



HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL

Landscape Sensitivity to Residential and Commercial Development within Hastings

Prepared by Lizard, November 2024

Appendix A - Landscape Character Context Areas and Unit Landscape Sensitivity Assessments

LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA

i Location and Landscape Character Summary

There are three Assessment Units within LCCA1, with two, (Units 1-1 and 1-2) west of the Hastings to London railway line within the eastern edge of the Combe Valley Countryside Park (CP), and one to the east of the Railway Line, (Unit 1-3).

Landform falls from high levels of some 40m aOD upon the valley ridges to the western edge of Hastings, towards the Combe Valley at some 2m aOD along the edge of the Combe Valley bottom to the west. A tributary stream flows westwards from an impounded area east of the Railway line, where the Wishing Tree Reservoir, in use as a Fishing Lake is located. A further stream flows under the railway line further to the south.

The London to Hastings Railway extends variously within a cutting or part raised embankment, defining the north-eastern edge of the Combe Valley CP. The Combe Valley CP extends across 2.3 square miles (about 1480 acres) of countryside between Hastings and Bexhill, which is designated for public enjoyment and recreation. About half of the land is privately owned and farmed, with the remainder belonging to Hastings, Rother or East Sussex.

The Combe Haven SSSI extends about the Combe Haven within the valley bottom where alluvial meadows dominate, interspersed with reed fringed drainage ditches, with blocks of Ancient Woodland on higher ground about the perimeter, including Marsh Wood, Redgeland Wood North and Monkham Wood within LCCA1. The SSSI extends across much of the Combe Valley CP, including towards the railway line in a corridor to the centre of LCCA1. Most patches of Ancient Woodland are additionally designated as Local Wildlife Sites, (LWS) including Redgeland Wood North and Dogkennel Wood to the north of the Railway line, and the intervening land between these areas designated as the Wishing Tree LWS.

Through reference to the Sussex Historic Characterisation, (Bannister, 2010) there are four main Historic Landscape Character Types which bisect across the LCCA, with the area to the east of the Railway line dominated by suburban settlement expansion, interspersed with patches of regenerated woodland, assarted field systems and ancient semi-natural woodland. The area to the west of the Railway line is largely characterised as regenerated woodland to the south and assarted field systems to the north, with smaller parcels of ancient semi-natural woodland.

The B2092 across Harley Shute Road and then Crowhurst Road approximately defines the boundary of Landscape Character Areas defined within the East Sussex County Landscape Character Assessment, (2016) with Combe Haven Valley, (LCA10) to the west, within which all three Units are located and The Urban Area of Hastings, (LCA 31) extending east of this.

Combe Haven Valley (LCA10)

Key positive landscape attributes of LCA10 present within LCCA1 include: *'Focal open, flat, winding valley floor and wetland in the Combe Haven Basin; Intricate terrain of small, winding valleys and ridges around levels, with abundant woods and gills; Extensive areas of ancient woodland; Filsham reed beds at the eastern end of the Combe Haven Valley are one of the largest areas of reedbeds in East Sussex; A sense of tranquillity away from the main settlements and roads; Indigenous characteristic tree species are oak, ash and field maple, with wild cherry and sweet chestnut coppice in woodland on the drier slopes. Scattered scrub and large white willow on the levels; Wetland birds are a feature in the wetland landscape; Scattered historic farmsteads typical of the High Weald.'*

The current condition of LCA10 is identified as including: *'a largely unspoilt and tranquil rural landscape with few intrusive features. The landscape is in generally good condition and well managed as farmland with some surviving historic structure.'*

The vision for LCA10 is defined, including: *'A tranquil landscape with some areas of relative remoteness, particularly in the north of the area. The Combe Haven Valley and its tributary valleys contained by well wooded slopes. The Combe Valley Countryside Park in close proximity to urban areas providing great potential for unique recreational opportunities. Well managed and enhanced wildlife habitats and increased biodiversity. The distinctive historic character of this wealden landscape conserved and enhanced.'*

Landscape change and adaptation to meet the vision for LCA10 is identified as requiring the following:

- *'1. Planning for the enhancement of the Bexhill Fringe and the Combe Haven and Marline Biodiversity Opportunity Areas improving habitat continuity;*
- *2. Protect and manage existing habitats and plan for restoration of ditches and riverside vegetation to restore habitat linkages and continuity;*
- *3. Plan for the creation of multifunctional green infrastructure to maximise the opportunities for biodiversity and recreation offered by the river corridor and extensive woodland;*
- *4. Consider the potential to plan for recreational access in this character area identifying areas where public access can be encouraged whilst protecting other areas where wildlife conservation is the priority;*
- *5. Maximise opportunities for water based activities where this does not conflict with wild life interests, water quality or tranquillity;*
- *6. Integrate proposed and existing development into the landscape through planting of tree features and woodland to define the village boundaries with the countryside;*

- *7. Ensure that the design and layout of new developments respect the character and form of the landscape and existing settlements;*
- *8. Control the spread of suburbanisation by minimising clutter of signage and other urban features in lanes and villages;*
- *9. Conserve the setting of historic buildings and landscape features;*
- *10. Consider appropriate species for new plantings to maintain landscape character and biodiversity but also adaptation to climate change influences.'*

Guidelines for managing change within LCA10 are identified including the following: *'A priority should be to identify opportunities to enhance the degraded and poorly managed parts of the character area on the Hastings urban fringes; Any new development should respect the key positive attributes in the landscape; Proposed development should consider opportunities for proactively meeting the Landscape Change Strategy aims for this Landscape Character Area as set out in 1-10 above.'*

Hastings (LCA 31, 2016)

Hastings extends across the urbanised area of Hastings Town. It is described with characteristics including that: *'The town sits on sandstone, which is eroded into ridges and wooded ghylls, giving a series of parks, open spaces Urban Areas and sheltered woodland within the town; The medieval Old Town is overlooked by the cliff-top castle ruins.'*

The vision for Hastings is identified including: *'A town of strong, highly distinctive character with equally strong and distinctive local communities. A town with good links to the countryside via a network of ghylls, linear open spaces and well designed transport networks worthy of the town.'*

ii Settlement Pattern

Settlement pattern within LCCA1 occurs primarily to the east of the railway line, other than to the south resulting from 20th Century planned suburban settlement expansion. Housing is of generally low scale including terraces and detached dwellings. Larger size, higher quality detached dwellings are apparent in places built within the 21st Century, which exhibit more variation in built form and contrasting material typology within the same developments.

LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA



LCCA1 - Context Photograph 1A. Low scale housing across steeply undulating landform.



LCCA1 - Context Photograph 1B. Variation in built form and material typology used within newer build residential areas including buff or red brick facades with brick detailing and roof tiles in red clay or mottled grey slate types.

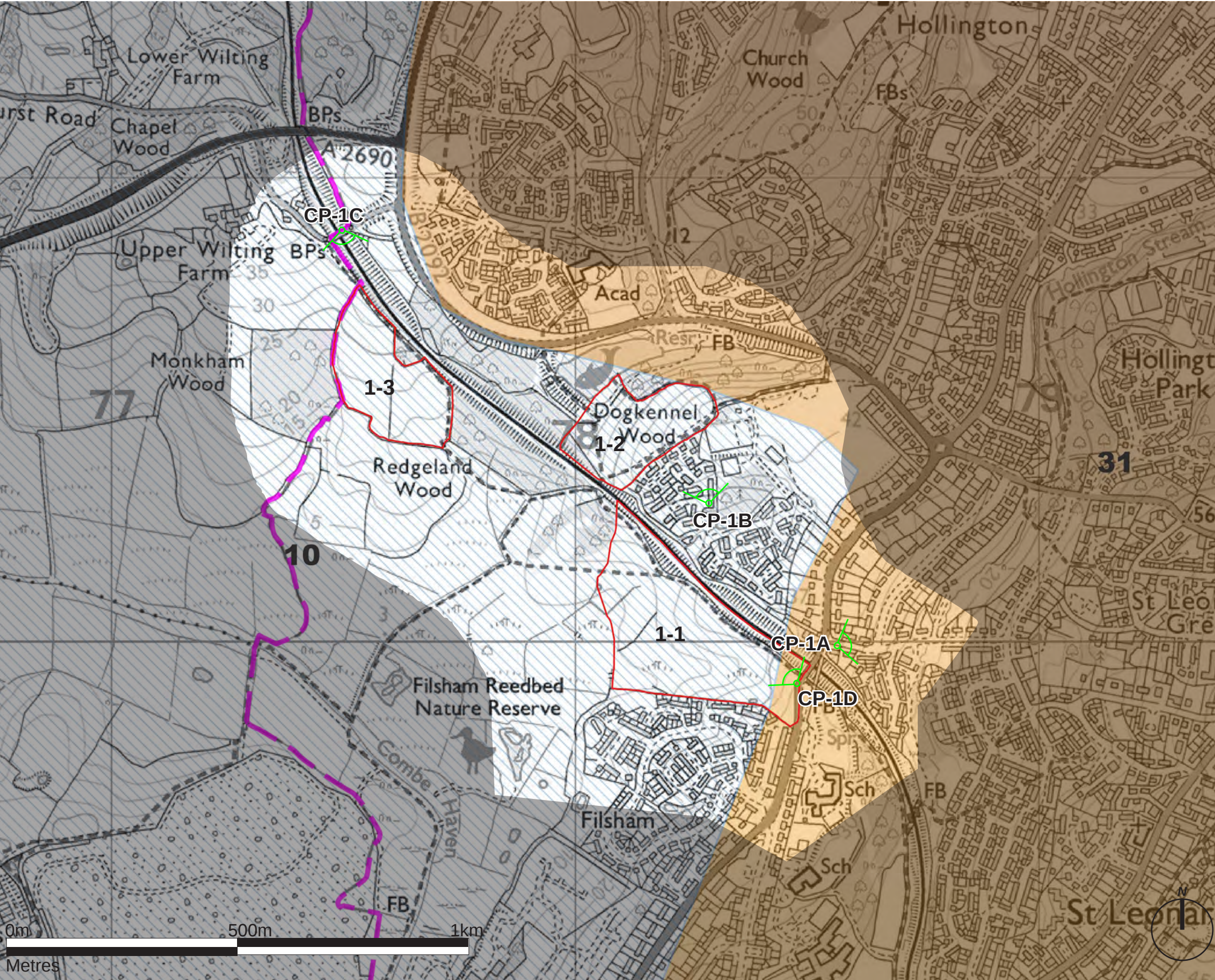


LCCA1 - Context Photograph 1C. The London to Hastings Railway extends variously within a cutting or part raised embankment, defining the north-eastern edge of the Combe Valley Countryside Park.



LCCA1 - Context Photograph 1D. Interpretation board highlighting formal and informal access within the Combe Valley Countryside Park.

LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA



Legend

Hastings Borough Boundary

LCCA1 Landscape Assessment Units

- 1-1** Land west of Harley Shute Road
- 1-2** Land West of Grove College
- 1-3** Monkham East

East Sussex Landscape Character Areas (2016)

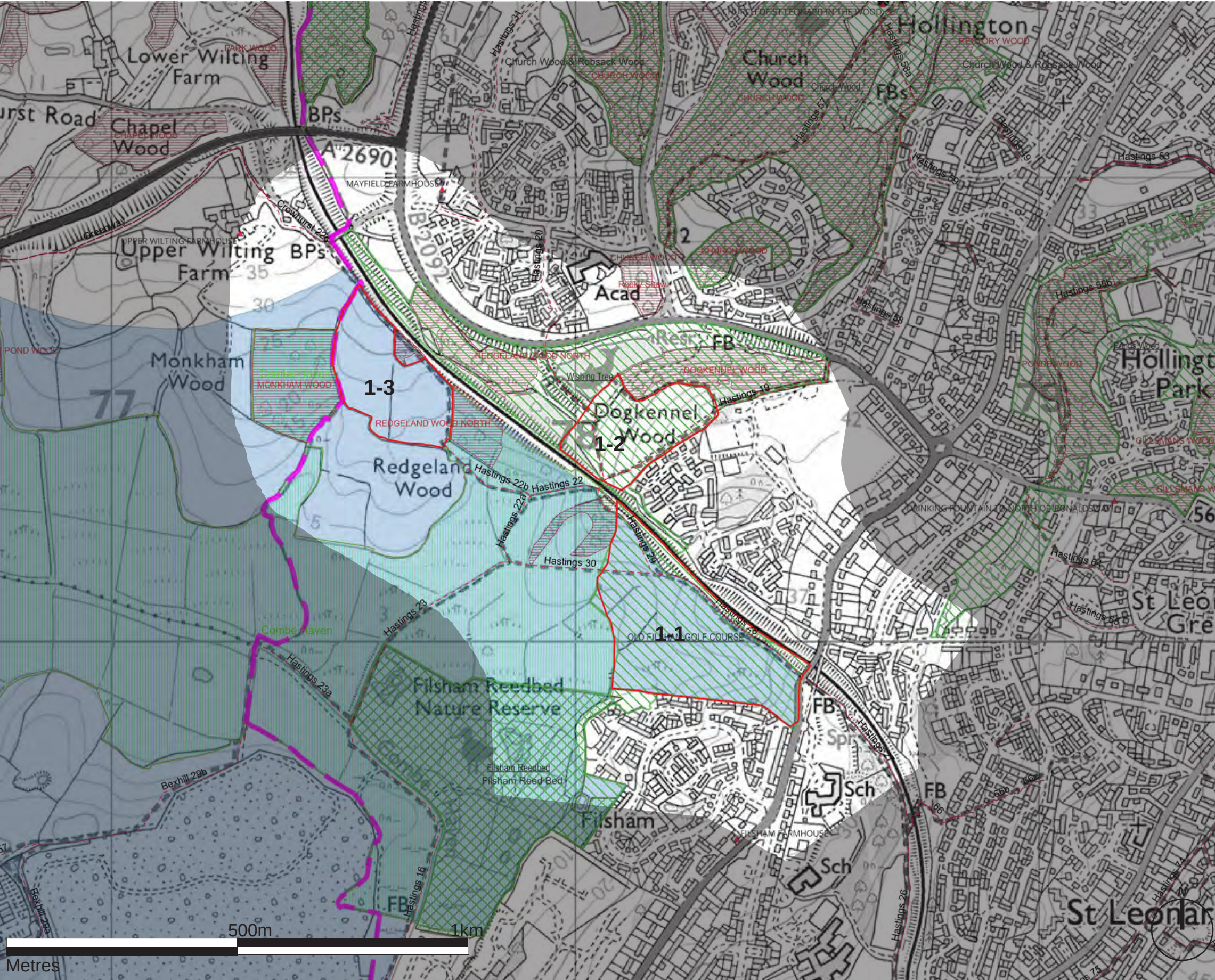
- 31** Urban Area of Hastings (LCA 31)
- 10** Combe Haven Valley (LCA 10)

Context Photograph Locations

Context Photographs, (CP)

Figure A1.1. LCCA1 - East Sussex Landscape Character Areas

LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA



Legend

Hastings Borough Boundary

LCCA1 Landscape Assessment Units

1-1 Land west of Harley Shute Road

1-2 Land West of Grove College

1-3 Monkham East

Designations

Ancient Woodland

Site of Special Scientific Interest

Listed Buildings

Local Nature Reserve

Local Wildlife Site

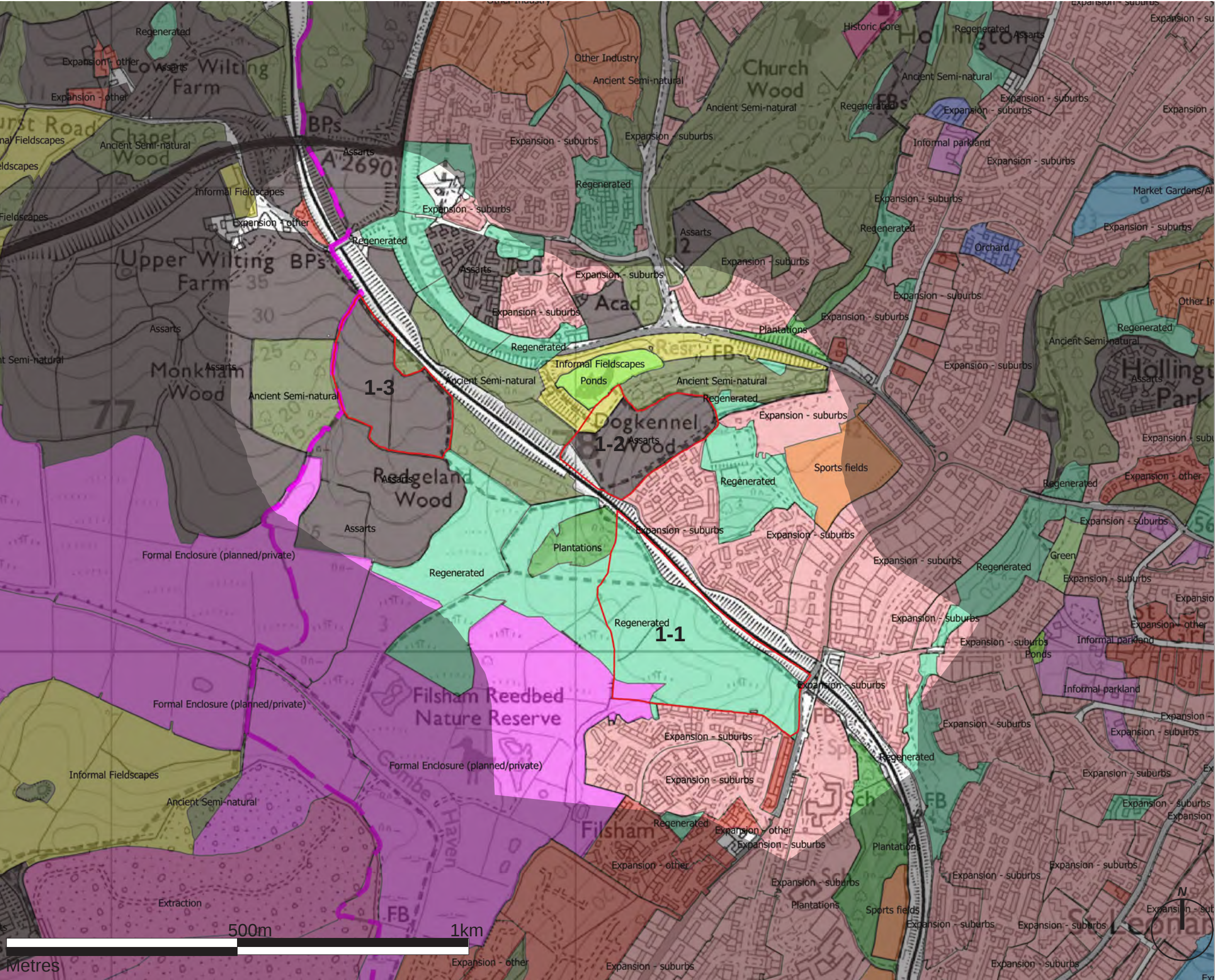
Combe Valley Countryside Park

Public Footpath

Figure A1.2. LCCA1 - Relevant Designations

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LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA



Legend

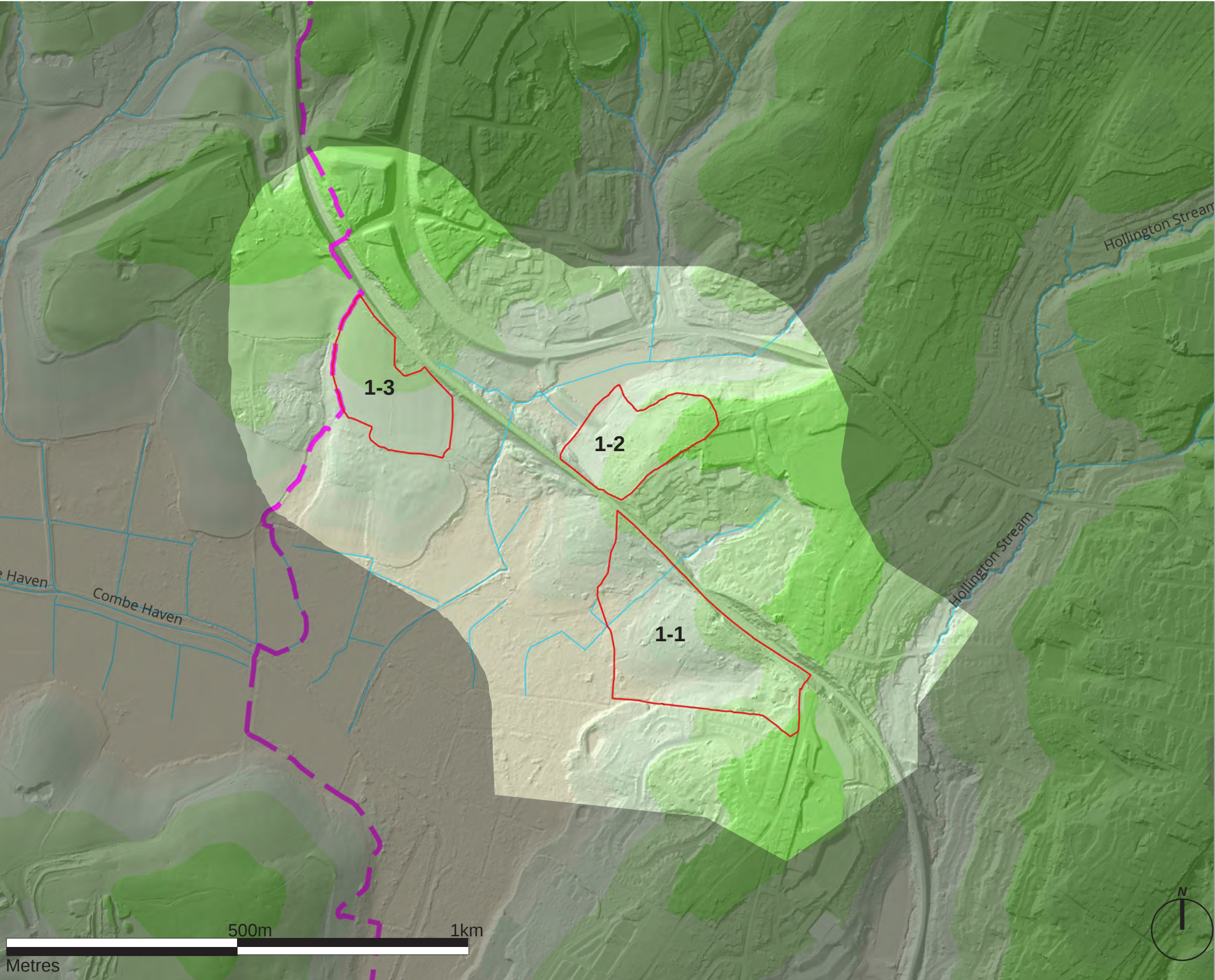
 Hastings Borough Boundary

LCCA1 Landscape Assessment Units

- 1-1** Land west of Harley Shute Road
- 1-2** Land West of Grove College
- 1-3** Monkham East

Figure A1.3. LCCA1 - Sussex Historic Landscape Character Types (2010)

LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA



Legend

- Hastings Borough Boundary
- Watercourse, (Source: OS Open Rivers)

LCCA1 Landscape Assessment Units

- 1-1** Land west of Harley Shute Road
- 1-2** Land West of Grove College
- 1-3** Monkham East

Level above Ordnance Datum, (aOD)

- 35-40m aOD
- 20-35m aOD
- 5-20m aOD
- 0-5m aOD

Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) is an airborne mapping technique, which uses a laser to measure the distance between the aircraft and the ground. Up to 100,000 measurements per second are made of the ground, allowing highly detailed terrain models to be generated.

The content of this LiDAR plan is sourced from the Environment Agency as digital elevation data supplied as a Digital Terrain Model to 1m, (2024) through QGIS.

Figure A1.4. LCCA1 - Landform

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LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA

Unit 1-1 Land West of Harley Shute Road - Unit Assessment				
Location and Landscape Character Summary	Unit 1-1 is located within the eastern end of the Combe Valley Countryside Park with long distance westerly views from the elevated eastern edge of the Unit, south-west of the cutting for the London to Hastings Railway. An area of 20th Century housing extends off the southern edge of the Unit off Harley Shute Road, (B2092). The B2092 extends along the eastern Unit boundary.			
Commentary against susceptibility evaluation criteria, informed by the field survey and desktop review.				
1. Landform (< >)	Undulating landform or some distinct landform features - Contributes to an intricate terrain of small, winding valleys and ridges - Landform falls by 20m in elevation across the Unit, over some 350m in distance from east to west, falling from about the 30m contour adjacent to Harley Shute Road to the 10m contour adjacent to the Combe Haven SSSI. The landform forms part of an undulating edge to the Combe Valley to the west, with a stream which arises within the suburban area offset to the north east, extending on a south westerly alignment through the north-western part of the Unit, with settled ridges offset to north and south.			
2. Landscape pattern and time depth (<)	Regular or uniform field patterns, (mainly of modern origin) - Through reference to the Sussex Historic Characterisation, (Bannister, 2010) Unit 1-1 largely falls within an area characterised as regenerated woodland, with just the south western corner falling within an area of fields resulting from formal enclosure. An area of settlement resulting from Twentieth century suburban expansion is located along the southern edge of the Unit, accessed off Harley Shute Road, (B2092).			
3. 'Natural' character (>)	Frequent occurrence of valued natural features (such as trees, hedgerows, shaws and woodland) and presence of larger areas of semi-natural habitats - Forms a vegetated area comprising patches of blackthorn scrub underlying a maturing and increasingly closed canopy of oak trees. An irregularly shaped area of Ancient Woodland, named Marsh Wood forms the north western corner of the Unit. The Filsham Reedbed LNR (forming part of the north eastern edge of the Combe Haven SSSI) is located off the western corner of the Unit, forming one of the largest reed beds in East Sussex. The SSSI continues northwards, defining the western boundary of the Unit to include the Ancient Woodland. The Unit is designated as the Old Filsham Golf Couse LWS described when last surveyed in 2008 as comprising a mixed open habitat of dry and wet grassland and emerging and thick scrub, providing excellent habitat structure on the edge of town. The grassland areas have been substantially reduced in extent from scrub encroachment. Through reference to Natural England's Priority Habitats Inventory, a small patch of woodland along the southern boundary of Unit 1-1 is identified as UK Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland.			
4. Historic features (<)	Absence of historic features in or adjacent to the area that contribute to landscape character.			
5. Recreational use (>)	Landscape important for access and enjoyment of the landscape - The Unit is promoted for recreational use as part of the Combe Valley Countryside Park, with a number of informal pathways maintained clear of encroaching vegetation across the Unit and shown on an interpretation board, which is located within the eastern corner of the Unit and indicated on OS Mapping. Public Footpath 28 extends along the north-eastern edge of the Unit, before splitting across the northern corner of the Unit as Public Footpath 29 and 30, linking with others over the railway to the north.			
6. Perceptual aspects (< >)	Some sense of rural character but with some signs of human activity and modern development - There are glimpsed views from the elevated eastern end of the Unit across the Haven to the distant skyline to the north west which provide scenic quality. The dense scrub about the narrow paths reduces sense of safety and tranquillity alongside of dispersed fly tipping, particularly adjacent to the southern edge of the Unit. Tranquillity increases associated with the improved vegetation structure about the Ancient Woodland fringe to the north west.			
7. Settlement pattern and setting (< >)	The area has some association with surrounding settlement pattern / provides some contribution as a backdrop and contributes to views that are important to the character of a settlement - The wooded character of the Unit forms part of the mostly natural backdrop within views when offset within the Combe valley bottom to the north west, within which there are small scale glimpses of settlement about the fringes of Hastings. The view to the distant skyline from the east is important to the character of the western edge of Hastings. An area of 20th Century housing extends off the southern edge of the Unit off Harley Shute Road, (B2092).			
8. Visual prominence (<)	Visually enclosed landscape screened by landform or land cover / Does not form a visually distinctive or prominent skyline - There is little visual prominence associated with the Unit from surrounding areas, due to the valley landform and enclosure from settlement upon the ridges to south and north, (with the vegetated railway cutting to the north) and intervening dense carr woodland, which extends across the valley to the north west. There is a view of the eastern edge of the Unit for road traffic along Harley Shute Road.			
9. Landscape Character strength of expression (>)	'Rare' landscape with many key positive landscape attributes - Key positive landscape attributes of the overlying Combe Haven Valley Landscape Character Area, (LCA10) include the contribution of the undulating valley landform to the intricate small, winding valleys, which lead to the Combe Valley offset to the west. Surrounding designated areas of Ancient Woodland to the northern boundary and Filsham Reed Bed Local Nature Reserve off the western boundary are notable.			
10. Coalescence (< >)	The area plays some role in separation of settlements although development could be designed so as to retain separation between settlements - The area forms part of the landform and habitat associated with the Combe Haven Valley, which provides a natural corridor between the settlements of Hastings to the east and Bexhill-on-Sea offset some 2km to the west.			
Sensitivity Analysis				
Sensitivity Analysis Commentary	The sloping, vegetated character of the Unit, forming the eastern gateway to the Combe Valley Countryside Park, with visual connectivity from the eastern edge of the Unit towards the far edge of the Combe Valley to the north west and with nationally designated wetland habitat and areas of Ancient Woodland bordering the western boundary comprise associations which are very susceptible to change without adverse change and significant effects. A limited area along the eastern edge of the Unit bordering Harley Shute Road and perhaps north of Kite Close may be less susceptible, in keeping with the existing dwellings to the south.			
Landscape Guidelines	Maintain the vista towards the Combe Haven Valley and distant skyline from the eastern end of the Unit. Maintain a tree belt with scrub to the north to ensure that the glimpsed views towards the distant skyline from both Harley Shute Road and the eastern edge of the Unit remain framed with naturalistic vegetation. The vista might be extended through the clearance of some scrub and trees to establish more of a grassed ride along which more of the Combe Valley might be seen from the elevated eastern end of the Unit. The diversity of the native species present dominated by oak trees with an understorey of blackthorn should be reinforced and diversified as part of any boundary planting.			
Sensitivity Judgement				
	Development Scenario			
	Residential - Low scale	Residential - Medium scale	Commercial / Industrial - Low-Medium scale	Solar
Landscape Sensitivity Rating	Moderate - High	High	High	Moderate - High

LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA

Unit 1-1 Land West of Harley Shute Road - Landscape Analysis



Legend

Land west of Harley Shute Road

Designations

Ancient Woodland

Site of Special Scientific Interest

Local Nature Reserve

Local Wildlife Site

Combe Valley Countryside Park

Tree Preservation Order

Public Footpath

Landscape Analysis

Watercourse

Built form

Contour lines (5m increments)

A

Unit Photographs

Figure A1.5. Landscape Analysis for Unit 1-1.

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LIZARD, DECEMBER 2024

LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA

Unit 1-1 Land West of Harley Shute Road - Photographs



Photograph 1-1A. South westerly glimpsed view towards the distant skyline over Harley Shute Road and vegetation within Unit 1-1, from the adjacent pavement before the railway bridge.



Photograph 1-1B. Westerly glimpsed view towards the distant skyline over the vegetated falling ground from the eastern edge of Unit 1-1 within Combe Valley Countryside Park.



Photograph 1-1C. Northerly view of the eastern edge of Unit 1-1 from the pavement along Harley Shute Road.

LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA

Unit 1-2 Land West of Grove College - Unit Assessment				
Location and Landscape Character Summary	Unit 1-2 comprises a north facing slope, enclosed within woodland. The London to Hastings Railway extends along the south western boundary of the Unit on relatively level ground. The Wishing Tree Reservoir, in use as a Fishing Lake is located off the north western edge of the Unit, bordered to the north by Crowhurst Road, (B2092).			
Commentary against susceptibility evaluation criteria, informed by the field survey and desktop review.				
1. Landform (< >)	Undulating landform or some distinct landform features - The landform forms part of a broad valley which leads to the Combe Valley beyond the Railway line to the west, albeit truncated by modified landform associated with the Railway Line, Reservoir and B2092 in particular. Landform falls by 30m in elevation across the Unit, from about the 40m contour to the east to the 10m contour about the Wishing Tree Reservoir to the north west.			
2. Landscape pattern and time depth (< >)	Mixture of simple and complex landscape field patterns, such as fields with partial historic boundaries in place, separated from surrounding field pattern - Through reference to the Sussex Historic Characterisation, (Bannister, 2010) Unit 1-2 is characterised as deriving from an assart field, with ancient woodland to the north east and north west. However, this area is separated from any surrounding field pattern, with an informal field resulting from waste about an informal pond to the north, an area of settlement, resulting from Twentieth century suburban expansion along the southern edge accessed off Harley Shute Road, (B2092) and a railway line to the part south-western edge.			
3. 'Natural' character (< >)	Some occurrence of valued semi-natural habitats and features (such as trees, hedgerows, woodland) - The Unit substantially comprises dense native scrub with young trees, which has colonised further to the earlier area of grassland which was noted within the Wishing Tree LWS citation (dated 1988). The LWS extends across the Unit towards a fringe of regenerated woodland along the northern edge of the Unit, beyond which the Dogkennel Wood North Ancient Woodland extends outside of the Unit. The LWS additionally extends across the Reservoir to the north and the Redgeland Wood North Ancient Woodland, offset to the north west of the Unit. Through reference to Natural England's Priority Habitats Inventory, (25 September 2024 update, MAGiC) areas of woodland along the north eastern edge of Unit 1-2, overlaying and extending beyond the area of ancient woodland are identified as UK Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland, with a further extent to the north west, shown extending towards the Unit from the area of Ancient Woodland, further to the north west. Belts of trees along the south-eastern and south-western edges are protected under Tree Preservation Orders.			
4. Historic features (<)	Absence of historic features in or adjacent to the area that contribute to landscape character.			
5. Recreational use (< >)	Some Public Rights of Way and footpaths - Public Footpaths No. 20 and 19 extend on respectively southerly and westerly alignments from the offset Crowhurst Road along the western and southern edges of the Unit. The Footpaths extend on informal alignments within the dense areas of scrub within the Unit, before joining towards a pedestrian crossing of the Hastings to London railway line, offset to the south west of Unit. A further Public Footpath (unlabelled) extends about the southern edge of Dogkennel Wood North towards the Fishing Lake, where this terminates.			
6. Perceptual aspects (<)	Close to visible or audible signs of human activity and modern development - There are glimpsed views from the elevated eastern end of the Unit towards the distant wooded skyline which rises above settlement upon the opposing valley side to the north west off Bodiam / Icklesham Drive, becoming increasingly obscured as scrub establishes. The dense scrub about the narrow paths reduces sense of safety and tranquillity alongside of dispersed fly tipping, particularly adjacent to the south-eastern edge of the Unit. Tranquillity increases associated with the improved vegetation structure about the Ancient Woodland fringe to the north east. However, road noise from the B2092 and the train line highlight the suburban context of the Unit.			
7. Settlement pattern and setting (< >)	The area has some association with surrounding settlement pattern and provides some contribution as a backdrop to existing settlements - The wooded character of the Unit forms part of the mostly natural backdrop within views when to the north from Public Footpath No. 20, as this extends south from Crowhurst Road adjacent to the Wishing Tree Reservoir. An area of 20th Century housing extends off the south-eastern edge of the Unit off Watermint Close, forming part of a planned housing estate along Newts Way/Darley Close, off Harley Shute Road, (B2092). A housing estate is currently under construction offset to the south east about Loverose Way.			
8. Visual prominence (< >)	Semi-enclosed - Due to the valley landform and settlement upon the ridges to south and north, (and the vegetated railway line to the west). There is some prominence in a glimpsed view from Crowhurst Road to the north, which is sustained along south bound Public Footpath No. 20, where the treed skyline to the south-east of the Unit is notable, but this could be avoided.			
9. Landscape Character strength of expression (< >)	'Fairly frequent' landscape, perhaps with some key positive landscape attributes - Key positive landscape attributes of the overlying Combe Haven Valley Landscape Character Area, (LCA10) include the contribution of the valley landform to the intricate small, winding valleys, which lead to the Combe Valley, albeit the valley is more broad and truncated by modified landform to south, west and north, with offset settlement to the northern valleyside.			
10. Coalescence (<)	The area does not play a particularly important role in settlement separation / Risk of coalescence of separate settlements with separate identities is low - The separation of the Unit from the more open landscape to the west of the Railway line limits any perception of contribution to separation of settlement.			
Sensitivity Analysis				
Sensitivity Analysis Commentary	The sloping, increasingly vegetated character of the Unit, enclosed with woodland and Ancient Woodland forms part of the setting to the Wishing Tree Reservoir and housing on the opposing valleyside offset to the north alongside of more substantial areas of woodland to either side. The scrub, which is colonising to woodland within the centre of the Unit would be less susceptible, in keeping with the existing dwellings to the south-east, provided landscape guidelines were followed.			
Landscape Guidelines	Maintain a belt of scrub fringed woodland along the boundaries of the Unit to maintain ecological connectivity and visually filter views from Public Footpaths, whilst maintaining a tree'd skyline in views from the north. Retain mature trees in good condition as part of layout and work sympathetically with the landform as is evident in the layout of the housing offset to the south east. Opportunity to establish a more diverse mosaic of grassland, scrub and trees.			
Sensitivity Judgement				
Landscape Sensitivity Rating	Development Scenario			
	Residential - Low scale	Residential - Medium scale	Commercial / Industrial - Low-Medium scale	Solar
	Moderate	High	High	Moderate

LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA

Unit 1-2 Land West of Grove College - Landscape Analysis



Legend

1-2 Land West of Grove College

Designations

- Ancient Woodland
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Local Wildlife Site
- Combe Valley Countryside Park
- Tree Preservation Order
- Public Footpath

Landscape Analysis

- Watercourse
- Built form
- Contour lines (5m increments)
- Unit Photographs

Figure A1.6. Landscape Analysis for Unit 1-2.

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LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA

Unit 1-2 Land West of Grove College - Photographs



Photograph 1-2A. South easterly view from Public Footpath No. 20, south of Crowhurst Road over the mown grass surrounding the Wishing Tree Reservoir, about which are patches of regenerated woodland. Rooflines of houses off Watermint Close can be glimpsed as part of a tree'd skyline beyond the scrub dominated Unit.



Photograph 1-2B. Glimpsed view from the elevated eastern end of the Unit towards the distant wooded skyline which rises above settlement upon the opposing valley side to the north west off Bodiam / Icklesham Drive.



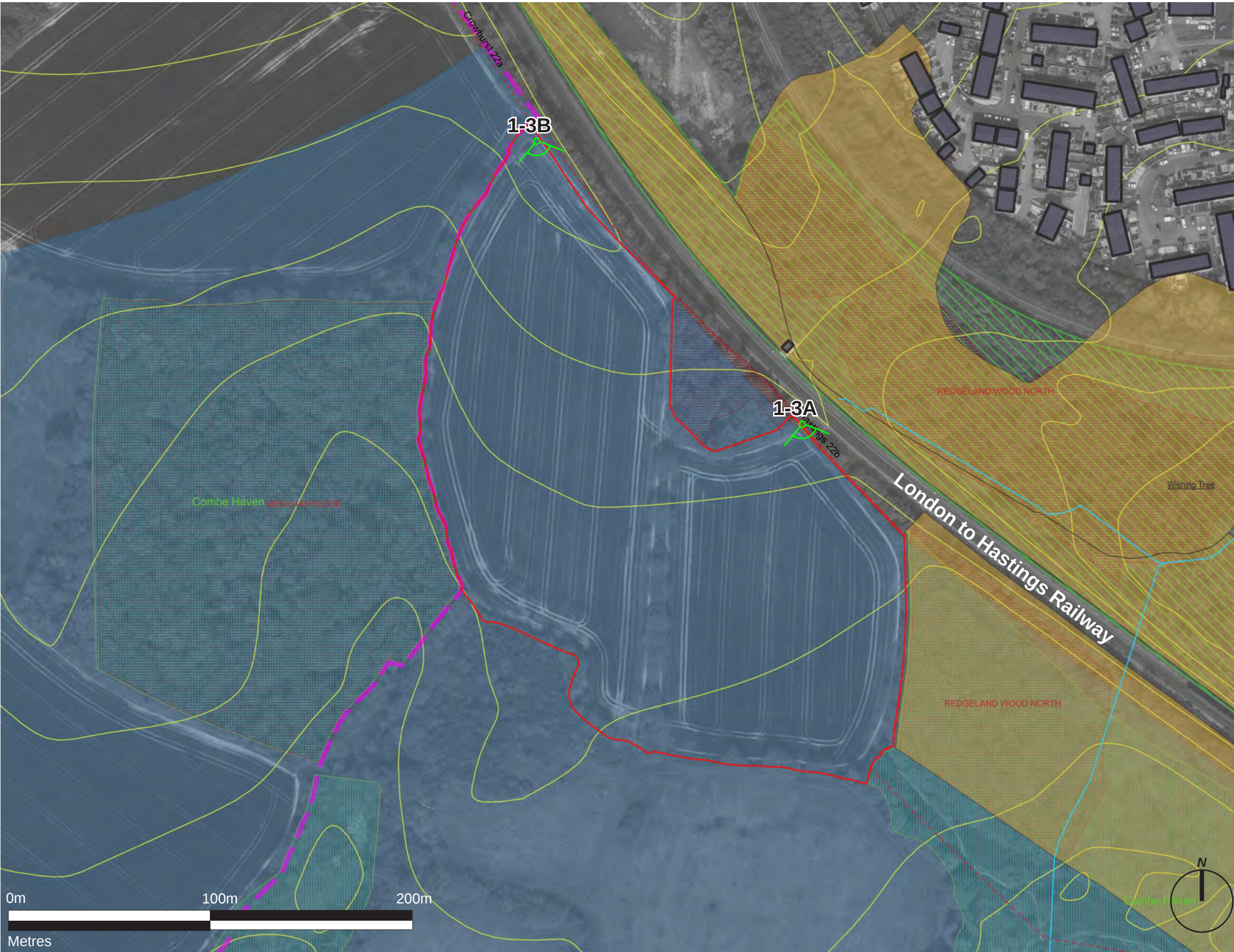
Photograph 1-2C. An area of 20th Century housing extends off the south-eastern edge of the Unit off Watermint Close, including bungalow type, two and two and a half-storey storey dwellings, with variation in rooflines, including cats slide roofs.

LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA

Unit 1-3 Monkham East - Unit Assessment				
Location and Landscape Character Summary	Unit 1-3 is located within the north-eastern end of the Combe Valley Countryside Park, forming two arable fields on gently sloping, undulating land, enclosed between areas of Ancient Woodland to east and west which are designated as part of the Combe Haven SSSI. A Public Footpath extends along the north eastern edge of the Unit, from which there are views across the Combe Valley and towards the sea. The cutting for the London to Hastings Railway is located off the north eastern boundary. Crowhurst Road crosses the railway offset to the north west, beyond an intervening field within Rother District.			
Commentary against susceptibility evaluation criteria, informed by the field survey and desktop review.				
1. Landform (>)	Presence of distinctive landform - The landform forms part of an undulating edge to the distinctive Combe Valley to the west. Landform falls by some 15m in elevation across the Unit, falling from about the 30m contour to the north to the 15m contour to the south about a rounded spur which continues to the valley floor offset to the west about the 5m contour.			
2. Landscape pattern and time depth (>)	Complex landscape field patterns such as assarted field patterns / presence of Ancient Woodland - Through reference to the Sussex Historic Characterisation, (Bannister, 2010) Unit 1-3 is characterised as deriving from an assart field, with ancient woodland bordering to the east and west, with a smaller pocket to the north. Assarted fields extend to the north and south outside of the Unit. The Unit is divided into two fields, with a tree'd field boundary extending in a straight line south from the small pocket of Ancient Woodland.			
3. 'Natural' character (< >)	Some occurrence of valued semi-natural habitats and features (such as trees, hedgerows, woodland) - Whilst the Unit comprises an arable field, there is a mature hedgerow with trees which divide the two fields. The Unit is additionally enclosed by Ancient Woodland, with Redgeland Wood to the east and Monkham Wood to the west. A small patch of Ancient Woodland is inset between the Railway line and the Unit along the north-eastern Unit boundary. Redgeland Wood and Monkham Wood form part of the Combe Haven SSSI, which otherwise extends off to the south west. The SSSI citation identifies broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland. Through reference to Natural England's Priority Habitats Inventory, (25 September 2024 update, MAGiC) the ancient woodland to east and west is identified as UK Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland.			
4. Historic features (< >)	Adjacent / presence of historic features that contribute to landscape character - Offset to the north west, beyond an intervening field is located the Grade II LB Upper Wilting Farm and surrounding farmstead upon the high ground where viewed from the opposing valleyside. The assarted field systems within the Unit and surrounding Ancient Woodland contribute historic features within the landscape.			
5. Recreational use (>)	Landscapes important for access and enjoyment of the landscape such as Country Parks / High density of well-connected Public Rights of Way - The Unit forms part of the Combe Valley Countryside Park, promoted for recreational use along Public Footpath 22 which extends along the north-eastern edge of the Unit towards Crowhurst Road offset to the north and to the railway crossing offset to the south-east.			
6. Perceptual aspects (>)	A highly rural landscape, remote from visible or audible signs of human activity and modern development - There are views from the elevated north-eastern end of the Unit between the wooded boundaries across the Haven to the opposing valleyside and ridge, and when visibility is good towards the English Channel, south of the Glyne Gap. Tranquillity increases in association with this view and the surrounding Ancient Woodland, but is impacted by the proximity of the adjacent, albeit sunken railway track to the north-east.			
7. Settlement pattern and setting (>)	The area does not have any association with surrounding settlement pattern / The area contributes to views that are important to the character of a settlement - There are glimpses of the suburban edge of Hastings within the panoramic view when offset upon the opposing Combe valley sides to the west. The wooded character of the Unit surrounds forms part of the mostly natural backdrop, with glimpses of the south eastern part of the Unit only about this. The view to the distant skyline and sea from within the Unit is important to the character of the western edge of Hastings within the Countryside Park.			
8. Visual prominence (< >)	Semi-enclosed or has some enclosed and some open areas - There is little visual prominence associated with the Unit from surrounding areas, due to the enclosure with woodland and the vegetated railway cutting to the north, with glimpsed views towards the south eastern part of the Unit only from the opposing valley side. However, the eye is drawn to Upper Wilting Farm and surrounding agricultural buildings, which is located beyond a field to the north west of the Unit upon the skyline.			
9. Landscape Character strength of expression (>)	'Rare' landscape with many key positive landscape attributes - Regarding strength of expression associated with the overlying Combe Haven Valley Landscape Character Area, (LCA10) the presence of key positive landscape attributes present within the Unit comprises the undulating landform to the Combe Valley and surrounding designated areas of Ancient Woodland. There is a general sense of tranquillity contributed from the rural character.			
10. Coalescence (>)	The area plays an important role in settlement separation - The area forms part of the landform and habitat associated with the Combe Haven Valley, which provides a natural corridor between the settlements of Hastings to the east and Bexhill-on-Sea offset some 2km to the west.			
Sensitivity Analysis				
Sensitivity Analysis Commentary	The two arable fields on gently sloping, undulating land, within the north-eastern end of the Combe Valley Countryside Park enclosed between areas of Ancient Woodland / SSSI to east and west with a Public Footpath along their north eastern edge from which there are views across the Combe Valley and towards the sea comprise associations which are very susceptible to change without adverse change and significant effects on the strength of expression of rural landscape and visual characteristics within the Unit. The Unit is separated from settlement other than the offset Grade II LB upper Wilting Farm.			
Landscape Guidelines	A buffer of at least 15m of semi-natural habitat might be provided to the areas of Ancient Woodland. Boundaries to the Ancient Woodland areas designated as SSSI might be better defined to reduce informal access and den building as noted in the SSSI condition report.			
Sensitivity Judgement				
	Development Scenario			
	Residential - Low scale	Residential - Medium scale	Commercial / Industrial - Low-Medium scale	Solar
Landscape Sensitivity Rating	High	High	High	High

LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA

Unit 1-3 Monkham East - Landscape Analysis



Legend

1-3 Monkham East

Hastings Borough Boundary

Designations

Ancient Woodland

Site of Special Scientific Interest

Local Wildlife Site

Combe Valley Countryside Park

Tree Preservation Order

Public Footpath

Landscape Analysis

Built form

Contour lines (5m increments)

Unit Photographs
(Photograph 3C is located some 1km to the south west, beyond the Combe Valley.)

Figure A1.7. Landscape Analysis for Unit 1-3.

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LCCA 1 - THE HARLEY SHUTE ROAD-GROVE COLLEGE-UPPER WILTING AREA

Unit 1-3 Monkham East - Photographs



Photograph 1-3A. From the northern end of the southern field - There are views between the wooded boundaries to the opposing valleyside and ridge, and when visibility is good towards the English Channel, south of the Glyne Gap.



Photograph 1-3B. From the northern end of the northern field - There are views between the wooded boundaries to the opposing valleyside and ridge, and when visibility is good towards the English Channel, south of the Glyne Gap.



Photograph 1-3C. There are glimpses of the suburban edge of Hastings within the panoramic view when offset upon the opposing Combe valley sides to the west. However, the most apparent built form is that of Upper Wilting Farm and surrounding agricultural buildings, which is located beyond a field to the north west of the Unit. The wooded character of the Unit surrounds forms part of the mostly natural backdrop, with glimpses of the south eastern part of the Unit only about this.