

**SECTION D Sub-area reports: North East**  
**CHICHESTER LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2035**  
**LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY**  
**NOVEMBER 2018**



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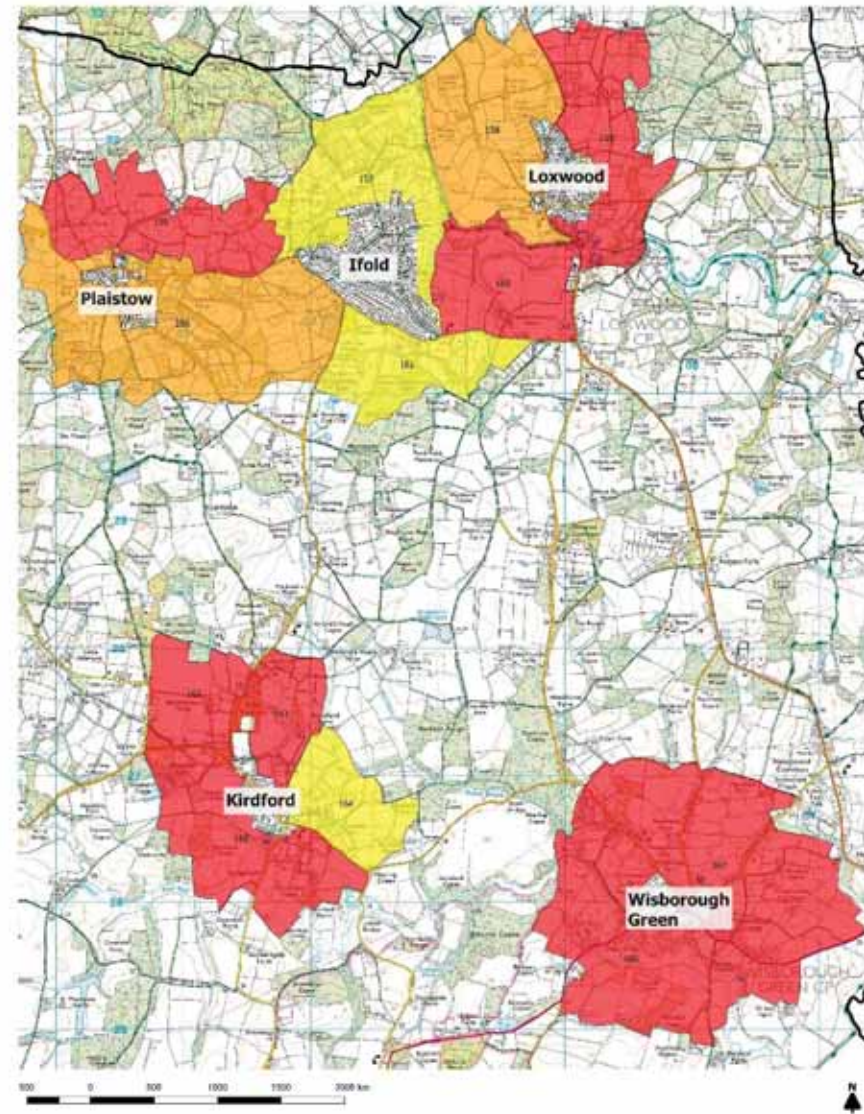
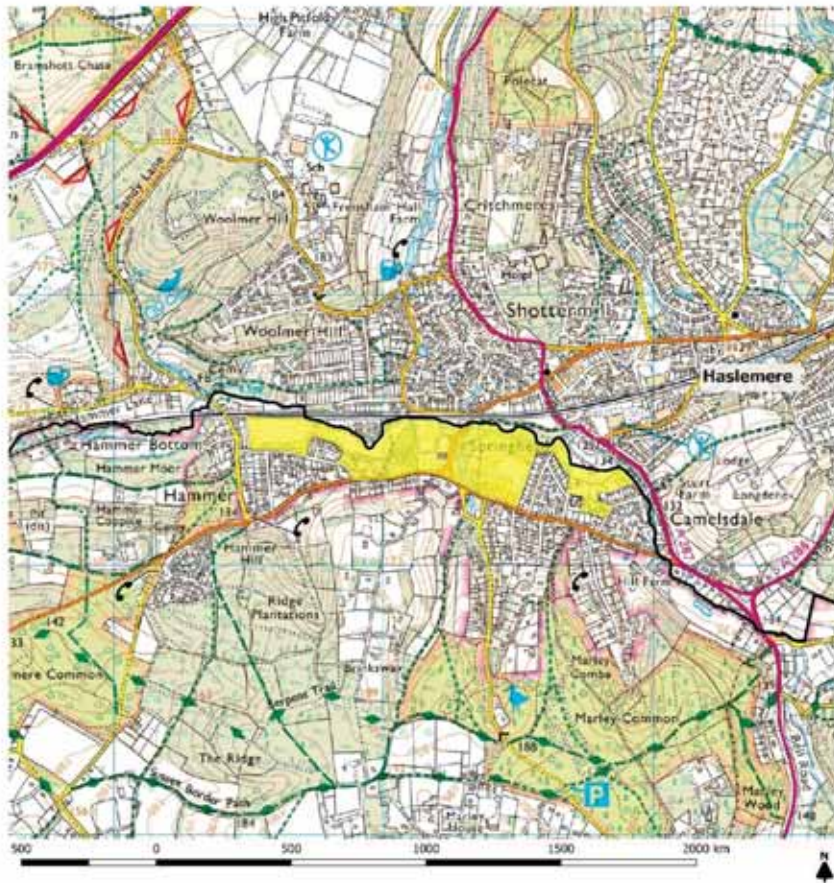
**Sub-areas:**

- 02 - North Hammer - Camelsdale Urban Edge
- 155 - Plaistow Northern Low Weald
- 156 - Plaistow-Ifold Low Weald
- 157 - Ifold Northern Low Weald
- 158 - Loxwood Western Low Weald
- 159 - Loxwood Eastern Low Weald
- 160 - Ifold Eastern Low Weald
- 161 - Foxbridge low Weald
- 162 - Belchamber's Low Weald
- 163 - Kirdford Northern Low Weald
- 164 - Kirdford Eastern Paddocks
- 165 - Staples Hill – Churchlands Low Weald
- 166 - River Kird and Southern Setting
- 167 - Wisborough Green Settled Low Weald

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**Chichester District Council Landscape Capacity Study - North East**

- Legend
- Chichester District Boundary
  - Capacity for landscape change:
    - Medium
    - Medium/Low
    - Low



**Sub-area: 02: North Hammer - Camelsdale Urban Edge**

**West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA WG4 North Western Ridges  
Chichester District Landscape Capacity Study Extension 2011 (CDLCSE): LCA North Hammer – Camelsdale Urban Edge; LCT L3:  
Pasture, L7: Mixed woodland/plantation, T1: Amenity/recreation, T2: Developed land outside settlement boundary  
Adjacent: South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA): LCA N1: Blackdown to  
Petworth Greensand Hills; LCT N: Greensand Hills**

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted):

- Prominent, wooded sandstone ridges and plateaux.
- Steep, horseshoe-shaped escarpment enclosing the Milland and Fernhurst Basins.
- Dense woodland cover with coniferous forestry and chestnut on higher slopes.
- Pasture and rough grazing in clearings and at the woodland edges.
- Hidden valleys and streams in deep gullies within the upper catchments.
- Narrow, twisting, often deeply-sunken lanes.
- Scattered, isolated farmsteads and small groups of cottages.
- Localised linear, suburban development along roads.
- Highly enclosed, secluded landscape, but with some long views across the basins.
- Small horse paddocks and small ponds.
- Hammerponds in the valleys and the remains of iron workings and lime kilns.
- Ancient woodland tracks and lanes.
- Wood pasture.
- Small irregular assarts.
- Significant woodland, (oak, birch and sweet chestnut woodlands and beech hangers), interspersed with remnant heathland provides a varied habitat.
- A large proportion of the woodlands are ancient, such as North Park Copse
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Rake Hanger (SSSI) and Durford Wood Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).
- Hedgebanks and hedges.
- Small streams with wet meadow fragments and alder carr woodland add to the diversity.
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife.
- Extensive panoramic views from open hill tops. (SDILCA)
- Prominent hills formed from sandstones and cherts of the Lower Greensand group with a steep escarpment at their inner edge from where there are panoramic views. (SDILCA)
- The settlement pattern is typically dispersed and density of settlement is low – this contributes to the rural nature of the hills.

### Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

- Long views from high ground have a high sensitivity to the impact of new urban development, modern farm buildings, masts and pylons and new roads.
- Loss of woodland along ridge slopes and ridge tops.
- Heathland remnants and significant areas of rich woodland biodiversity are vulnerable to loss and change.
- Erosion of narrow country lanes.
- Cumulative impact of small scale change.
- Conserve the remote and tranquil character of the area.
- Conserve and manage woodlands to maintain a diverse mosaic of woodland types, including coppice, hangers and mixed broadleaved woodland.
- Maintain historic character including features such as hammerponds, minepits, and patterns of small irregular fields, wood pasture and historic parkland.
- Plant new woodlands, trees belts and hedgerow trees to closely reflect the landform, using new planting to strengthen and link existing woodland and hedgerows.
- Manage road verges and banks with adjacent hedges to encourage wildlife. Conserve the special character of the deeply sunken lanes.
- Conserve and manage meadows adjacent to streams.
- Encourage the retention of debris dams and avoid dredging streams.
- Maintain and manage ponds and their margins for their landscape diversity and nature conservation value.
- Promote the use of current Stewardship schemes or equivalent.
- Conserve traditional stone and wealden cottages, villages and greens.
- Ensure any development respects historic settlement pattern and form, and building materials.
- Conserve and enhance tree cover on approaches to villages.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change.
- Ensure that any new development has a minimum impact on long and other significant views and is integrated within the landscape, paying particular attention to the siting of telecommunication masts.
- High level of perceived naturalness and lack of visible overt human impact. (SDILCA)
- The sense of remoteness arising from the low density of settlement with associated dark skies and low noise levels. (SDILCA)
- Conserve the low density of dispersed settlement which contributes to the tranquil rural character of the area. (SDILCA)
- Maintain the characteristic loose agglomerations of common-edge settlement and avoid infill or extensions which would create a more compact, solid settlement form along roads. (SDILCA)
- Ensure that any built development reflects the local vernacular - resist suburban style garden boundaries, kerbs, and lighting. Conserve the remote rural character of the landscape. (SDILCA)
- Ensure recreational facilities, such as horse riding centres and golf courses, do not erode sense of tranquillity. Avoid use of excessive lighting, signage and 'suburban' features. (SDILCA)
- Conserve the character of the ancient sunken lanes – resist pressure for road improvements which would alter the experience of travelling through the landscape. (SDILCA)
- Consideration should be given to the potential impact of any proposals for wind turbines or communication masts. Particular attention should be paid to views from key viewpoints as well as impacts on the less tangible aspects of character such as the special sense of

- Conserve the sense of remoteness and tranquillity of this character area, which is particularly valued in close proximity to areas of dense settlement. (SDILCA)

Relevant forces for change / threats / opportunities:

- Poor woodland management leading to an even-aged structure.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques, such as coppicing.
- Increasing traffic and suburbanisation along some roads.
- Increasing pressure from a wide variety of recreational activities.
- Gradual loss of locally distinctive building styles and materials.

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Sub-area map:

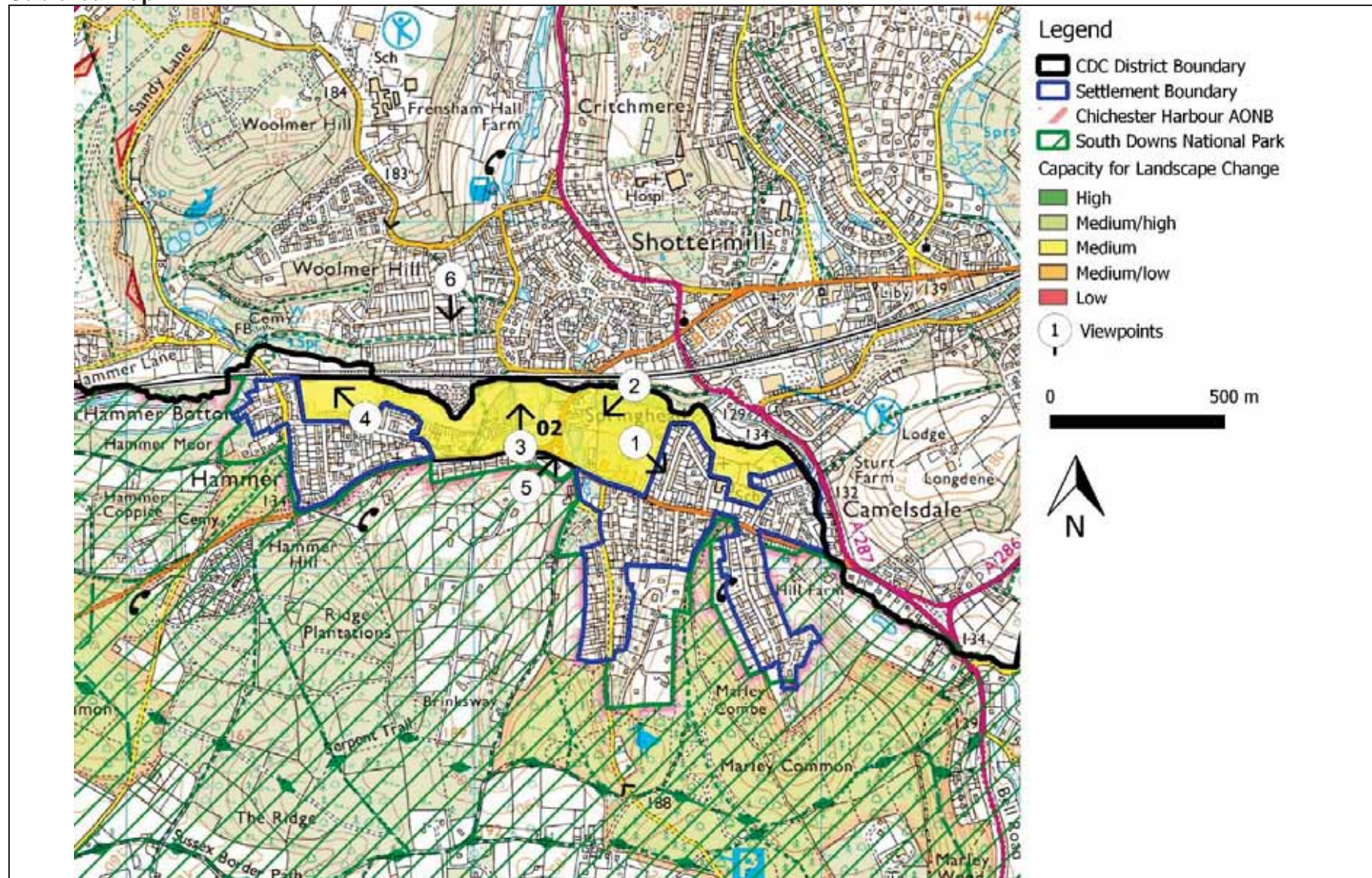


Figure: 02 Capacity of landscape to accept change and location of photographic viewpoints

**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 02 is a low-lying linear area stretching along the River Wey valley from Camelsdale to Hammer south of the district boundary and the railway line. The B2131 forms the southern edge. The area is largely unsettled and contained by settlement and transport infrastructure and is strongly influenced by the presence of the river and associated historic water features.

The sub-area is in the setting of the SDNP as there is some intervisibility and potential for affecting perceptual character

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**

*Photo 1: View south from Camelsdale Recreation Ground towards the wooded hills of SDNP and Marley Combe (NT). Settlement on New Road is visible, backing onto the recreation ground.*



*Photo 2: View south-west from PRow outside sub-area into valley bottom with River Wey and associated woodland (Hammer Moor SNCI/Camelsdale and Hammer Conservation Area)*





*Photo 3: View north from B2131 across meadow (NT) with River Wey valley beyond towards wooded hills.*



*Photo 4: View west across Copse Play Area within Hammer Moor SNCI which forms its woodland setting.*

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*Photo 5: View north-east from Penwith Drive (within SDNP) across sub-area to ridge of hills opposite. Views into the sub-area are limited by landform and vegetation.*



*Photo 6: View south from Pitfold Avenue across River Wey valley and sub-area towards SDNP. Views into the sub-area are limited by landform and vegetation.*

### **Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

#### **1. Visual Sensitivity: Medium**

- Visible from sensitive receptors within SDNP- although this is limited due to tree cover
- SDNP forms backdrop for receptors within sub-area
- Visible from residential properties within sub-area and adjacent to it.
- Sensitive receptors visiting National Trust sites at Marley Coombe and Shottermill Ponds
- Sensitive receptors within Camelsdale and Hammer Conservation area and on PRoW
- Motorists on busy B2131 and local roads
- Sensitive receptors engaged in recreation and play at 2 playgrounds/recreation grounds
- Existing woodland provides good structure for mitigation

## 2. **Landscape Sensitivity: Medium/high**

- River Wey and historic mill ponds are linear features in valley bottom
- Contains part of Camelsdale and Hammer Conservation Area which includes historic industrial buildings associated with water features
- Some urbanising influence of transport infrastructure, settlement edge and sewage works
- 2 playing fields/recreation grounds
- Ancient and semi-natural woodland and riverside trees
- 2 SNCI - Hammer Moor
- Allotments
- National Trust land
- Generally small scale and enclosed landscape

## 3. Landscape Character Sensitivity: Medium/high (combines 1 and 2)

## 4. **Wider Landscape Sensitivity: Medium/low**

- A somewhat enclosed and peaceful wooded landscape although influenced by settlement edges and transport routes/ infrastructure.
- Some visual connection to wooded hills but little physical connection with wider landscape apart from River Wey corridor
- Most of the sub-area comprises the wooded river corridor with opens areas limited to recreation grounds and National Trust land
- The area is largely typical of the wider LCA

## 5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium (combines 3 and 4)

## 6. **Landscape Value: Medium**

- Contains conservation area and Grade II listed building
- Forms part of setting of SDNP

## 7. Landscape Capacity: Medium (combines 5 and 6)

<p><b>Potential effect on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on sensitive receptors in SDNP and conservation areas</li> <li>• Impact on views from SDNP</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to valley bottom landform and river corridor which are integral to the area's character</li> <li>• Loss of woodland, including ancient and semi-natural woodland</li> <li>• Erosion of historic character of conservation area and setting of listed building</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of sparsely settled character</li> <li>• Risk of further coalescence of Hammer, Springhead, Shottermill, Woolmer Hill</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of woodland and all good and moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features</li> <li>• Retention of other vegetated areas where they contribute to landscape and biodiversity value</li> <li>• Long-term management of woodland blocks</li> <li>• Retaining legibility and setting of PRow network and creating additional links</li> <li>• Conserve rural character of river corridor</li> </ul>

### **Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area**

Sub-area 02 has a medium capacity, constrained by its riparian character, recreation grounds, tree cover and its role as part of the setting of SDNP. There are views from roads, public footpaths, railways and some views into and out of the SDNP to the south. Higher ground to the north and south also permits views into and across the sub-area but these are often limited by tree cover. The area has a clear sense of history as manifest in Shottermill Ponds and the surrounding conservation area and contains characteristics typical of the adjacent SDNP.

Despite the medium capacity of this sub-area development opportunities are very limited due to the river, the considerable amount of tree cover, and the recreation grounds. However, it is possible that some small amount of development may be accommodated within or around the existing settlements provided it is informed by further landscape and visual impact assessment and sensitively integrated into the landscape, respecting the historic settlement pattern and local distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm. Particular care should be taken to protect the setting of the SDNP, the historic landscape and SNCI.

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**Sub-areas: 155 Plaistow Northern Low Weald****West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW2 North Western Low Weald**

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- Gently undulating pastoral landscape *(with significant high points from which to observe key views)*
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees.
- Mature and over-mature oak trees.
- Woodlands often following winding streams.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture.
- Oak - hazel coppice.
- Small and medium sized fields of predominantly pasture with some larger arable fields.
- Wealden villages, scattered farmsteads and cottages.
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber.
- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms.
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements.
- A total of 12 glassworks throughout the area including Plaistow *(none found)*.
- Lime kilns and brick workings throughout the area *(none found)*.
- Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.
- Diverse natural history.
- Large blocks of ancient, semi-natural woodland.
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife.
- Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).

Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area.
- Encourage conversion of arable fields to permanent pasture *(diversity of arable and pasture is a feature of this parcel)*.
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws.
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted.
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens.
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods.
- Plant and manage isolated trees in pasture.
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland. Support and promote woodland industries.
- Conserve species rich pasture.

- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value.
- Loss of tranquillity.
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows.
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with *(some)* evidence of new young trees *(having been planted)*.
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features.
- Changes in farming practices leading to the expansion or addition of modern farm buildings.
- Quality of public rights of way (PRoW) network vulnerable to increased use *(and intrusive elements such as timber close board fences and garden extensions of large properties out into the countryside installed up against PRoWs)*

Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management.
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows.
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees.
- Poor pond management.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Introduction of large farm buildings.
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams.
- Localised increases in traffic on rural roads.
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places.
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use.

Sub-area map:

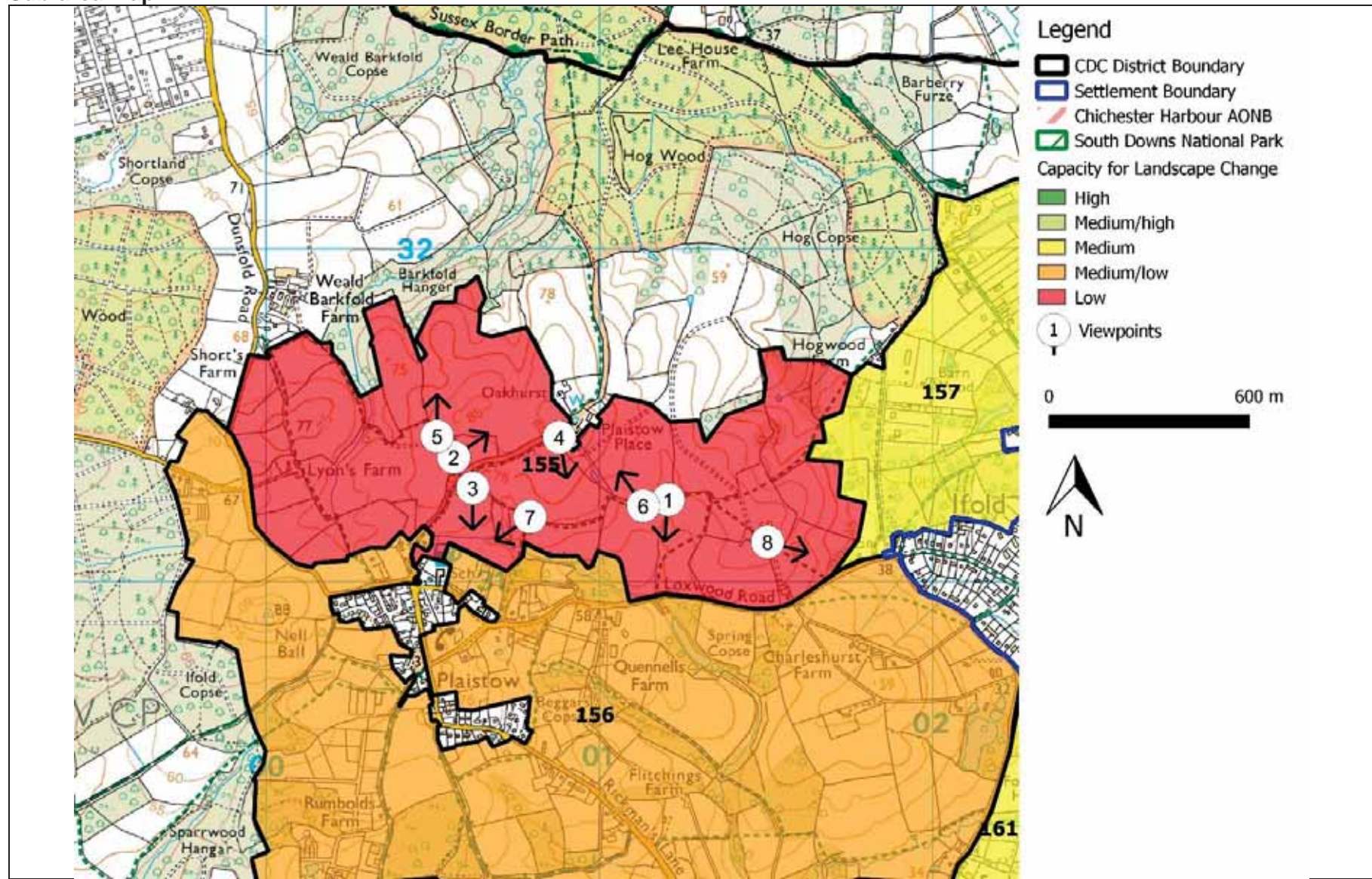


Figure 155: Capacity of landscape to accept change and location of photographic viewpoints



**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 155 comprises of high ground (69-85m) with distinctive dry valleys that wrap around the settlement of Plaistow to the north and west. To the south the land becomes gently undulating and then flat adjacent to the settlement edge. The South Downs National Park forms a small part of the western boundary. To the east of the sub-area comprises an area of high ground incised by a dry valley that contains Loxwood Road which defines the southern boundary. ASNW and SNCI are present although on the border of the sub-area. The area is predominantly rural, arable fields with riparian woods and wet pastures close to the settlement edge. Sparsely-settled with 4 isolated farmsteads of which 3 are situated on the northern edge. Other land uses include tracks and a very small number of residential properties on the edge of the Plaistow Conservation Area. A noticeable change from enclosed wooded, intimate historic village setting to that of a rural and attractive working agricultural landscape, with high ground affording long-distance breathtaking views of the South Downs ridgeline. Easy to access and appreciate from historic tracks and PRow's.

Plaistow is a small village containing informal low density layout of houses and small cottages and gardens. The historic core village at the junction of three roads, one from the west which leads to Shillinglee, Dunsfold and Chiddingfold (Dunsfold Road/Nell Ball), one from the south-east which leads to Kirdford (Rickmans Lane), and one from the west which leads to Ifold and Loxwood (Loxwood Road).

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**



*Photo 1: View southwards along dry valley. Gently rounded plateau and undulating landform with woodland contributes to the secluded character. From high ground a rare opportunity to appreciate long distant views.*



*Photo 2: View north-east across small, intimate grazing pasture and wet meadows containing a small, sinuous watercourse. Mature fields oaks, riparian vegetation and hedgerows provide a strong landscape structure that defines the settlement edge character. Undulating landform and vegetation limits long views.*



*Photo 3: View from track leading to Plaistow Place Farm, on the edge of Plaistow village looking north. Contains many typical features of this landscape character area. Views are close to mid-distant due to undulating landform and tree cover.*



*Photo 4: View south from PRoW on high point by Plaistow Place Farm. The South Downs ridgeline is clearly visible extending east-west along the skyline. A key viewpoint to appreciate the densely wooded character which hides the village from view.*



*Photo 5: View north across undulating landform, fields and woodland. Long distant, and surprising view of the wooded escarpment seen when exiting the well-vegetated and secluded village edge.*



*Photo 6: Isolated farmsteads and outbuildings built in the traditional vernacular style, situated on areas of high ground and surrounded by woodland and mature field oak trees. Long distant views out from high points becoming more restricted by landform and vegetation lower down the slopes moving closer to the village.*



*Photo 7: View looking south from PRow across small-scale field pattern towards well-vegetated village edge. Views are short due to tree cover.*



*Photo 8: View south-east from PRow and high point (69m AOD) overlooking Ifold village. Gently rounded plateau and undulating landform with woodland below is typical of the LW2 well-wooded character. From high ground a rare opportunity to appreciate long distant views.*

### **Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

#### **1. Visual sensitivity: High**

- Notable panoramic, long distance views out in all directions from elevated ground towards open and wooded Downs ridgelines including SDNP and adjacent village of Ifold.
- Views to Holy Trinity Church, a notable landmark.
- Range of sensitive viewers (receptors); all with high expectations of scenic beauty with easy access into countryside beyond settlement edge.
- Views from PRow particularly when crossing higher ground to the north.
- Views in and out into sub-area from the Plaistow Conservation Area.
- Views into the area from roads and residential properties, although limited.

- Rural, attractive agricultural landscape immediately around the village edge
- Limited opportunities to improve degraded field boundaries, to restore lost vegetation but may interrupt key long distant views towards the South Downs ridgeline to the south and wooded ridges to the north and east.
- Mitigation may damage local character as sub-area is sensitive to loss of historic field pattern and ‘open’ areas across high ground, alteration to the natural hydrology system (riparian habitat) and the characteristic undulating ground that leads to plateau with dry valleys.

## 2. **Landscape sensitivity: High**

- Complex and variable land cover with patchwork of mixed quality arable grassland / pasture fields interspersed with wooded streams tree belts and water meadows alongside ditches and streams.
- Small areas of deciduous woodland including ASNW and SNCI's. Stands and belts of mature field and riparian trees along streams.
- Individual native trees within continuous native hedges.
- Streams, field ponds and drainage ditches.
- High ground to north with distinctive dry valleys. Close to settlement edge undulating, uneven leading down to streams / ditches.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land.
- Evidence of sensitive historic landscape pattern with Plaistow historic core linked to medieval assart fields, sunken trackways and ancient drove route.
- Plaistow Conservation Area with distinctive trees, vernacular buildings and boundary treatments.
- Hedgerows and historic routes, both of strong character adding to perception of time depth.
- Settlement pattern mixed: traditional cottages, modern bungalows and properties set in well-tended gardens. To north very low settlement density; a working agricultural landscape of arable and pasture fields surrounding isolated, large vernacular farmsteads.
- Fieldscape contributes to settings of listed buildings (Grade II).
- Evidence of former ‘glass working’ industry with properties with cultural associations.
- Generally peaceful, attractive, rural and quiet away from roads. A noticeable change from enclosed wooded, intimate historic village setting to rural, attractive countryside with breath-taking views. Easy to access and appreciate from historic tracks and PRoW's.
- Presence of historic landscape features and buildings adding to overall perception of time-depth and a sense of enclosure along village's southern edge and historic core.
- Dark Skies prevail.
- Several PRoW and restricted Byways. Green lane recorded on the HER known locally as ‘the Roman road’.
- Area used and valued by local residents and visitors to the sub-area and nearby SDNP.
- Generally an open and enclosed landscape that is tranquil with historical landscape features present
- Open access land alongside roads and settlement edge.

## 3. Landscape character sensitivity: High (combines 1 and 2)

**4. Wider landscape sensitivity: High**

- Little direct adjacency with the settlement edge, with much of the sub-area remote from the settlement
- The settlement edge is extremely well contained by vegetation, wood and tree cover and appears rural.
- High levels of physical and visual connections between the surrounding landscape, farmsteads and the village of Plaistow
- The sub-area is typical of the wider LCA

**5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: High (combines 3 and 4)****6. Landscape value: Medium**

- Panoramic views from high ground towards the South Downs are noteworthy
- Well-served by PRow
- Contributes to the setting of Grade II listed buildings
- Forms part of the setting to the South Downs National Park, but not influenced by its proximity

**7. Landscape capacity: Low (combines 5 and 6)**

**Potential effect on key visual characteristics**

- Impact on views towards and out from the Conservation Area
- Impact on rural views from PRow
- Impact on a key panoramic views from PRow on high ground towards the South Downs ridgeline to the south and views of the wooded Wealden landscape to north and east.
- Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character
- Impact on individual field oaks to east of village, on undulating land seen against the skyline
- Impact on views of the Holy Trinity Church and its wooden spire

**Potential effect on key landscape characteristics**

- Loss of mature field oaks (individuals and stands/groups)
- Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland, copses and riparian vegetation
- Loss of wetland and wet meadows
- Loss of good quality productive arable soils
- Impacts on historic landscape features; large areas of medieval assart fields, ASNW
- Alteration to the natural hydrology, ponds, watercourse network/ system
- Impacts on the gently undulating rolling landform
- Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Plaistow
- Impacts on the setting of isolated scattered historic farmsteads
- Impacts to the setting of many listed buildings
- Impacts on PRow network and linkages to national trails
- Impact on the semi-open/enclosed associated with medieval assart small to medium scale arable fields and hedgerows, tree cover.
- Impact on ancient droveway route
- Impact on network of SNCI's
- Impacts on tranquillity
- Impacts on connecting PRow's
- Impacts on wooded settlement edge

**Potential effect on key settlement characteristics**

- Impacts on the rural landscape setting if development were to be extended beyond the well-defined settlement edge.



**Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure**

- Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value
- Restoring lost field boundaries and copses
- Retaining legibility and setting of PRoW network and creating additional links
- Conserve the rural character of lanes
- Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural lanes
- Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings

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### **Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area**

Sub-area 155 has a low capacity, constrained by its strong rural character, distinctive topography with plateau and its role as an integral part of the rural setting of nearby settlement and conservation area. The sub-area is easy to access and appreciate from historic tracks and PRow's with links to the South Downs National Park. A noticeable change from enclosed wooded, intimate historic village setting surrounded by a patchwork of pasture fields interspersed with mature field oaks, hedgerows, wooded streams, tree belts and historic, sensitive water meadows to more open, pastoral landscape with footpaths across plateau and higher ground; providing breath-taking far reaching, panoramic views (north, south and east) of a wooded landscape, Holy Trinity Church spire and large section of the east-west running South Downs ridgeline. ASNW and SNCI's present. The area retains a clear sense of history through its historic medieval assarted field pattern that extends across the majority of the sub-area surrounding historic and listed farmsteads (an assart is a piece of land cleared of trees and bushes in preparation for cultivation). The area contains many of the characteristics features typical of the wider LCA, reasonably well used by locals and visitors with occasional noise from aircraft affecting its tranquil character.

New development in this location would dominate the farm/village setting of Plaistow resulting in a negative effect on the settlement pattern of the LW 2 North Western Low Weald character. It is unlikely that any development beyond the settlement edge may be accommodated.

**Sub-area: 156 Plaistow-Ifold Low Weald****West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW2 North Western Low Weald**

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- Gently undulating pastoral landscape.
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees.
- Mature and over-mature oak trees.
- Woodlands often following winding streams.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture *(dominates, a noticeable feature)*.
- Oak - hazel coppice.
- Small and medium sized fields of predominantly pasture with some larger arable fields.
- Wealden villages, some centred on village greens, scattered farmsteads and cottages *(Character of the village and the village green is a noticeable feature)*.
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber.
- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms.
- Medieval churches at Kirdford and Wisborough Green.
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements.
- A total of 12 glassworks throughout the area including Plaistow *(none found)*.
- Lime kilns and brick workings throughout the area *(industrial earthworks next to Ancient Byway)*.
- Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.
- Diverse natural history.
- Large blocks of ancient, semi-natural woodland.
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife
- Large Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) at Sparwood Copse.

Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

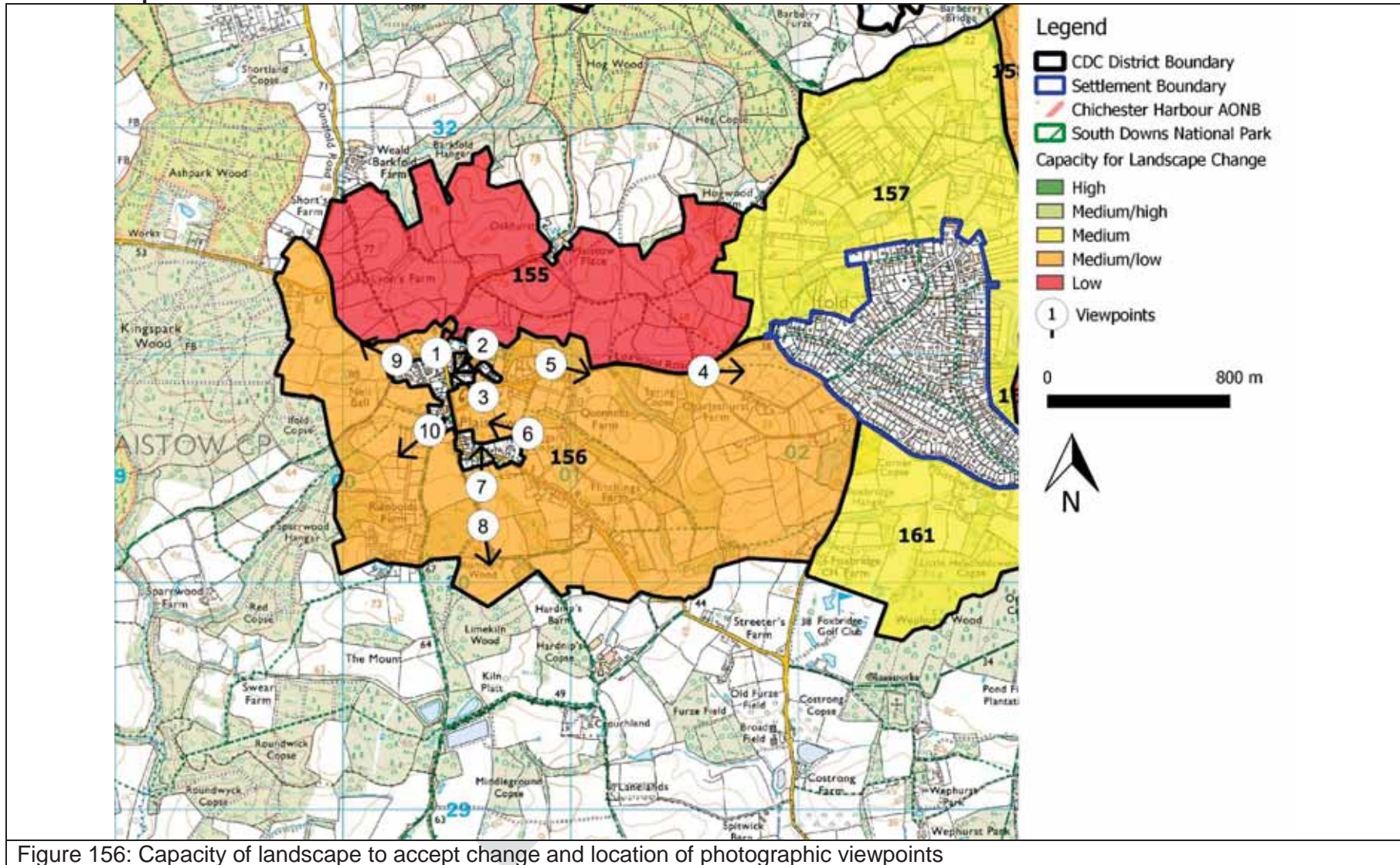
- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area.
- Encourage conversion of arable fields to permanent pasture *(diversity of arable and pasture is a feature of this parcel)*.
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws.
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted.
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens.
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods.
- Plant and manage isolated trees in pasture.
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland. Support and promote woodland industries.

- Conserve species rich pasture.
- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests.
- Seek to reduce the extent, intensity and impact of horse grazing (*a notable issue for this parcel*). Encourage the planting of tree belts and hedgerows around paddocks.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value.
- Loss of tranquillity.
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows.
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with little evidence of new young trees.
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features.
- Changes in farming practices leading to the expansion or addition of modern farm buildings.
- Quality of public rights of way network vulnerable to reduced drainage management and increased use (*notable evidence of ground poaching/ damage from horses hooves and footfall along bridleway and Byway*)

Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management.
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows.
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees.
- Poor pond management.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Introduction of large farm buildings.
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams.
- Localised increases in traffic on rural roads.
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places.
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use.

Sub-area map:



**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 156 comprises of undulating land with two localised 'knolls' overlooking settlements of Plaistow and Ifold to the east. The South Downs National Park boundary lies to the west of Kingspark Wood. The northern boundary is defined by the Conservation Area, modern residential development and Loxwood Road. The area is predominantly rural, pasture fields and well-settled with the historic village of Plaistow and Ifold maintaining their distinct identities. Isolated, historic farmsteads are a feature with ribbon settlement along Rickman's Lane. Areas of common land including Plaistow village green and many areas of ASNW with SNCI's present. Other land uses include paddocks, small holdings plots (containing livestock), allotment, orchard and more modern residential infilling and large to small domestic gardens. This sub-area is very much influenced by the range of residential historic properties and gardens particularly along the edge of Plaistow village.

Plaistow is a small village containing informal low density layout of houses and small cottages with gardens. The historic core village at the junction of three roads, one from the west which leads to Shillinglee, Dunsfold and Chiddingfold (Dunsfold Road/Nell Ball), one from the south-east which leads to Kirdford (Rickmans Lane), and one from the west which leads to Ifold and Loxwood (Loxwood Road).

*'The Parish is characterised as remote and tranquil. It comprises undulating, pastoral landscape of green fields interspersed with belts of woodland, including ancient woodland, ancient assarts, hedgerows and shaws extending from the Arun valley to the east and the Western extent of the Low Weald.'*

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**



*Photo 1: View of church, cottages and trees within Plaistow Conservation Area. Elsewhere the houses are more modern and architecturally less interesting. Views from the Conservation Area are generally inward looking.*



*Photo 2: Characteristic buildings and boundary walls within Plaistow Conservation Area.*



*Photo 3: View north-west along The Street within Plaistow Conservation Area. View of the landmark church spire and green. View are short due to buildings and tree cover.*



*Photo 4: View looking eastwards from convergence of PRow, historic tree lined track and Loxwood Road. Long distance view across the Low Weald wooded landscape.*





*Photo 5: View eastwards towards Quennells Farm. Converted farm buildings into residential surrounded by well-maintained hedges and paddocks. Views contain many features of the LW2 character.*



*Photo 6: Small paddocks and smallholdings forming the village edge. Views are short due to tree cover.*



*Photo 7: Modern housing set within large gardens along the southern edge of Plaistow Conservation Area.*



*Photo 8: Ancient track (Byway) through ASNW towards Rumbold Wood; a typical and sensitive feature of the landscape character area.*

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*Photo 9: View across Plaistow recreation ground from PRow. Flat land containing the village that becomes more undulating further beyond settlement edge.*



*Photo 10: View south-west across paddocks towards Sparrow Hanger (SNCI). Typical of 'open' fieldscape and tree cover character. Views are short due to woodland and hedgerows.*



*Photo 11: View south from edge of Plaistow Conservation Area. Typical of the edge character that contains buildings, strong hedgerow pattern and wooded valleys containing watercourses. Views are short*

**Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

**1. Visual sensitivity: Medium**

- Panoramic, long and middle distance views (east, west and south) towards Ifold and South Downs ridgeline.
- Views out from PRow and Conservation Area.
- Views to Holy Trinity Church and its wooden spire and of Tree copse on Nell Ball knoll.
- Views into the area from farmsteads and residential properties
- Wide range of sensitive viewers (receptors) with high expectations of scenic beauty. Evidence of rural PRow that appear well worn and regularly used.
- Rural, attractive agricultural landscape immediately around the village edge.

- Opportunities for mitigation planting based on strong pattern of hedgerows and copses. To restore lost or improve existing fragmented field boundaries, conversion of small paddocks/ small holding fields adjacent to and that surround Plaistow village core and tree planting to hedgerows alongside PRoW's.
- Mitigation planting especially on plateau next to the village edge may interrupt key views (far distant views seen from PRoW).

## 2. Landscape sensitivity: High

- Mature tree stands, specimen trees on settlement edge.
- Strong native hedgerow structure with hedgerow trees.
- Species rich wildflower meadows are a feature, with pasture and wet meadow.
- Deciduous woodland including many areas of ASNW, two SNCI's and nature reserve.
- Large lake, series of linear lakes, garden pond, spring-fed streams and drainage ditches. Wetland.
- Undulating topography with Nell Ball high point / knoll overlooking Plaistow before landform gently descends towards Ifold.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land.
- Common land includes Plaistow Village Green and the village cricket / football field.
- Wide range and mix of boundary treatments (e.g. metal parkland railing, traditional Sussex post and rail, brick walls and local 'Winklestone' walls)
- Evidence of sensitive historic landscape pattern beyond Plaistow historic core comprising of medieval assart fields, sunken trackways and ancient drove route.
- Plaistow Conservation Area with distinctive specimen trees, vernacular buildings and boundary treatments.
- Hedgerows and historic routes, both of strong character adding to perception of time depth.
- Distinctive settlement pattern: wide range of building types, styles and ages (listed in record sheet), tightly clustered around the rural lane network, historic core and on the edge. Beyond settlement larger historic farm buildings and small barns converted into residential uses surrounded by intimate, small paddocks, small holding pasture.
- Evidence of organic linear, ribbon growth following lane pattern.
- Private gardens, mature trees and vegetation along the edge contributes to the setting of the village.
- Contributes to the setting for a high number of listed buildings (Grade II), and including unlisted Holy Trinity Church, Plaistow.
- Evidence of former 'iron working' industry with Quennells Farm (cultural associations with wider landscape).
- Generally peaceful, attractive, rural and quiet away from roads. Beyond the village edge a complex rolling pastoral landscape of fields, hedges, woods and streams with open, uninterrupted and framed views.
- Generally an open and enclosed landscape that is tranquil although influenced somewhat by traffic along local roads and gardens with small holdings and equestrian uses to settlement edge
- Dark Skies prevail.
- Well-served by PRoW and restricted Byways/ historic routes. Good physical and visual connections between the surrounding landscape, farmsteads and the village of Plaistow
- Area used and valued by local residents and visitors (including National Trust) to the village and nearby SDNP.

- Open access land alongside lanes and PRow leading to Rumbold Wood.
3. Landscape character sensitivity: Medium / High (combines 1 and 2)
  4. **Wider landscape sensitivity: Medium / High**
    - Strongly influenced by Plaistow village and ribbon settlement along Rickman's Lane.
    - The sub-area is largely typical of the wider LCA.
  5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium/High (combines 3 and 4)
  6. **Landscape value: Medium**
    - Contains sites of important ecological value, including SNCIs and Ancient woodland
    - Well-served by PRow and road network
    - Contributes to the setting of Grade II listed buildings
    - Areas of common land
  7. Landscape capacity: Medium/Low (combines 5 and 6)

<p><b>Potential effect on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on views into and out from the Conservation Area</li> <li>• Impact on rural views from PRoW</li> <li>• Impact on key panoramic views from PRoW on high ground over Ifold, of the South Downs ridgeline and the wooded Wealden landscape.</li> <li>• Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character</li> <li>• Impact on views of the Holy Trinity Church and its wooden spire</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of mature field oaks (individuals and stands/groups)</li> <li>• Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland, copses and riparian vegetation</li> <li>• Loss of wetland and wet meadows</li> <li>• Loss of good quality productive arable soils</li> <li>• Impacts on historic landscape features; large areas of medieval assart fields, ASNW, designed landscape and parkland.</li> <li>• Alteration to the natural hydrology, ponds, lakes, watercourse network/ system</li> <li>• Impacts on the gently undulating rolling landform</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Plaistow</li> <li>• Impacts on the setting of isolated scattered historic farmsteads</li> <li>• Impacts to the setting of many listed buildings</li> <li>• Impacts on PRoW network and linkages to national trails</li> <li>• Impact on the semi-open/enclosed associated with medieval assart small to medium scale arable fields</li> <li>• Impact on ancient trackway route</li> <li>• Impacts on tranquillity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting, (including the wooded field edge pattern) and the erosion of separation that currently exists within the village itself, which has evolved and is unique to this place and its ribbon settlements along rural lanes. Impacts on the views to/from Conservation Area and key views out from settlement edge if development were to be extended beyond settlement edge into open countryside.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value</li> <li>• Restoring lost field boundaries and copses</li> <li>• Retaining legibility and setting of PRoW network and creating additional links</li> <li>• Conserve the rural character of lanes</li> <li>• Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural lanes</li> <li>• Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings</li> <li>• Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead power and telephone cables crossing rural, open fields</li> </ul>

## Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area

Sub-area 156 has a medium / low capacity, constrained by its reasonably rural character, distinctive topography and 'knolls' and its role as an integral part of the rural setting of nearby settlement and conservation area. The area is well-served by PRow with links to the South Downs National Park. There are panoramic, mid and distant views, particularly towards the south and south-east from PRow and views from tracks, rural lanes and the conservation area. The area retains a clear sense of history through its historic medieval assarted field pattern, presence of many listed buildings and their settings, historic farmsteads and the historic settlement core. Has a strong, cultural association with the iron working industry. Many areas of ASNW and SNCI's present. The area contains many of the characteristic features typical of the wider LCA, well used and travelled by locals and visitors although tranquillity has been negatively affected by traffic and aircraft noise, and suburban elements, including paddocks, equestrian uses, and modern styles of housing around the settlement edge. Mature, private gardens and vernacular style properties contributes very strongly to the setting of the village and sub-area.

It is possible that a very small amount of development may be accommodated within existing clusters of farmstead settlement, larger garden plots, paddocks or building conversions provided it is informed by further landscape and visual impact assessment and sensitively integrated into the landscape, respecting the historic settlement pattern and locally distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm.

New development in this area would extend the built edge southwards and eat into adjacent paddocks and historic fields. Although the flat land and vegetation structure provides opportunities for small scale barn/ single house forms of development, within paddocks, this would further dominate the village edge and add pressure to sensitive ecological and landscape features. The combination of these factors would result in a largely negative effect on settlement pattern.



## Sub-areas: 157 Ifold Northern Low Weald

### West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW2 North Western Low Weald

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- Gently undulating pastoral landscape.
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees.
- Mature and over-mature oak trees.
- Woodlands often following winding streams.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture.
- Oak - hazel coppice.
- Small and medium sized fields of predominantly pasture with some larger arable fields.
- *(Residential properties around the east and northern edge of Ifold, a distinctive private estate are very atypical of the expected Wealden village centred on village greens with scattered farmsteads and cottages. Consisting of Large executive properties, both modern and historic in nature set within extensive wooded grounds based on a highly noticeable regular organised, planned layout pattern)*
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber *(typical of listed buildings, far less evident in the modern properties, many of which are pastiche).*
- *(Straight drives and planned lanes based on a regimented pattern is atypical of the)* wider character – its next work of winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms *(seen in the surrounding locality).*
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements.
- Lime kilns and brick workings throughout the area *(none noted)*
- Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.
- Diverse natural history.
- Large blocks of ancient, semi-natural woodland.
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife (for example, otters).
- Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) along the Wey & Arun canal towpath.

Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area.
- Encourage conversion of arable fields to permanent pasture.
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws.
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted.
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens.
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods.
- Plant and manage isolated trees in pasture.
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland. Support and promote woodland industries.

- Conserve species rich pasture.
- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests.
- Seek to reduce the extent, intensity and impact of horse grazing. Encourage the planting of tree belts and hedgerows around paddocks.
- Promote the use of current Stewardship schemes or equivalent.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials. *(this is a key issue to note within this parcel)*
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value. *(this is a key issue to note within this parcel)*
- Loss of tranquillity.
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows.
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with little evidence of new young trees.
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features. *(This is a key issue to note within this parcel. Suburban gardens and planting extending out into common land and rural surroundings)*
- Changes in farming practices leading to the expansion or addition of modern farm buildings.
- Quality of public rights of way network vulnerable to increased use *(and intrusive elements such as timber close board fences and garden extensions of large properties out into the countryside installed up against PRowS)*

Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management.
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows.
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees.
- Poor pond management.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Introduction of large farm buildings.
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams.
- Localised increases in traffic on rural roads.
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places.
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use.

Sub-area map:

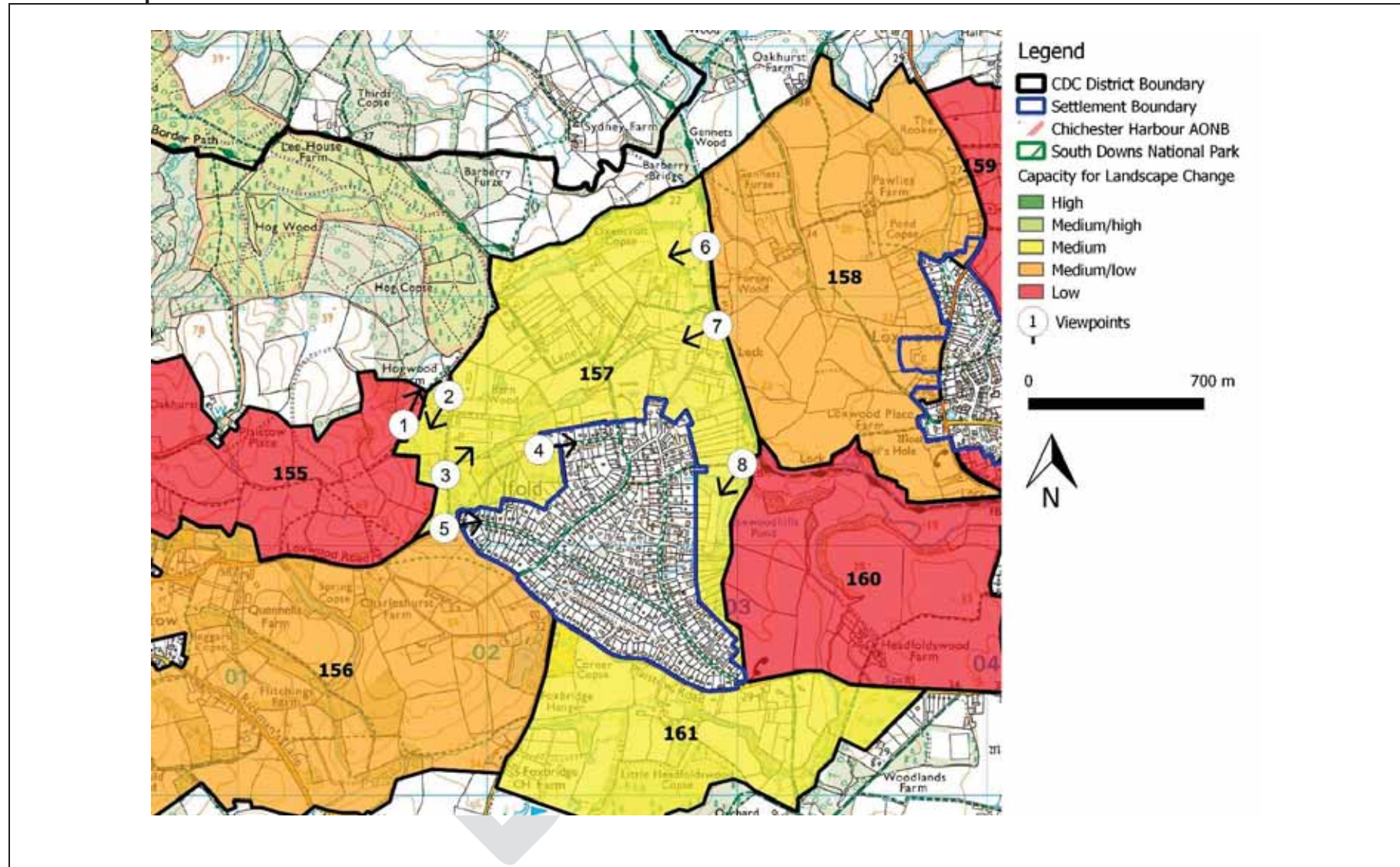


Figure: 157 Ifold Northern Low Weald Sub-areas

### Sub-area description:

Sub-area 157 lies to the north of Ifold settlement edge with land containing a wooded stream valley and gently sloping sides extending from high ground on the western boundary. Along the eastern boundary the land is low lying, flat along the River Lox and Wey & Arun canal corridor and settlement edge. In the north a shallower wooded valley contains a small tributary and lake. The area is predominantly settled and different in character to Ifold with individual dwellings set in a regimented layout of long garden plots and paddocks. Several areas of woodland including ASNW, pockets of heathland and SNCI along canal present. Other land uses include Loxwoodhills Pond that is a notable feature and in the west a number of large, executive properties with extensive gardens set within woodland. This sub-area is heavily influenced by the development of the post war planned layout associated with Ifold settlement.

Ifold is a hamlet that is unique in Chichester district as a modern 1930-1950's planned residential 'estate' layout based on a triangular internal road pattern. Originally part of the historic Ifold estate with its manor house with a later Ifold House (built 1802, demolished 1936). During WWII plots of land sold to build weekend or holiday homes. The hamlet (as it does not contain a church) is described as *'low density of housing, semi-rural, eclectic, residential community, with a large number of trees and vegetation providing seclusion, and a quiet sylvan quality, with close proximity to the adjoining countryside.'* (Plastow & Ifold Parish draft VDS 2017).

The settlement is characteristically rural with a high degree of vegetation, hedges and trees, both native and ornamental in large gardens with grass verges and mature (predominantly oak) trees backing onto large woodland and heathland.

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**

*Photo 1: View northwards towards Hog Copse, illustrating the typical open sinuous field pattern enclosed by woodland. Limits views out and in. A landscape that is well contained and inward facing.*




*Photo 2: View is typical of the residential properties and large, open grounds (off The Forestry Road) found across the western sub-area. Views are short and constrained by buildings and woodland cover.*



*Photo 3: View eastwards from The Forestry Road of extensive woodlands that surround residential properties around the northern edge of Ifold. Views out constrained by woodland.*



*Photo 4: View eastwards from footpath entering Ifold. Garden vegetation and pattern contributes strongly to the settlement edge character. Views generally short and contained.*

	<p><i>Winter photograph.</i></p>
<p><i>Photo 5 View from Loxwood Road into the residential estate of Ifold. Built form lies within a wooded setting which limits long views.</i></p>	<p><i>Photo 6: View eastwards from Wey &amp; Arun Canal/ Wey South National Trail. Views are short due to vegetation cover.</i></p>
<p><i>Winter photograph</i></p>	<p><i>Winter photograph</i></p>
<p><i>Photo 7: View eastwards from Wey &amp; Arun Canal/ Wey South National Trail. Views are short due to tree and hedge boundaries surrounding residential properties, strip linear gardens and land holdings.</i></p>	<p><i>Photo 8: View south across Loxwoodhills Pond from footpath. Views are short due to woodland cover associated with settlement edge.</i></p>

**Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

**1. Visual sensitivity: Medium/Low**

- Panoramic views and landmarks absent.
- Views out of the sub-area to the west are of extensive, continuous woodland; a characteristic feature of this wider landscape character.

- Views in from PRow and two regional routes: Wey South Path and Sussex Border Path associated with the River Lox and Wey & Arun canal.
- Views into the sub-area from adjacent areas of high ground and road (B2133)
- Elsewhere views are highly restricted. Sub-area enclosed by woodland, trees and vegetation.
- Some sensitive receptors, mainly local residents engaged in recreation with expectations of scenic beauty from the canal and away from roads.
- Views on arrival via PRow network from the west are predominantly of an attractive agricultural and rural wooded mosaic landscape.
- Opportunities for mitigation planting based on existing vegetation structure that surrounds large gardens, woods, hedges and verges along rural roads.
- Mitigation planting may interrupt key views into the sub-area across open heathland.
- Views that include the sylvan woodland character; a key feature of the wider landscape character - if lost or removed appreciation the landscape character could be detrimentally altered.

## 2. Landscape sensitivity: Medium/High

- Simple land cover and uses associated with residential properties.
- Several large areas of broadleaved woodland including ASNW and SNCI.
- Native hedgerows, trees and copses provide a pre-planned regimented structure.
- Lakes, ponds, ribbon lakes and streams. Includes Loxwoodhills Pond that has historical interest.
- Wetland and wet meadow associated with steam valley and Loxwoodhills Pond.
- Generally flat lying land, rising in the west.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land with poor (Grade 4) along east edge.
- Small pockets of heathland and wooded over common present.
- Suburban boundary treatments (e.g. brick walls, timber gates and sports fencing). More traditional Sussex chestnut post and rail away from residential properties.
- Limited features of historic landscape character, mainly associated with river valley along eastern edge and on the south western edge of Ifold.
- Distinctive settlement pattern: Individual properties set within rectangular planned plots. Very different to Ifold village that it abuts.
- Contributes to setting of only one listed building (Grade II).



- Reasonably attractive and rural although vegetation, woodland and copses, paddocks and gardens associated with very large executive properties appears highly regular, regimented and pre-planned.
- Enclosed and secluded.
- Tranquillity affected by residential noise, sub-urban lighting and overhead power lines/wires
- Reasonable physical connections with several PRoW and two recreational routes: Wey South Path along the northern edge and the Sussex Border Path along eastern edge.
- Open access land within nearby SDNP can be accessed from this sub-area.

3. Landscape character sensitivity: Medium (combines 1 and 2)

4. **Wider landscape sensitivity: High**

- Settlement edge largely well-vegetated.
- Influenced by / and connection with Ifold to the south.
- Limited visual connection with Ifold.
- Contributes to wider and important sites of ecological value.
- Apart from the extent of mature trees cover, native planting and water features, this sub-area is largely atypical of the wider LCA.

5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium/High (combines 3 and 4)

6. **Landscape value: Medium/Low**

- The sub-area is less typical of the wider LCA except for the south west corner containing woodland, common and heathland.
- Reasonably served by PRoW network that includes two regionally important national trails
- Contributes to the setting of the Ifold village character
- Contains Designated Green Spaces

7. Landscape capacity: Medium (combines 5 and 6)

<p><b>Potential effect on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on rural views from PRoW and national trails</li> <li>• Impact on views of Loxwoodhills Pond</li> <li>• Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of mature field oaks within grass verges, roadsides</li> <li>• Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland, copses and riparian vegetation</li> <li>• Loss of wetland and damp pasture</li> <li>• Loss of heathland</li> <li>• Loss of medium to good quality soils</li> <li>• Impacts on historic landscape features; small area of medieval assart fields, ASNW</li> <li>• Alteration to the natural hydrology, Loxwoodhills Pond ditches and watercourse network/ system</li> <li>• Impacts on the naturally undulating land and incised stream valley</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural, sylvian landscape setting of Ifold</li> <li>• Impacts on scattered, isolated farmstead</li> <li>• Impacts on PRoW network</li> <li>• Effect on SNCI</li> <li>• Strongly wooded settlement edge and its sylvan qualities</li> <li>• Impacts on tranquillity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting associated with Ifold village if additional built form introduced into gardens, extending and altering the characteristic low density settlement pattern beyond Ifold village.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of all very good, good to moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features</li> <li>• Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value</li> <li>• Restoring lost field boundaries and copses</li> <li>• Retaining legibility and setting of PRoW network and creating additional links</li> <li>• Conserve the rural character of lanes</li> <li>• Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural lanes</li> <li>• Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings</li> <li>• Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead telephone cables</li> </ul>

### **Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area**

Sub-area 157 has a medium capacity, and is less constrained by the nature of existing residential settlement pattern with long gardens and paddocks. Elsewhere the area is more constrained by the presence of interlinked ponds, man-made Loxwoodhills Pond, large woodland, River Lox riparian corridor, its flood zones, heathland, and designated sites. There are limited views from PRow, Forest Road, B2133 and the Sussex Border Path (national trail) and Wey South Path (National Trail) along the Wey& Arun canal. Generally views are highly restricted by woodland, trees and vegetation. Several ASNW and SNCI's present. The area retains a clear sense of history through its unique residential pattern and the sub-division of land into linear, regimented plots. The area contains a few of the characteristic features typical of the wider LCA with large garden sizes, verges and road frontages forming an important amenity characteristic of the settlement. The 'privately managed estate' naturally restricts the number of visitors to residents and occasional walkers. Closer to the settlement edge tranquillity has been slightly affected by suburban elements and busy road.

It is possible that a very small amount of development may be accommodated within existing larger, strip gardens or consider existing building conversions (similar to the presumption that is in favour of development within the Settlement Boundary set out within the adopted CDC Local Plan) provided it is informed by overall assessment of housing density and informed by a landscape and visual impact assessment to ensure development can be sensitively integrated into the landscape, respects the historic settlement pattern and local distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm. The sub-area to the north and west contains the most sensitive of landscape features and is therefore more constrained in landscape terms.

**Sub-area: 158 Loxwood Western Low Weald**

**West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: majority of the parcel covered by LW2 North Western Low Weald with small area of LW4 Low Weald Hills to the south west of the Conservation Area and LW3 Upper Arun Valley along the Wey & Arun canal valley.**

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- Gently undulating pastoral (*and arable*) landscape.
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees.
- Mature and over-mature oak trees (*a notable feature within fields and alongside PRow / tracks*)
- Woodlands often following winding streams.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture.
- Oak - hazel coppice.
- Small and medium sized fields of predominantly pasture with some larger arable fields.
- Wealden villages, some centred on village greens, scattered farmsteads and cottages (*farmsteads e.g. Pawlies Farm are notable, situated on higher ground with views out over the surrounding landscape*)
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber.
- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms.
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements.
- Medieval moated sites at Loxwood (*noted but hard to access*)
- Lime kilns and brick workings throughout the area. (*none noted*)
- Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.
- Diverse natural history.
- Large blocks of ancient, semi-natural woodland.
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife
- Mostly narrow valleys with undulating valley sides. (LW3)
- Lush valley bottoms with small, drained, irregularly shaped pastures. (LW3)
- The Wey and Arun Junction Canal which is currently being restored. (LW3)
- Mostly rural unspoilt character except for.....some road and aircraft noise in places. (LW3)
- Distinctive stone and brick bridges. (LW3)
- Moated farmsteads (*Loxwood Place Farm*). (LW3)
- Wey and Arun Canal. (LW3)
- Rich marginal vegetation along many riverbanks and watercourses supporting notable dragonfly interest. (LW3)
- Small valley side broadleaved woodlands. (LW3)
- Blocks and strips of interconnecting woodland, including a large number of blocks of ancient woodland. (LW4)

- Mostly rural character with intricate patchwork of small to medium size pasture fields with a combination of sinuous and straight boundaries. (LW4)
- Strong pattern of shaws and hedgerows enclosing fields with mature single oaks in hedgerows and fields. (LW4)
- Steep, secretive wooded ghylls. (LW4)
- Some suburban development on village edges. (*noted along the eastern edge of Loxwood*) (LW4)
- Moated sites (*of Loxwood*). (LW4)
- Small to medium-sized linear fields associated with old droveways. (LW4)
- Small and large irregular fields carved out of woodland (assarts). (LW4)
- Many historic farmsteads (*Loxwood Place Farm*). (LW4)
- Ancient woodland. (LW4)
- Extensive semi-natural broad-leaved woodlands linked by hedgerows and shaws particularly on the heavy clay hill tops and alongside gill valleys. Inter-connected woodland of special value. (LW4)
- Woodland important for tree species such as small-leaved lime and wild service tree. (LW4)
- Gill woodland. (LW4)
- Mosses and liverworts in the gill woodlands are of national significance. (LW4)

#### Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area.
- Encourage conversion of arable fields to permanent pasture.
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws.
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted.
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens.
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods.
- Plant and manage isolated trees in pasture.
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland. Support and promote woodland industries.
- Conserve species rich pasture.
- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials. (*has occurred on the western edge of Loxwood*)
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value.
- Loss of tranquillity.
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows.
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with little evidence of new young trees.
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features.

- Changes in farming practices leading to the expansion or addition of modern farm buildings (*noted during fieldwork*)
- Quality of public rights of way network vulnerable to increased use
- Conserve the rural character of the valley. (LW3)
- Ensure any development on the valley sides respects historic settlement pattern, form and building materials, and is integrated into existing landscape pattern of small woodlands and hedgerows. (LW3)
- Conserve and manage valley side woodland and hedgerows. (LW3)
- Create new wetland areas such as reed beds and marsh. (LW3)
- Conserve the wildlife potential of wetland areas by controlling scrub, to avoid suppressing marshland plants and drying out of the ground. (LW3)
- Promote the use of pollarding of wetland trees and shrubs as a management technique. (LW3)
- Where possible enhance the wildlife potential of river banks and drainage channels by reprofiling in a sympathetic manner. (LW3)
- Encourage clearance cycles of watercourses that increase floristic diversity. (LW3)
- The overall condition is good .....Overall sensitivity to change is high, reflecting many landscape qualities of the area, and visual prominence of some valley sides. (LW3)
- Conserve the rural quality of the area including the pattern of the agricultural landscape, the intricate patchwork of small scale fields, and linked woodland, and the intimate and unobtrusive settlement pattern throughout much of the area. (LW4)
- Maintain and strengthen the interlinking network of hedgerows, woodland and shaws. Restore shaws/hedgerows and single hedgerow trees throughout pasture land. (LW4)
- Ensure any development respects historic settlement pattern and form, and building materials. (LW4)
- Conserve and enhance the historic character of small scale field patterns, scattered development, and moated sites (*this is most relevant*). (LW4)
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land-use change, and avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials (*which is seen along the western edge of the village*) (LW4)

#### Key sensitivities are:

- Small scale incremental changes eroding rural character. (LW3)
- Maintenance of historic character made up of dispersed historic farm and manor buildings, stone bridges and small irregular fields. (LW3)
- Loss of riverside trees and vegetation. (LW3)
- Any development which would damage the integrity of the valley floor or sides. (LW3)
- Change in agricultural practices – pasture improvement and land drainage. (LW3)
- Change to river banks and drainage for wildlife by unsympathetic reprofiling. (LW3)
- Any large scale housing/commercial development. (LW3)
- Cumulative impact of small scale change. (LW4)
- Any large scale housing/commercial development. (LW4)

#### Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management.
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows.

- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Introduction of large farm buildings.
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams.
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places.
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use.
- Introduction of concreted sections on river banks. (LW3)
- Possible pressures for engineered flood defences. (LW3)
- Loss of hedgerows and woodland on valley sides. (LW3)
- Decline in traditional land management. (LW3)
- Noise from Gatwick Airport (*and military aircraft*). (LW4)
- Localised development pressures for urban development. (LW4)
- Localised intrusion from suburban features (*including telecom mast and Leylandii hedging/ trees*). (LW4)
- Localised loss of hedgerows and shaws. (LW4)
- Expansion of horse paddocks. (LW4)
- Increasing development on narrow historic lanes (*only one significant historic lane containing bridleway accessed form west side of Loxwood village, an important and notable feature within this parcel which has been affected by recent development*). (LW4)
- Increasing traffic pressures on narrow lanes and minor roads due to proximity of urban areas. (LW4)
- Poor woodland and hedgerow/shaw management. (LW4)
- Poor pond management. (LW4)

Sub-area map:

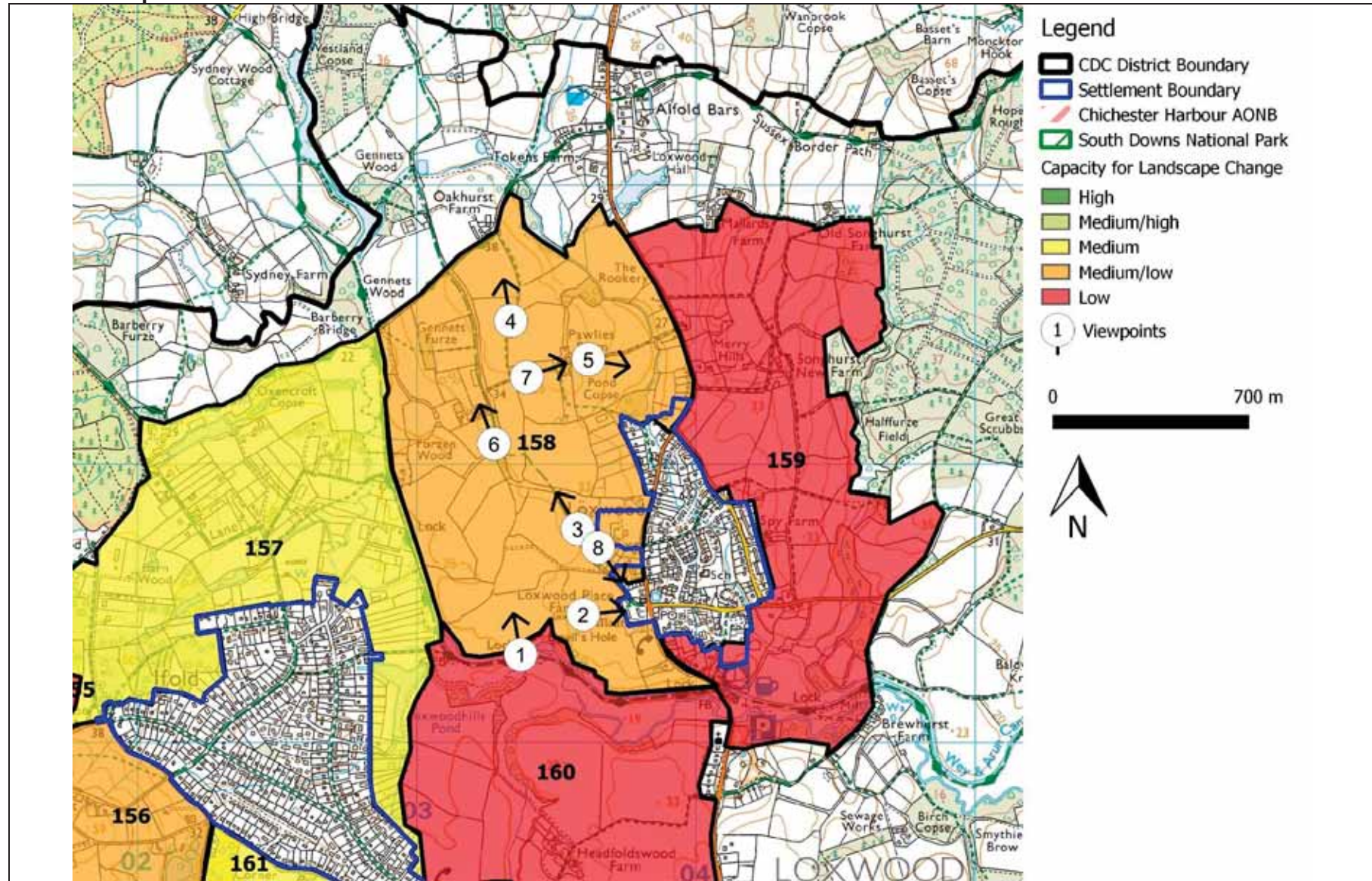


Figure 158: Capacity of landscape to accept change and location of photographic viewpoints



Sub-area description:

Sub-area 158 comprises of a localised river-cut escarpment following the Rover Lox valley bottom, with land gently rising from 25m towards a domed plateau at around 35m to the north. The south boundary follows the River Lox and Wey & Arun canal corridor. The eastern boundary includes the western edge of the settlement. To the north the boundary follows the line of the Sussex Border path and in the east the Wey & Arun canal. The area is predominantly rural containing extensive gardens, paddocks and arable fields with hedges and trees, heathland, scrubland, furze, copses and wood meadow (SNCI). Sparsely-settled away from Loxwood village, the area is crossed by farm tracks leading to isolated farmsteads e.g. Pawlies Farm and Oakhurst Farm. Ribbon settlement exists along the B2133.

Loxwood is a small, typical village of the Low Weald comprising of a historic core with small pockets of modern infill development built in the vernacular style and materials with modern development occurring mainly on the southern edge. Evidence of recent and successful residential infilling within the village. Visible along the settlements western edge as it faces out over open fields, however very recent development is well screened and integrated into the existing mature trees and tall hedge structure.

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**



*Photo 1: View north west from junction of footpath with the Wey & Arun canal. Mid-range views across agricultural land and gently rising topography that lies to the west of Loxwood edge.*



*Photo 2: View east of Loxwood settlement edge and moated feature next to house (to the right of central tree). Views short due to housing and mature vegetation/trees.*



*Photo 3: View north-west along trackway defined on either side by raised linear banks and mature vegetation. Known locally as 'Roman Road', a likely ancient droveway and ancient route that defines and lies adjacent to the settlement edge. Views out limited until track crossed open farmland to the north.*



*Photo 4: View north from footpath towards Oakhurst Farm. Example of higher, plateau within the northern part of the sub-area. Long-distant views towards wooded horizon are a feature of this sub-area.*



*Photo 5: View south east from footpath by Pawlies Farm. Views from high ground overlooking rolling wooded field landscape incised by valleys containing main roads (B2133).*

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*Photo 6: View north east from bridleway (ancient track known locally as 'Roman Road') – settlement edge contains farmstead, paddocks and woodlands (Gennets Furze). Long-distant views limited by vegetation and buildings. Visually well contained.*



*Photo 7: View from track/footpath leading to Pawlies Farm. A collection of traditional farm buildings demonstrate the local vernacular style and nucleated building pattern.*



*Photo 8: View south east from footpath looking at Loxwood settlement edge. Small-scale field pattern adjacent to settlement edge. Openness and visibility between settlement and countryside are two important features of this sub-area character.*

**Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

**1. Visual Sensitivity: Medium**

- Panoramic views from PRoW crossing elevated plateau at Pawlies Farm
- Notable far-reaching views from elevated ground crossed by PRoW, with views generally more outward than inward looking across the sub-area.
- Views into the area from PRoW, Wey & Arun Canal, Wey South Path (National Trail), tracks/ green lane (historic route) and B2133.
- Views into the area from farmsteads and residential properties
- Range of key sensitive viewers (receptors), mainly local residents with canal visitors; all with high expectations of scenic beauty from the canal and away from roads.

- Opportunities for mitigation planting based on existing vegetation structure / copses and to reintroduce lost field boundaries and creating new footpaths and bridleway routes and connections reducing pressure on historic, ancient routes containing PRow.
- Mitigation planting especially on plateau next to the village edge may interrupt key views to north east and contribute to a loss of openness and alteration to local historic field pattern.

## 2. **Landscape sensitivity: Medium/High**

- Open arable farmland enclosed by strong structure of native hedgerows, wood copses, wooded belts and ‘furze’ heath land (with place names of pre 7<sup>th</sup> century origins), native woodland and riparian habitat alongside the Wey & Arun Canal to south.
- Historic linear features (ditch/bank) enclosing field and ASNW.
- Hedgerows and historic routes, both of strong character adding to perception of time depth.
- Stream linked to Loxwood Hall Lake and tributaries in the north.
- Distinctive elevated plateau that drops steeply into the River Lox valley to south.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land.
- Evidence of historic landscape pattern with medieval assart fields, ASNW and includes moated feature surrounding Loxwood Place Farm on settlement edge.
- Largely rural, attractive with arable and pasture fields surrounding large, traditional and distinctive isolated farmsteads and dominated by the well vegetated residential edge of Loxwood.
- Ribbon settlement (larger individual properties and equestrian ménages) with long private gardens and paddocks (immediately adjacent to Loxwood village edge and B2133).
- Fieldscape contributes to settings of listed buildings (Grade II).
- A generally open landscape with enclosure from field boundaries, green lane around the settlement edge. Perceived as peaceful, pleasant and attractive rural setting with views out; of positive scenic value.
- Tranquillity affected by intrusive power lines and urbanising elements and noise along the B2133. Away from roads tranquillity is immediately noticeable and a key characteristic.
- Dark Skies prevail.
- Several PRow and recreational route: Sussex Border Path (National Trail). Good physical connection between the surrounding landscape, farmsteads and the village of Loxwood.
- Area well used and valued for recreation/ tourism aspect.
- Small area of open access land by canal lock.
- Includes Local Green Space: Land at North Hall identified in the Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan

## 3. Landscape character sensitivity: Medium/High (combines 1 and 2)

**4. Wider landscape sensitivity: Medium/High**

- Settlement edge largely well-vegetated.
- Influenced by / and connected to Loxwood.
- Sub-area feels strongly rural and part of the wider countryside and separate from built up areas.
- Visual connection to the high weald forests and ridgelines north and west.
- The sub-area is typical of the wider LCA.

**5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium/High (combines 3 and 4)****6. Landscape value: Medium**

- Contains sites of important ecological value, including SNCIs and Ancient woodland
- Well-served by PRoW and road network
- Contributes to the setting of Grade II listed buildings
- Contains two regionally important trails

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7. Landscape capacity: Medium/Low (combines 5 and 6)

<p><b>Potential effect on key visual characteristic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on views out from edge of village</li> <li>• Impact on rural views from PRow across high ground / plateau</li> <li>• Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of mature field oaks (individuals and stands/groups)</li> <li>• Impact on the wooded settlement edge</li> <li>• Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland, copses and riparian vegetation</li> <li>• Loss of wetland and wet meadows</li> <li>• Loss of heathland</li> <li>• Loss of good quality productive arable soils</li> <li>• Impacts on historic landscape features; moat, medieval assart fields, ASNW, Ancient semi-natural medieval assarted woodland.</li> <li>• Alteration to the natural hydrology, watercourse network/ system</li> <li>• Impacts on the gently undulating rolling landscape that contains a notable ridgeline</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Loxwood</li> <li>• Impacts on the setting of isolated scattered farmsteads</li> <li>• Impacts to the setting of a few listed buildings</li> <li>• Impacts on PRow network and linkages to national trails</li> <li>• Impact on the semi-open/enclosed character associated with medieval assart</li> <li>• Impacts on tranquillity</li> <li>• Impact on historic ancient drove road /“green lane”, known locally as roman road</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting, and on the wooded / field pattern that surrounds Loxwood village, if development were to be extended beyond the well-defined settlement boundary.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of all very good, good to moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features</li> <li>• Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value</li> <li>• Restoring lost field boundaries and copses</li> <li>• Retaining legibility and setting of PRow network and creating additional links</li> <li>• Conserve the rural character of lanes</li> <li>• Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural lanes</li> <li>• Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings</li> <li>• Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead power and telephone cables crossing rural, open fields</li> </ul>

### Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area

Sub-area 158 has a medium / low capacity, constrained by its strong rural character, distinctive plateau topography and its role as an integral part of the rural setting of nearby settlement. The sub-area is well-served by an excellent network of bridleways and footpaths crossing the Low Weald and joining with those in adjacent Counties. It is well used and travelled though by locals and visitors. There are views from public footpaths, the canal and the Wey South Path and rural lanes/ farm tracks, with far-reaching views from PRow and plateau looking north.

The area retains a clear sense of history, especially with the proximity of the canal with Devils Hole, the moated manor site, the settlement's historic core and listed buildings, a likely historic drove route (trackway / 'green' lane containing linear bank features) and medieval assarted field pattern extending around the settlement edge. ASNW present with medieval assarted woodland and medieval assart fields surround well-settled farmsteads. This sub-area contains many of the characteristics that describe the 3 LCAs (Low Weald and Low Weald Hills and River Arun Valley), including furze woodland, heathland and high levels of tranquillity.

It is possible that a very small amount of additional development may be accommodated around farmsteads as existing building/barn conversions provided it is informed by further landscape and visual impact assessment and sensitively integrated into the landscape, respecting the historic farmstead pattern and local distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm. On the edge and within the settlement boundary 3 SHLAA sites for residential development have been identified with the intention to concentrate development within the Settlement Boundary.

It is unlikely that further development along the settlement edge may be accommodated and integrated without adverse negative effect on both the landscape character and the historic features, views and 'openness' across plateau of high ground.

Outside this settlement boundary the sub-area is more constrained in landscape terms.

**Sub-area: 159 Loxwood Eastern Low Weald****West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW4 Low Weald Hills across the majority of the parcel with LW3 Upper Arun Valley along the Wey & Arun canal valley.**

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- *(Undulating, low and notable open ridgeline to the east of Loxwood settlement edge running the length of the parcel from north –south)*
- Blocks and strips of interconnecting woodland, including a large number of blocks of ancient woodland. Western area characterised by woodland of some size *(although these tend to define the parcel's eastern boundary).*
- Mostly rural character with intricate patchwork of small to medium size pasture fields with a combination of sinuous and straight boundaries.
- Strong pattern of shaws and hedgerows enclosing fields with mature single oaks in hedgerows and fields.
- Network of narrow lanes, sometimes sunken, cross the area with strong definition north-south. Many of them are former droveways for cattle, pigs and sheep.
- Steep, secretive wooded gills.
- Includes the main tributaries of Arun which meander through mostly narrow valleys with undulating valley sides.
- Dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farms, cottages, hamlets *(farmsteads Spy and Songhurst New farm and landmark properties on Merry Hills)* are set on higher ground. Farm cottages dispersed along lanes. *(Loxwood)* forms a particularly attractive area with a traditional core. Some suburban development on village edges *(west not east).*
- Strong historic vernacular of sandstone, half timber and plaster/brick, tile hanging and weatherboarding *(notable on the east settlement edge).*
- Small to medium-sized linear fields associated with old droveways.
- Small and large irregular fields carved out of woodland (assarts).
- Many historic farmsteads and cottages.
- Ancient woodland.
- Extensive semi-natural broad-leaved woodlands linked by hedgerows and shaws particularly on the heavy clay hill tops and alongside gill valleys. Inter-connected woodland of special value.
- Many ancient semi-natural woodlands, but some replanted conifer *(extensive woodland seen along the parcel's eastern boundary).*
- Woodland important for tree species such as small-leaved lime and wild service tree.
- Gill woodland.
- Mosses and liverworts in the gill woodlands are of national significance.
- Field corner ponds add to habitat interest. Support amphibian populations.
- Upper tributaries of the river Arun contain marginal vegetation and wetland trees.
- Many shaws.
- Unimproved pasture
- Mostly narrow valleys with undulating valley sides. (LW3)
- Lush valley bottoms with small, drained, irregularly shaped pastures *(a notable feature).* (LW3)
- Occasional curving strips of woodland on valley sides *(a notable feature).* (LW3)
- Tightly meandering and steeply banked river and stream courses. (LW3)
- The Wey and Arun Junction Canal which is currently being restored. (LW3)

- Mostly rural unspoilt character except for urban edge ...and some road and aircraft noise in places. (LW3)
- Distinctive stone and brick bridges (*associate with the canal*). (LW3)
- Historic mill (*near Brewhurst Farm*).v
- Small irregular field pattern (*on higher valley sides*). (LW3)
- Wey and Arun Canal (*and lock structures*). (LW3)
- Rich marginal vegetation along many riverbanks and watercourses supporting notable dragonfly interest. (LW3)
- Small valley side broadleaved woodlands. (LW3)
- Unimproved pastures. (LW3)
- Small ancient woodlands. (LW3)

#### Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

- Conserve the rural quality of the area including the pattern of the agricultural landscape, the intricate patchwork of small scale fields, and linked woodland, and the intimate and unobtrusive settlement pattern throughout much of the area.
- Conserve and enhance rural wooded character, including the distinctive form of ridgetop woodlands and gill woodlands. Encourage positive management and long term woodland regeneration.
- Maintain and strengthen the interlinking network of hedgerows, woodland and shaws. Restore shaws/hedgerows and single hedgerow trees throughout pasture land.
- Ensure any development respects historic settlement pattern and form, and building materials.
- Conserve and enhance the historic character of small scale field patterns, scattered development, and moated sites.
- Respect the historic character of rural roads and lanes notably those with sunken profiles. Consider appropriate traffic management strategies to reduce traffic pressures on the narrow lanes.
- Conserve ..... parkland... estate boundary features.
- Manage the upper tributaries of the Arun to retain nature conservation interest. Ensure any development respects the form, aspect and natural features of river valleys and watercourses.
- Maintain and manage field and woodland ponds, for landscape and nature conservation value.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land-use change, and avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Avoid skyline development and ensure any new development is well integrated into the wider landscape. Use new woodland, shaw and hedgerow planting as appropriate.
- Plant new woodland and hedgerows around village fringes. Promote the planting of amenity trees throughout new housing development.
- Encourage more sympathetic management of horse paddocks. Avoid unsightly fencing. Encourage new hedge and tree planting outside unsightly fence lines. Conserve and enhance existing hedgerows and tree belts around paddocks.
- The overall condition is good. Overall sensitivity to change is high, reflecting many landscape qualities of the area, and visual prominence of some valley sides. (LW3). Despite the high degree of enclosure in many parts of the area, some ridgetops and slopes are prominent with distinctive long views to both North and South Downs and across the Crawley Vale to the High Weald Forests (LW4). (*the ability to appreciate the far reaching views out from the ridgeline is a particular feature of this parcel's character*)
- Conserve the rural character of the valley. (LW3)

- Ensure any development respects historic settlement pattern, form and building materials, and is integrated into existing landscape pattern of small woodlands and hedgerows. (LW3)
- Promote natural watercourse management avoiding the introduction of engineered flood defences. (LW3)
- Conserve and manage valley side woodland and hedgerows. (LW3)
- Create new wetland areas such as reed beds and marsh. (LW3)
- Conserve the wildlife potential of wetland areas by controlling scrub, to avoid suppressing marshland plants and drying out of the ground. (LW3)
- Promote the use of pollarding of wetland trees and shrubs as a management technique. (LW3)
- Conserve historic stone and brick bridges. (LW3)
- Conserve and extend existing grassland, managing for species richness. (LW3)
- Where possible enhance the wildlife potential of river banks and drainage channels by reprofiling in a sympathetic manner. (LW3)
- Encourage clearance cycles of watercourses that increase floristic diversity. (LW3)

Key sensitivities are:

- Loss of woodland along ridgetops and valley slopes.
- Cumulative impact of small scale change.
- Any large scale housing/commercial development (*would be inappropriate and out of character with the intimate, small-scale pattern along the east and western village edges*)
- Cumulative impact of vertical structures on ridge slopes and ridgetops.
- Small scale incremental land management change, e.g. expansion of horse paddocks (*and fields used for sheep grazing immediately adjacent to property gardens that lie along the settlements east edge*)
- Erosion of the narrow country lanes.
- Any development that would damage the integrity of gills or river valleys.
- Small scale incremental changes eroding rural character. (LW3)
- Maintenance of historic character made up of stone bridges and small irregular fields. (LW3)
- Loss of riverside trees and vegetation. (LW3)
- Any development which would damage the integrity of the valley floor or sides. (LW3)
- Unsympathetic flood defences. (LW3)
- Change in agricultural practices – pasture improvement and land drainage. (LW3)
- Change to river banks and drainage for wildlife by unsympathetic re-profiling. (LW3)
- Any large scale housing/commercial development. (LW3)

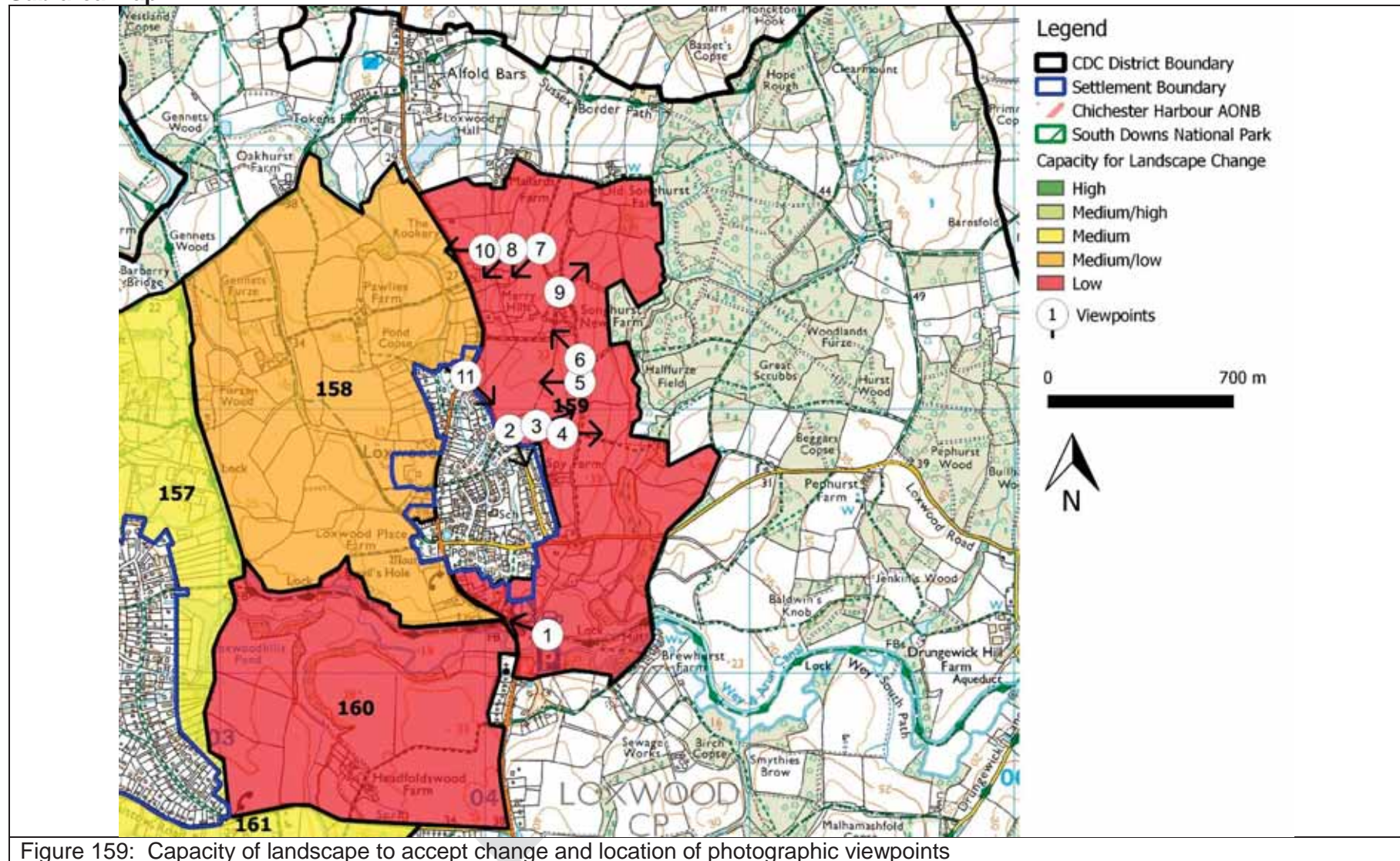
Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Localised intrusion from suburban features.
- Localised loss of hedgerows and shaws.
- Expansion of horse paddocks.
- Increasing development on narrow historic lanes.
- Increasing traffic pressures on narrow lanes and minor roads.

- Poor woodland and hedgerow/shaw management.
- Poor pond management.
- Introduction of concreted sections on river banks. (LW3)
- Possible pressures for engineered flood defences. (LW3)
- Loss of hedgerows and woodland on valley sides. (LW3)
- Decline in traditional land management. (LW3)
- Pressure for further urban development. (LW3)
- Potential for increased recreational pressures. (LW3)

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Sub-area map:



**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 159 comprises of a long, narrow rolling ridgeline running north-south through its centre with the B2133 and settlement edge forming the western boundary. Extensive areas of woodland and wooded stream valley border the eastern boundary. The area is predominantly rural, arable and pastures fields although influenced by proximity of the settlement edge with other land uses including large gardens, orchards, paddocks, equestrian uses, and the canal. The area is predominantly rural with scattered isolated farmsteads and occasional individual dwellings (off Merry Hill Lane) linked to Loxwood by the B2133 and a network of PRow that cross over and follow the line of the ridge.

Loxwood is a small, typical village of the Low Weald comprising of a historic core with small pockets of modern infill development built in the vernacular style and materials with modern development occurring mainly on the southern edge. Evidence of recent and successful residential infilling within the village. Visible along the settlements western edge as it faces out over open fields, however very recent development is well screened and integrated into the existing mature trees and tall hedge structure.

For more detail refer to record sheets.



**Photographs:**



*Photo 1: View west along the Wey & Arun canal. Views contained by built-form, vegetation and landform.*



*Photo 2: View of Loxwood more urban settlement edge character.*

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*Photo 3: View east from footpath exiting edge of Loxwood settlement. Woodland and small scale field boundary pattern limits long-distant views.*



*Photo 4: View east exiting the edge of Loxwood. Open, arable farmland and distinctive topography - a distinctive feature of this sub-area Views extends from the higher ground out to the far distant horizon.*

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*Photo 5: View of Loxwood's eastern settlement edge from footpath along ridgeline. A 360 degree panoramic view noted from this elevated position. A well-used recreational amenity and valued location.*



*Photo 6: View north west towards Merry Hills from footpath along ridgeline. Typical of the edge setting to Loxwood settlement.*



*Photo 7: View south west with Merry Hills in the foreground with long-distant views to the horizon*

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*Photo 8: View south west illustrating paddocks associated with ribbon settlement along the B2133. Ridgeline affords far-reaching panoramic views across sub-area.*



*Photo 9: View north east across farmland from junction of 4 footpaths by Songhurst New Farm. Glimpsed far-distant views framed by trees and vegetation, ancient woodland.*



*Photo 10: Looking west panoramic views seen from footpath running along ridgeline. B2133 and ribbon settlement in the foreground along the valley floor. Typical of larger field pattern and wooded setting.*



*Photo 11: View south towards Loxwood's more rural settlement edge character. Gardens contribute to well-vegetated settlement edge character..*

### **Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

#### **1. Visual Sensitivity: High**

- Series of panoramic views (far reaching in all directions) from the PRow network that crosses ridgeline. views from high ground being particularly noteworthy.
- Ability to appreciate the far reaching views out from the ridgeline is a particular feature of this sub-area, despite the high degree of enclosure elsewhere in the sub-area. Ridgetops and slopes beyond the sub-area are prominent with distinctive long views to both North and South Downs and across the Crawley Vale to the High Weald Forests.
- Views into the area from PRow, Wey South Path (National Trail), Wey & Arun Canal and local roads.
- Views from ridgeline looking westwards at and across settlement.
- Views into the area from farmsteads and residential properties
- Isolated, mature trees act as landmarks against skyline.
- Area contains views of Loxwood hall's distinctive landmark clock and bell tower.

- Wide range of sensitive viewers (receptors) with high expectations of scenic beauty particularly from the canal and away from roads. Evidence of rural PRoW that appear well worn and regularly used.
- Rural area with positive scenic value and included in published walks; hence views likely to be valued by locals and visitors.
- Opportunities for mitigation planting building on existing hedgerow structure to reintroduce lost field boundaries (introducing small woods, deciduous copses and tree belts would be in character), but may interrupt key views and 'open' character across rolling ridge topography.
- Generally a more open than enclosed field landscape containing mature field (oak) trees.

## 2. Landscape Sensitivity: High

- Wooded stream / river valley and canal with riparian habitat, wet meadows
- Arable and pasture fields surrounding large farmsteads. Perceived as a semi-open/enclosed landscape derived from small to medium scale arable field pattern.
- Area dominated by native hedgerows, small copses and wooded shaws. Individual field trees and Ancient replanted woodland.
- Wey & Arun Canal, River Lox and ditches.
- Gently undulating rolling landscape that contains a notable ridgeline. Ridge lies immediately to east of settlement edge and is a distinctive feature in the sub-area.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land.
- Evidence of sensitive historic landscape pattern. Contains medieval assart fields, medieval hamlet manor site (moated) and historic mill alongside the river valley and Wey & Arun canal.
- Strong cultural associations with industrial heritage linked to canal and water mill.
- Contributes to/ includes Loxwood hall designed landscape / informal parkland.
- Contributes to the setting of many listed buildings (Grade II)
- Settlement pattern mixed: Loxwood settlement itself, scattered farmsteads and large grouped properties.
- Private gardens and paddocks (immediately adjacent to Loxwood village edge and B2133).
- Generally peaceful, pleasant and attractive rural setting with views out; of positive scenic value.
- Dark Skies prevail.
- Tranquillity affected by intrusive overhead power/telephone lines, urbanising elements from equestrian developments and noise along the B2133 and rural lanes. Away from roads tranquillity is immediately noticeable; and key characteristic feature.
- Many PRoW footpaths and links to recreational routes: Sussex Border path to the north and the Wey South Path that follows the line of the Wey and Arun Canal. Good physical connection between the surrounding landscape, farmsteads and the village of Loxwood.
- Area well used and valued from a recreation/ tourism aspect.

## 3. Landscape Character Sensitivity: High (combines 1 and 2)

#### 4. **Wider Landscape Sensitivity: Medium/High**

- Settlement edge largely well-vegetated although influenced by semi-open paddocks along the eastern edge.
- Influenced by / and connected to Loxwood.
- Sub-area feels strongly rural and part of the wider countryside and separate from built up areas.
- Visual connection to the high weald forests and ridgelines to the north and north-west.
- The sub-area is typical of the wider LCA.

#### 5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: High (combines 3 and 4)

#### 6. **Landscape Value: Medium**

- Contains one regionally important trail
- Contains sites of important ecological value, including SNCIs and Ancient woodland
- Well-served by PRoW and road network
- Contributes to the setting of Grade II listed buildings
- Contributes to the setting of the Loxwood village
- Contains historic features and interpretation of industrial canal heritage

#### 7. Landscape Capacity: Low (combines 5 and 6)



**Potential effect on key visual characteristics**

- Impact on views from Wey South Path (National Trail) along the Wey& Arun canal
- Impact on views when travelling along the Wey& Arun canal
- Impact on views out from edge of village
- Impact on a key panoramic view from high ground / rolling ridgeline overlooking Spy Farm and village are interesting and particularly noteworthy.
- Impact on panoramic rural views from PRoW, particularly from the rolling ridgeline
- Impact on long views to both North and South Downs and across the Crawley Vale to the High Weald Forests
- Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character
- Impact on Loxwood Hall's bell/clock tower
- Impact on individual field oaks to east of village, on rolling ridgeline seen against the skyline
- Impact on rural views from PRoW

**Potential effect on key landscape characteristics**

- Loss of mature field oaks (individuals and stands/groups)
- Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland, copses and riparian vegetation
- Loss of wetland and wet meadows
- Loss of orchards
- Loss of good quality productive arable soils
- Impacts on historic landscape features; large areas of medieval assart fields, historic mill and industrial canal heritage.
- Alteration to the natural hydrology, ponds, watercourse network/ system
- Impacts on the gently undulating rolling landscape that contains a notable ridgeline
- Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Loxwood
- Impacts on the rural landscape setting of the Wey& Arun canal
- Impacts on the setting of isolated scattered farmsteads
- Impacts to the setting of many listed buildings
- Impacts on PRoW network and linkages to national trails
- Impact on the semi-open/enclosed associated with medieval assart small to medium scale arable fields
- Impacts on tranquillity

**Potential effect on key settlement characteristics**

- Impacts on the rural landscape setting, its open edge character and erosion of separation with ribbon settlements and dispersed farmsteads, if development were to be extended beyond the well-defined settlement edge.

**Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure**

- Retention of all very good, good to moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features
- Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value
- Restoring lost field boundaries and copses
- Retaining legibility and setting of PRoW network and creating additional links
- Conserve the rural character of lanes
- Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural lanes
- Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings
- Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead power and telephone cables crossing rural, open fields

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### **Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area**

Sub-area 159 has a low capacity, constrained by its strong rural character, distinctive topography and its role as an integral part of the rural setting of nearby settlement.

Within the Rover Lox valley, there are views from public footpaths, the canal, the Wey South Path and from rural lanes/ farm tracks. Despite the high degree of enclosure in many parts of the area, some ridge tops and slopes are prominent. From the PRow network that criss-crosses the rolling ridgeline there are notable and distinctive long far reaching views to both the North and South Downs and across the Crawley Vale to the High Weald Forests. PRow also afford clear, close views towards and across the settlement edge and Loxwood Hall clock bell tower. The area retains a clear sense of history with the majority of area covered by medieval assarted fields surrounding the historic settlement core. Small area of designed landscape / informal parkland and features associated with the area's River Lox mill and industrial canal heritage present. Contributes to the setting of many listed buildings located on the edge of Loxwood and within the sub-area. This sub-area contains many of the characteristics that describe the 2 LCAs (Low Weald Hills and River Arun Valley), is well used and travelled through by locals and visitors with tranquillity somewhat negatively affected by equestrian related paraphernalia and the B2133.

It is possible that a small number of isolated dwellings (in the form of ribbon development within paddocks and equestrian facilities) may be accommodated along both sides of the B2133 provided. This form of development is informed by further landscape and visual impact assessment and sensitively integrated into the landscape, respecting the historic settlement pattern and local distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm.

Any development in this sub-area would extend the influence of Loxwood village eastwards and would impact on sensitive ecological and landscape features, detrimentally affecting the village's eastern setting. The combination of these factors is likely to result in a negative effect on settlement pattern.

**Sub-area: 160 Ifold Eastern Low Weald**

**West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW2 North Western Low Weald across the majority of the area with LW3 Upper Arun Valley along the Wey & Arun canal valley (parcel's northern edge).**

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

**LCA LW 2**

- Gently undulating pastoral landscape *(majority of the fields as mixed arable crops)*
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees.
- Mature and over-mature oak trees *(a number as isolated trees standing within open fields)*
- Woodlands often following winding streams.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture.
- Oak - hazel coppice.
- Medium sized fields of predominantly pasture with some larger arable fields.
- Wealden villages (Loxwood) and farmstead (Headfoldswood Farm).
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber *(but not including the line of semi-detached houses along Plaistow Road, this parcel's southern edge).*
- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms.
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements.
- Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.
- Diverse natural history.
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife
- Mostly narrow valleys with undulating valley sides.(LW3)
- Lush valley bottoms with small, drained, irregularly shaped pastures *(a notable feature)*.(LW3)
- Occasional curving strips of woodland on valley sides *(a notable feature)*. (LW3)
- Tightly meandering and steeply banked river and stream courses.(LW3)
- The Wey and Arun Junction Canal which is currently being restored. (LW3)
- Mostly rural unspoilt character except some road and aircraft noise in places. (LW3)
- Distinctive stone and brick bridges (associated with the canal). (LW3)
- Small irregular field pattern. (LW3)
- Rich marginal vegetation along many riverbanks and watercourses supporting notable dragonfly interest. (LW3)
- Small valley side broadleaved woodlands. (LW3)
- Unimproved pastures. (LW3)

Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly (*arable and*) wooded character of the area.
- Encourage conversion of arable fields to permanent pasture. (*may not be appropriate, given this parcel appears to be the most agricultural productive and managed*)
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws.
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted.
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens.
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods.
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland.
- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests.
- Promote the use of current Stewardship schemes or equivalent.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value.
- Loss of tranquillity (*this is an issue particularly noticed with high levels of traffic using Plaistow Road*)
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows.
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with little evidence of new young trees.
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features.
- Changes in farming practices leading to the expansion or addition of modern farm buildings (*would be highly relevant as Headfoldswood farm is highly visible across open farmland from Plaistow Road and B2133*).
- Quality of public rights of way network vulnerable to increased use.
- Conserve the rural character of the valley. (LW3)
- Ensure any development on the valley sides respects historic settlement pattern, form and building materials, and is integrated into existing landscape pattern of small woodlands and hedgerows. (LW3)
- Promote natural watercourse management avoiding the introduction of engineered flood defences. (LW3)
- Conserve and manage valley side woodland and hedgerows. (LW3)
- Create new wetland areas such as reed beds and marsh. (LW3)
- Conserve the wildlife potential of wetland areas by controlling scrub, to avoid suppressing marshland plants and drying out of the ground. (LW3)
- Promote the use of pollarding of wetland trees and shrubs as a management technique. (LW3)
- Conserve historic stone and brick bridges. (LW3)
- Conserve and extend existing grassland, managing for species richness. (LW3)
- Where possible enhance the wildlife potential of river banks and drainage channels by re-profiling in a sympathetic manner. (LW3)
- Encourage clearance cycles of watercourses that increase floristic diversity. (LW3)
- The overall condition is good. Overall sensitivity to change is high, reflecting many landscape qualities of the area, and visual prominence of some valley sides. (LW3)

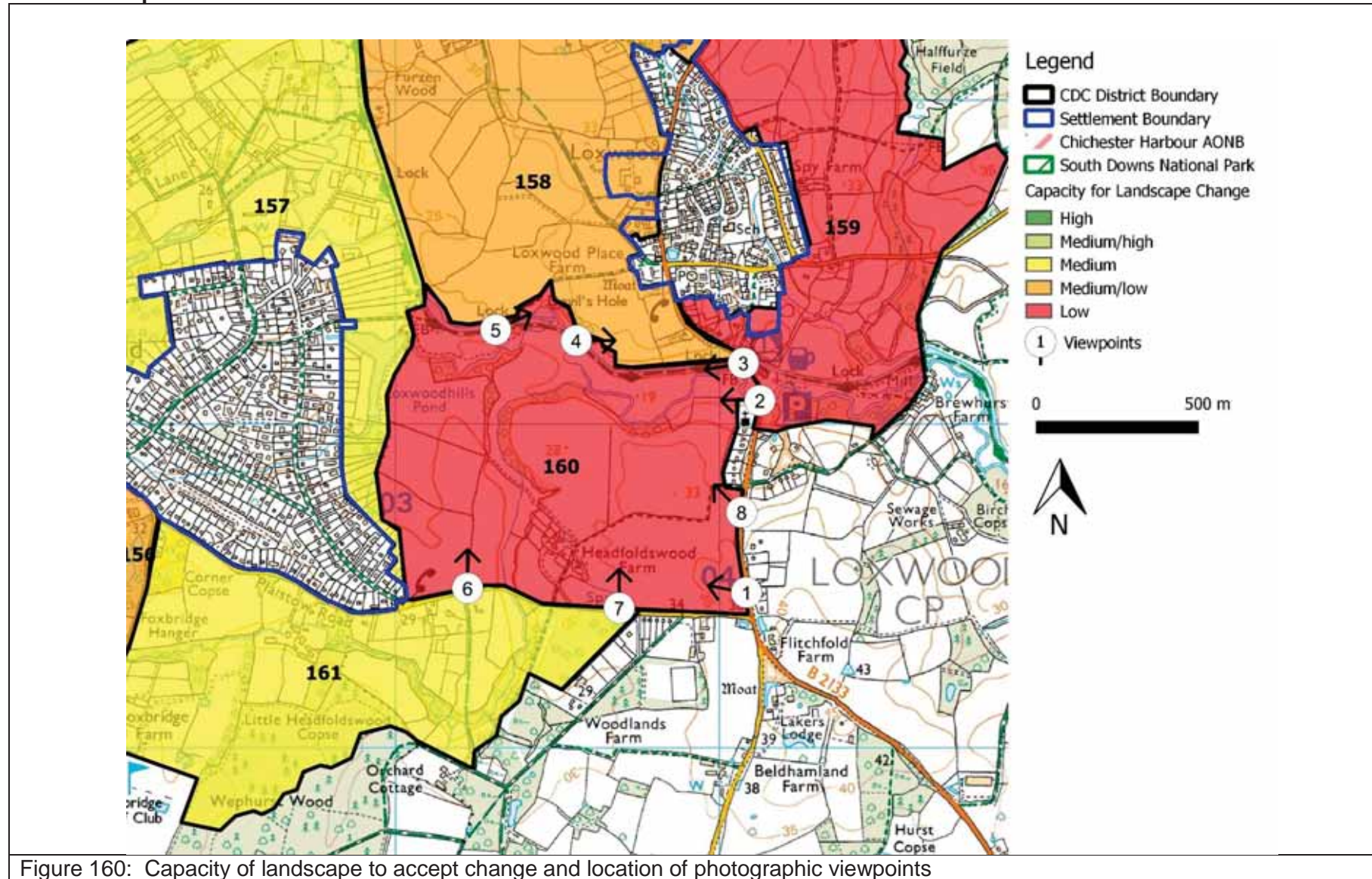
Key sensitivities are:

- Small scale incremental changes eroding rural character. (LW3)
- Maintenance of historic character made up of *brick* bridges and small irregular fields. (LW3)
- Loss of riverside trees and vegetation. (LW3)
- Any development which would damage the integrity of the valley floor or sides. (LW3)
- Unsympathetic flood defences. (LW3)
- Change to river banks and drainage for wildlife by unsympathetic re-profiling. (LW3)
- Any large scale housing/commercial development. (LW3)

Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management.
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows.
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees.
- Poor pond management.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Introduction of large farm buildings.
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams.
- Localised increases in traffic on *rural B road (B2133)*.
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places.
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use.
- Introduction of concreted sections on river banks. (LW3)
- Possible pressures for engineered flood defences. (LW3)
- Loss of hedgerows and woodland on valley sides. (LW3)
- Decline in traditional land management. (LW3)
- Pressure for further *urban (housing)* development. (LW3)
- Potential for increased recreational pressures (*in and around the vicinity of the canal*). (LW3)

Sub-area map:



**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 160 is a predominantly arable landscape that lies between the historic village of Loxwood and Ifold, both settlements of very individual and distinct identity. Comprising of gently undulating land, gently rising to a high point at the junction between Plaistow Road and B2133 into Loxwood; both roads forming the southern and eastern boundaries respectively. Land uses are predominantly rural, arable fields with the central part incised by wooded stream valley linked to the River Lox and Wey & Arun canal corridor that lies along the northern boundary. The central and southern edge of the sub-area forms a plateau and upper slopes of the north-facing valley slope of the narrow River Lox valley. The northern boundary follows the east-west valley and contains the river, a tributary stream and the Wey & Arun canal, with scarp face and higher ground rising to the north. 4 areas of ancient semi natural woodland present. The area is predominantly rural and very sparsely-settled with an isolated farmstead and ribbon development including a church situated along the south and eastern boundaries.

Loxwood is a small, typical village of the Low Weald comprising of a historic core with small pockets of modern infill development built in the vernacular style and materials with modern development occurring mainly on the southern edge. Evidence of recent and successful residential infilling within the village. Visible along the settlements western edge as it faces out over open fields, however very recent development is well screened and integrated into the existing mature trees and tall hedge structure.

For more detail refer to record sheets.



**Photographs:**



*Photo 1: View westwards towards Ifold and Headfoldswood Farm from B2133. From high ground long, uninterrupted views across open, flat ground towards the wooded landscape and South Downs ridgeline on the horizon.*

*Photo 2: View west along watercourse (River Lox). Views are short due to riparian vegetation long valley floor.*

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*Photo 3: View west along Wey & Arun canal. Glimpsed view of landmark church with trees and vegetation along the valley floor limiting views across sub-area.*



*Photo 4: View across water meadows of the River Lox from canal towpath. Views short due to extensive tree cover. Inward looking and intimate character. Vegetation a key feature of this sub-area and a key indicator of topography and soils.*

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*Photo 5: View east along Wey & Arun canal tow path of escarpment and Devils' Hole. Inward looking and intimate character. Vegetation a key feature of this sub-area and a key indicator of topography and soils.*



*Photo 6: Uninterrupted views north across open, flat arable fields seen from travelling along Plaistow Road. Woodland and dense boundary vegetation limits long views.*

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*Photo 7: Far-reaching views north from Plaistow Road across sub-area towards South Downs ridgeline. Mature hedgerow trees and native hedges surrounding open arable fields – typical of the wooded landscape found throughout the wider LCA.*



*Photo 8: Long distant views looking west across large arable field containing isolated mature field trees. The contrast between openness and enclosure is a key feature of this sub-area.*



Photo 9: View north on arrival into Loxwood crossing the Wey & Arun canal.  
View of settlement (southern) edge.

### Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process

#### 1. Visual Sensitivity: Medium/High

- Panoramic views from elevated ground towards the north, west and south.
- Views into the area from roads and residential properties on edge of Ifold.
- Views into area from PRoW and tourism receptors (National Trail and Wey & Arun Canal).
- Wide range and number of sensitive viewers (receptors) with high expectations of scenic beauty particularly from the canal and away from roads.
- Mid and far distant views across Low Weald from elevated ground crossed by PRoW.
- Some opportunities for mitigation planting building on existing vegetation structure and to reintroduce lost field boundaries, however certain areas will be more sensitive to impact (e.g. loss of 'openness' and interruption of far-reaching views).
- Glimpsed views of Saint John the Baptist church from canal tow path.

#### 2. Landscape Sensitivity: Medium/High

- Wooded stream valleys with riparian habitat, wet meadows and native wooded copses (perception of enclosure) in contrast to large arable fields (openness) edged by ASNW, mature (and possible veteran) field oak trees and strong hedgerow structure.
- River Lox, Wey & Arun Canal and tributary streams in the north.
- Undulating landform bisected by valley and river floodplain.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land with poor (Grade 4) characteristic of the Wey and Arun Canal and valley.
- Distinctive boundary treatments (estate railings, walls, post and rail)
- Evidence of historic landscape pattern containing a mix of modern fields and medieval assart fields along river valley.
- Listed buildings (Grade II) and their settings contribute to character.
- Largely rural, attractive with arable and pasture fields surrounding isolated farmsteads.
- Distinctive linear settlement and gardens to eastern and southern edge.
- Distinctive church and cultural heritage / associations arising from the industrial canal heritage/ locks and Devil's Hole.
- Generally peaceful, attractive, rural and quiet away from roads.
- Dark Skies prevail.
- Noise from B2133 and Plaistow Road and some intrusive sub-urban features (including planting) reducing tranquillity.
- Limited PRow and recreation route: Wey South Path (National Trail).
- Area well used and valued from a recreation/ tourism aspect.
- Open access land alongside roads.
- Generally a more open than enclosed field landscape containing mature field (oak) trees

3. Landscape Character Sensitivity: Medium/High (combines 1 and 2)

4. **Wider Landscape Sensitivity: High**

- Provides separation between Loxwood and Ifold.
- Visual connection to wooded horizons to west.
- Influenced, albeit to a limited extent by ribbon development located along the sub-area's eastern edge.
- The sub-area is somewhat typical of the wider LCA.

5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: High (combines 3 and 4)

6. **Landscape Value: Medium**

- Contains one regionally important trail
- Contains sites of important ecological value, including SNCIs and Ancient woodland

- Well-served by PRoW and road network
- Contributes to the setting of Grade II listed buildings
- Contains historic features and interpretation of industrial canal heritage

7. Landscape Capacity: Low (combines 5 and 6)

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<p><b>Potential effect on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on panoramic views from high ground at junction of B2133 and Plaistow Road across the low weald landscape towards the far distant wooded horizon.</li> <li>• Impact on views from Wey South Path (National Trail) along the Wey&amp; Arun canal</li> <li>• Impact on views when travelling along the Wey&amp; Arun canal</li> <li>• Impact on views out from edge of Ifold village</li> <li>• Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character</li> <li>• Impact on rural views from PRow</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of mature field oaks (individuals and stands/groups)</li> <li>• Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland, copses and riparian vegetation</li> <li>• Loss of wetland and sinuous wet meadows alongside river and canal</li> <li>• Loss of good quality productive arable soils</li> <li>• Impacts on historic landscape features; sinuous, intimate medieval assart fields and industrial canal heritage.</li> <li>• Alteration to the natural hydrology, ponds, watercourse network/ system</li> <li>• Impacts on the gently undulating rolling landscape that contains a notable ridgeline</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Ifold and Loxwood</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting of the Wey&amp; Arun canal</li> <li>• Impacts on the setting of isolated scattered farmsteads</li> <li>• Impacts to the setting of a few listed buildings</li> <li>• Impacts on PRow network and linkages to national trails</li> <li>• Impacts on tranquillity</li> <li>• Impact on the open medium to large scale arable modern field pattern</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting, its open edge character and erosion of separation with ribbon settlements and dispersed farmsteads, if development were to be extended beyond the well-defined settlement edge into open farmland.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of all very good, good to moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features</li> <li>• Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value</li> <li>• Restoring lost field boundaries and copses</li> <li>• Retaining legibility and setting of PRow network and creating additional links</li> <li>• Conserve the rural character of lanes</li> <li>• Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural lanes</li> <li>• Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings</li> <li>• Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead power and telephone cables crossing rural, open fields</li> </ul>



### **Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area**

Sub-area 160 has a low capacity, constrained by its strong rural and riparian character and its designated sites. There are views from public footpaths, the canal and the Wey South Path, common land and rural lanes. The area retains a clear sense of history, especially with the presence of the canal and proximity to the historic core of Loxwood village. It contains many characteristics that are typical of the wider LCA, is well used and travelled through by locals and visitors with traffic noise and suburban features having a negative effect on tranquillity.

It is possible that a very small amount of additional development, in the form of individual cottages may be accommodated around the isolated farmstead and along the north side of Plaistow Road, adjacent to Ifold, provided it is informed by further landscape and visual impact assessment and sensitively integrated into the landscape, respecting the historic settlement pattern and local distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm particularly on the higher, open and visually sensitive ground. Further development would also risk the coalescence of Ifold and Loxwood / other dwellings along the B2133.

Continuation of linear settlement pattern along the B2133 would be in conflict with most visually sensitive area with its far-reaching views to north and west.

## Sub-areas: 161 Foxbridge Low Weald

### West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW2 North Western Low Weald

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- Gently undulating pastoral landscape.
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees.
- Mature and over-mature oak trees.
- Woodlands often following winding streams.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture.
- Oak - hazel coppice.
- Small and medium sized fields of predominantly pasture with some larger arable fields.
- Wealden scattered farmsteads and cottages.
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber.
- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms (*Plaistow Road*).
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements.
- Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.
- Diverse natural history.
- Large blocks of ancient, semi-natural woodland.
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife
- Large Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) at Headfolds Wood meadow and fields and woodland around Corner Copse.

Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area.
- Encourage conversion of arable fields to permanent pasture.
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws.
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted.
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens.
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods.
- Plant and manage isolated trees in pasture (*has been undertaken within gardens of properties along Plaistow Road and visible from the PRow*)
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland.
- Conserve species rich pasture.
- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests.
- Seek to reduce the extent, intensity and impact of horse grazing. Encourage the planting of tree belts and hedgerows around paddocks.

- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value.
- Loss of tranquillity (*Noise from high levels of traffic using Plaistow Road is a major detractor*)
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows.
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with little evidence of new young trees.
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features.
- Changes in farming practices leading to the expansion or addition of modern farm buildings.
- Quality of public rights of way network vulnerable to reduced drainage *management (evidence of ground poaching / damage from horses hooves)* and increased use

Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management.
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows.
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees.
- Poor pond management.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Introduction of large farm buildings.
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams.
- Localised increases in traffic on rural roads.
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places (*evidence of this seen from the PRow crossing the parcel*).
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use (*and may possibly include conversion to Golf course (Foxbridge) on the parcel's southern edge*).

Sub-area map:

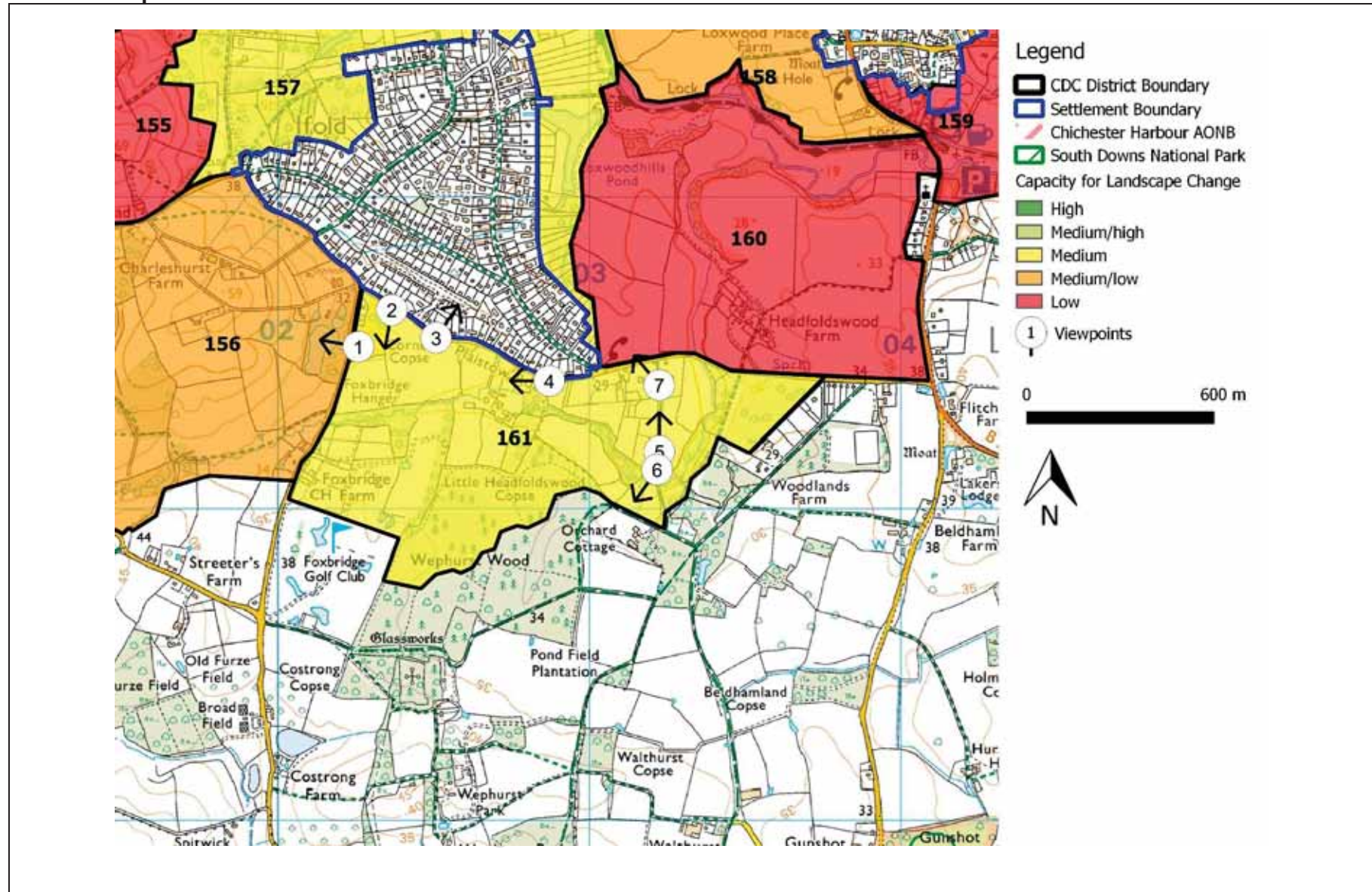


Figure 161: Capacity of landscape to accept change and location of photographic viewpoints

**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 161 comprises of gently undulating land with woods, copses and a narrow, wooded valley containing a spring fed tributary originating from the north of Plaistow crossing the area from west to east. The northern boundary formed by Plaistow Road and includes Ifold settlement edge and open arable farmland. The western boundary is defined by Foxbridge Lane with the southern and eastern boundaries passing through woodland and bordering a golf course. The central and southern part of the sub-area is heavily wooded, with individual copses and divided by wooded stream valley with SNCI present.

The area is reasonably rural and sparsely-settled along roads with isolated farmstead and dwellings in the south-west with a few isolated dwellings set within large and small gardens along Plaistow Road. Other land uses includes equestrian paddocks, associated equestrian uses, large gardens, pockets of heathland and nature reserve managed by the Woodlands Trust.

Ifold is a hamlet that is unique in Chichester district as a modern 1930-1950's planned residential 'estate' layout based on a triangular internal road pattern. Originally part of the historic Ifold estate with its manor house with a later Ifold House (built 1802, demolished 1936). During WWII plots of land sold to build weekend or holiday homes. The hamlet (as it does not contain a church) is described as '*low density of housing, semi-rural, eclectic, residential community, with a large number of trees and vegetation providing seclusion, and a quiet sylvan quality, with close proximity to the adjoining countryside.*' (Plastow & Ifold Parish draft VDS 2017).

The settlement is characteristically rural with a high degree of vegetation, hedges and trees, both native and ornamental in large gardens with grass verges and mature (predominantly oak) trees backing onto large woodland and heathland.

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**



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*Photo 3: View illustrates the typical residential / tree character of Ifold seen facing onto Plaistow Road.*



*Photo 4: View west of the well-vegetated edge to ribbon settlement along Plaistow Road. Land surrounding ribbon settlements comprising of woodlands and hedges surrounding small-scale field pattern with fenced paddocks providing an element of openness and opportunities to view in and out of the sub-area.*



*Photo 5: View north from bridleway of ribbon settlement along Plaistow Road. Long-distant views restricted by vegetation. Wooded, tree cover adds to enclosure of smaller fields adjacent to properties.*



*Photo 6: View south from bridleway into 'open parcels'. Sub-area well-wooded with shortened views a characteristic feature.*





*Photo 7: View north from bridleway across Plaistow Road. Hedges and tree cover enclose rural lane network. Where gaps in vegetation appear views can be far reaching into adjacent sub-area 160 to the far horizon.*

**Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

**1. Visual Sensitivity: Low**

- Panoramic views and landmarks absent.
- Views in from PRow, Plaistow road and residential properties.
- Views out from PRow and beyond into adjacent sub-area.
- Views generally curtailed by extensive woodland cover and buildings.
- Range of sensitive receptors, residents and visitors or passing through the sub-area with high to medium level expectation of scenic beauty.
- Opportunities for mitigation planting based on existing vegetation structure that surrounds large gardens, woods, hedges and verges along rural roads. Further opportunities for planting within property grounds and paddocks to south of Plaistow Road.
- Mitigation planting may interrupt key views into the sub-area across flat, low-lying farmland

- Views that include the sylvan woodland character; a key feature of the wider landscape character. If lost or removed appreciation the landscape may be detrimentally altered.
- Views that include sensitive hydrological features e.g. streams/ ditches and riparian tree, habitats; that are key features of the wider landscape character - if lost or removed would appreciation detrimentally alter the landscape character.

## 2. Landscape Sensitivity: Medium

- Individual mature field oak trees set within gardens and grass verges on Ifold edge.
- Mixed broadleaved / conifer woodland and tree belts along rural lane.
- Strong native hedgerow structure containing mature field trees.
- SNCI (Headfolds Wood Meadow). Grassland mosaic consisting of coarse, acid and neutral grassland dissected by ditch, scrub and bounded by stream.
- Species rich wildflower meadows are a feature, with pasture and wet meadow.
- Pockets of heathland.
- Arable and horse paddocks.
- Stream (joins canal) and ditches.
- Undulating topography with wooded stream valley dividing the area in two halves.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land.
- Boundary treatments (e.g. walls of rubble natural stone 'winklestone' with brick coping, brick walls and mix of timber fence types).
- Evidence of sensitive historic landscape pattern comprising of unimproved/Unenclosed wooded over common enclosed by woodland and medieval assart fields.
- Conservation Area and Listed buildings not present.
- Distinctive settlement pattern: contains traditional farmstead and modern linear development of individual houses along Plaistow Road with extensive gardens and paddocks extending into woodland.
- Large properties with extensive gardens and paddocks (sheep and horse grazing) contribute to the character of the southern side of Plaistow Road.
- This sub-area is generally enclosed, secluded and intimate in nature.
- Tranquillity slightly affected by noise from high levels of traffic travelling along Plaistow Road , light glow from Ifold and car headlights on rural lanes.
- Limited number of PRoW with two community recreational areas (allotments and Scout hut) present.

3. Landscape Character Sensitivity: Medium/Low (combines 1 and 2)

4. **Wider Landscape Sensitivity: Medium**

- Limited influence by / connection with Ifold to the north.
- Northern part contributes to approach into Ifold along Plaistow Road (main through route).
- Sub-area is typical of the wider LCA.

5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium (combines 3 and 4)

6. **Landscape Value: Medium**

- The sub-area is typical of the wider LCA
- Limited PRow network
- Contains sites of important ecological value, including SNCIs and Ancient woodland
- Does not contain listed buildings

## 7. Landscape Capacity: Medium (combines 5 and 6)

<p><b>Potential effect on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on rural views from PRoW (bridleway) crossing the area</li> <li>• Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of mature field oaks within grass verges, roadsides</li> <li>• Impacts on the strongly wooded settlement edge and its sylvan qualities</li> <li>• Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland, copses and riparian vegetation</li> <li>• Loss of wetland and wet meadows</li> <li>• Impacts on wooded over common</li> <li>• Loss of medium to good quality soils</li> <li>• Impacts on historic landscape features; medieval assart fields, ASNW</li> <li>• Alteration to the natural hydrology, ponds, lake, ditches and watercourse network/ system</li> <li>• Impacts on the naturally undulating land and incised stream valley</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Ifold</li> <li>• Impacts on scattered, isolated farmsteads</li> <li>• Impacts on PRoW network</li> <li>• Effect on SNCI</li> <li>• Rural, but busy road network (Plaistow Road)</li> <li>• Impacts on tranquillity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting if development were to be extended beyond the well-defined settlement edge.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of all very good, good to moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features</li> <li>• Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value</li> <li>• Restoring lost field boundaries and copses</li> <li>• Retaining legibility and setting of PRoW network and creating additional links</li> <li>• Conserve the rural character of lanes</li> <li>• Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural lanes</li> <li>• Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings</li> <li>• Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead power and telephone cables crossing rural, open fields</li> </ul>

### **Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area**

Sub-area 161 has a medium capacity, however is constrained by its strongly secluded rural and riparian character, its flood zones, extensive woodland/copses, wooded over common, streams and SNCI. There are limited views from the public bridleway, footpaths and Plaistow Road. The area retains a clear sense of history through its historic medieval assarted field pattern, ancient woodland and contains many of the characteristics that are typical of the wider LCA, with traffic movement and noise having a negative effect on its tranquil character. It is well used and travelled through by locals, people engaged in sport and visitors.

It is possible that a small amount of additional development may be accommodated within existing clusters of settlement and equestrian centres/ paddocks provided it is informed by further landscape and visual impact assessment and sensitively integrated into the landscape, respecting the historic settlement pattern and local distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm.

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**Sub-areas: 162 Belchamber's Low Weald****West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW2 North Western Low Weald**

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- Gently undulating pastoral landscape.
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees.
- Mature and over-mature oak trees.
- Woodlands often following winding streams.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture.
- Oak - hazel coppice.
- Small and medium sized fields of predominantly pasture with some larger arable fields.
- Wealden villages, some centred on village greens, scattered farmsteads and cottages.
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber.
- Dominant east-west pylon line.
- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms.
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements.  
Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.
- Diverse natural history.
- Large blocks of ancient, semi-natural woodland.
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife.
- Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) at Steers Common and Whithurst Park.
- Around Kirdford are ancient tracks and lanes
- Localised linear, suburban development along roads
- Amongst the woodland are areas of fragmented heathland;
- Highly enclosed, secluded landscape, but with some long views

Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area.
- Encourage conversion of arable fields to permanent pasture.
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws.
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted.
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens.
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods.

- Plant and manage isolated trees in pasture.
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland. Support and promote woodland industries.
- Conserve species rich pasture.
- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value.
- Loss of tranquillity.
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows.
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with little evidence of new young trees.
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features.
- Changes in farming practices leading to the expansion or addition of modern farm buildings.
- Quality of public rights of way network vulnerable to reduced drainage management and increased use

Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management.
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows.
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees.
- Poor pond management.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Introduction of large farm buildings.
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams.
- Localised increases in traffic on rural roads.
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places.
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use (*has been noted during fieldwork*)

Sub-area map:

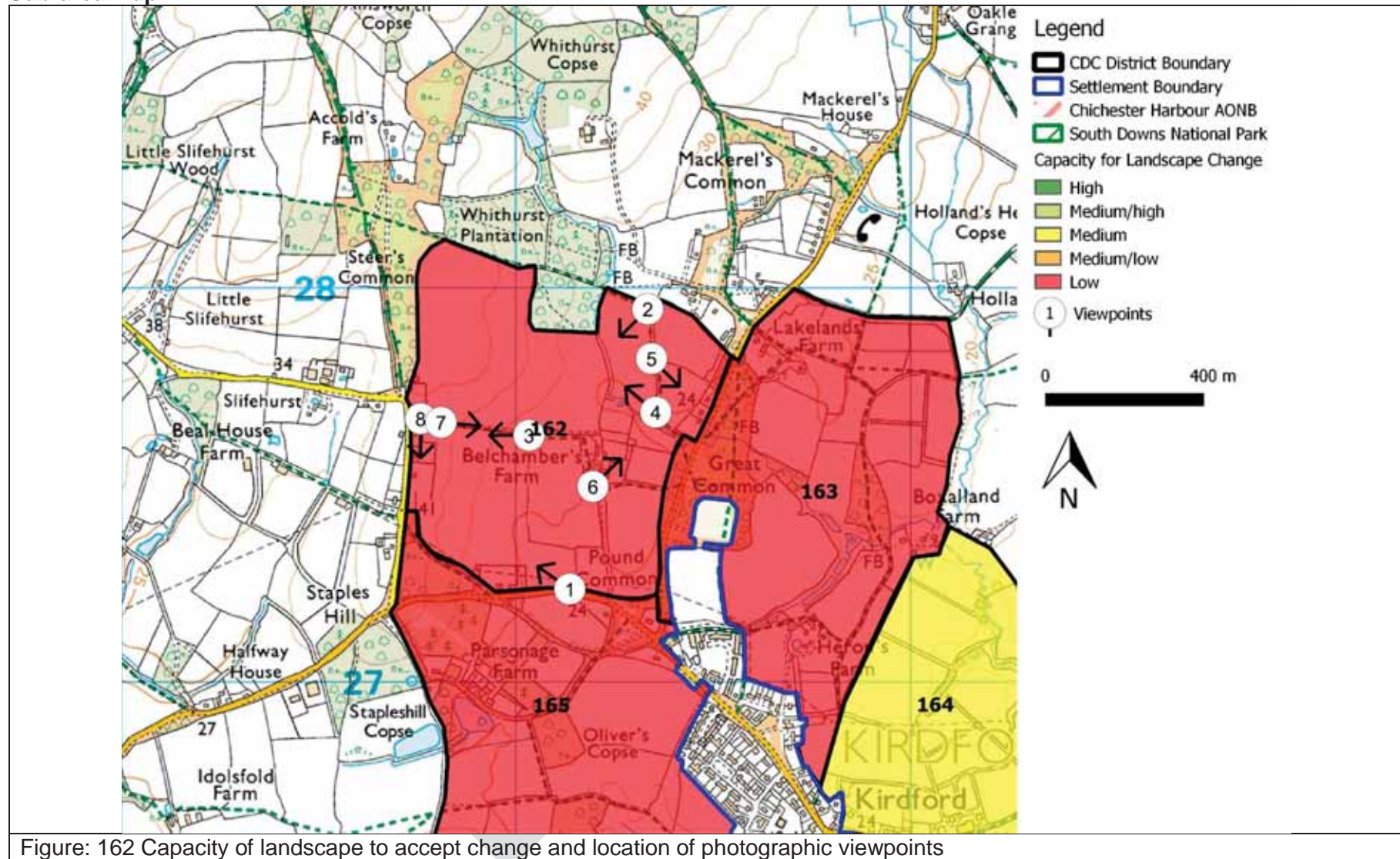


Figure: 162 Capacity of landscape to accept change and location of photographic viewpoints



**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 162 comprises of low lying flat land (contiguous with the broader valley floor) that rises up the valley side towards the ridgeline of Staples Hill along the western boundary. To the north the boundary follows the edge of wooded Shaw and two SNCI's (Steers Common and Whithurst park plantation). To the south and east the boundary follows the common land containing Plaistow Road. Areas of heathland, Common land linked to Great Common, ASNW and Shaws are present. The area is predominantly rural, pastoral fields and sparsely-settled with isolated historic farmstead on the edge between valley floor and rising ground overlooked by individual dwellings along the ridgeline to the west. Other land uses include grass airfield, traditional orchards and land managed by the National Trust. The sub-area contains Belchamber's Farm with its designed landscape of informal parkland and large landscape garden with pond.

The settlement of Kirdford is made up of a historic core containing a distinctive church and small village green surrounded by period properties in the Sussex Weald vernacular style and materials. Further north the settlement contains more modern properties set within mature gardens, a converted barn as village store adjacent to a second 'village green' open space surrounded by more recent housing development. An industrial estate lies close nearby.

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**

*Photo 1: View from Plaistow Road passing through Great Common that characterises the eastern sub-area. Mature field trees (oaks) line wide grass verges / heathland that is typically of the winding rural lane network.*



*Photo 2: View south-west from footpath towards Belchambers' Copse and ASNW. Openness and rural character derived from regular field pattern edged with hedgerows and mature field trees surrounded by large areas of deciduous woodland. Views restricted by vegetation and rising topography.*



*Photo 3: View west along footpath leaving Belchamber's Farm to meet ridgeline. Views contained by rising topography.*



*Photo 4: View north-west towards Whithurst plantation across irregular field pattern with line of trees indicating line of sensitive drainage ditch / watercourse. Views restricted by woodland cover.*



*Photo 5: View across open paddocks and gardens from footpath. An example of the abrupt separation between built form and open countryside found within this sub-area. Buildings and woodland restricting long-distant views.*



*Photo 6: View of Belchamber's Farm designed landscape lake and out building. Setting contains elements in the local, vernacular style and materials.*



*Photo 7: 180 degree panoramic view from footpath and ridgeline at Staples Hill. Belchamber's Farm and wooded landscape lies at the footslope. The contrast between enclosure and openness with elevated views – a key vantage point to understand the sub-area (and wider landscape character) wooded mosaic character. A good vantage point from which to consider and understand potential capacity.*



*Photo 8: Typical of residential ribbon settlement at Staples Hill that includes grass airstrip.*

### **Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

#### **1. Visual Sensitivity: High**

- Notable panoramic, long distance views out from elevated ground looking to the north east to south across intervening well-wooded north western low weald landscape and beyond towards the South Downs ridgeline.
- Views to Belchamber's Farm buildings set within trees and the South Downs wooded hangers; both places and landmarks.
- Views out of the sub-area towards ridge of high ground in the west of the sub-area; that includes Staples Hill
- Wide range of sensitive receptors, residents, engaged in recreational activities e.g. riding and flying. Includes visitors passing through the sub-area with high expectations of scenic beauty when visiting the ridge of high ground.
- Views are of a rural, attractive agricultural landscape with an interesting arrangement of building within Belchamber's Farm set within wooded field mosaic landscape.
- Opportunities for mitigation planting based on existing vegetation structure (strong hedgerow structure) exists that could benefit from restoring lost hedgerows and new tree planting. Further opportunities for planting within the flatter, lower lying land closer to roads.

- Mitigation planting may interrupt key panoramic views especially from higher, visually exposed ground in the western part of the sub-area.

## 2. Landscape Sensitivity: Medium / High

- Mature, field hedgerow trees along rural lanes.
- Strong native hedgerow structure containing mature, field hedgerow trees.
- Herb rich wildflower meadows, pasture and wet meadow.
- Traditional orchards associated with Belchamber's Farm.
- Deciduous woodland and shaws including ASNW, two SNCI's and wooded over common.
- Hay meadows and grazing pasture.
- Designed lakes, ponds, watercourses and drainage ditches. Areas of wetland.
- Low lying flat rising to the west to notable ride line at Staples Hill.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land.
- Common land along rural lane verges that includes mature field trees and heath type habitats.
- Limited range of boundary treatments (e.g. traditional Sussex post and rail and field gates with timber post and barbed wire fencing around fields and alongside PRoW)
- Evidence of historic landscape pattern comprising of medieval assart fields and Designed landscape of informal parkland and large landscape garden.
- Kirdford Conservation Area contributes little on the wider sub-area due to its remoteness.
- Settlement pattern: The settlement pattern of the area and context is dominated by isolated farmstead surrounded by fields and lines of cottages set within large gardens facing onto rural lanes. Of note is the historic farmstead of Belchamber's Farm in the vernacular style and layout.
- Vegetation, outbuildings and boundary treatments in the vernacular style within curtilage of private properties contributes to the wider agricultural setting.
- Contributes to the setting of many listed buildings (Grade II).
- An attractive pastoral landscape defined by a network of hedges, mature field tree. Edges strongly defined both physical and visually contained by Whithurst plantation / over wooded Great Common and copses. Mature hedges and mature oak trees adding to the rural lane character.
- Two thirds of the area to west characterised by large, open pastoral fields on gently rising ground with land to the east semi-enclosed created by strong pattern of hedgerows, mature field tree s surrounding smaller fields and settlement / farmstead.
- Tranquillity slightly affected by encroachment of gardens into open fieldscape, otherwise noticeably very quiet and tranquil away from rural lanes.
- Dark Skies prevail.
- Limited PRoW, with possible ancient route linking Staples Hill to Great Common.

- Area well used and valued by local residents as within easy walking distance of Kirdfold.
  - Open access land alongside lanes.
3. Landscape character sensitivity: High (combines 1 and 2)
4. **Wider landscape sensitivity: High**
- Sub-area feels strongly rural and part of the wider countryside and separate from built up areas
  - Eastern part links to wider wooded landscape character that extends eastwards.
  - Visual connections to the north and east and South Downs National Park to the south.
  - Sub-area is typical of the wider LCA.
5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: High (combines 3 and 4)
6. **Landscape value: Medium**
- Contributes to the setting of the South Downs National Park
  - Listed buildings (Grade II) and designed parkland / garden associated with Belchamber's Farm
  - ASNW present
  - Local PRoW network crossing open fields with long distant views towards the South Downs wooded ridge in contrast to enclosed landscape in the broad valley below.
7. Landscape capacity: Low (combines 5 and 6)

**Potential effect on key visual characteristics**

- Impact on a key panoramic view from high ground / ridge near Staples Hill
- Impact on rural views from PRoW crossing the area
- Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character

**Potential effect on key landscape characteristics**

- Loss of mature field oaks (individuals and stands/groups)
- Impacts on the strongly wooded settlement edge
- Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland, copses and riparian vegetation
- Loss of wetland and wet meadows
- Impacts on wooded over common
- Loss of moderate to good quality soils
- Impacts on historic landscape features; medieval assart fields, ASNW, Commons
- Alteration to the natural hydrology, ponds, lake, ditches and watercourse network/ system
- Impacts on the naturally sloping landform and broad valley floor
- Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Kirdford
- Impacts on the setting of historic Belchamber's Farm, a listed property
- Impacts on tranquillity
- Impacts on interconnected PRoW
- Effect on the wider network of SNCI's

**Potential effect on key settlement characteristics**

- Impacts on the rural landscape setting, if development were to be extended beyond the well-defined settlement edge.

**Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure**

- Retention of all very good, good to moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features
- Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value
- Restoring lost field boundaries and copses
- Retaining legibility and setting of PRoW network and creating additional links
- Conserve the rural character of lanes
- Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural lanes
- Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings
- Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead power and telephone cables crossing rural, open fields



### **Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area**

Sub-area 162 has a low capacity, constrained by the natural, complex and contrasting topography and character. This varies from the flat secluded land of riparian character with extensive woodland/copses, which contrast with the open, pastoral landscape on higher ground, from which elevated long reaching panoramic views across the Low Weald landscape and the South Downs are possible. The area retains a clear sense of history through its historic medieval assarted field pattern and the presence of listed buildings and historic farmstead. It contains many of the characteristics that are typical of the wider LCA, particularly its tranquil character and is well used and travelled thorough by locals and passing drivers.

Small-scale development, as in farm building conversions, has already occurred. However, it may be possible that a very small amount of isolated dwellings (in the form of ribbon development) may be accommodated to reflect the existing settlement pattern, provided it is informed by further landscape and visual impact assessment and sensitively integrated into the landscape, respecting the historic settlement pattern and local distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm.

Any development in this sub-area is likely to have a negative effect on the rural and historic setting of Belchamber's farmstead and wooded over commons, and that of the notable characteristic features of the North Western Low Weald landscape character.

**Sub-areas: 163 Kirdford Northern Low Weald****West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW2 North Western Low Weald**

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- Gently undulating pastoral landscape.
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees.
- Mature and over-mature oak trees.
- Woodlands often following winding streams.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture.
- Oak - hazel coppice.
- Small and medium sized fields of predominantly pasture with some larger arable fields.
- Wealdon scattered farmsteads and cottages.
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber.
- Dominant east-west pylon line.
- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms.
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements.
- Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.
- Diverse natural history.
- Large blocks of ancient, semi-natural woodland.
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife (for example, otters).
- Localised linear, suburban development along roads.
- Amongst the woodland are areas of fragmented heathland;
- Highly enclosed, secluded landscape, but with some long views.

Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

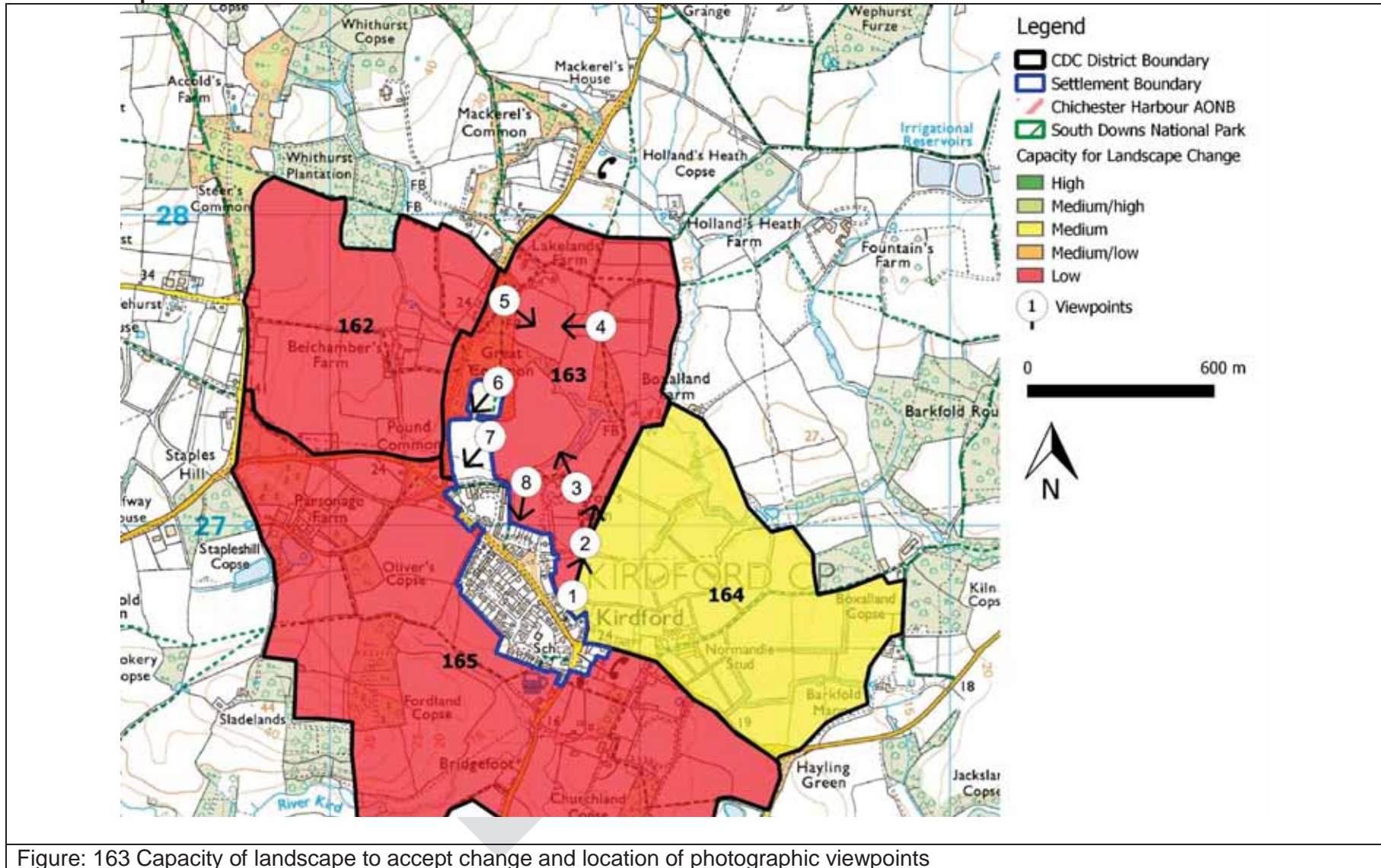
- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area.
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws.
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted.
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens.
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods.
- Plant and manage isolated trees in pasture.
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland. Support and promote woodland industries.
- Conserve species rich pasture.

- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests.
- Seek to reduce the extent, intensity and impact of horse *grazing (noticeable impact on this parcel's character)* . Encourage the planting of tree belts and hedgerows around paddocks.
- Promote the use of current Stewardship schemes or equivalent.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials (*has occurred and is noticeable*)
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value.
- Loss of tranquillity (*caused by road and aircraft noise*).
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows.
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with little evidence of new young trees.
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features.
- Changes in farming practices leading to the expansion or addition of modern farm buildings.
- Quality of public rights of way network vulnerable to reduced drainage management and increased use

Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management.
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows.
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees.
- Poor pond management.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Introduction of large farm buildings.
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams.
- Localised increases in traffic on rural roads.
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places.
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use.

Sub-area map:



**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 163 comprise of land to the north of Kirdfold settlement. The land gently undulates falling slightly towards a deeply incised wooded valley containing tributary and series of lakes that feed the wider riparian valley containing Boxall Brook. The eastern boundary follows the line of Road and Great Common. The tributary and low-lying land associated with Boxall Brook defines the eastern boundary. Areas of wooded over common, heathland, common land and ASNW present. The area is reasonably rural, wooded pasture and grassland fields surrounding sparsely-settled with isolated farmsteads to the north and east boundary and Kirdfold Conservation Area and settlement edge along the southern boundary. Other uses include paddocks, equestrian uses, gardens and private drives.

The settlement of Kirdford is made up of a historic core containing a distinctive church and small village green surrounded by period properties in the Sussex Weald vernacular style and materials. Further north the settlement contains more modern properties set within mature gardens, a converted barn as village store adjacent to a second 'village green' open space surrounded by more recent housing development. An industrial estate lies close nearby.

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**

*Photo 1: View over paddocks adjacent to semi-open settlement edge from footpath and road leading to Boxalland Farm Stud.*



*Photo 2: View into the sub-area from footpath across stud paddocks. Formal tree planting along drive to Boxalland Farm. Views contained by mature woodland (ASNW).*



*Photo 3: View north west from footpath across typical small-scale assart fields on edge of settlement.*

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*Photo 4: View west from footpath across wooded pasture. Views contained by vegetation and isolated properties.*



*Photo 5: Great Common. Wooded over common; a distinctive and important landscape feature that contributes to the wider landscape character.*

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*Photo 6: View south west across football pitches within Great Common. Views restricted by woodland cover.*



*Photo 7: View from footpath across open land towards semi-open edge of settlement. Views contained by vegetation.*

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Photo 8: View from footpath across open land towards semi-open edge of settlement. Views contained by vegetation.

Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process

#### 8. Visual Sensitivity: Medium

- Views from a limited number of PRoW with noticeable restricted access.
- Views in to sub-area generally restricted by mature vegetation. Little of this sub-area is visible from the wider surroundings.
- Range of sensitive receptors, residents, persons engaged in sporting activities e.g. riding and visitors passing through the sub-area. Likely to have high expectations of scenic beauty. Close to settlement edge PRoW routes appear well worn in places indicating in regular use.
- Views are generally of a rural, attractive agricultural landscape setting with paddocks immediately adjacent to the village edge.
- Opportunities for mitigation planting somewhat limited due to the current level of visual and physical enclosure; however in places opportunities to restore lost or improve existing fragmented field boundaries, reduce field size and expand broadleaved woodlands on periphery.
- Mitigation planting is unlikely to interrupt key views other than localised views found within the historical field pattern that contains small pockets of openness that contribute to landscape character.

## 9. Landscape Sensitivity: Medium/High

- Tree belts and mature field trees. Mixed broadleaved copses adjacent to settlement edge and across Great Common.
- Strong native hedgerow structure, well maintained with some containing mature, field hedgerow trees.
- Formal tree avenues and isolated parkland oak trees with riparian tree structure along streams / watercourse.
- Herb rich wildflower meadows, rough grass and wooded pasture and wet meadow.
- Deciduous woodland and shaws including ASNW and wooded over common.
- Hay meadows and grazing pasture with paddocks.
- Designed lakes, series of interlinked fishponds and watercourses.
- Gently undulating falling towards watercourse with deeply incised watercourse through wooded valley.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land.
- Large area of Common land: Great Common.
- Wide range of traditional and agricultural boundary treatments mostly more suburban moving closer to settlement edge.
- Evidence of sensitive historic landscape pattern comprising of medieval assart fields and enclosures with linear and mounded earthworks/banks and ditches. Evidence of early industrial workings with coppiced hazel hedgerows.
- Kirdford Conservation Area. Mature trees add to the sylvan character, helping to frame views, and screen more modern buildings which lie around the boundaries of the conservation area (settlement edge). Lanes in the conservation area retain a rural quality which is further enhanced by the wide grass verges, soft front boundaries (various forms of hedging predominate).
- Settlement pattern: A simple settlement pattern of large isolated farmsteads with Kirdford village settlement edge comprising of residential properties and gardens. Equestrian land uses associated with properties dominate the sub-area to the south.
- Farmsteads in the traditional vernacular style with modern and period properties along settlement edge.
- Contributes to the setting of a few listed buildings (Grade II).
- An attractive pastoral landscape defined by a network of hedges, mature field trees and medium size arable fields. Elsewhere wooded commons and dense vegetation around small fields provides greater levels of enclosure.
- Tranquillity affected by overhead pylons and cables, CCTV, post and barbed wire fences subdividing larger fields into smaller grazing plots and extensive timber post and rail fencing surrounding large paddocks. Domestic noise, overhead aircraft and traffic reducing tranquillity further with light spill/ glow from residential edge of settlement. Elsewhere generally dark skies.
- Reasonable number of PRoW with clearing within Great Common containing community football pitches. Good physical connection between the surrounding landscape, farmsteads and the village of Kirdford.
- Area used and valued by local residents however some restrictions on access exist.

## 10. Landscape character sensitivity: Medium/ High (combines 1 and 2)

**11. Wider landscape sensitivity: High wider sensitivity**

- Urban edge varies between semi-open and well-vegetated.
- Partially influenced by / and connected to Kirdford.
- Sub-area feels strongly rural and part of the wider countryside and separate from built up areas.
- The sub-area is highly typical of the wider LCA.

**12. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: High (combines 3 and 4)****13. Landscape value: Medium**

- Contains the Conservation Area and Grade II listed properties.
- Contains large are of registered Common Land.
- Local recreational facilities (football pitches and new green set within new housing) of landscape value.

**14. Landscape capacity: Low (combines 5 and 6)**

<p><b>Potential effect on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on rural views from PRow crossing the area.</li> <li>• Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of mature field oaks (individuals, lines, avenues and stands/groups)</li> <li>• Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland, copses and riparian vegetation</li> <li>• Loss of wetland and wet meadows</li> <li>• Impacts on wooded over common</li> <li>• Loss of good quality soils</li> <li>• Impacts on historic landscape features; medieval assart fields, Commons, ASNW</li> <li>• Alteration to the natural hydrology, ponds , fish ponds and watercourse network/ system</li> <li>• Impacts on the natural undulating landform</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Kirdford</li> <li>• Impacts on the setting of a few listed properties</li> <li>• Impacts on PRow's</li> <li>• Impacts on scattered, isolated farmsteads and their vernacular character</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting and listed building setting if development were to be extended beyond the well-defined semi-open settlement edge.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of all very good, good to moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features</li> <li>• Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value</li> <li>• Restoring lost field boundaries and copses</li> <li>• Retaining legibility and setting of PRow network and creating additional links</li> <li>• Conserve the rural character of lanes</li> <li>• Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural lanes</li> <li>• Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings</li> <li>• Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead power and telephone cables crossing rural, open fields</li> </ul>

### **Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area**

Sub-area 163 has a low capacity, constrained by its strong rural character, incised valley topography, designated sites and its role as an integral part of the rural setting of nearby settlement and conservation area. The area contains wooded over common, pockets of heathland, ASNW, wooded valleys containing streams and series of fishponds. There are limited views from public footpaths, Crow land and Conservation Area, with views out generally restricted by mature vegetation surrounding individual fields. The area retains a clear sense of history through its historic medieval assarted field pattern and ASNW, listed buildings and their settings and historic farmsteads. It contains many of the characteristics that are typical of the wider LCA, although tranquillity has been strongly and negatively affected by land-use along the settlement edge; that includes sub-division of fields into paddocks and suburban features including extensive post and rail paddock fencing and intrusive CCTV cameras. The sub-area is well used and travelled through by locals and visitors.

It is possible that a small amount of additional development (as in small-scale single dwellings) may be accommodated within existing clusters of settlement (farmstead and adjacent paddocks) provided it is informed by further landscape and visual impact assessment and sensitively integrated into the landscape, respecting the historic settlement pattern and local distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm.

Beyond the settlement boundary the sub-area is more constrained in landscape terms.

## Sub-areas: 164 Kirdford Eastern Paddocks

### West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW2 North Western Low Weald

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- Gently undulating pastoral landscape.
- Mature and over-mature oak trees *(appears to be remnants of an earlier field system with hedgerows lost from sub-division and conversion of fields into Stud paddocks)*
- Woodlands often following winding streams.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture.
- Oak - hazel coppice.
- *(Now large sized fields of predominantly quality grass feed rather than arable or pasture).*
- *(Stud farm in appearance and layout is not typical of the)* Wealden scattered farmsteads.
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber.
- Dominant east-west pylon line.
- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms.
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements.
- Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees *(along the lane only)*
- Diverse natural history.
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife
- Localised linear, suburban development along roads
- Amongst the woodland are areas of fragmented heathland;
- Highly enclosed, secluded landscape, but with some long views.

Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area.
- Encourage conversion of arable fields to permanent pasture.
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws.
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted.
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens.
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods. *(viewed as a priority)*
- Plant and manage isolated trees in pasture *(these are mature, possibly veteran field oak trees of stature, conserve, protect and plant new oaks as a priority)*
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland.

- Conserve species rich pasture.
- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests.
- Seek to reduce the extent, intensity and impact of horse grazing. Encourage the planting of tree belts and hedgerows around paddocks (*viewed as a priority*).
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value.
- Loss of tranquillity (*high levels of traffic and noise along the lane bordering the parcel, civilian and military aircraft noise*).
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows.
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with little evidence of new young trees.
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features (*the architectural style, scale, massing and materials of the Normandie Stud stands out*).
- Quality of public rights of way network vulnerable to increased use (*by horse riders and further invasion of walker's privacy by CCTV cameras placed in the countryside in and around the Stud farm*).

Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management.
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows.
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees.
- Poor pond management.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Introduction of large farm buildings.
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams.
- Localised increases in traffic on rural roads.
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places.
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use (*and equestrian use*).

Sub-area map:

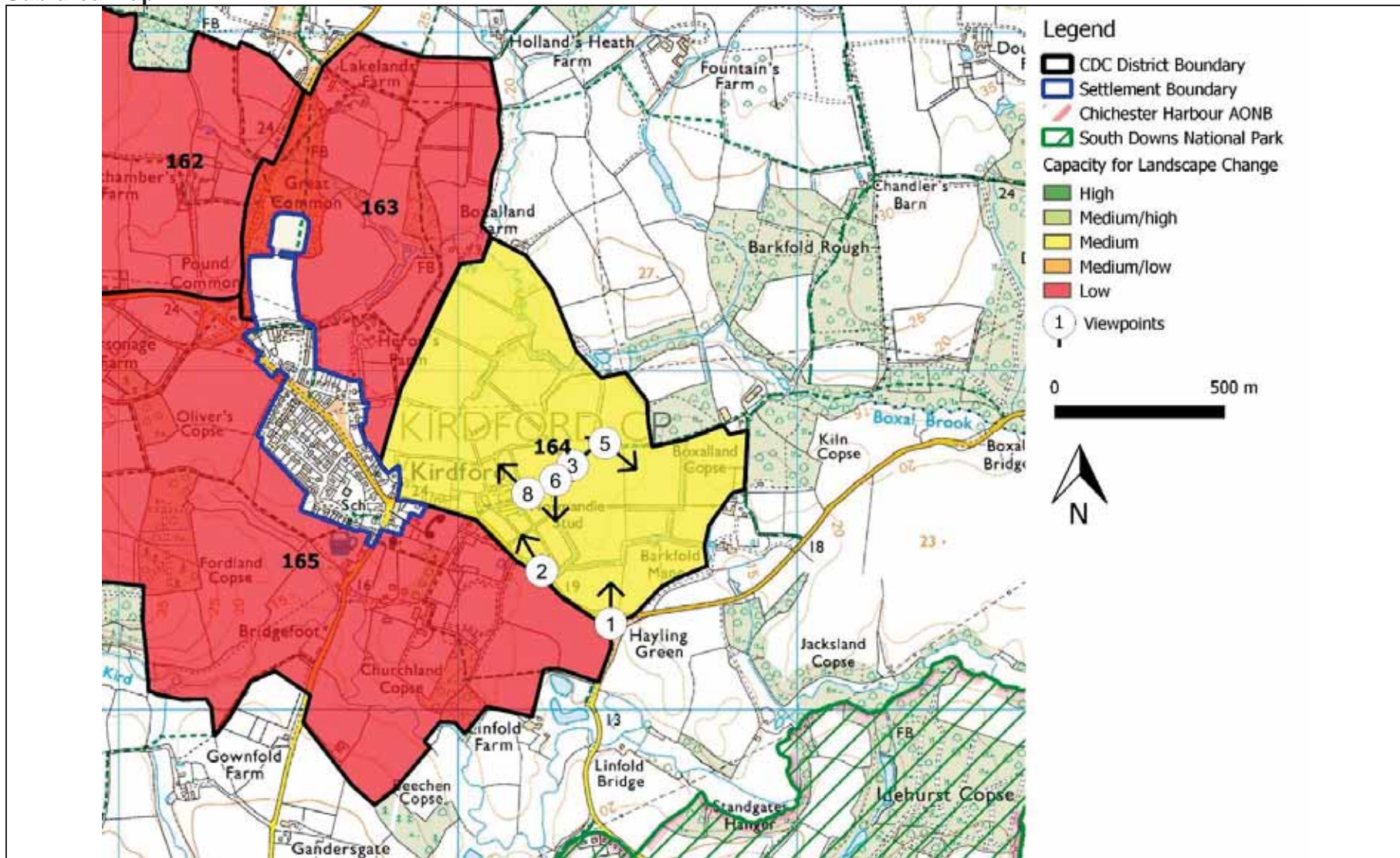


Figure: 164 Capacity of landscape to accept change and location of photographic viewpoints



**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 164 comprises the southern side of the Boxall brook valley corridor and land that is generally gently undulating and flat. The northern boundary follows the line of the tributary with the remaining boundaries being formed by the settlement edge, Conservation Area and individual cottages along Kirdford Road. The area is predominantly rural but heavily influenced by the dominating equestrian land use associated with the Normandie Stud surrounded by extensive paddocks. The remaining area is very sparsely-settled and contains two historic farmsteads. Two ASNW of Boxalland Copse and Kiln Copse lie along the eastern boundary.

The settlement of Kirdford is made up of a historic core containing a distinctive church and small village green surrounded by period properties in the Sussex Weald vernacular style and materials. Further north the settlement contains more modern properties set within mature gardens, a converted barn as village store adjacent to a second 'village green' open space surrounded by more recent housing development. An industrial estate lies close nearby.

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**

*Photo 1: View over the area from rural lane contained by tree cover*



*Photo 2: View of Normandie Stud complex from wide grass verge and hedgerow with mature field trees – typical of the rural lane character.*



*Photo 3: Views across the sub-area uniformly similar in all directions*



*Photo 4: Mature field trees (remnant of former now lost field pattern)*



*Photo 5: Isolated farmsteads on perimeter of sub-area. Listed buildings with settings affected by extensive paddocks and suburban fencing.*



*Photo 6: Long distant views across sub-area towards South Downs ridgeline. Land use has resulted in the loss of former hedgerows, woodland and vegetation typically seen elsewhere in the wider landscape.*



*Photo 7: Settlement edge character - distinctive, contains many vernacular features that back onto open fields and paddocks.*



*Photo 8: Typical vegetation cover – mature field trees (predominantly oak) and native hedgerows with large copses. Views generally short and well contained looking to the north.*

**Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

**15. Visual Sensitivity: Medium**

- Panoramic views absent.
- Views in from PRow and rural roads and residential properties.
- Views out from PRow across extensive, manicured flat paddocks containing 'parkland' trees towards continuous woodland that includes isolated farmstead buildings.
- Views from rural road dominated by the landmark Normandie Stud buildings and complex which is distinctive (and arguably visually intrusive) feature within this sub-area.
- Limited range of sensitive receptors, which are involved with large –scale equestrian business exercising horses, living or passing through the sub-area. Riders likely to have moderate expectations of scenic beauty give the extent of equestrian use. Residents likely to have expectations of scenic beauty.

- Opportunities for mitigation planting based on existing vegetation structure (strong hedgerow structure) exists that could benefit from restoring lost hedgerows and new tree planting. Further improvement to views by removal of intrusive sub-urban fencing surrounding paddocks.
- Mitigation planting is unlikely to interrupt key views.

#### **16. Landscape Sensitivity: Medium/Low**

- Tree belts and mature field trees -isolated, lines and avenue of 'statuesque parkland' trees, many of which likely to be of veteran status.
- Native hedgerows with historic division lines lost to facilitate equestrian uses and creation of paddocks. Hedges along rural lane grass verges generally species poor and contain mature field trees.
- Paddocks leading to wooded watercourse edged by riparian trees and habitat.
- Deciduous woodland linked to adjacent ASNW on edge of sub-area.
- Tributaries of / and Boxall Brook, ponds and drainage ditches.
- Generally flat and then undulating falling towards watercourse of Boxall Brook.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land.
- Limited range of boundary treatments (e.g. paddock post and rail, Natural stone and red brick garden boundary walls with traditional Sussex chestnut post and rail).
- Large modern farmstead (Normandie Stud) surrounded by remnant medieval assart and post medieval gentrification designed landscape informal parkland associated with Barkfold Manor. Mature field Oaks (individual lines and grouped across the area), remnant of earlier historic hedge field pattern.
- Kirdford Conservation Area. Mature trees add to the sylvan character and boundary walls add to character.
- Settlement pattern: Small cottages along rural lanes in contrast to Stud Farm complex of buildings set back from rural lane surrounded by extensive paddocks.
- Contributes to the setting of two listed buildings (Grade II).
- An attractive, rural landscape with a sense of enclosure from mature field 'parkland' trees set retained within large, open paddocks. Hedgerows around the edges and wooded stream valley passing through the northern edge adding complexity and interest. Highly distinctive character.
- Tranquillity strongly affected by traffic and aircraft noise, suburban style fences subdividing larger field's into extensive paddocks. Unsympathetic building and development seen as visually intrusive with light spill/ glow and car headlights. Elsewhere generally dark skies with higher tranquillity further away from settlement edge.
- Very limited (one) PRow crossed the sub-area.
- Area used and valued by local residents however some restrictions on access exist.

#### **17. Landscape character sensitivity: Medium (combines 1 and 2)**

**18. Wider landscape sensitivity: Medium/Low wider sensitivity**

- Some influence by / connection with Kirdford to the west.
- Southern part contributes to western approach to Kirdford along Kirdford Road (a busy route)
- Sub-area is atypical of the wider LCA as a result of equestrian use that dominate to a large extent, resulting in many landscape features having been lost leaving only oak stands, lines and individual 'parkland' oak trees.
- The eastern part (containing farmsteads) is more typical of the LCA.
- Minimal, if any influence on the adjacent South Downs National Park.

**19. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium /Low (combines 3 and 4)****20. Landscape value: Medium**

- Local PRoW through the centre
- Local buildings, historic vegetation and wooded tributary valley raises the value.
- Valued for its equestrian recreational use, although as a commercial Stud farm access is controlled and is a less welcoming experience .for walkers and residents from the presence of CCTV surveillance.
- Contains a small area of the Kirdfold Conservation Area with acknowledged (mapped) views out across paddocks from settlement edge.
- Landscape features that remain are notable, and visually distinctive.
- Presence of Grade II listed properties on the north eastern edge.

**21. Landscape capacity: Medium (combines 5 and 6)**

<p><b>Potential effect on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Views towards the tower of The Parish Church of St John The Baptist</li> <li>• Impact on rural views from PRoW crossing the area</li> <li>• Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character</li> <li>• Views of the mature field trees set within a predominantly open fieldscape (paddocks)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of mature field oaks (individuals, lines, avenues and stands/groups)</li> <li>• Loss of remnant pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland and riparian vegetation</li> <li>• Loss of wetland and wet meadows</li> <li>• Loss of good quality soils</li> <li>• Impacts on historic landscape features; small area of medieval assart field, designed landscape parkland, medieval wet pastures</li> <li>• Alteration to the natural hydrology, ponds and watercourse network/ system</li> <li>• Impacts on the natural undulating landform</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Kirdford</li> <li>• Impacts on the setting of listed properties located on the perimeter</li> <li>• Impact on reduced level of tranquillity</li> <li>• Impact on PRoW's</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting and rural road network if development were to be extended beyond the well-defined settlement edge. Erosion of separation between settlement and isolated listed buildings and their settings on the edge of the sub-area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of all very good, good to moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features</li> <li>• Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value</li> <li>• Restoring lost field boundaries and copses</li> <li>• Retaining legibility and setting of PRoW network and creating additional links</li> <li>• Conserve the rural character of lanes</li> <li>• Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural lanes</li> <li>• Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings</li> <li>• Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead power and telephone cables crossing rural, open fields</li> </ul>

### **Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area**

Sub-area 164 has a medium capacity, constrained by its rural character, the distinctive remnant field oak trees and its role as the rural setting of nearby settlement and conservation area.

There are views from PRow, rural lane and from properties within the Conservation Area.

The area retains a clear sense of its former rural, assarted wood history with medieval assarted fields linked to Boxalland Copse (ASNW) and medieval irregular piecemeal enclosure alongside Boxall Brook. Fields of post medieval gentrification designed landscape and informal parkland associated with Barkfold Manor add to its 'well- settled' historic character. ASNW and mature field oak trees; many of which are isolated, lines and avenue of 'statuesque parkland' trees (likely to be of veteran status), wooded stream valley. The area contains many of the characteristics that are typical of the wider LCA, although with a notable loss of historic field pattern and hedgerows. Tranquillity has been strongly and negatively affected by land-use along the settlement edge and conservation area; that includes the sub-division of fields into paddocks and suburban features including alteration of vegetation, extensive post and rail paddock fencing and presence of intrusive CCTV cameras. The 'privately managed Stud' has had negative effect on the perception of access that deter the occasional walker, yet encourage people engaged in equestrian activities.

It is possible that a limited amount of additional small scale development (if built in the local vernacular style and materials, reflecting the clustered farmsteads seen elsewhere within the locality) may be accommodated within the curtilage of the existing cluster of stud buildings, adjacent paddocks and settlement edge provided it is informed by further landscape and visual impact assessment and sensitively integrated into the landscape, respecting the historic settlement pattern and local distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm. Further development would also risk the coalescence of the existing ribbon development on the edge of the conservation area and alter the small, nucleated village character expanding it to the east.

**Sub-areas: 165 Staples Hill – Churchlands Low Weald**

**West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW2 North Western Low Weald**  
**Nearby: South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA): LCA O2: Northchaple Basin; LCT O: Low Weald.**

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- Gently undulating pastoral landscape.
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees.
- Mature and over-mature oak trees.
- Woodlands often following winding streams.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture.
- Oak - hazel coppice.
- Small and medium sized fields of predominantly pasture with some larger arable fields.
- Wealden ....scattered farmsteads and cottages.
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber.
- Dominant east-west pylon line.
- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms.
- Around Kirdford are ancient tracks and lanes
- Localised linear, suburban development along roads
- Amongst the woodland are areas of fragmented heathland;
- Highly enclosed, secluded landscape, but with some long views
- Medieval church at Kirdford.
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements.
- Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.
- Diverse natural history.
- Large blocks of ancient, semi-natural woodland.
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife
- Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) at Kirdfold churchyard.
- Lowland clay vale enclosed by the rising slopes of the Greensand Hills to the south and west. (SDILCA)
- Lighter soils derived from sandstone on the higher ground supports arable
- Farming. (SDILCA)
- Intricate mosaic of arable/pasture farmland and deciduous woodland plus areas of
- Parkland and common land. (SDILCA)
- Rich in ponds and small streams (although often hidden in the landscape by vegetation) which have carved narrow valleys into the landform, including hammer ponds associated with the former Wealden iron industry. (SDILCA)



- A heavily wooded landscape with an abundance of ancient woodland and linear strips of remnant woodland along the narrow valley streams. (SDILCA)
- Large wooded commons .....supporting important ecological assemblages including ancient semi-natural woodland.
- 19th century parkland landscapes..... Add to the historic time depth of the landscape. (SDILCA)
- High density of dispersed settlement typically comprising isolated farmsteads of medieval origin. (SDILCA)
- Villages represent modern infill around an original dispersed medieval core. (SDILCA)
- **Restricted views due to woodland cover but, where woodland permits, the Greensand Hills form a strong backdrop. (SDILCA)**

#### Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

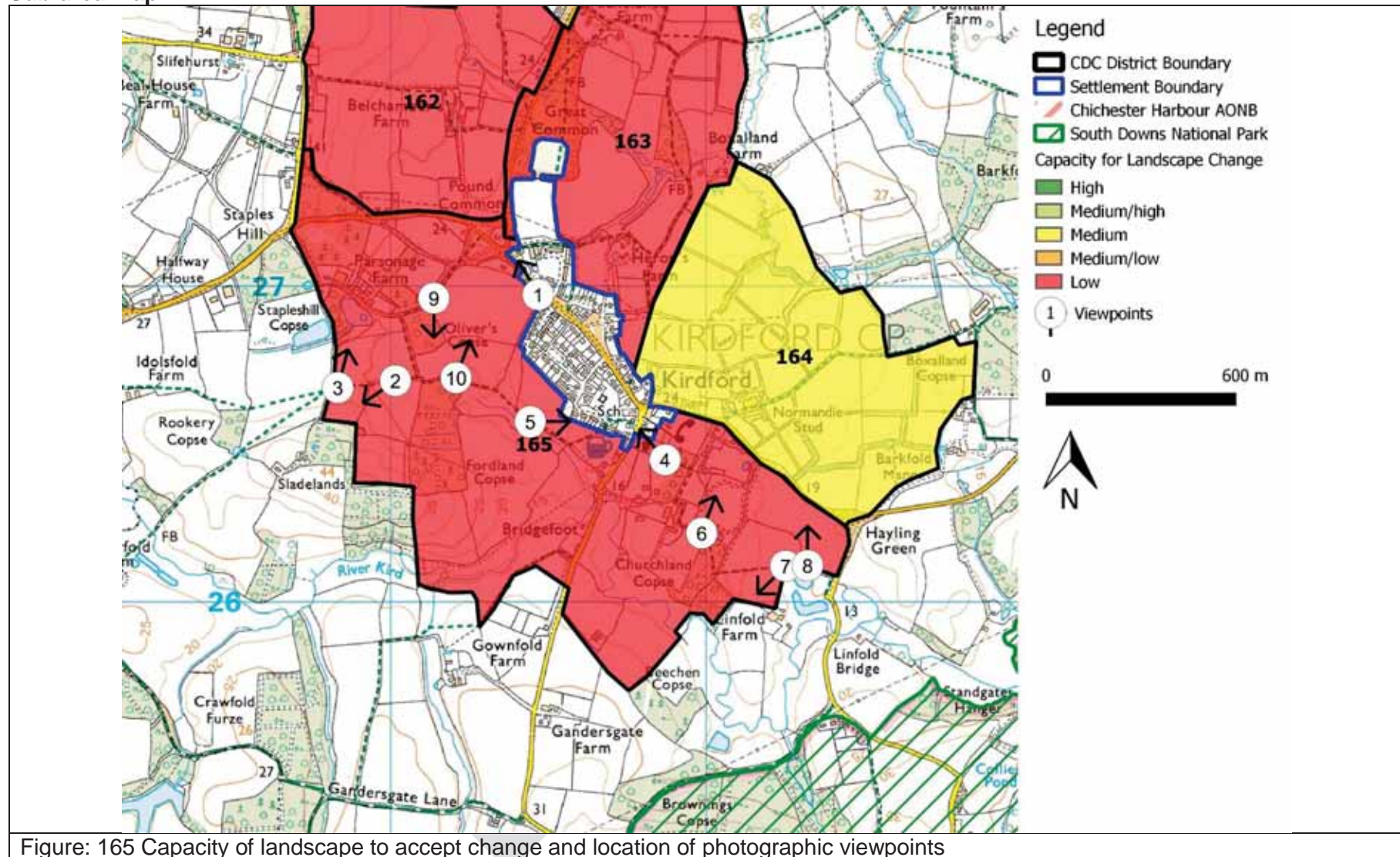
- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area.
- Encourage conversion of arable fields to permanent pasture.
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws.
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted.
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens.
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods.
- Plant and manage isolated trees in pasture.
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland. Support and promote woodland industries.
- Conserve species rich pasture.
- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests.
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value.
- Loss of tranquillity (*detrimentally affected by high levels of traffic and civilian and military aircraft noise*).
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows.
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with little evidence of new young trees.
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features.
- Changes in farming practices leading to the expansion or addition of modern farm buildings.
- Quality of public rights of way network vulnerable to reduced drainage management and increased use
- The former hammerponds, associated with the former Wealden iron industry. (SDILCA)
- The areas of wooded commonland and ancient wood pasture which are of significant ecological value. (SDILCA)
- The occasional areas of marshy grassland and semi-improved grassland which are
- high biodiversity interest (SDILCA)
- The sense of rural tranquillity that is already affected by ....electricity
- Pylons. (SDILCA)

- Conserve the former hammerponds, associated with the former Wealden iron industry, as features of the landscape and manage for habitat biodiversity. (SDILCA)
- Conserve, and seek to extend, areas of marshy grassland and semi-improved
- Grassland, particularly along stream corridors and protect existing meadows. (SDILCA)
- Conserve the areas of wooded commonland and ancient wood pasture ...which are of significant ecological value. (SDILCA)
- Conserve historic 18th century designed landscapes and their settings, encouraging the management/restoration of permanent pasture, parkland trees, avenues and clumps of trees. (SDILCA)
- Consider impact on views into the valley from the surrounding higher land, e.g. popular viewpoints in the adjacent Blackdown to Petworth Greensand Hills, in relation to any proposed change. (SDILCA)

Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management.
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows.
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees.
- Poor pond management.
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Introduction of large farm buildings.
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams.
- Localised increases in traffic on rural roads.
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places.
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use.
- Ensure any new development is integrated into its landscape setting by introducing small scale planting schemes of native broadleaved species that are in proportion with the surrounding landscape pattern. Avoid 'suburbanised hedges' containing exotic species. (SDILCA)
- Seek to conserve the sense of rural tranquillity, despite the presence of electricity pylons. Seek to mitigate impacts of roads through planting. (SDILCA)
- Consider re-introducing traditional management of wood pasture. (SDILCA)

Sub-area map:



**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 165 comprises of low lying, flat land along the River Kird valley with isolated 'islands' of high ground with land uniformly rising towards high ground in the west at Sladelands. Kirdfold settlement edge, Conservation Area and Kirdford Road forms the sub-area's northern boundary. Glasshouse lane passes through the sub-area entering the village from the south. Areas of heathland, ASNW, scrubland and SNCI's present. The area is predominantly rural, pastoral landscape that is reasonably well-settled focused around the landmark church and contains scattered, isolated large farmsteads and occasional individual dwellings.

The north and east the boundaries of the Northchapel Basin are defined by the National Park boundary. The settlement sits within the wider landscape which extends beyond the final National Park boundary into the Low Weald. (SDILCA).

The settlement of Kirdford is made up of a historic core containing a distinctive church and small village green surrounded by period properties in the Sussex Weald vernacular style and materials. Further north the settlement contains more modern properties set within mature gardens, a converted barn as village store adjacent to a second 'village green' open space surrounded by more recent housing development. An industrial estate lies close nearby.

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**



*Photo 1: View north-west along Kirdford Road. Example of distinctive materials that characterise the settlement edge with wooded cover the dominant feature.*



*Photo 2: Views across sub-area looking south west / west across open farmland. Long distant views out to South Downs framed by rising topography and distinctive wooded copses.*



*Photo 3: Panoramic view that includes Parsonage Farm against Oliver's Copse backdrop. The continuous dense woodland cover is highly typical of the wider landscape character type and the settlement edge.*



*Photo 4: View from footpath within the churchyard out across sub-area. characterised by gardens.*



*Photo 5: View east towards modern settlement edge. Views out to far horizon frames by wooded copses.*

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*Photo 6: Some parts of the sub-area influenced by horticultural and nursery commercial activities resulting in a loss of landscape features and alteration to overall character. Landmark church tower is visible from surrounding footpaths*



*Photo 7: View south-west from footpath towards Linfold farm on edge of sub-area. Distant views of wooded skyline, lake and farmstead buildings in the local vernacular style.*



*Photo 8: View north across large open arable fields. Views short due to woodland cover.*



*Photo 9: View from footpath of Olivers' Copse (Ancient Semi Natural Woodland)*

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Photo 10: View north-east from footpath looking towards settlement edge.

### Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process

#### 22. Visual Sensitivity: Medium / High

- Notable panoramic, long distance views from PRoW crossing higher ground of the open countryside looking to the west and east.
- Views of notable landmark buildings, that of the tower of The Parish Church of St John The Baptist, Linfold Farm and Parsonage Farm.
- View out from PRoW limited by dense vegetation, hedgerows, woodlands and wood copses. Views out from the Conservation Area are localised.
- Views close to settlement dominated by strong hedgerow structure and large wood copses that include Oliver's, Fordland and Churchland Copses (all of historic value) in contrast to views in and out from PRoW across fields beyond edge of settlement.
- A wide range of sensitive visual and landscape receptors (that includes the Conservation Area). High expectations of scenic beauty with an appreciation of the surrounding landscape evident from visitor information, signage and published walks exploring the local surroundings with Kirdford seen as a popular destination for leisure, residential and employment.
- Mitigation planting may interrupt important views out to the west.

- Open fields; a key feature of the wider landscape character if lost or removed, may detrimentally alter the appreciation of this landscape.
- Views that include open fields on the western edge of the sub-area - if these are lost or inappropriately planted may alter the landscape character and understanding of the settlement's historic development.
- Views from two Local Green Spaces identified in the Kirdford Neighbourhood plan (2014)

### 23. Landscape Sensitivity: High

- Notable broad-leaved woodland blocks, mature tree stands, belts and riparian trees along watercourses. Formal tree avenues along drives and wooded over common.
- Strong native hedgerow structure with hedgerow trees around field edges.
- Species rich wildflower meadows pasture and wet meadows. Regenerating native scrub on edge of settlement.
- Deciduous woodland including two large areas of ASNW and SNCI in churchyard.
- River Kird, tributary, manmade pond weir and drainage ditches.
- Flat topography with isolated 'islands' that uniformly rises up to a high point.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land with Grade 4 (poor) further south and west.
- Common land: wooded over common with pockets of heath.
- Wide range and mix of boundary treatments (e.g. traditional Sussex post and rail, brick walls with pointed coping and local 'Winklestone' walling)
- Evidence of sensitive historic landscape pattern beyond Kirdford historic core comprising of medieval assart fieldscape, Historic linear ditch / banks features, trackways and designed landscape informal parkland.
- Kirdford Conservation Area with distinctive sylvian character, specimen trees, vernacular buildings and boundary treatments. Views from St John's Church across surrounding countryside. Lanes in the conservation area retain a rural quality which is further enhanced by the wide grass verges, soft front boundaries.
- Distinctive settlement pattern: Village surrounded by pasture fields and large woodland / copses with wooded river Kird valley. Isolated, grand period houses and farm buildings set within designed parkland / landscapes with large ponds.
- Informal parkland (designed landscape) and private gardens add positive character.
- Contributes to the setting for a high number of listed buildings (Grade II), and includes Grade I St John the Baptist Church.
- Generally peaceful, attractive, rural and a feeling of remoteness. Contrasting areas of large flat fields in contrast to smaller, undulating intimate field pattern enclosed by historic hedge boundaries, woodlands and large copses. Attractive and historically interesting with good time-depth
- Dark Skies prevail.
- Well-served by PRoW. Easy access to countryside.
- Area used and valued by local residents and visitors.
- Open access land alongside lane.
- Contains two Local Green Spaces identified in the Kirdford Neighbourhood plan (2014)

**24. Landscape Character Sensitivity: High (combines 1 and 2)**

**25. Wider Landscape Sensitivity: Medium / High**

- Settlement fringe character varies between well-vegetated and open fields.
- Influence by / connection with Kirdford to the east.
- Contributes to the conservation area.
- Sub-area feels strongly rural and part of the wider countryside and to a degree separate from built up areas
- The area is largely typical of the wider LCA.

**26. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: High (combines 3 and 4)**

**27. Landscape Value: Medium/High**

- Forms the setting of the Grade I listed Church of St John The Baptist, historic village core and Grade II listed properties
- Part of the setting of Kirdford Conservation Area
- Well-served by PRow and road network

**28. Landscape Capacity Low: (combines 5 and 6)**

<p><b>Potential effect on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on the characteristic panoramic views from PRow looking out west and east</li> <li>• Views towards the tower of The Parish Church of St John The Baptist</li> <li>• Impact on rural views from PRow crossing the area</li> <li>• Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character</li> <li>• The sense of enclosure derived from the small-scale, intimate field pattern dominated by copses, woods</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland and riparian vegetation</li> <li>• Loss of wetland and wet meadows</li> <li>• Loss of good quality soils</li> <li>• Impacts on historic landscape features; that of medieval assart fields, wooded over commons, ASNW, pastures and historic features e.g. moat</li> <li>• Alteration to the natural hydrology, ponds and watercourse network/ system</li> <li>• Impacts on the natural undulating landform</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Kirdford</li> <li>• Impacts on the setting of many listed properties</li> <li>• Erosion of the pattern of scattered farmsteads and their vernacular character</li> <li>• Impact on tranquillity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erosion of the low density settlement pattern (of scattered farmsteads and their vernacular character) away from the settlement.</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting if development were to be extended beyond the well-defined settlement edge.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of all very good, good to moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features</li> <li>• Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value</li> <li>• Restoring lost field boundaries and copses</li> <li>• Retaining legibility and setting of PRow network and creating additional links</li> <li>• Conserve the rural character of lanes</li> <li>• Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural 'green lanes'</li> <li>• Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings</li> <li>• Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead power and telephone cables crossing rural, open fields</li> </ul>

### **Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area**

Sub-area 165 has a low capacity, constrained by its strong rural character, the distinctive topography containing the riparian River Kird valley corridor, field pattern enclosed by hedgerows and broadleaved oak woodlands, flood zones, wet meadow, heathland, and its role as an integral part of the rural setting of nearby settlement and conservation area. There are notable panorama and far-reaching views from PRow on higher ground looking to the west and east. The area retains a clear sense of history through its historic medieval assarted field pattern, historic settlement core, Grade I and II listed buildings, informal parkland and designed landscape associated with Churchlands and Churchlands Farm. Farmsteads and the C12-C19 medieval building and tower of The Parish Church of St John The Baptist are notable landmarks. ASNW and SNCI's present. The area contains many of the characteristics that are typical of the wider LCA. Highly typical of the North Western Low Weald landscape character in particular its wooded fieldscape, views and tranquil character. Tranquillity is somewhat affected by occasional aircraft noise and the introduction of modern housing with suburban elements. It is well used and travelled through by locals and visitors and contains two Local Green Spaces identified in the Kirdford Neighbourhood plan (2014).

It is possible that a very small amount of additional small-scale development (that of a single dwelling / farmhouse with cluster of outbuildings with pond) may be accommodated around clusters of built form, farmsteads or building conversions, on brownfield sites and within large garden plots within the area provided it is informed by further landscape and visual impact assessment and sensitively integrated into the landscape, respecting the historic settlement pattern and local distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm.

### Sub-areas: 166 River Kird and Southern Setting

**West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW5 Southern Low Weald across the majority of the parcel with LW2 North Western Low Weald in the North West corner and LW3 Upper Arun Valley along the northern edge that includes the southern edge of Wisborough Green village.**

**Nearby: South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA): LCA O2: Northchapel Basin; LCT O: Low Weald.**

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- Mostly low-lying, flat to gently undulating landscape. (LW 5)
- Occasional low wooded ridges in the east of the area. (LW 5)
- Intricate patterns of small pastures and large arable fields. (LW 5)
- Where field sizes have been enlarged by removal of hedgerows, remnants of irregular ancient field patterns are still visible. (LW 5)
- Variable hedgerow network fragmented and depleted in places. (LW 5)
- Old hedgerow alignments are indicated by isolated oak trees standing in broken lines. (LW 5)
- Distinctive scatter of isolated semi-natural copses, woodlands and linear streamside woodlands. (LW 5)
- Many hedgerow oak trees, some stag-headed. (LW 5)
- Occasional long views to the South Downs and the High Weald. (LW 5)
- Traditional building materials are of timber frame, brick, tile (LW 5)
- Winding lanes, some narrow, some with wide verges, link scattered hamlets and farms *(the track and bridleway running north-south from Wisborough Green to Harsfold Hanger and beyond is an excellent example of an historic lane character)* (LW 5)
- Pattern of small fields as a result of enclosure in medieval times. (LW 5)
- Overall biodiversity is reduced by extent of arable farmland in some areas. (LW 5)
- Field ponds. (LW 5)
- Veteran or isolated field trees and hedgerow trees. Good hedgerow matrix. (LW 5)
- Streamside vegetation and ditches with marginal vegetation. (LW 5)
- Water, wet grassland, stream and meadow habitats including SNCI'S (LW 5)
- Gently undulating pastoral landscape. (LW 2)
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees. (LW 2)
- Mature and over-mature oak trees. (LW 2)
- Woodlands often following winding streams. (LW 2)
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture. (LW 2)
- Oak - hazel coppice. (LW 2)
- Small and medium sized fields of predominantly pasture. (LW 2)
- Wealden village..... scattered farmsteads and cottages *(this parcel includes properties of Wisborough Green that lie to the south of the A272)* (LW 2)
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber. (LW 2)

- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms. (LW 2)
- Medieval church at Wisborough Green (*visible and situated within adjacent parcel 167*). (LW 2)
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements. (LW 2)
- Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees. (LW 2)
- Diverse natural history. (LW 2)
- Large blocks of ancient, semi-natural woodland. (LW 2)
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife. (LW 2)
- Mostly narrow valleys with undulating valley sides (LW 3)
- Lush valley bottoms with small, drained, irregularly shaped pastures. (LW 3)
- Occasional curving strips of woodland on valley sides. (LW 3)
- Tightly meandering and steeply banked river and stream courses. (LW 3)
- A few widely dispersed small farms on elevated valley sides (*Old Farm, Harsfold Farm*). (LW 3)
- Mostly rural unspoilt character except for ....some road and aircraft noise in places. (LW 3)
- Small irregular field pattern. (LW 3)
- Rich marginal vegetation along many riverbanks and watercourses supporting notable dragonfly interest. (LW 3)
- Small valley side broadleaved woodlands (*notable feature. Localised steep mature oak wooded escarpment along the parcel's northern edge and along the river in the east*). (LW 3)
- Unimproved pastures. (LW 3)
- Small ancient woodlands. (LW 3)
- Lowland clay vale enclosed by the rising slopes of the Greensand Hills to the south and west. (SDILCA)
- Lighter soils derived from sandstone on the higher ground supports arable farming. (SDILCA)
- Intricate mosaic of arable/pasture farmland and deciduous woodland plus areas of parkland and common land. (SDILCA)
- Rich in ponds and small streams (although often hidden in the landscape by vegetation) which have carved narrow valleys into the landform, including hammer ponds associated with the former Wealden iron industry. (SDILCA)
- A heavily wooded landscape with an abundance of ancient woodland and linear strips of remnant woodland along the narrow valley streams. (SDILCA)
- Large wooded commons supporting important ecological assemblages including ancient semi-natural woodland.
- 19th century parkland landscapes add to the historic time depth of the landscape. (SDILCA)
- High density of dispersed settlement typically comprising isolated farmsteads of medieval origin. (SDILCA)
- Villages represent modern infill around an original dispersed medieval core. (SDILCA)
- Restricted views due to woodland cover but, where woodland permits, the Greensand Hills form a strong backdrop. (SDILCA)

#### Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

- Conserve and enhance pastoral rural character. Maintain the historic character of the area, including the pattern of small irregular fields. (LW 5)
- Conserve and manage existing tree and woodland pattern, especially coppice and streamside woodlands and ponds, copses, tree lines and mature hedgerow trees. (LW 5)

- Promote the replacement of hedgerow trees by replanting or selection of regenerated trees to perpetuate features. (LW 5)
- Maintain and strengthen existing hedgerows and shaws. Conserve hedgerows by careful management and infill planting. (LW 5)
- Restore and create a network of new, small broadleaved farm woodlands, hedgerows and shaws throughout the area, whilst maintaining long views to distant ridges and respecting existing field patterns. (LW 5)
- Encourage planting field corners with native tree and shrub groups linking in with hedgerow and tree belts. (LW 5)
- Maintain and manage river and streamside vegetation for both nature conservation and landscape value. (LW 5)
- Promote the creation of arable field margins, particularly where arable land borders the sides of streams. (LW 5)
- Manage and restore field ponds as valuable wildlife stepping stones and landscape features. Conserve the character and extent of meadow pasture. (LW 5)
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials. (*evidence of this has been found at farms within the parcels northern fringe*) (LW 5)
- Establish new hedgerow and hedgerow tree planting alongside major roads (A272) to blend with existing woodland and hedgerow patterns. (LW 5)
- Ensure any new development is well integrated into the wider landscape. Use new woodland, shaw and hedgerow planting as appropriate. Encourage new tree planting within settlements where appropriate. (LW 5)
- Loss of hedgerows. (LW 5)
- Loss of individual specimen trees in hedgerows and fields. (LW 5)
- Unsympathetic riverside development or drainage of water meadows (*this parcel contains many water meadows along the stream within the northern area. Protecting their hydrology and management to reduce signs of ground poaching and damage to woodland by cattle will be important*). (LW 5)
- Intrusion of urban development and extensions to smaller settlements (*such as Wisborough Green*) (LW 5)
- Road improvements (*to the A272*). (LW 5)
- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area. (LW 2)
- Encourage conversion of arable fields to permanent pasture. (LW 2)
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws. (LW 2)
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted. (LW 2)
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens. (LW 2)
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods. (LW 2)
- Plant and manage isolated trees in pasture. (LW 2)
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland. (LW 2)
- Conserve species rich pasture. (LW 2)
- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests. (LW 2)
- Seek to reduce the extent, intensity and impact of horse grazing. Encourage the planting of tree belts and hedgerows around paddocks. (LW 2)
- Promote the use of current Stewardship schemes or equivalent. (LW 2)
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials. (LW 2)
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development. (LW 2)



- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness. (LW 2)
- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value. (LW 2)
- Loss of tranquillity. (LW 2)
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows. (LW 2)
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with little evidence of new young trees. (LW 2)
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features. (LW 2)
- Changes in farming practices leading to the expansion or addition of modern farm buildings. (LW 2)
- Quality of public rights of way network vulnerable to reduced drainage management and increased use (LW 2)
- Conserve the rural character of the valley. (LW 3)
- Ensure any development on the valley sides respects historic settlement pattern, form and building materials, and is integrated into existing landscape pattern of small woodlands and hedgerows. (LW 3)
- Promote natural watercourse management avoiding the introduction of engineered flood defences. (LW 3)
- Conserve and manage valley side woodland and hedgerows. (LW 3)
- Create new wetland areas such as reed beds and marsh. (LW 3)
- Conserve the wildlife potential of wetland areas by controlling scrub, to avoid suppressing marshland plants and drying out of the ground. (LW 3)
- Promote the use of pollarding of wetland trees and shrubs as a management technique. (LW 3)
- Seek to reduce the intensity extent and visual impact of horse grazing. (LW 3)
- Conserve and extend existing grassland, managing for species richness. (LW 3)
- Where possible enhance the wildlife potential of river banks and drainage channels by re-profiling in a sympathetic manner. (LW 3)
- Encourage clearance cycles of watercourses that increase floristic diversity. (LW 3)
- The overall condition is good. Overall sensitivity to change is high, reflecting many landscape qualities of the area, and visual prominence of some valley sides. (LW 3)
- Small scale incremental changes eroding rural character. (LW 3)
- Maintenance of historic character made up of dispersed historic farm ... buildings...and small irregular fields. (LW 3)
- Loss of riverside trees and vegetation. (LW 3)
- Any development which would damage the integrity of the valley floor or sides. (LW 3)
- Unsympathetic flood defences. (LW 3)
- Change in agricultural practices – pasture improvement and land drainage. (*this would be a major issue in the north of the parcel and along its eastern edge*) (LW 3)
- Expansion of horse paddocks. (LW 3)
- Change to river banks and drainage for wildlife by unsympathetic re-profiling. (LW 3)
- Any large scale housing/commercial development. (LW 3)
- The former hammer ponds, associated with the former Wealden iron industry. (SDILCA)
- The areas of wooded common land and ancient wood pasture.....which are of significant ecological value. (SDILCA)
- The occasional areas of marshy grassland and semi-improved grassland which are high biodiversity interest (SDILCA)
- The sense of rural tranquillity that is already affected by electricity pylons. (SDILCA)

- Conserve the former hammer ponds, associated with the former Wealden iron industry, as features of the landscape and manage for habitat biodiversity. (SDILCA)
- Conserve, and seek to extend, areas of marshy grassland and semi-improved grassland, particularly along stream corridors and protect existing meadows. (SDILCA)
- Conserve the areas of wooded common land and ancient wood pasture which are of significant ecological value. (SDILCA)
- Conserve historic 18th century designed landscapes and their settings, encouraging the management/restoration of permanent pasture, parkland trees, avenues and clumps of trees. (SDILCA)
- Consider impact on views into the valley from the surrounding higher land, e.g. popular viewpoints in the adjacent Blackdown to Petworth Greensand Hills, in relation to any proposed change. (SDILCA)

Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Continuing hedgerow removal and lack of management. (LW 5)
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees. (LW 5)
- Pylon routes. (LW 5)
- Increasing traffic pressures. (LW 5)
- Visual impact and loss of tranquillity associated with major road improvements. (LW 5)
- Introduction of large farm buildings. (LW 5)
- Development pressures around the edges of some settlements. (LW 5)
- Lack of appropriate management of riverside habitats or water meadows (*this would be a priority*) (LW 5)
- Drainage 'improvements' increasing peak flood flows downstream and reducing residual stream flows during dry summer months. (LW 5)
- Poor hedgerow and woodland management. (LW 2)
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows. (LW 2)
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees. (LW 2)
- Poor pond management. (LW 2)
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing. (LW 2)
- Introduction of large farm buildings. (LW 2)
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams. (LW 2)
- Localised increases in traffic on rural roads. (LW 2)
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places. (LW 2)
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use. (LW 2)
- Introduction of concreted sections on river banks. (LW 3)
- Possible pressures for engineered flood defences. (LW 3)
- Loss of hedgerows and woodland on valley sides. (LW 3)
- Decline in traditional land management. (LW 3)
- Localised visual impact of horse paddocks. (LW 3)
- Pressure for further urban development. (LW 3)
- Potential for increased recreational pressures. (LW 3)

- Ensure any new development is integrated into its landscape setting by introducing small scale planting schemes of native broadleaved species that are in proportion with the surrounding landscape pattern. Avoid 'suburbanised hedges' containing exotic species. (SDILCA)
- Seek to conserve the sense of rural tranquillity, despite the presence of electricity pylons. Seek to mitigate impacts of roads through planting. (SDILCA)
- Consider re-introducing traditional management of wood pasture. (SDILCA)

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Sub-area map:

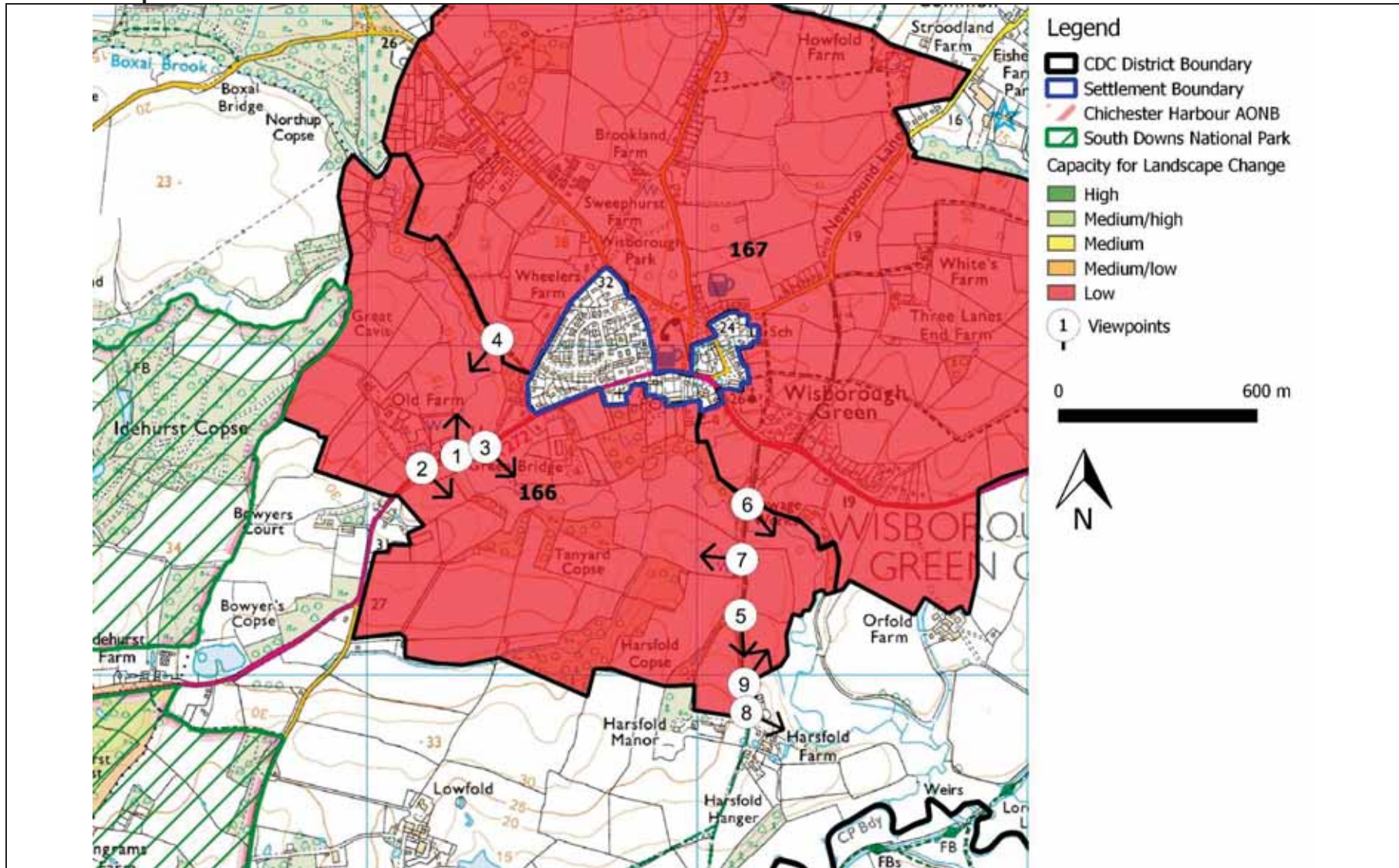


Figure: 166 Capacity of landscape to accept change and location of photographic viewpoints

**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 166 comprises of the Boxall Brook valley that runs along the northern boundary linked to the River Arun. The remaining land gently rises towards higher ground in the south-west. The South Downs National Park forms a small part of the western boundary with the northern a mixture of settlement edge, Conservation Area, river cut escarpment and Boxal Brook valley. The east-west A272 bisects the local area. Woodland and open fields defines the southern boundary with the eastern boundary following the low-lying floodplain of the Boxal Brook valley that discharges into the River Arun valley floodplain. Large areas of ASNW present. Other land uses includes paddocks and gardens. The area is rural and well-settled to the north (Wisborough Green village) with the remaining area sparsely settled with isolated farmstead to the south and west.

The settlement of Wisborough Green is made up of a historic core focused around a picturesque central village green, pond and landmark parish church set in an elevated position. The village core is surrounded by a mix of period to modern settlement with tree rural roads extend out to the north, each containing modern ribbon settlement that includes horticultural nurseries and farm buildings.

The conservation area is well defined and contains large area of entire settlement, apart from line of houses along the A272 out to the east and ribbon settlements along roads to the north.

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**



*Photo 1: View north from A272 at Green Bridge. Sections of the river incorporated into gardens.*



*Photo 2: View from A272 at Green Bridge of wooded escarpment and river corridor. Sub-area secluded and small-scale, intimate fields adjacent to and is the setting of the settlement edge.*

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*Photo 3: View south east across water meadow/pasture towards Tanyard Copse from Green Bridge/ A272. View is typical of the small enclosed fields adjacent to river and around settlement edge. Views short due to woodland cover.*



*Photo 4: View south west from footpath across water meadow/pasture and pond associated with river. Views contained by extensive riparian vegetation and field boundary vegetation along the valley floor.*



*Photo 5: View from bridleway along rural lane. This lane is one of the best examples in the surrounding landscape. Comprising of hedge banks, mature field oak trees and wide grass verge, this sinuous route reflects the historic field pattern and evolution. Views out occurring occasionally at gateways.*



*Photo 6: View south east across watercourse and wet pasture from bridleway along rural lane. Views short due to characteristic riparian vegetation and hedge field boundaries.*





*Photo 7: Large, regular arable fields enclosed by hedgerows and wooded copses. Long distant views restricted by topography and vegetation.*



*Photo 8: View south east from higher ground and rural lane to Harsfold Farm. Long-distant views across river valley floor (containing riparian habitat, grazing pastures) towards wooded ridgeline.*

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*Photo 9: View north east from gate on rural lane leading to Harsfold Farm. Mid-distant view towards the settlement edge and river valley tree cover and arable fields. Attractive and typical of the landscape character.*

### **Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

#### **29. Visual Sensitivity: Medium / Low**

- Notable panoramic, long distance views from western and south western edge of Wisborough Green.
- Views in and out from PRow, roads (A272) and residential properties.
- Views in and out from the Conservation Area.
- Long distant views from PRow and settlement edge on elevated ground looking across open agricultural land and river valley below and towards the wooded ridgeline of the South Downs in the far distance.
- Some views contain the landmark steeple and Parish Church of St Peter Ad Vincula set on high knoll.
- Wide range of sensitive visual and landscape receptors (that includes the Conservation Area). Evidence within the settlement indicates that there are very high levels of public interest and appreciation of the surrounding landscape; with Wisborough Green village being a very popular tourist destination for leisure purposes, for living and employment. High expectations of scenic beauty with very high number of visitors particularly at weekends.

- Opportunities for mitigation planting based on existing vegetation structure (strong hedgerow and tree structure) exists that could benefit from restoring lost hedgerows and new tree planting, however extent may be limited by high number of sensitive ecological, landscape and historic features present.
- Mitigation planting is likely to interrupt key views back towards the conservation area, of the church spire and long distance views towards the South Downs.
- Views that include sensitive hydrological features e.g. streams/ ditches and riparian tree, habitats; that are key features of the wider landscape character - if lost or removed would have a detrimentally affect the landscape character.

### **30. Landscape Sensitivity: High**

- Mature tree stands, lines and riparian trees along water course.
- Strong native hedgerow structure with mature hedgerow trees.
- Species rich wildflower meadows with wetlands and wet meadow associated with Boxall Brook.
- Fields both arable and pasture, with paddocks.
- Large broad-leaved woodland copses including large areas of ASNW.
- Streams, ponds and drainage ditches.
- Undulating topography with low lying broad valley containing Boxal Brook rising to high ground / plateau in the north.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land.
- Mix of boundary treatments (e.g. agricultural throughout sub-area with brick walls and local 'Winklestone' walls closer to settlement edge)
- Evidence of sensitive historic landscape pattern beyond Wisborough Green historic core to east and west comprising of medieval assart fields and ASNW.
- Wisborough Green Conservation Area with distinctive specimen trees, vernacular buildings and boundary treatments.
- Distinctive settlement pattern: Wisborough Green is a notable, medium size village of significant age and of significant historical interest. Situated to the north side of the A272 period buildings forms the historic village core, focused around the highly prominent and distinctive Village Green and the parish church. A number of properties lie to the south of the A272 with isolated cottages and farmsteads set within wooded fieldscape and open valley to the south.
- Well vegetated gardens and trees contribute to settlement edge character.
- Contributes to the setting of 16 Grade II listed properties along the southern edge of the conservation area and A272, including the Grade I listed Parish Church of St Peter Ad Vincula.

- Cultural associations with cider and timber, glass and iron industries. The Green has always featured as an important community 'green space' in the heart of the village.
- Generally quiet and tranquil away from the A272. Attractive, rural and generally unspoilt towards the south. Beyond the settlement edge (beyond the A272 road corridor) a semi-open/enclosed agricultural landscape set on a gently undulating rolling land and broad valley containing wooded streams, water meadows and medieval fields.
- Dark Skies prevail.
- Limited PRow (two) cross the sub-area and footpath alongside A272. Relatively easy to reach the countryside using rural lane and footpath extending out from the settlement edge.
- Area used and highly valued by local residents. Visitors value Wisborough Green as a tourist destination village.

**31. Landscape character sensitivity: High (combines 1 and 2)**

**32. Wider landscape sensitivity: High**

- Settlement edge largely well-vegetated.
- Strongly influence by / connection with Wisborough Green that lies to the north.
- Contributes to approach into Wisborough Green along A272 (main tourist route).
- Contributes to the conservation area.
- Sub-area feels strongly rural and part of the wider countryside and to a degree separate from built up areas.
- Sub-area is highly typical of the wider LCA.
- Minimal, if any influence on the adjacent South Downs National Park.

**33. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: High (combines 3 and 4)**

**34. Landscape value: Medium**

- Contains Conservation Area and Grade II listed buildings.
- Contributes in part to the wider landscape setting and views associated with Grade I listed St Peter's Church.
- Notable trees of merit around the settlement edge and backdrop that is important to the setting of the Conservation Area.
- Proximity of the South Downs National Park has little influence.
- Limited PRow network.

- Contributes to the setting of the Wisborough Green Conservation Area.
- Contains sites of important ecological value, including SNCIs and Ancient woodland.
- 'Settled' with historic features present.

**35. Landscape capacity: Low (combines 5 and 6)**

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<p><b>Potential effect on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on the characteristic panoramic views from the Conservation Area (St Peter's churchyard and out to the west across the wider landscape towards the South Downs)</li> <li>• Impact on rural views from PRow crossing the area</li> <li>• Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural character</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland and riparian vegetation</li> <li>• Loss of wetland and wet meadows, medieval pastures</li> <li>• Alteration to the natural hydrology and watercourse network/ system</li> <li>• Impacts on the natural undulating landform</li> <li>• Impact on the characteristic panoramic views from the Conservation Area (St Peter's churchyard and out to the west across the wider landscape towards the South Downs)</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Wisborough Green village</li> <li>• Impacts on the setting of listed and locally listed properties</li> <li>• Erosion of the pattern of scattered farmsteads and their vernacular character</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential effect on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erosion of the pattern of scattered farmsteads and their vernacular character</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Wisborough Green which has already been affected by recent development and led to suburbanisation of the settlement edge and open edge defined by the A272</li> <li>• Impacts on the rural landscape setting south of Wisborough Green.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of all very good, good to moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features</li> <li>• Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value</li> <li>• Restoring lost field boundaries and copses</li> <li>• Retaining legibility and setting of PRow network and creating additional links</li> <li>• Conserve the rural character of lanes</li> <li>• Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural 'green lanes'</li> <li>• Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings</li> <li>• Maintain and where appropriate, extend screening along the A272</li> <li>• Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead power and telephone cables crossing rural, open fields</li> </ul>

### **Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area**

Sub-area 166 has a low capacity, constrained by its strong rural arable and pastoral field pattern enclosed by mature trees and hedges, the distinctive topography containing riparian River Kird wooded corridor and water meadows which flows around the west and south of the village, flood zones, pastures and wetland associated with Boxal Brook and woodland. The area strongly contributes to the rural setting of nearby settlement, conservation area and forms the setting of the South Downs National Park. There are many views in and out from a limited PRow network, the A272, rural lanes, residential properties and to and from the Conservation Area; with panoramic views from the (mound) elevated churchyard of the Parish Church of St Peter Ad Vincula, view of the steeple, looking west long distant views from PRow and houses on Carters Way/ The Luff looking towards/of the wooded ridgeline of the South Downs National Park and farmland and river valley below. The area is well used and travelled through by locals, visitors and local clubs/ allotment owners.

The area retains a clear sense of history with medieval assarted fieldscape associated with historic farmsteads, ancient drove routes / green lane and unchanged skyline dominated by large areas of ASNW. The area strongly contributes to the setting of 16 Grade II listed properties along the southern edge of the conservation area and A272. Large areas of ASNW present. The area contains many of the characteristics that are typical of the wider LCA, although tranquillity has been strongly and negatively affected by traffic along the A272 and suburban elements associated with ribbon development (modern housing and gardens) in the north. Tranquillity is relatively unspoilt in the mid to southern area.

SDILCA indicates at present these minor residential changes can be easily absorbed. However if changes (e.g. modern infill and expansion) continue to occur the effect will be detrimental to the organic landscape pattern.

It is unlikely that any development outside the settlement boundary and south of the A272 may be accommodated.

**Sub-areas: 167 Wisborough Green Settled Low Weald**

**West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA) LCA: LW2 North Western Low Weald across the majority of the parcel (including the northern edge of Wisborough Green village with a small area in the south LW3 Upper Arun Valley).**

Key characteristics and key qualities (West Sussex LCA unless noted) *(with comments added based on fieldwork observations in brackets).*

- Gently undulating pastoral landscape. (LW2)
- Dense network of medium sized woodlands, shaws and hedges with mature hedgerow trees. (LW2)
- Mature and over-mature oak trees. (LW2)
- Woodlands often following winding streams. (LW2)
- Ancient semi-natural woodland and old woodland pasture. (LW2)
- Oak - hazel coppice. (LW2)
- Small and medium sized fields of predominantly pasture *(close to village edge)* with some larger arable fields *(further to the north)*
- Wealden village, some centred on village greens, scattered farmsteads and cottages *(this parcel includes the significant village green church and historic buildings of Wisborough Green) (Howfold Farm in the north with its panoramic views south over the flood meadows, trees and Church spire).* (LW2)
- Varied local building materials of stone, brick, weatherboard and half-timber. (LW2)
- Dominant east-west pylon line *(partially obscured by tree cover)* (LW2)
- Winding narrow lanes linking scattered hamlets and farms. (LW2)
- Medieval church at Wisborough Green (LW2)
- Woodland assarts and radiating field patterns around settlements. (LW2)
- Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees. (LW2)
- Diverse natural history. (LW2)
- Large blocks of ancient, semi-natural woodland. (LW2)
- The small streams in the upper catchments improve the connectivity with woodlands and neighbouring catchments enabling the migration of wildlife. (LW2)
- Site of Nature Conservation Importance SNCI Wisbrough Green Churchyard. (LW2)
- Mostly narrow valleys with undulating valley sides. (LW3)
- Lush valley bottoms with small, drained, irregularly shaped pastures. (LW3)
- Occasional curving strips of woodland on valley sides. (LW3)
- Tightly meandering and steeply banked river and stream courses. (LW3)
- A few widely dispersed small farms on elevated valley sides. (LW3)
- Mostly rural unspoilt character except for ....some road and aircraft noise in places. (LW3)
- Small irregular field pattern. (LW3)
- Rich marginal vegetation along many riverbanks and watercourses supporting notable dragonfly interest. (LW3)
- Small valley side broadleaved woodlands *(notable feature. Localised steep mature oak wooded escarpment along the parcel's western edge).* (LW3)



- Unimproved pastures. (LW3)
- Small ancient woodlands. (LW3)
- Lowland clay vale enclosed by the rising slopes of the Greensand Hills to the south and west. (SDILCA)
- Lighter soils derived from sandstone on the higher ground supports arable farming. (SDILCA)
- Intricate mosaic of arable/pasture farmland and deciduous woodland plus areas of parkland and common land. (SDILCA)
- Rich in ponds and small streams (although often hidden in the landscape by vegetation) which have carved narrow valleys into the landform, including hammer ponds associated with the former Wealden iron industry. (SDILCA)
- A heavily wooded landscape with an abundance of ancient woodland and linear strips of remnant woodland along the narrow valley streams. (SDILCA)
- Large wooded commons supporting important ecological assemblages including ancient semi-natural woodland.
- 19th century parkland landscapes add to the historic time depth of the landscape. (SDILCA)
- High density of dispersed settlement typically comprising isolated farmsteads of medieval origin. (SDILCA)
- Villages represent modern infill around an original dispersed medieval core. (SDILCA)
- Restricted views due to woodland cover but, where woodland permits, the Greensand Hills form a strong backdrop. (SDILCA)

#### Landscape strategy and key sensitivities and guidelines:

- Conserve existing tranquil rural and predominantly wooded character of the area. (LW2)
- Encourage conversion of arable fields to permanent pasture. (LW2)
- Encourage the conservation and management of existing hedgerows and shaws. (LW2)
- Replant hedgerows with a diverse mix of native species where these have been removed or depleted. (LW2)
- Encourage the planting of hedgerow oaks to ensure a new generation of individual specimens. (LW2)
- Restore historic field patterns where possible and maximise linkages with existing small woods. (LW2)
- Plant and manage isolated trees in pasture. (LW2)
- Conserve and encourage sound management of all woodland. (LW2)
- Conserve species rich pasture. (LW2)
- Conserve and manage streamside vegetation and ponds. Encourage appropriate management to perpetuate conservation and landscape interests. (LW2)
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials. (LW2)
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agriculture and other development. (LW2)
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness. (LW2)
- Conserve the rural character of the valley. (LW3)
- Ensure any development on the valley sides respects historic settlement pattern, form and building materials, and is integrated into existing landscape pattern of small woodlands and hedgerows. (LW3)
- Promote natural watercourse management avoiding the introduction of engineered flood defences. (LW3)
- Conserve and manage valley side woodland and hedgerows. (LW3)
- Create new wetland areas such as reed beds and marsh. (LW3)

- Conserve the wildlife potential of wetland areas by controlling scrub, to avoid suppressing marshland plants and drying out of the ground. (LW3)
- Promote the use of pollarding of wetland trees and shrubs as a management technique. (LW3)
- Seek to reduce the intensity extent and visual impact of horse grazing. (LW3)
- Conserve and extend existing grassland, managing for species richness. (LW3)
- Where possible enhance the wildlife potential of river banks and drainage channels by re-profiling in a sympathetic manner. (LW3)
- Encourage clearance cycles of watercourses that increase floristic diversity. (LW3)
- The overall condition is good. Overall sensitivity to change is high, reflecting many landscape qualities of the area, and visual prominence of some valley sides. (LW3)
- The former hammer ponds, associated with the former Wealden iron industry. (SDILCA)
- The areas of wooded common land and ancient wood pasture which are of significant ecological value. (SDILCA)
- The occasional areas of marshy grassland and semi-improved grassland which are
- high biodiversity interest (SDILCA)
- The sense of rural tranquillity that is already affected by electricity pylons. (SDILCA)
- Conserve the former hammer ponds, associated with the former Wealden iron industry, as features of the landscape and manage for habitat biodiversity. (SDILCA)
- Conserve, and seek to extend, areas of marshy grassland and semi-improved grassland, particularly along stream corridors and protect existing meadows. (SDILCA)
- Conserve the areas of wooded common land and ancient wood pasture which are of significant ecological value. (SDILCA)
- Consider re-introducing traditional management of wood pasture. (SDILCA)
- Conserve historic 18th century designed landscapes and their settings, encouraging the management/restoration of permanent pasture, parkland trees, avenues and clumps of trees. (SDILCA)
- Seek to conserve the sense of rural tranquillity, despite the presence of electricity pylons. Seek to mitigate impacts of roads through planting. (SDILCA)
- Ensure any new development is integrated into its landscape setting by introducing small scale planting schemes of native broadleaved species that are in proportion with the surrounding landscape pattern. Avoid 'suburbanised hedges' containing exotic species. (SDILCA)
- Consider impact on views into the valley from the surrounding higher land, e.g. popular viewpoints in the adjacent Blackdown to Petworth Greensand Hills, in relation to any proposed change. (SDILCA)

Key sensitivities are:

- Protect the character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their conservation value. (LW2)
- Loss of tranquillity. (*road noise an issue particularly in the east*) (LW2)
- Loss of individual trees in fields and hedgerows. (LW2)
- Over maturity of hedgerow trees with little evidence of new young trees. (LW2)
- Unsympathetic development, changes in settlement pattern and addition of suburban features (*garden fences intrusive and out of character*). (LW2)
- Changes in farming practices leading to the expansion or addition of modern farm buildings. (LW2)
- Quality of public rights of way network vulnerable to reduced drainage management and increased use. (LW2)
- Small scale incremental changes eroding rural character. (LW3)

- Maintenance of historic character made up of dispersed historic farm ... buildings...and small irregular fields. (LW3)
- Loss of riverside trees and vegetation. (LW3)
- Any development which would damage the integrity of the valley floor or sides. (LW3)
- Unsympathetic flood defences. (LW3)
- Change in agricultural practices – pasture improvement and land drainage. (*This would be a major issue in the west and east of the parcel*). (LW3)
- Expansion of horse paddocks. (LW3)
- Change to river banks and drainage for wildlife by unsympathetic re-profiling. (LW3)
- Any large scale housing/commercial development. (LW3)

Relevant forces for change / key issues / threats / opportunities:

- Poor hedgerow and woodland management. (LW2)
- Localised loss and fragmentation of hedgerows (*particularly noted in the west of the parcel*). (LW2)
- Over-maturity and decline of hedgerows and field trees. (LW2)
- Poor pond management. (LW2)
- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing. (LW2)
- Introduction of large farm buildings (*has occurred in the west of the parcel, now in poor condition and out of character*). (LW2)
- Changes in farming practices resulting in silt and sand run off, causing loss of topsoil and siltration issues in streams. (LW2)
- Localised increases in traffic on rural roads. (LW2)
- Introduction of non-native, exotic plant species into the landscape giving a suburban, manicured feel in places. (LW2)
- Former individual farmsteads have been converted to residential use. (LW2)
- Introduction of concreted sections on river banks. (LW3)
- Possible pressures for engineered flood defences. (LW3)
- Loss of hedgerows and woodland on valley sides. (LW3)
- Decline in traditional land management. (LW3)
- Localised visual impact of horse paddocks. (LW3)
- Pressure for further urban development. (LW3)
- Potential for increased recreational pressures. (LW3)

Sub-area map:

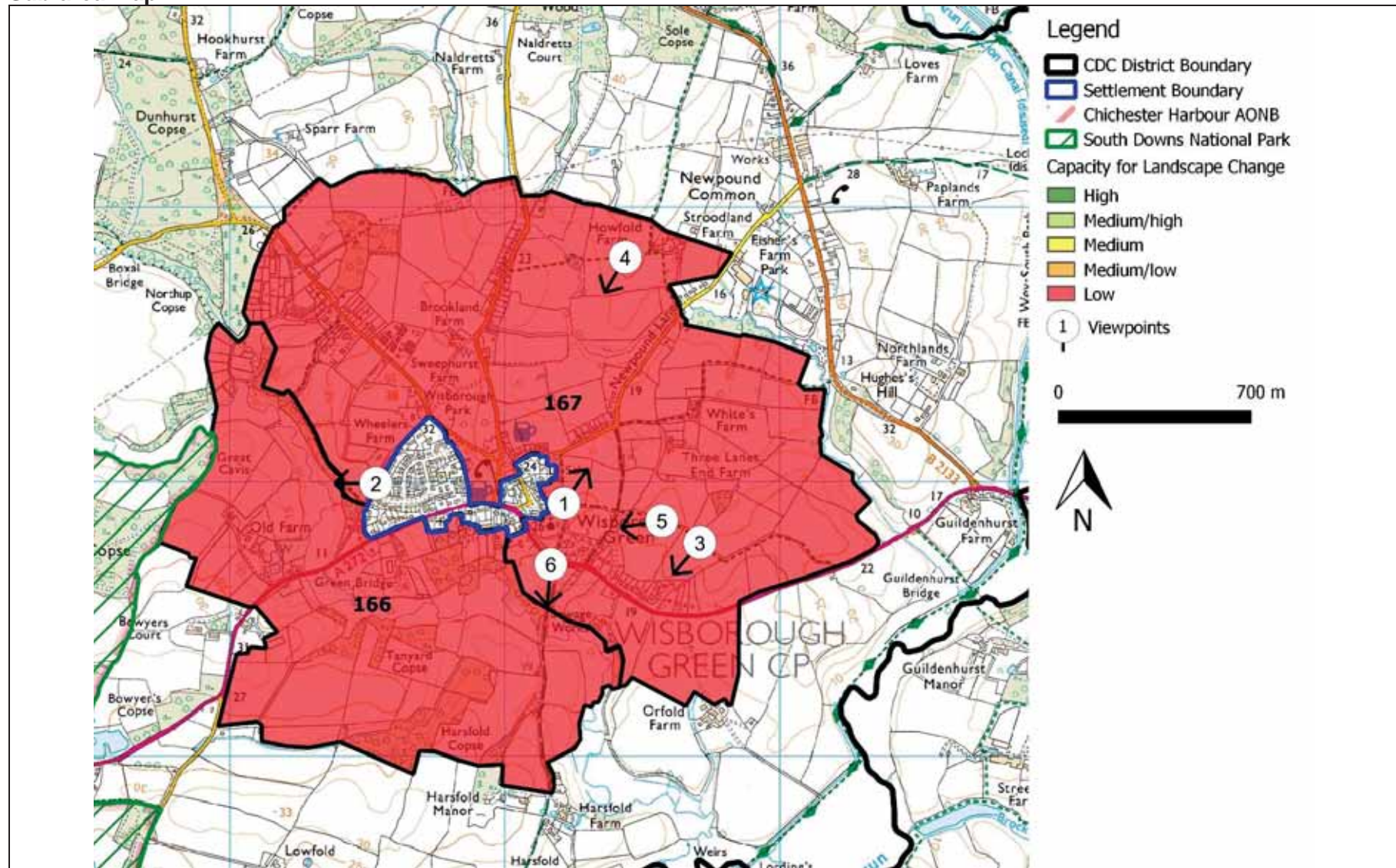


Figure: 167 Capacity of landscape to accept change and location of photographic viewpoints

**Sub-area description:**

Sub-area 167 comprises of gently undulating land across the area rising to higher ground around 25m towards the east. The northern boundary follows the tributary stream that flows eastwards towards the River Arun valley floodplain. The southern boundary is formed by open farmland and the A272 with ribbon settlement before entering the village from the east. The southern boundary is formed by both the settlement edge and the Conservation Area.

SNCI and ASNW present. Other land uses include the Village Green, Wisborough House Park and parkland, Horticultural glasshouses, individual properties and gardens. The area is predominantly rural and well-settled with the historic village and landmark Parish Church of St Peter Ad Vincula being of strong, positive identity. Three rural roads (Durbans / Loxwood Road and Kirdford Road and Newpound Lane) bisect the local area out to the north, north-east and north-west each containing ribbon settlement. Scattered, isolated farmsteads extend across the remaining local area.

The settlement of Wisborough Green is made up of a historic core focused around a picturesque central village green, pond and landmark parish church set in an elevated position. The village core is surrounded by a mix of period to modern settlement with tree rural roads extend out to the north, each containing modern ribbon settlement that includes horticultural nurseries and farm buildings.

The conservation area is well defined and contains large area of entire settlement, apart from line of houses along the A272 out to the east and ribbon settlements along roads to the north.

For more detail refer to record sheets.

**Photographs:**

*Photo 1: View north east from footpath existing churchyard. Strong belts of vegetation and mature trees define the small-scale intimate field pattern and wooded settlement edge character. Rolling topography provides occasional glimpsed long-distant views.*



*Photo 2: View west from western edge of settlement. Areas of high ground offer long-distant views across the river valley below (within adjacent sub-area 166).*

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*Photo 3: View east / south east across flat open fields and well-vegetated settlement edge towards the South Downs horizon.*



*Photo 4: View south of church spire beyond tributary flood plain with views framed by strong lines of mature field trees and open grazed paddocks in the foreground.*

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*Photo 5: View east from footpath of well-wooded settlement edge and landmark church spire.*



*Photo 6: View south of A272 towards allotments and into adjacent sub-area 166. Views generally restricted by vegetation but from higher ground the occasional long-distant views are found.*

### Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process

#### 36. Visual Sensitivity: Medium/High

- Notable panoramic, long distance views from high knoll containing churchyard of the Parish Church of St Peter Ad Vincula. The higher levels of visibility associated with this sub-area compared to other sub-areas is a key feature.
- Long distance views out from PRow on high ground towards wooded hangers and the South Downs to the west and south.
- Views to the north across meadows and farmland and distant views towards Bedham Wood in the south Views in and out from the Conservation Area.
- Views in and out from PRow, roads (A272) and residential properties.
- Views back towards the wooded village edge from PRow particularly crossing the sub-area in the north and crossing eastern area.
- A wide range of sensitive visual and landscape receptors (that includes the Conservation Area). Evidence within the settlement indicates that there are very high levels of public interest and appreciation of the surrounding landscape although from a limited

number of PRow, with Wisborough Green village being a very popular tourist destination for leisure purposes and work. High expectations of scenic beauty with PRow well-used and worn close to settlement edge.

- Views are typically characterised by views of open farmland and wooded areas through the high hedgerows with glimpse of farmhouses.
- Opportunities for mitigation planting based on existing vegetation structure (strong hedgerow copse, and tree structure) exists that could benefit from restoring lost hedgerows and new tree planting, however extent may be limited by high number of sensitive ecological, landscape and historic features present.
- Mitigation planting is likely to interrupt key views back towards the conservation area, of the church spire and long distance views towards the South Downs.
- Planting may result in the loss of the smaller ‘open’ fields around the village edge which contributes to the wider open/enclosed wooded field pattern and character.
- Views that include sensitive hydrological features e.g. streams/ ditches and riparian tree, habitats; that are key features of the wider landscape character - if lost or removed would detrimentally affect the landscape character.
- Views from Village Green (identified as a Local Green Space in the Wisborough Green Neighbourhood Development Plan)

### 37. Landscape Sensitivity: High

- Statuesque mature trees around the Church, specimen trees and riparian trees along water course.
- Strong native hedgerow structure with mature hedgerow trees.
- Fields both arable and pasture, with areas of wetland and wet meadow/pasture.
- Wisborough House Park and parkland. (CDC Locally listed).
- Limited mixed broad-leaved woodland with ASNW and SNCI in Wisborough Green Churchyard.
- Watercourse/tributary, field ponds and drainage ditches.
- Undulating topography rising to higher ground in east. Contains small valley.
- Classified as Grade 3 (medium to good) agricultural land with Grade 4 (poor) further north and east.
- Mix of boundary treatments (e.g. Traditional post and rail, brick walls and local ‘Winklestone’ walls closer to settlement edge)
- Evidence of sensitive historic landscape pattern beyond Wisborough Green edge; a wide mix of ages that includes medieval assart, modern field and glass houses, planned and designed landscapes.
- Wisborough Green Conservation Area with distinctive specimen trees, vernacular buildings and boundary treatments.
- Distinctive settlement pattern: Wisborough Green is a notable, medium size village of significant age and of significant historical interest. Situated to the north side of the A272 period buildings forms the historic village core, focused around the highly prominent

and distinctive Village Green and the parish church. A number of properties lie to the south of the A272 with isolated cottages and farmsteads set within wooded fieldscape and open valley to the south.

- modern ribbon settlements along each of the 3 roads (Durbans/ Loxwood Road and Kirdford Road and Newpound Lane) that extend northwards from the conservation area.
- Well vegetated gardens, trees and parkland associated with Wisborough House Park contribute to settlement edge character.
- Contributes to the setting of over 22 Grade II listed properties along the southern edge of the conservation area and A272; including the Grade I listed Parish Church of St Peter Ad Vincula.
- Cultural associations with cider, timber and iron industries, with evidence of former glass works. The Green has always featured as an important community 'green space' in the heart of the village (identified as a Local Green Space in the Wisborough Green Neighbourhood Development Plan)
- Generally quiet and tranquil away from the settlement and A272 further south. Attractive, rural but with localised sub-urban degraded areas and features affecting rural character in the north.
- Dark Skies prevail.
- Some PRoW that joins 'green lane /historic trackway' and PRoW over high ground overlooking Boxall Brook and back towards Wisborough Green.
- Area used and highly valued by local residents. Visitors value Wisborough Green as a tourist destination village.

**38. Landscape character sensitivity: High (combines 1 and 2)**

**39. Wider landscape sensitivity: Medium / High wider sensitivity**

- Settlement edge largely well-vegetated.
- Strongly influence by / connection with Wisborough Green that lies to the south.
- Contributes to approach into Wisborough Green along A272 (main tourist route).
- Contributes to the conservation area.
- Sub-area feels strongly rural and part of the wider countryside and to a degree separate from built up areas.
- Sub-area is highly typical of the wider LCA.
- Minimal, if any influence on the adjacent South Downs National Park.

**40. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: High (combines 3 and 4)**

**41. Landscape value: Medium/High**

- Contains Conservation Area and is the setting of the Grade I listed St Peter's Church and churchyard and Grade II listed properties; part of the historic village core.
- Contributes to the setting of the Wisborough Green Conservation Area.
- Contains a Registered Village Green.
- Notable trees of merit around the settlement edge and backdrop that is important to the setting of the Conservation Area.
- Contains and contributes to the setting of Wisbrough House Park, designed garden and parkland (only locally listed).
- Reasonably well served by PRow network.
- Contains sites of important ecological value, including SNCIs and Ancient woodland.

**42. Landscape capacity: Low (combines 5 and 6)**

**Potential effect on key visual characteristics**

- Impact on the characteristic panoramic view from the Conservation Area (St Peter's churchyard) to the north, east and west
- Impact on rural views from PRow crossing the area, particularly across higher, open ground
- Impact on scenic quality of the area including its rural and tranquil character
- Impact on the view of the church spire, wooded river valley and attractive tranquil farmland seen from PRow cross higher ground (Howfold Farm) to the north

**Potential effect on key landscape characteristics**

- Loss of pastoral fields, hedgerows with mature trees, woodland and riparian vegetation
- Loss of wetland and wet meadows and medieval pastures
- Alteration to the natural hydrology and watercourse network/ system
- Impacts on the natural undulating landform
- Impact on the characteristic panoramic view from the Conservation Area (St Peter's churchyard) to the north, east and west
- Impacts on the rural, well-vegetated landscape setting of Wisborough Green village
- Impacts on the setting of listed (Grade I and II) properties on the northern edge of the village, and its historic village green
- Impacts on the setting of locally listed property Wisborough Park House and its designed landscape and parkland
- Erosion of the pattern of scattered farmsteads and their vernacular character

**Potential effect on key settlement characteristics**

- Erosion of low density pattern of scattered farmsteads and their vernacular character
- Impacts on the rural landscape setting of Wisborough Green that has been affected by more recent, modern development and suburbanisation along the A272.
- Impacts on the rural, minor road network
- May result in beneficial improvement to agricultural land and farm buildings that are in poor, declining condition
- Impacts on the rural landscape setting and tranquillity of Wisborough Green village if development extends to the north, east and west
- Erosion of the separation (designated gap) between settlement and ribbon settlements along the three rural lanes to the north.

**Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure**

- Retention of all very good, good to moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features
- Retention of other vegetated areas, watercourses, ponds and riparian, wooded valleys and wet pasture fields where they continue to contribute to landscape and biodiversity value
- Restoring lost field boundaries and copses
- Retaining legibility and setting of PRow network and creating additional links
- Conserve the rural character of lanes
- Conserve the hedgerows, mature field oak trees and wide grass verges of the rural 'green lanes'
- Retain the undisturbed rural setting of nearby listed buildings
- Maintain and where appropriate, extend screening along the rural roads, replacing missing sections of vegetation / tall hedgerows and removing sub-urban style fencing
- Where appropriate and feasible remove overhead power and telephone cables crossing rural, open fields

### Conclusion and recommendations and potential capacity of sub-area

Sub-area 167 has a low capacity, constrained by its strong rural character, distinctive topography, specimen and unusual species of mature trees, riparian stream corridor, flood zones, period properties with large mature gardens, Wisborough Village Green and its role as an integral part of the rural setting of nearby settlement, conservation area and forms the setting of the South Downs National Park. The Village Green is also identified as a Local Green Space in the Wisborough Green Neighbourhood Development Plan. There are panoramic views from the (mound) elevated churchyard of The Parish Church of St Peter Ad Vincula. Views from the conservation area of the village and from PRoW (bridleway) in the north elevated view back towards the steeple of the Parish Church of St Peter Ad Vincula across the river valley. The area is well used and travelled through by locals, visitors and people engaged in sporting activities (cricket and play) and visiting the parish church.

The area retains a clear sense of history through its historic medieval assarted field pattern, Ghyll woodland, large medieval farmstead, medieval common edge settlement, historic settlement core, Grade I Parish Church of St Peter Ad Vincula and the setting of many Grade II listed buildings and medieval gentrification informal parkland / designed landscape associated with Wisborough House Park. The area contains many of the characteristics that are typical of the two wider LCA's (North Western Low Weald and Upper Arun Valley), although tranquillity has been strongly and negatively affected by traffic along the A272 and suburban elements associated with ribbon development (modern housing and gardens) in the north. Tranquillity is relatively unspoilt in the mid to southern area. Cultural associations with the former glass working industry are noted with ASNW and SNCI present.

It is possible that a small amount of additional development may be accommodated within existing clusters of settlement within existing farmsteads/ buildings and adjacent paddocks, isolated development within existing large gardens on the settlement edge and declining commercial horticultural sites or brownfields sites (such as proposed development sites at Winterfold Fields, Greenways Nursery and Clark's Yard), provided it is informed by further landscape and visual impact assessment and sensitively integrated into the landscape, respecting the historic settlement pattern and local distinctiveness, although great care would need to be taken to avoid any landscape or visual harm. Further development would also risk the coalescence of isolated dwellings into ribbon developments, and ribbon developments coalescence with Wisborough Green settlement and the loss of strategic rural gaps identified within the neighbourhood plan.

SDILCA indicates at present these minor residential changes can be easily absorbed. However, if changes like modern infill and expansion continue, this may have a detrimental impact on the historic settlement and adjacent historic field pattern.

Beyond the settlement boundary the sub-area is more constrained in landscape terms.