

Hastings Borough Council

Rother District Council

Ivyhouse Lane – Rock Lane Study Area

Landscape Assessment

Volume 1

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Brief

1.1.1 The Environmental Advice Team of East Sussex County Council has been asked by Hastings Borough and Rother District Councils to carry out a landscape assessment of the Ivyhouse to Rock Lane Area to the north of Hastings.

1.1.2 This will build on previous studies carried out by this team for the area:

- a) A Landscape Assessment of Land at Ivyhouse Lane, March 2002
- b) Hastings Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Landscape Assessment, July 2008

1.1.3 The specific aim of this assessment is: *To provide a landscape appraisal of the defined Study Area to form a sound basis for considering the landscape setting and landscape capacity that will assist in the consideration of potential residential and employment development within the area in both Hastings and Rother.* (Client Brief Sept. 2013, Appendix 1).

1.1.4 The output from this study is to assist in the selection of development sites from the Study Area provided. It provides pointers to the nature and spatial planning of the development opportunities, but it does not constitute a detailed Development Brief,

1.1.5 The field work for the project was carried out in October 2013 and has been supplemented with desk top studies of published landscape character assessments and planning policy documents.

1.2 Planning Policy Context

1.2.1 The Study Area is located within the High Weald AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). Development proposals for this area would need to have regard to the purposes of the AONB designation. The location of the site in the High Weald AONB would require that the development demonstrates *protection and enhancement* of valued landscapes in accordance with NPPF policy (109). Further to this *great weight needs to be given to the conservation of landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs (115).*

1.2.2 The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2004 and subsequent updates (Second Ed.2009, Third Ed.2014-2019, Draft June 2013, to be published early in 2014) is required to formulate the management policies to inform the management of the area and for carrying out functions in relation to it. Management plans for AONBs are focused on delivering the statutory purpose of AONB designation: conserving and enhancing natural beauty. The principle components of natural beauty identified for the High Weald are; Geology and Water Systems and Climate, Settlement, Routeways, Woodland, Field and Heath.

1.2.3 The Hastings Planning Strategy Proposed 2012, Hastings Local Plan, Policy EN7 outlines policies for the conservation and enhancement of landscape in the borough. Policy EN2, Green Infrastructure (GI) Network, undertakes to identify and establish and protect a green network to ensure that everyone has access to natural, semi-natural and managed open space. A definition of GI is included in Appendix 4.

1.2.4 Rother District Council Proposed Submission Core Strategy August 2011 sets the policy context for the consideration of planning applications in the District, along with the extant Rother District Local Plan (2006). The Core Strategy contains a

number of policies of particular relevance for this Study including Policies Policy EN1 (Landscape Stewardship) HF1 (The Hastings Fringes) and EN5 (Biodiversity and Greenspace). Policy EN1 refers to the management of high quality historic, built and natural landscape character within the District. It details how this should be achieved through the protection and, where possible, the enhancement of nationally designated landscapes, including the High Weald AONB. Policy HF1 specifically refers to taking a holistic approach to the use and management of plan between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane to secure environmental and access improvements in association with any development in the locality. Policy EN5 sets out how geodiversity, biodiversity and green space will be protected and enhanced. This includes policy commitments to green infrastructure and for linking natural green space for wildlife and people, particularly through increasing accessibility to the countryside from urban areas especially in the Hastings and Bexhill Fringes.

1.3 Study Area Context

1.3.1 The Study Area, Map 1, is located to the north east of the town of Hastings and to the north of the Hastings Ridge. The area is bounded by Ivyhouse Lane to the west, Rock Lane to the east and Footpath 47 which crosses the area to the north and links these two lanes. The area is formed of a valley which extends between two well defined ridges. In the bottom of the valley is a wooded ghyll which dominates its character. The valley bottom is occupied by the south coast railway which emerges from a tunnel half way across the Study Area and continues north in a deep cutting.

1.3.2 Generally the Ridge is the defined edge to the urban area of Hastings. The High Weald AONB was designated in 1983 and since that date policies have generally prevented major development from spreading north of The Ridge. Historically small areas of development have extended over the ridge as ribbon development along established historic transport routeways. Just to the south of the Study Area the industrial units either side of Ivyhouse Lane intrude into the valley landscape physically and visually. Housing development just to the east of the Study Area between Rye Road and Rock Lane also spills over the Ridge. The only developments within the Study Area are the static Caravan parks at Stalkhurst on Ivyhouse Lane and Spindlewood Country Holiday Park on Rock Lane.

1.3.2 The environmental designations which are present in the Study Area are indicated on Map 2. The entire Study Area is within the High Weald AONB.

1.3.3 Extensive areas of ghyll woodland dominate the valley bottom and run in fingers along streams which arise from springs on the valley sides. Ghyll woodland is a category of habitat which is nationally rare and is particularly characteristic of the High Weald landscape.

1.3.4 Much of this woodland is designated by Natural England as Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland, some of this is mapped as ancient replanted woodland and this still has the same level of protection. It is worth noting that the area of ancient woodland was reviewed in 2010 as part of an AONB wide survey and some areas in the southern part of the Study Area were taken out of this designation. A Revision of Ancient Woodland Inventory for Rother District, East Sussex (Natural England and Forestry Commission 2010) http://www.rother.gov.uk/media/pdf/a/b/Ancient_Woodland_Inventory.pdf

1.3.5 There are long views across and into the Study Area from the surrounding ridges. The open landscape of the Hastings Cemetery affords views into much of the Study Area. From Rye Road and the housing estates on the eastern ridge there are glimpsed views into much of the area. From Rock Lane there are views into the valley and across to the industrial estates on the urban edge.

2.0 Methodology for Assessment

2.1 Existing Guidance

2.1.1 There are several sources of guidance relevant to assessing the landscape and visual appraisal of proposed development projects.

2.1.2 The primary guidance from the Landscape Institute is *Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA)* published by the Institute of Environmental Assessment and the Landscape Institute (Second Edition 2002 and Third Edition 2013). Detailed guidance for undertaking landscape character assessments to inform planning policy and decisions is also provided in the *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland* published jointly by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002). This document has various addendums including *Topic Paper 6, Techniques and criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity*.

2.1.3 These various forms of current guidance will be used for the purposes of assessing the development capacity of the Study Area defined by Hastings Borough and Rother District Councils for this landscape assessment.

2.2 Methodology for Landscape Character Assessment

2.2.1 The Assessment involves an appraisal of the landscape character of the Study Area.

2.2.2 Desktop and field surveys have been undertaken to identify the character of the defined study area and this has particularly drawn upon the regional and county landscape assessments. The landscape character of the Study Area has been assessed at the local level, according to existing guidance for character assessment.

2.2.3 The following strategies have been considered in defining the character of the landscape in the Study Area:

- The Countryside Agency (1999) – Countryside Character Volume 7: South East & London. The Study Area sits within National Character Area (NCA) 122 High Weald. (The NCAs are currently being updated as National Character Areas on NE website, the High Weald Area has been reviewed as a draft prior to publication).
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 2002 and 2013 and Landscape Assessment Guidance – Countryside Agency (Topic Paper 6, Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity).
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), 2002 and 2013, The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental and Amenity Managers.

- The High Weald; Exploring the Landscape of the AONB, Countryside Commission, 1994.
- East Sussex Trees and Woodland Strategy, (TAWS), East Sussex Woodland Forum 1990.
- East Sussex County Landscape Assessment, published on ESCC website and updated 2010.
- Historic Landscape Characterisation Assessment, Historic Environment Record ESCC.
- CPRE Tranquil Areas Mapping, [Mapping Tranquillity](#)
- Remoteness at the Local Scale, an Application in East Sussex, East Sussex County Council, 1997.

2.2.4 The landscape is a combination of both cultural and physical characteristics and components, which give rise to patterns that are distinctive to particular localities and help to define a sense of place. The landscape is not therefore simply a visual phenomenon but relies upon other influences including topography, land use land management, ecology, and cultural associations.

2.2.5 Landscape character areas are single unique areas in the landscape, which have a particular sense of place. These are discrete areas of an identifiable character reflected by differing vegetation, settlement and field patterns, cultural associations and other landscape characteristics. They are unique individual geographical areas. They share general characteristics with other areas but have their own particular identity.

2.2.6 The local character areas within the identified Study Area have been assessed in the context of the East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 2010 [East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment](#), which identifies landscape character areas across the county.

2.2.7 A field survey has been carried out to identify the landscape character of the Study Area. The area is subdivided into smaller character areas; these are, mapped and shown on Map 3 in Volume 2. The individual character of these areas is described using the customised field survey sheets contained within Appendix 3. These include typical representative photographic views of each area.

2.2.8 Other factors which have been considered as part of the landscape character assessment are local cultural considerations and sense of place. The survey sheets provide the opportunity to record both the objective elements within the landscape in question and the subjective impressions of the viewer. At least one representative photograph has been taken for each character area and an assessment made as to the quality, value and sensitivity to the change of the character area in question. This will include an assessment of visual sensitivity. This is in accordance with the guidance provided in the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (GLVIA) publication.

2.2.9 The site assessment has considered the potential for mitigating change within the character areas and whether mitigation features would be out of character. For example, mounding may be inappropriate in a flat landscape and extensive woodland or tree planting may be out of keeping in an open landscape.

2.2.10 An assessment has also been made of the current condition or quality of the landscape and requirements for management of the land and associated features.

The assessment has drawn on the management needs identified in existing assessments.

2.2.11 The information obtained from the field survey exercise has been supplemented by a desk top study to map existing designations relating to historical, archaeological, biodiversity or other cultural interest. Supporting strategies will also be reviewed together with existing landscape character assessments at national, regional and local level in order to inform the landscape assessment.

2.2.12 Having drawn together the baseline information this has then been used to describe the character of the landscape. Landscape character assessment is concerned primarily with landscape character, rather than with landscape quality or value. These factors are considered relevant where assessment is being used to inform environmental impact assessments. Subsequently, each landscape character area will be evaluated in relation to quality, value and sensitivity to change in accordance with the criteria contained in the following guidance and Tables in Appendix 2.

2.3 Landscape Quality Evaluation Criteria

2.3.1 Quality has been defined in accordance with *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA)*. The quality of the landscape is defined according to a 5 point scale ranging from Poor to Exceptional. The quality of each character area has been assessed in accordance with the criteria outlined in Appendix 2, Table 1.

2.4 Landscape Value

2.4.1 The setting of Hastings has a rich resource of valued landscapes. The importance of its landscapes is recognised in national terms in the designation of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Areas which are the subject of nature conservation or heritage designations are also considered in the value scoring.

2.4.2 The assessment has appraised landscape value of each character area using a set of indicators, this is done by assessing:

The importance of characteristic features;

- Why and who they are important to;
- Their relationship in overall landscape patterns; and,
- Relative value at the local, county, regional or national scale.

2.4.3 A landscape may be valued by different users for a variety of reasons recognising perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquility, remoteness, special cultural associations, other conservation or specialist interest.

2.4.5 The value of an area is influenced by the designations which may have been afforded for landscape, biodiversity or cultural heritage reasons. These are identified for the Study Area on Map 2.

2.4.6 The Landscape Value Criteria which have been used in the assessment are detailed in Appendix 2, Table 2.

2.5 Landscape Character Sensitivity

2.5.1 The sensitivity of each character area and the scope for landscape enhancement measures has been assessed in accordance with *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 2002 and 2013* and *Landscape Assessment Guidance – Countryside Agency (Topic Paper 6, Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity)*.

2.5.2 GLVIA and the Countryside Agency advocate that sensitivity studies are carried out at a regional level to inform strategic and local development frameworks.

2.5.3 Landscape character sensitivity is based on judgements about sensitivity of aspects most likely to be affected e.g. natural, cultural, aesthetic factors. This combined with visual sensitivity and landscape value identifies the capacity of the landscape to accommodate a specific type of change.

2.5.4 Other factors which have been taken in to account in assessing the sensitivity of the landscape resource are existing trends for change in the landscape which may be due to natural process or human activities. Landscapes exhibiting reduction in management due to changed farming practices may be considered less sensitive to change. The Evaluation Criteria of the sensitivity to change of a landscape are defined in Appendix 2 - Table 3.

2.6 Visual Sensitivity

2.6.1 The visual sensitivity of the landscape is recorded on the site assessment sheets for each character area as part of the character assessment. Key views and viewpoints are identified and focal features which enhance or detract from the view are noted. The inter-visibility of the area with surrounding areas has been recorded as have distant views into and out of the area. Key visual receptors with views across the area are recorded. The visual sensitivity is evaluated for each character area in accordance with Appendix 2 - Table 4.

2.7 Landscape Capacity

2.7.1 The following is a definition of landscape capacity taken from the Countryside Agency Guidance:

“Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape type or character area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type. Capacity is likely to vary according to the type and nature of change being proposed.”

Further to this: *“Capacity is all a question of the interaction between sensitivity of the landscape, the type and amount of change and the way that the landscape is valued.”*

In Summary: <i>Landscape Character Sensitivity + Visual Sensitivity + Landscape Value = Landscape Capacity</i>
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2.7.2 The above quotes are taken from *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland, Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity*, Countryside Agency (2002).

2.7.3 As advised in Topic Paper 6, an overview has been taken of the distribution

of the assessments of each aspect and this has been used to make an informed judgement about the overall assessment of capacity. These assessments are arranged in Table 5 to provide a profile of each identified landscape character area.

2.7.4 The assessment of capacity for each character area is made by combining the quality, value and character / visual sensitivity scores. For example if Quality = High, Value = High, Character sensitivity = High and Visual sensitivity = High, the capacity is most likely to be None. Where Quality = Ordinary, Value = Low, Character sensitivity = Low and Visual sensitivity = Low, the capacity is likely to be High. It is less straightforward where there is more of a differential between the scores. For example, an area may be high quality and value, but have low character and / or visual sensitivity. In these cases a certain amount of site specific professional judgement has been used to come to a view on the overall capacity score. Where this is the case the tables allow for a comment on the potential for development in landscape terms, such as the scope for landscape mitigation and the need to improve or enhance the existing landscape features.

2.7.5 For the purposes of this study a gradation of capacity for identified character areas is based on high, moderate, low or no capacity. This represents the capacity of a particular area to absorb the proposed type of development without significant adverse effects.

3.0 Landscape Character and Capacity Evaluation

3.1 Visual Assessment

3.1.1 The key views across the study area are from the higher ground on the ridges which enclose the valley to the west and the east. Long views can be obtained across the study area from the Hastings Cemetery in the west and from Rye Road and the housing estates on the ridge to the east of the area.

3.1.2 There are closer views across much of the study area from Rock Lane and from footpath no. 46 which forms the northern boundary of the study area. There are also long views across the area from Ivyhouse Lane on the higher ground to the north west of the study area in the vicinity of Adams Farm. From within the study area the urban edge of the Ivyhouse Industrial estate and the housing estates on the Rye Road ridge intrude visually into the green valley landscape.

3.1.3 Trees and woodland and the valley topography prevent long views into and out of much of the area and in particular the southern part. There are longer views across the wider AONB landscape from the northern edge of the study area from Rock Lane and footpath 46.

3.2 Landscape Character Assessment

3.2.1 The Study Area has been identified by Hastings Borough and Rother District Councils.

Regional Landscape Character Context

3.2.2 The Countryside Character Map of England Volume 7: South East and London, Countryside Agency (1999). The study area falls within the regional landscape character area 122 High Weald.

3.2.3 A summary of the key characteristics for the High Weald, which are relevant to the study area are as follows:

- a well wooded landscape rising above the Low Weald;
- main roads and settlements are sited along prominent ridges-lines with a dense network of small winding lanes linking scattered villages, hamlets and farms;
- high forest, small woods and copses, and a network of hedges, shaws link small irregular fields created from cleared woodland.
- recent 'suburbanisation' of farmstead buildings is eroding the distinctive local style in many places.

3.2.4 The High Weald, Exploring The Landscape of The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Countryside Agency (1994). The Study Area falls within the Brede Valley. The Brede Valley extends from Battle in the west to Winchelsea in the east and from the north side of Hastings in the south to Northiam and Robertsbridge in the north. The Study Area is typical of the description for the urban fringe area on the north side of the Hastings Ridge.

3.2.5 The landscape character areas in the above document broadly correspond with the East Sussex County Council Landscape character areas.

County Landscape Character Area Context

3.2.6 The County Landscape Assessment is divided into five regional character areas: The High Weald, The Low Weald, The Downs, the Levels and the Urban Areas. These areas are further sub divided into the County Landscape Character Areas, the Study Area falls within the *Brede Valley*.

3.2.7 According to the County Landscape Assessment the Brede valley runs from Netherfield in the West to Icklesham in the east. The well wooded sides are steep and contrast with the flat predominantly open levels on the valley floor. A landscape action priority identified for this area is to strengthen the urban edge of Hastings by means of tree planting and rigorous control of development on the slopes of the ridge. Another priority is the consideration of traffic management and calming measures on the lanes near Hastings. Urban fringe management is another relevant action priority.

3.2.8 Characteristics of the Brede Valley which are relevant to the Study Area:

- Quite steep sloped valley sides, patterned with trees, woods and farms.
- Southwest of the main valley, a broad belt of fairly low, undulating country extends to the Battle/Hastings ridge, with ridges, small woods and valleys.

3.2.9 Problems, pressures and detracting features relevant to the Study Area:

- Extensive caravan and chalet developments
- Urban fringe problems to the north of Battle and Hastings, including: holiday and recreational developments, pylons, sheds and warehouses, new housing development and nurseries.

3.2.10 Landscape Action Priorities relevant to the Study Area:

- Strengthen the urban edge by means of tree planting and rigorous control of development on the slopes of the Ridge.
- Consider traffic management and calming on the lanes near Hastings, with signage respecting rural character.

3.2.11 *East Sussex Trees and Woodland Strategy, (TAWS), East Sussex Woodland Forum 1990.* A landscape action priority for this area is to encourage urban fringe planting and woodland management on the Hastings Ridge and slopes

Study Area Landscape Character Context

3.2.11 The local character of the Study Area has been assessed and recorded on the site assessment sheets in Appendix 3, these describe the character areas in detail as identified on Map 3.

3.2.12 The report *Remoteness at the Local Scale, An Application in East Sussex, East Sussex County Council 1997* was used to identify any areas of relatively remote landscape in the Study Area. An area was identified which extends into the centre of the valley and this is reproduced on Map 3. This implies that the area would provide and opportunity to experience a degree of solitude as well as separation from noise and disturbance.

3.2.13 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (East Sussex CC Historic Environment Record) identifies the area as a mix of fieldscapes and woodland. The area to the west of the railway is categorised as fieldscapes with informal large fields and the east as more formal enclosure. The historic Maps which are reproduced as 5 and 6 illustrate this as there are few field boundaries to the west of the railway and these follow the east west streams as informal boundaries. By contrast the eastern area would appear to have well defined boundaries and smaller fields. The ghyll woodlands are more defined in the eastern area and form distinct field boundaries. The structure of the landscape on the western side would appear to be largely unchanged. There has been some clearance of hedges and hence loss of the field structure on the east side of the study area. The ghyll woodlands are distinctive in that they are largely intact.

3.2.14 The old maps clearly indicate the original carriage ride for Coghurst Hall and this is indicated on Map 2. This arises from a Lodge on the Ridge and proceeds through an area of mixed woodland plantation. This supports the evidence that the woodland in this area is not ancient woodland and has been excluded from this in the review of October 2010. http://www.rother.gov.uk/media/pdf/a/b/Ancient_Woodland_Inventory.pdf. Some of the trees remaining in the woodland adjacent to Burgess Road are significant specimen trees and remnants of this plantation which may be worthy of retention. The changes since the 1875 mapping include development of the Cemetery, Ivyhouse industrial estate and the housing which spills over the ridge between Rye Road and Rock Lane.

3.3 Mapping

3.3.1 The maps are presented in Volume 2 and cross reference with the tables as follows :

Map 1 Sets the location and landscape context for the Study Area.

Map 2 Indicates designations and constraints for the Study Area

Map 3 Identifies local landscape character areas and should be read in conjunction with Table 5 and the assessment sheets in Appendix 3.

Map 4 Indicates a broad landscape masterplan identifying areas where there could be potential for development in a strong landscape framework which would provide an overall enhancement. This should be read in conjunction with Table 6.

Maps 5 and 6 are historic maps provided to indicate how the landscape has changed and features which have been lost or preserved. This provides a guide for masterplanning the restoration of the landscape.

3.3.2 For the purpose of this study Map 4 provides a broad indication of areas where development could take place. It must be recognised that there may be parts of these areas which should not be developed because of more detailed environmental considerations. Within these development areas any significant woodland features which would need to be retained and protected are indicated.

It should be noted that this does not go into the detail of individual trees as this would be dependent on a detailed tree survey for the areas. Map 4 also provides an indication of the areas which should be retained and positively managed as multifunctional Green Infrastructure, a definition for which is provided in Appendix 4. These areas include open fields, woodland, ghylls and tree belts.

3.3.3 Where appropriate Map 4 indicates the potential for key mitigation planting to link with existing landscape features, notably woods and shaws. This map also indicates areas which could be enhanced as multifunctional green infrastructure as defined in section 3.4 and Appendix 4.

3.3.4 As these areas are in the High Weald AONB any proposals would need to demonstrate conservation and enhancement of natural beauty as required by NPPF paragraphs 109 and 115. Details of how this could be secured are outlined in section 3.4 and Table 6.

3.4 The Setting of the Study Area in relation to the High Weald AONB

3.4.1 The AONB boundary is identified in Map 2. The character of the landscape is not assessed on the basis of landscape designations but on the intrinsic characteristics of a particular area. The analysis of the capacity of the landscape as described in section 2.7 above takes in to account all of the relevant factors including any designations. Designated landscapes would be scored as higher value than non designated landscapes by virtue of the designation. When the various factors are considered, an assessment of the capacity can be made. It is possible for an area of landscape within an AONB to have a lower quality score and/or lower visual and character sensitivity than an undesignated landscape elsewhere. From this point of view therefore, it may be possible for areas within the AONB to have greater capacity for development from a landscape point of view than areas outside the AONB.

3.4.2 Hastings has grown up on the High Weald Landscape, with its deeply sculpted landform, robust tree structure, powerful relationship with the sea and sometimes uncomfortable tension with the nationally important AONB landscape to the north and east. These characteristics create both constraints and opportunities for change in the landscape and to make the most of them, it is necessary to apply a creative approach to landscape planning which may release benefits for all.

3.4.3 The AONB tightly hugs much of the urban edge and sometimes the urban area and urban fringe influences detract from the character and quality of the designated landscape. It is therefore appropriate in planning considerations to assess areas whether or not they are in the AONB as decisions should be made having regard to opportunities to conserve and *enhance* the landscape.

3.4.4 The Study Area comes into this consideration and a comprehensive approach to the landscape planning of the urban edge, embracing the AONB would generate some exciting opportunities for development alongside the conservation and enhancement of the AONB countryside.

3.4.5 Much of the Study Area is essentially run down and in need of a comprehensive facelift, as it is currently unworthy of its status as AONB. An overall

landscape master-plan involving new development, management of existing and creation of new woodlands and open space and the management of non motorised access corridors could create a revitalised urban fringe and be an example to others of coordinated landscape and development planning.

3.4.6 There is an opportunity here to facilitate the creation of an area of truly multifunctional Green Infrastructure as a buffer between town and country. The area has no doubt fallen into poor management as it is not attractive for agricultural use and due to this neglect some areas are abused by some of the urban population. By contrast it is well used as accessible natural green space and this use could be formalised and greatly enhanced. To release some of the less sensitive areas for development could be the catalyst to address this urban fringe problem. This would also provide an opportunity to secure the future management of the area as a resource to serve the urban population.

3.4.7 The mosaic of open grassland and deciduous woodland is characteristic of the better managed areas of the AONB countryside on the Ridge to the north of Hastings. The current lack of management of the Study Area is resulting in encroachment of scrub and trees into the open meadow areas. This is having a negative effect on the character of the area.

3.4.8 The potential impact of potential development proposals on the AONB Management Plan (High Weald AONB Management Plan 2004 and subsequent updates, Second Ed.2009, Third Ed.2014-2019, Draft June 2013, to be published in early 2014) priorities and key characteristics of the AONB are outlined below:

Woodland

3.4.9 Ghyll woodlands are identified as a key characteristic component of the High Weald AONB. The Study Area has several belts of ghyll woodland some of which are also Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland. These areas are not currently in positive management. The woodland not only provides valuable habitat it also helps to mitigate the existing built development on the urban fringe of the Study Area. In order to secure the long term viability and health of these woodlands they need to be bought into positive management. This could be achieved if they are brought into a comprehensive green infrastructure network as part of a development masterplan, Map 4.

Geology, Landform, Water Systems and Climate

3.4.10 The ridge and valley landscape of the Study Area is typical of the High Weald AONB landform. This is masked by the encroaching urban development in the southern part of the valley. Proposed development within the AONB would need to respect the landform and geology of the specific site. For example development which would require extensive areas of cut and fill on sloping sites would not be acceptable. The type and scale of development would need to be tailored to the site topography.

3.4.11 The springs arising on the slopes and converging on the central stream running north into the Brede Valley are also characteristic features. There is a high potential that the water quality in these streams is adversely impacted by current urban fringe land-uses and activities. Consideration needs to be given to the current water quality in streams and opportunities to enhance these as GI assets.

3.4.12 The highest design standards for sustainable development would need to be considered in terms of carbon neutrality, water conservation and recycling and renewable energy standards. Green roof design should be considered for all

developments to maximise biodiversity value and to reduce visual impacts.

Settlement

3.4.13 Proposed development within this area of the AONB would need to be carefully designed to ensure successful integration into the landscape. The opportunity to improve the visual appearance of existing developments on the urban fringe should be exploited in any proposals for development. Mitigation for new development should be based on a comprehensive masterplan which provides a green infrastructure network as outlined in Table 6 and Map 4.

Routeways

3.4.14 The lanes which define the west and east boundaries to the Study Area are characteristic ancient routeways as identified in the High Weald Management Plan. Ivyhouse and Rock Lane would have been historic connections between the farmed countryside and the coast. The character of these lanes needs to be conserved and enhanced in any proposals.

3.4.15 Urban development has begun to encroach visually on Rock Lane in the form of housing developments which extend from the AONB boundary to Rye Road. Other development along the Rock Lane is not as intrusive and is not uncharacteristic of ribbon development in the AONB landscape. Any proposals for development in the Study Area would need to conserve and enhance the character and safe recreational use of the lane.

3.4.16 Ivyhouse Lane has a sunken enclosed rural character despite the caravan park and industrial development in the southern part of the Study Area. Any proposals for development in the Study Area would need to conserve and enhance the character and safe recreational use of the lane.

3.4.17 The carriage track (see Map2) which crosses the area and once gave access to Coghurst Hall, which lies to the north, is also an important historic routeway. This feature should be conserved and enhanced as a recreational routeway as part of any landscape management proposals.

Field and Heath

3.4.17 The structure of the landscape in the Study Area is largely unchanged in terms of field patterns and ghyll woodland belts when compared to the maps of Epoch 1, refer to Map 5. Some field boundaries on the eastern slopes have disappeared. The historic landscape would probably have been a mosaic of grazed meadows and pastures. The intrinsic character is being lost due to lack of grazing and scrub encroachment. Proposals for change in the Study Area should maximise opportunities to restore the open grasslands and flower rich meadow and the historic field patterns. Lack of intervention will see the area become an overgrown wilderness of pioneer woodland which could overwhelm the characteristic mosaic of ghyll woodland, hedges and open meadow.

3.5 Landscape Capacity Assessment

3.5.1 The capacity to accept change for each character area identified on Map 3 is assessed in Table 5, Volume 2.

3.5.2 Using the methodology for assessment outlined in section 2.0 an overall assessment can be made for each character area on the capacity to accept the type

of change being considered. This judgement is made according to the combination of characteristics that contribute to a particular area of landscape.

3.5.3 The capacity of an area to accept change is related to the potential of the area to accommodate development in a particular location without detracting from the overall character of the broader landscape. *In this context the capacity is not a reflection of the scale of potential development.* The capacity evaluation for each character area does not assume that this should have the same capacity across the entire character area.

3.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Reinforcement of the High Weald AONB Landscape

3.6.1 An assessment of potential for landscape enhancement is incorporated into each landscape character area description in Table 5 and is based on the following set of factors:

- the condition of landscape features;
- the need to restore lost landscape features such as hedges and woods;
- the need to restore degraded landscape;
- the need to soften hard urban edges;

3.6.2 The condition of the landscape will be determined by the degree to which it is soundly managed according to the land use. Current management of each character area is described in Table 5 and has been assessed according to:

- whether there is a grazing regime to control invasive weeds and encroaching scrub;
- whether hedges are kept clipped or are grubbed out and replaced with fences;
- whether footpaths are kept open, stiles and gates are maintained;
- unauthorised access is controlled to prevent dumping and tipping; and
- whether copses and tree belts are in active management.

3.6.3 Opportunities for enhancement should build on the multifunctional Green Infrastructure (GI) opportunities offered by the area, refer to Appendix 4 for a definition of GI.

3.6.4 In the context of this study the key functions for green infrastructure in this urban fringe AONB landscape are:

- Maximise opportunities to enhance public access and enjoyment of the countryside.
- Enhance biodiversity
- Conserve cultural heritage
- Contribute to flood management and CO2 reduction
- Agriculture and food production is not currently a function which is fully exploited in this area but there may be opportunities for grazing in some areas as improved land management.

3.7 Potential Development Opportunities within identified character areas

3.7.1 Within the character areas identified as having some capacity for development, zones have been outlined on Map 4 as potential development areas.

3.7.2 An analysis of the development potential and the constraints within the different

character areas within the Study Area has been carried out and is detailed in Table 6. This analysis identifies the sites of greatest landscape potential for development in each character area. This is judged purely from a landscape perspective and is based on the assessment work carried out as a part of this report to identify the capacity of these landscapes to accommodate development.

3.7.3 Designated sites of nature conservation, archaeological and cultural significance have been mapped and taken into consideration in the identification of potential development areas. This would not preclude the need for site specific ecological or archaeological surveys if these sites were to be considered for further study.

3.7.4 The key factors in determining potential development opportunities include the need to contain and mitigate the effects of development and to strengthen the existing landscape structure. It is inevitable however, that major development will result in a change of landscape character and the loss of environmental capital.

3.7.5 The Masterplan Map 4 indicates the extent of the Study Area which could be brought into positive management to enhance the character of the AONB landscape and meet the requirements of the AONB Management Plan. The proposed provision of significant areas of managed landscape as multifunctional green infrastructure should provide opportunities for required compensation.

3.7.6 The landscape mitigation and enhancement would need to be part of a detailed development brief for each area considered suitable for development.

This should incorporate:

- Retention and appropriate management of existing landscape features
- New woodland planting to link with existing
- New tree belts to link with existing
- Creation of multifunctional green infrastructure networks as planting, open space or recreational corridors.
- Enhanced management of areas which are currently poorly managed.

4.0 Conclusions on the capacity of the Study Area to support development

4.0.1 The output from the assessment process is almost completely accounted for in the Volume 2 tables and maps. It is therefore not intended to repeat the content of the tables as these are self explanatory.

4.0.2 This assessment has identified areas within the Study Area which could be considered for development from a landscape perspective. The proposed compensatory landscape management enhancement and mitigation measures outlined in Table 6 and Map 4 could be achieved through land purchase or developer contributions to landowners.

4.0.3 The enhancement of green infrastructure assets need not necessarily require public access to all of the areas identified as having potential for landscape management and enhancement. However if managed access were to be secured to the areas indicated as potential GI on Map 4 that would take pressure off the wider AONB countryside and formalise the current, often damaging, access which is occurring at present. The existing informal open access in much of the Study Area could be formalised and properly managed to resolve the current urban fringe problems which are detracting from the AONB landscape.

5.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Project Brief – September 2013

IVYHOUSE LANE – ROCK LANE STUDY AREA LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Introduction and Purpose of the Assessment

1. Specialist advice is sought on the landscape character and quality, and capacity to absorb development, of the area between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane.
2. Both Councils are seeking to develop the necessary evidence base which will support a policy(ies) for inclusion in their respective Local Plans which will provide for potential development in this area, whilst seeking to conserve and, where possible, enhance the AONB landscape.
3. The specific aim of the Landscape Assessment is:
 - a) To provide a landscape appraisal of the defined Study Area to form a sound basis for considering the landscape setting and landscape capacity that will assist in the consideration of potential residential and employment development within the area in both Hastings and Rother. The Appraisal will build on the previous landscape assessment carried out in this area - "Hastings Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Landscape Assessment, July 2008" which was produced by the County Council Landscape Group
4. Relevant existing planning policy documents will be provided as part of the background to this work.
5. The potential scale of development to be put forward within the respective Council's new Local Plans will in part be informed by this work. Areas to specifically be considered as potential developed areas will be provided as background documentation, but include:
 - a) Ivyhouse Lane Industrial Estate extension in Hastings Borough (employment floorspace)
 - b) Land east of Burgess Road, in both Hastings Borough and Rother District (employment floorspace)
 - c) Land west of Rock Lane in both Hastings Borough and Rother District (housing)

Background

6. The area between Rock Lane and Ivyhouse Lane has been identified by Rother and Hastings Councils as an area with potential for better management of, and access to, the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), providing a valuable amenity for residents of both areas, to be brought forward in association with any potential development.
7. The area under consideration is located north of The Ridge and is bounded by Hastings Cemetery and Ivyhouse Lane to the west, Ivyhouse Industrial Estate to the south, Rock Lane to the east and a public footpath (Guestling 46) to the north. The area falls within the AONB, and lies within the two local authority areas. See attached area location plan
8. By allowing some, new development, coupled with the management of existing and creation of new woodlands and open space this urban fringe area could be

revitalised to provide a good example of coordinated landscape and development planning.

9. The policies of both Councils seeks to ensure that any potential for new residential and employment development in this location is taken forward on the basis of providing a comprehensive approach to the landscape planning of this urban fringe area that allows development aspirations to be met whilst conserving and, where practicable, enhancing the AONB countryside at this location.
10. The delivery of new employment space and new homes is integral to Hastings Borough Council's regeneration agenda. To this end Hastings Council is undertaking to provide *at least* 3,400 net new homes over the Plan period 2011-28, and whilst the emerging Development Management Plan (Submission Version 2013) does not propose any residential allocations in the Study Area the earlier County Council Landscape Assessment (July 2008) produced for Hastings indicated that there is some scope for both residential and employment development within the general area. In terms of employment land requirements, the Council has set itself a target provision of up to 70,000sq.m and in doing so is looking to carry forward two existing employment allocations at Ivyhouse Lane, which would form extensions to the exiting Ivyhouse Lane Industrial Estate (site HOV11 – Ivyhouse Lane northern extension which is proposed for 7,000sq.m and HOV12 – land east of Burgess Road proposed for 1,400sq.m). Whilst the existing industrial estate abuts the Study Area, both of these proposed allocations fall with the Study Area. The outcome of this work could support the inclusion of these allocations within the Development Management Plan.
11. Rother District Council, through their Core Strategy is seeking to provide at least 5,700 new dwellings over the Plan Period (2011-2028). As is the situation with Hastings, the Rother Core Strategy does not include any specific allocations for residential development within the Plan as this is the role of the forthcoming Development and Site Allocations Plan. However, the Core Strategy does break down the overall housing figures between different towns and villages across the District. The Study Area falls within the 'Hastings Fringes' area identified within the Core Strategy and is defined as the 'those areas that are contiguous with the built up area of Hastings extending within Rother District'. The relevant housing target for the Hastings Fringes area is 100-250 dwellings. The relevant extract from the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2013 provides context relating to residential development potential within the Hastings Fringes. In terms of employment development, the Core Strategy identifies 100,000sq.m of employment floorspace over the Plan period (2011-2028), with at least 3,000sq.m identified within the Hastings Fringes area, primarily through the expansion of existing sites. The existing employment floorspace allocation on land east of Burgess Road from the Rother District Local Plan 2006, which seeks 3,000 sq.m of business floorspace falls within the Study Area

Scope and Methodology

12. The Assessment should build on and develop the earlier "Hastings Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Landscape Assessment, July 2008" which was produced by the County Council Landscape Group. It will be assumed that this is in accordance with the latest best practice guidance and with reference to 'Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland' ((2002) unless otherwise advised.

13. The methodology should utilise existing information as much as possible, but will also require a survey of the Study Area. The Assessment should:
 - a) indicate the key defining characteristics - landform, topography, features, condition, views, boundaries
 - b) assess the landscape capacity, quality and key sensitivities, including contribution to the character and setting of the local area, with specific reference its contribution to the AONB
 - c) identify opportunities for the potential for development, along with landscape conservation, mitigation or enhancement which may include, identifying screening measures; the retention of and potential enhancement of woodland areas, for example. Reference should be made to the likely landscape/visual amenity improvements, specifically in relation to the AONB, that could be realised in-conjunction with any potential development,
 - d) conclude on the landscape capacity for development

Output

14. The report should be suitably illustrated and include clear OS-based maps showing landscape characteristics, potential areas of high/low sensitivity to change (and hence potential development areas), areas for landscape management and improvement, whilst also identifying potential important existing, and potential new screening measures.
15. The report should include brief introductory sections explaining the methodology and context/use of background material. It should also relate the assessment to earlier work as referred to above.

Submission and project management

16. Allowance should be made for an inception meeting and a meeting to discuss the draft Report.
17. The project should be carried out as soon as possible and completed by the end of October 2013.
18. Payment dates will be on satisfactory completion of relevant work, and can be phased if required.
19. A submission is required by 13th September 2013. It should indicate the following:
 - a) Proposed methodology
 - b) Timescale
 - c) Details of the personnel and time allocations
 - d) Fee proposal
20. Submission should be sent to Nichola Watters, Senior Planner Rother District Council – nichola.watters@rother.gov.uk

Documents to be provided as part of the commission:

- a) Map of Study Area
- b) Relevant existing planning policy documents in both Hastings and Rother, including relevant proposals maps
- c) Existing landscape assessments in general locality
- d) Details of potential schemes put forward by landowners in the Study Area

Appendix 2 - Evaluation Tables

Table 1 Landscape Quality Evaluation Criteria

Quality	Evaluation Criteria
Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich, distinctive, unique or outstanding natural landscape character • Strong landscape structure, characteristics, patterns and unified combination of landform and land cover; • Good condition – appropriate management for land use and land cover; • Distinct features worthy of conservation; • Unique sense of place; • No detracting features; • Strong sense of tranquillity reflected in extensive 'Most Tranquil Areas' and, • Areas of exceptional remoteness, possibly some wilderness
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very attractive, semi-natural or farmed landscape with strongly distinctive or unusual features; • Strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns and balanced combination of landform and land cover; • Appropriate management for land use and land cover but potentially scope to improve; • Distinct features worthy of conservation; • Strong sense of place; • Occasional detracting features; • Sense of tranquillity, smaller zones of Most Tranquil Areas; and, • Areas of remoteness and possible exceptional remoteness.
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attractive semi-natural or farmed landscape with some distinctive features; • Recognisable landscape structure, characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and land cover are still evident; • Scope to improve management for land use and land cover; • Frequent features worthy of conservation; • Sense of place; • Some detracting features; • No 'most tranquil areas'; and, • Possible areas of remoteness, rarely exceptional remoteness

Quality	Evaluation Criteria
Ordinary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonplace landscape with limited distinctiveness; • Distinguishable landscape structure, characteristic patterns of landform and land cover often masked by land use; • Scope to improve management for land use and land cover; • Some features worthy of conservation; • Frequent detracting features; • No relatively tranquil areas; and, • No areas of remote landscape.
Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dull landscape which has lost most of its natural features; • Weak or degraded landscape structure, characteristic patterns of landform and land cover are often masked by land use; • Mixed land use evident; • Lack of management and intervention has resulted in degradation; • Frequent dominant detracting features; • Disturbed or derelict land requires treatment; • Least tranquil areas; and, • No areas of remote landscape

Sources:

Modification of criteria contained in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2002 and 2013)

Remote areas are determined according to Remoteness at the Local Scale (ESCC 1997)

Tranquil areas are determined according to Tranquil Areas South East Region (CPRE 2005,)

Table 2 Landscape Value Criteria

Value	Typical Criteria	Typical Scale	Typical Examples/Features
Very High	Very attractive and rare Exceptional landscape quality	International or National	World Heritage Site, National Park, AONB or key elements/features within them. Areas of exceptional remoteness (ESCC) Relatively most tranquil area (CPRE) Accessible wildlife areas of international or national value. Providing setting for internationally valued buildings or cultural features
High	Very attractive or attractive scenic quality and in part rare High / good landscape quality.	National, Regional, District or Local	National Park, AONB, Areas of Great Landscape Value (or similar designation) or key elements within them. Remote countryside (ESCC) Accessible wildlife areas of national value. Providing setting for Listed Buildings or nationally important cultural features.
Medium	Typical and commonplace or in part unusual Good / Ordinary landscape quality	Regional, District or Local	Generally undesignated but value expressed through local cultural associations or through demonstrable use. Accessible wildlife areas of local value
Low	Monotonous, degraded or damaged; Ordinary/ Poor landscape quality.	District or Local	Certain individual landscape elements or features may be worthy of conservation and landscape would benefit from restoration or enhancement. Relatively least tranquil areas (CPRE)

Source: Modification of criteria contained in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2002 and 2013)

Table 3 Landscape Character Sensitivity to Change Evaluation Criteria

Sensitivity to Change	Evaluation Criteria
High	A landscape sensitive to proposed type of change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, features or elements.
Moderate	A landscape capable of accepting limited change, of the type proposed, with some effects on landscape character, features or elements.
Low	A landscape capable of accommodating considerable change, of the type proposed, without effects on landscape character, features or elements.

Table 4 Visual Sensitivity

Visual Sensitivity	Evaluation Criteria
High	Views can be gained from visual receptor groups with a High sensitivity to the proposed type of visual change i.e. residential properties, access land, footpaths, informal recreational users. High visitor numbers. Sensitivity will be higher in designated landscapes. Long views across the area with few natural visual barriers i.e. landform, trees, hedges and woods. Usually little scope for mitigating potential visual impacts.
Moderate	Views can be gained from visual receptors with a moderate sensitivity to the proposed type of visual change i.e. recreational establishments, hospitals, schools, community uses, roads, railways and equestrian. Moderate visitor numbers. Some long views, some natural visual barriers to contain development. Usually moderate scope for mitigating potential visual impacts.
Low	Views can be gained from visual receptors with a low sensitivity to the proposed type of visual change i.e. commercial properties, farms and industrial sites. Low visitor numbers. Few long views, contained landscape with frequent visual barriers to contain development. Usually considerable scope for mitigating potential visual impacts.

Appendix 3 – Landscape Character Assessment Sheets
Landscape Character Area – 1a East of Ivyhouse Lane - see map 3

Viewpoint No: 1 and 2
Date: Sept.2013

Location: Adjacent to Stalkhurst Caravan Park

Direction of View: North



Viewpoint 1



Viewpoint 2

Brief description

This is an east facing slope of enclosed landscape with a mix of land-use. A well defined straight tree lined and sunken trackway defines the eastern boundary to the area. The narrow, windy and tree enclosed Ivyhouse Lane is the western boundary. The track is probably the original historic carriage access to Coghurst Hall which lies to the north. The southern part of the area is enclosed by a well managed caravan site to the west and the track to the east. The area to the south is a footpath in a narrow corridor past the caravan site and an open wooded area with little ground cover and young and coppiced trees. The north part of the area is an area of mown meadow enclosed on all sides by tree belts. This is a pleasant informal meadow area with a footpath crossing from south to north. Self seeded trees are forming into some good specimen oaks, ash and birch giving an informal parkland character.

Landcover and landscape elements

farm buildings	walls	woodland (ghyll) x	river	Footpath x
churches	fences	Plantation x	stream	Track x
masts, poles	hedges	isolated trees x	lake	road
Pylons x	banks	tree clumps	reservoir	motorway
industry	shelterbelt	hedgerow trees x	pond	railway
vernacular buildings	field pattern	parkland	canal	Informal Public access x
settlement (type) x	arable	scrub x	waterfall	
built-up	Pasture x	marsh	beach	
mineral working	orchards		dune	
ruins			mudflat	

Landform		
flat	plain	coast
undulating x	rolling lowland x	estuary
rolling	plateau	broad valley x
steep	hills	narrow valley
vertical	scarp	deep gorge
	cliff	

Aesthetic factors				
BALANCE:	harmonious	balanced x	discordant	chaotic
SCALE:	intimate x	small	medium	large
ENCLOSURE:	confined	enclosed x	open	exposed
TEXTURE:	smooth	textured x	rough x	very rough
COLOUR:	monochrome	muted	colourful	garish
DIVERSITY:	uniform	simple	diverse	complex
MOVEMENT:	remote	vacant	peaceful	active
UNITY:	unified	interrupted	fragmented	chaotic
FORM:	straight	angular	curved	sinuous
SECURITY:	comfortable x	safe	unsettling	threatening
STIMULUS:	boring	bland	interesting	invigorating
PLEASURE:	offensive	unpleasant	pleasant x	beautiful

Landscape Condition

This is generally well managed landscape with a sense of wildness around the edges where self sown trees are allowed to establish.

Most Appropriate Management Strategy

Conservation

Meadow and woodland cover tree and hedges. Manage the public footpath as recreational route which serves locals and visitors to the caravan park.

Restoration - No

Reconstruction - No

Ability to Accommodate Change/stability of character/attributes vulnerable to change and which are irreplaceable.

The southern part of the area would have some capacity to accommodate change within well defined boundaries and with landscape buffers to the countryside. The character and quality of the area is not very typical of the High Weald AONB countryside as there are some intrusive elements, however it does not have the urban fringe degraded impression of areas closer to the urban fringe in the study area.

Any change would need to demonstrate conservation and enhancement of the AONB landscape.

There would be limited opportunity in this area for large industrial units but smaller units or some residential development in a strong tree structure. Proposed development should not extend more than half way across the area northwards as this would impact on views across the area from the higher ground to the east.

Visual appraisal

Visual receptors and types

Users of the public footpath, residents and visitors to the caravan site and house, footpaths in the AONB on the opposite ridge and Rye Road / Rock Lane area.

Types of view

Medium to long views into and out of the site to and from Rye Road / Rock Lane ridge.

Visual barriers

Trees and woodland and landform prevent long views into and out of much of the area and in particular the southern part.

Scope to mitigate visual intrusion

The strength of the wooded character of the south parts of the area provide a key characteristic feature upon which to develop a mitigation strategy.

However the northern part of the area has views in from the more rural AONB countryside and would be visually sensitive as the existing wooded landscape does not conceal the area.

Landscape Character Area - 1b Coghurst South – see Map 3

Viewpoint No: 3, 4 and 5 Location: North of Ivyhouse Industrial estate Date: Assessment, Sept.2013

Photos: 4 August 2008 (date of previous assessment) Direction of View: 3 and 4 = North-East, 5 = south



Viewpoint 3



Viewpoint 4



Viewpoint 5

Brief description

North-east sloping and undulating area of vacant land the area is popular for informal recreation and some anti-social activities.

The area is bounded by the Coghurst Hall carriage ride to the west and a significant area of impenetrable ghyll woodland to the east.

The land cover is mainly open grassland and scrub with strong tree features identifying the main topographical features. The southern part of area is dominated by electricity pylons and noise from the adjacent industrial estate. The northern part of the area is identified in the East Sussex County Council Remoteness paper (see reference documents in Volume. 1, Section 2.2) as relatively remote. There are views across the area from Rye Road and Hillcrest School/North Seat on the ridge to the east. Some long views to High Weald channelled down the valley. This part of the study area has an air of dereliction.

Landcover and landscape elements

farm buildings	walls	woodland (broadleaf)	x	river	footpath	
churches	fences	plantation		stream	x track	
masts, poles	hedges	isolated trees	x	lake	road	
pylons	x banks	tree clumps		reservoir	motorway	
industry	shelterbelt	hedgerow trees	x	pond	railway	
vernacular buildings	field pattern	parkland		canal	informal public access	x
settlement	arable	scrub	x	waterfall		
built-up	pasture	marsh		beach		
mineral working	orchards			dune		
ruins				mudflat		

Landform		
flat	plain	coast
undulating	x rolling lowland	estuary
rolling	plateau	broad valley
steep	x hills	narrow valley
vertical	scarp	deep gorge
	cliff	

Aesthetic factors				
BALANCE:	harmonious	balanced	discordant	x chaotic
SCALE:	intimate	small	medium	x large
ENCLOSURE:	confined	enclosed	open	x exposed
TEXTURE:	smooth	textured	rough	x very rough
COLOUR:	monochrome	muted	colourful	x garish
DIVERSITY:	uniform	simple	diverse	x complex
MOVEMENT:	remote	vacant	x peaceful	active
UNITY:	unified	interrupted	fragmented	x chaotic
FORM:	straight	angular	curved	x sinuous
SECURITY:	comfortable	safe	unsettling	x threatening
STIMULUS:	boring	bland	interesting	x invigorating
PLEASURE:	offensive	unpleasant	x pleasant	beautiful

Landscape Condition

Poorly managed – probably no management. Urban fringe and derelict character.

Most Appropriate Management Strategy

Manage woodland cover and grassland. Manage public access and enhance if appropriate. Manage footpath across north of area.

Conservation

Conserve existing valued landscape features and habitats including woodland, ancient woodland and ghyll woodland. Note that woodland, in particular Ancient and ghyll woodland, is a key High Weald AONB characteristic.

Restoration

Where areas have been degraded by intensive use or abuse

Ability to Accommodate Change/stability of character/attributes vulnerable to change and which are irreplaceable.

The area could have some capacity to accommodate change in the southern part of the area only. This would depend upon the long term retention and protection of existing trees and woodland. This would require long term management of these areas to secure stability and safety and notably of ghyll woodland. A 15 metre buffer would need to be allowed for Semi- natural Ancient Woodland and it is suggested that this should be a minimum for Ghyll woodland and associated streams. The extension of Green Infrastructure into the area to link town and countryside would be advisable. The northern boundary of any potential developable area should be defined by the existing ghyll wood and reinforced with new woodland planting. A 15 metre landscape buffer should be retained adjacent to woodland and incorporated as a GI asset.

Note: residential development would put greater pressure on the adjacent AONB landscape and habitats and would not be in character with the adjacent uses on the industrial estate. Any change would need to demonstrate conservation and enhancement of the AONB landscape.

Visual appraisal

Number of visual receptors and types

Sensitive receptors would be users of the informal open space, footpaths and houses on Rock Lane and Rye Road area.

Types of view

Medium to long views out of the site to housing on the ridge to the east and AONB countryside to the north.

Visual barriers

Trees and woodland and rising ground to west east and north, trees and the urban edge to the south.

Scope to mitigate visual intrusion

The strength of the wooded character of the area provides a major characteristic upon which to develop a mitigation strategy. The historic sunken lane on western boundary should be retained as a cultural feature and an access/wildlife corridor.

Landscape Character Area - 2 Woodland North of Ivyhouse Industrial Estate

Viewpoint No: 6
Photo 4 August 2008

Location: North of Burgess Road

Date:

Assessment: Sept 2013
Direction of View: North



Viewpoint 6

Brief description

This is an area of urban fringe valley woodland with heavy and often damaging informal recreational use, e.g. motorbikes, joy riding and dog walking. Larger trees removed under overhead cables to produce willow scrub. The woodland and mature trees are a key characteristic of the wider landscape and are important for visually containing the industrial estate. There are areas of Ghyll woodland along the northern spine of the area as a characteristic feature of the AONB. The northern part of the area is identified in the East Sussex County Council Remoteness paper (see reference documents in Volume. 1, Section 2.2) as relatively remote.

Otherwise the area has few AONB characteristics. Semi natural ancient woodland extends in fingers along the streams in a small patch on the east side and over much of the northern part of the area. The woodland in the southern part of the area is more recent, but does support some significant

mature trees.

Landcover and landscape elements

farm buildings	walls	woodland (broadleaf) x	river	footpath x
Churches	fences	plantation	stream x	track
masts, poles	hedges	isolated trees	lake	road
pylons x	banks	tree clumps	reservoir	motorway
industry	shelterbelt	hedgerow trees	pond	railway
vernacular buildings	field pattern	parkland	canal	informal access x
settlement (urban fringe)	arable	scrub x	waterfall	
built-up	pasture	marsh	beach	
mineral working	orchards		dune	
ruins			mudflat	

Landform		
flat	plain	coast
undulating x	rolling lowland	estuary
rolling	plateau	broad valley
steep x	hills	narrow valley
vertical	scarp	deep gorge
	cliff	

Aesthetic factors				
BALANCE:	harmonious	balanced	discordant x	chaotic
SCALE:	intimate	small x	medium	large
ENCLOSURE:	confined	enclosed x	open	exposed
TEXTURE:	smooth	textured x	rough	very rough
COLOUR:	monochrome	muted	colourful x	garish
DIVERSITY:	uniform	simple	diverse x	complex
MOVEMENT:	remote	vacant x	peaceful	active
UNITY:	unified	interrupted	fragmented x	chaotic
FORM:	straight	angular	curved x	sinuous
SECURITY:	comfortable	safe	unsettling x	threatening
STIMULUS:	boring	bland x	interesting	invigorating
PLEASURE:	offensive	unpleasant x	pleasant	beautiful

Landscape Condition

Poorly managed and damaged urban fringe woodland, some in ghyll valleys.

Most Appropriate Management Strategy

Manage woodland to typify ghylls. Management should address urban fringe pressures and access control or management.

Conservation

Conserve mature trees and ghyll woodland. Manage mature specimen trees to ensure long term stability.

Restoration

Damaged features eroded ground and broken trees. Remove unsightly rubbish debris and dumping.

Ability to Accommodate Change/stability of character/attributes vulnerable to change and which are irreplaceable.

Ability to accommodate change is restricted over much of the area due to the presence of mature trees, woodland and in particular ancient woodlands, ghylls and the associated streams. However there is an opportunity to conserve and enhance the AONB landscape. These woodlands are a key characteristic of the wider Ivyhouse Valley landscape and need to be brought into positive management for long term conservation.

Any change would need to demonstrate conservation and enhancement of the AONB landscape.

The southern part of the area immediately adjacent to Burgess Road estate could provide an opportunity to extend the built development into this area. There would be limited opportunity in this area for large industrial units due to the need to conserve significant mature trees and tree groups. Smaller units in a defined area could potentially be accommodated with the provision that positive management of the remaining woodland and mature trees can be secured.

Visual appraisal

Number of visual receptors and types

Houses on the ridge to the east at Rye Road and Rock Lane overlook the area. There are glimpsed views out of the area to the pylons and roofs of the industrial estate.

Types of view

Very limited views out from within the woodland.

Visual barriers

Trees and location at the bottom of the valley.

Scope to mitigate visual intrusion

If development was proposed, a strategic plan for retaining mature trees and woodland should be developed and implemented as a part of the urban fringe management.

Viewpoint No: 11 Location: West of Rock Lane Date: Sept.2103

Direction of View: South -West



Viewpoint 11

Brief description

A west sloping site of paddocks and well defined tree belts and ghyll woodland and some “urban fringe” properties and activities such as pylons and horseyculture. Much of the area has long views to High Weald AONB as well to the ridge to the east, the urban area and the cemetery on the west ridge. The western part of the area is identified in the East Sussex County Council Remoteness paper (see reference documents in Volume. 1, Section 2.2) as relatively remote.

Landcover and landscape elements

farm buildings	walls	woodland (broadleaf) x	river	Footpath X
churches	fences x	plantation	stream	track
masts, poles	hedges x	isolated trees	lake	road
pylons x	banks	tree clumps	reservoir	motorway
industry	shelterbelt	hedgerow trees	pond	railway
vernacular buildings	field pattern x	parkland	canal	
settlement (urban fringe) x	arable	scrub x	waterfall	
built-up	Pasture X	marsh	beach	
mineral working	orchards		dune	
ruins			mudflat	

Landform		
flat		coast
undulating	x	rolling lowland
rolling		broad valley
steep	x	narrow valley
vertical		deep gorge
		cliff

Aesthetic factors					
BALANCE:	harmonious	balanced	x	discordant	chaotic
SCALE:	intimate	small		medium	x
ENCLOSURE:	confined	enclosed		open	x
TEXTURE:	smooth	textured		rough	x
COLOUR:	monochrome	muted		colourful	x
DIVERSITY:	uniform	simple		diverse	x
MOVEMENT:	remote	vacant	x	peaceful	active
UNITY:	unified	interrupted		fragmented	x
FORM:	straight	x	angular	curved	sinuous
SECURITY:	comfortable	safe		unsettling	x
STIMULUS:	boring	bland		interesting	x
PLEASURE:	offensive	unpleasant	x	pleasant	beautiful

Landscape Condition

The area is generally well managed as horse paddocks, exercise area and stables.

Most Appropriate Management Strategy

Manage pasture as grassland. Avoid further introduction of fences to divide up into more paddocks and other horse related clutter. Manage footpath access as key path crossing area.

Conservation

Retain existing trees and ghyll woodland.

Ability to Accommodate Change/stability of character/attributes vulnerable to change and which are irreplaceable.

The area would have very low capacity for change due to the open views and potential adverse effect upon the AONB countryside to north and west. Landscape character is more typical in character and quality of AONB countryside than the rest of the study area.

Visual appraisal

Number of visual receptors and types

Houses on Rock Lane area, footpaths and much of the ridge to the west including the cemetery

Types of view

Open long views.

Visual barriers

Trees, scrub, hedges and landform for more distant views towards the wider High Weald.

Scope to mitigate visual intrusion

There would be very little scope because of slopes and long views and typical mosaic of woodland and pasture which should be retained.

Landscape Character Area - 3b – West of Rock Lane (South)

Viewpoint No: 7, 8, 9, 10
2008

Location: West of Rock Lane

Date: 4 August
2008

Direction of View: East, East and South-East



Viewpoint 7



Viewpoint 8



Viewpoint 9



Viewpoint 10

Brief description

West facing valley slopes of typical urban fringe character, embracing a caravan site, rough grassland, scrub and views of the urban edge and notably Ivyhouse industrial estate. Whilst the caravan site is well managed, in gardening terms, the main valley slopes have an air of dereliction due to lack of positive management as pasture or other rural landuse. Views from this side of the valley are more extensive than they are from the western side. The ghyll woodlands which follow streams running into the valley are a key characteristic of this are and of the High Weald AONB landscape.

The northern part of the area is identified in the East Sussex County Council Remoteness paper (see reference documents in Volume. 1, Section 2.2) as relatively remote.

Landcover and landscape elements

farm buildings	walls	woodland (broadleaf) x	river	footpath
churches	fences	plantation	stream	track
masts, poles	hedges x	isolated trees	lake	road
pylons x	banks	tree clumps	reservoir	motorway
industry	shelterbelt	hedgerow trees x	pond	railway
vernacular buildings	field pattern x	parkland	canal	
settlement (urban fringe)	arable	scrub x	waterfall	
built-up	pasture x	marsh	beach	
mineral working	orchards		dune	
ruins			mudflat	

Landform		
flat	plain	coast
undulating x	rolling lowland	estuary
rolling	plateau	broad valley
Steep in places x	hills	narrow valley
vertical	scarp	deep gorge
	cliff	

Aesthetic factors				
BALANCE:	harmonious	balanced	discordant x	chaotic
SCALE:	intimate	small	medium x	large
ENCLOSURE:	confined	enclosed	open x	exposed x
TEXTURE:	smooth	textured	rough x	very rough
COLOUR:	monochrome	muted	colourful x	garish
DIVERSITY:	uniform	simple	diverse x	complex
MOVEMENT:	remote	vacant x	peaceful	active
UNITY:	unified	interrupted	fragmented x	chaotic
FORM:	straight	angular x	curved	sinuous
SECURITY:	comfortable	safe	unsettling x	threatening
STIMULUS:	boring	bland x	interesting	invigorating
PLEASURE:	offensive	unpleasant x	pleasant	beautiful

Landscape Condition

The poor quality landscape management does not do justice to the valley setting within the AONB, with its occasional long views to the High Weald countryside. The encroaching trees and scrub detract from the mosaic of green fields and woodland which are characteristic of the better managed parts of the Hastings ridge landscape.

Apart from the remnants of ghyll woodland the historic field boundaries have been lost over the years

Most Appropriate Management Strategy

Manage existing trees, restore historic hedges and better manage the open grassland. Management and formalisation of established public access.

Conservation

Conserve Ghyll woodland and other Ancient semi natural woodland.

Ability to Accommodate Change/stability of character/attributes vulnerable to change and which are irreplaceable.

The part of this area north of Spindlewood Holiday Park would not have any capacity to accept development apart from an area closely associated with existing housing development on Rock Lane. The area is open to long views from the high ground and AONB landscape to the west and most notably the cemetery. The northern part of the area is rural in character and more closely related to the countryside to the north than the urban fringe areas to the south. There could be limited potential for development in the southern part of the area. This area is considered in the context of the existing built up area on the slopes to the east extending up to Rye Road. This would require a strong landscape structure building on the existing ghyll woodlands. Particular care would be needed on the upper slopes. Any development brief would need to consider the eastern slopes of the valley in the wider landscape context and create a strong landscape and spatial structure. The caravan site could have ability to accommodate change/development as it has lost most of its key landscape characteristics and there are opportunities for enhancement. However the existing open field and pond area are historic features which contribute to the character of the local landscape and would need to be retained as landscape assets.

Any change would need to demonstrate conservation and enhancement of the AONB landscape.

There would be limited if any opportunity in this area for industrial development due to the residential character of the neighbouring urban areas. Some medium density residential development may be acceptable building on the existing mosaic of field patterns and woodland and in a strong tree structure.

Visual appraisal

Number of visual receptors and types

Users of footpaths, cemetery and some houses.

Types of view

To other side of valley, fairly open and some long views to AONB countryside in the north.

Visual barriers

Trees and hedges and landform to the west but there are longer views to the wider AONB countryside and Brede Valley.

Scope to mitigate visual intrusion

There is modest scope to restructure the landscape on this east side of the valley to create pockets of high density development within open space and well managed woodland. The site would need to be considered within the wider context of the valley landscape. The caravan site already has significant mitigation measures in place, which could form the mitigation framework for development, but its eastern section is in particular need of tree structure enhancement to reduce long views in. However, when seen from the countryside to the north any development and indeed the caravan site must be seen in the general context of The Ridge.

Appendix 4 – Definitions of Green Infrastructure

The Extract below is from the Draft East Sussex County Council GI Study due to be published by Dec 2013.

The Landscape & Biodiversity Working Group

The Landscape and Biodiversity Working Group was established to take forward the actions from the East Sussex Environment Strategy as outlined under Environmental Principle 4 in this document.

In particular the key action: *We will develop a countywide approach to green infrastructure that supports the management and restoration of the county's landscape and the habitats its supports by March 2013.*

At the first LBWG meeting it was agreed that a separate workshop should be held to bring together all of the interested parties in the county to discuss Green Infrastructure. It was acknowledged that GI assets are not confined to electoral boundaries and some are at a landscape scale which can cross several districts and counties, for example the South Downs and the main river valleys. For this reason it was considered that representative officers from West Sussex should be invited to attend as well as officers from organisations with land ownership and specialist environmental interests in East Sussex.

The attendees included officers from the following organisations:

- East Sussex County Council
- West Sussex County Council
- Rother District Council
- Hastings Borough Council
- Eastbourne Borough Council
- Wealden District Council
- Lewes District Council
- The High Weald Unit
- The Environment Agency
- Natural England
- The Forestry Commission
- The Woodland Trust
- Sussex Wildlife Trust

Subsequent meetings have brought on board representatives from the South Downs National Park.

The key issues identified by the workshop were as follows:

1. There are various definitions of GI available in reports and studies many of these refer to the more urban context for areas with large conurbations, heavy industry and high projected growth. This approach could not be applied very accurately to the rural county of East Sussex where the largest conurbations are concentrated on the coast as seaside towns. The group needed to agree on a definition for GI in the East Sussex context.
2. The district and borough councils have historically mapped data for spatial planning studies of informal and formal recreation provision (PPG17) and to identify need. Previous guidance for providing open space was based on the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) standards which are now outdated. Unless informal recreation studies were carried out these studies did not identify accessible natural green space or the potential multifunctionality of spaces.

3. It was agreed that there was a need to have a central place where the many layers of data, which should inform GI strategies, could be held. This could include all of the wildlife, landscape and heritage designations amongst other things. If there was a central database with consistent mapping for this type of information that would be a great help to districts and boroughs in producing their GI strategies.
4. The need to agree a common definition and agreement regarding the range of functions which GI can provide for East Sussex.
5. A need to identify how the various partners with an interest in GI can contribute and work together to inform GI strategies in the County and across the boundaries.

Agreed outcomes & actions

1. The definition should be taken from the South East Green Infrastructure Partnership guidance.
2. A pilot project for mapping should be instigated by ESCC ideally using the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre AS the districts and boroughs and other organisations have agreements with the SxBRC.
3. Wealden District Council had bid for funding from Natural England towards their GI strategy which was in preparation to support the local plan.
4. East Sussex County Council would work with Wealden District to produce a 'How to' guide to developing GI strategies at County and District levels.
5. NE encouraged ESCC to bid for funding to develop a strategic high level strategy. This would aim to ensure a consistent approach across the county for mapping baseline assets and functionality. This would also address cross boundary issues.

GI Terminology

GI is a network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect by villages towns and cities. Individually these elements are GI assets, and the roles that these assets play are GI functions. When appropriately planned, designed and managed, the assets and functions have the potential to deliver a wide range of benefits - from providing sustainable transport links to mitigating and adapting the effects of climate change.

Landscape Institute Position Statement (March 2013)

Green Infrastructure Assets

GI assets range from country parks lakes and woodlands to urban interventions such as green roofs and street trees. They can be specific sites at the local level or broader environmental features at the landscape scale within and between rural and urban areas such as wetlands, moors and mountain ranges (Landscape Institute, 2013).

Green Infrastructure Functions

GI functions are the roles that assets can play if planned, designed and managed in a way that is sensitive to, and includes provision for, natural features and ecosystem services. They may have obvious primary functions, but each asset can perform different functions simultaneously – a concept known as multifunctionality. For example, street trees add aesthetic quality to an urban area, but will also reduce urban heat island effects, mitigate wind chill and turbulence and increase biodiversity (Landscape Institute, 2013).

Definition of Green Infrastructure

The South East Green Infrastructure Partnership (SEGIP) describes GI for urban areas and larger villages (Box below), and is good for the district and site level

definition.

South East GI Partnership Definition

For the purposes of spatial planning the term green infrastructure (GI) relates to the active planning and management of sub-regional networks of multi-functional open space. These networks should be managed and designed to support biodiversity and wider quality of life, particularly in areas undergoing large scale change.

The following areas can form part of networks of GI:

- parks and gardens – including urban parks, country parks and formal gardens;
- natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces – including woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons and meadows), wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas (e.g. cliffs, quarries and pits);
- green corridors – including river and canal banks, cycleways, and rights of way;
- outdoor sports facilities (with natural or artificial surfaces, either publicly or privately owned) including tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pitches, golf courses, athletics tracks, school and other institutional playing fields, and other outdoor sports areas;
- amenity greenspace (most commonly, but not exclusively, in housing areas) – including informal recreation spaces, greenspaces in and around housing, domestic gardens and village greens;
- provision for children and teenagers – including play areas, skateboard parks, outdoor basketball hoops, and other informal areas (e.g. 'hanging out' areas, teenager shelters);
- allotments, community gardens, and city (urban) farms;
- accessible countryside in urban fringe areas;
- river and canal corridors;
- green roofs and walls.

As the SEGIP definition does not fully address the GI opportunities in the wider countryside which are more relevant to the rural county of East Sussex, a more strategic definition is that in the Natural Environment White Paper, *The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature* (Box XX).

Natural Environment White Paper Definition

Green Infrastructure of a term used to refer to the living network of green spaces, water and other environmental features in both urban and rural areas. It is often used in an urban context to cover benefits provided by trees, parks, gardens, road verges, allotments, cemeteries, woodlands, rivers and wetlands.

Green infrastructure is also relevant in a rural context where it might refer to the use of farmland, woodland, wetlands or other natural features to provide services such as flood protection, carbon storage or water purification. Green infrastructure maintains critical ecological links between town and country.