



HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL

Landscape Sensitivity to Residential, Commercial and Solar Development within Hastings

Prepared by Lizard, December 2024



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Prepared by:	Josh Peacock, MALA, CMLI
Checked By:	JJ
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background and scope

- 1.1 This Landscape Sensitivity Study has been prepared for Hastings Borough Council to provide a ‘high level’ landscape and visual evidence base to support the emerging new Local Plan to 2039. The methodology used within this study is defined in line with the most recent relevant technical guidance from Natural England (1).
- 1.2 The Study assesses the Landscape Sensitivity of 21 Assessment Units about the perimeter of Hastings Borough against the principle of residential, commercial and solar development, which are defined through four scenarios.
- 1.3 The 21 Assessment Units are mostly as identified within the 2008 Landscape Assessment which this Study supersedes, albeit with some modification of boundaries in places and some additional Assessment Units.

Report structure

- 1.4 Following this introduction, the methodology for the Study is described within **Section 2.0** followed by the Study findings and generic guidance within **Section 3.0**.
- 1.5 The 21 Detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessments are presented within **Appendix A**, organised about eight Landscape Character Context Areas, (LCCA).

Report use

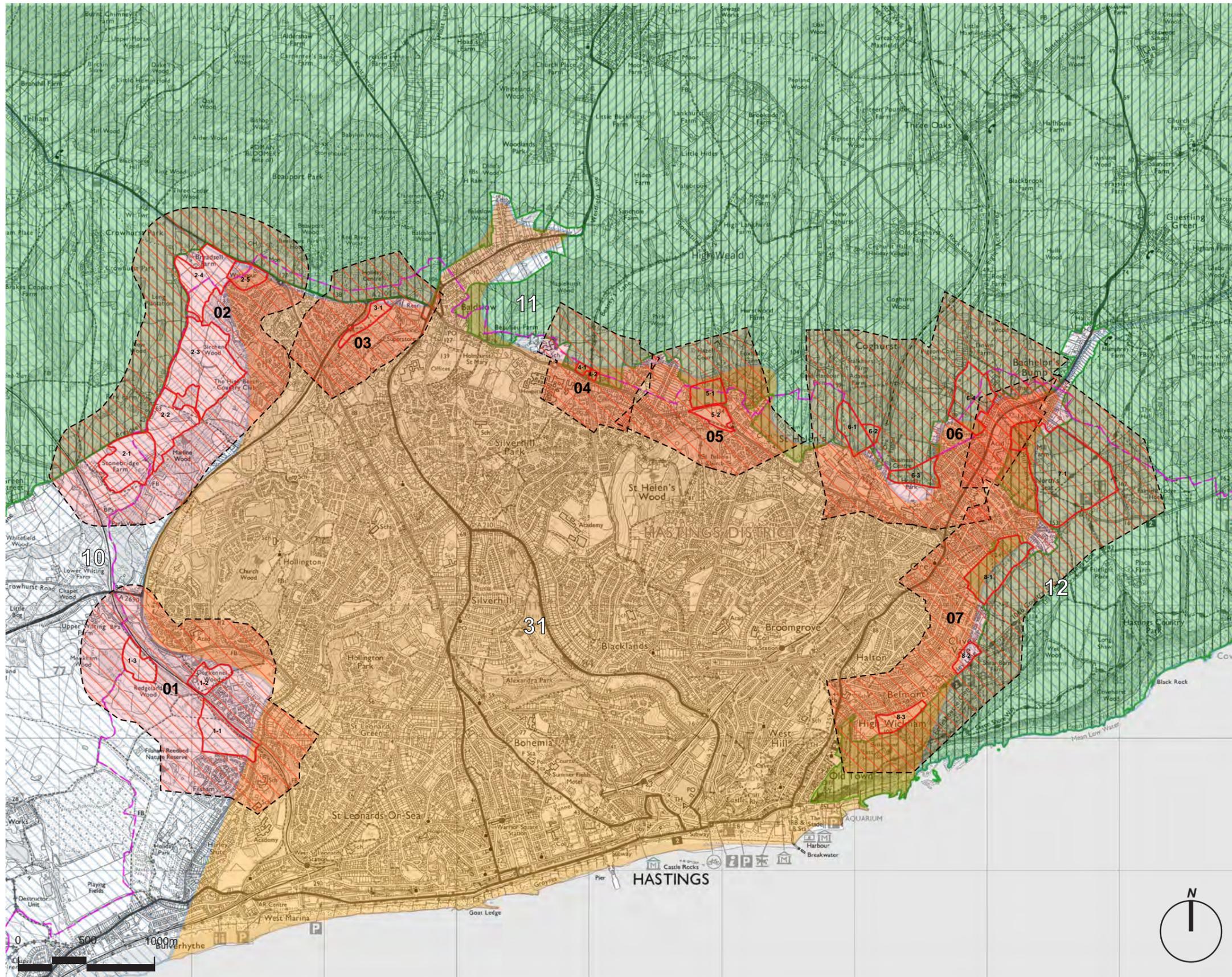
- 1.6 The aim is for this study to be clear, concise, proportionate, and easily understood by the community and decision makers. It is intended that it should be used to:

- Support the preparation of the Pre-Submission Local Plan and the subsequent Regulation 19 public consultation;
- Identify suitability of the 21 Assessment Units for development, providing guidance to inform the approach to development of proposals at the pre-application stage;
- Inform the preparation of detailed landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) for proposed development through the recommended Landscape Guidelines for Development Management; and
- Assist the council with their consultation responses to planning applications.

National Policy context

- 1.7 The Government’s current planning policies on land use planning in England are set out within the National Planning Policy Framework, (NPPF, December 2024).
- 1.8 The NPPF does not specifically address the topic of landscape sensitivity. Sustainable development is described including the environmental objective: *‘to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land,[...]’ Para 8(c)*
- 1.9 Regarding the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, Paragraph 187 within Chapter 15 identifies that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

(1) - An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management, (Tudor, C. Natural England. June 2019)



Legend

-  Hastings Borough Boundary
-  High Weald National Landscape

East Sussex Landscape Character Areas (2016)

-  31 Urban Area of Hastings (LCA 31)
-  10 Combe Haven Valley (LCA 10)
-  11 Brede Valley (LCA 11)
-  12 High Wealden Coast (LCA 12)

Landscape Character Context Areas -
(Derived from consolidated areas resulting from a 300m offset from each of the 21 Units).

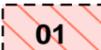
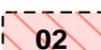
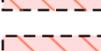
-  01 LCCA 1 - The Harley Shute Road-Grove College-Upper Wilting Area;
-  02 LCCA 2 - The Breadsell Lane Area;
-  03 LCCA 3 - The Ridge West and Queensway Junction Area;
-  04 LCCA 4 - The Beaney's Lane Area;
-  05 LCCA 5 - The Sandrock Area;
-  06 LCCA 6 - The Ivyhouse Area;
-  07 LCCA 7 - The North Seat Area.
-  08 LCCA8 - The Fairlight Avenue-Barley Lane Area.

Figure 1.1. Hastings Landscape Character Context Areas and Units

Landscape overview

- 1.10 The Study Area is located within the High Weald National Character Area, (NCA 122). The High Weald NCA forms the ridged and faulted sandstone core of the Kent and Sussex Weald, consisting of a mixture of fields, small woodlands and farmsteads, connected by historic routeways, tracks and paths.
- 1.11 The East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (2016) characterises the landscape to the west of Hastings as the Combe Haven Valley Landscape Character Area, (LCA) with the Brede Valley LCA to the north, and the High Wealden Coast LCA to the east. The Urban Area of Hastings extends between these LCA, (see **Figure 1.1**).
- 1.12 The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029 is relevant to decisions made within or contributing to the setting of the High Weald AONB. The High Weald AONB extends about the edge of the Borough from the north west about to the east, with a number of the Units assessed falling within this area.
- 1.13 The Management Plan identifies that from the end of 2023, whilst all AONBs are to be known as National Landscapes, (NL) the High Weald National Landscape remains designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.14 The Management Plan describes how natural beauty within the High Weald NL is articulated through eight core character components, rooted in the historic characterisation of the High Weald landscape as a whole, as follows:
- **'1. Natural systems (geology, soils, water and climate)** - A deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform of clays and sandstone with highly variable, relatively undisturbed soils and numerous headwaters (gill streams) functioning under an oceanic climate;
 - **2. Settlement** - Dispersed historic settlement including high densities of isolated farmsteads, hamlets and late-medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries;
 - **3. Routeways** - A dense network of historic routeways (now roads, tracks and paths);
 - **4. Woodland** - An abundance of ancient woodland mostly in small holdings, highly interconnected with hedges and shaws;
 - **5. Fieldscapes and heath** - Small, irregular and productive fields, bound by hedgerows and woods, and typically used for livestock grazing; with distinctive zones of lowland heaths and inned river valleys (reclaimed marshland);
 - **6. Dark night skies** - Intrinsically dark at night with our own galaxy (the Milky Way) visible;
 - **7. Aesthetic and perceptual qualities** - Arising from the interaction of people with the landscape, including the notion of a quintessential English pastoral landscape, intimacy of scale, a sense of history and timelessness; rurality and tranquillity; glimpsed long views; freedom to explore and make connections with the natural world, and a rich legacy of features and ideas left by writers, poets and gardeners inspired by the landscape;
 - **8. Land-based economy and rural living** - With roots extending deep into history, and which has visibly and culturally shaped the landscape.'

Landscape character context areas

- 1.15 To provide a baseline against which a contextual analysis of each Unit is undertaken, a 300m offset from each Unit is defined as a Landscape character context area, (LCCA) within which the wider landscape area and the settlement pattern surrounding the Assessment Units is described.
- 1.16 The offset results in the grouping of Units which share an overlapping context. This approach has reduced the number of search areas to eight, requiring their renumbering and renaming from the superseded 2008 Study.
- 1.17 The naming of the Units has been maintained as within the 2008 Study. However, the numbering has been modified to reflect both the consolidated LCCA which each Unit is associated with and spatial positioning about Hastings, organised clockwise from west to east.
- 1.18 The Units have been renumbered to associate with the surrounding LCCA as follows:
- **LCCA 1** - The Harley Shute Road-Grove College-Upper Wilting Area;
 - **LCCA 2** - The Breadsell Lane Area;
 - **LCCA 3** - The Ridge West and Queensway Junction Area;
 - **LCCA 4** - The Beaney's Lane Area;
 - **LCCA 5** - The Sandrock Area;
 - **LCCA 6** - The Ivyhouse area;
 - **LCCA 7** - The North Seat Area;
 - **LCCA 8** - The Fairlight Avenue-Barley Lane Area.

Development scenarios

- 1.19 Each Unit is assessed in terms of sensitivity to urban expansion from the following development scenarios. The development scenarios define the form of buildings rather than the quantity of potential development.



Residential - Low scale

- **Two / two and a half-storey**, residential dwellings, either terraced, semi-detached or detached, with associated access roads, private gardens and garaging.



Residential - Medium scale

- **Three or four-storey** residential development such as blocks of flats, care homes or hotels with associated access roads, parking and communal open space.



Commercial / Industrial - Low-Medium scale

- **Maximum two or three-storeys** with associated access roads, parking and open space such as local business park units.



Solar

- **Ground-mounted solar PV development** consisting of 'arrays' of solar PV panels, some three metres in height on metal frames, with associated infrastructure including inverters, powerhouse, security fencing and CCTV. This scenario is considered to have high reversibility.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 The methodology used within this study is defined in line with the most recent relevant technical guidance (1) (2) (3).

2.2 The key change within this guidance is the introduction of the term 'susceptibility', in place of capacity. Within the 2019 Guidance, susceptibility is defined as: *'the degree to which a defined landscape and its associated visual qualities and attributes might respond to the specific development type / development scenario or other change without undue negative effects on landscape character and the visual resource.'*

2.3 This introduces a more granular approach to defining sensitivity by recommending consideration of a range of headline susceptibility criteria, under which indicators of lower, moderate or higher susceptibility to built development in general are defined, taking into account value(s) related to that landscape and visual resource.

2.4 A more informed position can then be taken regarding the sensitivity of the Assessment Unit to the principle of the specific development scenario, drawing from the detailed understanding of the susceptibility of the attributes and qualities associated with it.

Assessment approach

2.5 Landscape susceptibility evaluation criteria have been defined through reference to **Table 2.1**. The criteria provide an indicative consideration of where lower, medium or higher susceptibility might result from the nature of development defined within the scenarios.

2.6 Sensitivity ratings are defined through reference to a five point scale, provided within **Table 2.2**. The rating is informed by a consideration of the susceptibility criteria as applied to each Unit.

2.7 Within **Appendix A** an indication of lower, moderate or higher susceptibility is attributed for each of the Units. The indicative consideration of susceptibility draws from contextual information provided for each LCCA, including consideration of relevant value, informed by a structured field survey undertaken during October and November 2024.

2.8 A sensitivity rating for the four Development Scenarios is provided for each of the 21 Units, guided through reference to the five point scale and informed by the susceptibility criteria, which takes into account value(s) related to that landscape and visual resource.

2.9 The 8 LCCA descriptions and respective Unit Assessments are defined as follows within **Appendix A**:

Content - LCCA:

- A description of the character and key characteristics within the LCCA (Through reference to the East Sussex Landscape Characterisation, Historic Characterisation and baseline);
- A description of typical settlement pattern within the LCCA;
- Supporting Representative Photographs of the LCCA;
- An Ordnance Survey map showing the location of the Unit/s and surrounding LCCA relative to the East Sussex Landscape Character Areas, (2016);
- An Ordnance Survey map showing the location of the Unit/s and surrounding LCCA relative to relevant designations;
- An Ordnance Survey map showing the location of the Unit/s and surrounding LCCA relative to the East Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation;

(1) - An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management, (Tudor, C. Natural England. June 2019)

(2) - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, (Natural England. 2014)

(3) - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3, Landscape Institute and IEMA, third edition (2013).

- A Digital Terrain Model, showing the location of the Unit/s and surrounding LCCA relative to landform.

Content - Assessments Units:

- Unit Assessment Table, providing: Location and Landscape Context summary; Descriptive commentary against evaluation criteria, informed by the field survey and desktop review; Landscape sensitivity analysis; Landscape Guidelines; Attribution of Landscape sensitivity rating for respective Development scenarios;
- A Landscape Analysis Figure for each Unit upon an aerial photograph, taken in April 2022. Relevant designations associated with each Unit is shown alongside of Tree Preservation Orders. Surrounding roads and key buildings are labelled, whilst the pattern of built form within / surrounding the Unit is represented. Representative photograph locations are shown;
- Representative Photographs of the Unit.

Baseline - High Weald AONB / National Landscape

- 2.10 The Landscape Analysis Figure includes a dataset provided by the High Weald AONB, where relevant. This enables identification of potentially valued elements or areas within the High Weald NL. The dataset includes presence of historic field boundaries, historic farmsteads, historic routeways and ponds.
- 2.11 Regarding the historic field boundary dataset from the High Weald AONB, the areas identified correspond to field boundaries existing in early Victorian times as evidenced through mapping from circa 1850, with probability of these being much earlier, anticipating Medieval origins, as indicated within Category 1 of the High Weald AONB GIS dataset.

- 2.12 Three categories of field are identified within the High Weald AONB GIS dataset:

- Category 1 - Original - Complete match, These are the base fields that still retain the medieval pattern that is such a significant element of the natural beauty of the High Weald;
- Category 2 - Merged - The overall external boundary of the new (current) field still replicates the historic boundary but has lost an internal feature which would previously have divided the field in two (or more) individual units;
- Category 3 - Partial - Represent fields that have undergone some change, been replanted, or merged into other fields for example, but still reflect the historic pattern in a positive manner.

- 2.13 The historic field boundary dataset is used to identify presence of valued fields or part of in line with High Weald AONB Management Plan Objective FH2: *'To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands'*. It is worth noting that there are some discrepancies between the attribution of a medieval field, identified within the AONB Storymap, (hosted online at: <https://highweald.org/aonb-management-plan/storymap/>) and the comparable type of a Category 1 - Original field within the AONB GIS dataset.

- 2.14 Separately, regarding the historic farmstead dataset from the High Weald AONB, the AONB Storymap, (hosted online) identifies farmsteads as either Medieval or not Medieval. There are no Medieval farmsteads within or adjacent to the Assessment Units.

Table 2.1 – Indicators of Landscape Sensitivity		
Susceptibility Evaluation Criteria within Hastings Borough		
<p>1. Landform - This considers landform. Smooth, gently undulating or flat landforms are likely to be less sensitive to development. Dramatic landform changes or distinct landform features are likely to be indicative of higher sensitivity.</p>		
Indicative of Lower Susceptibility (<)	Indicative of Moderate Susceptibility (< >)	Indicative of Higher Susceptibility (>)
Absence of strong topographical variety / Featureless, smooth, very gently undulating or flat landform.	Undulating landform / Some distinct landform features.	Presence of strong topographical variety or distinctive landform features such as sandstone outcrops, an intricate terrain of small, winding valleys and ridges or a deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform.
<p>2. Landscape pattern and time depth - This considers field pattern and historic time depth, (through reference to that recorded in the Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation (Bannister, 2010) / Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory / the AONB Storymap, (hosted online at: <https://highweald.org/aonb-management-plan/storymap/>) and the AONB GIS Dataset. Landscapes with more irregular field patterns, particularly those of historic origin are likely to more sensitive to the introduction of development.</p>		
Indicative of Lower Susceptibility (<)	Indicative of Moderate Susceptibility (< >)	Indicative of Higher Susceptibility (>)
Simple / Regular or uniform field patterns, (mainly of modern origin).	Mixture of simple and complex landscape field patterns / Designed landscape / May be some Ancient Woodland. Within the High Weald NL: Fields where the overall external boundary still replicates the historic boundary but has lost an internal boundary / Partial historic boundaries.	Complex landscape field patterns such as small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands / Assorted field patterns / presence of Ancient Woodland. Within the High Weald NL: Fields that still retain the medieval pattern.
<p>3. 'Natural' character - This considers 'naturalistic' qualities. Extent of semi-natural habitats and valued natural features (such as trees and hedgerows) which contribute to landscape character and could be vulnerable to loss from development. Areas with frequent natural features (including large areas of designated habitats) would result in increased sensitivity to development.</p>		
Indicative of Lower Susceptibility (<)	Indicative of Moderate Susceptibility (< >)	Indicative of Higher Susceptibility (>)
Lack of semi-natural habitat coverage or valued natural features such as intensively farmed or areas with high levels of existing development.	Some occurrence of valued semi-natural habitats and features (such as trees, hedgerows, woodland).	Frequent occurrence of valued natural features (such as trees, hedgerows, shaws and woodland) / Presence of larger areas of semi-natural habitats.
<p>4. Historic features - This considers the presence of historic features that contribute to landscape character (such as features or areas that may form part of areas designated as National Landscapes, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings). Landscapes with a high density of historic features including historic fields and routeways important to the character of the area would result in increased sensitivity to development.</p>		
Indicative of Lower Susceptibility (<)	Indicative of Moderate Susceptibility (< >)	Indicative of Higher Susceptibility (>)
Absence of historic features in or adjacent to the area that contribute to landscape character.	Presence of some historic features that contribute to landscape character, or adjacent to historic features.	Presence of many historic features that contribute to landscape character, such as historic fields and routeways.
<p>5. Recreational use - This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape. This may include Public Rights of Way, Country Parks or Countryside Parks where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long-distance footpaths or recreation routes, national cycle routes.</p>		
Indicative of Lower Susceptibility (<)	Indicative of Moderate Susceptibility (< >)	Indicative of Higher Susceptibility (>)
Publicly inaccessible or limited provision of access routes / Recreational use limited to community sports facilities (where enjoyment of the landscape is not integral to the activity).	Landscapes with green spaces or recreation areas valued in the local context / Some Public Rights of Way and footpaths.	Landscapes important for access and enjoyment of the landscape such as Country Parks / High density of well-connected Public Rights of Way.
<p>6. Perceptual aspects - This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. This is because development will introduce new features which may detract from a sense of tranquillity and or remoteness.</p>		
Indicative of Lower Susceptibility (<)	Indicative of Moderate Susceptibility (< >)	Indicative of Higher Susceptibility (>)
Close to visible or audible signs of human activity and modern development.	Some sense of rural character but with some signs of human activity and modern development. Relative tranquillity associated with rural character / Some scenic value.	A highly rural landscape, remote from visible or audible signs of human activity and modern development / High sense of remoteness or tranquillity / High scenic value.

Table 2.1 – Indicators of Landscape Sensitivity		
Susceptibility Evaluation Criteria within Hastings Borough		
7. Settlement pattern / setting - The association with surrounding settlement pattern and the role the landscape plays in the setting of settlement.		
Indicative of Lower Susceptibility (<)	Indicative of Moderate Susceptibility (< >)	Indicative of Higher Susceptibility (>)
The area has a close association with surrounding settlement pattern / The area does not provide an attractive backdrop to adjacent settlement(s) or play an important part in views from it.	The area has some association with surrounding settlement pattern / The area provides some contribution as a backdrop / setting to existing settlements / Contributes to views that are important to the character of a settlement.	The area does not have any association with surrounding settlement pattern / The area contributes positively as a scenic backdrop to a settlement(s) / Contributes to views that are important to the character of a settlement.
8. Visual prominence - This considers the visual prominence of the landscape area, reflecting the extent of openness or enclosure in the landscape (due to landform and land cover), and extent to which potential development would be visible. It also considers whether the area contributes to a visually distinctive or undeveloped skyline.		
Indicative of Lower Susceptibility (<)	Indicative of Moderate Susceptibility (< >)	Indicative of Higher Susceptibility (>)
Visually enclosed landscape screened by landform or land cover / Does not form a visually distinctive or prominent skyline.	Semi-enclosed or has some enclosed and some open areas / The area may have some visually prominent skylines - but could be avoided.	Open character with little screening land cover / Area is visually prominent or contains distinctive skylines.
9. Landscape Character strength of expression - This considers the presence of characteristic areas and features identified as key positive landscape attributes for the associated character area identified within the East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, (2016), taking into account the special qualities of the High Weald NL where within or adjacent, including deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform with gill streams, historic routeways, ancient woodland interconnected with hedges and shaws; small, irregular and productive fields, bound by hedgerows and woods and intimacy of scale, a sense of history and timelessness; rurality and tranquillity.		
Indicative of Lower Susceptibility (<)	Indicative of Moderate Susceptibility (< >)	Indicative of Higher Susceptibility (>)
'Frequent' landscape with few key positive landscape attributes.	'Fairly frequent' landscape, perhaps with some key positive landscape attributes.	'Rare' landscape with many key positive landscape attributes
10. Coalescence - This considers the potential for coalescence of two settlements with separate identities should development occur in an area.		
Indicative of Lower Susceptibility (<)	Indicative of Moderate Susceptibility (< >)	Indicative of Higher Susceptibility (>)
The area does not play a particularly important role in settlement separation / Risk of coalescence of separate settlements with separate identities is low.	The area plays some role in separation of settlements although development could be designed so as to retain separation between settlements.	The area plays an important role in settlement separation / development could result in a high risk of settlement coalescence.

Table 2.2 – Landscape Sensitivity Ratings	
High	Landscape and visual characteristics / values of the Assessment Unit are very susceptible to change, and it is unable to accommodate the relevant type of development without adverse change and significant effects. Thresholds for significant change are very low.
Moderate – High	Landscape and visual characteristics / values of the Assessment Unit are susceptible to change. It may be able to accommodate the relevant type of development but only in limited situations without adverse change or significant effects. Thresholds for significant change are low.
Moderate	Landscape and visual characteristics / values of the Assessment Unit are susceptible to change. It may have some potential to accommodate the relevant type of development if sited and designed sensitively. Thresholds for significant change are intermediate.
Low - Moderate	Landscape and visual characteristics values of the Assessment Unit are more resilient and of lower susceptibility to change. The area is likely to be able to accommodate the relevant type of development, although care is still required in siting and design to minimise landscape and visual effects. Thresholds for significant change are high.
Low	Landscape and visual characteristics/ values of the Assessment Unit are robust and are not susceptible to change and it is likely to be able to accommodate the relevant type of development without significant change or adverse effects. Thresholds for significant change are very high.

3.0 STUDY FINDINGS AND GENERIC GUIDANCE

Background

- 3.1 The published baseline has changed from when the Assessment Units were last assessed for landscape sensitivity and capacity in 2008. The East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (2016) has been updated, whilst the Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation (Bannister, August 2010) has become available as a GIS Dataset. Various components of the High Weald AONB have been mapped and digitised.
- 3.2 The 21 Assessment Units are mostly as identified within the 2008 Landscape Assessment, which this Study supersedes, albeit with some modification of boundary in places.
- 3.3 The methodology has also changed as outlined and described within the preceding section. The approach to susceptibility in place of capacity and the applied consideration of this to various landscape and visual components within the landscape prior to attribution of sensitivity to specific development scenarios separates the methodology used through reference to current guidance in place of previous guidance from 2004(4), which encouraged a consideration of inherent landscape sensitivity, regardless of proposal.
- 3.4 The current approach allows a more granular assessment of landscape sensitivity with regard to the principle of a particular type of change scenario.

Making overall judgements on Landscape Sensitivity

- 3.5 The five defined 'Landscape Sensitivity Ratings' within this Study form stages on a continuum, rather than clearly separated categories. The ratings include a level of landscape potential as part of their definition.
- 3.6 An element of professional judgement is required both to provide an indication of susceptibility and to attribute a rating from an often complex interplay of variously weighted criteria.

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment - Summary of Results

- 3.7 There are limited Units within the Borough where there is some potential to accommodate Commercial / Industrial development, with only The Ridge West and Queensway Junction Are, (Unit 3-1) if sited and designed sensitively, and only in limited situations across Units 6-1, 6-2 and 6-3 within The Ivyhouse Area.
- 3.8 This may be for a number of reasons, including the adjacent settlement pattern and the role the landscape plays in the settlement setting, or the value placed on field pattern and perceptual qualities within the High Weald NL.
- 3.9 The same Units, (including Unit 5-2) are identified as having some potential to accommodate Medium scale residential development if sited and designed sensitively, but only in limited situations within LCCA6.

(4) - Topic Paper 6 – Techniques and criteria for judging capacity and sensitivity. (Countryside Agency. 2004)

- 3.10 All of the LCCA have some Units within which landscape and visual characteristics / values have some potential for low scale residential development if sited and designed sensitively, other than within Unit 7-1, (the only Unit within LCCA7, where there is only a limited situation identified for this.
- 3.11 Units which remain very susceptible to low scale residential without adverse change and significant effects on the strength of expression of rural landscape and visual characteristics, are limited to the following: Unit 1-3, Units 2-1, 2-2, and Unit 8-3.
- 3.12 The sensitivity rating for the solar development scenario is comparable to that for low scale residential, other than within Unit 2-1, where there is a more enclosed area of the field to the west of the Unit which may be less susceptible to solar development, subject to the landscape guidelines.

Comparison with the 2008 Landscape Capacity Study Results

- 3.13 The 2008 Study identified two scenarios only: Housing and Business, with the Housing scenario not defined. Business was defined as: *'light industrial type uses which would be consistent with a residential environment. These would be single storey units which could be considered as part of a mixed use development.'* (Ibid, p13).
- 3.14 The limited number of scenarios and their definition considered within the 2008 Study, difference in methodology and extent of baseline used, separates the outcomes from the 2008 Capacity Study from this Study. This results in a difficulty making comparison between the outcomes of the Studies. Whilst there are some correlations, there are also some marked differences, which are highlight here.

- 3.15 The following analysis of findings makes reference to Volume 2 of the 2008 Study, albeit including the numbering from this Study.

LCCA 1 - The Harley Shute Road-Grove College-Upper Wilting Area

- 3.16 For housing development the 2008 Study identified Moderate capacity within Monkham East, (Unit 1-3), whilst this Study has identified no potential without adverse change and significant effects.

LCCA 2 - The Breadsell Lane Area

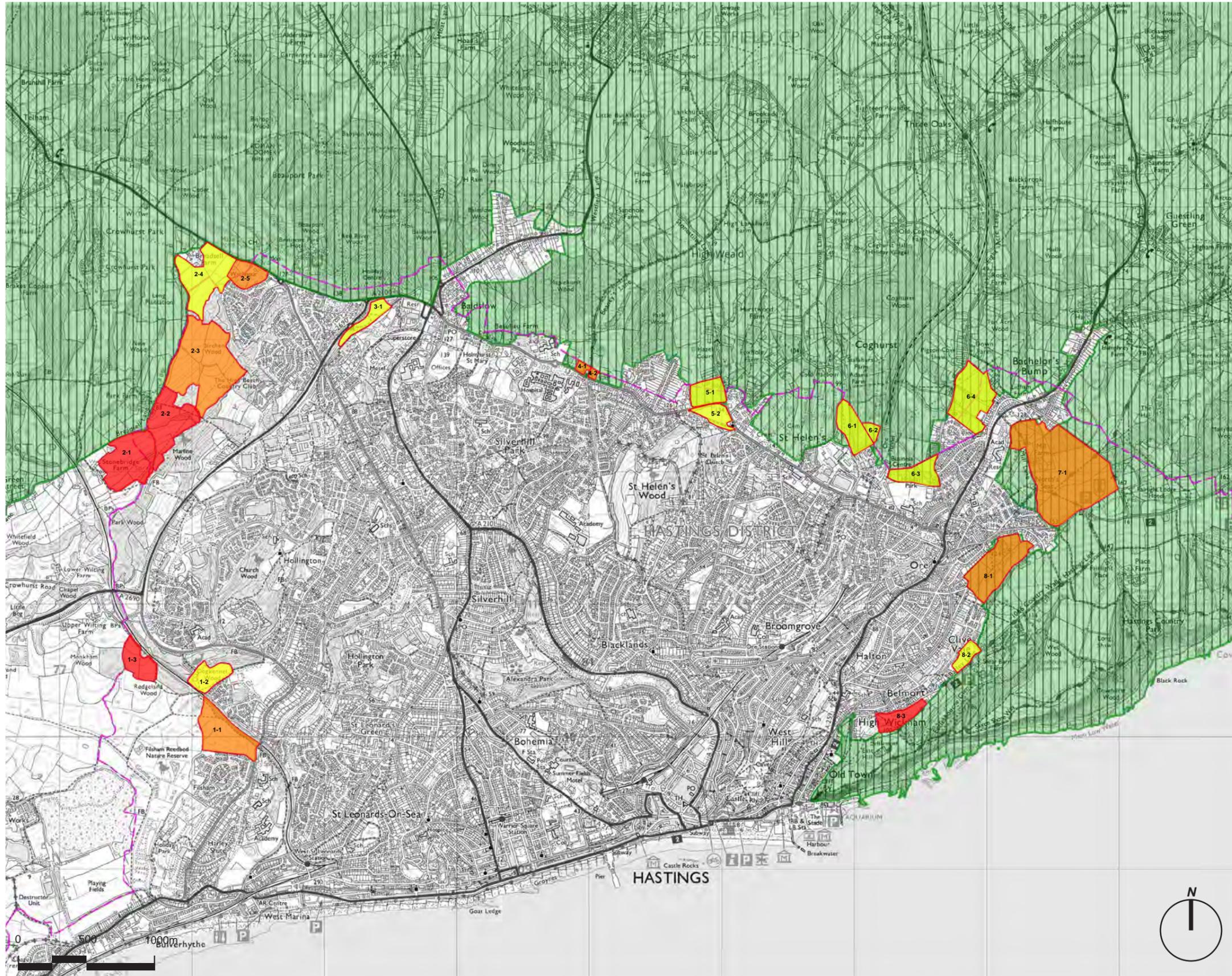
- 3.17 For business development the 2008 Study identified low capacity for Business development within the three central Units within LCCA2 named Breadsell, (Units 2-2, 2-3 and 2-4) whilst this Study has identified no potential without adverse change and significant effects.

- 3.18 For housing development, the 2008 Study identified no capacity within Unit 2-1, which broadly correlates with the High Sensitivity rating of this Study, where landscape and visual characteristics / values of the Assessment Unit are very susceptible to change. But then identifies a generally higher capacity for Units to the north than within this Study, (Units 2-2, 2-3, 2-4 and 2-5). The lack of baseline consideration makes the conclusions difficult to analyse. However, whilst it is agreed that Units 2-3 - 2-5 have some potential, Unit 2-2 is considered to have High sensitivity, due to its intervisibility with the Marline Woods LWS and contribution to the setting of the High Weald NL.

LCCA 6 - The Ivyhouse area

- 3.19 The Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-Brackendale, (Unit 6-4) within the 2008 Study identified Low capacity for Housing, whilst this Study attributes a Moderate sensitivity.

Table 3.1 – Summary of Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Scores				
Landscape Assessment Units, (Organised under Landscape Character Context Areas - LCCA)	Residential - Low scale	Residential - Medium scale	Commercial / Industrial - Low-Medium scale	Solar – Small scale
LCCA 1 - The Harley Shute Road-Grove College-Upper Wilting Area				
Unit 1-1 Land west of Harley Shute Road	Moderate - High	High	High	Moderate - High
Unit 1-2 Land West of Grove College	Moderate	High	High	Moderate
Unit 1-3 Monkham East	High	High	High	High
LCCA 2 - The Breadsell Lane Area				
Unit 2-1 Green Street East, (Partly in Rother)	High	High	High	Moderate - High
Unit 2-2 Breadsell - South of Alder Wood	High	High	High	High
Unit 2-3 Breadsell - South of Coneyburrow Wood	Moderate – High	High	High	Moderate – High
Unit 2-4 Breadsell North, (Partly in Rother)	Moderate	High	High	Moderate
Unit 2-5 Wychnour, (Partly in Rother)	Moderate – High	High	High	Moderate - High
LCCA 3 - The Ridge West and Queensway Junction Area				
Unit 3-1 Land at Junction with The Ridge West and Queensway	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
LCCA 4 - The Beaney's Lane Area				
Unit 4-1 Land West of Beaney's Lane	Moderate – High	High	High	Moderate – High
Unit 4-2 Land East of Beaney's Lane	Moderate – High	High	High	Moderate – High
LCCA 5 - The Sandrock Area				
Unit 5-1 Sandrock Playing Fields - North	Moderate	High	High	Moderate
Unit 5-2 Sandrock Playing Fields - South (Partly in Rother)	Moderate	Moderate	High	Moderate
LCCA 6 - The Ivyhouse Area				
Unit 6-1 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-West	Moderate	Moderate – High	Moderate – High	Moderate
Unit 6-2 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-West, (In Rother)	Moderate	Moderate – High	Moderate – High	Moderate
Unit 6-3 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-East	Moderate	Moderate – High	Moderate – High	Moderate
Unit 6-4 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-Brackendale, (Partly in Rother)	Moderate	High	High	Moderate
LCCA 7 - The North Seat Area				
Unit 7-1 Hastings Country Park - North Seat	Moderate – High	High	High	Moderate – High
LCCA 8 - The Fairlight Avenue-Barley Lane Area				
Unit 8-1 Land East of Fairlight Avenue	Moderate – High	High	High	Moderate – High
Unit 8-2 Playing Fields West of Barley Lane	Moderate	High	High	Moderate
Unit 8-3 Land South of Barley Lane	High	High	High	High



Legend

-  Hastings Borough Boundary
-  High Weald National Landscape

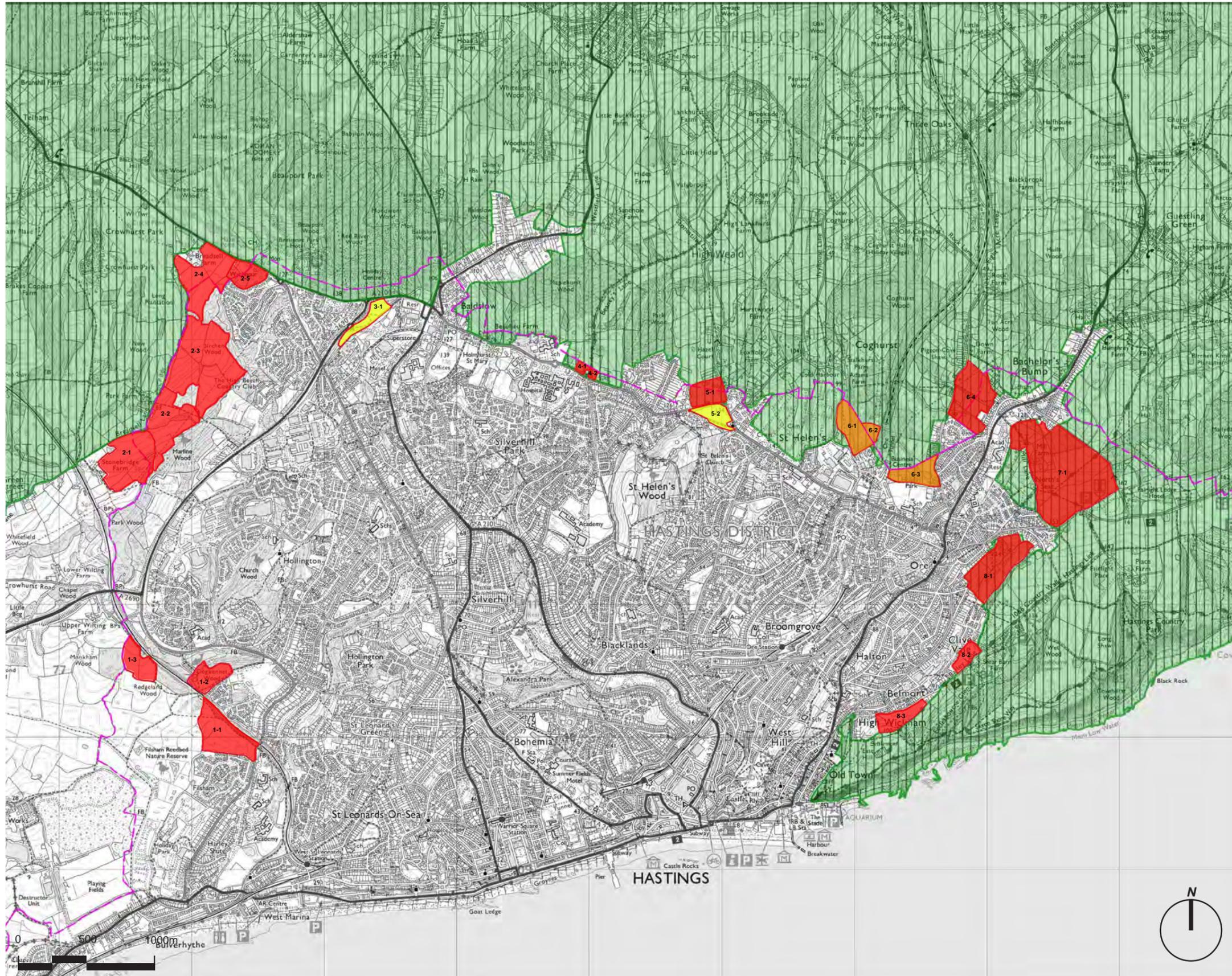
Landscape Assessment Units

Unit 1-1 Land west of Harley Shute Road
Unit 1-2 Land West of Grove College
Unit 1-3 Monkham East
Unit 2-1 Green Street East, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 2-2 Breadsell - South of Alder Wood
Unit 2-3 Breadsell - South of Coneyburrow Wood
Unit 2-4 Breadsell North, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 2-5 Wychmour, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 3-1 Land at Junction with The Ridge West and Queensway
Unit 4-1 Land West of Beaney's Lane
Unit 4-2 Land East of Beaney's Lane
Unit 5-1 Sandrock Playing Fields - North
Unit 5-2 Sandrock Playing Fields - South (Partly in Rother)
Unit 6-1 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-West
Unit 6-2 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-West, (In Rother)
Unit 6-3 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-East
Unit 6-4 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-Brackendale, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 7-1 Hastings Country Park - North Seat
Unit 8-1 Land East of Fairlight Avenue
Unit 8-2 Playing Fields West of Barley Lane
Unit 8-3 Land South of Barley Lane

Landscape Sensitivity Ratings Key

-  High
-  Moderate - High
-  Moderate

Figure 3.1. Landscape Sensitivity for Residential - Low scale



Legend

-  Hastings Borough Boundary
-  High Weald National Landscape

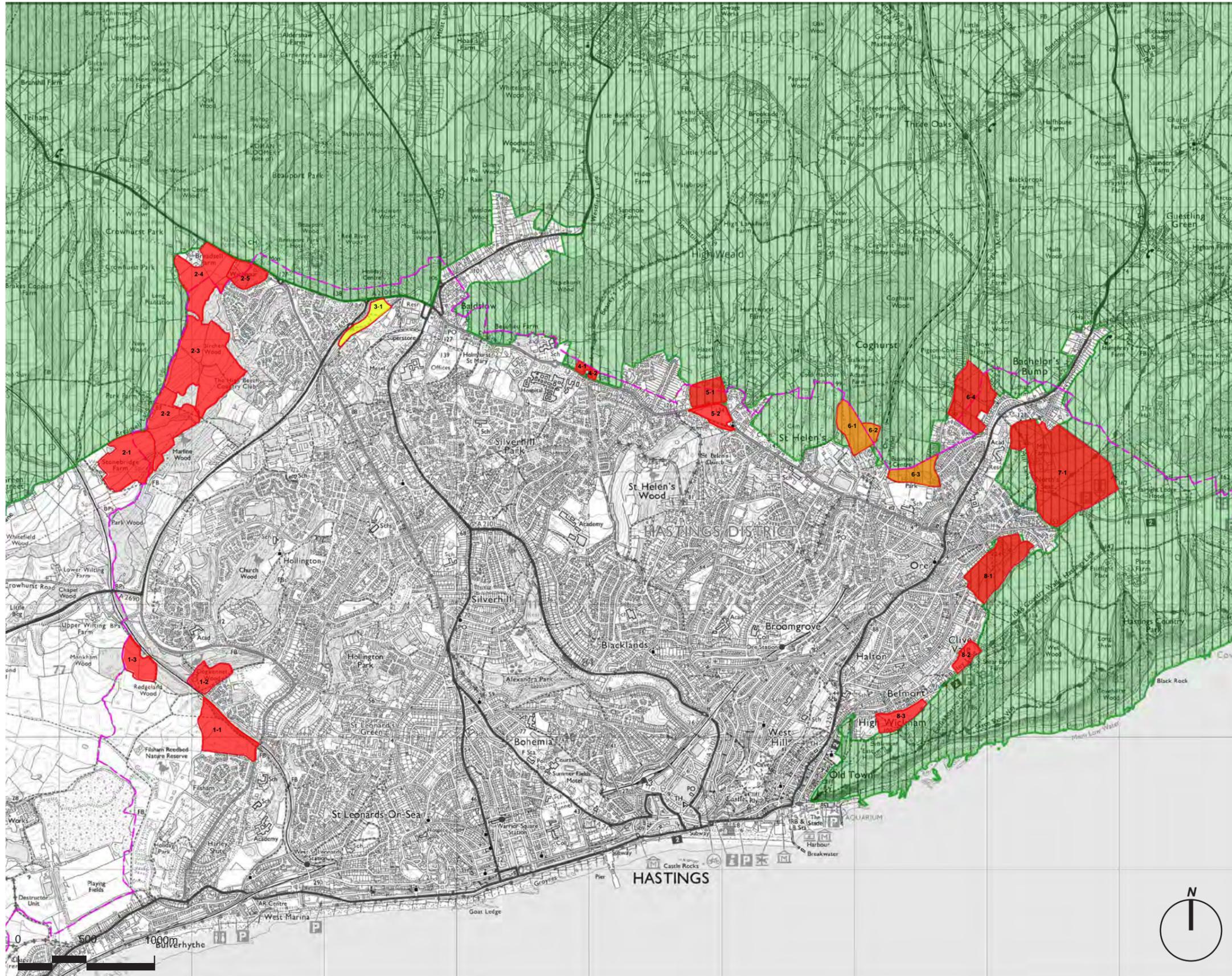
Landscape Assessment Units

Unit 1-1 Land west of Harley Shute Road
Unit 1-2 Land West of Grove College
Unit 1-3 Monkham East
Unit 2-1 Green Street East, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 2-2 Breadsell - South of Alder Wood
Unit 2-3 Breadsell - South of Coneyburrow Wood
Unit 2-4 Breadsell North, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 2-5 Wychmour, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 3-1 Land at Junction with The Ridge West and Queensway
Unit 4-1 Land West of Beaney's Lane
Unit 4-2 Land East of Beaney's Lane
Unit 5-1 Sandrock Playing Fields - North
Unit 5-2 Sandrock Playing Fields - South (Partly in Rother)
Unit 6-1 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-West
Unit 6-2 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-West, (In Rother)
Unit 6-3 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-East
Unit 6-4 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-Brackendale, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 7-1 Hastings Country Park - North Seat
Unit 8-1 Land East of Fairlight Avenue
Unit 8-2 Playing Fields West of Barley Lane
Unit 8-3 Land South of Barley Lane

Landscape Sensitivity Ratings Key

-  High
-  Moderate - High
-  Moderate

Figure 3.2. Landscape Sensitivity for Residential - Medium scale



Legend

-  Hastings Borough Boundary
-  High Weald National Landscape

Landscape Assessment Units

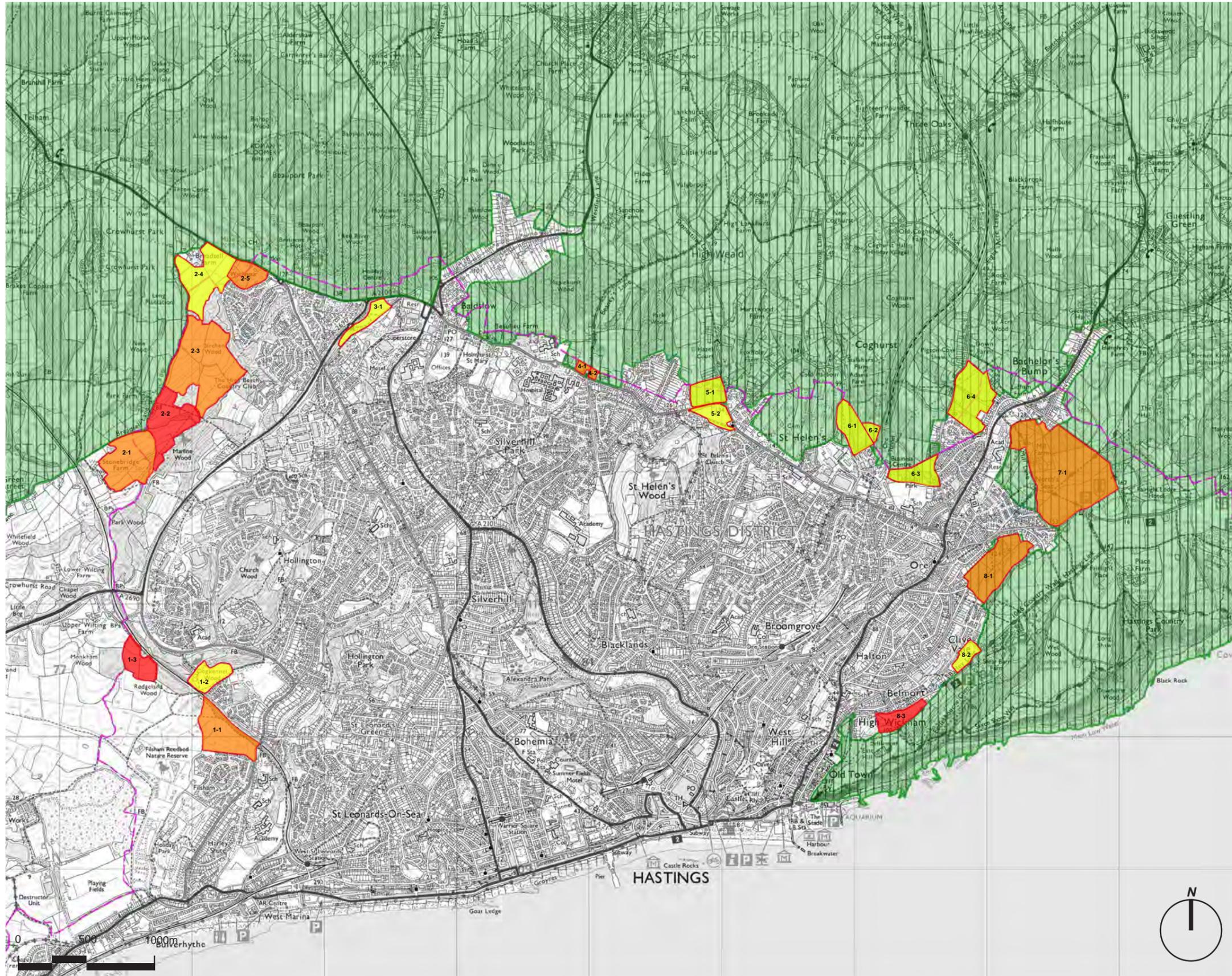
Unit 1-1 Land west of Harley Shute Road
Unit 1-2 Land West of Grove College
Unit 1-3 Monkham East
Unit 2-1 Green Street East, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 2-2 Breadsell - South of Alder Wood
Unit 2-3 Breadsell - South of Coneyburrow Wood
Unit 2-4 Breadsell North, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 2-5 Wychmour, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 3-1 Land at Junction with The Ridge West and Queensway
Unit 4-1 Land West of Beaney's Lane
Unit 4-2 Land East of Beaney's Lane
Unit 5-1 Sandrock Playing Fields - North
Unit 5-2 Sandrock Playing Fields - South (Partly in Rother)
Unit 6-1 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-West
Unit 6-2 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-West, (In Rother)
Unit 6-3 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-East
Unit 6-4 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-Brackendale, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 7-1 Hastings Country Park - North Seat
Unit 8-1 Land East of Fairlight Avenue
Unit 8-2 Playing Fields West of Barley Lane
Unit 8-3 Land South of Barley Lane

Landscape Sensitivity Ratings Key

-  High
-  Moderate - High
-  Moderate

Figure 3.3. Landscape Sensitivity for Commercial / Industrial - Low-Medium scale

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Legend

-  Hastings Borough Boundary
-  High Weald National Landscape

Landscape Assessment Units

Unit 1-1 Land west of Harley Shute Road
Unit 1-2 Land West of Grove College
Unit 1-3 Monkham East
Unit 2-1 Green Street East, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 2-2 Breadsell - South of Alder Wood
Unit 2-3 Breadsell - South of Coneyburrow Wood
Unit 2-4 Breadsell North, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 2-5 Wychmour, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 3-1 Land at Junction with The Ridge West and Queensway
Unit 4-1 Land West of Beaney's Lane
Unit 4-2 Land East of Beaney's Lane
Unit 5-1 Sandrock Playing Fields - North
Unit 5-2 Sandrock Playing Fields - South (Partly in Rother)
Unit 6-1 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-West
Unit 6-2 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-West, (In Rother)
Unit 6-3 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-East
Unit 6-4 Land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane-Brackendale, (Partly in Rother)
Unit 7-1 Hastings Country Park - North Seat
Unit 8-1 Land East of Fairlight Avenue
Unit 8-2 Playing Fields West of Barley Lane
Unit 8-3 Land South of Barley Lane

Landscape Sensitivity Ratings Key

-  High
-  Moderate - High
-  Moderate

Figure 3.4. Landscape Sensitivity for Solar

Generic guidance for accommodating development in Hastings Borough

3.20 The guidance provides information about mitigation measures to reduce adverse effects on landscape and views and to maximise benefits arising from development.

3.21 Where areas are advanced, these should be subject to detailed assessment through a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, taking into account both the recommended landscape guidelines for the relevant Unit and the generic guidance. Guidelines include:

- 1. Where within the High Weald National Landscape or its setting development should be of high quality and landscape-led, being guided by the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029 (5). Development should be undertaken through reference to relevant guidance, including the High Weald Housing Design Guide, the High Weald Colour Study, the High Weald Routeways Guidance and the High Weald Dark Skies Planning Advice Note.
- The following High Weald AONB objectives should be achieved as part of development, where relevant:
 - Objective S2: *'To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure new development reflects the character of the High Weald in its siting, scale, layout and design'*;
 - Objective R1: *'To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways.'*
 - Objective FH2: *'To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands'*;
- Objective DS1: *'To preserve the dark skies of the High Weald AONB by minimising light pollution, obtrusive external lighting and internal light spill from domestic, commercial and public premises in both existing and new developments within the High Weald, and from highways lighting'*;
- Objective PQ2: *'To protect the unspoilt rural landscape with its intrinsic sense of naturalness, valued views, and the extent of green space which foster experiences of rurality and tranquillity.'*
- Objective PQ3: *'To foster and promote equitable access and informal enjoyment of the High Weald landscape and the integrated management of its resources for the enjoyment of natural beauty by all'*.
- 2. Any new development should follow a landscape-led approach, utilising landform and natural contours to sensitively contain and provide boundaries to built form; and conserving and reinforcing the existing network of woodland, shaws and hedgerows, which provide landscape structure, enclosure and screening. This landscape-led approach should extend to the consideration of green infrastructure (GI), and opportunities to incorporate existing valued landscape features within a network of multi-functional, accessible green and blue spaces and routes;
- 3. Ensure any new development is sensitive to local character and context in terms of building scale, massing, style and materials, incorporating sensitive lighting design and native plant species of local provenance;
- 4. Consider opportunities to enhance and link priority habitat (including broadleaf woodland and lowland meadow) and hedgerow networks, aiming to link existing and new habitats to help minimise impacts on, and provide net gains for, biodiversity in the Borough. Reference should be made to the National Habitat Network GIS Dataset or when available the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for East Sussex.

Glossary

Ancient Woodland - Land that has had a continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD.

Assart - To clear land from woodland, wood pasture or heath to create clearings for cultivation. These are then enclosed by hedges created/ left from the adjacent woodland or new planted.

Assart Woodland - The pieces of much once much larger woods which are left after clearings have been made from them and enclosed into fields.

Country Park - Public green space often at the edge of urban areas which provide places to enjoy the outdoors and experience nature in an informal semi-rural park setting.

Conservation Area - Areas of special architectural and historic interest, the character and appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Green Infrastructure - Multifunctional green areas which provides areas for recreation, wildlife, water supply catchment, flood relief, food or timber production.

Landform - Natural features in the landscape that make up the terrain, such as hills, valleys and plains;

Landscape - An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and / or human factors (6).

Landscape Capacity - The amount of specified development or change which a particular landscape and the associated visual resource is able to accommodate without undue negative effects on its character and qualities (1).

Landscape Character - A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse (2).

Landscape-led design - Means using landscape as a framework to both understand the Unit – its context, character, qualities and functioning – and to formulate a design response in terms of Unit capacity, layout and design. Where within and adjacent to the High Weald National Landscape shaped and informed by an understanding of the High Weald's landscape as described within the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029 (5).

Landscape Sensitivity - A term applied to landscape character and the associated visual resource, combining judgements of their susceptibility to the specific development scenario together with the value(s) related to that landscape and visual resource. Landscape sensitivity may be regarded as a measure of the resilience, or robustness, of a landscape to withstand specified change arising from development types or land management practices, without undue negative effects on the landscape and visual baseline and their value (1).

Landscape Susceptibility - Degree to which a defined landscape and its associated visual qualities and attributes might respond to the specific development type / development scenario or other change without undue negative effects on landscape character and the visual resource (1).

Landscape Value - The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons (1).

(6) - Council of Europe (2000), European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe, Florence, Oct 2000.

(1) - An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management. (Tudor, C. Natural England. June 2019)

(2) - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (Tudor, C. Natural England. October 2014)

(5) - The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029

LB - Listed Building - Buildings that are of special architectural or historic interest.

LNR - Local Nature Reserve - Managed for nature conservation, and provide opportunities for research and education, or simply enjoying and having contact with nature.

LWS - Local Wildlife Site - Area of high, local conservation value.

NL - National Landscape - Also known as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Nationally important area of countryside designated by the government to protect its landscape character and the wildlife, natural systems and cultural associations on which it depends in order that people, now and in the future, can enjoy its natural beauty.

Natural Beauty - Not just the look of the landscape, but includes landform and geology, plants and animals, landscape features, and the rich history of human settlement over the centuries (7). For the High Weald AONB, natural beauty is defined by the Statement of Significance within the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029.

Priority Habitat - Habitats of Principal Importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

Scheduled Monument - Nationally important archaeological Unit, which can be above or below ground and can include remains as well as structures that are still in-use.

SSSI - Site of Special Scientific Interest - An area of land which is of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features.

(7) - Guide for AONB partnership members, CA24 (Countryside Agency, November 2001).



LIZARD

Landscape Design and Ecology

The Old Bank, 34 South Street, Tarring, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 7LH
T. 01903 216033 E. lizard.landscape@btconnect.com W. lizardlandscapeecology.com
