

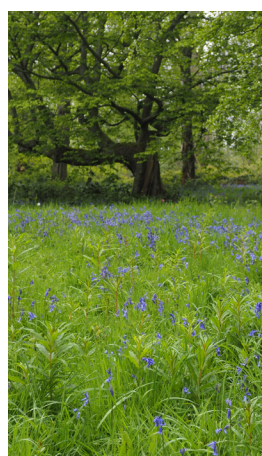


Kent Downs
National
Landscape

Kent Woods and Downs Candidate National Nature Reserve

Landscape Implementation Plan For Kent Downs National Landscape

Final Report
May 2024




FIONA FYFE
Associates Ltd.

PART A: Introduction

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List of acronyms used in this document

CAMS	Cobham and Ashenbank Management Scheme
KDNL	Kent Downs National Landscape
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LTC	Lower Thames Crossing
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
NNR	National Nature Reserve
RIGS	Regionally Important Geological Site
RPG	Registered Park and Garden
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WKDCT	West Kent Downs Countryside Trust

All photos have been taken by Fiona Fyfe unless stated otherwise.



Part A: Introduction

PART A: Introduction

1.0 Background

1.1 Context

This Landscape Implementation Plan is a companion document to the Candidate NNR Landscape Character Assessment. 'Landscape' covers many disciplines (e.g. ecology, heritage and access), and consideration of landscape must therefore be integral to all strategies. The Landscape Implementation Plan describes how the recommendations for landscape enhancement identified in the Landscape Character Assessment can be put into practise through the themed strategies being developed for the Candidate NNR. If these measures are integrated into the strategies then landscape character (and opportunities to appreciate the landscape) will be protected and enhanced. The themed strategies are as follows:

- Community consultation
- Visitor access and engagement
- Ecological and environmental management
- Veteran trees
- Heritage landscape
- Deer management
- Grazing plan

1.2 Structure of Report

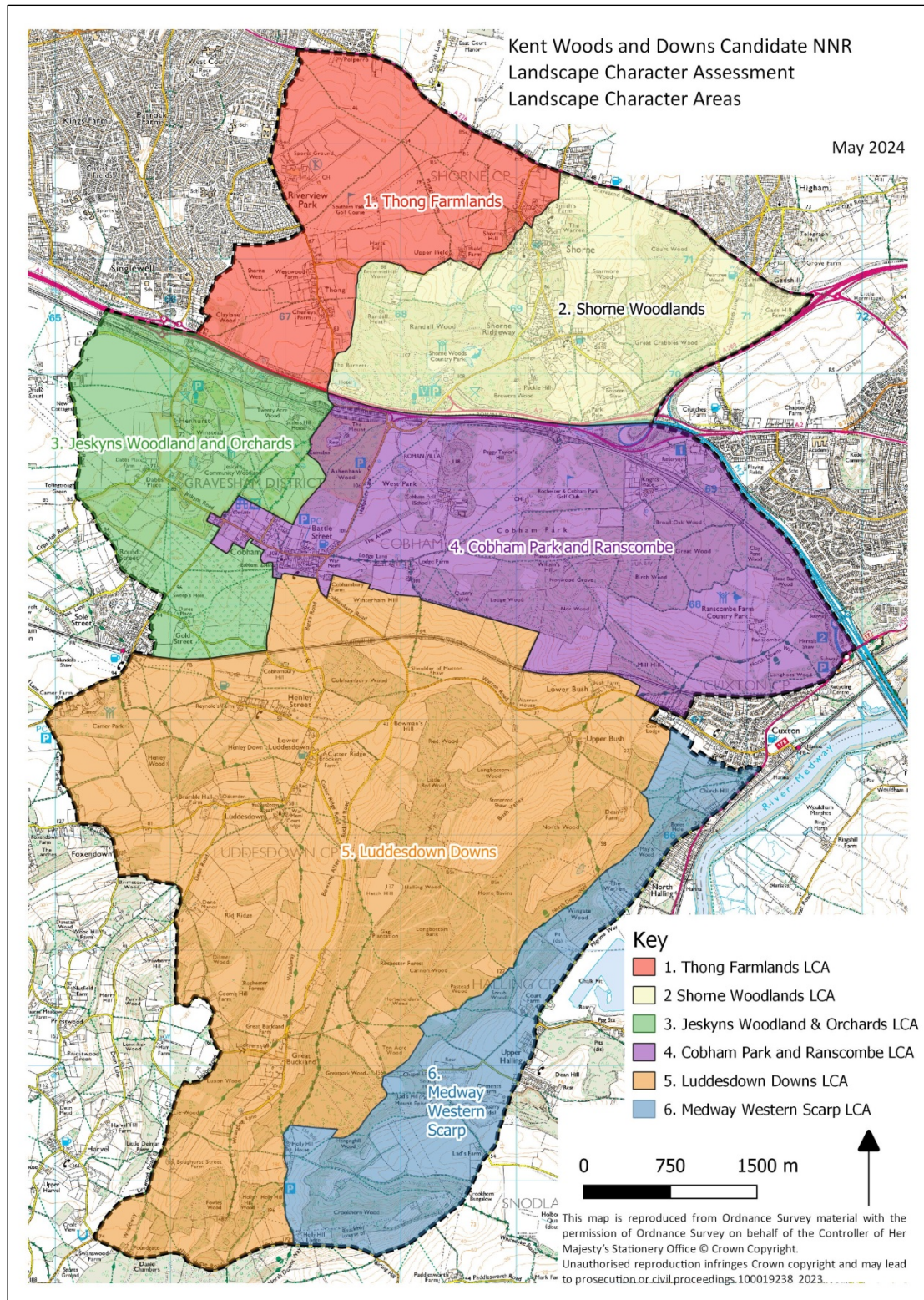
Following this introduction, Part A of the Landscape Implementation Plan contains a map and summary of the six unique Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) identified in the Landscape Character Assessment. Each LCA has a distinctive character made up of the unique combination of landscape elements within it. The intention is to promote this diversity of landscape character in order to retain and enhance local 'sense of place', so the summary also includes the aspirational strategy for each LCA. These aspirational strategies should be substantially achieved through the recommendations in this Landscape Implementation Plan.

Part B of the Landscape Implementation Plan contains a series of eight chapters; one for each strategy, plus a chapter on enhancement of the aesthetic and perceptual qualities of landscape. All of the chapters in Part B contain general recommendations which are applicable across the study area, plus (where appropriate) recommendations which are specific to one or more LCAs. They should be integrated into the other themed strategies being prepared. The recommendations are illustrated with photographs and sketches showing good practice where appropriate.

2.0 Landscape Character Areas

2.1 Introduction

Please refer to the accompanying Landscape Character Assessment document for detailed descriptions of the six LCAs identified within the study area. These are summarised below, and shown on Map 1.



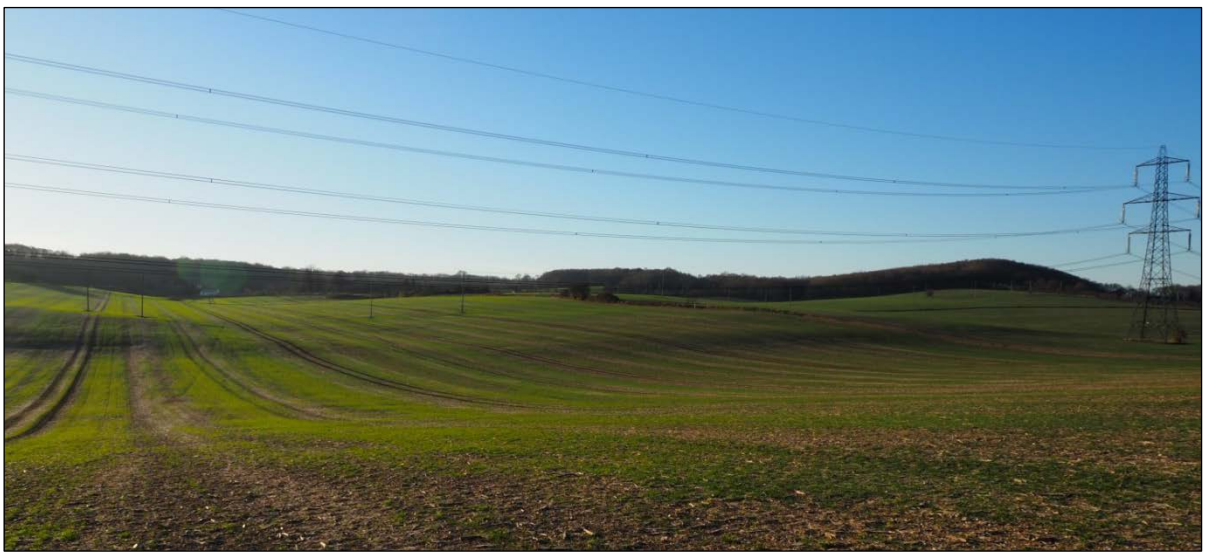
Map 1: Landscape Character Areas

PART A: Introduction

2.2 LCA 1: Thong Farmlands

The Thong Farmlands LCA primarily comprises a series of large, open arable fields in the north-west of the study area, on the dip slope of the Kent Downs. It forms a transition between the urban areas of Gravesend and the Kent Downs. There are long views towards the urban edge of Gravesend and/or the Thames Estuary to the north and west. In views south and east the backdrop and sense of place are provided by the sinuous edges of Shorne Woods and Claylane Woods, which emphasise the landform created by the underlying chalk capped with sands and gravels. There are patches of ancient woodland on the peripheries of the LCA, and also historic settlements at Thong and Shorne.

As well as arable fields, this LCA contains a golf course (now closed) and a sports centre. This is the LCA which will be most affected by the Lower Thames Crossing should it be constructed, and so the landscape here is the most likely to change.



A typical scene within the Thong Farmlands LCA

Special qualities to be retained and enhanced

- The smooth undulating chalk landform in the eastern part of the LCA.
- The strong visual relationship with the adjacent woodlands within the KDNL and the Candidate NNR. The oasts at Ifield Farm form a focal point in some of these views.
- Long views to and from the Thames Estuary.
- Pockets of woodland in the peripheries of the LCA (some designated Ancient Woodland or LWS).
- Historic settlements at Thong and part of Shorne (Conservation Areas, containing Listed Buildings).
- The transition between the urban area of Gravesend and the KDNL and the Candidate NNR at Shorne Woods.
- The existing footpath network (although there are opportunities to expand this).

Aspirational Strategy for Thong Farmlands LCA

The LCA will continue to provide the immediate setting to the KDNL and the Candidate NNR, and the strong visual relationship between this LCA and Shorne Woodlands will be retained. In the eastern part of the LCA, the setting of the KDNL and the Candidate NNR will be enhanced through undergrounding of overhead wires, and through the integration of woodland and farmland by introducing shaws and new/restored hedges. Enlarging habitats such as hedges and field margins will provide benefits for both landscape and biodiversity and expand the reach of the Candidate NNR into the wider landscape.

Woodlands will be well managed, with management integrated with surrounding larger woodland areas. Claylane Wood will have its own management plan. Accessibility will be improved between Gravesend and Shorne Woods, including possible reinstatement of the original access via Thong Lodge.

If the Lower Thames Crossing is built, this LCA will be users' first view on emerging from the tunnel, and therefore will become a gateway into Kent. The western part of the LCA will become a much more 'designed' and potentially wildlife-rich landscape due to proposed planting and habitat creation associated with the road corridor. Parts will also have improved public access.

If the Lower Thames Crossing is not built, there is still potential to enhance the landscape in the western part of the LCA through habitat creation (e.g. woodland expansion linking Claylane Wood and Shorne Wood), and to improve accessibility. There is potential for chalk grassland restoration, other habitat creation, and increased public access on the golf course site.

2.3 LCA 2: Shorne Woodlands

The Shorne Woodlands LCA comprises extensive blocks of woodland, and the surrounding farmland and settlements to the north of the A2. Just under half of the LCA is within the KDNL, including the area within Shorne Woods Country Park.

The land is relatively high, and the tree-clad ridge forms the backdrop in views from the north. The diversity of sands, gravels and clays overlying the chalk bedrock, combined with variations in historic land use and land ownership, is reflected in the diversity of woodland types and ground flora found in the LCA.

The historic settlements within the LCA (Shorne and Shorne Ridgeway) are characterised by their wooded setting and their form of loosely-clustered houses around greens and along roads. Outside of woodlands, the presence of settlements creates a more settled character to this LCA. The villages have treed settings, including woodland, parkland, wooded common, orchards, and ornamental planting, and most open areas are surrounded by woodland on two or more sides. There is therefore a strong presence of woodland within the landscape, and a resulting sense of enclosure.

PART A: Introduction



A typical scene within Shorne Woodlands LCA

Special qualities to be retained and enhanced

- The diversity of woodland cover and other semi-natural habitats (traditional orchard, chalk grassland, historic parkland, veteran trees, heath), reflecting the varied underlying geology as well as past land uses.
- Sites designated for their woodland and other valuable habitats.
- The sense of enclosure and relatively small scale of the landscape, resulting from the constant presence of trees and woodlands in the foreground, middle ground and/or background of views.
- Distinctive settlements, often located around greens or along roads, with vernacular buildings of brick, flint, timber and tile. The strong relationship between the settlements and the surrounding trees/woodlands adds to the sense of place.
- Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and their settings.
- The sense of history and time-depth within the landscape. Some are ancient features still in everyday use (such as roads and paths) whilst others are more subtle (such as the earthworks of Randalls Manor fishponds, and prehistoric flint scatter sites, within Shorne Woods).
- The dense network of public rights of way and opportunities to explore the landscape, including the network of paths (many of which are suitable for 'tramper' vehicles) within the popular Shorne Woods Country Park.

Aspirational Strategy for Shorne Woodlands LCA

The LCA will retain its strongly-wooded character, and its range of habitats. Wildlife linkages will be improved between woodland blocks through the creation of new hedges and tree shaws, scrubby areas and grass buffer strips. Links will be enhanced between the Candidate NNR and the surrounding countryside. Positive management of habitats will continue (including chalk grassland, traditional orchards, heath, wood pasture, woodland, coppice, parkland and veteran trees). Where necessary, new management will be introduced to enhance biodiversity. Woodland will be managed to promote age and species diversity to try and minimise the effects of pests and diseases, and climate change.

The distinctive wooded influence on the character of built form will be maintained, for example through encouraging homeowners to retain/plant trees within domestic curtilages. The appearance of the landscape will be enhanced through the removal of poles and overhead wires and screening of industrial buildings.

Accessibility and safety will be improved through the creation of foot and cycle paths where needed, especially in and around villages. New off-road circular routes from settlements will enable access to Candidate NNR sites, including new permissive paths through woodland currently not publicly accessible.

The local community will continue to be involved in conservation management, for example orchard management, archaeological excavation, species surveys etc. Further opportunities will be developed for local people to access and engage with the Candidate NNR.

2.4 LCA 3: Jeskyns Woodland and Orchards

The Jeskyns Woodland and Orchards LCA comprises community woodland, orchards (community and commercial) and farmland to the west of Cobham village. The area is characterised by its gentle topography and relatively high proportion of young trees (including fruit trees and 21st Century woodland planting). The contrasts between the planted blocks of young trees and the open areas around them are also part of the character. From many of the open areas there are long views west towards London, and a sense of openness and exposure. The LCA can be appreciated from extensive access land and a range of Public Rights Of Way (PROW), including footpaths, byways and an equestrian route.

There are a small number of buildings within this LCA, but it is generally very lightly settled. The many and varied fruit trees create strong seasonal changes, with spring blossom particularly attractive and noticeable.

The eastern part (within the KDNL) is more strongly influenced by the chalk landscapes and Cobham Hall estate, while the western part is more influenced by the clay-dominated farmlands to the west.



A typical scene within Jeskyns Woodland and Orchards LCA

Special qualities to be retained and enhanced

- The variety of trees – especially fruit and nut trees – within this LCA.
- The accessibility of the landscape, through areas of public access and a strong Public Rights of Way network, including some ancient routes, and dedicated equestrian routes.
- The treed setting which the LCA provides for the KDNL, the Candidate NNR and the Conservation Area at Cobham.
- The sudden long views, which aid orientation and add to the sense of place.

Aspirational Strategy for Jeskyns Woodland and Orchards LCA

The LCA will continue to provide an attractive setting for the KDNL, Candidate NNR and Cobham Conservation Area. It will also continue to act as a repository for different species of trees, including fruit and nut trees.

The existing treed character will be expanded into adjacent arable farmland in the west of the LCA, where it will further enhance visual connections, habitats and wildlife corridors. Views will be retained so that the sense of place and orientation is not lost.

The landscape will remain accessible through its network of historic and more recent public rights of way. It will continue to be a place where local people can interact with nature using senses of taste, touch and smell, as well as sight and sound. Footpath connections with Gravesend will be enhanced in association with new planting in fields in the west of the LCA. Circular walks using sustainable transport options from Sole Street station and from urban areas of Gravesend will be promoted.

2.5 LCA 4: Cobham Park and Ranscombe

The Cobham Park and Ranscombe LCA comprises the core of the Cobham Park (Darnley) estate and contains numerous cultural heritage designations. It includes parkland, wood pasture, ancient woodland and farmland associated with Cobham Hall (Listed Grade I), as well as the historic village of Cobham. Cobham Hall (now a school) is an impressive Tudor house with later modifications and additions, and sits roughly in the centre of the LCA. Its grounds have a long history, and today contain natural and built elements from various stages of their evolution, including veteran trees originally in a medieval deer park, later formal planting, gardenesque designs by Humphrey Repton, extensive woodland and coppice, a 19th Century arboretum and a 20th Century golf course. It is a Registered Historic Park and Garden (Grade II*). The Grade-I Listed Darnley Mausoleum (a decorative and substantial stone structure designed by James Wyatt) sits at the highest point of the estate.

Today the Darnley estate is in multiple land ownerships, but it retains extensive areas of ancient woodland and wood pasture, and numerous fine examples of parkland and veteran trees which provide rich habitats for insects and birds. There are also areas of chalk grassland, rare arable field wildflowers, productive woodland and farmland. Most of the LCA is in active and positive management. There are long views within and out of the LCA, particularly from natural vantage points and the edges of woodland.



A typical scene within Cobham Park and Ranscombe LCA

Special qualities to be retained and enhanced

- Distinctive historic features which add to the sense of place and history, such as the wavy edges of woodland, the network of historic tracks, and surviving designed landscape features.
- Relationships between historic buildings/structures and the surrounding landscape.
- High quality and unobstructed views within the LCA, and out over other parts of the Candidate NNR.
- Diversity of woodland, parkland, grassland and arable habitats, and the transitions between them.
- The combination of innovative and traditional management techniques.
- Public access into much of the LCA, and positive management by environmental NGOs.

Aspirational Strategy for Cobham Park and Ranscombe LCA

The LCA will remain an exemplar of positive management of woodland, wood pasture, parkland, golf course, chalk grassland, veteran trees and arable flowers. It will remain a place where innovative approaches to nature conservation are tried, which can be transferred elsewhere if they are successful.

Management will be more holistic across the LCA, and also within areas such as Cuxton and Cobham Woods which have been sub-divided into multiple ownerships. This will improve connectivity and biodiversity within the core of the Candidate NNR. The successful model of co-operation between different landowners in this part of the Candidate NNR will be expanded to include all landowners.

This LCA will be a large accessible area within the Candidate NNR, with an expanded role for volunteering and environmental education. People will continue to be able to access the areas currently open to the public, and the extensive network of PRoW. Opportunities will be explored for new/enhanced access points and routes, such as a more attractive and welcoming gateway into the Candidate NNR from Strood, and potentially new bridges over the A2 associated with the Lower Thames Crossing.

The area's rich historic legacy will be protected and celebrated, and Cobham village will retain its distinctive character and setting.

PART A: Introduction

2.6 LCA 5: Luddesdown Downs

The extensive Luddesdown Downs LCA covers the attractive and tranquil chalk downland landscape which is typical of this part of the West Kent Downs. The underlying chalk has been eroded into a series of steep-sided dry valleys running roughly south-west to north-east. The highest land and steepest parts of the valley sides are generally wooded, with small but valuable pockets of chalk grassland also found on steep slopes. The woodlands and chalk grassland are designated at international, national or local level for their biodiversity importance.

Hedged fields cover the valley floors and shallower slopes. Traditionally these have been in pastoral use, with some arable. Today many of the agricultural fields are used for viticulture – a new landuse responding to the changing climate.

Historic farmsteads and hamlets nestle into folds in the landform in a sparse settlement pattern hardly changed in centuries. A network of narrow lanes and tracks follow ridge tops and valley floors, often lined by thick hedges and sometimes sunken where they cross valley sides. The topography and woodland mean that this is often an enclosed landscape, with most views along valleys. There are also views into this LCA from the north.



A typical scene within the Luddesdown Downs LCA

Special qualities to be retained and enhanced

- The distinctive pattern of wooded ridges and more open valleys.
- The strong landscape structure created by woodland, shaws and hedges.
- The mosaic of ancient woodland, grassland and scrub habitats, and the transitions between them.
- Strong traditional relationship between buildings and landform, with historic buildings nestled into sheltered folds rather than in exposed locations.
- Historic landscape features and the resultant strong sense of time-depth
- The strongly-rural, tranquil feel of the landscape.
- The appearance of this LCA when seen from popular viewpoints, particularly to the north.

Aspirational Strategy for Luddesdown Downs LCA

The LCA will be closely integrated with neighbouring parts of the Candidate NNR in terms of the management and connectivity of habitats, enabling enhancements at a landscape scale across the area. The diversity of habitats will be retained and expanded, with opportunities sought for chalk grassland restoration. New scrub and woodland habitats will also be encouraged where they fit with the landscape pattern and structure, and there will be greater public awareness of the habitats and species found within the LCA.

The LCA will retain and enhance its clear landscape structure, and distinctive pattern of woodland and open land. Any future expansion of vine coverage will respect and enhance the landscape structure (for example through hedgerow restoration), and will not result in loss of habitat. Innovative techniques will enable viticulture to be as sensitive as possible to its surroundings and to promote biodiversity.

Buildings will remain well assimilated into the landscape. They will be sensitively located and sited, and avoid isolated locations. The area will retain its strongly-rural character and sense of time-depth. Its landscape history will be researched and celebrated, for example through interpretation and trails.

Opportunities for sustainable access will be explored, and the LCA will be linked with other parts of the Candidate NNR, for example, through the creation of circular routes from Sole Street Station, and from carparks at Camer Park Country Park and Holly Hill. Care will be taken not to damage fragile habitats through increased visitor footfall.

2.7 LCA 6: Medway Western Scarp

Landscape character The Medway Western Scarp LCA comprises the steep western valley side of the Medway Valley. It forms the western setting to the Medway Valley and is highly visible from it. The combination of colours, patterns and textures on the valley side make this setting particularly distinctive. The chalk landform is so steep (due to a combination of natural processes and quarrying) that it appears as a white cliff-like band along the base of the slope, sometimes extending where larger quarries have been carved into the chalk. The upper parts of the valley side are covered by dense woodland, which occasionally extends down the slope. Below the woodland is a band of fields, sometimes separated from the woodland by an irregular margin of chalk grassland. At the base of the slope are a series of farms and small villages, one of which – Cuxton – has extended up the valley side towards Lower Bush.

There are impressive panoramic views from this LCA, particularly in the south where views from roads and paths are more open. From here there are long views across the Medway Valley to the east and over Kemsing Vale to the south.

PART A: Introduction



A typical scene within the Medway Western Scarp LCA

Special qualities to be retained and enhanced

- The dominance of chalk geology.
- The distinctive landscape pattern of horizontal bands on the valley sides, caused by contrasting colours and textures of woodland, scrub, chalk grassland, farmland and former quarries. These land uses are closely related to topography.
- The diversity of habitats, designated at local, national and international level, and the variety of woodland due to different species and management.
- The function of the scarp slopes as a backdrop to the Medway Valley and Kemsing Vale.
- The panoramic views out over surrounding lower land.

Aspirational Strategy for Medway Western Scarp LCA

The LCA will continue to function as a buffer between the core of the Candidate NNR and the more urbanised Medway Valley, and will remain a strong green setting to the Medway Valley and Kemsing Vale. It will be managed at a landscape scale, with seamless integration of habitats and land management between this LCA and the surrounding LCAs.

It will retain its distinctive combination of woodland, scrub, chalk grassland, parkland, farmland and quarry habitats. Farmland habitats will be enhanced and biodiversity corridors and connections improved through planting of replacement/new hedges and shaws. These will also help to enhance the visual structure of the landscape, and to reduce soil loss. Woodland will remain managed to promote age and species diversity, and its present variety will be retained, including areas of traditionally-managed productive woodland.

Footpaths and tracks will remain open and well-used. Sustainable travel will be encouraged, for example through developing waymarked routes between railway stations at Snodland, Halling and Cuxton. There are also opportunities for route connections across the Candidate NNR with the station at Sole Street.

Where views currently exist or have been recently lost they will be kept open through vegetation control.

Part B: Recommendations

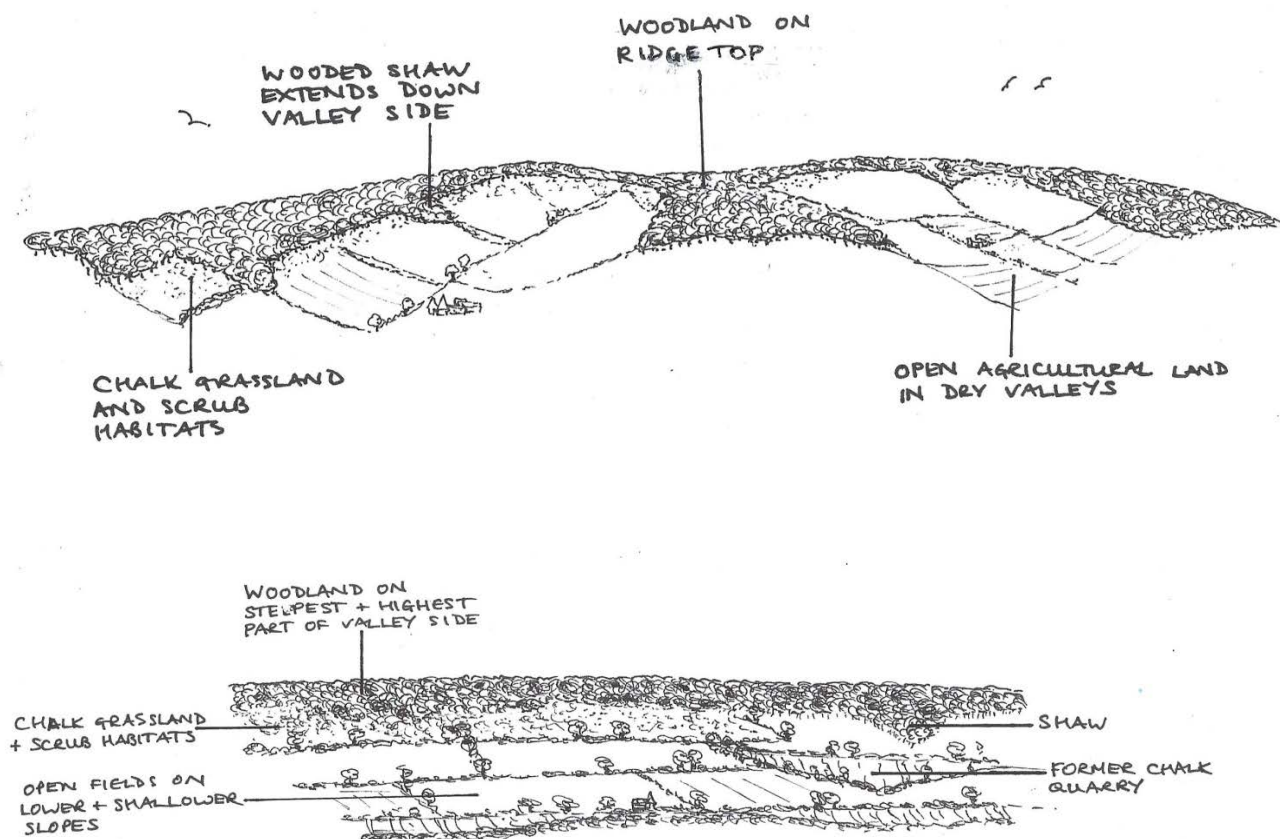


3.0 Aesthetic and perceptual qualities of landscape

3.1 Distinctive landscape patterns

The Candidate NNR area contains several distinctive landscape patterns, and in several of the LCAs they are fundamental to the landscape character. Often they are the result of geological/landform processes and subsequent land uses over hundreds of years. It is therefore important that landscape management (particularly in relation to tree planting and the siting of buildings) respects these landscape patterns so that the landscape character is not lost or diluted. Guidelines to achieve this are as follows:

- Within LCA 5, protect the distinctive pattern of wooded ridges and open valleys, with transitional areas of scrub and chalk grassland between them. Avoid extensive tree planting within valleys; this should be limited to shaws on the valley sides.
- Within LCA 5, protect the relationship between buildings and landscape, where buildings are nestled within the landform and do not dominate it. Avoid siting new buildings in isolated locations away from existing buildings.
- Within LCA 6, protect the distinctive horizontal bands of woodland, scrub, chalk grassland and farmland. New tree planting on the valley side should be limited to shaws, with lower slopes kept open.



3.2 Visual landscape enhancements

There are a small number of locations within the study area (often outside the KDNL) where the appearance of the landscape could be enhanced by the screening or removal of detracting features. For example, there is no tree or hedge planting along the western edge of the Haulex depot at Park Pale (on the northern side of the A2). This location is within the designed landscape of Cobham Park, and the industrial buildings are noticeable, despite the proximity of the A2. Poles and overhead wires occur in various locations within the study area, but are particularly noticeable where they cross open fields rather than following hedged lanes or field boundaries.

- Throughout (but particularly in the more open LCA 1) consider undergrounding the many wires supported on poles where they run across fields.
- Throughout (but particularly at Park Pale in LCA 2), provide additional screening of industrial buildings using native tree and shrub planting.



Overhead wires and poles in LCA 1, looking north towards Shorne Woods



Overhead wires and poles in LCA 2, between Shorne village and Court Wood

3.3 Long-distance views

Despite the wooded character of the Candidate NNR there are a number of locations with long views. These views are popular with local people, and aid both orientation and sense of place. Existing viewpoints should be retained and it is important that they are not blocked by new tree/hedge planting or unmanaged vegetation. In some locations, clearing intervening vegetation would enable historic views to be appreciated again. There are also opportunities to enhance interpretation and make more of the views.

The elevated location of the Candidate NNR means that it features in views from a wider surrounding area. Within these views it often forms the backdrop and/or skyline, and is therefore particularly sensitive to the introduction of new structures which would be highly visible over the surrounding area.

- Throughout, work with local residents and users of the Candidate NNR to find out where they would like new seating and/or interpretation as part of the community engagement and access strategies.

PART B: Recommendations

- In LCA 1, retain open views towards Shorne Woods and to the Thames. There may be opportunities to provide seating and interpretation here as part of a wider access improvement programme to connect Gravesend and the Candidate NNR.
- In LCA 3, retain open views west towards London, and consider them when designing new planting and access.
- In LCA 4, consider opening up historic designed views from Cobham Woods in conjunction with Heritage and Ecology strategies.
- In LCA 4, manage the viewpoint looking south from Brockles by keeping vegetation in check, maintaining/replacing the existing interpretation panel and maintaining the existing sculptured bench.
- In LCA 6, consider providing seating and low-key interpretation at viewpoints looking across the Medway Valley.
- In LCA 6, protect the skyline of the scarp from further developments such as communications masts to retain the character of this feature in views from the Medway Valley and Kemsing Vale.

3.4 Settings

The ‘setting’ of heritage assets is defined in planning terms as *the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*¹ The Candidate NNR contributes to the settings of many designated heritage assets: Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and the Registered Historic Park and Garden at Cobham Hall. It also contributes to the setting of the KDNL, and to the settings of non-designated heritage assets. Through the Candidate NNR there are opportunities to protect and enhance the settings of these assets. When considering settings, there is inevitably some overlap between the ‘views’ section 3.3 above, and the heritage strategy section 8.1.

- Throughout, the setting of the KDNL should be protected and enhanced. This includes panoramic views from within the KDNL, which should be kept open and free from detracting features.
- Throughout, settings to all Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Historic Park and Garden should be protected and enhanced.
- In LCA 1 and LCA 2, there is particular opportunity to protect and enhance the setting of the historic settlements of Thong, Shorne and Shorne Ridgeway (all Conservation Areas). This requires understanding of the relationship between the settlements and their surroundings of woodland and small fields. The historic mosaic field pattern around the settlements, and the remnant parkland character at Park Pale, should not be lost through blanket woodland planting or insensitive development.
- In LCAs 1 and 3 there are particular opportunities to enhance the setting of the KDNL through new tree and hedge planting on current areas of open ‘prairie field’ outside the KDNL.

¹ National Planning Policy Framework Annex 2: Glossary

- In LCAs 3, 4 and 5 there are opportunities to enhance the setting of Cobham Conservation Area through restoration of the small-scale orchards which surround the village.
- In LCA 6, development should be resisted which would be detrimental to its role as a buffer between the core of the Candidate NNR and the more urban character of the Medway Valley.

3.5 Tranquillity

Parts of the Candidate NNR (particularly in LCA 5 but with pockets elsewhere) have high levels of tranquillity, despite their proximity to transport corridors, large settlements and other sources of noise, movement and light. Within the Candidate NNR there are opportunities to protect the existing sense of tranquillity, and also to enhance the sense of tranquillity elsewhere.

- Within LCA 5 (and where pockets of tranquillity occur elsewhere) protect the sense of tranquillity by resisting new development or land uses which may be detrimental to it.
- In LCAs 1,2 and 3 use mitigation planting and landscape design associated with the LTC to minimise impacts of noise, movement and light from the LTC (as well as the existing A2 road and High Speed 1 railway).

PART B: Recommendations

4.0 Community consultation

4.1 Identifying favourite views

The Candidate NNR area contains many viewpoints which are enjoyed and appreciated by local people – from their home or village, or when out walking, cycling or driving in the vicinity. One way to engage the local community with the Candidate NNR would be to undertake a study to find people’s favourite views, which could then be protected and sensitively enhanced. An example of a similar project for the Quantock Hills Landscape Partnership can be found at:

https://qlps.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/View-to-a-Hill_Final_Complete_Low-Res.pdf

For the ‘View to a Hill’ project, local people were invited to submit their favourite view, through online or paper questionnaires. All these viewpoints were then visited by the consultants, who created a shortlist of viewpoints which represented different views of the Quantock Hills and also told the story of the landscape. These shortlisted viewpoints were then ‘adopted’ by local volunteers who researched landscape elements which could be seen in the view, and also photographed the views throughout the year. This research can then contribute to future interpretation projects. Recommendations were made for bespoke enhancement and/or management measures to keep each viewpoint open and appreciated in the future.

- Work with local people to undertake a ‘favourite views’ study for the Candidate NNR, in association with heritage and access strategies.

4.2 Involving local residents in positive landscape change

Local residents can play a role in enhancing the landscape and biodiversity of the Candidate NNR. This may involve educating residents on the importance of trees and other wildlife habitats within domestic curtilages. It is applicable throughout the study area, but particularly in LCA 2, where the settlement character is defined by the presence of trees, and where there is current concern about felling trees in gardens in pursuit of ‘tidiness’ or convenience.

- Throughout the Candidate NNR, but particularly within LCA 2, encourage local residents to retain and look after trees and wildlife - and plant new native trees - within their gardens, educating them about the importance of trees and scrub to settlement character and biodiversity.

4.3 Involving communities in research and management

Within the Candidate NNR there are a number of local groups actively researching local history and undertaking biodiversity surveys. Several are based around Shorne Woods and volunteers are also active at National Trust, Woodland Trust and West Kent Downs Countryside Trust sites. There are many opportunities to expand their activities throughout the area, in association with heritage and management strategies.

- Within all LCAs, including established groups in LCAs 2 and 4, expand research to include (for example) medieval manorial sites; place name studies on local woodland and field names, and species survey.
- Within all LCAs, continue to involve community groups in conservation management.

5.0 Visitor access and engagement

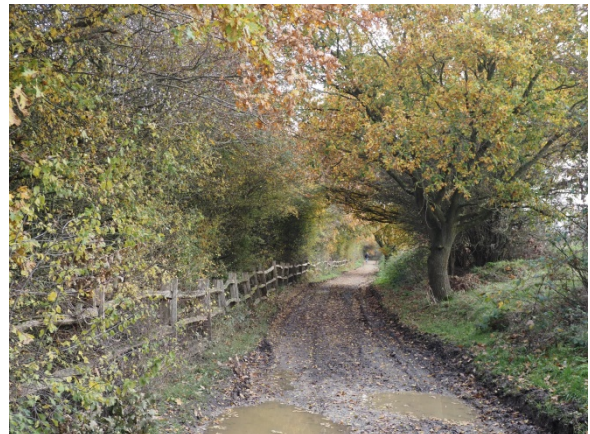
5.1 Retaining the character of historic routeways

Throughout the Candidate NNR there are paths, tracks and lanes with historic origins, some of which may have been in use since prehistoric times. Some routes which are footpaths today would historically have been roads connecting towns and villages. One example is the track between Lodge Farm and the Darnley Mausoleum, which is the old road between Cobham and Rochester, and was closed to traffic during expansion of the Cobham Hall estate in the 17th Century. There are many other examples of medieval routeways, including tracks around Shorne and Shorne Ridgeway, those around Luddesdown, and those to the north of Cobham. These are surviving examples of medieval lanes which have not been surfaced, and as such offer a window on the past. It is important that their distinctive and historic character is retained in any works to upgrade or repair them.

- Throughout, use great care and sensitivity on works to historic tracks. Avoid use of modern urban materials such as black-top tarmac, concrete kerbs or steel lighting columns. If surfacing works are unavoidable, use locally-sourced stone or gravel.
- Retain historic walls, hedges and verges alongside historic roads and tracks. If additional fencing is required, use traditional cleft-chestnut post-and-rail, estate-style railings or native-species hedge.



Historic track surfaced with local stone, east of Cobham



The former main road between Cobham and Rochester, now a footpath. The hedge on the left was planted relatively recently, but looks much older. Note the traditional cleft-chestnut fencing.

5.2 Improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists

There are some locations within the study area where the road layout, the lack of pavements/off-road paths, and the volume of traffic, make walking or cycling along roads exceptionally dangerous. These stretches of road are barriers, preventing those without a car from accessing the core of the Candidate NNR. They should therefore be prioritised within the access strategy.

- Within LCA 1, retain and improve the footpath and cycle network, including enhancement of links between Gravesend and Shorne Woods.
- Within LCA 2, enhance the road and/or path network to improve safety of pedestrians and cyclists, particularly within/close to villages.

PART B: Recommendations

5.3 Improving access from adjacent urban areas

There are opportunities to enhance access into the Candidate NNR from nearby urban areas to make it more accessible to local residents without cars.

- In LCA 1, improve footpath/cycle access from Gravesend to Shorne Woods.
- In LCA 3, improve footpath/cycle access from Gravesend to Jeskyns Woodland, using the existing footbridge over the A2. There are opportunities to integrate this with new planting proposed to the west of Jeskyns Woodland as part of the LTC nitrogen deposition mitigation.
- In LCA 4, investigate opportunities for improving access into the area from Strood, creating a more welcoming and attractive gateway over/under the M2, and work with landowners and potentially LCT designers on enhancing accessibility.

5.4 Routes connecting with railway stations

There are no railway stations within the Candidate NNR, but Sole Street Station is very close, with half-hourly trains to London and to Rochester. The Medway Valley line, to the east of the Candidate NNR has stations at Cuxton, Halling and Snodland, with half-hourly trails to Strood and to Maidstone. The sustainable transport opportunities provided by these stations should be integrated into the access strategy.

- In LCA 3, 4 and 5 there is potential for a series of waymarked routes from Sole Street railway station (which should also be accessible from car parks at Jeskyns Community Woodland, Ashenbank, Cobham or Camer Park). They could include routes along quiet lanes suitable for road bikes and powered wheelchairs. These routes could be designed to pass different landscape features, habitats, historic buildings etc.
- In LCA 5, identify and promote circular walks from Holly Hill car park.
- In LCA 6, identify and promote new circular or linear walks between railway stations on the Medway Valley line. On-road and off-road routes between Cuxton/Halling and Sole Street stations could also be identified and promoted.

5.5 Expanding the network of permitted paths

The existing Public Rights of Way network would be enhanced by new permitted paths, particularly where these would enable people to complete circular walks from villages. There may also be locations where new permitted paths would help to reduce footfall in sensitive habitats by spreading visitors over a wider area.

- Within LCA 2, work with landowners to promote new permissive paths through woodland to encourage public access and new circular walks.

5.6 Viewpoints and interpretation

There are no viewpoints marked on OS maps of the area, but within the study area there are a few informal viewpoints where benches have been placed for people to stop and enjoy the view, such as at Brockles, and on high land in Jeskyns Community Woodland. There are many more sites where there are good views but no interpretation or seating (for example the views south and east from Ranscombe Farm, and views looking east across the Medway Valley from Holly Hill).

- Within all LCAs there is potential to work with local people to identify and then celebrate favourite views (see section 4.1 above).
- Manage foreground vegetation at viewpoints (for example from the road looking east from Holly Hill in LCA 6) to prevent vegetation from blocking views. Add low-key interpretation and seating where appropriate.
- Consider opening up historic views associated with Cobham Park (see section 3.3 above and 8.3 below).
- Viewpoints may be linked with themed trails (see below).



Sculpted bench at Brockles viewpoint



View east across the Medway Valley from road near Holly Hill

5.7 Themed trails

There are many opportunities for trails within the Candidate NNR covering a wide range of landscape themes. They could be designed with involvement from local groups, and should tie in to the relevant strategies. Ideas (in addition to the existing Darnley trail) include:

- Within all LCAs, a historic buildings trail
- Within LCAs 1, 2 and 4, a WW2 sites trail.
- Within LCAs 2 and 4, a veteran trees trail.
- Within LCAs 2 and 4, a Charles Dickens trail.
- Within LCAs 2, 3, 4 and 5, a medieval landscapes and/or medieval manors trail.
- Within LCAs 5 and 6, a chalk habitats trail

PART B: Recommendations

6.0 Ecological and environmental management

6.1 General principles

Trees, woodlands, hedgerows and other habitats such as scrub and chalk grassland give the Candidate NNR landscape its structure, and make a hugely important contribution to landscape character. Therefore a landscape which is in good ecological and environmental management is likely to have a strong and resilient character. The Candidate NNR contains some sites which are exemplars of conservation management, as well as some areas where much more could be done. The Candidate NNR enables ecological and environmental management to be considered at a landscape scale, rather than on a site-by-site basis. This opportunity to create overarching management plans for sites spanning various ownerships is one of the most exciting aspects of the Candidate NNR, and – if done well – should lead to very positive environmental outcomes.

When designing environmental management schemes, particularly tree planting or allowing natural regeneration, be mindful of unintended negative consequences on other elements of the landscape such as archaeology, views and access, as well as on the distinctive patterns which give the landscape its character.

- Encourage integrated, landscape-scale management of land and habitats through working with Candidate NNR partners. There are particular opportunities for new collaboration between adjoining landowners in LCAs 4, 5 and 6.
- Seek to link habitats to improve wildlife corridors and increase resilience to climate change, both within each LCA, and at a landscape scale through habitat connectivity with other parts of the Candidate NNR.
- Within all LCAs, build on work undertaken by the National Trust at Cobham Woods (LCA 4), testing alternative and innovative management practices, particularly those helping species adapt to changing climatic conditions and threats such as Acute Oak Decline.
- Within all LCAs, before commencing tree planting or any other land management change, consult with an archaeologist to make sure that there is no potential for surface or buried archaeology which would potentially be lost or damaged by the proposals. Prehistoric flint scatter sites, which are often superficial or very shallow, are particularly vulnerable.
- Within all LCAs, when considering planting trees or allowing natural regeneration, consider whether any views will be lost as trees grow, and design the planting and maintenance regime accordingly.
- Within all LCAs, if possible work collaboratively with volunteers and community groups to undertake conservation work and train the new generations of specialists.
- When planting new trees and hedges, use biodegradable tree guards in a muted colour.
- Remember that good aftercare is as important as good planting, and all planted trees and hedges require management for successful establishment and long-term health.
- There may be opportunities for new trails around the Candidate NNR which visit different habitats.

6.2 Woodland and wood pasture

Woodland is fundamental to the landscape character of the Candidate NNR, and there are opportunities to enhance this character through positive woodland management, and sensitively extending, linking and diversifying woodlands.

- Within all LCAs, seek to diversify the age and range of native species present to provide resilience to climate change and tree disease, and to increase biodiversity. Measures are likely to include both traditional and innovative woodland management methods.
- Within all LCAs, remove invasive non-native species such as rhododendron.
- Within all LCAs, respect the existing variations found within and between woodlands due to differences in underlying geology and soils. Allowing managed natural regeneration can help to achieve this.
- Within all LCAs, avoid straight edges to new woodland planting, and incorporate glades and rides.
- Within all LCAs containing ancient woodland, use LiDAR surveys to identify medieval field boundaries within the woodland, and be mindful of these when undertaking woodland management.
- Within LCA 1, seek to manage Claylane Wood, and (if LTC is not constructed) link it with Shorne Woods.
- Within LCAs 1 and 2 strengthen the link between Shorne Pastures LWS and Shorne Woods.
- Within LCA 2 seek to link Court Wood, Starmore Wood, Great Crabbles Wood and woodland around Shorne village with each other, and with the larger block of woodland at Shorne Woods. However, the existing parkland character should be retained around Park Pale.
- Within LCAs 2 and 4, manage veteran trees and wood pasture, continuing existing management practises such as light undergrazing, halo-clearance, retaining deadwood habitats, etc.
- Within LCA 3, thin and manage 21st Century planting to create a more varied woodland structure which can join seamlessly with more established woodland nearby.
- Within LCA 4 respect and retain the distinctive 'wavy edges' to ancient woodlands such as those around the edges of Ranscombe Farm.
- Within LCA 4, promote holistic management of the Cuxton and Cobham Woods (including the areas divided into 'leisure plots') and seek to get them into single ownership.
- Within LCA 5, protect the distinctive pattern of wooded ridges and open valleys, with transitional areas of scrub and chalk grassland between them. Avoid extensive tree planting within valleys; this should be limited to shaws on the valley sides. [SEE SKETCH IN SECTION 3.1]
- Within LCA 6, protect the distinctive horizontal bands of woodland, scrub, chalk grassland and farmland. New tree planting on the valley side should be limited to shaws, with lower slopes kept open. [SEE SKETCH IN SECTION 3.1]

6.3 Orchards

The study area contains both traditional and commercial orchards, and these are characteristic of some LCAs. There are also opportunities to enhance landscape character and species diversity through sensitive planting of new orchards. Given the current economic viability of orchards, it is likely that new traditional orchards are likely to be planted as ecological or community schemes, rather than as commercial enterprises.

PART B: Recommendations

- Within all LCAs, promote planting of orchards and fruit trees, particularly around settlements (villages, hamlets and isolated dwellings and farms).
- Within LCA 2, continue active management of surviving traditional orchards and associated grassland habitats at Great Crabbles Bottom.
- Within LCA 3, retain the diversity of fruit and nut species grown, and expand community orchards to accommodate further species as appropriate. This expansion could be part of the design of LTC nitrogen deposition mitigation planting.
- Within LCAs 3, 4 and 5, there are opportunities to enhance the setting of Cobham through restoration of the small-scale orchards which surround the village.

6.4 Species rich grassland

Species-rich grassland contributes to the landscape character of the Candidate NNR. There are numerous areas of chalk grassland, and also pockets of grassland on sand and clay, reflecting the underlying geology. There is potential to further enhance landscape character and biodiversity through species-rich grassland restoration and expansion of grassland habitats. This section deals primarily with grazed grassland; arable plants and field margins are covered in section 6.6 below.

- Within all LCAs explore the potential for chalk grassland restoration, particularly on areas currently in arable use.
- Within LCA 1 seek to explore the potential for chalk grassland creation/restoration on the former golf course site.
- Within LCAs 2, 4, 5 and 6 manage existing chalk grassland pockets, managing invasive scrub to maintain a balance of habitats through grazing/ cutting as required.
- Within LCAs 2, 4, 5 and 6, seek to link chalk grassland sites through habitat corridors to encourage migration of species between sites.
- Within LCA 4, work with the golf course to encourage species diversity in rough areas.
- Within LCAs 4 and 5, explore opportunities for enhancing chalk grassland habitats alongside viticulture.

6.5 Parkland

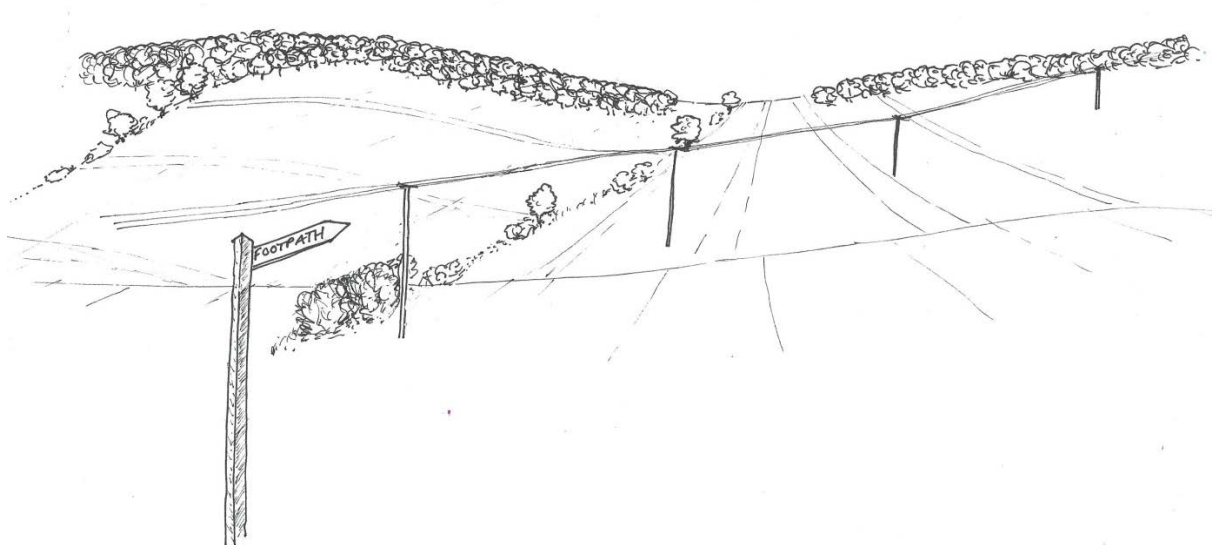
The core of the Candidate NNR contains the historic parkland of Cobham Park, and so parkland is a key component of landscape character. Historically the designed landscape of the Darnley Estate covered LCA 4 and part of LCA 2. There are also smaller pockets of historic parkland along the northern edge of LCA 3, at Camer Park (LCA 5) and at Holly Hill (LCA 6).

- Within all LCAs, manage parkland, including planting new specimen and parkland trees to eventually replace those which die, and enhance biodiversity value through positive management of grassland.
- Within LCA 2, seek to enhance the parkland character of surviving historic parkland, and aim to keep its overall parkland character, rather than become woodland.
- Within LCAs 2 and 4, work with the multiple landowners of Cobham Park (Gravesham Borough Council, Rochester and Cobham Park Golf Club, Cobham Hall School, the National Trust and the West Kent Downs Wildlife Trust) to implement the recommendations in the *Cobham Park Conservation Plan 2003*, and to update or expand these recommendations if appropriate.
- Within LCA 5, seek to plant new shaws to link Camer Park and nearby woodland blocks.

6.6 Land used for agriculture and viticulture

The study area contains extensive areas of farmland, particularly around the peripheries. Many of the arable areas outside the KDNL have particular opportunities for landscape and environmental enhancements. The Candidate NNR also contains Plantlife's Ranscombe Farm Reserve, which is of national importance for its work promoting arable plants. The farmed landscape of the central part of the Candidate NNR (LCA 5 and part of LCA 4) has seen a notable change in recent years, with viticulture now a key land use on chalk soils.

- Within all LCAs, develop partnerships between local farmers and the Ranscombe reserve to expand biodiversity-rich habitats and promote diversity of arable plants growing in field margins.
- Within all LCAs, but particularly LCAs 1 and 3, strengthen the landscape structure of trees and hedges, seeking to reinforce existing hedges where they have become gappy, and to replace those lost through agricultural intensification, using historic maps to find their former courses. It may also be appropriate to add new hedges to reduce soil loss and flooding, and enhance the KDNL and Candidate NNR setting. Any new hedges should accentuate the visual sweeps of the landform, and will be most effective at slowing surface water if planted parallel to the contours. New hedgerow trees will add both visual interest and biodiversity value.
- Within all LCAs, but particularly LCAs 1 and 3, expand field margins (possibly in association with new hedge planting) to create a network of biodiversity corridors.
- Within LCA 3, seek to extend woodland planting into adjacent farmland, supporting nature recovery by linking habitats where possible and enhancing biodiversity, for example through planting new hedges and trees, and widening field margins to accommodate grass buffer strips. This may be achieved through working with LTC's designers responsible for the nitrogen deposition mitigation and ancient woodland compensation planting. The design should enhance the existing PROW. It should incorporate the existing long views and take into account the sense of openness currently experienced here.
- Ongoing experimental viticulture techniques should be continued and expanded, using wildflower and other species monitoring to promote ecologically-sensitive viticulture practices.



An imagined arable landscape now, with poor landscape structure and few wildlife habitats



The same imagined arable landscape in the future, with new woodland and hedgerow planting, and associated field margins, providing landscape structure and wildlife habitat. The hedges also help to reduce flooding and soil loss. In addition, the distracting overhead wires have been removed, and the landscape made more accessible and welcoming.

7.0 Veteran trees

7.1 Putting veteran trees in their historic landscape context

Most of the veteran trees within the Candidate NNR are found in LCA 2 (within Shorne Woods), and LCA 4 (associated with Cobham Park). There are also examples within LCAs 5 and 6. Many of the veteran trees provide a window into a lost landscape of medieval fields which has largely been swept away by successive phases of parkland design, woodland growth and land enclosure. They are of great landscape value for their role as iconic features within the landscape, for the biodiversity which they support, and for their role in telling the story of the area's landscape history.

- In all LCAs, protect veteran trees and manage them to promote biodiversity and their longevity within the landscape.
- Use LiDAR to identify medieval boundaries within woodlands, and be mindful of these when undertaking woodland management.
- Develop and promote a 'veteran trees trail' describing different species and origins of veteran trees found within the Candidate NNR.

7.2 Landscape sensitive management

The way in which veteran trees are managed can further enhance landscape character if done sensitively.

- In all LCAs, when fencing veteran trees, avoid use of palisade-style fencing or sawn timber fencing if possible. Use traditional cleft chestnut post and rail which quickly mellows into the landscape and does not detract from the splendour of the tree.
- In all LCAs, a potential alternative to fencing to be considered is piling brushwood against the trunk to prevent animals from getting too close. It also acts as 'slow-release fertilizer' to the tree's roots.



Veteran tree protected by cleft chestnut post-and-rail fencing, Ashenbank wood

8.0 Heritage landscape

8.1 Designated sites and their settings

This section overlaps with the ‘settings’ section 3.4 and the ‘views’ section in 3.3. The ‘setting’ of heritage assets is defined in planning terms as *the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*² The Candidate NNR contributes to the settings of many designated heritage assets: Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and the Registered Historic Park and Garden at Cobham Hall. It also contributes to the setting of the KDNL, and to the settings of non-designated heritage assets. Through the Candidate NNR there are opportunities to protect and enhance the settings of these designated historic assets.

- In all LCAs, settings to all Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Historic Parks and Gardens should be protected and enhanced.
- In LCA 1 and LCA 2, there is particular opportunity to protect and enhance the setting of the historic settlements of Thong, Shorne and Shorne Ridgeway (all Conservation Areas). This requires understanding of the relationship between the settlements and their surroundings of woodland and small fields. The historic mosaic field pattern around the settlements should not be lost through blanket woodland planting or insensitive development.
- In LCAs 3, 4 and 5 there are opportunities to enhance the setting of Cobham Conservation Area through restoration of the small-scale orchards which surround the village.
- In LCA 4, protect surviving historic designed landscape features associated with Cobham Hall, including those from schemes designed by Humphrey Repton and Hames Wyatt. Seek opportunities to make them accessible to the public on an occasional basis. Measures should reflect recommendations in the *Cobham Hall Conservation Plan 2003* (or later additions/updates). There are also opportunities to raise awareness of other local sites associated with the landowning families, such as the brasses and tomb in Cobham church, and the ‘Toe Monument’ in Cobham Woods.

8.2 Appreciation and protection of non-designated sites

Throughout the Candidate NNR there are historic sites and features which are part of the everyday landscape, and contribute to landscape character, but which are not protected through statutory designation (for example old routeways and woodland edge shapes). There are also many archaeological sites and findspots which are vulnerable to changes in landscape management, but again are not protected through statutory designation. There is therefore some overlap between the recommendations below and those in Section 5.0 – Visitor access and engagement, and Section 6.0 – Ecological and environmental management.

- In all LCAs, protect historic and distinctive features of the landscape which add to its sense of place and history, such as the wavy edges of woodlands, old roads, and lost medieval field patterns (often marked by ancient and veteran trees).

² National Planning Policy Framework Annex 2: Glossary

- In all LCAs, before commencing tree planting or any other land management change, consult with an archaeologist to make sure that there is no potential for surface or buried archaeology which would potentially be lost or damaged by the proposals. Prehistoric flint scatter sites, which are often superficial or very shallow, are particularly vulnerable.
- In all LCAs, continue investigations into lost medieval manorial sites. Local community groups are already involved in this work.
- In LCAs 1, 2 and 4, raise awareness of 20th Century military sites, including the Scheduled anti-aircraft gun site at Cobhambury, which does not currently have public access.

8.3 Researching the historic environment and views

Within the Candidate NNR there are many opportunities to work with local groups to improve understanding of the historic environment, through researching views and landscape features. There is therefore some overlap with the recommendations below and those in section 4.0 – Community consultation and 5.0 – Visitor access and engagement.

- Work with local people to undertake a ‘favourite views’ study for the Candidate NNR, in association with heritage and access strategies (See section 4.1 for more information).
- Within LCA 4, consider opening up historic designed views from Cobham Woods (particularly looking south from the Mausoleum) in conjunction with Access and Ecology strategies.
- Within all LCAs, including established groups in LCAs 2 and 4, expand research to include (for example) medieval manorial sites; place name studies on local woodland and field names, and military/defensive sites.
- Create a map of historic routeways within and around the Candidate NNR.

8.4 Heritage trails

There are many opportunities for trails within the Candidate NNR covering a wide range of historic landscape themes. They could be designed with involvement from local groups, and should tie in to the relevant strategies. Ideas (in addition to the existing Darnley Trail) include:

- Within all LCAs, a historic buildings trail
- Within LCAs 1, 2 and 4, a WW2 sites trail.
- Within LCAs 2 and 4, a veteran trees trail.
- Within LCAs 2 and 4, a Charles Dickens trail.
- Within LCAs 2, 3, 4 and 5, a medieval landscapes and/or medieval manors trail.

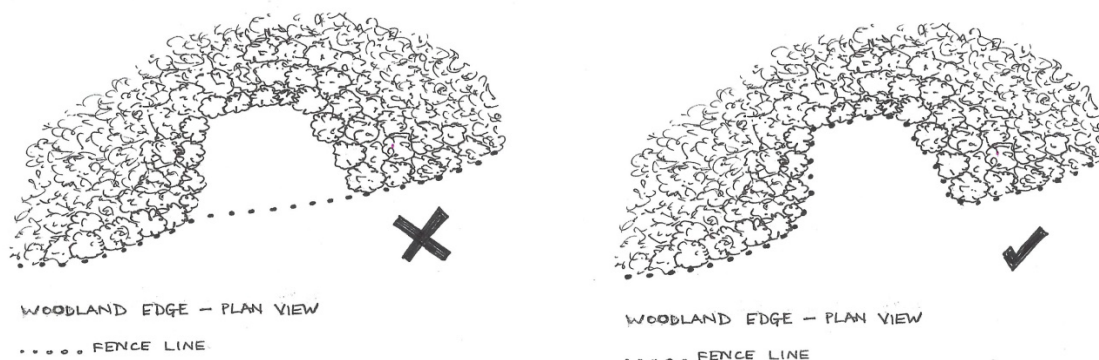
PART B: Recommendations

9.0 Deer management

9.1 Design of deer fencing

Good deer management can help to protect and enhance landscape features such as woodlands and parkland trees. However, it is important that deer fencing is designed in a way which is sensitive to the landscape.

- In all LCAs, when setting out fencing against woodlands with irregular outlines, avoid cutting corners and giving the woodlands straight edges. This is because the irregular outlines of woodland are often historic landscape features which contribute to the landscape character and sense of place.
- In all LCAs, use deer fencing which has a minimal visual impact within the landscape. Generally, post and wire fencing with timber uprights is the least visible. Timber palisade fencing appears as a wall within the landscape and is very visually prominent. It should therefore be avoided. If welded metal ‘security fencing’ has to be used, then it should be of a dark colour – preferably black, dark olive green (e.g. *RAL 6008 Brown Green*) or dark brown, with a matt finish.



Post and wire deer fencing at Dunster Castle

10.0 Grazing plan

10.1 Fencing design

Grazing is an important tool for habitat management, and thriving habitats contribute to landscape character. When designing fencing for grazing livestock it is important to consider the appearance of the fencing, particularly in areas of historic landscape, and to design it accordingly.

- In all LCAs, where possible, use fencing constructed in a traditional manner from locally-available materials. In the West Kent Downs this is cleft chestnut post and rail fencing. Use local adaptations depending on the type of animals being grazed – for example sheep fencing will require more rails. Wire mesh can be added to the fencing if necessary.
- Fences which will become permanent should ideally have a native-species hedge planted alongside. Once the plants have established, the hedge should be managed through laying every few years in order to create a stockproof barrier which eventually leaves the fence redundant.
- Gates and stiles should ideally also be of natural materials. Traditional designs may need to be adapted to accommodate accessibility requirements.
- If using temporary or electric fencing, use poles and wires/tapes in a dark or muted colour which don't stand out.