mix of land uses with pastoral and arable farmland, woodland and historic parkland.
- Contains woodland blocks, occasionally relatively large. Woodland is dispersed unlike the continuous tracts of woodland within the Clay Woodland Type (LW).
- Settlement pattern is either scattered farmsteads and small, nucleated villages, or substantial areas of largely 20th century dwellings clustered along the line of the railway and extending along the rural roads.
- A largely peaceful, rural landscape fragmented in some areas by modern ribbon development.
- Historic landscape patterns associated with small farms and early human occupation.



## LR2: OCKHAM AND CLANDON WOODED ROLLING CLAYLANDS

### Location and Boundaries

Ockham and Clandon Wooded Rolling Claylands is a broad band of land lying to the east of Guildford. The boundaries are defined by the change in underlying geology from the London Clay to the rising chalk downs to the south (following the line of the A246) and to the gravel terrace and sand heath to the north. The character area continues eastwards until reaching the Lower Mole river floodplain. The character area is outside the Surrey Hills AONB, but adjoins it in small places to the south.

### Key Characteristics

- Gently sloping lowland based mainly on the London Clay Formation Clay, Silt and Sand solid geology.
- The area supports a range of land uses; pastoral and arable farmland, woodland, parkland and leisure along with substantial settlements spreading along roads.
- Medium to large scale fields of pasture and some arable are bounded by hedgerows or fences.
- Parkland is prominent with a line of historic parks to the south of the area with open grassland, mature parkland trees (often oaks), woodland plantations, lakes, and views to grand houses.
- Blocks of woodland and plantations are often associated with the historic parks. Shaws are a common feature, and there is a significant, but dispersed, amount of ancient woodland.
- Horse paddocks are present particularly to the north where they fragment the field pattern by subdividing the large fields with fences, and attract associated buildings and facilities.
- Network of small streams, ponds and ditches.

- Dissected by major transport routes including the A3 (both old and new), London to Portsmouth Road, and a stretch of the M25 motorway along with the large recently constructed motorway service area. Elsewhere, there are narrow roads enclosed by hedgerows. The London-Portsmouth main railway line passes through the character area, including West Clandon railway station, and Effingham Junction railway station where the main line meet the Mole Valley railway line.
- Settlement consists of scattered farmsteads, grand houses in parkland and large extended villages, some with historic village cores, which expanded following the arrival of the railway, creating a strong suburban feel in some areas.
- Varied building materials include brick, timber frame, flint and weatherboard with tile and some thatch roofs.
- The character area contains a considerable number of Conservation Areas including West Clandon, East Clandon, West Horsley, East Horsley, Ockham, Effingham, Downside Village, Cobham Plough Corner, Little Bookham, and a small part of the Ripley Conservation Area.
- Clandon Park and Hatchland Gardens, towards the south of the character area are listed as historic parks and gardens, and there are scheduled monuments south of Boughton Mall and near Effingham.
- There are various Sites of Nature Conservation Importance across the character area, such as Cotts Wood, Clandon Woods, Lollesworth Woods, and Wisley Field. There a few small areas of Common Land, including Effingham Common, and the northern part of the character area includes a small part of the Ockham and Wisley Local Nature Reserve.
- A fragmented area, enriched by parklands and woodland but with rural views often obscured by settlement.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE LR: WOODED ROLLING CLAYLANDS EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### Key positive landscape attributes

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

- Peaceful rural character.
- Network of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and field trees.
- Woodland blocks including substantial areas of ancient woodland of high biodiversity value.
- Commons with their heathland vegetation, Open Access Land and function as a rural setting to roadside development.
- Historic parklands and designed views.
- Historic villages and farmsteads.
- Sparse settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads in some sections especially to the south.
- Views to the unsettled rural backdrop of the chalk ridge to the south.

#### Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures

##### *Past change*

- Small scale infill and expansion of residential development along roads and within small areas defined by roads (such as Flexford).
- Loss of hedgerows.
- Decline in numbers of hedgerow trees and field trees.
- Decline in active management of woodland.
- Encroachment of woodland onto open heathland of the commons.
- Introduction of horse paddocks.
- Expansion of settlement and roads, and development of plant nurseries.
- Fragmentation of structure of historic parklands through loss of original houses and key landscape features.
- Golf course development.
- M25, A3 and A246 corridors.

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

- Continued infill and expansion of residential development.
- Continued loss of hedgerows.
- Decline in numbers of hedgerow trees and field trees from loss of mature and over mature tree stock.
- Increase in demand for horse paddocks with associated infrastructure such as fencing and shelters.
- Further loss of open heathland due to regenerating woodland.
- Further loss of historic designed landscapes through conversion to modern use.
- Pressure for additional residential development through edge of town and infilling development.
- Development of formal recreational, sport or community facilities associated with settlements.
- Upgrading of rural roads through additional kerbing and signage to accommodate increasing traffic volume, and pressure for further road infrastructure along 'A' roads and motorway.

## **GUIDANCE**

### ***Landscape Strategy***

The strategy for the Wooded Rolling Clayland is to conserve the pastoral landscape with its partially intact network of hedgerows and frequent mature trees, its woodland and commons of ecological and historic value and the sparsely scattered farmsteads including farmhouses and barns of traditional structure and local materials. Elements to be enhanced are the hedgerows, tree cover, and the settlement pattern where this dilutes the rural character of the area.

### Landscape Guidelines

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

- Encourage landowners to maintain an appropriate management regime using traditional farming techniques where these will conserve and enhance key landscape features such as the hedgerows, hedgerow and field trees and woodlands.
- Resist drainage or water management schemes which could disturb the characteristic land cover and vegetation patterns, adversely affecting the area's character or ecological value. This character area type coincides with Surrey's Thames Basin Lowlands biodiversity opportunity area, important for habitats associated with seasonally wet soils.
- Raise awareness of the historic dimension and underlying archaeology of the landscape including the field patterns, remnants of parkland and woodlands. Conserve historic elements of the landscape.
- Conserve, enhance and restore the woodlands through effective long term management and replanting to retain their varied character and their ecological value.
- Promote traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing with local landowners and the farming community.
- Encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands.
- Promote the use of locally appropriate native species within woodlands and hedgerows.
- Enhance the hedgerows by replanting and consistent management and resist development that will result in further loss/fragmentation of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Protect and maintain new hedgerow trees.
- Conserve field trees (often oaks) through management of surrounding pasture by for instance avoiding over grazing and consider opportunities for planting new field trees.
- Raise awareness of local historic dimension and local hydrology to encourage sustainable drainage.
- Conserve and where appropriate encourage repair of the historic parkland to maintain and restore key elements such as parkland trees and boundary features.
- Encourage traditional heathland management techniques on the common heathland.
- Encourage appropriate siting and management of horse paddocks, for instance in utilising existing hedges or planting new native hedges as boundary treatments. Resist fencing small areas of land out of keeping with the scale of surrounding field patterns.
- Encourage the use of suitable fence styles, in keeping with the local style or material, including metal park fencing where a local parkland character creates precedence.
- Avoid development of permanent exercise areas and siting of exercise equipment such as treadmills, pens, and jumps where this is visually intrusive on the landscape or detrimental to its character.

### ***Built Development***

- Seek to conserve fragmented landscapes including the surviving areas of open farmland with scattered farmsteads.
- Conserve the small roadside commons that form the rural setting for Wood Street Village.
- Consider creating similar small semi-natural public open spaces to enhance the rural character of settlement elsewhere in the area (for instance at Willey Green or Ash Green) and to integrate it with the rural landscape.
- Retain the individual settlements avoiding merging these through dense linear development along roads.
- Retain gaps in linear development (for instance between Great Westwood and Flexford) particularly where these allow rural views over farmland.
- Conserve built features associated with historic estates and seek to conserve historic designed landscape.
- Encourage any new built development to respect local characteristics, including support of sympathetic contemporary architecture, through high quality detailing, architectural features, and use of natural building materials. Refer to Surrey design guides; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association).
- Conserve and restore traditional boundary features with particular regard to their form and relationship to landscape and landscape elements.
- Avoid the location of any new large mass of development or bulky structures where overly visually intrusive on this character area. Subject any development to rigorous landscape and visual impact assessment, site carefully, and design to minimise impact, and integrate with the area's rural context.
- Promote the use of appropriate plant species and boundary treatments at urban edges to better integrate development into the adjacent rural character.
- Improve the present understanding of the general pattern of settlements, with regard to their form and relationship to landscape and landscape elements.
- Resist further urbanisation of roads through encouraging appropriate surfacing of existing pavements, enhancing the immediate landscape setting and ensuring minimum clutter.
- Enhance the character of the settled roads through taking opportunities for rural planting of hedgerows and oak and ash trees.
- Ensure that lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing 'dark skies' in the more rural unsettled sections of the area particularly to the south.
- Promote the use of traditional signage features with particular regard to local style and materials.
- Conserve the views south to the rural, unsettled ridge of the Hog's Back for instance from the south side of Flexford.



# Glossary

AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
GBC	Guildford Borough Council
LCA	Landscape Character Area
SV	Site viewpoint (see Annex 1)
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility