

CHICHESTER LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2035

LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY MARCH 2019



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SECTION A

1. Introduction

General

- 1.1 Chichester District Council appointed The terra firma Consultancy Limited in June 2018 to produce a Landscape Capacity Study (the Study) to inform the evidence base for the emerging Chichester Local Plan Review for the period up to 2035 for a plan end date of 2036. The Study includes a high level assessment of landscape capacity to help inform decision making relating to the need to accommodate strategic development over the plan period.
- 1.2 The aim of this Study is to provide a robust landscape evidence base that will be weighed with all the other evidence used in plan making and planning decisions. The Study aims to provide a transparent, consistent, objective and robust assessment of the landscape capacity of land parcels, known as sub-areas, to provide evidence to understand where the landscape and visual impacts would be greatest and identify which areas, if any, may have capacity to accommodate change without causing significant and detrimental damage to the fine landscapes within the plan area or those of the South Downs National Park (SDNP), or the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.3 The Study examines areas of the plan area outside the SDNP and outside the established settlement boundaries. The sub-areas assessed in this Study are based upon the parcels used for previous capacity and sensitivity studies¹, which will be superseded by this Study. The West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (2003), South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (2005, updated 2011) and Chichester Harbour AONB Landscape Character Assessment (2006) provided an understanding and assessment of the landscape character of Chichester District. The Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation (2010) has also been referred to.
- 1.4 The plan area covers an area of approximately 256km². The landscape character varies from lowland marsh and creeks at Chichester Harbour and Pagham Harbour, across the coastal plain to the South Downs and the Weald further north. Chichester Cathedral's spire is a key landmark in the visual character of the area. The Low Weald landscape, to the north east of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) boundary, is characterised by a mix of pasture and medium to small scale arable fields. Further south, the Downland footslopes feature semi-open, large scale, arable fields and paddocks. The extensive coastline, which forms the southern border of the Plan area, varies in character, with shingle ridges, sandy beaches and a variety of wetlands, salt marsh and harbours, including the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which also provides an important bird habitat.

¹ The Future Growth of Chichester: Landscape and Visual Amenity Considerations (Land Use Consultants, April 2005); Chichester District AONB Landscape Capacity Study (Hankinson Duckett Associates, October 2009); Chichester District Landscape Capacity Study Extension (Hankinson Duckett Associates, August 2011)

- 1.5 There is a well-established strong horticultural industry as a result of the climate and high light levels. Large-scale glasshouse development is located on the Manhood Peninsula and along the East-West Corridor and forms a key feature in the landscape as well as making a contribution towards the local economy. A study to assess the landscape impact of any potential expansion of or any new Horticultural Development Areas (HDAs) in the southern part of the plan area for future horticultural development is being undertaken separately.
- 1.6 A key issue for future development in the East-West Corridor is the prevention of coalescence between the settlements of Southbourne, Prinsted, Nutbourne, Bosham, Fishbourne and Chichester along the A259; an area also featuring the main railway line serving Brighton and Southampton (east/west) with links to London (with the A27 running just to the north). The Local Plan Review sets out a strategy for development that focuses on the area along the east-west A27 Corridor. However, it is vital that each settlement located in the East-West Corridor along the A259 maintains its separate identity, something that may be eroded or even lost if development continues to take place on the settlement edges. Not only do the existing gaps between settlements located within the East-West Corridor allow for and protect open views from the South Downs National Park to Chichester Harbour AONB and its setting, but they also serve as coalescence prevention. The maintenance of these open, long-distance views is an important consideration, especially where key landscape features such as the spires of Chichester Cathedral and Holy Trinity Church, Bosham for example form significant views. A study to assess the landscape extent of gaps between settlements is being undertaken separately.
- 1.7 The landscape capacity of each sub-area is assessed relative to the other sub-areas included in the Study rather than against the most and least sensitive areas nationally. The attributes identified in the record sheets, and summarised within the individual reports, also provide guidance on which landscape and visual attributes require special protection should some level of development be acceptable. For consistency and continuity, the boundaries of the sub-areas are based on reporting parcels defined in the previous capacity studies, with additional parcels to include areas previously not included, i.e west of Funtington, between Somerley and East Wittering, south of Donnington and around Bremere Rife. For the purposes of this Study the reporting parcels are known as sub-areas and a total of 144 sub-areas have been assessed:
- a) In the north, around Haslemere, Plaistow, Ifold, Loxwood, Kirdford and Wisborough Green;
 - b) Around Chichester, the east-west corridor and around Southbourne and Tangmere;
 - c) On the Manhood Peninsula, around Birdham, the Witterings, Sidlesham and Selsey.
- It is important to note that **some of the Sub-areas are large in size and therefore comments qualifying this may be included in the assessments.**
- 1.8 Section A.2 describes the planning policy framework of relevance to this Study, at national, regional and local levels.
- 1.9 Section A.3 describes the landscape character assessment framework for this Study.

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- 1.10 Section A.4 describes the methodology and factors taken into account to determine the landscape capacity of each sub-area. This includes the mass and scale of any potential development. At all times the recommendations for areas of least sensitivity in landscape terms should be read in conjunction with the associated landscape capacity assessment reports.
 - 1.11 Section B, C and D comprise reports for each of the sub-areas included within the Study. The reports are grouped into 3 areas: East West Corridor (B), Manhood Peninsula (C) and North East (D).
 - 1.12 Section E includes the fieldwork record sheets for each sub-area, from which the key sensitivities are drawn in the Reports.
 - 1.13 Appendix A comprises a series of Study Area Diagrams.
 - 1.14 Appendix B provides a full list of source documents as the Bibliography.
 - 1.15 Appendix C lists and defines technical terminology used in this Study, in a Glossary.

2. Summary of planning guidance and policy

National Planning Policy

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the government's planning policies for England:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018)

- 2.2 The NPPF highlights that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, including by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in designated landscapes (including National Parks and AONBs).
- 2.3 National Planning Policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework July 2018 (NPPF). The paragraphs of relevance to landscape are set out below.
- 2.4 Paragraph 8 sets out overarching objectives of the planning system. These include an environmental objective to '*contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment...*'. Paragraph 9 states that '*These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area*'.

- 2.5 The overarching objective to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment is reflected, with specific policies aimed at promoting healthy and safe communities (Section 8); achieving well-designed places (Section 12); conserving and enhancing the natural environment (Section 15); and conserving and enhancing the historic environment (Section 16).
- 2.6 Paragraph 98 in Section 8 states that ‘policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails’.
- 2.7 Paragraph 127 in Section 12 states that ‘policies and decisions should ensure that developments (inter alia):
1. *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 2. *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
 3. *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit’.*
- 2.8 Paragraph 170 states that ‘planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by’ (inter alia):
4. *‘protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
 5. *recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- 2.9 Paragraph 172 states that ‘Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues’.
- 2.10 National Planning Practice Guidance² makes clear that the duty to conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty ‘is relevant in considering development proposals that are situated outside National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty boundaries, but which might have an impact on the setting of, and implementation of, the statutory purposes of these protected areas’.
- 2.11 The above indicates that government policy gives considerable weight to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and statutory designated and non-designated valued landscapes in particular; and to recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

² NPPG Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 8-003-20140306 Revision date: 06 03 2014)

CDC Planning Policy

- 2.12 The Local Plan Review will include a review of the development management policies set out in the adopted Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies 2014-2029. Currently there is no specific policy relating to landscape alone, however the following policies are relevant:
- 2.13 Policy 48 – Natural Environment contains various criteria relating to landscape character, openness of views, including in relation to the setting of the South Downs National Park, and the need to retain the identity of settlements.
- 2.14 Policy 43 – Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) states in criteria 3 that either individually or cumulatively development should not lead to actual or perceived coalescence of settlements or undermine the integrity or predominantly open and undeveloped, rural character of the AONB and its setting.
- 2.15 Policy 47 – Heritage and Design again makes reference to the need to ensure the individual identity of settlements is maintained, and the integrity of predominantly open and undeveloped character of the area, including the openness of the views in and around Chichester and Pagham Harbours, towards the city, the Cathedral, local landmarks and the South Downs National Park, is not undermined. There is further reference to the issue of coalescence in Policy 2 Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy under Settlement Boundaries.
- 2.17 Policy 45 considers ‘Development in the Countryside’ that occurs beyond settlement boundaries and must meet a demonstrable need that cannot be met within or on the edge of an existing settlement boundary.
- 2.18 Appendix A refers to green infrastructure. Although it is not intended as policy, it provides guidance as to issues and approaches to be considered through the development of masterplans and in planning applications. It is based on the guiding principles for green infrastructure of connectivity and multifunctionality to create a robust and coherent network of green spaces.

Emerging Policies from the Preferred Approach version of the CDC Local Plan Review 2035

- 2.19 The Preferred Approach version of the plan includes a number of policies that relate to landscape:
- 2.20 Policy S26 – Natural Environment contains various criteria relating to protecting the distinctive local landscape character, the openness of views in and around the coast, designated environmental areas and the setting of the South Downs National Park.
- 2.21 Policy S24 – Countryside states that outside settlement boundaries development will be permitted in the countryside provided that it meets certain criteria including conserving and, where possible, enhancing the key features and qualities of the rural and landscape character of the countryside setting.
- 2.22 Policy S22 – Historic Environment requires that the significance of heritage assets within the plan area is conserved or enhanced to ensure the long term protection and enjoyment of the historic environment including by protecting and managing all heritage assets, archaeological sites and historic landscapes, designated and non-designated assets, and their setting in accordance with legislation and national policy.

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- 2.23 Policy S20 – Design requires all proposals for new development to be of high quality design that should respond positively to the site, surroundings and context, should physically and visually integrate with its surroundings and should incorporate and/or link to high quality Green Infrastructure and landscaping.
- 2.24 Policy S13 – Chichester City Development Principles includes reference to protecting views of the cathedral.
- 2.25 Policy S29 – Green Infrastructure states that the Council will seek to ensure development should reinforce and enhance the role of green infrastructure.
- 2.26 Policy DM19 considers ‘Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)’ and requires that development (individually or cumulatively) does not lead to coalescence of settlements or undermine the integrity and open, undeveloped rural character of the AONB and its setting and responds to, rather than detracts from, the distinctive character and special qualities of the AONB.
- 2.27 Policy DM22 considers ‘Development in the Countryside’ that occurs beyond settlement boundaries and must meet a demonstrable need that cannot be met within or on the edge of an existing settlement boundary.
- 2.28 Policy DM20 – Development around the Coast states that development should provide recreational opportunities that do not adversely affect the character, environment and appearance of the coast and Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and that there are measures for mitigation of any detrimental effects including where appropriate the improvement of existing landscapes relating to the proposal.
- 2.29 Policy DM27 – Historic Environment states that proposals should conserve and enhance the settings of designated and non-designated heritage assets including Historic Parks or Gardens and respect existing designed or natural landscapes. The policy also makes reference to the need to ensure the individual identity of settlements is maintained, and the integrity of predominantly open and undeveloped character of the area, including the openness of the views in and around Chichester and Pagham Harbours, towards the city, the Cathedral, local landmarks and the South Downs National Park, is not undermined.
- 2.30 Policy DM28 – Natural Environment contains various criteria relating to landscape character, openness of views, including in relation to the setting of the South Downs National Park, the tranquil and rural character of the area and the need to retain the identity of settlements.
- 2.31 Policy DM31 – Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands contains criteria relating to conserving and enhancing existing valued trees, hedgerows and woodlands.
- 2.32 Policy DM32: Green Infrastructure states that all development will be expected to contribute towards the provision of additional green infrastructure, and the protection and enhancement of existing green infrastructure.

South Downs National Park

2.33 Parts of the wider Chichester District lie within the SDNP and are adjacent to sections of this Study area. National Parks were designated originally under the National Parks and Countryside Act of 1949 and subsequently the Environment Act 1995 which revised the original legislation and set out two statutory purposes for National Parks in England and Wales:

- *Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage;*
- *Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of National Parks by the Public*

When pursuing these purposes in National Parks, there is also a duty to:

- *Seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of local communities within the National Parks*

2.34 In cases where there is conflict between the two purposes the Sandford principle will apply – that is, the first purpose takes priority.

2.35 The special qualities of the SDNP are defined as follows:

- *Diverse, inspirational landscapes and breathtaking views*
- *A rich variety of wildlife and habitats including rare and internationally important species*
- *Tranquil and unspoilt places*
- *An environment shaped by centuries of farming and embracing new enterprise*
- *Great opportunities for recreational activities and learning experiences*
- *Well-conserved historical features and a rich cultural heritage*
- *Distinctive towns and villages, and communities with real pride in their area*

2.36 The SDNPA has prepared a single local plan for the entire National Park, which is currently at examination, and has carried out a separate evidence base. They have produced a Background Paper on Landscape to support their Local Plan (September 2017). This paper outlines the basis upon which four key Local Plan policies have been formulated. These policies are:

- *Policy SD4: Landscape Character*
- *Policy SD6: Safeguarding Views*
- *Policy SD7: Relative Tranquillity*
- *Policy SD9: Dark Night Skies*

2.37 The Background Paper explains the context behind why the policies are necessary to ensure that the Purposes and Duty of the National Park are met, briefly summarises national policy, and summarises the key evidence base studies which have fed into the policies. It also looks briefly at the way the landscape has been protected through other policies in the Local Plan.

- 2.38 The SDNP Local Plan has been written to give priority to the protection and enhancement of the landscape, both through specific landscape policies and through the great weight accorded to landscape evidence in the drafting of the other Local Plan policies. This is described as a “landscape led approach”. The Background Paper on Landscape sets out in detail how such an approach has been translated into Local Plan policies.
- 2.39 As well as the Background Paper, reference has been made to a number of studies published by the SDNPA:
- *South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA): 2011*
 - *Settlement Baseline Maps*
 - *Settlement Context Analysis drawings*
- 2.40 Parts of the Study area are within the setting of the SDNP. For the purposes of spatial planning, any development or change capable of affecting the significance of the NP or people’s experience of it can be considered as falling within its setting. The scale, height, siting, use, materials or design of a proposed development will determine whether it affects the natural beauty and special qualities of the NP. A very large or high development may have an impact even if some considerable distance from the NP boundary. Therefore there is no defined boundary as to where the setting of the NP ends. However, distance away from the NP will obviously be a material factor in that the further away a development is from the boundary the more the impact is likely to be reduced.

Principles of development within the SDNP

- 2.41 Core policy SD1: Sustainable Development in the South Downs National Park, states that the SDNPA will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development provided that they are consistent with the statutory purposes of the National Park. The SDNPA will work in partnership with other local authorities to ensure that development outside of the National Park does not have a detrimental impact on its setting or otherwise prejudice the achievement of the National Park purposes.

Chichester Harbour AONB

- 2.42 As well as being within the Plan area parts of the wider Chichester District lie within the AONB and are adjacent to sections of this Study area. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated by the Government for the purpose of ensuring that the finest landscapes in England and Wales are conserved and enhanced. In planning policy terms they have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty, equal to National Parks. Chichester Harbour AONB was designated in 1964 under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 places a statutory duty on local authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs when coming to decisions or carrying out their activities relating to, or affecting, land within these areas (Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 Section 85). The NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of AONBs (para 172).
- 2.43 The Chichester Harbour AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 sets out the Special Qualities of the AONB (full details of the AONB Management Plan can be seen via the AONB Conservancy’s website). This Plan will be replaced by the updated Chichester Harbour

AONB Management Plan 2019-24 which was available at the time of writing as a consultation draft (dated 15 August – 15 October 2018) . The Special Qualities of the AONB remain the same in the 2019-24 version of the Plan:

- *The unique blend of land and sea - especially the combination of large open water areas, narrow inlets and intimate creeks.*
- *The frequently wooded shoreline.*
- *The flatness of the landform, unusual among AONBs, accentuates the significance of sea and tide and of distant landmarks across land and water.*
- *The open water of the central area of the Harbour.*
- *An overall sense of wilderness within the seascape.*
- *Particularly strong historic character and associations.*
- *The picturesque harbourside settlements.*
- *Wealth of flora and fauna, notably the vast flocks of wading birds, adds to the richness and diversity of the landscape.*
- *The unspoilt character and unobtrusive beauty.*
- *The very special sense of peace and tranquillity, largely engendered by the gentle way it is used and the closeness to nature that is experienced.*

2.44 Chichester Harbour Conservancy and its partners have evolved a series of values to guide the management of Chichester Harbour. These values provide a framework to underpin the landscape-scale approach to help deliver the Management Plan identified in the 2019-24 version of the Plan. These values are similar to the 'Key Concepts' identified in the 2014-2019 version of the Plan. The first value involves:

1. Conserving and Enhancing the Special Qualities of the AONB

- *Protect the natural beauty of the landscape of Chichester Harbour.*
- *Enhance the diverse range of habitats for the benefit of wildlife.*
- *Continue to value of Chichester Harbour for sailing, boating and other recreational activities.*
- *Safeguard the quiet and undeveloped nature of Chichester Harbour.*
- *Maintain the cultural heritage of Chichester Harbour*

2.45 The Chichester Harbour AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 also sets out threats and opportunities in relation to protecting the Special Qualities, policies and planning guidelines which relate to development in the landscape.

Principles of development within the Chichester Harbour AONB

2.46 Key concept 5 of the Chichester Harbour AONB Management Plan 2014-2019: Supporting sustainable development, states that a key concept is to support sustainable forms of rural and marine industry and agricultural practices where they are consistent with

Chichester Harbour AONB's landscape and nature conservation designations; and support the economic and social needs of the local communities where they are consistent with Chichester Harbour AONB's landscape and nature conservation designations.

3. Landscape character assessment

- 3.1 All of the sub-areas fall within The West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (2003) which is presented as Land Management Guidance sheets. Land management guidelines cover 42 unique areas of West Sussex. The guidelines identify key characteristics, historic features, biodiversity and key issues of change and land management guidelines for each area. This assessment has provided the main landscape character evidence base for this Study. In addition the South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (2005, updated 2011), Chichester Harbour AONB Landscape Character Assessment (2006) and The Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation (2010) have also provided an understanding of the landscape character for the plan area as well as landscape character assessment work undertaken in the previous capacity and sensitivity studies³, including for example key views to Chichester Cathedral identified in The Future Growth of Chichester.
- 3.2 The Study does not include a new local landscape character assessment of the study area. The landscape character areas were therefore taken as the starting point. In order to undertake an assessment of the comparative sensitivity and landscape capacity of the sites, it was important to undertake a more detailed assessment of the sub-areas, individually and in comparison with each other to ensure a consistent approach. This assessment work can be found in the record sheet and report for each sub-area (see Sections B-F).

³ The Future Growth of Chichester: Landscape and Visual Amenity Considerations (Land Use Consultants, April 2005); Chichester District AONB Landscape Capacity Study (Hankinson Duckett Associates, October 2009); Chichester District Landscape Capacity Study Extension (Hankinson Duckett Associates, August 2011)

4. Methodology

Basis of methodology

- 4.1 The methodology and assessment criteria used for this assessment are detailed below. Sources of data are identified in Appendix B of this Report. The key texts on which the methodology is based are the Scottish Natural Heritage and The Countryside Agency's *Landscape Character Assessment (2002)* and subsequent *Topic Paper 6 Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity (2006)*, Natural England's *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014)*, as well as the Landscape Institute / IEMA *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013) (GLVIA)*.
- 4.2 Landscape capacity is defined as 'the extent to which a particular area or type of landscape is able to accommodate change without significant effects on character or overall change in the landscape type'. It should be noted that landscape capacity is a combination of the sensitivity of the landscape character and the value attached to the landscape.
- 4.3 As in current best practice, sensitivity should be assessed against a specific change, and for this study, a development scenario based on an initial indicative density of 15-30 residential dwellings per hectare for the whole Sub-area including the provision of open space and roads serving the development. For the purposes of the Study dwellings of two or three storeys, have been assumed for the Sub-areas. Site specific requirements may be set out within the Local Plan Review process as it progresses. The key factor is the height and mass and scale of the built form in this Study, and therefore commercial development of a similar height and overall volume on the Sub-areas may also be appropriate.
- 4.4 Best practice guidance also recognises that a landscape with a high sensitivity does not automatically mean that landscape has a low capacity for change, but that 'capacity is all a question of the interaction between the sensitivity of the landscape, the type and amount of change and the way that the landscape is valued' (*Topic Paper 6, 2006, p12*). The Sub-areas have been assessed with the development scenario above in mind. Recommendations and comments have been added to ensure raised awareness of potential unacceptable adverse effects on landscape character.
- 4.5 Proposals for any development, over the whole or part of any Sub-area, would need to include appropriate, detailed and specialist input into siting, layout and design, and a full landscape and visual impact assessment should accompany a specific planning application relating to the relevant part of the Sub-area. Other studies including ecology, archaeology, arboriculture, traffic, soils may also be required to accompany specific proposals.
- 4.6 Details of the landscape and visual attributes of the Sub-areas and an assessment of landscape and visual sensitivity (based on desk top studies and field surveys) are to be found on the Record Sheets in Section E. A summary of the landscape sensitivity, value and capacity for each of the Sub-areas follows in each Report.

Assessment process

- 4.7 The assessment methodology is a staged process. Landscape attributes, and visual attributes, are considered separately in accordance with the guidance in GLVIA. These attributes are used to identify the **intrinsic landscape and visual sensitivity** (Stages 1 and 2) of the Sub-area on a scale of 5 levels from low to high as set out under the Matrix 1 and 2 below. These are set out in the Record Sheets. The landscape and visual sensitivity of the Sub-area are then merged to identify the **landscape character sensitivity** (Stage 3) as set out under Matrix 3 below.
- 4.8 The Study then goes on to classify the **sensitivity of the Sub-area in its wider context** (Stage 4) into five categories. In Stage 5 the landscape character sensitivity is combined with the wider sensitivity as set out in Matrix 4 to identify the **overall landscape sensitivity** (Stage 5).
- 4.9 The **landscape value** (Stage 6) of the Sub-area is assessed separately on a scale of 5 levels as set out under Table 3 below. Finally the overall landscape character sensitivity is merged with the landscape value on a scale of 5 levels to give an assessment of **landscape capacity** (Stage 7) on a scale of 5 levels as set out under Matrix 5 below.
- 4.10 This ‘bottom up’ process is tested against the five criteria for landscape capacity (Stage 7) based on professional judgement and an overall full understanding of the Sub-areas.

Assessment abbreviations and colour code:

 L	– Low Capacity	 M/L	– Medium / Low Capacity	 M	– Medium Capacity
 M/H	– Medium / High Capacity	 H	– High Capacity		

Stage 1: Determination of Visual Sensitivity

- 4.11 This assessment is set out in the Record Sheet and Report for each Sub-area.
- 4.12 The assessment considers the types of **views (e.g panoramic, distant, context)**, the nature of the **viewers** (people who see the sub-area) and the **potential to mitigate** visual impact on the identified viewpoints. The more viewpoints, the more exposed the area, the greater the sensitivity of the viewers (based on GLVIA) and the greater difficulties in screen planting to mitigate the impact without harm to the landscape and visual attributes of the area, the higher the sensitivity. At this stage each level has been given a score from low = 1 to high = 5 and the scores are added up. Total scores for the Sub-area are grouped as shown.

Matrix 1: Visual sensitivity

General visibility	L (1)		L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
Population	L (1)		L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
Mitigation	L (1)		M/L (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
OVERALL VISUAL SENSITIVITY			3-4 = low; 5- 7 = Med/low; 8-10 = Med; 11-13 = Med/high; 14-15 = High			

Table 1: Notes on Visual Sensitivity Assessment

Factor	Higher sensitivity	Lower sensitivity
General Visibility	Sequenced and exposed views toward area	Fleeting and limited views
	Most of Sub-area visible	Little of Sub-area visible
	Area is a key focus in available wider views	Area is an incidental part of wider views
	Area includes prominent and key landmarks	No landmarks present
	Important vistas or panoramas in/out of area	Unimportant or no vistas
	Prominent skyline	Not part of skyline
Population	Large extent or range of key sensitive receptors	Lack of sensitive receptors
	Large number of people see area	Few can see area
	Key view from a sensitive receptor	Views of Sub-area are unimportant
	Area is part of valued view	Area does not form a part of a valued view
	Area in key views to/across/out of town	Not part of setting of settlement view
Mitigation	Mitigation not very feasible	Mitigation possible
	Mitigation would interrupt key views	Would not obscure key views
	Mitigation would damage local character	Mitigation would not harm local character

Stage 2: Determination of Landscape Sensitivity

- 4.13 This assessment is set out in the Record Sheet and Report for the Sub-area.
- 4.14 The assessment considers the **natural** physical factors which make up the landscape character of the Sub-area, the **cultural** and built form aspects and the **perceptual** features. The greater the incidence of landscape interest and diversity, historically important features and cultural associations, and the greater the levels of access and perceptions of tranquillity and strong landscape pattern; the greater the sensitivity. At this stage each level has been given a score from low = 1 to high = 5 and the scores are added up. Total scores for the Sub-area are grouped as shown.

Matrix 2: Landscape sensitivity

Natural factors	L (1)	L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
Cultural factors	L (1)	L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
Perceptual features	L (1)	M/L (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	3-4 = low; 5- 7 = Med/low; 8-10 = Med; 11-13 = Med/high; 14-15 = High				

Table 2: Notes on Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Factor	Higher sensitivity	Lower sensitivity
Natural	Native woodland	Plantation
	Significant tree/groups	Insignificant/young trees
	Strong hedgerow structure with hedgerow trees	Weak structure and no trees
	Species rich grassland	Arable field
	Significant water feature(s)	No water feature(s)
	Varied landform and distinctive feature of the area	Uniform landform and lack of topographical features
	Pronounced Geology	Lack of geological features
	Soils significantly contribute to landscape features	Soils are not an important feature
	Complex and vulnerable landcover	Simple robust landcover
	Presence of other significant vegetation cover	Absence of other significant vegetation
	Presence of valued wildlife habitats	Absence of valued wildlife habitats
	Significant wetland habitats and meadows	Poor water logged areas
	Presence of common land	No common land
	Presence of good heathland	Lost heathland
Cultural	Distinctive good quality boundary features	Generic or poor boundary features
	Evidence of surviving part of an historic landscape	No evidence
	Complex historic landscape pattern with good time depth	Simple modern landscape
	Evidence of historic park	No evidence
	Important to setting or in a Conservation Area	No relationship
	Includes a Scheduled Ancient Monument or Important to setting	No relationship
	Locally distinctive built form and pattern	Generic built form
	Important to setting of a Listed building	No relationship
	Distinctive strong settlement pattern	Generic or eroded pattern
	Locally significant private gardens	Poorly maintained gardens erode the character
	Evidence of visible social cultural associations	Lack of social cultural associations
Perceptual	Quiet area	Noisy area
	Absence of intrusive elements	Intrusive elements present
	Dark skies	High levels of light pollution
	Open exposed landscape	Enclosed visually contained landscape
	Unified landscape with strong landscape pattern	Fragmented/'bitty' or featureless landscape
	Well used area or appreciated by the public	Inaccessible by public
	Important rights of way	None present
	Well used and valued open air recreational facilities	None present
Open access land	None present	

Stage 3: Determination of Landscape Character Sensitivity

4.15 The landscape sensitivity and visual sensitivity are combined, as shown in Matrix 3, to give the **landscape character sensitivity**. The results of the assessment are set out in the Report.

Matrix 3: Landscape character sensitivity

VISUAL SENSITIVITY	High	M	M/H	M/H	H	H
	Med/High	M/L	M	M/H	M/H	H
	Medium	M/L	M/L	M	M/H	M/H
	Med/Low	L	M/L	M/L	M	M/H
	Low	L	L	M/L	M/L	M
	Low	Med/Low	Medium	Med/High	High	
LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY						

Stage 4: Determination of Wider Sensitivity – The Contribution of the Sub-area to the Wider Landscape and Settlement Edge Pattern

4.16 Stages 1 to 3 have led to a comprehensive assessment of the intrinsic landscape sensitivity of the Sub-areas. However the sensitivity of each Sub-area to development is also affected by its importance, and contribution, to the adjacent wider rural landscape and the influence of, and pattern of uses within, the settlement edge. The contribution each Sub-area makes to the individual identities of settlements and their settings is also taken into account. The relative wider sensitivity of the Sub-area is assessed as follows:

Low wider sensitivity – The Sub-area is heavily influenced by urbanising development and is not an important part of the adjacent wider landscape.

Medium/Low wider sensitivity – The Sub-area is heavily influenced by urbanising development and has views of some parts of the adjacent urban settlement but shares some of the characteristics of the adjacent wider landscape.

Medium wider sensitivity – The Sub-area is partly influenced by urbanising development but shares many of the characteristics of the wider landscape, with good physical and visual links to the wider landscape.

Medium/High wider sensitivity – The Sub-area has strong physical and visual links to the wider landscape and these outweigh any minor impacts from urbanising development.

High wider sensitivity – The Sub-area is an important part of the wider landscape with which it has strong visual and landscape links. The nearby settlement has little impact on the Sub-area.

4.17 The results of the assessment are set out in the reports for each Sub-area.

Stage 5: Determination of Overall Landscape Sensitivity

4.18 The **overall landscape sensitivity** is determined by combining the landscape character sensitivity with the wider sensitivity as shown in Matrix 4. The results of the assessment are set out in the Report Sheet for each Sub-area.

Matrix 4: Overall landscape sensitivity

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	High	H	H	M/H	M/H	M
	Med/High	H	M/H	M/H	M	M/L
	Medium	M/H	M/H	M	M/L	M/L
	Med/Low	M/H	M	M	M/L	M/L
	Low	M	M	M/L	M/L	L
		High	Med/High	Medium	Med/Low	Low
		WIDER SENSITIVITY				

Stage 6: Determination of Landscape Value**Table 3 – Landscape value criteria**

Value	Typical criteria	Typical scale	Typical examples
High	Very High importance (or quality) and rarity. No or limited potential for substitution	International	World Heritage Site SAC SPA
Medium/high	High importance (or quality) and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	National	National Park/ AONB SSSI SPA 400m Buffer SANG HE Register of Parks and Gardens Scheduled Monuments Grade I and II* listed buildings and their settings National recreational route or area e.g. South Downs Way
Medium	Medium importance (or quality) and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	Regional	Setting of AONB / National Park Local landscape designation Open Access or common land Landscape value identified in the Local/Neighbourhood Plan SNCI/Conservation Areas and their setting Grade II listed buildings and their setting Local Wildlife sites Regional recreational route/area
Medium/low	Local importance (or quality) and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	Local	Local buildings and parks/gardens of historic interest and their settings Local recreational facilities of landscape value
Low	Low importance (or quality) or rarity		Area of little value and identified for improvement

Designations: Although value is implicit in the assessment of sensitivities, the location of the Sub-area within a designated area, or the presence of a designated area within the Sub-area, is an important additional measure of the value society gives to the landscape of the Sub-area. These include landscape, historic and ecological designations and recreational routes at a national/international level, regional or district level, or at the local level.

Local Associations: These are included as far as possible using available published data. In addition to the more formal designations above, Sub-areas may sometimes have special scenic value, associations or meanings to the local community and therefore make a contribution to the value of the local landscape. This has been assessed through a review of readily available evidence of community value. Further research may be required as part of any detailed landscape and visual impact assessment.

Professional judgement: Professional judgement has been used to modify the value scoring where a particular designation has little effect on the sensitivity of a Sub-area, e.g if there is only a single Grade I Listed Building which has little relationship with or influence over the wider Sub-area, the value might be reduced from medium / high to medium.

Stage 7: Determination of Landscape Capacity

4.19 Landscape capacity is the ability, or otherwise, of the Sub-area to accommodate a certain amount of development. The landscape capacity is determined by combining the overall landscape sensitivity with the landscape value as shown in Matrix 5. The results of the assessment are set out in the Report Sheet.

Matrix 5 Landscape Capacity

OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	High	M	M/L	L	L	L
	Med/High	M/H	M	M/L	L	L
	Medium	H	M/H	M	M/L	L
	Med/Low	H	H	M/H	M	M/L
	Low	H	H	H	M/H	M
		Low	Med/Low	Medium	Med/High	High
		LANDSCAPE VALUE				

4.20 The results from the matrix are subsequently tested against the following classifications for each level of landscape capacity, building on classifications used by the authors of this Report for other capacity studies.

Low capacity (red) – The Sub-area could not accommodate areas of new development without a significant and adverse impact on the landscape character. Occasional, very small scale development may be possible, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.

Medium / Low capacity (orange) – A low amount of development may be accommodated only in limited situations, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas. In some cases no development would be acceptable and the reason for this is explained in the conclusion.

Medium capacity (yellow) - The Sub-area could be able to accommodate areas of new development in some parts, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas. There are landscape constraints and therefore the key landscape and visual characteristics must be retained and enhanced.

Medium/ High capacity (pale green) – The Sub-area is able to accommodate larger amounts of development, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas. Certain landscape and visual features in the area may require protection.

High capacity (dark green) – Much of the Sub-area is able to accommodate significant areas of development, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.

Stage 8: Determination of landscape capacity within the Sub-area and of Green Infrastructure

- 4.21 Each Sub-area Report contains an overall plan showing the landscape capacity classification. The landscape capacity is indicative, and the actual capacity of each Sub-area will be determined by more detailed assessment of the area.
- 4.22 In some cases an area of least sensitivity is described which identifies a part of the Sub-area that could be considered further as a potential growth area subject to further detailed assessment and the provision of Green Infrastructure which is multi-functional and appropriate to the rural character of the area. The policy constraint affecting areas within the SPA 400m buffer have also been taken into account.
- 4.23 It is important to note that this Study does NOT recommend that all the least sensitive areas would be suitable as potential developable areas within the undeveloped open land within the Local Plan Review period. The object of the Study is to identify those parts which are the least sensitive in landscape and visual terms to development from which Chichester District Council can select those Sub-areas it wishes to investigate further for possible inclusion to meet demand within the Local Plan period.

Study Constraints

1. The Sub-areas have been assessed from publicly accessible viewpoints including the local road network, public rights of way, public open space and other publicly owned land. Views from private houses and from private land are noted where obvious, but were not visited. This has not resulted in any significant constraint on the assessment.
2. Photographs included in this study are representative of key views of the Sub-area.
3. Views from the surrounding countryside or urban areas have been assessed by noting intervisibility from within or adjacent to the Sub-area, but the Study does not include an assessment of the potential zone of visual influence of any development on each Sub-area.
4. The majority of study fieldwork was undertaken in August and September 2018.
5. The Agricultural Grade Classification (ALC) of each Sub-area has been noted in the Record Sheets. However the quality of the agricultural land is not considered a key factor in determining the contribution each Sub-area makes to defining the separate identity of the settlements or preventing coalescence. The ALC however is a material consideration in its own right and should be considered separately from this Study.