

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT REVIEW

FINAL VERSION
SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

December 2017

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Urban Practitioners

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SECTION A
**SETTING THE
SCENE**

1

INTRODUCTION





Fig 1 View across the Wealden Greensand

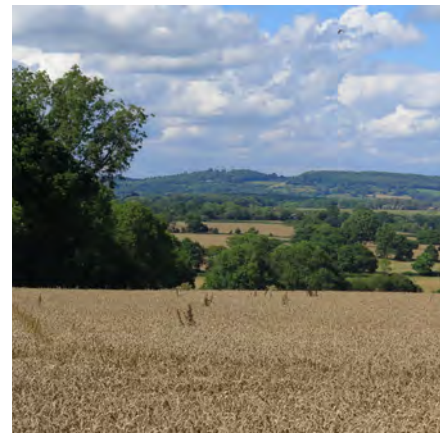


Fig2 Photos of a number of heritage assets across the District

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out a comprehensive and integrated Historic Environment Review for Sevenoaks District Council to form the basis for conservation and heritage local planning in the District and to provide guidance to be followed in the future.
- 1.1.2 The study is in two parts and this document sets out Part 1 of the study. Part 1 draws together the existing information and guidance regarding the District's historic environment, identifies heritage themes and assesses the significance of heritage assets. Part 2 is policy focused and makes recommendations for draft policies to be included in the emerging Local Plan. It also sets a framework for the positive conservation and engagement of the District's heritage assets.
- 1.1.3 The historic environment is a valuable asset which can contribute to wider strategic objectives such as economic development, urban regeneration, high quality urban design and planning, tourism, leisure, education and sustainability. This review aims to assess the heritage assets in the District to better inform these diverse objectives.
- 1.1.4 The principal focus of this review is on physical heritage, for example archaeology, landscape, settlements, buildings, monuments, parks and open spaces. It also identifies more hidden characteristics which help to form the District's local distinctiveness and which make a significant contribution to its heritage.
- 1.1.5 The historic environment review has been commissioned in parallel by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council. The research phase and stage 1 report have been prepared in tandem. It is important to note that in some cases, there is a significant overlap in the historic themes (see chapter 3) which reinforces the merits of a joint study, albeit with separate Tunbridge Wells / Sevenoaks specific outputs.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

- 1.2.1 The objectives of Part 1 are:
- To draw together sources of information and data from the existing evidence base to provide a holistic overview of the District's historic environment;
 - To assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their setting;
 - To identify the factors and local historic environment themes which have influenced the heritage of the District;
 - To make recommendations regarding any areas where the evidence base could be strengthened and would benefit from further research;
 - To identify opportunities for raising awareness of the role of the historic environment in social, economic and environmental well-being;
 - To assess the contribution made by the settings of heritage assets and their scope for enhancement; and
 - To predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets may be discovered in the future.

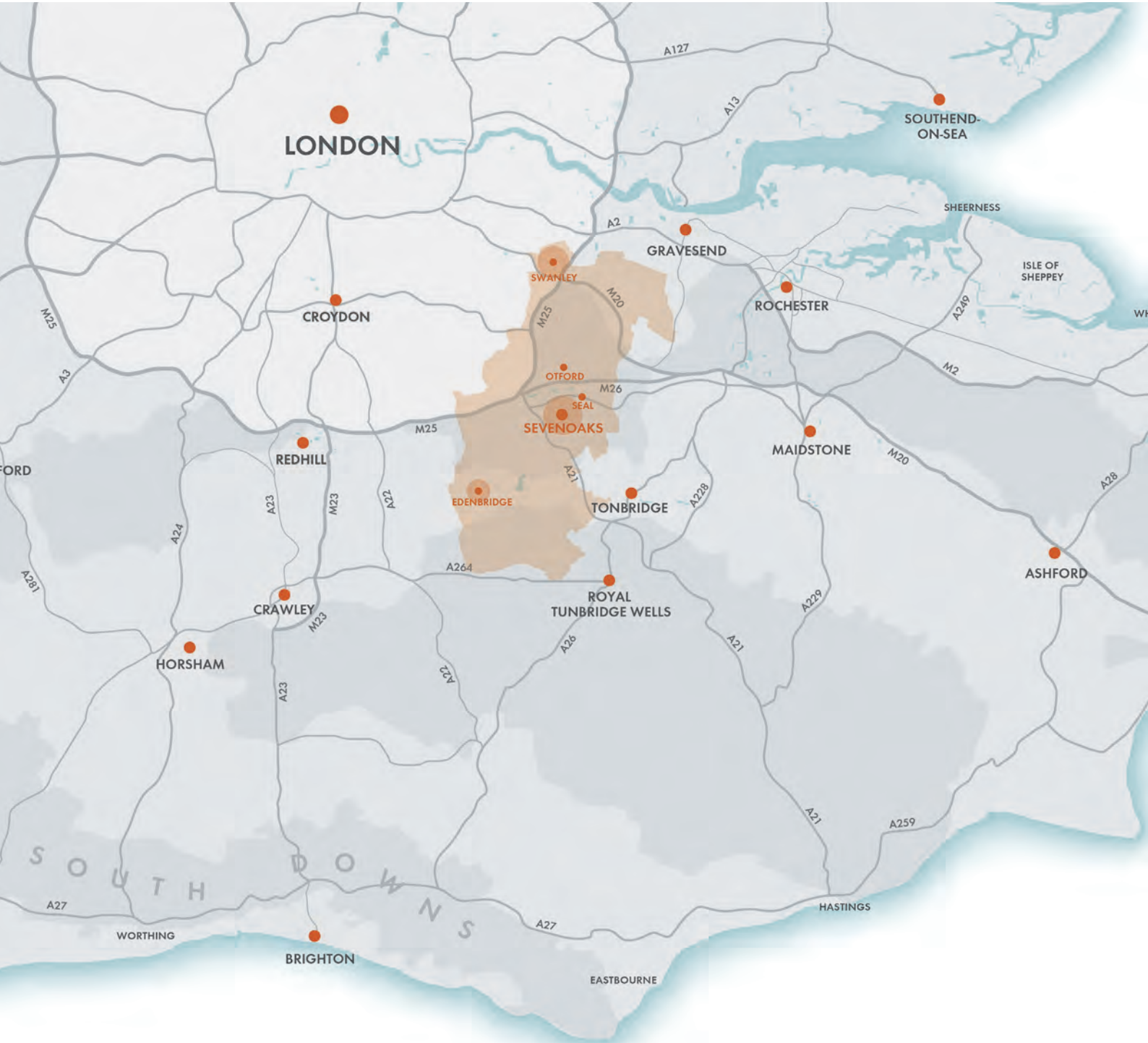


Fig 3 Sevenoaks in context

1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE DISTRICT

- 1.3.1 Sevenoaks District is located within Kent County in South East England, bordering Greater London to the north west, Surrey to the west and East Sussex to the south west. The District is well-connected by rail and road to London and the coast.
- 1.3.2 The District comprises small towns, suburbs and countryside, lying to the south east of London. The principal towns are Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge. The rest of the District is set within large swathes of countryside, punctuated by small rural villages. Ancient settlements, such as Eynsford and Shoreham, follow the route of the River Darent which spurred the growth and prosperity of many of these small villages.
- 1.3.3 The District is home to a wealth of heritage assets, including around 1,700 listed buildings. The well-known Grade I Listed Hever Castle and Knole House stand out, but there are many gems, such as the Riverhill Himalayan Gardens and the historic villages that are home to numerous statutory listed buildings.
- 1.3.4 This rich and diverse built heritage is set within a stunning medieval natural landscape of ancient woodland and farmland. A large proportion of Sevenoaks District lies within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the southern tip lies within the High Weald AONB. The myriad of historic parks and gardens encompass aesthetic, botanic, scientific and social heritage and form an important part of the areas' landscape heritage character.
- 1.3.5 Sevenoaks has long appealed to commuters, attracted by regular rail services into London, and the pressures of population growth, infrastructure, housing and employment all have a bearing on the stewardship of the historic environment. 93% of Sevenoaks District is designated as Green Belt, which plays an important role in preserving the setting and special character of historic towns.

1.4 NATIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

- 1.4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in 2012 and sets out recommendations for inclusion of the historic environment in local plan making. The study assists in meeting these recommendations to sustain and enhance heritage assets, to put them to viable uses, and to consider the wider social, cultural and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring. The NPPF also states the importance of recognising the potential for heritage assets to inform new development and contribute to better places.

Good Practice Advice in Planning - The Historic Environment in Local Plans (2015)

- 1.4.1 The document sets out guidance for local authorities where the evidence base for historic environment is weak. Local authorities are encouraged to undertake detailed characterisation work, visual impact assessments, to seek the views of the local community about what they value about the historic environment, and to carry out archaeological assessment, where appropriate. GPA2 and 3 also provide additional national guidance.



Fig 4 Front cover of the NPPF report

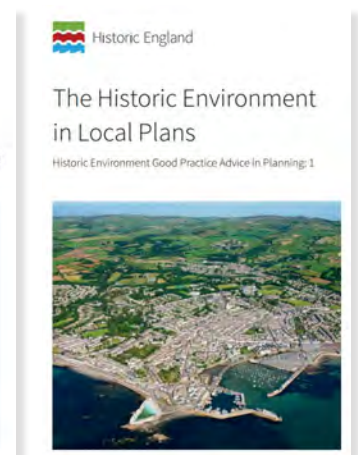


Fig 5 Historic Environment in Local Plans cover (2015)

1.5 LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

Core Strategy DPD (2011)

- 1.5.1 Sevenoaks Core Strategy was adopted in 2011 as part of the District's Local Development Framework. The document sets out a clear vision, spatial objectives and planning policy guidance for the district including a target of 3,300 new dwellings between 2006 and 2026. The Core Strategy includes a summary of the principal characteristics which includes reference to heritage and landscape issues in paragraphs 2.02 and 2.03.
- 1.5.2 "Conserving and enhancing the high quality of the natural and built environment" is specifically identified as an issue and the vision statement incorporates a specific statement in this regard, with greatest emphasis on designated areas.
- 1.5.3 The key diagram reflects the significance of AONB and Green Belt designations which cover a significant proportion of the district as a whole. Relevant policies include Policy LO 1 – Distribution of Development defines a robust approach to the management of development extents and expansion. Supported by a sequence of settlement specific policies, guidance on the distribution of development is consolidated in Policy LO8 – Countryside rural economy which seeks to protect the Green Belt and maintain the special character of the landscape and biodiversity.
- 1.5.4 Policy SP 1 - Design of New Development and Conservation states that "[a]ll new development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is situated. Account should be taken of guidance adopted by the Council in the form of Kent Design, local Character Area Assessments, Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, Village Design Statements and Parish Plans. In rural areas account should

be taken of guidance in the Countryside Assessment and AONB Management Plans." Guidance also indicates that "The District's heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains, ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, historic buildings, landscapes and outstanding views will be protected and enhanced."

Allocations and Development Management Plan (2015)

- 1.5.5 Sevenoaks District Council adopted the Allocations and Development Management Plan in 2015. The document provides more detailed planning guidance in support of the strategic policy position which is established in the Core Strategy.
- 1.5.6 Key policies include Policy EN1 - Design Principles which is supplemented by reference to non-statutory guidance such as Supplementary Planning Documents and AONB Management Plans. Paragraphs 2.11 to 2.34 set out a picture of the heritage assets in the District and provide a background for three relevant planning policy statements - Policy EN3 - Demolition in Conservation Areas, Policy EN4 - Heritage Assets and Policy EN5 – Landscape, again with relevant reference to key character-based evidence base documents and supplementary guidance.
- 1.5.7 Subsequent chapters provide policies which strengthen the strategic position in relation to the distribution of development in relation to the existing settlement hierarchy and constraints to development with respect to the Green Belt. Positive statements are also set out with respect to Green Infrastructure opportunities including walking and cycling opportunities.



Fig 6 Core Strategy (2011)

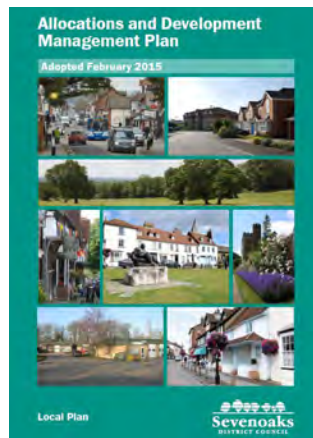


Fig 7 Allocations and Development Management Plan (2015)

Local Plan - Issues and Options consultation (2017)

- 1.5.8 Sevenoaks District Council published an Issues and Options report in Summer 2017 which explores the context for the next iteration of the Local Plan.
- 1.5.9 Chapter 2 describes the character of the District with particular reference to the rural character of the area and the importance of heritage assets and their settings. The third component of the Vision for the period from 2015 to 2035 focuses on nature and the environment which includes the historic environment. Objective 2 seeks to promote well designed, safe places and safeguard and enhance the District's distinctive high quality natural and built environments.
- 1.5.10 Chapter 5 describes the overall strategic approach to the district, noting a need for 12,400 new homes, 11.6ha of employment land and 32,000 sqm of retail floorspace. Protection of the Green Belt continues to be a major priority for the Council and is therefore a major constraint for the delivery of these targets, particularly the housing element.

1.5.11 Chapter 7 expands the second objective in the emerging Local Plan. Para 7.4 to 7.9 consider the diverse character and historic qualities of the landscape, highlighting the importance of conserving and enhancing landscape character and opportunities for positive place-making and green infrastructure. Para 7.28 to 7.31 make explicit reference to heritage and conservation and cross-references the historic environment review. There is a clear aspiration to achieve development which is compatible with its setting, and to protect key heritage assets, AONBs, key views, gaps between settlements, village greens, parkland, woodland and other natural features including ancient woodland.

1.5.12 Six geographical place-making areas (including logical sub-areas) have been identified for policy purposes. These have been generated with reference to: shared characteristics, heritage or landscape designations; predominant use of similar infrastructure, services and facilities; and/or shared local issues or demographics. The Issues and Options report sets out the existing characteristics and background of the physical environment and communities, and defines the priority issues for each, including the potential quantum of housing to be delivered. The areas are:

- Upper Darent Corridor (four sub-areas);
- Darent Valley (five sub-areas);
- North-east (five sub-areas);
- North-west (six sub-areas);
- Sevenoaks and Surrounds (five sub-areas); and
- South (six sub-areas).

1.6 DEFINING TERMS

Heritage Assets

- 1.6.1 Heritage Assets are defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) as:

“A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).”¹

- 1.6.2 Designated heritage assets are:

“A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.”

- 1.6.3 Designated assets only include a proportion of the total heritage assets in Sevenoaks and 66% of records in the Historic Environment Record relate to non-designated sites. In order to deliver the objectives of the Heritage Strategy it is necessary to fully incorporate the non-designated assets into the life of the Borough. The online National Planning Practice Guidance defines non-designated assets as follows:

“Local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets. These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as ‘locally listed.’

¹ Department for Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework: Annex 2 Glossary*, 2012.

A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage interest for their significance to be a material consideration in the planning process.”

- 1.6.4 For sites of archaeological interest, non-designated assets includes those site that are “demonstrably of equivalent significance” to scheduled monuments, and therefore considered subject to the same policies (NPPF paragraph 139). They also include a much larger category of lesser heritage significance, although still subject to the same conservation objective (NPPG paragraph 040).

- 1.6.5 The Draft Local List Supplementary Planning Document (2016) sets out the criteria and process by which locally notable historic assets can be nominated for inclusion on the District's Local List. These are buildings or structures that make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the District. For consideration for inclusion on the Local List, the asset must comply with at least one of the criteria listed below, "provided that its historic form and



Fig 8 Draft Local List SPD (2016)

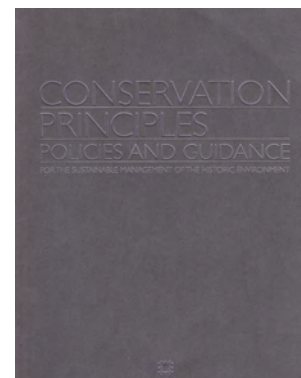


Fig 9 Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance

qualities have not been seriously eroded by unsympathetic alteration²:

- Demonstrate significant architectural and artistic interest;
- Demonstrate significant historic interest; or
- Contribute positively to the townscape character.

Significance

1.6.6 The significance of identified assets has been assessed drawing on advice from Historic England, set out in the Conservation Principles (2005) publication which gives guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment. The report includes four value groups that can contribute to significance:

- Evidential value - yielding primary evidence of the past including archaeological potential.
- Historical value - showing connections between places and past people, events or aspects of life.
- Aesthetic value - the way people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- Communal value - the meanings of a place for people and their collective memories of it.

Vulnerability

1.6.7 Historic England's annual Heritage at Risk Register identifies sites considered to be at greater risk of being lost as a result of decay, neglect, obsolescence or inappropriate development.

1.6.8 Heritage assets may be vulnerable because their significance is hidden from view, for example buildings in remote locations or concealed behind layers of later development. The resulting lack of knowledge or lack of understanding may lead to harmful change or neglect.

1.6.9 **Decay** - heritage assets may be at risk where the cost of upkeep (or repair) approaches or outweighs the end value of the site – the “conservation deficit”. Vacancy, especially long-term vacancy, poses risk of security (theft, vandalism, arson). Unnoticed deterioration may be caused by leaking roofs, blocked gutters, wet or dry rot, hastened by inadequate ventilation. Decay may result in the loss of historic fabric: doors and windows, roof timbers or floors, internal or external features.

1.6.10 **Neglect** - heritage assets may be vulnerable where owners do not take responsibility for the condition of their sites. Field monuments (such as prehistoric burial barrows) are often fragile earthworks that are particularly vulnerable to animal and ploughing damage.

1.6.11 **Obsolescence** - the loss of ability of a building to fulfil its original function, for example the capacity for traditional farm buildings to accommodate modern agricultural machinery. Another example is the redundancy of military sites or railway infrastructure.

1.6.12 **Inappropriate development** - heritage significance may be eroded or lost altogether through the removal of architectural features, removal of fabric, loss of floor plan or associated structures. Development may harm the setting of a heritage asset, reducing the ability to appreciate its significance. It could also harm the economic viability, by subdivision of a site (such as the loss of farmland) or reducing its amenity. The impact of new development is a general area of vulnerability across the historic environment in the District.

1.6.13 Vulnerability can be tackled through a variety of methods, for example compiling a buildings at risk register (perhaps with the help of parish councils), developing strategies for action, providing expertise and contacts to support willing owners, monitoring changes and championing success stories.

² Sevenoaks District Council, *Draft Local List Supplementary Planning Document*, 2016, p. 2.

Guidance

- 1.6.14 For the purpose of this report, the term “guidance” is used to denote any policy statements in statutory publications, or non-statutory documents which communicate principles, objectives or criteria in relation to historic environment or town planning. These documents have varying degrees of status, with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) forming the primary position with which local policies should accord. The Historic Environment Review forms part of the evidence base for the preparation of the emerging Local Plan. In that context, findings and recommendations in this report will be used to inform and refine guidance in the Local Plan.

Opportunities

- 1.6.15 The term opportunities refers to initiatives, interventions or guidance which could raise awareness of the role of the historic environment, strengthen the evidence base or establish a more effective policy position from a heritage perspective. Opportunities and associated recommendations are a key outcome for the Historic Environment Review project.

1.7 APPROACH AND METHOD

Overview

- 1.7.1 A primary objective of the study is to evaluate the existing sources of information to provide a comprehensive overview of the state of the historic environment in Sevenoaks. The team has undertaken an assessment of the following documents:

National

- National Planning Policy Framework and Guidance
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans (Historic England, 2015)
- Statutory list, Historic England
- Heritage at Risk Register, Historic England
- Heritage Counts (Historic England, 2016)

Sub-regional

- Kent Downs AONB Farmstead Guidance
- Kent Design SPD, Landscape Design Handbook
- Kent Historic Towns Survey (2003)
- Historic Landscape Characterisation studies and heritage strategies from adjacent Boroughs
- Archaeology SPG3: Archaeology in Historic Towns
- Strategic Stone Study: A Building Stone Atlas of Kent (English Heritage, 2003)
- South East Farmsteads Character Statement (Historic England)

Local

- Conservation areas appraisals
 - Draft Local List and Local List SPD (2017)
 - Landscape Character Assessment (2017)
- 1.7.2 Examples of heritage assets are sourced using the Historic Environment Record (HER) held by Kent County Council. The HER is a database of

all aspects of the county's heritage and therefore constitutes an important source of information for this review. In addition, information has been gathered from a wide range of secondary sources, including books and architectural guides, Ordnance Survey mapping available from the National Library of Scotland, and online specialist websites e.g. the Wealden Iron Research Group.

- 1.7.3 The desktop study has helped inform a historic overview of the District and its currently identified heritage assets. These assets, along with their associated condition, significance and vulnerability, are presented within thematic groupings in Section B. The study also gives opportunities relating to each heritage theme for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

Unidentified heritage assets

- 1.7.4 Heritage assets are still being discovered and their significance re-evaluated. Some assets have been hidden behind more recent development. Seemingly ordinary buildings may encase much older, and historically significant, interiors. Below-ground archaeological remains are by definition an unexplored heritage asset. Furthermore, new information or survey work may inform understanding about the significance of asset types and periods, including the rarity (national or local) of surviving assets. Examples would be investigations on elements of industrial archaeology, building technologies or modern architecture.
- 1.7.5 The likelihood of discovering additional heritage assets is probably greatest in remote or publicly inaccessible locations, where the significance of the asset is not evident from the public domain.

- 1.7.6 The Borough's Farmstead Assessment Guidance 2016 used historic Ordnance Survey maps to identify significant survival rates of pre-20th century farm buildings, suggesting high potential for further study. Vernacular buildings in general and properties in private ownership are also likely to benefit from more research.

- 1.7.7 A systematic programme of research and documentation is recommended. Historic England has provided guidance for local authorities and communities on how to identify and record local heritage assets. Priority should be given to areas that are poorly documented such as rural parishes, conservation areas without up-to-date appraisals or places under pressure for change.

Structure

- 1.7.8 The report is divided into three sections. Section A summarises the historic development of the District and provides the historic and landscape context for the state of the historic environment today.
- 1.7.9 Section B presents heritage themes that tell the story of the District in greater detail. The heritage themes are divided between overall geographical themes and cultural, economic and social activities. For each theme, the following aspects are covered:
- Historic overview
 - Heritage assets
 - Current condition
 - Significance
 - Vulnerability
 - Existing guidance; and
 - Opportunities.
- 1.7.10 Section C concludes outlining recommendations and next steps which will be covered in greater detail in Part 2 of the review.



2

CONTEXT

A grayscale photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a field of tall, textured grasses. Behind it is a dense line of bushes. In the middle ground, a large, open field is visible, with a few small structures or animals in the distance. The background consists of rolling hills and a line of trees under a cloudy sky.



Fig 10 View across the Wealden Greensand

HISTORIC EVOLUTION

2.1 OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT

2.1.1 Kent is celebrated as the Garden of England, famous for its orchards, hopfields, soft fruit and more recently its vineyards. Much of the landscape is of exceptional visual quality and the county is rich in historic buildings and settlements. Kent also has a diverse cultural and literary inheritance.

2.1.2 The Kent Weald and western part of the County is of particular scenic interest, much of it falling within nationally designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. 61% of Sevenoaks District is in the Kent Downs AONB. The area is also characterised by tracts of ancient woodland, hedgerows, historic droeways and long distance footpaths including the Pilgrims Way.

2.1.3 Across the District, as at neighbouring Tunbridge Wells, the historic environment is the equal of this landscape and the two are often interrelated. Oast houses, for example, are an emblem of the countryside. The long history of habitation has also ensured a considerable archaeological legacy. The District has prehistoric origins evidenced by the discovery of Palaeolithic handaxes from across the District, as well as important Mesolithic sites at Shoreham, Chevening and Lullingstone, Bronze Age barrows and an early iron age hillfort at Squerryes Park (a Scheduled Monument).

2.1.4 Sevenoaks District has a concentration of highly graded listed buildings, including fine medieval churches and some of the nation's distinguished country properties at Knole, Hever Castle, Penshurst Place and Chiddingstone. The District has many associations with famous personages, from Anne Boleyn and Clive of India to Sir Winston Churchill.

2.1.5 Many of the older villages are conservation areas, some with Roman or Anglo-Saxon origins. The heart of Sevenoaks itself, a former highway town, is of special interest with a high survival of timber-framed buildings. A market town since the 13th century, it enjoyed the patronage of archbishops after the Reformation in the 1450s.

2.1.6 Sevenoaks, unusually situated on the top of a hill, is notable for long views down the High Street to the North Downs. At the southern end of the High Street, the juxtaposition of the Sevenoaks School buildings, a fine array of frontages and beyond it, with the Grade I Listed Knole set deep in parkland creates a memorable ensemble. The growth of the railways after the 1860s spurred commuter housing at the valley bottom in Sevenoaks, north of the historic town centre, as well as small-scale industry.

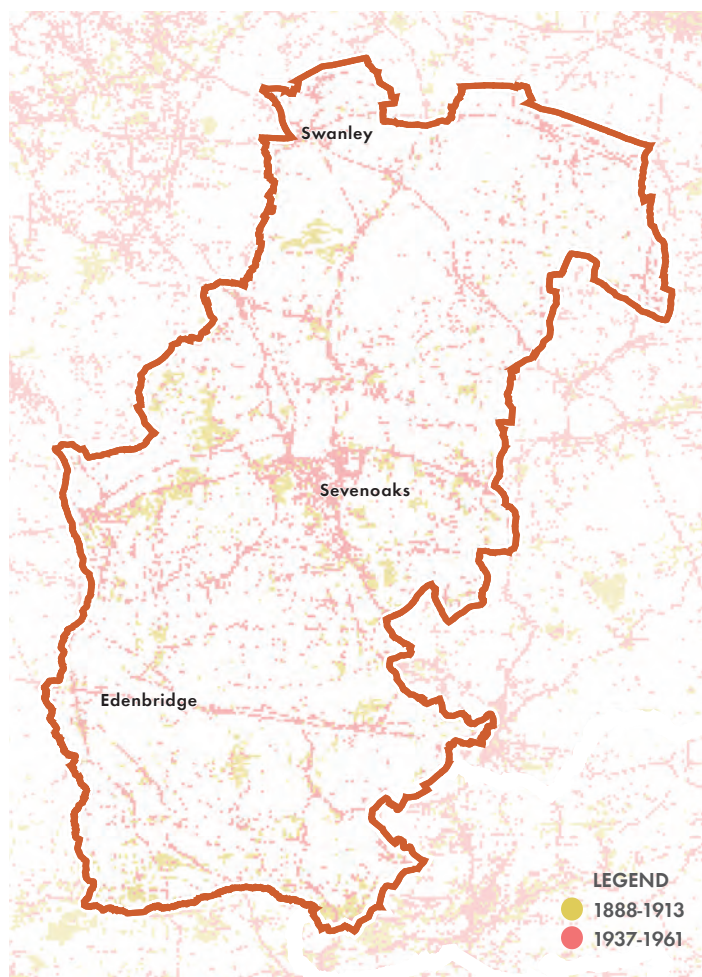


Fig 11 Map of historic evolution in the District

- 2.1.7 Lullingstone Roman Villa with mausoleum and granary in the Darent Valley near Eynsford is one of seventy or so Roman villas in Kent, and is also some of earliest evidence of Christianity. It is a Scheduled Monument. Edenbridge lies on the Roman road to Lewes and is another well-preserved market town, part of which is designated as a Conservation Area.
- 2.1.8 Otford stands at the crossing of the River Darent and the site of a Saxon battle; there are also Roman remains and the remnants of a Tudor palace which are designated as Scheduled Monuments. The Archbishop of Canterbury had

a manor and estate at Otford from the 8th century and a fragment of the long-ruined Archbishops Palace survives (Grade II Listed).

- 2.1.9 Kent has a concentration of medieval timber-framed buildings, especially in the Weald where rural industries of iron smelting and wool making once flourished. Penshurst is the District's outstanding medieval complex and includes the Grade I Listed 14th century hall built by Sir John de Pulteney, former Lord Mayor of London.

- 2.1.10 Chartwell, Churchill's home, enjoys an outstanding panorama across the woods of

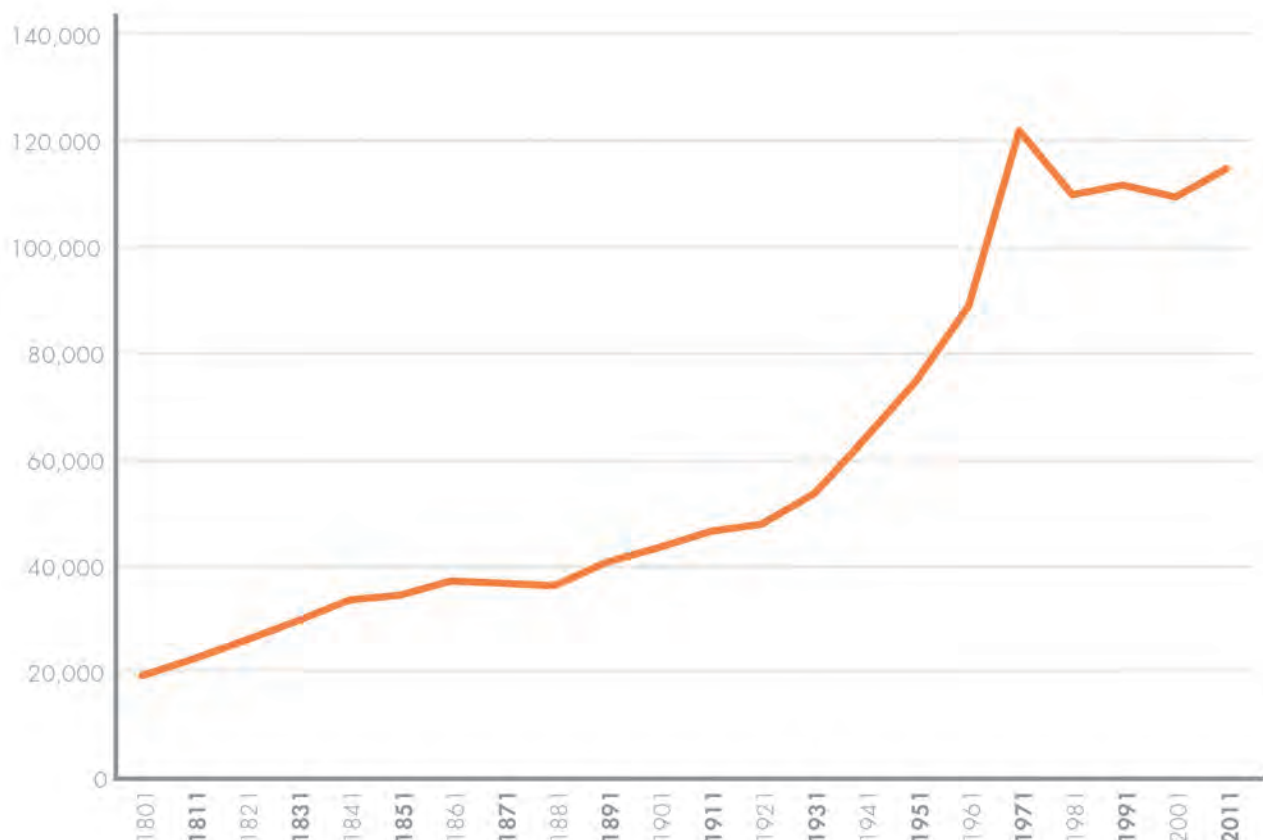


Fig 12 Graph showing population change over time for the District

Data source: A Vision of Britain

the Low Weald. The gardens at Chartwell are exceptional, as are the Italian gardens at Hever Castle and attract many visitors. Both are Registered Historic Parks and Gardens.

- 2.1.11 Since the end of the Second World War the outward spread of London metropolis has been held in check and much of the District is designated green belt. New Ash Green (celebrating its half centenary in 2017) in Sevenoaks District was a notable experiment in small town planning, famous for the design of the SPAN houses and masterminded by Eric Lyons, one of England's leading domestic architects and landscape design by Ivor Cunningham.

Traditional building materials

- 2.1.12 Kentish ragstone from the band of Lower Greensand is the most familiar limestone and has been used for many higher status buildings in the area and assumed particular popularity after the 18th century. Flint and chalk are also found in places. Flint was used for rough walling and road making, especially in the Downs as it was heavy to transport. Much more widespread than these materials however is brick, a defining characteristic of the area. Sevenoaks yellow stock brick is particularly characteristic and was being produced from the late 19th century. Some of the finest brickwork in England is manifest in the red brick from the clays of the Weald alongside Kentish tilework including tile hanging. These complement the earlier tradition of timber framed building, with the Wealden farmhouse being a distinctive building type. Timber frames (usually oak) were often protected by lime render, weatherboarding or tile hanging. Across the District there are isolated examples of thatched houses and farm buildings, mostly thatched in wheat reed. An example is Thatched Barn at Hoath Corner near Chiddingstone Hoath.

Sevenoaks District today

- 2.1.13 The many and diverse designated heritage assets in the District are generally in sound condition. However the wider historic environment is under pressure, as buildings are enlarged or converted to new uses, as towns and villages cope with changing demographics, as traffic increases and as new patterns of agriculture take shape. There is a need for further research on the extent and condition of non-designated heritage assets. The opportunity is there to back up the regulatory mechanisms with positive strategies for understanding, promoting and managing the District's exceptional legacy.

Fig 13 Historic photographs and maps
(Source: Kent Photo Archives)



Eynsford bridge and mill, date unknown



Knole House in 1933



1799 Sevenoaks



Cows in Westerham



Sevenoaks in 1869 (Source: NLS)



Sevenoaks Town Centre, date unknown



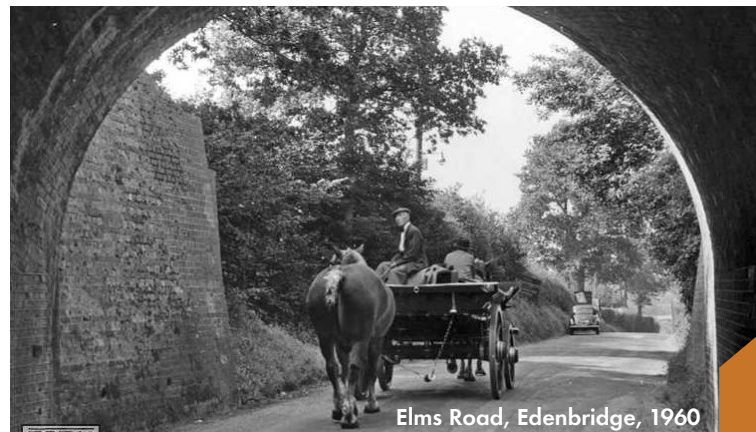
Bomb damage, Shoreham in 1943



Hever Castle, 1947



Edenbridge gas works, 1930



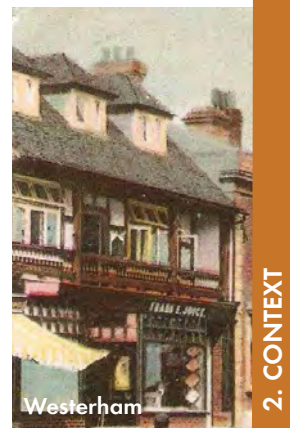
Elms Road, Edenbridge, 1960



Edenbridge High Street in 1901



Knole House, 1946



Westerham

LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.2 GEOLOGY AND NATIONAL CHARACTER AREAS

Geology

- 2.2.1 The map opposite shows a clear pattern of the underlying geology that has strongly influenced the distinctive landform seen across the District, which is summarised in the Landscape Character Assessment (2017). Superficial deposits are from the Quaternary age and may include floodplain and stream channel deposits. Bedrock includes all pre quaternary deposits.
- 2.2.2 The geology runs in horizontal bands - the northern part of the District is underlain by White Chalk, characterised by dry valleys and a steep scarp to the south. Below this is a band of Lower Chalk and a band of mudstone, sandstone and limestone. This forms the upper Darent, a gentle valley landform. The Lower Greensand is below and forms another scarp topography. The area still maintains a large amount of ancient woodland.
- 2.2.3 Wealden beds underlie the Low and High Weald. The Low Weald is characterised by heavy clay soils and the High Weald is dominated by fissured sandrock with a network of gill streams.
- 2.2.4 The geology of the District has shaped the historic built environment through the use of local materials such as Kentish ragstone from the Lower Greensand and Wealden clay for brickmaking after the 15th century.

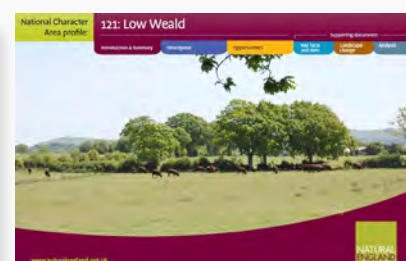
National Character Areas

- 2.2.3 The district-level landscape character areas broadly correlate with the National Character Areas (NCAs) as defined by Natural England. These are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries.
- 2.2.4 The tip of the District to the north is covered by the North Kent Plain. Below it is the North Downs, which forms part of the Kent Downs AONB, which is covered in more detail on the following pages. The Wealden Greensand forms the central band in the District. Below is the Low Weald NCA, which is characterised by broad low-lying clay vale which is predominantly agricultural. The High Weald is the southernmost character area, part of which is also designated as an AONB.
- 2.2.5 The NCAs are used to characterise the landscape theme, set out in more detail in Chapter 3.

Relevant documents



Landscape Character Assessment (2017)



NCA Profiles

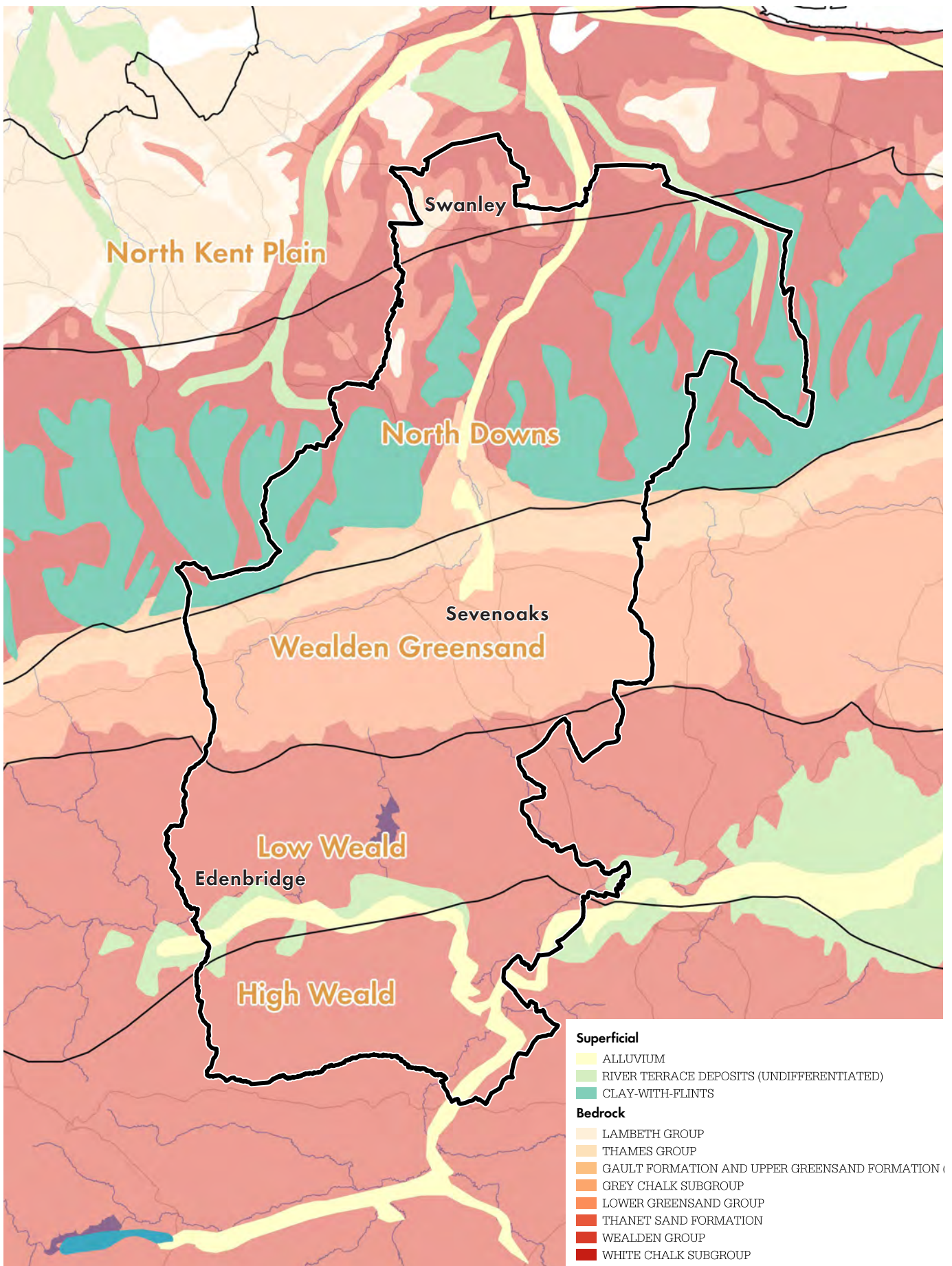


Fig 14 Geology and National Character Areas

LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.3 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

2.3.1 The historic landscape character has been mapped through the Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation (2001) and is shown opposite. The term 'historic landscapes' refers to all landscapes that have been shaped by human interaction. The evolution of the historic landscape character is set out in the Landscape Character Assessment (2017) and is summarised below.

Prehistoric and Roman

2.3.2 The first evidence of humans interacting with the landscape dates to Palaeolithic times, evidenced by the discovery of handaxes and flint fragments dating to this time from across the District. In the Mesolithic period, hunter-gatherer communities settled in the Low Weald and as technology and societies developed, neolithic hunter-gatherers began to clear woodland, particularly in the High Weald. The Romans settled along the river valleys of the Darent and it is likely that as part of their settlement Romano-British communities cleared woodland, cultivated land and raised a range of crops and animals, greatly influencing the landscape.

Early medieval

2.3.3 Transhumance, wood-pasture dens and north-south drove roads were key human influences on the landscape at this time, the woodland being a vital resource for seasonal pannage and rural industries since at least the Iron Age. Animals were driven to the forests in the Weald, as well as areas of downland, to feed on acorns. By the 11th century, the High Weald was the most densely wooded part of the country.

Medieval

2.3.4 By the medieval period, woodland clearance was common, and much of the Low Weald was a patchwork of assart fields and woodlands with dispersed manorial farms and market settlements. The District today is greatly influenced by the medieval period; the dispersed

pattern of farms, hamlets and villages are a key characteristic of the landscape.

2.3.5 The nutrient-poor soils of the Greensand meant that it was not as extensively cleared for agriculture. Instead, the woodlands were used for coppicing hazel, oak, hornbeam and chestnut. Field patterns typically reflect the irregularity of ancient enclosure, with regular Parliamentary-type enclosure generally restricted to heathland. Areas of heathland were later converted to agricultural land or forestry plantations, or secondary woodland. Common land, where people had collective grazing or harvesting rights, is typically in this central area of the District. The charts (wooded commons) provided the backdrop for many of the landscaped parks in the District.

Post-medieval

2.3.6 There is evidence of iron working in the Weald for over 2,000 years and activities included digging ore, cutting wood, charcoal making and transporting raw materials and products. Reminders of the iron industry are seen through hammer and furnace ponds and the grand houses owned by foundry owners. Ship-building was also a significant industry at this time.

2.3.7 During the agricultural revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries, areas of woodland and pasture and have been reclaimed for arable land use. As industrialisation increased, woodland became more unmanaged as the iron industry moved to the coal fields. Agriculture and hop picking dominated.

19th century

2.3.8 The arrival of the railways in the mid-19th century spurred development of the towns and brought further building and the growth of country houses and estates. The District expanded with early commuting and improved transport links created a demand for middle-class commuter housing. The railways also opened up the London market for hops, fruit and poultry.

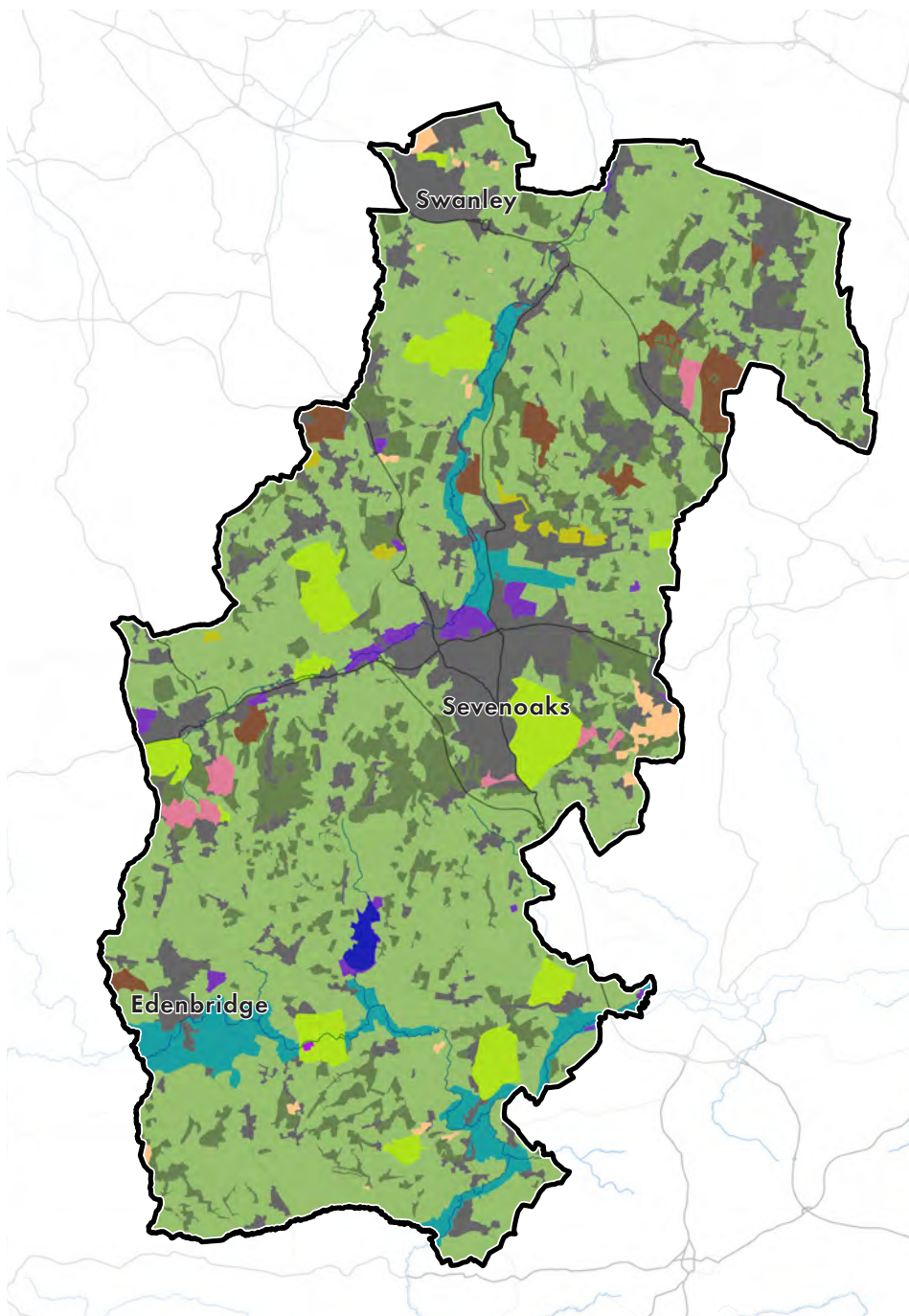


Fig 15 Historic landscape character

LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.4 LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION

Landscape Character Areas

- 2.4.1 The District's historic landscape attributes have contributed to the landscape character evident today. This is set out in more detail in the Landscape Character Assessment (2017), which identifies a number of District-level character areas that convey the diversity of the landscape.
- 2.4.2 The main District-level character area types are as follows:
- Settled Downs
 - Downs
 - Wooded Downs
 - Settled Farmland
 - Scarp Landscapes
 - Scarp Foot Farmland
 - Chalk Valleys
 - Clay Valleys
 - Greensand Parks & Farmlands
 - Cherts
 - Low Weald
 - Wealden River Valleys
 - High Weald

Relevant documents



Landscape Character Assessment (2017)

1. Settled Downs

- 1a: West Kingsdown Settled Downs
- 1b: Fawkham and Hartley Settled Downs
- 1c: Ash-cum-Ridley Settled Downs

2. Downs

- 2a: Farningham Downs
- 2b: Eynsford and Horton Kirby Downs

3. Wooded Downs

- 3a: Knockholt and Halstead Wooded Downs
- 3b: East Hill Wooded Downs

4. Settled Farmland

- 4a: Hextable Settled Farmland
- 4b: Crockenhill Settled Farmland

5. Scarp Landscapes

- 5a: Chevening Scarp
- 5b: Kemsing Scarp

6. Scarp Foot Farmland

- 6a: Chevening Scarp Foot Farmland
- 6b: Kemsing Scarp Foot Farmland

7. Chalk Valleys

- 7a: Darent Valley - South Darent to Farningham
- 7b: Darent Valley - Farningham to Oford

8. Clay Valleys

- 8a: Upper Darent Valley - West
- 8b: Upper Darent Valley - East

9. Greensand Parks & Farmlands

- 9a: Westerham to Sundridge Parks and Farmlands
- 9b: Seal Parks and Farmlands
- 9c: Knole Park

10. Cherts

- 10a: Westerham and Brasted Chart
- 10b: Sevenoaks Western Chart
- 10c: Sevenoaks Eastern Chart

11. Low Weald

- 11a: Sevenoaks Low Weald
- 11b: Leigh Low Weald

12. Wealden River Valleys

- 12a: Eden Valley
- 12b: Upper Medway Valley

13. High Weald

- 13a: Cowden to Chiddingstone High Weald
- 13b: Chiddingstone Hoath Plateau
- 13c: Penshurst and Leigh High Weald
- 13d: Fordcombe High Weald

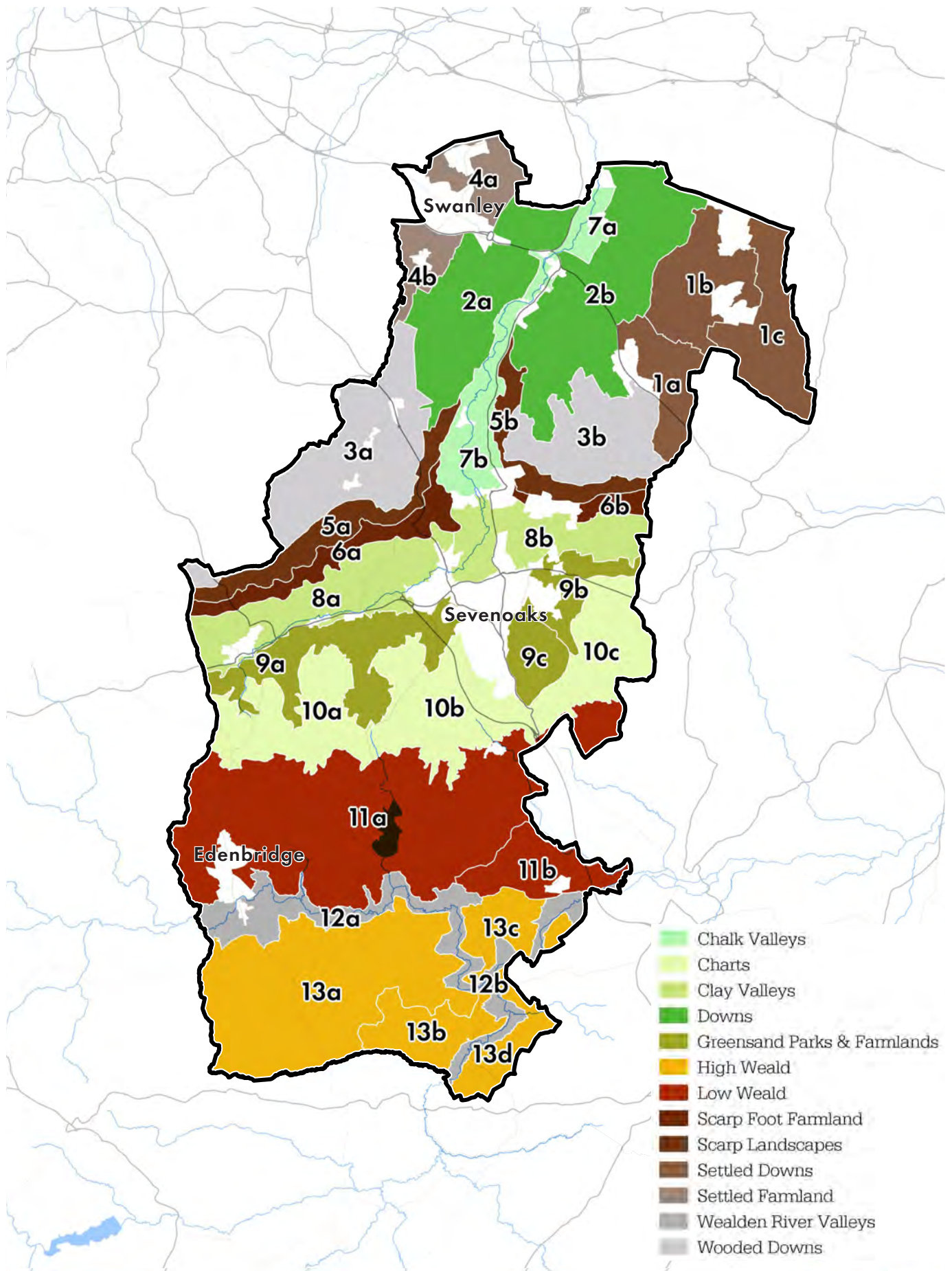


Fig 16 Landscape character areas today

LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.5 OVERVIEW OF LANDSCAPE ASSETS

Landscape overview

- 2.5.1 The District has a great number of landscape assets including a myriad of ancient woodland, commons, grass downland, agricultural and rural settlement which has created a diverse landscape character. Some areas are characterised by historic parkland and estate farmlands, such as at Knole.
- 2.5.2 A large portion of the District lies within the Kent Downs AONB. Part of the District to the south falls within the High Weald AONB.

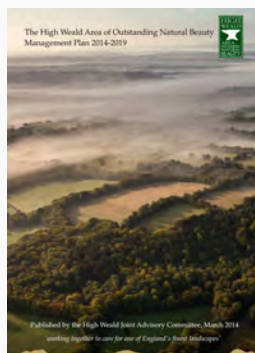
Green Belt

- 2.5.3 93% of Sevenoaks District is designated as Green Belt, which plays an important role in preserving the setting and special character of historic towns and villages.
- 2.5.4 The Development in the Green Belt SPD (2015) sets out detailed guidance for planning permission for development located in the Green Belt. One of the principal historic characteristics of the Green Belt is its openness.

Relevant documents



Landscape Character Assessment (2017)



High Weald AONB Management Plan 2014-2019



Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019



Development in the Green Belt SPD, 2015

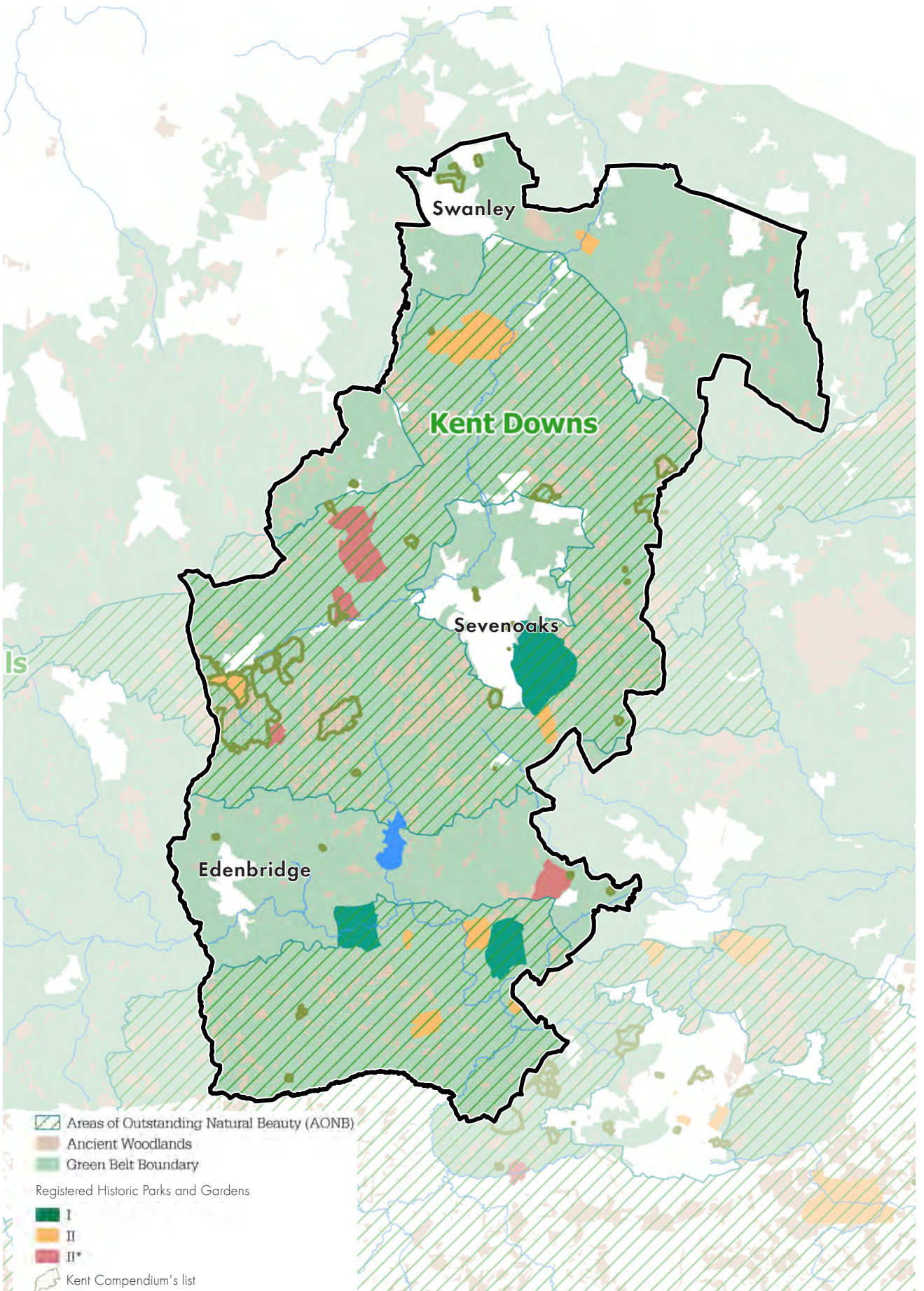


Fig 17 Landscape assets

HERITAGE ASSETS

2.6 HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

2.6.1 Within the landscape there are many parks and gardens which are heritage assets in their own right. Sevenoaks District is home to 17 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, significantly more than other adjacent boroughs. This is largely because of the woodland which has provided a stunning backdrop for medieval and designed parklands.

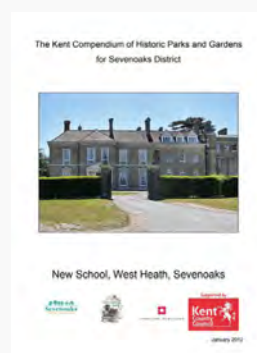
Local historic parks and gardens

2.6.2 In addition, the Review of The Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens for Sevenoaks District identifies a further 37 sites of local interest and value. Examples are Bradbourne Lake Park, Emmets Garden at Ide Hill and Henden Manor historic garden.

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

1. Hever Castle
2. Penshurst Place
3. Knole
4. Squerries Court
5. Chevening Park
6. Chartwell
7. Stonewall Park
8. Riverhill House
9. Franks Hall
10. Combe Bank
11. Chiddingstone Castle
12. Redleaf
13. Hall Place
14. Japanese Garden, Bitchet Wood
15. Long Barn
16. Swaylands
17. Lullingstone Castle

Relevant documents



The Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens for Sevenoaks District and dossiers (2011-2013)

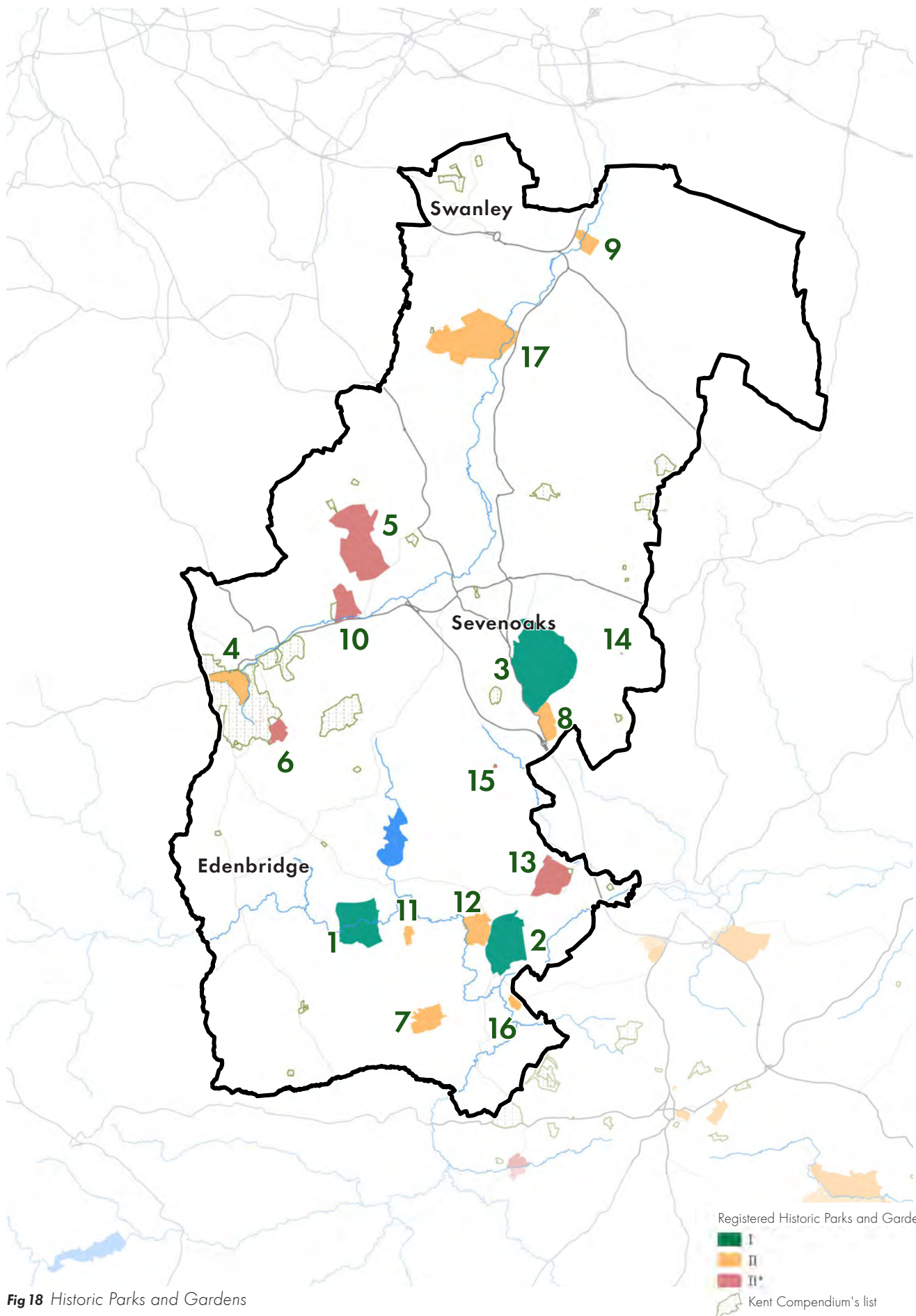


Fig 18 Historic Parks and Gardens

HERITAGE ASSETS

2.7 ARCHAEOLOGY

Non-designated archaeological assets

- 2.7.1 Sevenoaks District contains archaeological sites and discoveries dating back to the Palaeolithic period, covering all periods since that time. These contribute greatly to the character and sense of place for the District and are important components of the historic environment. Archaeological heritage assets may include standing remains and built structures as well as buried remains.
- 2.7.2 Archaeological sites and finds are documented within Kent County Council's Historic Environment Record. The record can provide information on the number and type of archaeological heritage assets for each parish in the Borough. The database is continually growing and new records are added from various sources, including archaeological work as part of the planning and development control process, original research by local societies and accidental discoveries.

Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAPs)

- 2.7.3 Sites of Archaeological Potential represent areas where there is a reasonable probability for the survival of archaeological remains. They are intended as an easy flagging mechanism to guide the District Council but do not offer a comprehensive picture of archaeological heritage assets in the District. Within the AAPs are areas with no real potential due to past development. Similarly, outside the AAPs there may be areas that do still have potential. Kent County Council is currently undergoing a review of AAPs in the Borough.

Scheduled Monuments

- 2.7.4 These are archaeological sites which are considered to be nationally significant. Scheduling is the legal protection specifically of archaeological sites, which derives authority from the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979. There are 25 scheduled monuments that lie partially or wholly in the District. These are listed and mapped opposite.

List of Scheduled Monuments

1. Roman Granary west of St Mary's Church
- 2: Two milestones at West Kingsdown
- 3: Fort Halstead
- 4: Milestone on Pilgrim's Way
- 5: Chapel, Maplescombe
- 6: St Thomas a Becket's Well
- 7: Otford Roman Villa
- 8: Montreal Park obelisk
- 9: Lullingstone Castle gateway
- 10: Eynsford Bridge
- 11: Camp at Squerryes Park
- 12: Otford Palace
- 13: Eynsford Castle
- 14: Lullingstone Roman Villa and Saxon church
- 15: Bowl barrow at Otford Mount
- 16: Bowl barrow 25m east of the Mount
- 17: Bowl barrow in Millpond Wood
- 18: A Romano-british villa and Iron Age farmstead
- 19: Medieval moated site, Filston Hall
- 20: Medieval moated site, Devils Den.
- 21: Medieval moated site, Great Barnett's
- 22: Linear earthwork 230m south west of Covers Farm
- 23: Medieval moated site and fishpond, Franks Hall
- 24: Fort Farningham, a London Mobilisation Centre
- 25: Remains of medieval church and churchyard at Halstead Place

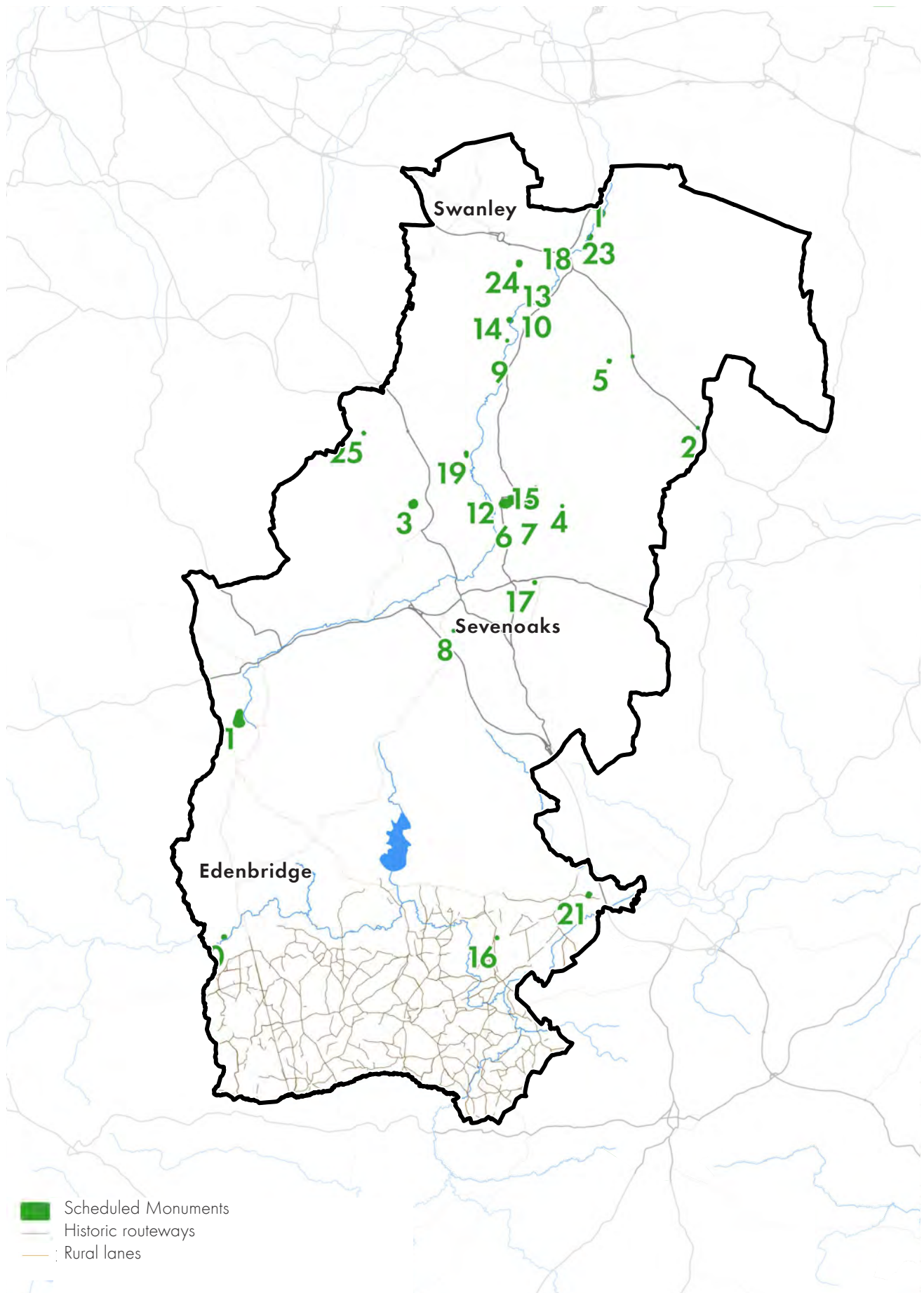


Fig 19 Scheduled Monuments and ancient routes
 (NB: Data for historic routeways is for the High Weald only)

HERITAGE ASSETS

2.8 CONSERVATION AREAS

2.8.1 Sevenoaks District has 42 designated Conservation Areas, defined as areas of special architectural or historic character. They vary in size and type, from Sevenoaks and Westerham town centres, to the historic core of villages and hamlets which are often focused around a cluster of listed buildings. Other features that contribute to the special character of Conservation Areas include open green space, trees, historic street patterns and the strength of relationship between the historic settlement and its rural landscape. Farningham was the first to be designated in 1969.

Conservation Area Appraisals

2.8.2 Appraisals of Conservation Areas are undertaken to ensure a positive management of change to the historic environment which is sustainable and which protects the special character and local distinctiveness of the District's conservation areas. Figure 20 shows when the last appraisal was undertaken for each conservation area in the District.

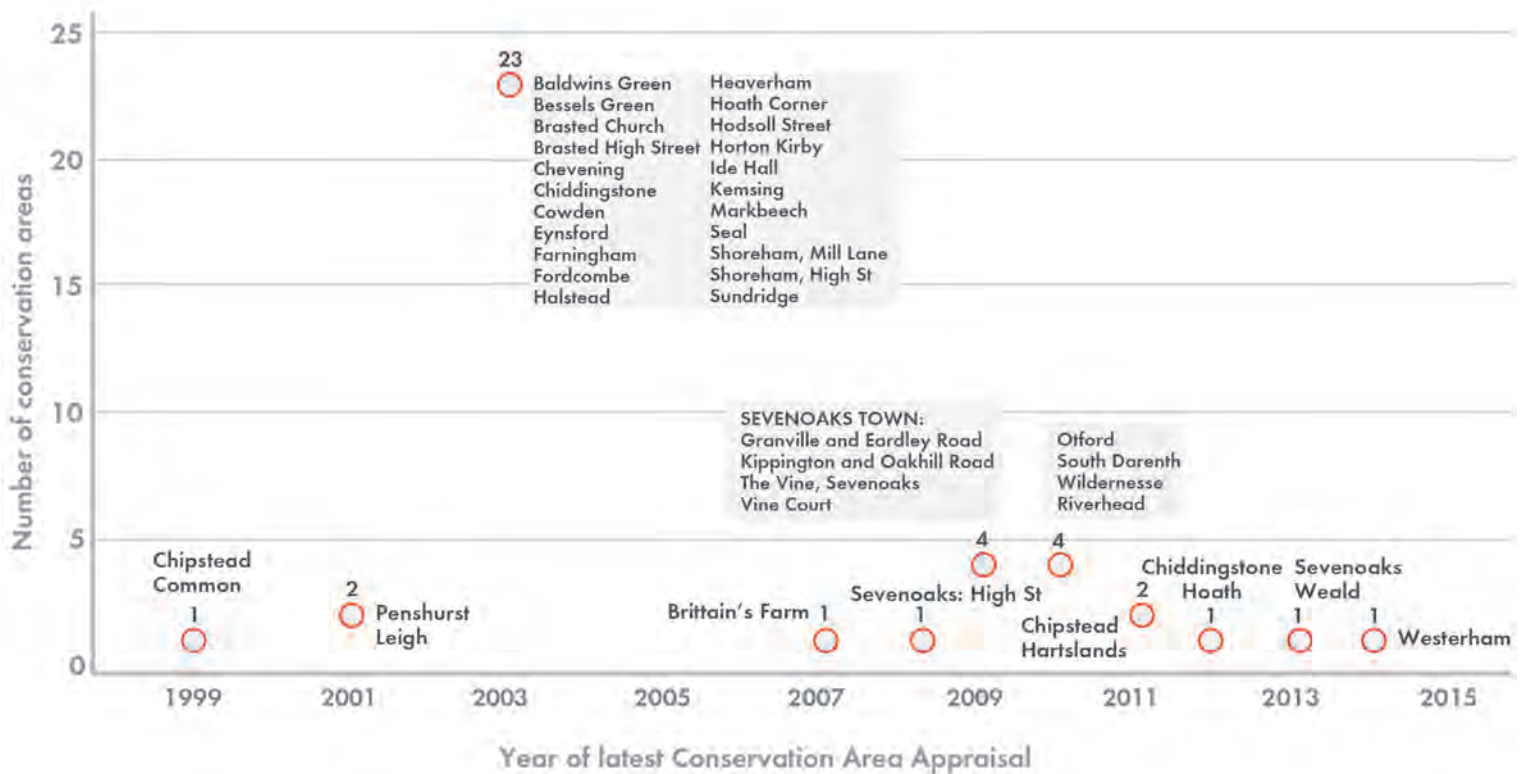


Fig 20 Graph showing age of latest CAA for CAs

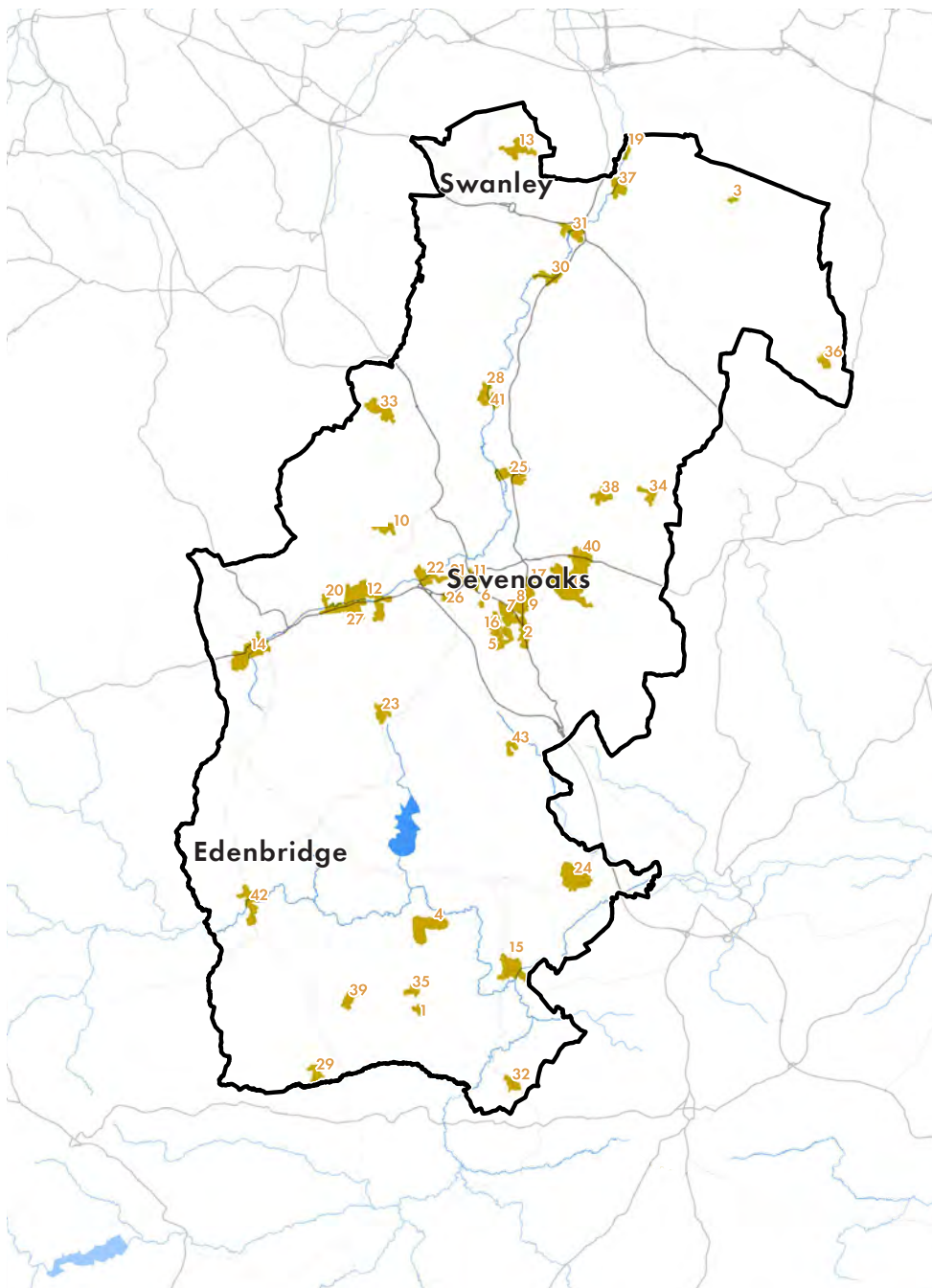


Fig 21 Conservation Areas

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Chiddingstone Hoath | 16. Sevenoaks - Britains Farm | 31. Farningham |
| 2. Sevenoaks - High Street | 17. Hoath Corner | 32. Fordcombe |
| 3. Baldwins Green, Fawkham | 18. Wildernesse | 33. Halstead |
| 4. Chiddingstone | 19. South Darent | 34. Heaverham |
| 5. Sevenoaks - Kippington and Oakhill Road | 20. Brasted Church area | 35. Hoath Corner |
| 6. Sevenoaks - Granville Road and Eardley Road | 21. Chipstead Common | 36. Hodsoll Street |
| 7. Sevenoaks - Vine Court | 22. Chipstead | 37. Horton Kirby |
| 8. Sevenoaks - Hartslands | 23. Ide Hill | 38. Kemsing |
| 9. Sevenoaks - The Vine | 24. Leigh | 39. Mark Beech |
| 10. Chevening | 25. Otford | 40. Seal |
| 11. Riverhead | 26. Bessels Green | 41. Shoreham - High St and Church St |
| 12. Sundridge | 27. Brasted High Street | 42. Edenbridge |
| 13. Swanley Village | 28. Shoreham - Mill Lane | 43. Sevenoaks Weald |
| 14. Westerham | 29. Cowden | |
| 15. Penshurst | 30. Eynsford | |

HERITAGE ASSETS

2.9 BUILDINGS

Statutory Listed buildings

2.9.1 There are nearly 1,700 nationally listed buildings in Sevenoaks District which are of special architectural or historic interest. Historic England hold the statutory list which can be viewed online. They are also catalogued within Kent County Council's Historic Environment Record.

2.9.2 A breakdown of listed buildings in the District is as follows:

- 31 Grade I listed buildings;
- 91 Grade II* listed buildings; and
- 1523 Grade II listed buildings.

Locally Listed buildings

2.9.3 The Council has compiled a database of buildings across Sevenoaks town that are recommended for local listing (see Figure 22). The list can be found here: <https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/locallist>

2.9.4 There are a number of buildings that do not qualify for local listing but still play a key role in contributing to local character.



Fig 22 Locally listed buildings in Sevenoaks town

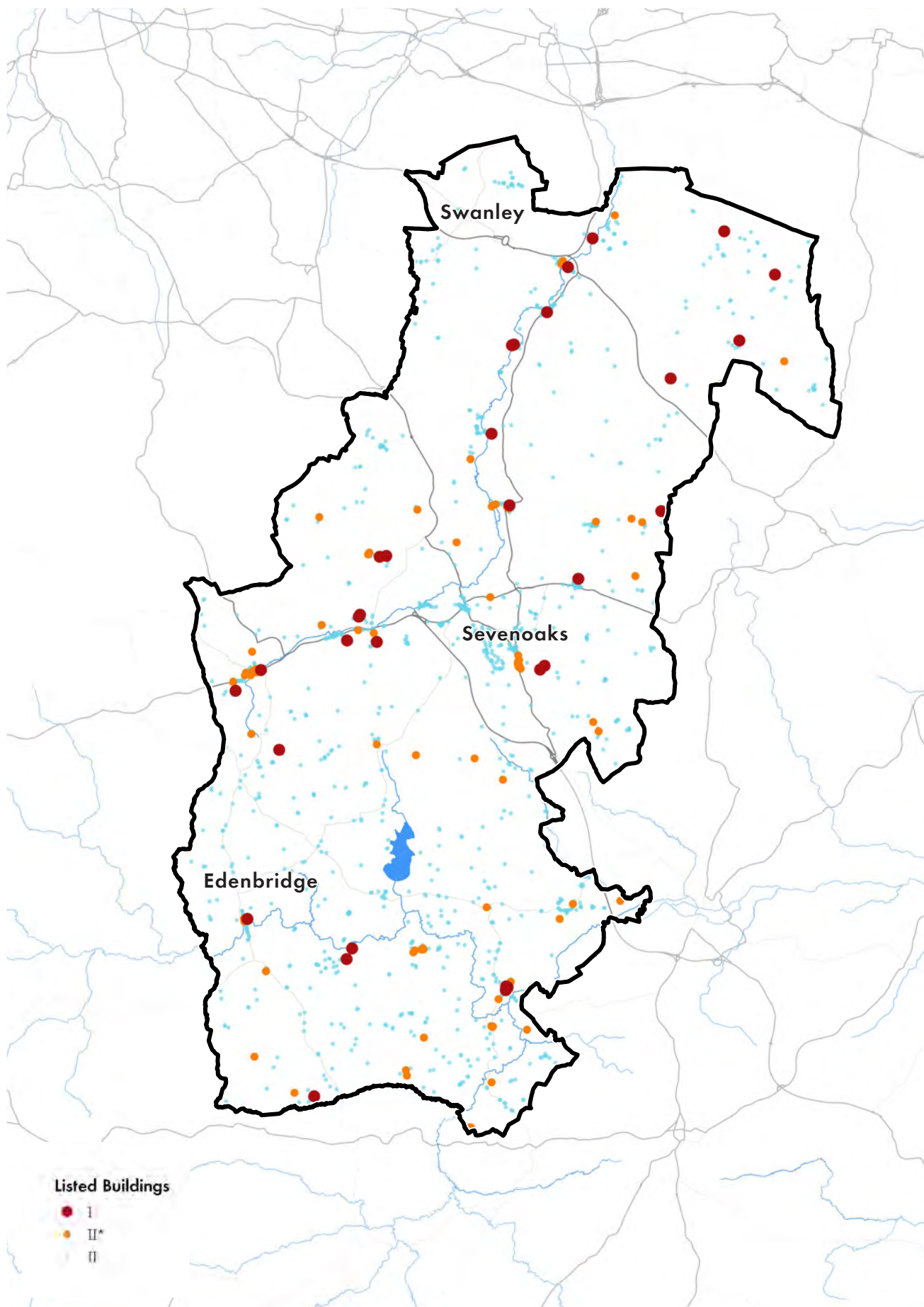


Fig 23 Listed buildings

HERITAGE ASSETS

2.10 VULNERABILITY / RISK

Heritage at Risk

- 2.10.1 Historic England provide a yearly list of heritage sites most at risk and in need of rescuing from vacancy, neglect, decay and inappropriate development. It includes listed buildings, conservation areas, designated parks and gardens and ancient monuments. There are nine that wholly or partly sit within Sevenoaks District.
- 2.10.2 Five heritage assets on the Heritage at Risk register are Conservation Areas - Edenbridge, Riverhead, Seal, Sevenoaks High Street and South Darenth.¹ They are all assessed as being in 'very bad' condition, except Seal which is 'poor'. For Riverhead, Seal and Sevenoaks High Street, the state of the historic environment continues to deteriorate.
- 2.10.3 Combe Bank and Swaylands are both designated as Registered Parks and Gardens. The grounds at Combe Bank date from the early 18th century. The north park became derelict after the construction of the M25 and later suffered extensive storm damage in 1987.² The lower pond at Swaylands has suffered years of neglect and its future uncertain.³
- 2.10.4 The chapel at Maplescombe is a scheduled monument, its condition deemed 'unsatisfactory with major localised problems'⁴. The remains of the corner tower at Otford Palace is in need of urgent repair work - options for taking forward a conservation project are being discussed.⁵

1 Historic England, Search results for 'sevenoaks', <https://goo.gl/PE2st2> (accessed 18 August 2017).

2 ibid

3 ibid.

4 ibid.

5 ibid.



Fig 24 Otford Palace



Fig 25 Edenbridge

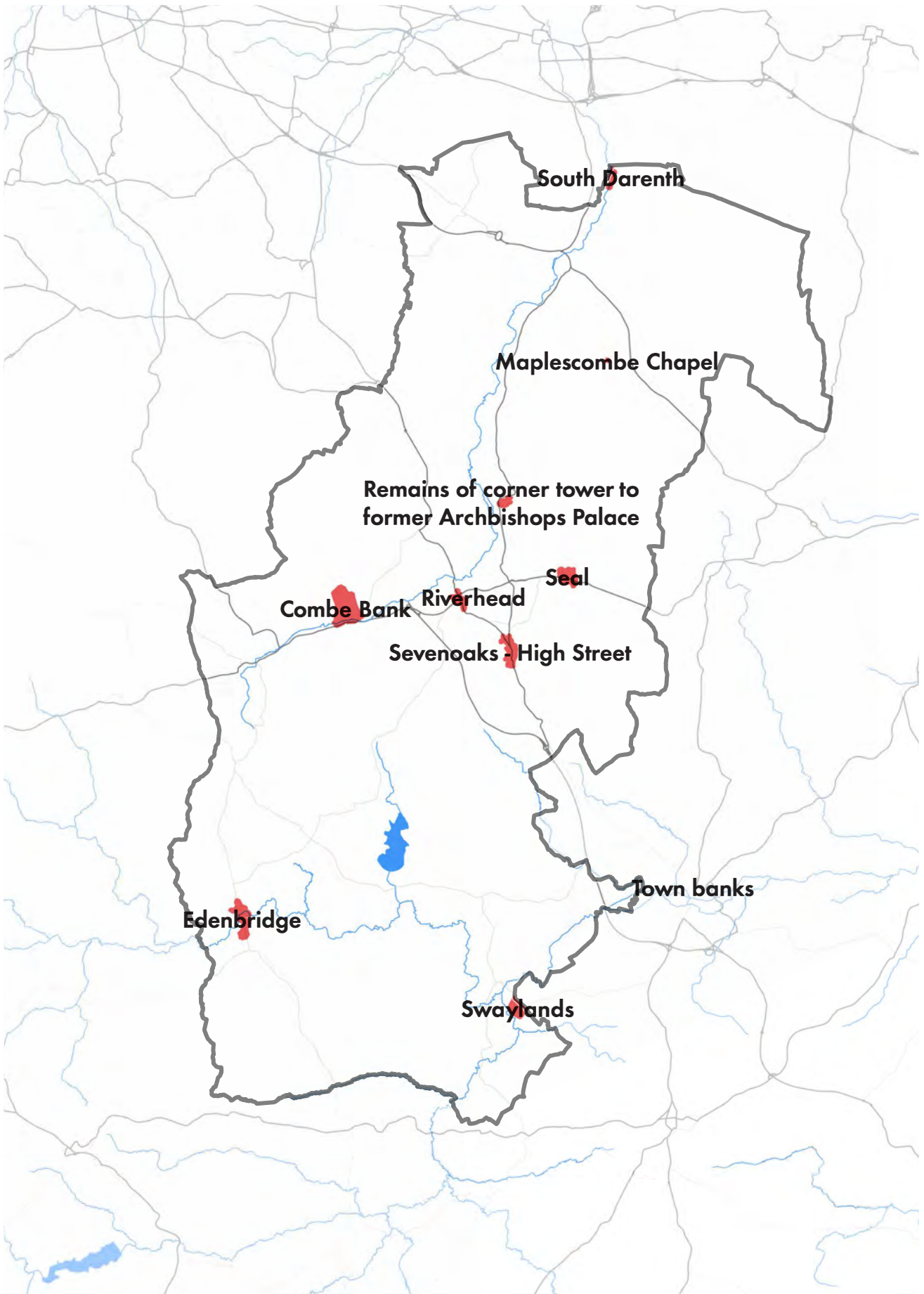


Fig 26 Heritage at Risk

SECTION B:
**HERITAGE
THEMES**

3

THEME OVERVIEW





Fig27 Penshurst Place

HERITAGE THEMES OVERVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION TO HERITAGE THEMES

Overview

- 3.1.1 A key objective of the historic environment review is the identification of the local historic environment themes which have informed the growth of the District and the legacy of heritage assets, features and characteristics.
- 3.1.2 This chapter establishes a thematic framework and diagrammatic matrix as a structure for the main body of the report. The framework helps to define a narrative which conveys the complexities of the area's evolution in a clear and accessible way.

Structuring the historical themes

- 3.1.3 The project team has considered different ways of structuring the report. One approach would be the presentation of a linear historical evolution highlighting specific drivers of growth. Although logical, there is a risk that a linear approach would be too descriptive which risks an over-simplification of the heritage context and interrelationships.
- 3.1.4 An alternative would be to define a more geographical approach in which the historic character and evolution of the District is communicated under spatial or location-specific headings. A geographical structure allows findings to be related more specifically to the existing spatial character of the area. However, it is likely that this would generate repetition where particular historical activities took place in multiple locations.
- 3.1.5 Following discussion and review, the preferred approach is to encourage a hybrid structure which combines the overarching geographical themes with the specific social, economic and cultural activities which have influenced growth. The two sets of themes draw on information gathered from the existing evidence base and are organised as two intertwined components:

- An overarching set of primary “geographical” themes which articulate the basic structure of the District in terms of landscape and settlement patterns.
- A finer grain of secondary social, economic and cultural activities.

3.1.6 The following matrix attempts to represent these elements diagrammatically. The horizontal “geographical” themes categorise a significant proportion of the District. Broadly, these themes and sub-themes divide into “Landscape” or “Settlement”.

3.1.7 The vertical themes and sub-themes are the main historic activities which have driven the interaction with, and evolution of, the landscape and settlements. Conversely, landscape and settlement characteristics have also informed the nature of activities in the District. In some cases, a particular activity has had a very dominant influence on the location. However, many places are a more complex product of several overlapping influences which define their distinctive and multi-faceted historic character and assets.

3.1.8 The purpose of the matrix is to offer a simple graphic explanation of the report structure. It has potential to be used informally in the future as a checklist for any site or area which is considered to have heritage potential or historical character. Although the “warp and weft” of the individual themes varies significantly across the District, the matrix forms a useful conceptual framework and means of distilling of the special identity, significance, vulnerability and opportunities associated with each component heritage theme.

3.1.9 The matrix is not intended to be used as a toolkit to capture the specific interrelationships

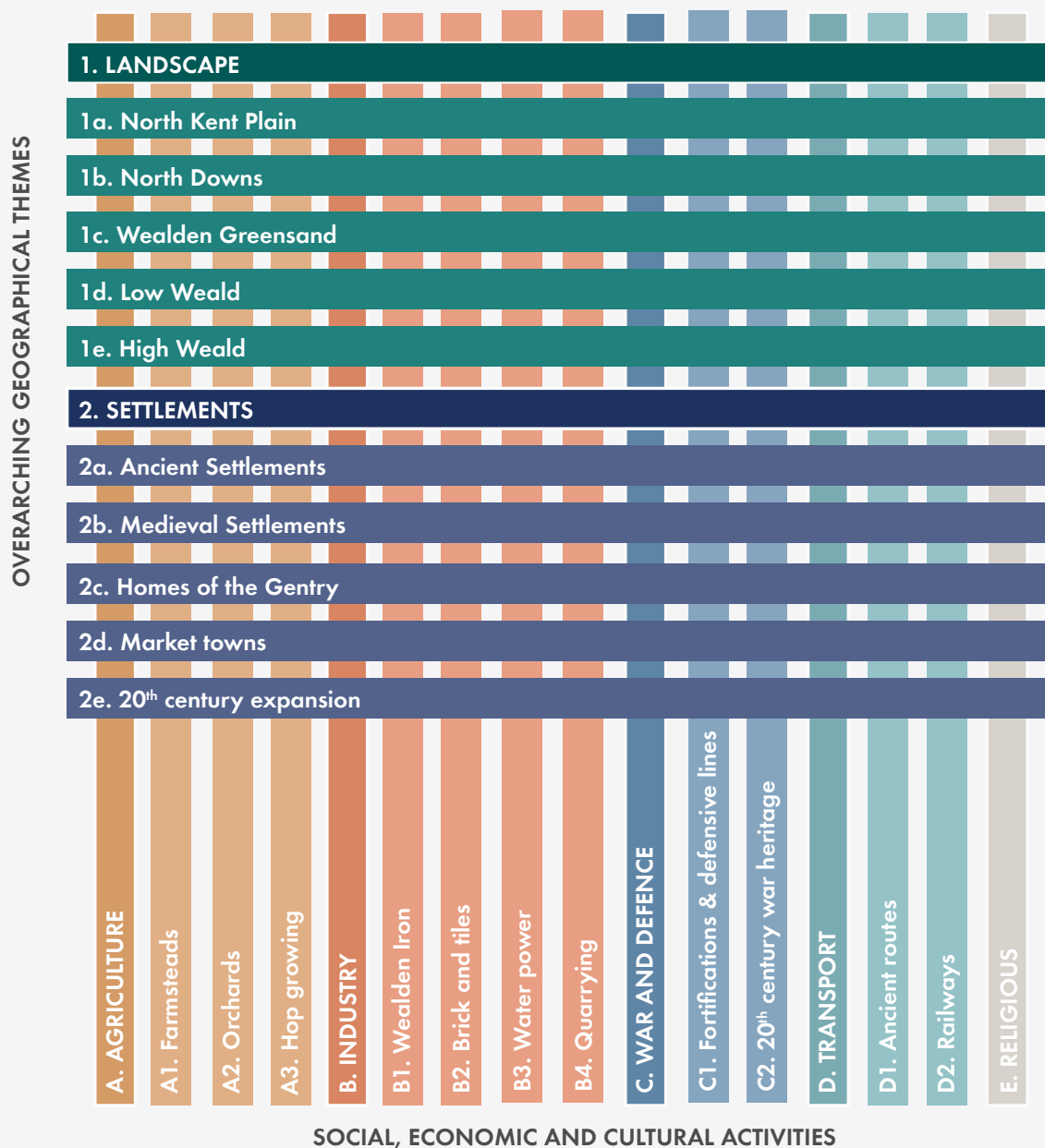


Fig 28 Themes matrix

between individual geographical themes and social / economic / cultural activities in a comprehensive way. Where clear overlap exists between themes, this is identified as appropriate in the body of the report.

- 3.1.10 Section 3.2 and 3.3 provide a brief introduction to each theme alongside their principal heritage assets.
- 3.1.11 It is recognised that there are significant heritage assets within the District that do not necessarily fall in to the above themes and arguments could be made for additional themes

which are important to the District for example woodland archaeology, post-medieval domestic buildings, and the character of the historic landscape. It is envisaged that future studies could add to the theme list above as set out in the recommendations.

- 3.1.12 In some cases, arguments could be made for themes to be grouped in different ways. For example, the farmstead category could also be considered as a “settlement” sub-theme, although the project team has concluded it is more appropriately identified as a social, economic and cultural activity.

3.2 SUMMARY OF OVERARCHING GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

THEME	OVERVIEW OF THEME	HERITAGE ASSETS
LANDSCAPE		
1a. North Kent Plain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic landscape of predominantly post-medieval informal enclosure defined by old drove roads. Its condition has been considerably affected by widespread suburban encroachment. The area is significant for its outstanding views, contrasted with the sense of enclosure east of Swanley village. It is within designated Green Belt land. 	Listed and non-listed buildings Scheduled Monuments Conservation Areas Historic parks and gardens Archaeological sites and artefacts Ancient woodland Routeways Historic landscape features
1b. North Downs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forms part of the Kent Downs AONB and lies within protected Green Belt land. Has strong local character, defined by a wealth of historic landscapes and features, such as parks and gardens and ancient woodland. Has historical value as having been influential to many people, places and events. 	
1c. Wealden Greensand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprises greensand parks and farmlands, extensive woodlands and a pastoral landscape. Generally intact condition, although there has been loss of parkland to agriculture/golf course and housing, hedgerow loss and evidence of horticulture on the edge of Sevenoaks. The area is significant for its woodland, oast houses and designed landscaped parks. 	
1d. Low Weald	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprises an open, flat and pastoral landscape with small blocks of ancient woodland and small to medium-sized pastures. Arable farming is a dominant land use and the light soils supported fruit and hop growing which was on an industrial scale by the 19th century. Ancient routeways and dispersed settlement are a special feature. 	
1e. High Weald	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characterised by ancient woodland, the fruit belt, open farmland and a dispersed settlement pattern. Its significance derives from its sense of place / inspiration, tranquillity and history. The Weald has significant historical associations with the iron industry. The majority of the High Weald is within the High Weald AONB. 	
SETTLEMENTS		
2a. Ancient settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence of prehistoric activity across the District, especially along the Darent Valley, which has evidence of the earliest occupation in the District. Ancient settlements are significant for their age and rarity and are of high evidential value. 	Archaeological features - Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman assets, ancient routes
2b. Medieval settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transhumance played an important role in shaping medieval settlement in Sevenoaks District, as well as the medieval gavelkind system. The timber-framed vernacular buildings are a distinctive heritage asset and an emblem of Kent. Most medieval settlements are designated as Conservation Areas and have strong historic and aesthetic significance. 	Archaeological features, castles and manors, vernacular buildings, medieval settlement patterns, routes and tracks
2c. Homes of the Gentry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> London's gentry were attracted to the District because of its space and clean air, and so purchased land and built houses. Their style changed substantially over time, influenced by changing fashions, from timber-framed manors to small Palladian rural houses. The finest are designated as Registered Parks and Gardens. They have high architectural, historic and communal significance. 	Manors, Elizabeth and Jacobean mansions, country houses, villas, Victorian houses and Parks and Gardens
2d. Market towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sevenoaks, Edenbridge and Westerham are a distinguished part of the District's heritage The market towns prospered with the development of small industries and the arrival of the railways The towns are of high historic and architectural significance because of the great concentration of high quality buildings and spaces. 	Archaeological features, medieval buildings, post-medieval buildings
2e. 20th century expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arrival of the railways led to the growth of suburbs around Sevenoaks and other small towns. House building accelerated in the 1920s and 1930s, the London overspill added two new suburbs to Edenbridge in the 1950s and 1960s and New Ash Green was developed in the 1960s. New roads and motorways supported growth. The suburbs are of low significance architecturally and historically. 	Victorian, Edwardian, inter-war, Span development, garages and petrol stations, tree-lined streets and grass verges, 20 th century civic/cultural buildings

3.3 SUMMARY OF SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

THEME	OVERVIEW OF THEME	HERITAGE ASSETS
AGRICULTURE		
A1. Farmsteads	Farmsteads have historic links with agricultural processes and industry, as well as influencing later settlement pattern. There is a great variety of plan types and building types within the theme, with varying levels of significance.	Assets grouped by plan type and building type. Buildings include barns, granaries, pigsties and oasts.
A2. Orchards	Fruit orchards are found in the Weald, as well as around Seal and Sevenoaks. Cobnut plats are a special characteristic of the North Downs. Traditional orchards have strong historical value, keeping alive traditional techniques, customs and folklore.	Traditional fruit orchards Cobnut plats
A3. Hop growing	Hop growing is an important part of the District's heritage, prevalent in the chartland and Weald. It has strong historical and communal significance. The decline of the hop industry led to the conversion of oast houses to residential.	Oast houses, hop picker huts, breweries and brewhouses, malt-houses and hop fields
INDUSTRY		
B1. Wealden Iron	The Weald was an important iron-producing region in Roman and Tudor Britain and has strong evidential and historical significance.	Archaeological features and artefacts, grand houses, forges, landscape features (ponds, leats, small craters)
B2. Water power	The River Darent has been a source of water power for centuries, peaking in the 18 th century when there was on average a mill every two miles along the length of the river. Mills are reminders of the historic role of local industries in supporting the prosperity and growth of villages. Many mills have been demolished or converted to residential / office use.	Water mills, mill cottages, mill houses and outbuildings
B3. Brick and tiles	Brick and tiles were commonly produced in the District, the red brick of the Wealden clay being made to an outstanding quality.	Archaeological features, brick kilns, workers cottages and houses
B4. Quarrying	Quarrying for the production of materials such as sandstone, ragstone and chalk was an extensive industrial activity up to the late 19 th century. Dryhill Quarries near Sevenoaks is an example.	Archaeological features and artefacts, landscape features
WAR AND DEFENCE		
C1. Fortifications and defensive lines	The District has had fortifications and defensive lines dating to prehistoric times e.g. Iron Age hillforts. Castles were later used for defence, but over time, defences reduced in height from large structures to near invisibility, influencing the appearance of landscapes, by adapting, modifying or preserving them.	Archaeological features and artefacts, castles, other pre-20 th century military installations
C2. 20th century war heritage	The wars of the 20 th century left a lasting legacy on the District, impacting the landscape, halting the development of villages and towns, and deeply affecting the people who lived through them. Many war heritage assets are in the District, from air raid shelters to redoubts and pillboxes.	Civil defence sites (e.g. air raid shelters, ARP posts) and other military installations, for example pillboxes, barracks and redoubts.
TRANSPORT		
D1. Ancient Routes	The District has a network of ancient routeways and tracks that have strong historical significance, giving a sense of the way in which people travelled through the landscape.	Drove roads, sunken routes, Roman roads and turnpike features
D2. Railways	The arrival of the railways transformed parts of the District, spurring development and accelerating industrial growth, especially in Sevenoaks and villages along the Darent. Electrification in the 1930s hastened the spread of the London commuter belt.	Stations and platform canopies, railway cottages and taverns, tunnels and bridges
RELIGIOUS	The District has a large number of religious assets, a hugely important component of the historical built framework. Churches formed an important role within settlements and were often a focal point of a village or town. They have strong social significance. Many churches have been altered since their construction and some are no longer used as places of worship.	Medieval remains, Early Parish Churches, Mid 16 th century churches, non-conformist chapels, churches (1830-1914) and other faith buildings

4

OVERARCHING GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES



Landscape



Settlements

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

LANDSCAPE

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO LANDSCAPE THEME

4.1.1 The historic landscape character of Sevenoaks District has played an essential role in evidencing the way in which humans have interacted with their natural environment. The evolution of the landscape in broader terms has been characterised by successive cycles of reclamation and abandonment of woodland, pasture and arable as population and agricultural pressures have ebbed and flowed over the centuries.

4.1.2 The theme has been divided into five sub-themes, which correspond to the National Character Areas (NCAs). These are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries. The NCA's that are within Sevenoaks District are shown on the map opposite and are listed below:

- North Kent Plain;
- North Downs;
- Wealden Greensand;
- Low Weald; and
- High Weald.

4.1.3 The following section draws together the National Character Area profiles, Landscape Character Assessments and AONB guidance to summarise the historic development of each landscape theme, the historic assets, current condition, significance, vulnerability, opportunities and existing guidance regarding each theme.

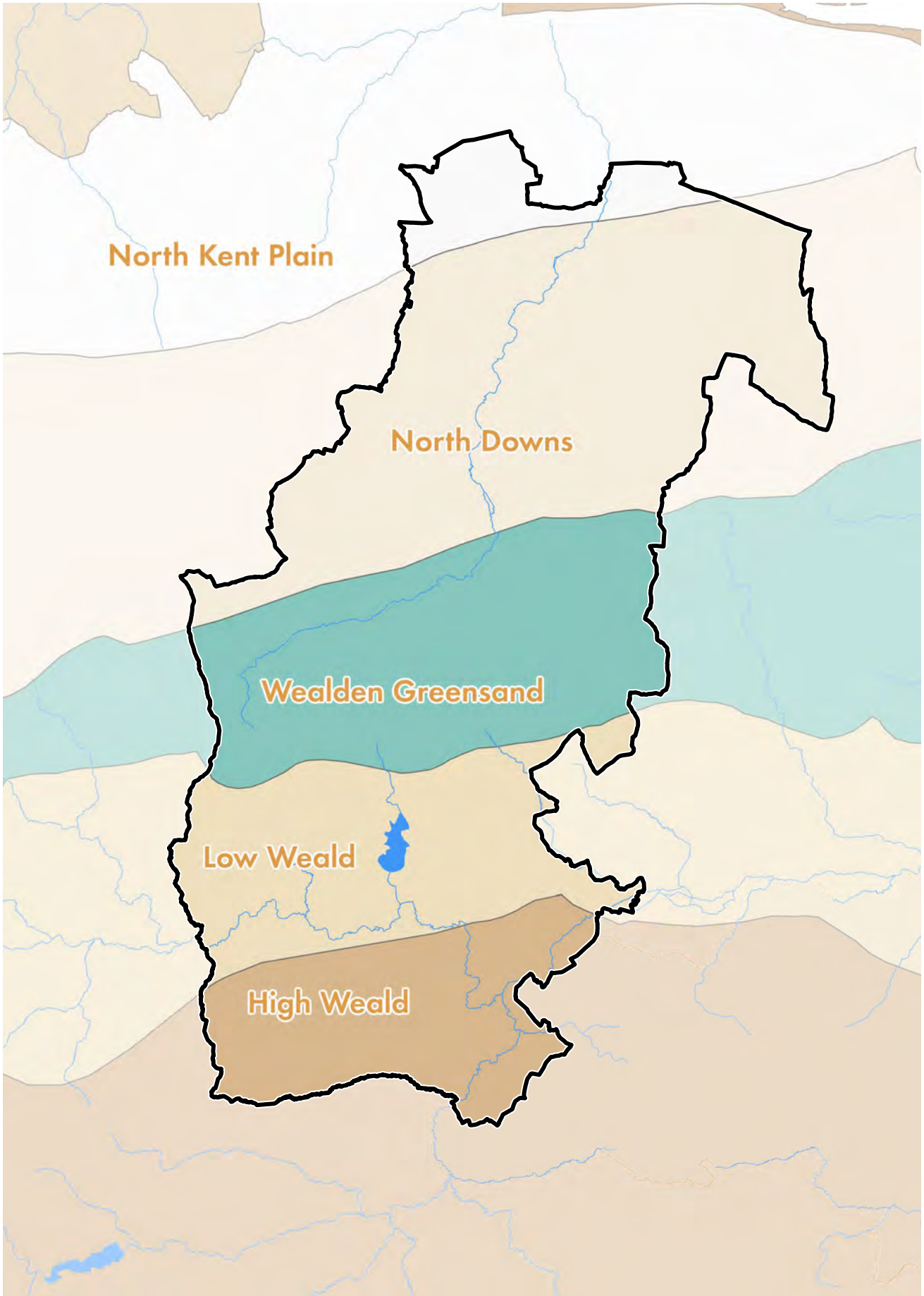


Fig 29 National Character Areas

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

LANDSCAPE

 North Kent Plain

 North Downs

 Wealden Greensand

 Low Weald

 High Weald

4.2 NORTH KENT PLAIN

Historic Development

- 4.2.1 The northern tip of Sevenoaks District is within the North Kent Plain NCA. The area is comprised largely of Hextable Settled Farmland, but also includes aspects of the Downs landscape character, and the northern tip of the Darent Valley. The area lies within protected Green Belt land. The area has a historic landscape of predominantly post-medieval informal enclosure defined by old drove roads. There are some small-scale rectilinear fields of parliamentary enclosure.¹
- 4.2.2 The River Darent was central to the use of the landscape in the north of the District and attracted settlement throughout prehistory and history. The North Kent Plain contains one of the most archaeologically sensitive but also the most characterful areas of the District. Combined with the North Downs, the Darent Valley contains a number of sites that tell the story of how the river was exploited through history, for example Horton Kirby Roman Villa and Horton Kirby itself (see Sections 4.8 and 5.5). On the slopes that rise to the east of the river there are also a number of enclosures and ditches that have been seen in cropmark and that are the remains of the extensive prehistoric exploitation of the landscape.

Summary of assets

- 4.2.3 Within the landscape character areas are a variety of heritage assets which relate to the social, economic and cultural activities, covered in greater detail in Chapter 5. Heritage assets include Listed and non-listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites and artefacts, ancient woodland, routeways and historic landscape features.

Current condition

- 4.2.4 The intactness of the area has been considerably affected by widespread suburban encroachment, including large-scale transportation routes, industrial land-use and hedgerow loss which has adversely affected its condition. In addition, some extensive areas of horticulture exist. However, there are some areas of remaining intact landscape where field boundaries, rural lanes and historic villages survive. Along the river corridor are intact field patterns on valley slopes, historic settlement cores and a strong ecological network which contributes positively to the historic landscape condition.

Significance

- 4.2.5 From various points across the North Kent Plain are outstanding scenic views across the landscape. This is contrasted with the sense of enclosure that the area affords, particularly east of Swanley Village. The narrow rural lanes with steep banks and high hedges contribute to the area's historical significance.
- 4.2.6 Swanley Village is a historic settlement designated as a Conservation Area. It has numerous listed buildings of a traditional vernacular, surrounded by ancient woodland and a remnant small-scale field pattern.

Vulnerability

- 4.2.7 The area lies within Green Belt which protects the landscape from urban expansion. However, Green Belt status may come under pressure in the future in response to the demand for greater housing in the South East of England. The demand for extensions and new outbuildings can conflict with the Conservation Area and Green Belt policy.²
- 4.2.8 Mature trees and hedgerows contribute to the distinctive historic character of the landscape and are vulnerable to neglect and removal.

¹ IUC, *Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment*, 2017.

² Sevenoaks District Council, *Swanley Village Conservation Area Appraisal SPD*, 2003.

Existing Guidance

4.2.9 **National Character Area profile 113: North Kent Plain** - the profile includes Statements of Environmental Opportunity. SEO1 places an emphasis on maintaining the historic character and long tradition of a farmed landscape and protecting traditional practices. SEO4 refers to protecting and enhancing the strong character and heritage of urban areas.

4.2.10 **Sevenoaks Green Belt SPD** - 93% of Sevenoaks District is designated as Green Belt. The SPD sets out further guidance on how the Council will implement Green Belt policies, which aim to control the spread of urban areas by keeping land permanently open.

4.2.11 **Landscape Character Assessment (LUC, 2017)** - breaks down the NCA into district landscape character areas and sub-areas. The relevant areas for North Kent Plain are:

- 4a - Hextable Settled Farmland and part of 4b - Crockenhill Settled Farmland;
- The northern tip of 2a Farningham Downs, and 2b Eynsford and Horton Kirby Downs; and
- The northern tip of 7a Darenth Valley - South Darenth to Farningham.

Opportunities

4.2.12 There is an opportunity to consider the role of the landscape in relation to the setting of heritage assets and settlements from the local plan perspective.



GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

LANDSCAPE

 North Kent Plain

 North Downs

 Wealden Greensand

 Low Weald

 High Weald

4.3 NORTH DOWNS

Historic Development

4.3.1 The North Downs has a rich history, from Neolithic monuments to medieval villages and stately homes with their associated parks and gardens. Early occupation was concentrated in the Darent Valley and the footslope of the escarpment where soils are more fertile. Compelling evidence of ancient settlements along the Darent Valley include Franks, Lullingstone and Otford Roman villas, as well as later medieval settlements of Farningham, Eysnford, Shoreham and Otford. Many cropmarks reveal historic exploitation of the uplands whilst more recent industrial extraction has left deep scars in the landscape north of Sevenoaks.

4.3.2 Modern-day settlement patterns of villages, hamlets and associated field patterns can be traced to the Anglo-Saxon period where large-scale irregular, piecemeal clearance of woodland took place as population increased. Much of the distinctive road pattern, old drove roads and ancient routes of the downs date from this time, as the downland region provided areas of temporary summer pasture. As settlements developed, many of these pastures came to be used as areas of rough grazing.¹

4.3.3 Extensive areas of woodland and pasture converted to arable in the medieval period, as the population increased further. The agricultural revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries led to cultivation of lower slopes for arable crops and horticultural production. This continued during WWII, but in the last 50 years, market conditions have led to the dramatic reduction in the area of orchards in the area, as well as a decline in hop production. Wooded areas were exploited for woodland products, but as demand decreased, so did woodland management and many areas have been neglected. Chalk has been dug out of the Downs for at least 2,000 years and today,

the long-abandoned overgrown and hidden chalk pits remain a common feature of the landscape.²

4.3.4 Traditional parklands are also a historic feature, the wooded areas providing a suitable setting for parkland, from medieval parks to the designed parklands of the 18th and 19th centuries. The North Downs Way follows ancient paths along the ridge, and today is a popular National Trail. It follows Pilgrims Way, thought to be an important iron-age trading route and used by pilgrims travelling from Winchester to Canterbury Cathedral to pray at the shrine of Thomas Becket.³

Summary of assets

4.3.5 Within the landscape character areas are a variety of heritage assets which relate to the social, economic and cultural activities, covered in greater detail in Chapter 5. Heritage assets include Listed and non-listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites and artefacts, ancient woodland, routeways and historic landscape features.

Current condition

4.3.6 The North Downs is defined by rolling chalk downland overlain by a medium scale field pattern of regularly parliamentary fields, as well as some older fields and occasional assarts. There is a sparse settlement pattern of scattered farms and linear development. Agriculture is an important component of the landscape, and there is a mix of arable and pastoral farmland bound by hedgerows and shaws. Dense ancient woodland and steep topography restrict views but there are long views from open areas. To the west, changes in settlement have been inconsistent with character, reflecting its close proximity to London, to the M25 corridor and

² *ibid.*

³ *History of the Pilgrim's Way*, [website], date unknown, <http://www.pilgrimswaycanterbury.org/history-of-the-pilgrims-way/> (accessed 18 August 2017).

¹ Natural England, *NCA Profile: 112 North Kent Plain*, 2013, <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2900242> (accessed 21 August 2017).

to major towns where associated development pressure is high and has had an influence on the NCA.

- 4.3.7 Much of the North Downs lies within the Kent Downs AONB, which was designated in 1968, except for a small area to the east and west. The area lies within protected Green Belt land. Within the North Downs NCA are district-level landscape character areas, identified in the 2017 Landscape Character Assessment. These are the downs, scarp landscapes, Darent Valley and most of the scarp foot farmland.

Significance

- 4.3.8 The Downs has a strong local character and is defined by a wealth of historic landscapes and features, including parks and gardens, that make a vital contribution to the distinctiveness and character of the landscape.
- 4.3.9 The North Downs has historical value as having been influential to many people, places and events of great artistic and cultural importance. These include paintings by Samuel Palmer in the Darent Valley and the writing and paintings of Winston Churchill at home in Chartwell. The North Downs was the 'landscape laboratory' for Darwin's theory on evolution by natural selection.

Vulnerability

- 4.3.10 A number of factors threaten the historic character of the North Downs which are outlined in the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and Landscape Character Assessment. These are:
- Siting, scale and design of much new housing and commercial development around urban edges can have an adverse impact on the North Downs landscape;
 - Change in character of views in and out of the North Downs, cumulative loss of landscape



features, and erosion of character through use of standardised layouts and designs;

- Materials choice often does not reflect local distinctiveness;
- Increasing traffic and speed and the erosion of verges and hedgebanks, modern signage and lighting;
- Intensive agriculture, lack of management, loss from development, damage to veteran trees and the setting of ancient monuments;
- Conifer planting, decline of woodland and coppice management, fragmentation of ancient woodland, loss of shaws and harsh edges/poor wildlife value of conifers, golf courses; and
- A changing climate.

Existing Guidance

- 4.3.11 National Character Area profile 119: North Downs – the profile includes Statements of Environmental Opportunity. SEO1 places emphasis on an appropriate approach to managing, conserving and enhancing the distinctive rural character and historic environment of the North Downs, including the established settlement pattern, ancient routes, traditional buildings, cultural and natural heritage, views, and the tranquillity of the landscape.
- 4.3.12 Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 – there is a duty on relevant authorities, public bodies and statutory undertakers to take account of the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of AONB landscapes when carrying out their statutory functions.
- 4.3.13 AONB Management Plan – the Plan and its policies are a material consideration in planning matters, with the National Planning Practice Guidance supporting that its evidence and principles are taken into account in Local Plan

and in Neighbourhood Plan creation. The NPPF states that local planning authorities should set criteria-based policies against which proposals for any development affecting landscape will be judged. Policies HCH1 to HCH5 set out the criteria against which development proposals should be assessed.

- 4.3.14 Kent Downs AONB Landscape Design Handbook – design guidance contributes to the conservation and enhancement of the special characteristics of the Kent Downs AONB and its individual character areas. Principles relate to new build, infrastructure and communications, rural diversification, recreation and tourism, historic landscape, countryside furniture, hard materials and planting species and more. Included are character and landscape statements for relevant character areas and detailed guidance on materials, fencing and woodland.
- 4.3.15 Kent Downs AONB Rural Streets and Lanes: A Design Handbook (July 2009) – there is a guidance gap between DMRB/Manual for Streets and local policy – many A-roads around Sevenoaks are cited. The design handbook covers prehistoric tracks and routeways, Roman roads, medieval roads, turnpike roads and historic streetscape. It uses eight case-study examples and provides toolkit guidance.

Opportunities

- 4.3.16 The Local Plan should seek to define guidance which addresses concerns regarding the vulnerability of the North Downs as set out above.
- 4.3.17 Opportunities for improved visitor management should be considered alongside better access for walking and cycling.



Fig 30 *North Downs*

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

LANDSCAPE

 North Kent Plain

 North Downs

 Wealden Greensand

 Low Weald

 High Weald

4.4 WEALDEN GREENSAND

Historic Development

- 4.4.1 The Wealden Greensand has been occupied since prehistoric times, with the presence of Palaeolithic flint tools at Oldbury Hill, just outside of Sevenoaks District to the east. The Greensand soils are generally nutrient-poor, so they have not been as extensively cleared for agriculture as some other areas, and many ancient woodlands survive. Coppicing trees and shrubs was an important activity of the rural economy, and coppice products included fencing materials, firewood, hop poles (mostly sweet chestnut in Kent) and charcoal. The landscape is more wooded than the Low Weald to the south but at the same time contains a greater amount of designed landscapes, particularly Knole Park in the east but also Squerryes, Valence and Emmets in the west. Fruit growing took place across the area. Most field patterns still reflect the irregularity of ancient enclosure or enclosure by agreement, with regular Parliamentary-type enclosure generally restricted to late enclosure of heathland.¹
- 4.4.2 Heathland is characteristic of the Greensand ridge and historically important for the rural economy, providing grazing land, bedding for stock and a source of fuel. It was often common land, as were some of the ancient woodlands, and these wooded commons (charts) were used for grazing livestock and gathering firewood. The charts today still display a typical structure and suite of species that are the result of their traditional use. The Wealden Greensand supported the production of iron and building stone.²
- 4.4.3 Another key characteristic is the Sevenoaks Greensand Commons which comprises significant elements in the historic landscape of the District. It is currently the location of a Heritage Lottery Fund project.

Summary of assets

- 4.4.4 Within the landscape character areas are a variety of heritage assets which relate to the social, economic and cultural activities, covered in greater detail in Chapter 5. Heritage assets include Listed and non-listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites and artefacts, ancient woodland, routeways and historic landscape features.

Current condition

- 4.4.5 The Wealden Greensand incorporates the following district landscape character areas – Clay Valleys, the Charts, and Greensand Parks and Farmlands. All of the character area falls within the Kent Downs AONB and lies within designated Green Belt, except for the towns of Sevenoaks and Westerham. The area is characterised by extensive woodlands, orchards, parkland and pastoral landscape. The Upper Darent Valley cuts vertically through the area, and its condition is generally intact, with small-scale fields bounded by hedgerows, wet pastures, remnant woodland, farmsteads and well preserved historic mill villages on the river itself.
- 4.4.6 The greensand parks and farmlands cover a large part of the NCA, and include the infamous Knole with its ancient deer park and Jacobean mansion. Intact field boundaries, historic hamlets north of A25 and historic parkland contribute positively to the landscape condition. Detractors to the historic condition are the traffic noise, loss of parkland to agriculture / golf course, and modern housing development.
- 4.4.7 The Charts is an elevated pastoral and wooded landscape on the Greensand ridge to the south of the character area. There is a generally well-managed and intact rural landscape of woodland

¹ Natural England, *NCA Profile: 120 Wealden Greensand*, 2013, publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/4904583142834176 [accessed 21 August 2017].

² *ibid.*

and pasture cover but evidence of decline or loss in places, especially in the Sevenoaks Western Chart sub-area. There is evidence of horticulture on the edge of Sevenoaks and some hedgerow loss. Settlement across the area is a mix of dispersed farmsteads and hamlets, and some nucleated villages, often linked by small, deeply sunken lanes.

- 4.4.8 The area's landscape pattern becomes increasingly fragmented to the east of the area where urban fringe features, large industrial buildings, transport routes, former mineral extraction and gravel pits detract from the historic landscape. Some hedgerow boundaries are fragmented.

Significance

- 4.4.9 The Greensand is scattered with landmarks that document the activities of previous centuries and make important contributions to England's heritage, including Chartwell. The woodland provides a background for 18th and 19th century designed landscaped parks.
- 4.4.10 Oast houses are a highly characteristic farm building type associated with the hop industry and prevalent in the area, and many timber-framed buildings dating from the 15th and 16th centuries survive, including barns and Wealden hall houses.

Vulnerability

- 4.4.11 A number of factors threaten the historic character of the Wealden Greensand which are outlined in the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and Landscape Character Assessment. These are:
- Siting, scale and design of much new housing and commercial development around urban edges can have an adverse impact on the Wealden Greensand landscape;



- Change in character of views in and out of the Wealden Greensand, cumulative loss of landscape features, and erosion of character through use of standardised layouts and designs;
- Materials choice often does not reflect local distinctiveness;
- Increasing traffic and speed and the erosion of verges and hedgebanks, modern signage and lighting;
- Intensive agriculture, lack of management, loss from development, damage to veteran trees and the setting of ancient monuments;
- Conifer planting, decline of woodland and coppice management, fragmentation of ancient woodland, loss of shaws and harsh edges/poor wildlife value of conifers, golf courses; and
- A changing climate.

Existing Guidance

- 4.4.12 National Character Area profile 120: Wealden Greensand – the profile includes Statements of Environmental Opportunity. SEO 1 places an emphasis on protecting and managing the nationally recognised and distinctive character of the landscape character, including its tranquillity, sense of place and rich historical and geological heritage.
- 4.4.13 Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 – there is a duty on relevant authorities, public bodies and statutory undertakers to take account of the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of AONB landscapes when carrying out their statutory functions.
- 4.4.14 AONB Management Plan – the Plan and its policies are a material consideration in planning matters, with the National Planning Practice Guidance supporting that its evidence and principles are taken into account in Local Plan and in Neighbourhood Plan creation. The NPPF states that local planning authorities should set

criteria-based policies against which proposals for any development affecting landscape will be judged. Policies HCH1 to HCH5 set out the criteria against which development proposals should be assessed.

- 4.4.15 Kent Downs AONB Landscape Design Handbook – design guidance contributes to the conservation and enhancement of the special characteristics of the Kent Downs AONB and its individual character areas. Principles relate to new build, infrastructure and communications, rural diversification, recreation and tourism, historic landscape, countryside furniture, hard materials and planting species and more. Included are character and landscape statements for relevant character areas and detailed guidance on materials, fencing and woodland.
- 4.4.16 Kent Downs AONB Rural Streets and Lanes: A Design Handbook (July 2009) – there is a guidance gap between DMRB/Manual for Streets and local policy – many A-roads around Sevenoaks are cited. The design handbook covers prehistoric tracks and routeways, Roman roads, medieval roads, turnpike roads and historic streetscape. It uses eight case-study examples and provides toolkit guidance.

Opportunities

- 4.4.17 The Local Plan should seek to define guidance which addresses concerns regarding the vulnerability of the Wealden Greensand as set out above.
- 4.4.18 Opportunities for improved visitor management should be considered alongside better access for walking and cycling.

Fig 31 Wealden Greensand



GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

LANDSCAPE

 North Kent Plain

 North Downs

 Wealden Greensand

 Low Weald

 High Weald

4.5 LOW WEALD

Historic Development

- 4.5.1 Human occupation of the Low Weald dates to prehistoric Mesolithic times. Hunter-gatherer communities exploited the land and constructed semi-permanent and temporary camps. There is evidence that prehistoric communities cleared woodland for settlements and inroads into the Low Weald. This increased during the Iron Age and Roman period with a network of Roman roads linking the area to London and the coast. Livestock were driven to the Wealden forests to feast on acorns and beech masts or to the downland to graze on higher pasture and numerous north-south roads are a legacy of this traffic. During the medieval period, the Low Weald was generally managed as a patchwork of assart fields and woodlands, with dispersed manorial farms and market settlements, many of which developed into modern-day villages and hamlets.¹ Isolated farmsteads, commonly occupying ancient sites, are the predominant settlement pattern in the Low Weald.²
- 4.5.2 The geology of the Low Weald provided raw materials for brick and tile making which still continues. In addition, the Low Weald woodland provided materials for shipbuilding, charcoal, forest glass and brickmaking industries and centuries of deforestation has left the Low Weald with only remnants of that woodland cover.³
- 4.5.3 Arable farming continues to be a dominant land use in the Borough, and as a result, fields tend to be larger and more regular with fewer hedgerows and trees. This is contrast to the well-wooded pastoral appearance of most of the Low Weald.⁴
- 4.5.4 The light soils supported fruit and hop growing which was on an industrial scale by the 19th century. Oast houses remain characteristic

of this landscape, although most have been converted to residential. Hop growing died out commercially in the Low Weald in the late 20th century.

- 4.5.5 The Low Weald also contains notable areas of designed landscapes such as Hever Castle, Redleaf and Hall Place, Leigh. The west of the area is dominated by Edenbridge which sits astride the Roman road from London to Lewes and which can still be seen in the major landscape feature in the area, the B2026.

Summary of assets

- 4.5.6 Within the landscape character areas are a variety of heritage assets which relate to the social, economic and cultural activities, covered in greater detail in Chapter 5. Heritage assets include Listed and non-listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites and artefacts, ancient woodland, routeways and historic landscape features.

Current condition

- 4.5.7 The Low Weald comprises an open pastoral landscape with small blocks of woodland and small to medium sized pastures. There are pockets of wetland and standing water, such as Bough Beech Reservoir, and springs, springholes and ponds on Wealden Clays. The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) identifies the Sevenoaks Low Weald and Leigh Low Weald as district-level character areas. Sevenoaks Low Weald has an intact historic field pattern and a strong network of features, such as woodland, tree belts, hedgerows and watercourses. However, there is some hedgerow loss resulting in a decline in condition, and some urbanising influence around Edenbridge. It has relatively few detracting features.
- 4.5.8 Leigh Low Weald comprises intact ancient woodland, plantations and historic parkland.

1 Natural England, *NCA Profile: 121 Low Weald*, 2013, <https://goo.gl/zP5NH> (accessed August 18, 2017).

2 *ibid.*

3 *ibid.*

4 *ibid.*

However, the amalgamation of fields and decline in hedgerows have eroded the condition in some parts of the area. The A21 and modern residential development are detractors.

- 4.5.9 The Eden Valley sub-area also forms part of the Low Weald. The valley has an intact historic field pattern of small pastoral fields, including medieval fields and assarts, but intensive farming practices have compromised this in places. Development at Edenbridge and on the fringes of the valley, as well as roads and railway, can detract from the historic landscape.

Significance

- 4.5.10 The Low Weald river valleys are comprised of lowland meadows and fen which are of interest for their history. In addition, the rural character of lanes that cross the river and historic river crossing points are significant, and includes the survival of the Roman road at Edenbridge.
- 4.5.11 Hever Castle and associated grounds and woodland are historically significant, as well as a medieval moated site at Devils' Den.

Vulnerability

- 4.5.12 The majority of the Low Weald is not protected by AONB status. However, all of the Low Weald falls within Green Belt designation.

Existing Guidance

- 4.5.13 National Character Area profile 121: Low Weald – the profile includes Statements of Environmental Opportunity. SEO 2 places an emphasis on the conservation and enhancement of the distinctive historical aspects of the Low Weald landscape, including its important geological features and sites of heritage interest, particularly those associated with the Wealden iron industry. This is to enable access, continued research, interpretation, understanding and enjoyment of the extensive and nationally significant resources.



Opportunities

- 4.5.14 The Local Plan should seek to define guidance which addresses concerns regarding the vulnerability of the Low Weald as set out above, and which recognises the opportunities set out in the National Character Area profile.
- 4.5.15 Opportunities for improved visitor management should be considered alongside better access for walking and cycling.



Fig 32 *Looking across the Low Weald*



GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

LANDSCAPE

 North Kent Plain

 North Downs

 Wealden Greensand

 Low Weald

 High Weald

4.6 HIGH WEALD

Historic Development

- 4.6.1 In pre-historic times, the natural woodland established in warmer post-glacial periods was modified and cleared by hunter-gatherers of the Mesolithic people. Bronze-age barrows indicate active communities in Ashdown Forest and the Roman interest in iron smelting contributed to woodland clearance. Transhumance, the seasonal movement of people and animals between the settlements on the borders of the Weald and its interior, greatly shaped the High Weald character area. A dense network of droveways connected the Downs and the Weald, providing social and economic links to the more habitable fringes where farming was easier. These linear routes, together with the wooded gills, provide a high degree of interconnectivity to ancient woodland habitats across the High Weald and today they are used as public rights of way.¹
- 4.6.2 One of the dominant landscape features in this zone is the river Medway that runs north-south across the eastern part of the district. As well as being generally attractive to human settlement throughout the past the river played a key role in the Second World War as the GHQ Stop Line (see Section 5.9).
- 4.6.3 The High Weald has a rich industrial past which is still evident in its landscape character and built heritage today. The Weald was the main iron-producing region in Britain during the Roman occupation, and was later revived in the Tudor era. The geology of sands and clay were well suited for iron ore and stone and brick to build furnaces. The woodland provided charcoal fuel, and the streams supplied water power for the forges and furnaces. Many ponds were created in the clay to store additional water, and many people were employed in digging ore, cutting wood, charcoal making and transporting

raw materials and products. As coal replaced wood as fuel for furnaces during the Industrial Revolution, the iron industry moved north to the coalfields, and agriculture became the most common industry.²

- 4.6.4 Ancient woodland provided the backdrop for a wealth of landscaped historic parks and gardens, including Penshurst Place, Swaylands, Stonewall, Jessups and Waystrode Manor.³ The success of the cloth-industry also left its mark on the landscape, including the creation of ponds as a result of extracting marl for fulling cloth.⁴
- 4.6.5 Agriculture has been a dominant land use over the centuries. A feature of this is hop-growing which expanded in the 17th and 18th centuries and the arrival of the railways opened up the London market for hops, fruit and poultry in the 19th century.

Summary of assets

- 4.6.6 Within the landscape character areas are a variety of heritage assets which relate to the social, economic and cultural activities, covered in greater detail in Chapter 5. Heritage assets include Listed and non-listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites and artefacts, ancient woodland, routeways, the River Medway and historic landscape features.

Current condition

- 4.6.7 The High Weald incorporates the High Weald and Wealden River Valleys district level character areas (Landscape Character Assessment, 2017). There is a pattern of historic field patterns, intact woodlands, parkland and wooded gills connected by mature hedgerows and shaws, resulting in a good landscape condition.

¹ Natural England, *NCA Profile: 122 High Weald*, 2013, <https://goo.gl/k38k31> (accessed August 18, 2017).

² J. Hodgkinson, *Iron - A Once Great Wealden Industry*, [website], 2002, <http://www.wealdeniron.org.uk/hist.htm>, (accessed 18 August 2017).

³ Natural England, *NCA Profile: 122 High Weald*, 2013, <https://goo.gl/k38k31> (accessed August 18, 2017).

⁴ High Weald Forum, *Along & Around the High Weald Landscape Trail*, 1999, <https://goo.gl/ujjda>.

However, some field boundaries have been lost, as well as woodland in places. Areas of horticulture are evident around Penshurst and Leigh.

Significance

- 4.6.8 Sense of place/inspiration: Harmonious mosaic of small mixed farms and woodland that makes up the High Weald is now considered to be a quintessentially English landscape. Beautiful, small-scale landscape shaped by man has inspired many people such as the architect Norman Shaw, the artist William Hunt, William Robinson, who pioneered the English natural garden style, and writers such as Rudyard Kipling and AA Milne.
- 4.6.9 Sense of history: As one of the best preserved medieval landscapes in north-west Europe, the High Weald has a strong sense of history, and this is enhanced by numerous churches and chapels, an abundance of traditional buildings and the remains of the former iron industry. The High Weald is extraordinarily well documented through old maps but these and the great extent of undisturbed ancient woodland which has preserved features from many different time periods still remain relatively unstudied.
- 4.6.10 Tranquillity: Buildings, tracks and the remains of industrial activities concealed by the High Weald's extensive woodland cover and overgrown hedgerows make the experience of this landscape today feel relatively tranquil, especially due to the close proximity of London and the busy coastal towns.
- 4.6.11 Recreation, biodiversity and geodiversity also contribute to the Weald's historic significance.



Vulnerability

- 4.6.12 Continuing high demand for housing in south-east England and rural areas in particular resulting in strong pressure for development on the edge of or adjacent to the High Weald AONB boundary and pressure to bring forward land for housing in and around larger villages threatening the dispersed settlement character of the landscape and the sustainable development of smaller settlements.
- 4.6.13 Historic buildings, historic routeways, boundaries and archaeological monuments are vulnerable to damage through lack of awareness, plough damage, poor maintenance or management.
- 4.6.14 Much below ground heritage may be discovered, particularly in woodlands and care should be taken not to damage or disturb buried heritage assets.
- 4.6.15 Plough and cultivation damage in a predominantly pastoral landscape, may be less of an issue than poach and animal damage. Woodland archaeology is susceptible to damage from forestry operations or wind-thrown trees in unmanaged woods.
- 4.6.16 Good management practices need to be maintained to ensure that historic parks and gardens continue to be key representative features of the High Weald landscape.
- 4.6.17 Emphasis should be placed on the need to protect and interpret the wealth of heritage present.
- 4.6.18 Until the 1950s the Weald was one of the slowest-changing regions in Britain. For 700 years prior to this time agriculture, the field shapes and sizes and the pattern of surrounding woodland and hedgerows hardly changed.

Since then farming and forestry, always difficult on the poor soils, have been pushed further to the economic margins by soaring land values with significant areas of land now devoid of productive agriculture. The majority of farmsteads are now residential hamlets and the decline in grazing animals and the industry associated with them is a major threat to the long-term management of species-rich grassland and heathland. Commercial coppicing has declined drastically although the Weald's woodmanship has been kept alive and may enjoy a period of revival with the increasing demand for wood fuel and renewable timber supplies.

- 4.6.19 An increase in road traffic on the characteristically small roads, winding lanes and historic routeways has been an issue, leading to conflicts between motorised traffic, pedestrians, horse-riders and cyclists and insensitive highway 'improvements'.
- 4.6.20 Development around built-up areas throughout south-east England has impacted on rural character. New land uses such as pony paddocks and associated domestic features such as tennis courts, street lighting and golf courses have impacted on character.

Existing Guidance

- 4.6.21 National Character Area profile 122: High Weald – the profile includes Statements of Environmental Opportunity. SEO 4 places an emphasis on maintaining and enhancing the dispersed settlement pattern, parkland and historic pattern and features of the routes of the High Weald. It encourages the use of locally characteristic materials and practices to ensure future development retains its distinctiveness and reaffirm sense of place. The emphasis is on:

- Appropriate approach to repair, restoration and conversion;
- Local vernacular and AONB design guidance;
- Traditional land management;
- Public access;
- Community involvement and economic partnerships;
- Traditional approach including literary and artistic;
- Information including historic mapping;
- Core component of natural beauty; and
- Ecology.

Opportunities

- 4.6.22 The Local Plan should seek to define guidance which addresses concerns regarding the vulnerability of the High Weald as set out above.
- 4.6.23 The National Character Area profile lists opportunities for conserving and enhancing the historic character of the High Weald as set out above.
- 4.6.24 Opportunities for improved visitor management should be considered alongside better access for walking and cycling.

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS

4.7 INTRODUCTION TO SETTLEMENTS

4.7.1 Most heritage assets in the District are found in settlements, many of which date to the medieval period. The landscape has driven settlement pattern in the District; the wooded areas of the High Weald compared to the Downs resulted in the seasonal movement of livestock and over time led to the creation of dispersed settlement forms. Dispersed settlements were also a consequence of peculiarities in Anglo-Saxon inheritance traditions e.g. the gavelkind system. Social, economic and cultural activities, for example the arrival of the railways and the growth of the iron industry, has spurred development of many of the District's towns and villages. In Edenbridge, the tanning industry led greatly to its prosperity and influenced the type of development there. The role of religion has also been important in the formation of ancient settlements, the parish church often being the centre of the historic village. In turn, settlements have had a bearing on the historic landscape, and have influenced the positioning of transport routes and certain industries.

4.7.2 The settlement theme has been divided into five sub-themes, which correspond broadly to types of settlement that have most significantly shaped the historic environment today. These are:

- Ancient settlements;
- Medieval settlements;
- Homes of the Gentry;
- Market towns; and
- 20th century expansion.

4.7.3 The following section draws together historical research from secondary sources with information collated from Conservation Area Appraisals, the Historic Environment Record, Kent Historic Towns survey and the AONB management plans.

Fig 33 Market Square, Westerham





THE
GEORGE AND DRAGON
TRADITIONAL 16TH CENTURY
COACHING HOUSE

TAVERN

GEORGE & DRAGON

FOOD
SERVED
ALL DAY
EVERY DAY

ROUTE
TO
THE
TAVERN

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS

 Ancient settlements

 Medieval settlements

 Homes of the Gentry

 Market towns

 20th century expansion

4.8 ANCIENT SETTLEMENTS

Historic Development

4.8.1 The District has a rich ancient history that dates back to the Palaeolithic period, evidenced by the discovery of Palaeolithic handaxes from across the District. Mesolithic sites at Shoreham, Chevening and Lullingstone give strong indication of settlers at this time. The first farmers settled in Kent around 4000 BC, many as migrants from mainland Europe. They cleared woodland for fields and pasture, cultivated crops, and crafted pottery.¹ Neolithic remains are rare and include flint implements found in the Darent Valley, burnt mounds near Seal, Neolithic axes at Kemsing and Neolithic pottery at Stonewall Park in Chiddingstone. Some of the earliest settlements were in the Darent Valley. The site of a Bronze Age burial ground and Iron Age fort was discovered at Otford, and another can be seen at Eynsford on the high ground of Lullingstone Park.²

4.8.2 During the Iron Age, the bulk of the population worked the land, but small-scale industries developed that took advantage of the iron-rich deposits of the Weald in the south of the District. Evidence of Iron Age occupation includes an Iron Age hillfort at Squerryes Park. The Romans settled in the fertile river valley of the Darent which provided an easy line of communication. They utilised the valley for transport, and evidence of early occupation include a Romano-British villa at Lullingstone and remains of three elite Roman villas in the valley. Many minor roads probably existed to link outlying farmsteads and villas to settlements and roads, such as at Plaxtol near Sevenoaks, whereas strategic routes include the Roman London to Lewes road that passes through the west of the District. Many of the roads may have been merely tracks, possibly of pre-Roman origin.³

Summary of assets

4.8.3 Archaeological artefacts and features:

- **Palaeolithic** - several Palaeolithic handaxes and flint remnants have been discovered across the District.
- **Mesolithic (10,000 BC to 4,000BC) and Neolithic (4,000 BC to 2,100 BC)** – important Mesolithic sites have been discovered at Shoreham, Chevening and Lullingstone. Known Neolithic remains include a prehistoric gully at Sevenoaks Quarry, two burnt mounds near Seal, and a prehistoric pit at Otford. Stone hoe, flint implements, flint flakes and Neolithic axes have been found in the Darent Valley and around Kemsing. Flint implements, pot boilers, calcined flints and charcoal was discovered at Knole Park.
- **Bronze Age (2,100BC - 600BC)** – archaeological remains from the Bronze Age are found across the District. Cremation burials and a barrow were discovered in Kemsing and a bowl barrow was discovered at Penshurst and Otford Mount. A Bronze Age arrowhead was discovered at 2 Coppings Brook Cottages. Other features include a Bronze Age pit at Halstead Place School, hammer at Brasted and flints and pottery at Lullingstone Country Park.
- **Iron Age (600BC to AD43)** – coins and pottery from the Iron Age have been discovered at Watery Lane in Kemsing, Chested House north-east of Chiddingstone, Riverhead, Otford and Dunton Green. Iron Age pits have been excavated at Hogthrough Hill, Cockerhurst Road in Shoreham, Old Downs in Hartley and in Horton Kirby and Darent parish. Evidence of an early Iron Age hill fort is found at Squerryes Park and a farmstead dating from this time can be found at Farningham on the western bank of the River Darent. Another late Iron Age farmstead is located at Eynsford. At the eastern end of Lullingstone Park is evidence of Iron Age settlement, including fragments of pottery, flint flakes and iron slag.

1 Kent County Council, *Exploring Kent's Past: Simple Timeline*, 2017, <https://goo.gl/9ZkQx4> (accessed 18 August 2017).

2 Kent County Council, Historic Environment Record.

3 D. Killingray and E. Purves, *Sevenoaks: An Historical Dictionary*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/MjhDx8> (accessed 18 August 2017).

- **Roman (43 – 410 AD)** – the Roman Lullingstone Villa is perhaps the most notable feature from this period and its significance derives from the importance of the Christian evidence from the site. Roman brick and tiles, pottery and coins have also been discovered across the District. A Roman-British bloomery was discovered near Chiddingstone. Evidence of Roman buildings have been discovered at Halstead, Horton Kirby/South Darent and Farningham, which is the site of a Roman villa bath house. Nearby, Franks Hall Roman Villa, located close to the River Darent, shows indication of great quantities of Roman bricks, tiles and pottery. A second century cinerary urn containing human bones was discovered in Sevenoaks town.
- **Early Medieval (410-1066)** - Sevenoaks District contains important Anglo-Saxon remains such as Otford Archbishops Palace and major Anglo-Saxon cemeteries towards the Downs and along Pilgrims Way. It was also the site of perhaps two important battles at Otford and Sevenoaks. This period is also likely to have had a significant impact on the local landscape.

4.8.4 Ancient routes include Pilgrim's Way in the North Downs and an ancient trackway passing the Iron-Age hillfort at Oldbury (see section 5.10).

Current condition

4.8.5 Further information is required on the condition of field monuments and other archaeological remains, particularly for non-designated heritage assets.

Significance

- 4.8.6 The prehistoric age of archaeological features mean that they are of high evidential value; physical remains of past human activity are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them. In the absence of written records, archaeological deposits provide the only source of evidence about ancient settlements.
- 4.8.7 The ancient routes have historical value as they give a sense of past aspects of life and are an important reminder of the different ways in which people for centuries have communicated and travelled through the landscape.

Vulnerability

- 4.8.8 Archaeological remains in settlements are perhaps most vulnerable to redevelopment. Any development proposal in areas likely to contain archaeology needs to contain an assessment of the likely impact of the proposal. This impact needs to be avoided if possible or mitigated through recording where this is not possible.
- 4.8.9 Ancient settlements are vulnerable to the threat of through traffic, which creates noise, pollution, and (for heavy vehicles) vibration. Heavy traffic also increases the risk of accidental physical damage, as well as inhibit the ability of pedestrians to appreciate or enjoy old buildings. In extreme cases, it will blight the use (or re-use) of properties fronting busy roads.
- 4.8.10 Ancient settlements are particularly vulnerable to neglect through ignorance, for example through a lack of knowledge or understanding about the existence or significance of sites.
- 4.8.11 Archaeological features are especially vulnerable to climate change, for example flooding and pollution.

Existing guidance

- 4.8.12 Between 1998 and 2004 Kent County Council undertook a survey of 46 small towns, including Sevenoaks, Westerham and Edenbridge, as part of the English Heritage's Extensive Urban Survey. In both towns, the team identified the need for further research on structures, artefacts and possibly large scale excavation of adjacent properties. Elsewhere, little research has been undertaken on the origins of other settlements in the District.

Opportunities

- 4.8.13 Seek opportunities to extend the knowledge base, including academic research. This could be through collaboration with stakeholder groups and the public.
- 4.8.14 There is an opportunity to map all known early settlements and document their attributes to better understand their heritage significance.
- 4.8.15 Investigate the potential for revealing or interpreting evidence of early habitation.



Fig 34 Signage at Lullingstone Roman Villa

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS

 Ancient settlements

 Medieval settlements

 Homes of the Gentry

 Market towns

 20th century expansion

4.9 MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENTS

Historic Development

- 4.9.1 Some medieval settlements in the District originated via a system of transhumance - the seasonal movement of livestock from one location to another along drove ways from the North Downs to the Weald. It was the combination of transhumance and the medieval gavelkind system, which meant a man's property was divided equally amongst his sons, that led to a much more dispersed settlement pattern of small hamlets and isolated farms, unique to Kent and particularly characteristic of the Weald.¹ These settlements were often connected with their neighbours by roads and shared common land. Bakehouses, pinfolds and ponds were communal features.²
- 4.9.2 The District has a predominantly dispersed settlement pattern with isolated farmsteads dating to medieval origin. Clusters of farmsteads are unusual, and so hamlets describe a range of small settlements that typically comprise a group of houses, sometimes, but not always, associated with a farm. Some hamlets or small villages may have evolved from the splitting of an original farm holding through gavelkind.³ Settlements with 'Street' or 'Green' in their name are indicative of medieval development of secondary settlements.⁴
- 4.9.3 Most of Kent's larger towns and villages in the Middle Ages were found in the east of the county while the west had more scattered settlement. However, rural industries such as the iron industry, led to the growth of places like Edenbridge. Alongside industry, large numbers of water mills, bridges and roads spurred the

development of hamlets and villages. Churches were paramount to medieval life⁵ (see section 5.10 below).

- 4.9.4 Some medieval settlements have survived to become modern day hamlets and villages which play a key role in the historic character of the District. Some settlements no longer survive, and it is archaeological evidence which is vital for understanding aspects of medieval society.⁶ The timber-framed vernacular buildings from the medieval period are perhaps the most distinctive type of Kentish building but are often concealed by later alterations.⁷

Summary of assets

- 4.9.5 **Archaeological features** – shows evidence of medieval fabric and construction and also evidence the origins and development of settlements.
- 4.9.6 **Medieval farmsteads** - there is a high density of isolated farmsteads of medieval origin in the District. The 'farmsteads' theme gives more detailed information in Section 5.1.
- 4.9.7 **Medieval settlement patterns** - street and plot pattern characteristic of medieval tenure.
- 4.9.8 **Vernacular buildings** – large number of surviving timber-framed buildings, in particular open halls, aisled halls and Wealden hall houses – arguably the most important medieval inheritance.
- 4.9.9 **Castles and manors** – such as at Eynsford and Hever. Eynsford Castle was built by William of Eynsford and a rare example of an early Norman 'enclosure castle'. Hever Castle was originally a medieval defensive castle, built in 1270.

1 J. Weekes, *The Medieval Period, South East Research Framework: Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the Medieval Period*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/Zgt5mE> (accessed August 18, 2017).

2 *ibid.*

3 Kent Downs AONB, *Farmstead Guidance: Part 4*, 2014, p. 11

4 *ibid.*

5 J. Weekes, *The Medieval Period, South East Research Framework: Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the Medieval Period*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/Zgt5mE> (accessed August 18, 2017).

6 *ibid.*

7 J. Newman, *Kent: West and the Weald*, London, Yale University Press, 2012.



Fig 35 Medieval settlements around the District

- 4.9.10 **Medieval routes and tracks** - early roads and paths are still traceable in many places, even where the buildings are more recent (see 'Ancient Routes' sub-theme in section 5.7).

Current condition

- 4.9.11 Many medieval settlements in the District have Conservation Area status, recognising the survival of many early buildings. Many are also within Green Belt designation and the Kent Downs and High Weald AONBs. The management plans outline guidance to protect their character and limit encroachment and growth of these settlements.
- 4.9.12 While dispersed settlements are particularly difficult to investigate archaeologically, a scheme of interdisciplinary village based projects, including field walking, might begin to characterise the medieval rural landscape around current villages more clearly.⁸

Significance

- 4.9.13 Archaeological features offer evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence of past human activity.
- 4.9.14 Medieval settlements in the District are of high aesthetic value, providing visual delight and intellectual stimulation. The continuity of habitation through to the present may give the towns, villages and hamlets strong historic value.
- 4.9.15 The oldest settlements in the District have high communal significance, representing collective experience or shared memories.

⁸ J. Weekes, *The Medieval Period, South East Research Framework: Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the Medieval Period*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/Zgt5mE> (accessed August 18, 2017).

Vulnerability

- 4.9.16 Medieval settlements are perhaps most vulnerable to unsympathetic development that can reduce the significance of heritage assets and the quality of heritage asset groups e.g. conservation areas.
- 4.9.17 Medieval settlements are vulnerable to the threat of through traffic, which creates noise, pollution and (for heavy vehicles) vibration. This could result in an increased risk of accidental physical damage.
- 4.9.18 Heavy traffic also increases the risk of accidental physical damage, as well as inhibit the ability of pedestrians to appreciate or enjoy old buildings. In extreme cases, it will blight the use (or re-use) of properties fronting busy roads.

Existing guidance

- 4.9.19 Conservation Area Appraisals provide guidance to protect the medieval character of the historic core of many of these settlements. Appraisals give guidance regarding how to manage change positively.

Opportunities

- 4.9.20 There are a number of deserted medieval settlements of which targeted village-based studies would be useful to undertake to understand why these were abandoned.
- 4.9.21 An opportunity exists to extend the knowledge base, including academic research.
- 4.9.22 In conjunction with the Kent Historic Environment Record, identify gaps in knowledge and areas for further investigation (including studies of key buildings).
- 4.9.23 There is scope for investment in infrastructure to support rural services and community life.

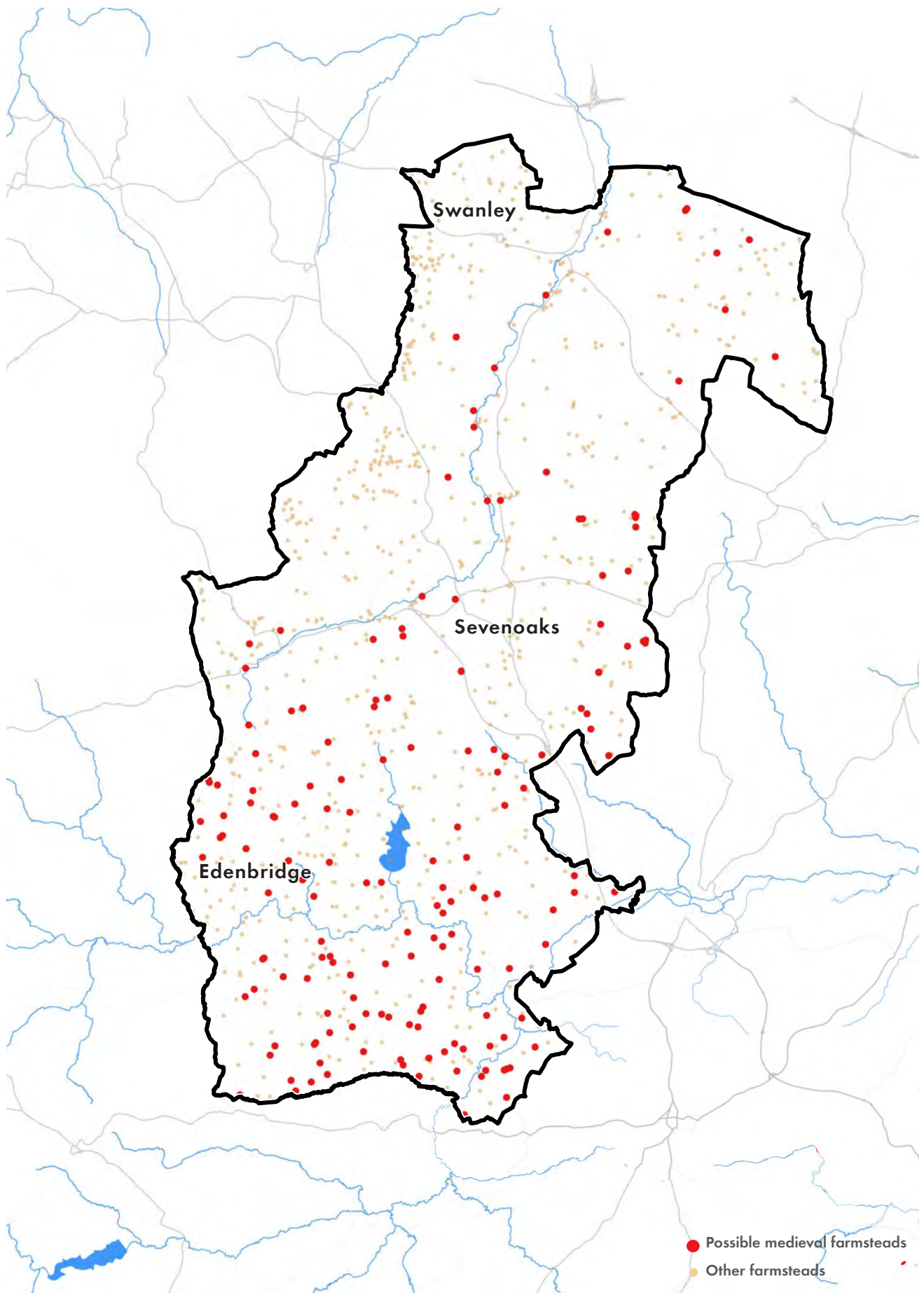


Fig 36 Possible medieval farmsteads in the District - buildings and listed buildings of medieval date that are within 50 metres of a farmsread have been extracted from the farmsteads record. Please note there will be some medieval farmsteads that have been missed out of this narrower dataset because they do not have surviving buildings, and equally there will be some false positives. See the 'Farmsteads' theme in Section 5.1 for more information (Source: Kent County Council)

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS

 Ancient settlements

 Medieval settlements

 Homes of the Gentry

 Market towns

 20th century expansion

4.10 HOMES OF THE GENTRY

Historic Development

- 4.10.1 Sevenoaks District has been the home of wealthy landowners since at least the Early Medieval period. The Wealden Hall house was an early type of "gentry house", a distinctive vernacular timber-framed hall house common in the medieval period.
- 4.10.2 After the Norman Conquest, manors were built on cleared land in areas of Chartland, and by the 13th century, manors had developed at Knole (1281), Black Charles (1292) and Blackhall (1313), the largest of these being Knole.¹ The unique gavelkind system meant that manorial lands were rarer than in other areas. The area's position close to London later attracted gentry and prosperous Londoners, including lawyers and merchants, moved out of the city to the space and clean air of the country. They purchased land and built there, typical of development in West Kent at this time. Sir John de Pulteney, who served four times as Mayor of London and was a major English entrepreneur and property owner, built Penshurst Place in around 1341.
- 4.10.3 In the 15th and 16th centuries, properties were characterised by buildings and houses with the focus on extant features, for example moats, bastions or garden walls. From the 1600s, new architectural features of the country house emerged, drawing on the Renaissance. In the Regency period and mid 19th century, smaller houses and suburban villas multiplied.
- 4.10.4 Country houses and estates in early 19th century reflected a shift from classicism to Tudor revival. At Chiddingstone in 1805, Queen Anne house was demolished, the park was enlarged and a lake was created. A new picturesque castle-style house was built further away from the village, to the designs of William Atkinson. The

reconstruction of Chiddingstone reflects the 18th and 19th century reshaping of estate landscapes through the influence of the Picturesque movement.²

Summary of assets

- 4.10.5 **Wealden Hall houses** - medieval vernacular timber-framed hall houses, home to the early gentry.
- 4.10.6 **Manors** – fortified manor houses, for example Penshurst Place. Wealden timber-framed buildings of 15th, 16th and 17th century.
- 4.10.7 **Elizabethan and Jacobean mansions** – for example, Franks Hall at Horton Kirby, dated 1591. It survives as one of the completest Elizabethan houses in the county.
- 4.10.8 **Country houses** – developed after the 16th century, for example Edenbridge House (grade II listed).
- 4.10.9 **Villas** are small Palladian rural houses built during the 18th century, the term later extending to large neoclassical and Italianate houses in urban areas.
- 4.10.10 **Parks and Gardens** are an important part of the District's heritage. The south-east region is home to 23% of all registered parks and gardens, demonstrating a higher concentration here than in other parts of England.³ Sevenoaks District has 17 Registered Parks and Gardens in total. These are:
- Hever Castle
 - Penshurst Place
 - Stonewall Park
 - Swaylands
 - Chiddingstone Castle
 - Redleaf

¹ D. Killingray, *Influences shaping the human landscape of Sevenoaks area since c. 1600*, 2010, <https://goo.gl/3vVlmG> (accessed 18 August 2017).

² J. Newman, *Kent: West and the Weald*, London, Yale University Press, 2012.

³ Tunbridge Wells Borough, *A Review of the Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens for Tunbridge Wells Borough*, 2010, p. 4.

- Hall Place
- Long Barn
- Chartwell
- Riverhill House
- Knole
- The Japanese Garden, Bitchet Wood
- Chevening
- Squerries Court
- Combe Park
- Lullingstone Castle
- Franks Hall

4.10.11 In addition, there are 37 non-Registered properties in the Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens (2011-2013).

Notable architects and famous residents

4.10.12 Notable architects include:

- William Atkinson;
- Ewan Christian;
- John Oldrid Scott;
- A. W. Blomfield;
- Ernest Newton;
- Norman Shaw;
- Sir T. G. Jackson; and
- George Devey.

4.10.13 Famous residents include Chartwell's Winston Churchill and Major General James Wolfe who resided at Quebec House in Westerham. The English poet, novelist and garden designer Vita Sackville-West was brought up at Knole.

Current condition

4.10.14 Many houses have been extended and remodelled over the centuries, creating complex forms. Most houses are in full occupation and appropriately maintained, although there are possibly some outbuildings that may be vacant or underused and therefore at risk.



Fig 38 Franks Hall, Horton Kirby (Source: Bromley Archives)

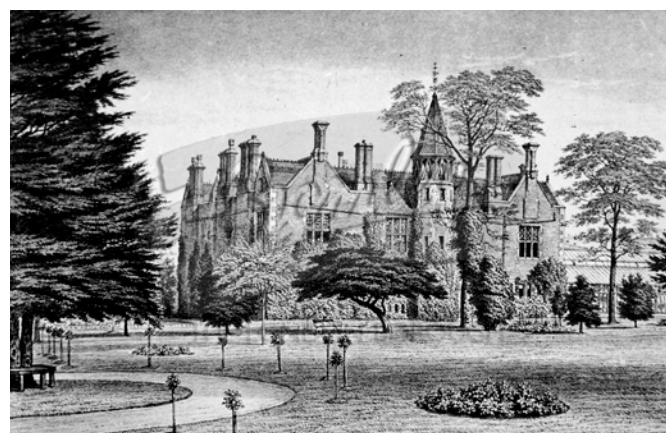


Fig 37 Franks Hall, Horton Kirby (Source: Bromley Archives)

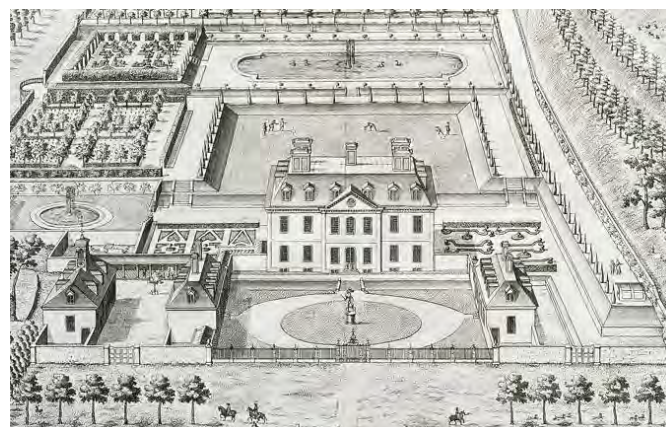


Fig 39 Squerries Court in the 18th century. (Source: Image via Squerries website)

Significance

- 4.10.15 The architectural and historic significance of the District's many country houses and mansions is recognised by listed status and often high grading.
- 4.10.16 Stately homes and historic parks and gardens as of particular importance to Kent.⁴ The south-east has more Registered Parks and Gardens than any other English region, and Kent has almost twice as many as any other county in the region.⁴
- 4.10.17 Within the county, Registered Parks and Gardens are concentrated in a central belt, associated with the North Downs, Wealden Greensand and High Weald landscape character areas.
- 4.10.18 The principal assets relating to this theme are significant for their aesthetic value, historical associations and evidential value of changing fashions. The buildings often have a strong relationship with their setting, and some are associated with influential architects or famous persons.

⁴ Tunbridge Wells Borough, *A Review of the Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens for Tunbridge Wells Borough*, 2010, p. 4.

Vulnerability

- 4.10.19 Many large houses have successfully been split into flats, but too many small units can jeopardise the integrity of the interior or create parking problems. Partitioning estates into small parcels can erode the appreciation of the historic relationship between buildings and landscape.
- 4.10.20 Encroachment on the original parkland can reduce the integrity of the site, as can changing-land use or planting which can affect the coherence of the original design.
- 4.10.21 Development can affect the setting of both the landscape and any individual heritage assets.

Tourism pressures

- 4.10.22 Overcrowding at peak periods can put a strain on the fabric of old buildings. Floors, surfaces, textiles, gardens can be eroded or prone to accidental damage.

Existing guidance

- 4.10.23 The Review of the Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens for Sevenoaks District 2011-2013 is part of the evidence base of historic, designed parks, and open



Fig 40 Chartwell



Fig 41 Chiddingstone Castle



Fig 42 Penshurst Place

spaces specific to the District. It also provides information for use in development management decisions. An objective of the Review was to raise the standards for surveying and describing sites whilst encouraging active public participation.⁵

Opportunities

4.10.24 There is an opportunity to develop a greater understanding of the operational needs of major houses, including their roles within larger agricultural estates.

4.10.25 For houses open to the public, there are opportunities for marketing and information exchange.

⁵ Kent Gardens Trust, *Edenbridge House, Sevenoaks*, <https://goo.gl/DDPK7A> (accessed 18 August 2017).

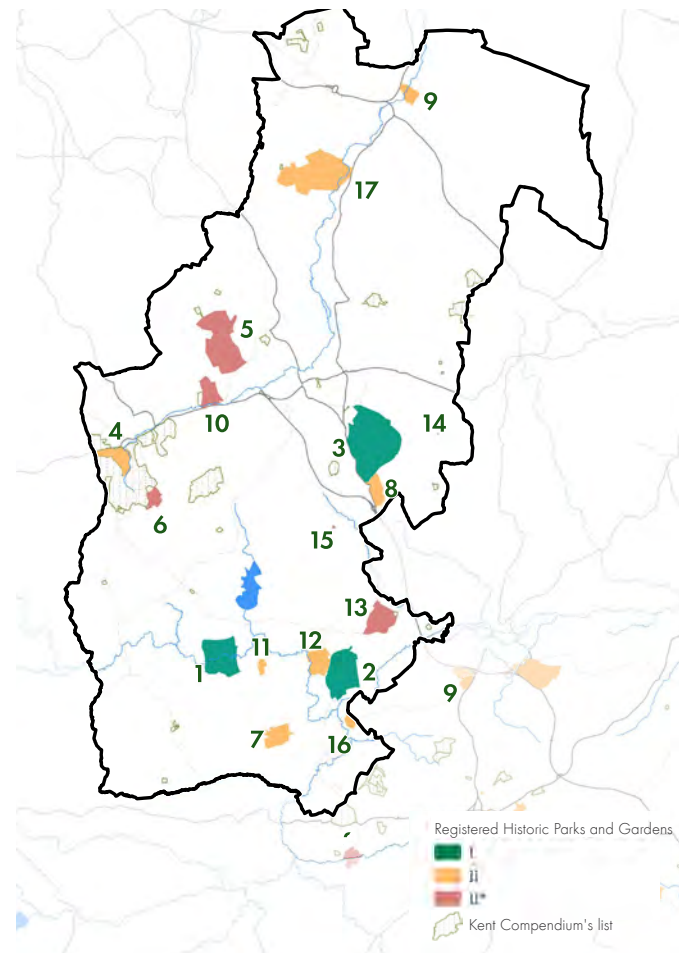


Fig 46 Parks and Gardens in the District



Fig 43 Quebec House



Fig 44 Gardens at Penshurst Place



Fig 45 Knole

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS

 Ancient settlements

 Medieval settlements

 Homes of the Gentry

 Market towns

 20th century expansion

4.11 MARKET TOWNS

Historic Development

- 4.11.1 The market towns of Sevenoaks, Edenbridge and Westerham are a distinguished part of the District's heritage. Sevenoaks town began as a market place of possible pre-Conquest origin at a junction of two important routes to London and Dartford. There is evidence to suggest an early market at around 1281, later followed by a church and manor. Buildings were linked by narrow alleyways with shambles where animals were slaughtered and fish and meat sold. Corn-milling, paper-making and brewing were key industries in and around the town. From 1456, successive archbishops at Knole fostered the town's economy, establishing it as a principal centre in West Kent.¹
- 4.11.2 The 'neat handsome well built market-town' of Westerham, described by Defoe in 1761, was granted market town status in 1227². In 1621 the weekly market was held on Wednesdays next to The George and Dragon Inn and had 13 market stalls.³ The town expanded with the coming of the railways and small industries, its historic form focused on the market square and green. Today the town has a bustling market and is a destination for shopping and tourism.⁴
- 4.11.3 Edenbridge also has a thriving market, where locals and tourists can sample the District's finest local produce. The small country town is the shopping and commercial centre for a number of outlying villages. The Wealden iron industry drove the town's expansion in the 15th and 16th century and it became the local market centre. The town declined in prosperity in tandem with the decline of the iron industry,

until the construction of two railways in the 19th century which led to a rapid increase in population. There is a high concentration of listed buildings which line the old Roman Road from London to Lewes, as well as 20th century expansion outside of the historic core.⁵

Summary of assets

- 4.11.4 **Archaeological features** – archaeological work has revealed a considerable amount of information about the historic towns of Sevenoaks, Edenbridge and Westerham which offer a greater understanding of the origins of these centres and how they developed. Examples of finds include medieval graves at St. Nicholas Church in Sevenoaks, the site of Stangrove Manor House (the medieval manor house of Edenbridge), and a 5th to 8th century bank and ditch at Westerham.⁶
- 4.11.5 **Medieval buildings (pre 1590)** – the old part of Sevenoaks town consists of many timber-framed vernacular buildings variedly altered. 15th and 16th century timber-framed houses centre on the junction of High Street and Church Street in Edenbridge. Churches are also important reminders of the towns' medieval pasts.
- 4.11.6 **Post-medieval (1590 onwards)** – these include domestic, commercial and industrial structures, places of worship, schools, police and fire stations and railway stations.

Current condition

- 4.11.7 The green-belt restrictions precluded more extensive development around the market towns, and most of the surrounding countryside is still unspoiled, except for motorways. In Sevenoaks, Knole Park to the east has also acted as a barrier to development.

1 D. Killingray, *Influences shaping the human landscape of Sevenoaks area since c. 1600*, 2010, <https://goo.gl/3vWlmG> (accessed 18 August 2017).

2 J. Newman, *Kent: West and the Weald*, London, Yale University Press, 2012.

3 Kent County Council, *Kent Historic Towns Survey - Westerham*, 2004.

4 Sevenoaks District Council, *Westerham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*, 2014.

5 Sevenoaks District Council, *Edenbridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*, 2012.

6 Kent County Council, *Kent Historic Towns Survey - Westerham, Edenbridge and Sevenoaks*, 2004.

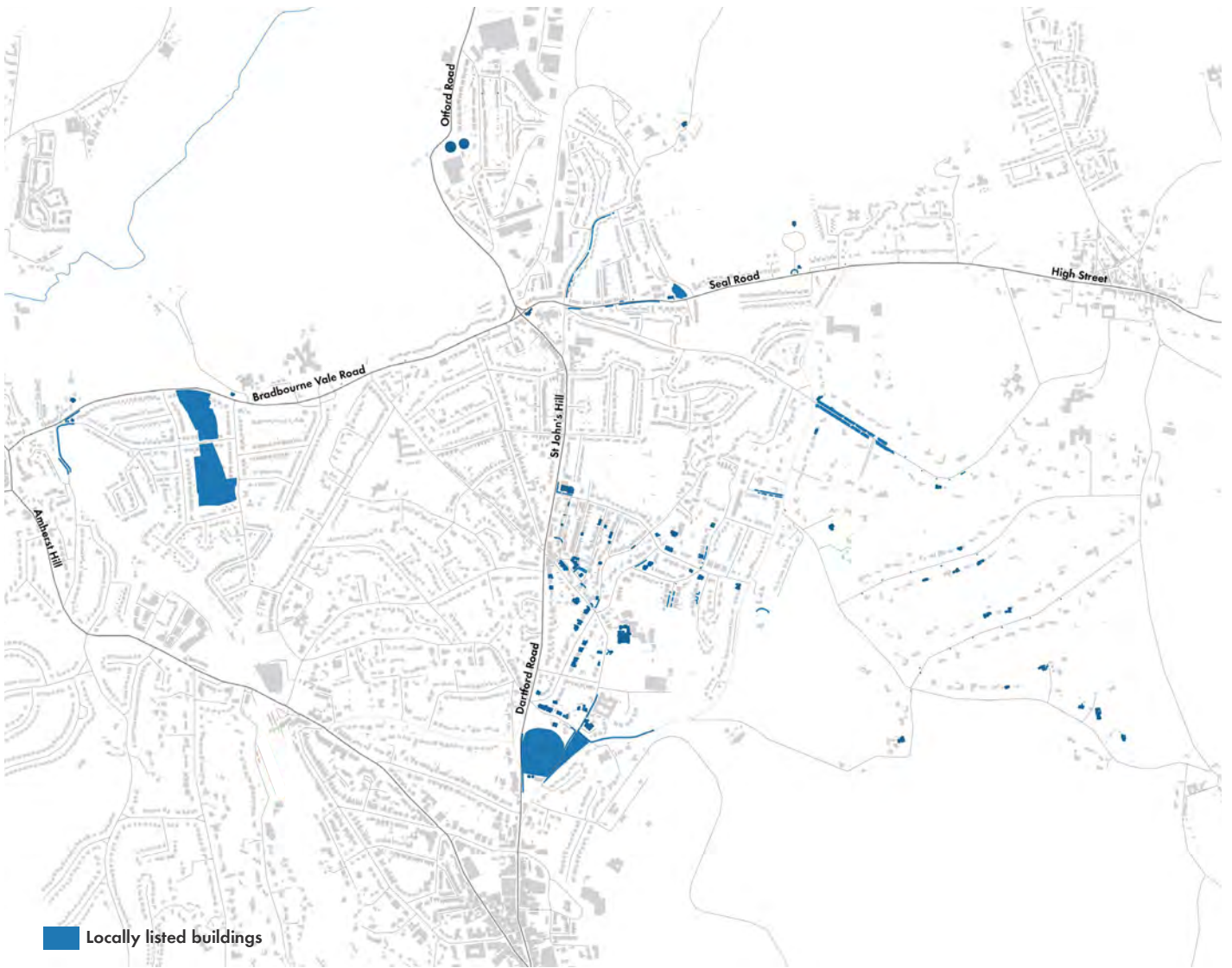


Fig 47 Locally listed buildings in Sevenoaks town

Significance

- 4.11.8 The towns are of high historic and architectural significance because of the quality of their buildings and spaces. Both Sevenoaks High Street and Westerham Conservation Area contain over 100 listed buildings, demonstrating their historic importance. The Edenbridge Conservation Area contains 50 listed buildings.

Vulnerability

- 4.11.9 Many of the historic features that give market towns their character are not protected by designation, whether through listing or conservation areas. Non-designated buildings and features, such as street furniture and pavement surfaces, combine to give a place its character and yet they are vulnerable to unsympathetic change, alteration or destruction.
- 4.11.10 Traffic through the town centres create noise, pollution and (for heavy vehicles) vibration. There is an increased risk of accidental physical damage. Heavy traffic may also inhibit the ability of pedestrians to appreciate or enjoy old buildings. In extreme cases, it will blight the use (or re-use) of properties fronting busy roads.
- 4.11.11 The Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans set out the following threats which may harm the historic character of the towns:
- Infill development that does not respect the traditional form and plot size of original buildings;
 - Loss of traditional details to unlisted buildings, such as timber windows and doors, and abundance of cheap low-quality replacement materials;
 - Road markings and poor signage are too dominant in places and can detract from the historic environment;
 - Replacement shop-fronts that are out of scale or that use inappropriate materials; and
 - Loss of historic paving and kerbs.

Existing guidance

- 4.11.12 The latest Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Westerham and Edenbridge was undertaken in 2014 and 2012 respectively. There are seven Conservation Areas in Sevenoaks town and its suburbs. These are:
- Brittain's Farm;
 - Granville Road and Eardley Road;
 - Hartslands
 - Sevenoaks High Street
 - Kippington and Oakhill Road
 - The Vine; and
 - Vine Court.
- 4.11.13 The Sevenoaks Locally Listed Buildings SPD raises awareness and enhances protection of locally notable historic assets. The Allocations and Development Plan (ADMP) states that "proposals that affect a heritage asset, or its setting, will be permitted where the development conserves or enhances the character, appearance and setting of the asset" (para 2.12).
- 4.11.14 The Kent Historic Towns Survey for Sevenoaks, Westerham and Edenbridge (2004) strengthens the evidence base for the evaluation of archaeological and historic remains.

Opportunities

- 4.11.15 An opportunity exists to increase understanding of hidden or under-appreciated heritage assets, including 20th century buildings which are likely to be understudied. There is an opportunity to identify eye-sores and outworn areas, as well as opportunities for renewal.
- 4.11.16 There are opportunities for investment and improvements in the town centre, for example Leathermarket in Edenbridge.
- 4.11.17 Subject to wider discussions regarding visitor strategies and branding initiatives there is the potential for new tourism and marketing opportunities to engage visitors and locals in the unique heritage of the towns.

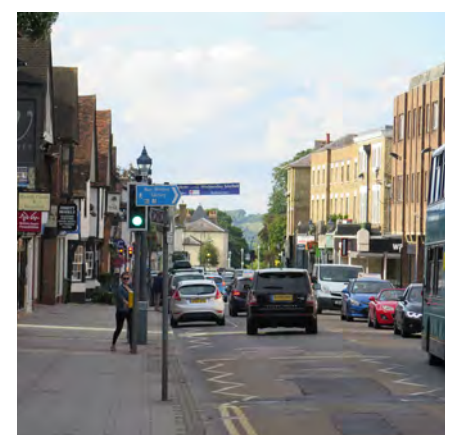


Fig 48 Photos of Westerham (top row), Edenbridge (middle row) and Sevenoaks (bottom)

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS

 Ancient settlements

 Medieval settlements

 Homes of the Gentry

 Market towns

 20th century expansion

4.12 20TH CENTURY EXPANSION

Historic Development

4.12.1 Following the arrival of the railways in the 1850s, the suburbs grew rapidly around Sevenoaks and other small towns within reach of London. Sevenoaks began to develop as a dormitory town and a large amount of housing was built following the arrival of the railways in 1862 and 1868, which made commuting to London possible. Land was sold and estates were built on, for example Vine Court in 1878 and Kippington Fields in 1890. Commuters' housing continued to be built, absorbing Riverhead and Dunton Green, interspersed with small-scale industry.¹

4.12.2 Commuting was given a further boost when the line was electrified in 1935. This coincided with a more general increase in house-building in the 1920s and 1930s. Land outside London was relatively cheap and large estates were sold off for housing, for example at Chipstead, Wilderness and Bradbourne.² Examples of interwar development include chalet bungalow houses on Bradbourne estate just south of the A25, and the Wickenden estate east of St. John's Hill. The London overspill added two new suburbs to Edenbridge (1959-51 and 1969-71), Spitals Cross and Stangrove housing estates, both designed by the LCC Architect's Department. Industrial estates grew to service and support them.³

4.12.3 New Ash Green was developed by Span and their architects, Eric Lyons and Partners, in the 1960s in an initiative led by the Greater London Council. The housing minister who gave permission for the development spoke of his vision for the scheme: "I want to see planned concentrated buildings, preserving all the countryside intact...this may well be a model of

how to get civilized modern community living in an area of beautiful landscape".⁴ The planning and management concept of New Ash Green has been preserved, despite a decline in the quality of architecture.⁵

4.12.4 Alongside population growth was the growth of other social and cultural infrastructure, such as schools, offices, shops, hospitals etc. for which the growing population in the suburbs fuelled a demand.

4.12.5 New roads and motorways were constructed which both supported and accelerated growth; the M25 opened in 1975 and had an adverse impact on the heritage and landscape character of the District. Suburban growth is evident in Sevenoaks, more so than in neighbouring boroughs further south and east, however much of the District is designated as Green Belt, restricting the spread of urban areas into the surrounding countryside.

Summary of assets

- Late Victorian residential;
- Edwardian residential;
- Inter-war housing;
- Span development at New Ash Green;
- Garages and petrol stations;
- Tree-lined streets and grass verges; and
- 20th century public / cultural / civic buildings.

Current condition

4.12.6 Houses in New Ash Green appear to be fully occupied and are in fair condition for their age. The communal gardens and open spaces are well maintained. The shopping centre seems to be struggling.

¹ D. Killingray, *Influences shaping the human landscape of Sevenoaks area since c. 1600*, 2010, <https://goo.gl/3vVlmG> (accessed 18 August 2017).

² *ibid.*

³ Sevenoaks District Council, *Edenbridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*, 2012.

⁴ J. Newman, *Kent: West and the Weald*, London, Yale University Press, 2012, p. 425

⁵ *ibid.*

Significance

- 4.12.7 The suburbs of Sevenoaks and Edenbridge are of low significance architecturally and historically.
- 4.12.8 New Ash Green's earliest housing, as well as some of its planning principles, are interesting aesthetically and socially. Span housing is distinctive for the way in which the buildings were designed to integrate with the landscape.

Vulnerability

- 4.12.9 There is a risk of inappropriate alterations to homes, through poor quality repairs or unsuitable extensions, especially under permitted development rights. There are no designated heritage assets. There are a series of covenants in place.

Existing guidance

- 4.12.10 There is no current Council guidance on New Ash Green and there is no conservation area, but the Village Association provides useful information.

Opportunities

- 4.12.11 Consider designating New Ash Green as a Conservation Area and seek opportunities to protect the special relationship between the buildings and landscape. Implement public realm strategies to improve the town centre.



Fig 49 New Ash Green housing



Fig 50 Plan of New Ash Green



Fig 51 Span housing

5

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES



Agriculture



Industry



War and defence



Transport



Religion

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: AGRICULTURE



Farmsteads



Orchards



Hop growing

5.1 FARMSTEADS

Historic Development

5.1.1 Traditional farmsteads date from before 1900 and many have medieval origins, whilst some farmstead sites have origins in the Anglo-Saxon period or earlier. They display a strong degree of local variation in their layout, scale and building form, which reflect deep-rooted local tradition and national influences. Between 1900 and 1950, there was little new building due to a long farming depression that had begun in the 1870s. After this period, most new builds comprised Dutch barns, hygienic dairies, milking parlours and architectural showpieces. Wide-span multi-purpose sheds became commonplace, often with associated hardstandings for vehicles and moving stock. The sheds were built on-site or adjacent to older farmsteads.¹

5.1.2 Farmsteads have historic links with agricultural processes and industry in the Weald. Kent has long supported a mix of farming, including pasture, cereals and other arables. Sheep rearing was especially important to support wool production and cattle rearing and fattening has been a principal feature of the Weald from the medieval period. Fruit growing, market gardening and the hop industry peaked in the mid 19th century. Farming historically worked alongside rural industries such as cloth making, the iron industry, quarrying and the export of woodland produce.²

Settlement patterns

5.1.3 Farmsteads sited among small-medium scale and irregular fields are often associated with ancient woodland, with the smallest fields located in parts of High and Low Weald. In the Low Weald today there are larger farms, fields and estates than in the past, changing the appearance of the landscape.

¹ English Heritage et al., *Kent Farmsteads Guidance: Part 1 Farmsteads Assessment Framework*, 2014, <https://goo.gl/xXKGnW> (Accessed 21 August 2017).

² *ibid.*

5.1.4 Farmsteads can be sited amongst irregular patterns of enclosure often with a mix of straight and pre-18th century wavy boundaries, a predominant fieldscape across Kent.

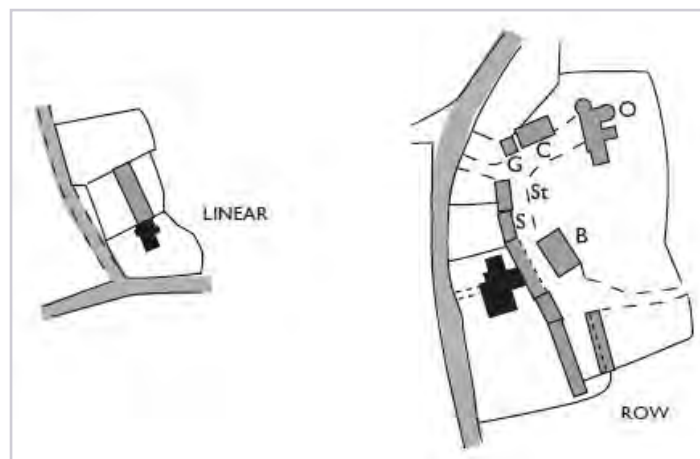
5.1.5 Farmsteads are more rarely sited amongst straight-sided enclosures, such as the enclosure of uncultivated land (heathland and parts of eastern Kent Downs).

Summary of assets

5.1.6 Farmsteads may be categorised by condition, significance and vulnerability. Assets can be grouped by plan type and building type. The table opposite summarises the assets.

5.1.7 Courtyard plan farmsteads are the basic form of farmstead around one or more yard and comprise 72% of recorded sites.³ Dispersed plans are where the buildings and yard are scattered within the outer boundary, a distinctive feature of the Weald. Other farmstead types, where working buildings are laid out in a row or are

³ English Heritage et al., *Kent Farmsteads Guidance: Part 3 Character Statements*, 2014, <https://goo.gl/dfzU9W> (Accessed 21 August 2017), p. 8.



Other plan types

Concentrated on small plots. Types include linear farmsteads, parallel plans (where working buildings are opposite and parallel to the house and attached working buildings) and row plans (where the working buildings are attached in-line).

attached to the farmhouse, are rare in Kent. Diagrams of plan types are shown in Figure 52.

5.1.8 Within farmsteads, the following building types are found:

- Barns for threshing and processing the grain crop, including a high proportion of 17th century and earlier examples.
- Buildings for cattle most commonly in the form of open-fronted shelter sheds facing into a yard.
- Granaries commonly sited above stables and/or cart sheds, typically 18th or 19th century date and concentrated in arable vales and chalklands.
- Pigsties most commonly found in dairying areas, notably in parts of the Weald and Thames Basin Heaths.
- Oasts for storing and drying hops. Most are 19th century and concentrated in the Weald.

Plan type

Loose courtyard
Regular courtyard
Dispersed courtyard
Other plan types

Building types

Barns
Cartshed
Cattle housing

Aisled barns
Cow house
Shelter shed

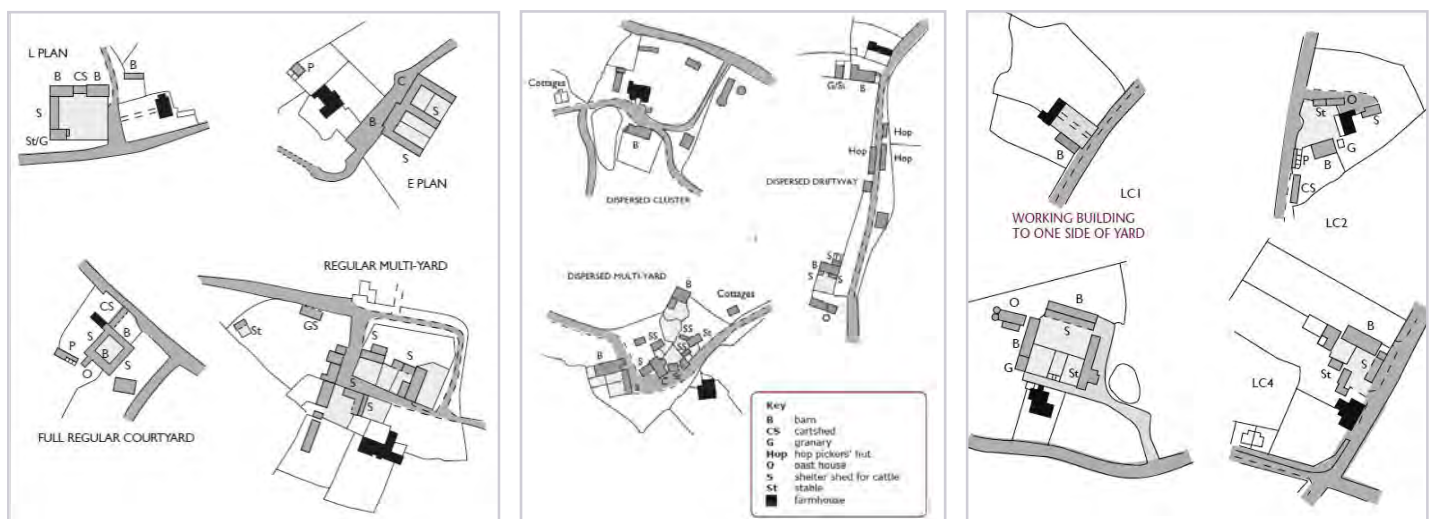
Granary
Pigsty
Stable
Hop industry

Oasts
Hop pickers huts
Tar banks

Outlying barns/companies
Other buildings

Back kitchens and dairies
Dovecoats

Fig 52 Diagrams of plan types
(Source: Kent Downs AONB farmstead guidance)



Regular courtyards

Consist of linked ranges formally arranged around one or more yards.

Dispersed plans

A seemingly random arrangement of buildings within a single farmstead boundary, usually irregular in shape.

Loose courtyards

Buildings are loosely arranged around one, two, three, or more rarely four sides of a yard.

Materials

5.1.9 Common features and materials include:

- Stone – ragstone from Lower Greensand outcrops widely used.
- Timber-framing – dominant building technique from medieval period until early 19th century.
- Thatch – wide availability of wheat straw.
- Tiles and slates – replaced thatch in some areas after late 18th century.

Current condition

5.1.10 Outfarms and field barns that are often remote without road access have been subjected to high rates of change. Only 18% have retained some or all of their historic form.⁴

5.1.11 Since the 1970s, many barns have been demolished or converted to other uses, especially residential.

Significance

5.1.12 84% of traditional farmsteads have retained some or all of their historic form and are thus of likely heritage significance.⁵

5.1.13 Barns in Kent are mostly of 17th or 18th century date but there is a high concentration, by national standards, of earlier examples. Many pre-1750 examples remain unidentified and unlisted.

5.1.14 Significant traditional farm buildings or farmsteads will have retained one or both of the following:

- One or more traditional farm buildings.
- Their historic plan form of the farmstead, where the farm buildings, houses and spaces relate to each other.

5.1.15 Many farmstead buildings may make a positive contribution to the landscape but are not heritage assets and will not fulfil the criteria for designation through listing.

5.1.16 Some farmsteads and their buildings have very high levels of significance in a county or national context, such as medieval barns, groups of buildings associated with the hop industry and farmsteads with two or more 18th century or earlier working buildings.

5.1.17 The greater the survival of the historic plan form, buildings and fabric, the greater will be its significance as a traditional farmstead.

Significance by type

5.1.18 The significance of each type of building asset is as follows:

- **Aisled barns** concentrated in the arable vales and the chalk downs, the largest in the corn-growing areas of east Kent and include many high status medieval examples.
- **Cart shed** - Pre-19th century examples – especially with historic grain bins and other features associated with granaries – are rare. Some very rare surviving evidence for granaries in the floored ends of barns in corn-producing areas.
- Free-standing **granaries** are rare in Kent, and are more common in East Anglia and in other corn-growing areas of southern England.
- **Pigsty** - any pre-19th century examples are very rare and significant if part of coherent farmstead groups
- **Stable** - After the barn, the stable is often the oldest building on the farmstead. A few stables dating to before 1700 have been identified in local surveys, while many more date from the 18th and 19th centuries.

⁴ English Heritage et al., *Kent Farmsteads Guidance: Part 1 Farmsteads Assessment Framework*, 2014, <https://goo.gl/xXKGnW> (Accessed 21 August 2017), p. 3.

⁵ *ibid.*

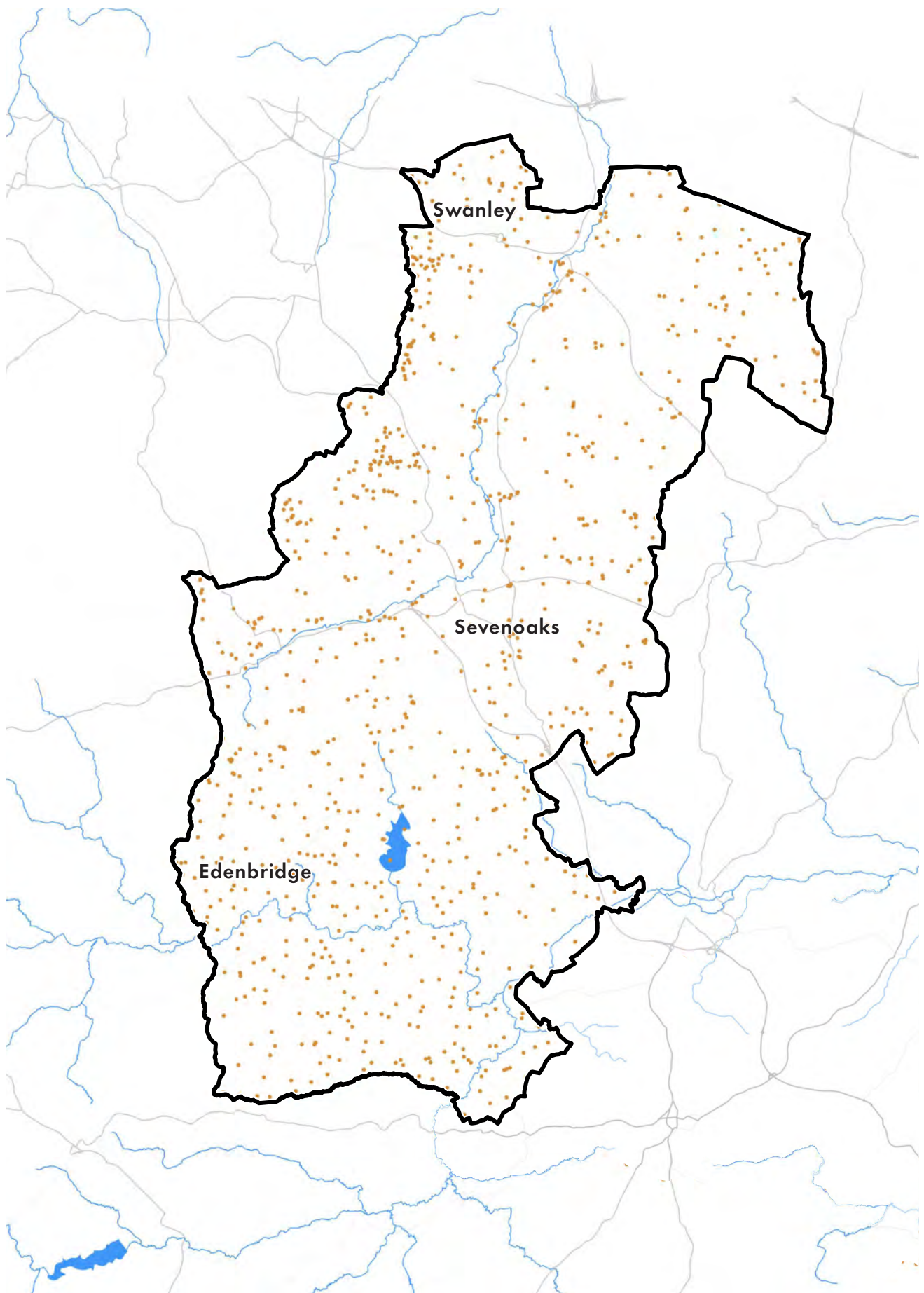


Fig 53 All farmsteads recorded in the District (Source: Kent County Council) (Source: Kent County Council)

- **Hop industry** - farmsteads that retain a range of buildings associated with hop growing and drying are highly significant. Early purpose-built oasts, small buildings which included a kiln, hop pickers' huts are rare. Only a small number of unconverted oast houses survive and thus take on a high degree of significance.

Fittings and details

- 5.1.19 Historic floors, doors and windows of pre-19th century and buildings with internal machinery (for example, threshing machines and internal kilns), are of particular significance.

Vulnerability

- 5.1.20 Outfarms and field barns have been subject to very high levels of loss, only 25% retaining any of their historic form.⁶ These have lower likelihood of being listed and many have become redundant and neglected.
- 5.1.21 Farmsteads, their buildings and the landscapes around them present different sensitivities to change, depending on their individual characteristics and the scale and nature of the change predicted for areas or proposed for individual sites.
- 5.1.22 Key factors influencing the vulnerability of farmsteads are:
- Type and density of settlement in the area;
 - Amount of land cover provided by trees, hedgerows and woodland;
 - Provision of vehicular rights of way;
 - How buildings are arranged in relationship to each other and areas of public and private space around them;
 - Scale and layout of individual buildings;
- Structural condition and the robustness of the fabric;
 - Habitats for wildlife;
 - Increase in domestic curtilage;
 - PD conversions;
 - Lack of detailed research and identification of assets on the ground; and
 - Redundancy (size, condition, use, advances in farming practices).
- 5.1.23 The caselaw R (Egerton) v Taunton Deane Borough Council in 2008 made unlisted farm buildings within the curtilage of a listed building more vulnerable as they are now not considered curtilage listed.

Existing guidance - national

- 5.1.24 Residential conversion of agricultural buildings under Class MB of the General Permitted Development Order:
- Government now allows the owners and tenants of agricultural units to change the use of an agricultural building and any land within its curtilage to residential use.
 - The order applies to the works necessary for the creation of up to three dwelling houses, and a cumulative floor area of 450 square metres.
 - Prior approval from the local planning authority is required to ensure that the change of use and any associated works do not create unacceptable impacts.

Existing guidance - regional

- 5.1.25 The South-east Farmsteads Character Statement (2014) is a comprehensive overview of farmstead buildings and types in the south-east. It focuses on level of survival and significance alongside categorisation. Guidance is established for 15 specific types of farmstead and page 7 sets out five key options and issues to consider. These are:

⁶ Historic England, *South East Farmsteads Character Statement*, 2014, <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/south-east-farmsteads-character-statement/> [accessed 18 August 2017], p. 6.

- Collapse and/or loss through dereliction or demolition and salvage.
 - Maintenance through investment and the use of traditional or nontraditional materials.
 - Conservation repair - as features in the landscape or as significant historic buildings, with minimal or no alteration.
 - Adapt - to new agricultural or non-agricultural uses; and
 - New build - to support continued on-farm operations or to provide residential or non-agricultural business accommodation.
- 5.1.26 Kent Farmsteads Guidance (2014) aims to inform and achieve sustainable development of farmsteads, including their conservation and enhancement.
- 5.1.27 Guidance will assist in identifying the need and potential change at the earliest stage of considering change for a farmstead or farm building.
- 5.1.28 This will help to prepare a scheme that complies with national and local planning policy, and save time and resources in the planning process.

Opportunities

- 5.1.29 According to Kent Farmsteads Guidance (2014), 74% of recorded farmsteads in the county have heritage potential and 53% have high heritage potential because they have retained more than 50% of their historic form. There is a higher likelihood of heritage asset identification, especially farmsteads that have experienced minimal change or have had some loss but have retained more than 50% of their historic plan form since the late 19th century. These have the greatest potential to be the most locally significant (TWP SPD, 2016).
- 5.1.30 There is an opportunity for District-level guidance that provides a greater understanding of the character, significance and sensitivity to change of farmstead buildings with Sevenoaks.
- 5.1.31 Consider the listing and local listing of additional farmstead buildings.
- 5.1.32 Support farmstead guidance in a new policy.
- 5.1.33 The separation of agricultural buildings from the land they served may threaten their long-term economic viability. Development in the landscape, particularly when close to urban centres, may dilute the contrast between town and country and harm the setting of heritage assets.
- 5.1.34 Recording the history of traditional farm buildings and features of interest is encouraged, especially buildings that would be lost where planning permission is granted permitting changes to farm buildings.
- 5.1.35 Where planning permission is required, a recording condition may be appropriate.

- 5.1.36 Opportunities could be sought to promote the heritage of farmsteads within wider rural tourism strategies.
- 5.1.37 Consider themed farmstead trails between groups of farmsteads.
- 5.1.38 There is an opportunity for training and information exchange for owners regarding repair, adaptation or conversion of historic farm buildings. There could be scope for traditional building skills and building conservation courses similar to those offered by Essex County Council. The Weald & Downland Living Museum also offer courses in historic building conservation.

Essex County Council building conservation courses: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/Activities/Heritage/Pages/Traditional-Building-Courses.aspx>.

The Weald & Downland Living Museum historic building conservation courses: <http://www.wealddown.co.uk/adult-learning/historic-building-conservation/>



Fig 54 Farmstead near Sevenoaks town

“Some buildings or farmsteads have the potential for special significance when compared to farmsteads and their landscapes in other parts of England. The absence of statutory designation does not imply lack of special significance in this respect. The protection afforded to historic farm buildings through listing is uneven, because some areas have not been surveyed since the 1970s and there are many buildings of 18th century or earlier date that are unlisted. In theory, all buildings of pre-1700 date which survive in anything like their original condition will be listed and most buildings of about 1700 to 1840 are listed but there are acknowledged concerns about the quality of the Lists in parts of the South East.”

South East Farmsteads Character Statement (2014 p.6)



SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: AGRICULTURE



Farmsteads



Orchards



Hop growing

5.2 ORCHARDS

Historic Development

- 5.2.1 Fruit orchards were introduced in the 16th century and by the late 19th century was a principal land-use across much of the District, along with hop-gardens, around Seal and the Low and High Weald. Cobnut plats (nut orchards) were a special characteristic of the Kent Downs, centred around Platt and Plaxtol in Tonbridge and Malling but found across the Greensand Ridge.¹
- 5.2.2 The High Weald traditionally produced a rich variety of fruits, especially apples, pears, cherries and plums, and in the Kent Downs, cherry orchards are particularly distinctive.² The railways opened up the market for fruits in the mid-19th century. Most orchards are now larger, more intensively managed commercial orchards of fruit trees and have replaced the traditional sheep grazed orchards. Although they have less historical value and do not support wildlife as well as traditional orchards, they are still an important link to the landscape of the past.³

Summary of assets

- 5.2.3 **Traditional fruit orchards** - these are orchards that are managed at a low intensity with no chemical pesticides. Remnant orchards are found near Crockenhill, Seal and Sevenoaks.
- 5.2.4 **Cobnut plats** - these are nut orchards characteristic of the Kent Downs and were once typical of the Sevenoaks Eastern Chart area. It was once a thriving industry but there are only a few cobnut plats left today. An example is at Golding Hop Farm in Sevenoaks.

Current condition

- 5.2.5 Orchards remain a defining historic characteristic of the District but have declined rapidly. The area of orchards and hop gardens in the Kent Downs AONB has decreased by nearly 50% since 1961.⁴ Many traditional orchards are now derelict, for example at Crockenhill, however others are in better condition e.g. at Stone Street.
- 5.2.6 Despite a long-term decline, more recently there has been a resurgence in orchard planting including walnuts and apricots.⁵

Significance

- 5.2.7 Traditional orchards are of historical value, keeping alive traditional techniques, customs and folklore. They contribute to the identity and character of Kent as the 'Garden of England', providing a sense of history and place.
- 5.2.8 They also have aesthetic value, particularly in the High Weald where the undulating slopes provide visual interest and seasonal variety. The old orchard trees with their gnarled, mossy bark and pink delicate flowers are an attractive feature of the landscape.
- 5.2.9 Traditional Kentish Cobnut plats are important and distinctive, especially in Sevenoaks District, in the west of the Kent Downs AONB.⁶

Vulnerability

- 5.2.10 The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) identifies the loss of traditional orchards and hop gardens and associated wind-break features as a landscape issue. The remaining traditional orchards are vulnerable to decay and neglect. They are often derelict.
- 5.2.11 Traditional orchards are identified as a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitat since 2007. The remaining commercial orchards are

¹ Kent Downs AONB Unit, *Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019*, 2014, p. 52.

² Kent Downs AONB Unit, *Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019*, 2014, p. 10.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Kent Downs AONB Unit, *Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019*, 2014, p. 52.

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ Kent Downs AONB Unit, *Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019*, 2014, p. 10.

often associated with modern field amalgamation type, where older orchards (and their internal boundaries) have been removed.⁷

- 5.2.12 14% of participants in the Kent Downs AONB 'Have Your Say' survey in 2013 rated orchards / cobnut plats as an important component of natural beauty in the Kent Downs AONB, compared to 21% of respondents in 2003.⁸ This decline in appreciation of orchards / cobnut plats may threaten the conservation and enhancement of traditional orchards.

Existing guidance

- 5.2.13 The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) provides a detailed assessment of the distinctive landscape character of the District. It identifies areas where orchards are prevalent and comments on their condition. The report also sets out recommendations for their conservation and enhancement.

Opportunities

- 5.2.14 Encourage the restoration and expansion of traditional orchards, seeking opportunities to replant, reinstate and better manage traditional orchards, especially apple, pear and cherry orchards. Consider the reintroduction of cobnut plats.
- 5.2.15 There is an opportunity to promote the orchards and their products as part of a broader tourism strategy that celebrates the identity of Kent as 'the Garden of England'. This could be coupled with promoting the hop industry.
- 5.2.16 Encourage community orchard initiatives. They not only help to reinforce the rural heritage features of the landscape but play a wider role for their environmental and social benefits.



Fig 55 Traditional orchards near Stone Street, Seal (Source: Wikimedia commons)

⁷ Borough of Royal Tunbridge Wells, *The Parishes of Hawkhurst, Cranbrook, Goudhurst & Beneden: Historic Landscape Characterisation*, Revision of Kent HLC 2000, 2015.

⁸ Kent Downs AONB Unit, *Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019*, 2014, p. 10.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: AGRICULTURE



Farmsteads



Orchards



Hop growing

5.3 HOP GROWING

Historic Development

5.3.1 Hops were used in the brewing of beer grown on a commercial scale since at least the 16th century. The arrival of the railway in 19th century expanded hop production which led to an increase in warehousing for the storage of hops and fruits.¹ Working class families from East London travelled to Kent every summer for hop-picking holidays, and this tradition peaked in the 1880s. In WWII, there were no shortages in the number of hop pickers as there was a desire to get away from the war damaged streets of East London.² Hop picking was prevalent in parts of the Low and High Weald, as well as on the Chartland, which was confined to land for grazing with a few arable fields suitable for hops. The Chartland also produced timber for hop poles.³ Hop gardens were also located around Sevenoaks town.

5.3.2 The mechanization of hop-picking led to a gradual decline of the industry and production decreased steeply in the late 19th century.⁴ This was also spurred by the restrictive licensing on pubs which meant that local breweries could no longer supply to local pubs. By the 1990s, Kent's once thriving industry reduced to just one substantial brewer - Shepherd Neame of Faversham. The decline was compounded by the switch from English ale to continental lager, reducing the demand for English hops.⁵

5.3.3 More recently, the District has seen the conversion of many of its oast houses to residential. However, there is some evidence to suggest that hop farming is seeing a resurgence

as a result of the growing craft beer industry, resulting in the replanting of some hop fields in Kent.⁶

Summary of assets

5.3.4 **Oast houses** - used for drying hops and an emblem of Kent. A typical oast house consisted the 'oast', a kiln characterised by a steep pitched roof which channelled hot air through the hops to the top, and a 'stowage', the bar section with a cooling floor, press and storage area. They vary in date, from 17th century timber-framed oast to 20th century hop processing buildings. Examples include the oast houses at Chiddingstone and Leigh Farm, among many others.

5.3.5 **Hop Pickers Huts** – huts which provided seasonal accommodation for hop pickers, many from London. They were once a typical feature of the agricultural landscape, but are becoming scarcer as they are not often suited to change or alteration to make them livable in the 21st century. An example are the huts at Greatness Farm near Sevenoaks.

5.3.6 **Breweries and brewhouses** – large commercial breweries, as well as brewhouses which were outbuildings containing brewing equipment, often associated with public houses and country houses. An example is at Westerham - the Black Eagle Brewery was a major local employer.⁷

5.3.7 **Malthouses and malting** were less common in the District but can still be found around Sevenoaks town and place names are indicative of past malting, for example Malthouse Road in Stansted.

5.3.8 **Hop fields** were once widespread but now are scarce.

1 AOC Archaeology, *Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line, Tunbridge Wells, Kent: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment*, 2016.

2 *Have a Hopping Holiday in the High Weald of Kent and Sussex!* 2014, <https://goo.gl/dQVbYn> (accessed 18 August 2017).

3 D. Killingray, *Influences shaping the human landscape of Sevenoaks area since c. 1600*, 2010, <https://goo.gl/3vWlmG> (accessed 18 August 2017).

4 *ibid.*

5 Brewery History Society, *The Brewing Industry*, 2010, <https://goo.gl/hnoFpD> (accessed 18 August 2017).

6 LUC, *Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment*, 2017.

7 Visit Westerham, *Westerham Timeline*, 2016, <http://www.visitwesterham.org.uk/heritage/h-timeline> (accessed 18 August 2017).

Current condition

- 5.3.9 Farmsteads in the Low Weald experienced greater levels of change in the mid to late 19th century, in association with the hop industry, which explains why oast houses in the Low Weald can often be at a larger industrial scale, than those in the High Weald.

Significance

- 5.3.10 The hop growing industry thrived in the District and is has historical significance. The hop picker huts retain evidential and historical value, as well as communal value.

Vulnerability

- 5.3.11 Hop growing in the Kent Downs has reduced significantly since 1961, from 7% of farmed land cover in the AONB to 2% in 2010.⁸
- 5.3.12 The few remaining oast houses are at risk of redundancy and irreversible conversion to other uses, especially residential.
- 5.3.13 Other hop related buildings such as hop pickers huts are at risk and often lack any statutory protection. In addition to the lack of statutory protection they may have been unrecognised or too fragile or small to be adapted for reuse.

Existing Guidance

- 5.3.14 The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) provides a detailed assessment of the distinctive landscape character of the District. It identifies areas where hop growing is prevalent and comments on their condition. The report also sets out recommendations for their conservation and enhancement.

8 Kent Downs AONB Unit, *Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019*, 2014, p.48



Fig 57 Hopper huts at Greatness Farm, Sevenoaks, Kent (Source: Tower Hamlets Community Housing¹)



Fig 56 Oast house

1 THCH, *When we went down Hopping, Hopping down in Kent*, 2013, <http://www.historical-society.horsmonden.org/Hopping/2013.pdf> (accessed 18 August 2017).

Opportunities

- 5.3.15 Encourage the reinstatement of hop farms, seeking opportunities to replant, restore and better manage them.
- 5.3.16 Promote opportunities to document the social history of the hop industry through local events and social media.
- 5.3.17 There is an opportunity to raise awareness with the general public, walkers, ale drinkers, former hop pickers and their descendants about the heritage of hop picking in the District. This could be through the creation of a hop trail / beer trail or by improving signs / information boards at important structures.
- 5.3.18 There are indications that hop fields are being replanted in response to growing demand from the craft beer industry. This could be promoted and incentivised, for example through 'Grow Beer' community schemes. Deal Hop Farm is a good example of this.⁹

⁹ Deal Hop Farm, [website], <http://transitiondeal.blogspot.co.uk/p/deal-hop-farm.html> (accessed 18 August 2017).



Fig 58 Oast houses near Chiddingstone

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: INDUSTRY

 Wealden Iron

 Water power

 Brick and tiles

 Quarrying

5.4 WEALDEN IRON

Historic Development

5.4.1 The iron industry developed in the late Roman period and it located in areas of the Weald, to the south of Sevenoaks District. The Weald was suited for the iron industry as it provided water, wood and iron ore from the Hastings beds (sand) and Wealden clay.¹ In the Middle Ages, Edenbridge became the centre of the Wealden Iron Industry. The industry accelerated with the introduction of water power in the 14th and 15th centuries and the introduction of the blast furnace in the 16th century, which led to the construction of leats, dams and hammer ponds. The industry flourished in the late 16th century, and the main products at this time were ordnance, cannon and iron shot. The demand for iron in Elizabethan wars created much wealth for founders, for example Richard Streatfield from Chiddingstone who owned grand houses in the Weald. Charcoal was used for the production of iron which necessitated the cutting down of coppiced woodland.²

5.4.2 The industry was a main factor influencing growth of settlements. In Edenbridge, local forges and foundries led to the expansion of the village³, and in Cowden, two blast furnaces were located south of the village. In the 17th century, the traditional iron industry declined due to newer production methods and improved transport which allowed areas further north to compete for London markets⁴ There were some later ironworks, for example Mount Pleasant in Farningham, from the 1860s.⁵ The evidence today of this activity is mainly found in place names, for example Furnace Mill and Furnace Lane in Cowden.



Fig 59 Furnace Pond, Cowden in 1743 (Source: Wealden Iron Research Group Database)

Summary of assets

5.4.3 **Archaeological features and artefacts** - there is evidence of the early iron industry from pre-Roman, Romano-British, Anglo-Saxon to early medieval periods found in the Weald. Features include iron bloomery slag, minepits and charcoal heaths, for example at Oakenden Farm in Chiddingstone. Forges used hammers to remove carbon and impurities to produce wrought iron. There were at least 14 forges in the Kentish Weald, many of which had ceased production by the mid-17th century. There were also 14 furnaces in the Kentish Weald, which had ceased production by the mid 17th-century. A small number of furnaces, including Cowden, survived into the 18th century but all had closed by the 1760s. None remain above ground, and examples include Scarlet Furnace and Bough Beech Furnace near Hever.

5.4.4 **Ponds and leats** are visible reminders of past iron-related activities and include hammer, furnace and forge ponds. An example is Furnace Pond at Cowden.

1 J. Hodgkinson, *Iron - A Once Great Wealden Industry*, [website], 2002, <http://www.wealdeniron.org.uk/hist.htm>, (accessed 18 August 2017).

2 High Weald Forum, *Along & Around the High Weald Landscape Trail*, 1999, <https://goo.gl/MaA4Un>, (accessed 18 August 2017).

3 Sevenoaks District Council, *Edenbridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*, 2012.

4 Sevenoaks District Council, *Cowden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*, 2006.

5 Farningham PC, *Parish History*, [website], <http://www.farninghampc.kentparishes.gov.uk/history/> (accessed 18 August 2017).



Fig 60 Furnace Mill

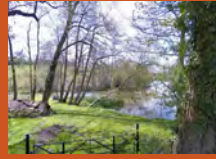


Fig 61 Pond today

Ironworks at Cowden

The original ironworks at Furnace Mill in Cowden are typical of those to be found in the Wealden area. Furnace Mill was originally owned by the Tichbourne family, who were well-known iron masters during the 16th and 17th centuries. The water supply to power the mill was mainly supplied by the Kent stream which formed the border between Sussex and Kent. The river was dammed at Scarlet's Mill and Furnace Mill, and the iron masters houses and hammerponds are still there.¹

¹ Wealden Iron Research Group Database, [website], <https://goo.gl/fwd1rf> (accessed 18 August 2017).

5.4.5 **Grand houses** formerly owned by wealthy ironworks owners and landowners, for example Bore Place near Chiddingstone and the Squerryes Estate outside of Westerham. Crippenden Manor near Cowden was built in 1607 and was home to iron master Richard Tichbourne.

5.4.6 **Forges** were workshops used by blacksmiths to work iron, shoes, horses and repair basic machinery. They relied heavily on charcoal and later on coke by the 19th century. A number existed in Sevenoaks town, including on Upper High Street and at Knole. Edenbridge had many forges, and Sevenoaks Weald also had a blacksmith. Forges declined in number after 1920 but are reflected in building names, for example the Grade II Listed Old Forge at Chiddingstone, the Grade II Listed Old Forge at Leigh and the Grade II Listed Forge and North Forge at Underriver.

5.4.7 Remains of **coppiced woodland**.

Current condition

5.4.8 The condition of landscape heritage assets and archaeological remains are harder to assess than the built environment however by their nature, the surviving elements of the iron industry are likely to have been eroded by vegetation, agriculture and vehicle impact.

Significance

5.4.9 The iron industry in the Weald was an important industry, producing a large proportion of the bar iron made in England in the 16th century and most British cannon until about 1770. It was also one of the most important iron-producing regions in Roman Britain, and excavations at a few sites have produced tiles of the Classis Britannica, suggesting that they were actually run by, or were supplying iron to this Roman fleet.

5.4.10 The industry employed large numbers of local people and led to the growth of towns and villages. It therefore has high communal and historical significance.

Vulnerability

5.4.11 Most sites are undesignated heritage assets with no statutory protection. Information about the industry is incomplete and some sites may be lost before their significance can be recognised or recorded.

Existing guidance

5.4.12 Assets associated with the iron industry may be protected by designations but the theme itself is not dealt with explicitly by existing guidance.

Opportunities

5.4.13 Baseline mapping of the iron industry to include archaeological features, grand houses and other evidence of iron-related activities e.g. ponds and craters.

5.4.14 Within the planning system there is an opportunity for the formal identification of heritage assets associated with the iron industry, with the best designated for further protection at a local level.

5.4.15 Opportunities for collaboration between groups could be sought to strengthen the evidence base of the iron industry and other past rural industries, for example the brick and tile industry. This could include working together to identify related heritage assets or to improve the documentation and increase awareness of their social and economic history. There is scope for schools and volunteers to assist with research and recording.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: INDUSTRY

 Wealden Iron

 Water power

 Brick and tiles

 Quarrying

5.5 WATER POWER

Historic Development

- 5.5.1 The River Darent and its tributaries have been exploited as a source of water power for the last millennium and at its peak in the 18th century there was on average a mill every two miles along the length of the river. Most mills in the Sevenoaks area ground corn, although they could be put to other uses, for example paper mills at Sundridge, Shoreham and Eynsford. The mill at Greatness was originally a fulling mill and by the late 18th century it had become a silk mill owned by the Nouaille family. The mill employed 80 people in 1816.¹
- 5.5.2 The loss of manufacturing jobs and activities changed the character and identity of many of the villages in the District, including Horton Kirby. Built in 1820, the mill at Horton Kirby was originally a small flour mill and later became a paper mill, employing a large number of locals. The mill had significant social and economic influence but closed in 1991, resulting in the loss of jobs. The mill has since been converted to housing, and the Victorian workers housing nearby is now one of the last remaining physical reminders of the industry.²

Summary of assets

- 5.5.3 **Water mills** are found in mill villages along the River Darent. A key feature is their weatherboarded exterior. Examples include the Old Mill at Eynsford, Old Mill at Brasted and Chipstead Mill.
- 5.5.4 **Mill cottages**, many of which were Victorian workers housing located close to the mill, reminders of the economic and social importance of once active rural industries.
- 5.5.5 **Mill houses and outbuildings** - larger properties often occupied by mill owners.

Current condition

- 5.5.6 Many conservation areas in Sevenoaks District cover these historic mill villages along the River Darent and its tributaries, for example South Darent, Horton Kirby, Farningham, Eynsford, Brasted and Shoreham. Some mills and mill houses are listed, for example at Farningham.
- 5.5.7 Many mills are no longer there, and some have been converted to housing, for example Westminster Mill at Horton Kirby which closed in 1991. The housing that replaces the mill reflects to some extent the scale and form of demolished buildings but the loss of manufacturing activities and jobs has changed the character of the village.

Significance

- 5.5.8 Mills are historic reminders of the importance of local industries, such as corn milling and paper-making in supporting the prosperity and growth of villages and small towns.
- 5.5.9 The mills would often employ a large number of people, and are therefore of social and communal significance.

Vulnerability

- 5.5.10 Many mills have been demolished or converted to residential / office use. Of the mills that survive close to their original form, the majority are listed and thus benefit from statutory protection. However they remain prone to minor alterations or poorly executed repairs, resulting in the erosion of original fabric or traces of mill machinery.

Opportunities

- 5.5.11 Opportunities for collaboration between the general public, enthusiasts and stakeholder groups could be sought to strengthen the evidence base of the mills and associated industries. This could include working together to identify related heritage assets or to improve the documentation of their social and economic history.

¹ D. Killingray, Influences shaping the human landscape of Sevenoaks area since c. 1600, 2010, <https://goo.gl/3vWlmG> (accessed 18 August 2017).

² Sevenoaks District Council, *Horton Kirby Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*, 2003.



Fig 63 1868 OS map showing corn mill



Fig 64 Paper mill at Shoreham, 1868



Fig 65 1868 OS map showing paper mill



Fig 62 Farningham Mill scheme which combined restoration and new build elements successfully

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: INDUSTRY

 Wealden Iron

 Water power

 Brick and tiles

 Quarrying

5.6 BRICK AND TILES

Historic Development

5.6.1 The local deposits of gault clay, common in the Vale of Holmesdale, were used for making bricks and tiles, a common building material from the 16th century onwards.¹ Three large pits were located to the north of the Wealden Greensand around Sevenoaks, one being on the main road to Maidstone where the Sevenoaks Town Council Office now stands. Bricks were made to an outstanding quality, equalled by tile manufacture and the production of plain tiles for roofs and tile hanging.²

5.6.2 Local demand stimulated an increase in house building after the 1860s and the construction of the railways in the 19th century required a vast number of bricks. The Victorians extracted the Wadhurst clay to assist with their mass-building efforts.³ Often builders would seek deposits of clay near the building site from which to make bricks to reduce transport costs. Examples include the Bat and Ball Brickworks, located to the west of Otford Road between 1870 and 1938, and Sevenoaks Brickworks, also known as Greatness Brickworks, located on the eastern side of the railway line. In 1936, 60 men were employed to produce 65,000 sand lime bricks a day. The Dunton Green Brick, Tile & Pottery works at Pounsley was established in 1862, and bricks were used to build the local parish church and primary school. The industry provided work for locals, both men and women, who would often live in cottages built for them.⁴

5.6.3 Brickworks were located across the District, including along the Eden Valley at Edenbridge, Cowden, Markbeeche, Hever, Chiddingstone, Penshurst and Leigh. The location of brickworks

depended on accessibility to roads for transport, as bricks would be transported along rough roads by horse and cart to their markets. When the railway was built in 1842, brickworks were sited along the tracks, providing materials for housing, infrastructure and industrial needs at a larger scale. Examples of brickworks along the Eden Valley include Chiddingstone Brickyard (1924-1976), High House Brickworks on Ide Hill Road (in operation during the 19th century), Cowden Pound Brickworks, Goodwin's Brickyard in Edenbridge and Markbeeche Brickworks.⁵

5.6.4 A related industry was the quarrying of various materials for building and road making. Stone quarrying was an important element in the medieval economy for the building of higher status buildings such as manor houses, cathedrals and churches.

5.6.5 Place names give indication of past brick and tile related activities, for example the Brickmakers Arms in Chipstead is named after the local brick-making industry.

Summary of assets

5.6.6 **Archaeological features** - remains of kilns, wooden railway sleepers and quarry pits.

5.6.7 **Brick kilns**, used for the manufacture of bricks and tiles from the 14th century onwards.

5.6.8 **Workers cottages and houses** built in the area, for example on Pounsley Road for workers at the Dunton Green Brick, Tile & Pottery works.

Current condition

5.6.9 The condition of landscape heritage assets and archaeological remains are harder to assess than the built environment.

1 D. Killingray and E. Purves, *Sevenoaks: An Historical Dictionary*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/MjhDx8> (accessed 18 August 2017).

2 D. Killingray, *Influences shaping the human landscape of Sevenoaks area since c. 1600*, 2010, <https://goo.gl/3vVlmG> (accessed 18 August 2017).

3 *ibid.*

4 D. Killingray and E. Purves, *Sevenoaks: An Historical Dictionary*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/MjhDx8> (accessed 18 August 2017).

5 D. Cufley, *Eden Valley Heritage Issue Number 29*, http://www.evmt.org.uk/assets/evmnews29_2015.pdf (accessed 18 August 2017).

“Some of the loveliest bricks of all, the reds of Wealden Kent”

Newman (2012:27)

“No English county, not even Sussex, can rival Kent in the profuse employment of tiles of superlative quality.”

Newman (2012:27)

5.6.10 The standing structures are at risk of deterioration through lack of use, resulting in water ingress and frost damage.

Significance

5.6.11 The District's historic buildings relied heavily on locally-sourced materials. Many of the older buildings are built of red brick, a typical Kentish vernacular building material.

5.6.12 Brickmaking employed large numbers of local people in and around Sevenoaks, as well as along the Eden Valley. They therefore have high communal significance.⁶

Vulnerability

5.6.13 There is a threat of loss from cumulative change or insufficient knowledge of significance of the brickworks and associated assets. Insufficient knowledge of history, location or significance may make heritage assets vulnerable to unintentional damage.

⁶ D. Killingray and E. Purves, *Sevenoaks: An Historical Dictionary*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/MjhDx8> (accessed 18 August 2017).

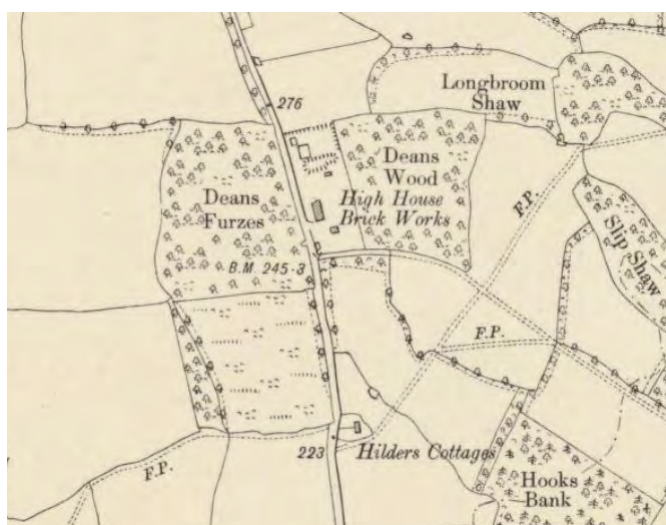


Fig 66 High House Brickworks in 1909 (Source: NLS)

Existing guidance

5.5.14 Assets associated with brick and tile making may be protected by designations but the theme itself is not dealt with explicitly by existing guidance.

Opportunities

5.6.15 Baseline mapping of the brick and tile industry to include heritage asset types, for example archaeological features, brick kilns and workers housing.

5.6.16 There is an opportunity for the formal identification of heritage assets associated with the brick and tile industry within the planning system with the best designated for further protection at a local level.

5.6.17 Opportunities for collaboration between the general public, enthusiasts and stakeholder groups could be sought to strengthen the evidence base of the brick and tile industry. This could include working together to identify related heritage assets or to improve the documentation of their social and economic history.



Fig 67 Bricklayers Arms on Harfield Road, Edenbridge, 1910 (Source: Kent Photo Archive)

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: INDUSTRY

 Wealden Iron

 Cloth-making and wool

 Brick and tiles

 Quarrying

5.7 QUARRYING

Historic Development

- 5.7.1 The geology of the District has led to extensive quarrying for the production of building materials, including Kentish ragstone, sandstone and chalk. Quarrying peaked in the 19th century but many had become abandoned by the early 20th century. The 1897 Ordnance Survey shows a number of old quarries, for example around Brasted, Knockholt and Pilots Wood near Shoreham.
- 5.7.2 Dryhill Quarries are a series of small linked disused quarry areas to the west of Sundridge in Coldharbour Wood. Now a picnic site, the quarries provide significant exposure of the Lower Cretaceous Hythe Beds.¹ Reminders of past quarrying activity is seen in the sandstone, as well as other materials that are used for buildings and boundary treatments throughout the District. Today, most quarries are no longer used for their original purpose but support mature trees which contribute to the overall character of the District.

Summary of assets

- 5.7.3 Archaeological features and artefacts show evidence of prehistoric quarrying.
- 5.7.4 Visible landscape features which show evidence of previous quarrying activities.

Current condition

- 5.7.5 The condition of landscape heritage assets and archaeological remains are harder to assess than the built environment.
- 5.7.6 The standing structures are at risk of deterioration through lack of use, resulting in water ingress and frost damage.

Significance

- 5.7.7 The District's historic buildings relied heavily on locally-sourced materials. Many of the older buildings are built using sandstone and Kent ragstone. Flint and chalk are also used.
- 5.7.8 Assets relating to this theme have archaeological significance and have evidential value of former human activity.

Vulnerability

- 5.7.9 There is a threat of loss from cumulative change or insufficient knowledge of significance of the quarries and associated assets.
- 5.7.10 Insufficient knowledge of history, location or significance may make heritage assets vulnerable to unintentional damage.

Existing guidance

- 5.7.11 Some assets associated with quarrying are protected by designations but the theme itself is not dealt with explicitly by existing guidance.

Opportunities

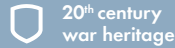
- 5.7.12 Baseline mapping of the quarrying industry to include heritage asset types, for example archaeological features.
- 5.7.13 There is an opportunity for the formal identification of heritage assets associated with quarrying within the planning system with the best designated for further protection at a local level.
- 5.7.14 Opportunities for collaboration between the general public, enthusiasts and stakeholder groups could be sought to strengthen the evidence base of quarrying activities. This could include working together to identify related heritage assets or to improve the documentation of their social and economic history.

¹ GeoConservation Kent, *Dryhill Quarry*, Available online: http://www.geoconservationkent.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61&Itemid=21 (Accessed December 2017).



Fig 68 1897 Ordnance Survey of an Old Quarry at Brasted.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: WAR AND DEFENCE



5.8 FORTIFICATIONS AND DEFENSIVE LINES

Historic Development

- 5.8.1 Kent's position close to the mainland continent via a short sea crossing made it vulnerable to conquest. The region held an important defence position between the mainland and London.¹ Although Kent's coastal areas featured most prominently in the defence effort, Sevenoaks District had its own fortifications and defensive lines, used both as a symbol of England's commitment to safeguard its freedom against foreign aggression, and a necessary act of protection against potential invaders.² The North Downs, in particular, were well situated for defence, especially where close to London, whose capture would have been an invader's primary objective.³
- 5.8.2 Prehistoric examples of fortifications include remains of what is considered to have been an extensive Iron Age Fort on the high ground of Lullingstone Park. These fortified hillforts provided protection of individual communities against clan or tribal threats.⁴
- 5.8.3 Castles were also used for defence. Eynsford Castle, for example, is a rare survival and one of the earliest Norman stonework defences in the country, the lower two thirds of the wall dating back to 1088. The castle was built on a man-made site, which had been in use since the Saxon period and formerly surrounded by a moat.⁵ Hever Castle was a fortified manor house before its reconstruction in 1270 as a medieval defensive castle with a gatehouse

and walled bailey. In the 15th century, gun loops were installed which are still visible. There is debate to whether this was a form of martial display or instead a rational enhancement for the protection of assets.⁶ Castles as defences gradually declined up to the 16th century because their military function faded and high walls were becoming vulnerable to more powerful gunpowder artillery.⁷

- 5.8.4 Other defence heritage has been discovered at Solefields, Sevenoaks, the site of the Battle of Sevenoaks in 1450 where the followers of Jack Cade met and defeated a detachment of royalists under Sir Humphrey Stafford on 24th June, 1450, killing the commander.⁸ In the 17th century during the English Civil War, Kent was the "seat of a royalist rebellion" and it is thought that Squerryes Court at Westerham was used as a defence site.⁹
- 5.8.5 Defences evolved to respond to innovations in attack and there was a gradual reduction in height from large visible structures to near invisibility by the end of the 19th century. Fortifications and other defences influenced the appearance of landscapes, by adapting, modifying or preserving them. Defences are closely linked to transport, which was an all-important dimension for field forces, including use of roads, water routes, and later, the railways.¹⁰

1 Smith, V. *Defence since the application of gunpowder: 1380-2000*, [website], 2012, <https://goo.gl/tD2TWb> [Accessed December 2017]

2 Kent County Council, *The Defence of Kent*, [website], <http://webapps.kent.gov.uk/kcc.exploringkentspast.web.sites.public/SingleResult.aspx?uid=Tke1060> [Accessed December 2017].

3 Smith, V. *Defence since the application of gunpowder: 1380-2000*, [website], 2012, <https://goo.gl/tD2TWb> [Accessed December 2017]

4 Kent County Council, *The Defence of Kent*, [website], <http://webapps.kent.gov.uk/kcc.exploringkentspast.web.sites.public/SingleResult.aspx?uid=Tke1060> [Accessed December 2017].

5 Historic England, *Eynsford Castle* [website] <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1007462> [Accessed December 2017]

6 Smith, V. *Defence since the application of gunpowder: 1380-2000*, [website], 2012, <https://goo.gl/tD2TWb> [Accessed December 2017]

7 *ibid.*

8 Information Britain, *Battle of Sevenoaks* [website] 2011, <http://www.information-britain.co.uk/famdates.php?id=1390> [Accessed December 2017].

9 Smith, V. *Defence since the application of gunpowder: 1380-2000*, [website], 2012, <https://goo.gl/tD2TWb> [Accessed December 2017]

10 *ibid.*

Summary of assets

- 5.8.6 **Archaeological features and artefacts** - for example Iron Age hillforts and battlefields e.g. at Otford and Sevenoaks.
- 5.8.7 **Castles** - including Eynsford (Norman) and medieval defensive castles such as Hever (originally a fortified Manor House).
- 5.8.8 **Other pre-20th century military installations**

Current condition

- 5.8.9 The condition of landscape heritage assets and archaeological remains are harder to assess than the built environment.
- 5.8.10 The standing structures are at risk of deterioration through lack of use, resulting in water ingress and frost damage.

Significance

- 5.8.11 Military sites will often have a strong collective value with historic remains forming part of a system of defences such as those at military encampments.
- 5.8.12 Castles often provide an emotive and evocative link to the past, particularly in relation to medieval warfare and defence.

Vulnerability

- 5.8.13 Insufficient knowledge of history, location or significance may make heritage assets vulnerable to unintentional damage.
- 5.8.14 Field monuments are particularly vulnerable to ploughing and grazing, especially non-designated or unidentified sites.

Existing guidance

- 5.8.15 Some assets associated with defensive lines and fortifications are protected by designations but the theme itself is not dealt with explicitly by existing guidance.

Opportunities

- 5.8.16 Baseline mapping of fortifications and defensive lines to include heritage asset types, for example archaeological features, castles and other types of defence installations.
- 5.8.17 There is an opportunity for defence sites to offer an important heritage tourism and educational resource. Examples of this include the county wide 'Front-Line Kent' project. A knowledge and appreciation of our defence past is part of our sense of national identity.
- 5.8.18 There is an opportunity for the formal identification of heritage assets associated with defensive lines and fortifications within the planning system with the best designated for further protection at a local level.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: WAR AND DEFENCE



Fortifications and defensive lines



20th century war heritage

5.9 20TH CENTURY WAR HERITAGE

Historic Development

- 5.9.1 The wars of the 20th century left a lasting legacy on the District. Communities gathered together to play their part in the war effort, from welcoming Belgian refugees into their towns and villages during the First World War, to setting up auxiliary hospitals and places of convalescence for wounded servicemen in local stately homes.
- 5.9.2 Alongside the development of new military technologies, a new defence strategy emerged in the late 19th century which involved establishing mobilisation centres across the North Downs to protect London in the event of enemy invasion. Defensible positions were built in the 1890s during peace time with pre-positioned supplies of tools and ammunitions.¹ All the centres in the County were located in Sevenoaks District, including at Farningham and Halstead. At Halstead, a government store mobilisation centre was established and was used for defence purposes during WWII.² It was later used as a wider military research site which led to the research into nuclear and ballistics during the Cold War.³ Fort Farningham and Fort Halstead are both Scheduled Monuments.
- 5.9.3 Between 1914 and 1917, 200,000 Belgian refugees fled to the UK to escape war in their country. Arriving in Folkestone, many were sent on special trains to towns and villages in the District, including Sevenoaks and Kemsing. Residents opened up their homes to care for them, and many were encouraged to find work within the towns.⁴ Alongside supporting the

Belgian wounded, hospitals were set up to support their own wounded military, for example a Voluntary Aid Detachment Hospital was established at Marlpit Court in Edenbridge, and a hospital ward opened in Cornwall Hall, Sevenoaks. World War One also had a bearing on the landscape with a network of trenches and defensive fortifications built across Kent, although these have mostly been erased.

- 5.9.4 The Second World War brought development to a halt in many towns and villages in the District. The Battle of Britain was underway in July 1940 and took place in the skies over Kent with small scale bombing raids, causing damage and destruction. An example is the Club Hall at The Vine cricket ground which suffered a direct hit and was destroyed. Brian Price's account as a child growing up in Sevenoaks during World War Two captures the proximity and immediacy of the action:

When the Battle of Britain began I saw the many twisting vapour trails. One weekend dinnertime we all went out to our back garden because of an unusual loud noise. It was a German bomber in flames, which crashed on to the public tennis courts by Walthamstow Hall School. Air raid sirens sounded the alert and also the all clear. The school rule was that if you were over halfway to school when the alert siren sounded you quickly continued; if not, you hastened home - 'halfway' was a very flexible position!⁵

- 5.9.5 Civil defence installations and other forms of defence were set up and became embedded in the landscape and part of normal daily life. These included private and communal air raid shelters, drill halls, pillboxes and prisoner of war camps. Halstead Place School was occupied by the Home Office during the war, and later

1 Historic England, *Fort Halstead, Dunton Green: A brief assessment of the role of Fort Halstead in Britain's early rocket programmes and the atomic bomb project.*

2 *ibid.*

3 Kent County Council, Historic Environment Record TQ 45 NE 11 [website] <http://webapps.kent.gov.uk/kcc.exploringkentspast.web.sites.public/SingleResult.aspx?uid=%27mke61%27> [Accessed December 2017]

4 Waits, J. *Wounded Soldiers in Tunbridge Wells, 1914-1918* [website], 2017, <https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/rtwbelgians/> [accessed December 2017].

5 Price, B. *Some childhood memories of the Second World War* [website], 2005, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/74/a5824974.shtml> [accessed December 2017].

became a prisoner of war camp. Kippington Court became a convalescent home after the war, and Chartwell is of significance as the home of Winston Churchill, although it was largely disused during the war.

5.9.6 The River Medway also played an important role as the GHQ Stop Line. Numerous pillboxes still survive along the banks of the river and, to a lesser extent, along the banks of the river Eden that runs into it. The defences of the Medway form one of the finest surviving stretches of Second World War defences anywhere in the country.

5.9.7 During the Cold War, Royal Observer Corps (ROC) Monitoring Posts were installed underground and were operated by volunteers between 1955 and 1991. There were ROC posts at Penshurst, Edenbridge, Brasted and Farningham, most of which have been demolished.

5.9.8 The World Wars had a lasting and significant impact on the landscape, halted the development of villages and towns and deeply affected the people who lived through them. Communities in the District suffered a deep sense of grief and heartache as many of their young men lost their lives defending the country. War memorials today are important focal points in the centre of villages that commemorate those who lost their lives during the wars.



Fig 69 Bomb damage in Shoreham c.1943 | Source: War and Peace Collection



Fig 70 Children in Westerham provide tea for residents after a V2 rocket fell c.1945 | Source: War and Peace Collection

Summary of assets

5.9.9 **London Defence Positions mobilisation centres** - including centres at Halstead and Farningham.

5.9.10 **Civil defence sites** - these include domestic and communal air raid shelters, for example remains of a WWII air raid shelter on Edenbridge High Street; precaution and civil defence control centres; ARP posts; fire watcher posts; gas decontamination centres and cleansing stations; air raid sirens; buffer depots; and signage and graffiti.

5.9.11 **Other military installations** - for example pillboxes, barracks, anti-aircraft batteries, redoubts and Prisoner of War camps.

5.9.12 **War memorials** - these are numerous. Examples include Kemsing War Memorial, war memorial overlooking The Vine Cricket Ground, Shoreham, St. Mary's Church Kippington and on Eynsford High Street.

Significance

5.9.13 Military sites will often have a strong collective value with historic remains forming part of a system of defences such as those at airfields or military encampments.

Vulnerability

5.9.14 Insufficient knowledge of history, location or significance may make heritage assets vulnerable to unintentional damage.

5.9.15 By their nature, wartime remains are obsolescent in peace time and do not lend themselves to reuse or repurposing. Redundant military sites no longer fulfil their original function and so are particularly vulnerable to change.

5.9.16 Field monuments are particularly vulnerable to ploughing and grazing, especially non-designated or unidentified sites.

Existing guidance

5.9.17 Some assets associated with 20th century war heritage may be protected by designations but the theme itself is not dealt with explicitly by existing guidance.

Opportunities

5.9.18 Baseline mapping of 20th century war heritage to include heritage asset types, for example archaeological features, civil defence sites and other military installations.

5.9.19 There is an opportunity for 20th century war heritage to offer an important heritage tourism and educational resource. Heritage trails, for example the Battle of Britain Trail which takes people to various sites and monuments across south-eastern Kent, helps improve knowledge and grow appreciation of our war heritage.

More information about the trail can be found here: <https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/leisure-and-culture/heritage/accessible-heritage-trails/battle-of-britain-heritage-trail.pdf>

5.9.20 There is an opportunity for the formal identification of heritage assets associated with 20th century war heritage within the planning system with the best designated for further protection at a local level.

5.9.21 Opportunities for collaboration between the general public, enthusiasts and stakeholder groups could be sought to strengthen the evidence base of 20th century war heritage. This could include working together to identify related heritage assets or to improve the documentation of their social and economic history.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: TRANSPORT



Ancient routes



Railways

5.10 ANCIENT ROUTES

Historic Development

- 5.10.1 The District has a network of ancient routeways and tracks that were first created when ancient woodland was foraged to feed livestock. The droveways can be traced to Roman and early Medieval times, when farmers from the Downs would drive their pigs into the woods each year to feed on acorns. Woodland pastures were called dens, evident in the place names of many hamlets and villages today. In 1086, Domesday records suggest 150,000 pigs were moved to and from the woods of the High and Low Weald. The tracks connecting dens with their villages were known as drove roads, which often followed even older trackways and form a distinct north to south pattern in the landscape today.¹
- 5.10.2 With the Roman occupation came the construction of new roads, sometimes built on prehistoric tracks, such as that between Cowden and Penshurst. The river system, including the Darent, was exploited during this period for transport, as well as resources.
- 5.10.3 The beginnings of industrial growth in the 17th century meant that a good transport system was needed, and in 1663, Parliament passed the Turnpike Act. Private Turnpike Trusts were established in the early 18th century, and road users paid a toll to provide for their upkeep. Toll gates were established through which people and carriages had to pass before continuing with their journey. This benefited those working in manufacturing, as improved roads meant shorter journey times. However, the system hit the poor the hardest, as turnpikes increased the cost of getting livestock to markets.²
- 5.10.4 Some of the ancient routeways became part of the modern road network, whereas others were

ploughed up. Those that survive form a network of lanes, bridleways and footpaths that span the District. Extant roads mark the alignment of drove ways into the Weald as well as ancient field boundaries.³

Summary of assets

- 5.10.5 **Pilgrim's Way** is the prehistoric route taken by pilgrims to the shrine of Thomas Becket in Canterbury, from Winchester to Hampshire. The route closely follows a pre-existing ancient trackway across the North Downs.
- 5.10.6 **Drove roads and sunken routes** - transhumance and the exploitation of forest resources created a north-south pattern of ancient routeways, many which still exist today.
- 5.10.7 **Roman road** - the Kent section of the Roman road runs from London, through the Weald to Sussex near Lewes. The route is preserved through the line of modern roads and footpaths. There is a possible Roman road running from Cowden to Penshurst.
- 5.10.8 **Turnpike features** - including toll houses, milestones, finger posts and boundary stones - for example a former toll house still stands at the junction of Donkey Lane and Gorse Hill at Farningham, dating to 1698.

Current condition

- 5.10.9 The condition of road verges and hedges along routes is poor in places, damaged by inappropriate management and lack of maintenance.

3 A. Everitt, *Continuity and colonisation: the evolution of Kentish settlement*, 1986, Leicester University Press.

1 High Weald Unit, *The Routeways Story*, [website], date unknown, <https://goo.gl/QDXZtr> (accessed 18 August 2017).

2 C. N. Trueman, *Roads 1750 to 1900*, [website], 2017, <https://goo.gl/vi9Epb> (accessed 18 August 2017).



Fig 72 Ancient bridge and ford at Eynsford

5.10.10 Even in urban areas, old paths and tracks have sometimes been survived within later development and are a record of earlier habitation. An example is Akehurst Lane in Sevenoaks, formerly Webb's Alley, which joined the north of Knole Park to the town centre.

Significance

5.10.11 The High Weald Management Plan 2014-2019 describes the historic pattern and features of the ancient routeways as "a rare UK survival of an essentially medieval landscape"⁴.

5.10.12 Kent Downs AONB 'Have Your Say' survey revealed that 40% of participants felt ancient lanes and paths were the most important component of natural beauty in the Kent Downs AONB (participants were asked to select the three most important components or features)⁵, indicating their aesthetic and communal value.

5.10.13 The ancient routes have historical value as they give a sense of past aspects of life and are an important reminder of the different ways in which people for centuries have communicated and travelled through the landscape.

Vulnerability

5.10.14 The archaeology and history of ancient routes remain under-researched which may make them vulnerable to unintentional damage.

5.10.15 Ancient routeways are vulnerable to damage from large vehicles / agricultural machinery, as well as increased congestion on rural roads due to suburbanising effects of highway improvement schemes and development on urban / village edges.

⁴ High Weald AONB Unit, *The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019*, 2014, p. 34.

⁵ Kent Downs AONB Unit, *Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019*, 2014

5.10.16 Toll houses are vulnerable to demolition, as well as milestones which are lost through decay.

5.10.17 Ancient routes and their associated heritage assets are vulnerable to neglect through ignorance e.g. lack of knowledge about the existence or significance of sites.

Existing guidance

5.10.18 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, local authorities with land in an AONB must prepare a plan which sets out their policy and implementation strategy for the management of the area. Objective R1 of the High Weald Management Plan 2014-2019 is to 'maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways' which are a key component of the historic landscape.

Opportunities

5.10.19 The High Weald Management Plan 2014-2019 identifies targets for 2019 related to ancient routeways. These are:

- Baseline mapping of the ancient routeway network extended to cover public rights of way, private tracks and abandoned paths, utilising community initiatives;
- Formal identification of ancient routeways as a heritage asset within the planning system with the best designated for further protection at a local level;
- Partnership working with Highways Authorities, parish councils and others to develop a design code for rural lanes promoting the use of characteristic boundaries and minimising the impact of intrusive highway engineering and signage;
- A Weald initiative to support the retention and restoration of turnpike features (e.g. milestones, toll houses); finger posts and boundary stones;

- An understanding of ancient routeways and their associated settlements informing rights of way planning and management including footpath diversions;
- Archaeological research to better understand the origin and function of ancient routeways and their associated features;
- An awareness campaign targeted at all users of the network, motorised and non-motorised, to raise awareness of the sensitive character of ancient routeways; and
- Parish councils and community groups increasingly engaged in conserving and protecting ancient routeways.⁶

5.10.20 There is an opportunity for specific guidance on the conservation and enhancement of ancient routeways to be set out within future Kent Downs AONB publications.

5.10.21 There is an opportunity to enhance understanding of the ancient routeway network of areas not covered by AONB designation. These routes are under-studied in comparison to the AONB areas and therefore necessitates further research.

⁶ High Weald AONB Unit, *The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019*, 2014, p. 34.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: TRANSPORT

 Ancient routes

 Railways

5.11 RAILWAYS

Historic Development

- 5.11.1 Sevenoaks District is well connected to London and the south-east by rail, although initially the railways bypassed Sevenoaks, the South Eastern railway linking Redhill to Tonbridge and then Folkestone. The London Chatham and Dover railway opened in 1860 and ran from Chatham to Swanley, via Tonbridge. People travelled by road to Tonbridge until a new line opened along the Darent Valley, connecting Swanley to Sevenoaks, with stations at Eynsford, Shoreham, Otford, Bat and Ball and Sevenoaks. South Eastern later opened a line in 1868, linking Lewisham to Tonbridge via Sevenoaks. It was later extended to Maidstone. The Oxted and Groombridge line ran through Edenbridge Town, Hever and Cowden. Edenbridge, Penshurst and Leigh are on the Redhill to Tonbridge line which opened in 1836 and was originally part of the South Eastern Railway.
- 5.11.2 A branch of the South Eastern line from Lewisham to Tonbridge served Westerham and Brasted from 1881 until its closure in 1961 due to low patronage. The Westerham Valley Railway Company built the branch line from the South Eastern mainline at Dunton Green.¹ There were plans to revive the line, but these were overhauled by plans for the M25 which called for the use of much of the line. The station buildings were demolished and the track was lifted by March 1967. Today the M25 follows the route of the Westerham branch, and hedges and paths also mark the route. The station master's house at Brasted remains and is now a private residence. The station site remains undeveloped and the outline of the goods yard can still be traced.²
- 5.11.3 The arrival of the railways to the District in 1862 spurred development of villages and towns, accelerating industrial growth and raising living

standards.³ The building of the railways also changed the physical landscape considerably, as compulsory purchase of land resulted in embankments, cuttings, tunnels and bridges.

- 5.11.4 Other forms of transport declined, including horse-drawn mail coaches. Rail transport reduced the commercial value of turnpikes, and road surfaces initially worsened until the increased use of motor vehicles which led to road improvements across the District.⁴
- 5.11.5 Electrification in the 1930s hastened the spread of the London commuter belt. With London less than an hour away from Sevenoaks, the town became frequented by both 'day trippers' and those looking to relocate permanently.⁵

Summary of assets

- 5.11.6 **Stations and platform canopies** - stations include Sevenoaks, Bat and Ball, Edenbridge, Edenbridge Town, Hever, Cowden, Shoreham, Eynsford, Penshurst and Swanley. Bat and Ball station is Grade II Listed.
- 5.11.7 **Railway cottages and taverns**, for example late Victorian railway cottages at Sunnyside near Edenbridge station.
- 5.11.8 **Tunnels and bridges** - the Polhill tunnel under the North Downs, and the Sevenoaks railway tunnel, were constructed in 1863 as part of the new line to Tonbridge that opened in 1868. Workers were temporarily housed in huts in White Hart Wood.⁶

1 Kent Past, *History of South Eastern Railway*, 2010, <https://goo.gl/hpTGEb> (accessed 18 August 2017).
2 Kent Rail, *Brasted*, [website] <http://www.kentrail.org.uk/brasted.htm> (accessed 18 August 2017).

3 D. Killingray and E. Purves, *Sevenoaks: An Historical Dictionary*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/MjhDx8> (accessed 18 August 2017).

4 D. Killingray, *Influences shaping the human landscape of Sevenoaks area since c. 1600*, 2010, <https://goo.gl/3vWlMG> (accessed 18 August 2017).

5 *ibid.*

6 D. Killingray and E. Purves, *Sevenoaks: An Historical Dictionary*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/MjhDx8> (accessed 18 August 2017).

Significance

5.11.9 Extensive demolition and modernisation gives the surviving original railway infrastructure rarity value. The Victorian railway legacy is key to understanding the growth and development of the Sevenoaks District after the mid-19th century.

Vulnerability

5.11.10 Heritage assets are vulnerable to technological change in the operational railway, for example loss of signal boxes, semaphore signals and station waiting rooms.

Opportunities

5.11.11 Consider the statutory or local listing of railway assets, for example stations and platform canopies, bridges / tunnels and houses associated with the railways.



Fig 74 Westerham branch in 1895 (Source: NLS)



Fig 73 Westerham station on London Road, now demolished (Source: Westerham Heritage Archive)

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: RELIGION

5.12 RELIGION

Historic Development

- 5.12.1 Sevenoaks has around 120 current and former places of worship, ranging from ancient parish churches to Victorian chapels and 20th century meeting places for a wide range of Christian denominations.¹ Churches are a hugely important component of the historical built framework and are the most common and obvious evidence of the historical periods of growth within the area. They form an important role within settlements, often as the focal point within a village or town, surrounded by a cluster of common rural activities including the pub, village shop and primary school. The relationship between the church and the village green is often a critical part of the character.
- 5.12.2 Within more urban areas such as in the town of Sevenoaks, older churches are located on the key routes into the centre, on the junctions of more major thoroughfares. Churches were generally the most important buildings within the towns and villages and were therefore built from the most expensive traditional materials including sandstone, flints or ragstone.
- 5.12.3 Churches are often the only remaining evidence of the medieval period for most inhabitants today, and were '... the focal point for ritual and social life in a medieval community. They were used as a place of worship and regular meeting, for religious and seasonal festivals, baptism of infants, marriages and burial of the dead'². Churches were a stage for display and public munificence by local elites and an important network between parishes and the central diocesan organisations³.

1 *List of places of worship in Sevenoaks District (borough)*, 2017, <https://goo.gl/BM7L3E> (accessed 21 August 2017).

2 R. Gilchrist, *Landscapes of the Middle Ages. Churches, castles and monasteries*. In J Hunter and I Ralston (eds), *The Archaeology of Britain: An introduction from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Industrial Revolution*, 1999, London.

3 J. Weekes, *The Medieval Period, South East Research Framework: Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the Medieval Period*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/Zgt5mE> (accessed August 18, 2017).

Summary of assets

- 5.12.4 **Medieval remains** - the earliest reference to church and priest at Sevenoaks is in 1120 but a place of worship undoubtedly preceded that date. St Nicholas may have begun as a shrine standing on one of the droveways used for passage of swine being driven into the Wealden area for seasonal pannage. Surrey and Kent were mainly characterised by dispersed patterns of small hamlets and isolated farms in the medieval period⁴, often with isolated churches developed between farms. The Reformation and Dissolution brought a clear change to an aspect of medieval culture and society as the ecclesiastical infrastructure was dismantled. The medieval period in the region was seminal in the development of a landscape template for the post-medieval period in terms of towns, villages, dispersed farms and hamlets, roads, field and park systems.
- 5.12.5 **Monastic houses and palaces**, representing the ecclesiastical interest in the countryside, for example at Otford, located on Pilgrim's Way.
- 5.12.6 **Early Parish Churches** – Older examples such as St Marys in Horton Kirby (1190) built by masons who had worked on Rochester Cathedral. Some typical Transitional details survive, but as with many of the oldest churches, significant alterations were made in 14th and 19th century. Another significant example includes St Peter and St Pauls Church in Farningham with major parts of the church dating from the 13th century, indicating a thriving medieval community in this part of the district.
- 5.12.7 **Mid 16th century – 1700 churches** - For nearly a century after the reformation, no new churches were built.
- 5.12.8 **Non-conformist chapels/churches** – Often simple brick buildings – round headed windows with an entrance under a pedimental gable – an
- 4 A. Everitt, *Continuity and colonisation: the evolution of Kentish settlement*, 1986, Leicester University Press.



Fig 75 Religious buildings across the District

early example is the Grade II listed Ebenezer Chapel in Edenbridge which was built in 1801 as a meeting place for Independent Calvinists. It is now a community centre and cafe.

5.12.9 Temporary or modest chapels are now rare. A Victorian 'tin tabernacle' at Chiddingstone Causeway was dismantled and re-erected for use as a village hall, but was demolished in 2015.

5.12.10 Quakers have been in Sevenoaks since the 1650s. The present Friends Meeting House opened in 1960, in a former school sanatorium.

5.12.11 **Churches 1830-1914** - Population increase and the popularity of religion from the 1840s expanded the building of churches until the First World War, generally built in a gothic style. Examples include St. Mary the Virgin's church in Swanley, built 1860-65 in French Gothic style, and St. Margaret's in Underriver, built in 1867 to designs by the renowned architect, Sir George Gilbert Scott. During the Victorian period many alterations to fixtures and fittings were made to churches across the district. From the turn of the century architects strove harder for originality, exploring the possibility of unconventional materials, in an Arts and Crafts Spirit.

5.12.12 **Vicarages / parsonages** - these were generally sited close to the church for resident clergymen and developed over the centuries in line with other houses. Many have been rebuilt over time and some were sold in the 20th century to be replaced with smaller ones.

5.12.13 **Other faiths / denominations** - there are seven Roman Catholic churches in the District - at Edenbridge, Hartley, Otford, Sevenoaks, Swanley, Westerham and West Kingsdown, as well as a small number of baptist churches, including the Grade II listed baptist church at Bessels Green. There are no mosques or synagogues in the District.

Current condition

5.12.14 Many older church buildings have been added

to or their design altered, providing a record of the changing architectural styles of religious building.

5.12.15 Around 20-30 churches or places of worship within the District no longer hold religious services but survive in other forms, often occupied by alternative community uses.

Significance

5.12.16 Religious buildings are the most common and obvious evidence of historical periods of growth.

5.12.17 The role of the church within the settlement in terms of its structural focus point, influences the grain of streets and routes that have since developed.

5.12.18 Memorials remembering influential people, war memorials and markings on gravestones significantly contribute to the documentation of the social history of many of the villages and hamlets in Tunbridge Wells.

5.12.19 The structures are socially significant in that they represent the centre of communities in towns and villages across the district. They have always been a place of social interaction and a source of identity. They often have communal value as important focal points of collective memory.

5.12.20 Religious assets are evidence of the growth and demise of some denominations.

Vulnerability

5.12.21 Within a context of a declining number of congregations in rural places, non-designated heritage assets are at risk from change of use or abandonment.

Existing guidance

5.12.22 Some denominations, including the Church of

England, have their own systems for inspection and control of works to the fabric.

Opportunities

5.12.23 The surroundings in which churches are experienced can make a negative or positive contribution to the significance of the heritage asset. There is an opportunity to review the setting of churches, for example opportunities for public realm enhancement, boundary improvements, wayfinding and interpretation.

5.12.24 An opportunity exists to record the social history and capture the communal significance of these religious spaces, for example famous events and life events of notable local people e.g. births, marriages and deaths.

5.12.25 Churches could also be identified specifically within policy guidance or supporting text where appropriate.



Fig 76 The spire of St Nicholas in Sevenoaks town

SECTION C:
**RECOMMENDATIONS
AND CONCLUSIONS**

6 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

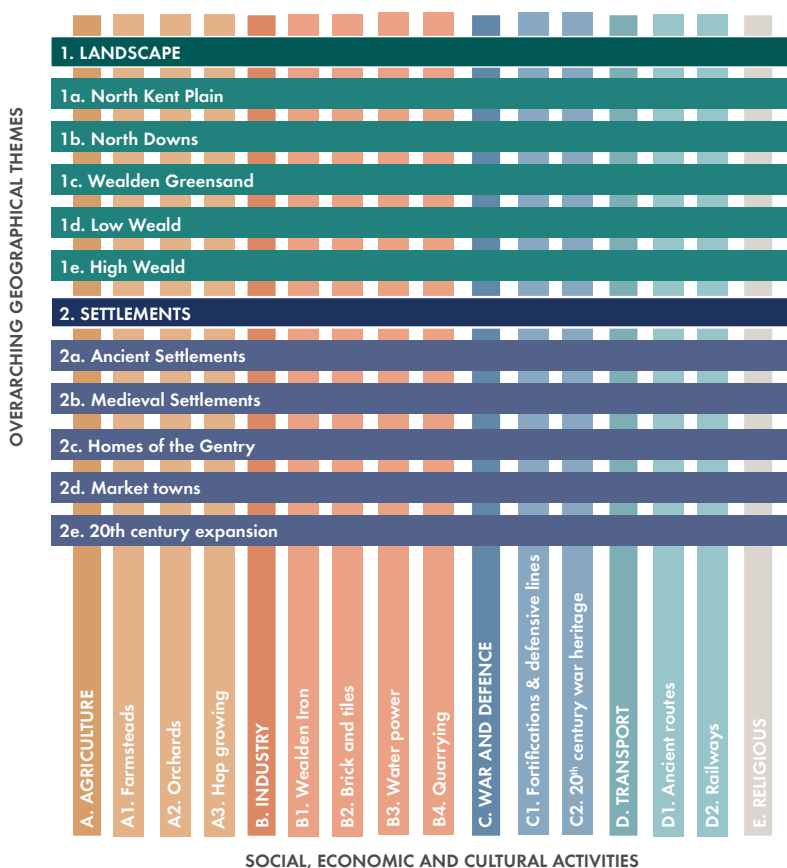
6.1 OVERVIEW OF THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

- 6.1.1 One of the Government’s twelve core planning principles is to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations (NPPF, para 17).
- 6.1.2 Following a review of the historic development of the District, and a description of the historic landscape character and heritage assets, section B of the report articulates a framework of historic themes which form a comprehensive basis to understand the District's historic context and assets.

6.1.3 As described in section B, these themes are organised as overarching geographical topics, and more intricate social, economic and cultural activities. These geographical themes and social, economic and cultural activities are intertwined and overlapping, but their distillation and establish a framework to articulate the complexity of the historic environment in Sevenoaks. The diagram below summarises the themes and sub-themes.

6.1.4 Within each theme, there is a series of sub-themes, each of which has been discussed in relation to historic context, heritage assets, current condition, significance, vulnerability, existing guidance and opportunities.

6.1.5 It is recommended that the thematic framework and individual themes and sub-themes form a reference tool for policy purposes in the emerging Local Plan and other corporate strategies. Section 6.3 makes specific recommendations from a planning perspective, and it is clear that the Local Plan should make deeper, more nuanced reference to the historic environment. This will embed a more holistic and positive attitude to the value of the historic environment, and help to facilitate an earlier, more proactive incorporation of heritage in the planning process with respect to place-making, design work and planning decisions.



6.2 SUMMARY OF VULNERABILITIES

6.1.1 Each sub-theme in section B of the report includes a summary of the specific vulnerabilities which pose a threat to the historic environment in the District. The following list is a concise summary of the principal vulnerabilities which set a context for theme specific opportunities (also in section B).

- **Alignment of landscape character and AONB protection:** Parts of the District are well-protected by AONB status. However, areas which fall outside of the designation boundary but share common landscape characteristics experience elevated development pressure which is subject to far fewer guiding principles and development management criteria.
- **Pressure for development:** Sevenoaks, like many locations in the South-east, is experiencing major pressure for development and growth to keep pace with an increasing need for new homes. This pressure for development brings a whole host of challenges and pressures to the historic environment. Erosion or loss of character, setting, integrity, evidence and heritage assets are a significant concern. This could result from a broad spectrum of development proposals including settlement expansion, infill development, intensification and modernisation of activities, conversion and shifting patterns of transport and movement. This is set against a backdrop of climate change which also has potential to exacerbate the impact on the historic environment (e.g. increased risk of flooding).
- **Tourism:** Increasing intensity of use, conversions and levels of traffic can all have an impact on historic assets including landscapes, buildings and other attractions in the urban environment.
- **Road traffic:** Allied to the previous point, increasing levels of car ownership, travel patterns and commercial activities continue to have an impact on the historic environment including landscape edges, routes and verges which is particularly significant in relation to ancient routeways. Traffic also has an impact on historic settlements and centres where traffic passes through the historic core.
- **Poor management, maintenance and changing practices:** The shifting nature and scale of activities is paralleled by evolving practices in relation to the management and maintenance of historic assets and landscapes. Over time, this has resulted in a decline in traditional techniques, which can have an impact on assets, characteristics and evidence to varying degrees.
- **Archaeological understanding:** As noted in chapter 2, there are gaps in the archaeological evidence base –detailed information already exists in the HER, but interpretation and / or more focused research would be beneficial in a number of cases.
- **Depth of protection:** The report has highlighted that gaps exist in the scope of planning guidance in relation to undesignated assets. There are two strands to this – first, the absence of a comprehensive local list, and secondly, the need for more specific local guidance which defines a positive position in relation to broader historic character and non-designated assets including criteria where appropriate.

6.1.2 These vulnerabilities are set out in greater detail in section B.

6.3 SUMMARY OF OPPORTUNITIES

6.3.1 The stage 1 report identifies a series of key opportunities and recommendations for development in stage 2. These are organised under four broad headings as follows:

- Overarching heritage strategy
- Development management and planning guidance
- Landscape management
- Tourism

1. Overarching heritage strategy

6.3.2 Sevenoaks has a distinctive historic character and a significant breadth of designated and non-designated assets. The historic environment is intertwined with the evolution of the landscape, in terms of the rural setting of both assets and settlements, and as a determinant of the historic pattern of economic and agricultural activities and uses.

6.3.3 The District's legacy has been handed down through the generations, but it cannot be taken for granted. Some of that inheritance is under greater threat than ever before, and its future cannot be taken for granted. There is an important story to tell, and it is strongly recommended that the Council prepare an overarching heritage strategy which articulates the historic character and evolution alongside reference to the spectrum of strategies and potential projects which would enable more effective protection, celebration and enhancement of the historic environment. The document would be a reference source for different teams within the Council, including economic development, tourism and planning.

6.3.4 **It is envisaged that the Heritage Strategy would play an important role in shaping corporate priorities, aspirations and delivery mechanisms** – some of which are subject to separate recommendations below.

6.3.5 In general terms, a more proactive heritage strategy should embrace the following outcomes:

- A richer sense of place;
- Catalytic benefits for regeneration;
- Reducing social exclusion;
- Increased access to heritage;
- Greater community involvement and collaboration in the historic environment; and
- Improved public health.

6.3.6 These general outcomes have helped to inform the more specific opportunities and strategies below and will be developed in more detail in stage 2 of the project.

2. Development management and planning guidance

6.3.7 Para 126 of the NPPF states that “Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.

6.3.8 Sevenoaks is currently preparing a new Local Plan for the District to 2035. As part of this review, it is recommended that the findings of the Historic Environment Review and subsequent Heritage Strategy are reviewed in the round. The following opportunities exist:

Strategic objectives

6.3.9 Issues and opportunities relating to historic character, heritage assets and their settings require careful consideration at a strategic level. **Explicit reference to protection and enhancement of assets is important, but wider opportunities to convey place-making potential and to communicate wider**

narratives of historic growth, character and significance should be taken. Linkages to movement and visitor opportunities, economic opportunities and broader vitality and viability of existing centres and the rural economy should be identified. The importance of adaptive design and opportunities to achieve sensitive outcomes for the historic townscape environment should also be promoted.

Considering the strategic spatial approach

- 6.3.10 The Sevenoaks Issues and Options report identifies an emerging preferred option which is structured around six geographical place-making areas and sub-areas. As part of the next stage of work, it is recommended that these place-making areas are considered from a heritage perspective with an overlay of the assets and the geographical themes in this report. It is likely that Green Belt designations and AONB status will preclude certain forms of development. However, as illustrated in chapter 3, other parts of the landscape are of historic interest, albeit outside of the AONB areas. **The potential impact on these fringe areas should be considered in the round as part of the strategic planning process.**

Broadening the depth of policy guidance

- 6.3.11 It is important that the Local Plan considers opportunities to look beyond designated heritage assets in their forthcoming Local Plan. Although these are important these assets are already relatively well-protected in law. Non-designated assets are not protected in law, only by the NPPF. They are also likely to be more numerous than designated assets and play a key role in defining local character.
- 6.3.12 **The Local Plan should establish clearer links to a more holistic range of supplementary guidance and evidence including the Historic**

Environment Review and other published guidance and character assessments. This could be achieved through a number of routes.

- 6.3.13 **One option would be to define an additional heritage policy which is explicit in cross-referencing relevant elements of the evidence base, and acting as a sign-post to other documents, guidance and strategies. This might be structured around the historic themes identified in this document, identifying specific opportunities and sensitivities, particularly where these relate to non-designated assets.**
- 6.3.14 **An alternative approach is to translate these principles, guidance and additional evidence into a specific Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document. This would enable a relatively concise position in the Local Plan, and a more expansive and comprehensive summary of key issues and opportunities as a natural companion to the "Heritage Strategy" document recommended above. The SPD could be conceived as a toolkit, encouraging a more sensitive criteria-based approach to heritage-led planning and design decisions. The SPD would permit a more integrated approach to the historic environment.**
- 6.3.15 **Specific assets such as historically significant routeways should be recorded as heritage asset within the planning system, with the best designated for further protection at a local level.**
- 6.3.16 **It is anticipated that the Local Plan would include a sequence of historic environment policies relating to designated assets (Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens,**

Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas). Policies should also be defined with specific reference to landscape character, particularly the AONB areas. In addition to focusing on the core NPPF requirements in relation to heritage assets and their settings, broader considerations might be established through the plan as set out below.

Settlement policies and allocations

- 6.3.17 **The historic environment review presents opportunities to refine and broaden settlement or allocation-specific guidance in the Local Plan, enabling more detailed reference to key considerations relating to setting, context and character, beyond the core heritage and landscape designations.**

Local list

- 6.3.18 **It is recommended that the ongoing commitment to the preparation of a local list continues with positive reference through specific planning policies, either in the Local Plan, or in supporting supplementary guidance. The thematic chapters of this document make reference to specific opportunities to identify local listings which relate to key historic themes.**

Archaeology

- 6.3.19 Research is ongoing in relation to the potential for additional unidentified archaeological assets and will be incorporated in subsequent drafts. Further targeted research into archaeology is recommended and including assessment of the contribution of standing buildings to archaeological knowledge. It is important to note that Areas of Archaeological Potential require careful review as they are not definitive in isolation. It is recommended that the District work closely with Kent County Council to establish priority areas for further archaeological

research. Areas of greatest sensitivity to change should be agreed with a view to undertaking a focused desktop review of assets by number and by type with reference to the HER.

Conservation areas

- 6.3.20 Local authorities are legally obliged to review their conservation areas from time to time as set out in section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Historic England Advice Note 1 (2016) underlines the importance of regular review of Conservation Area appraisals and Management Plans. **Many Conservation Areas in the District were prepared more than a decade ago and review is therefore overdue. The review should be prioritised to cover areas of particular vulnerability or development pressure.**

Research and understanding

- 6.3.21 In addition to officer-led research, or specialist studies, **the Council should be proactive in working with Kent County Council Heritage Conservation team and the voluntary sector – civic societies, archaeology groups and students. Such groups and individuals can provide a vital resource for fieldwork and documentary research, filling gaps in knowledge about such topics as vernacular buildings, industrial history and archaeology.**

Strategies for heritage at risk

- 6.3.22 **The District should consider producing a strategy for tackling heritage at risk, including resources for casework action and annual monitoring.** The National Planning Policy Guidance (para 3) notes that for historic buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation about such topics as vernacular buildings, industrial history and archaeology.

3. Landscape management

- 6.3.23 **Management strategies** should put an emphasis on holistic proposals to avoid damage to historic buildings, routeways, boundaries and archaeological monuments through lack of awareness, plough damage, poor maintenance or lack of management.
- 6.3.24 **Traditional “woodsmanship” techniques** – where possible, opportunities to protect or re-introduce knowledge of traditional techniques should be sought. Increasing demand for wood fuel and renewable timber supplies could play a role in this.
- 6.3.25 **Traffic management** – traffic impact on narrow roads, winding lanes and historic routeways is a key issue, leading to conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, horse-riders and cyclists. Insensitive highway ‘improvements’ or signage clutter may harm the character and setting of historic places.
- 6.3.26 **Ancient routeways** - Further research (including archaeological studies) might be required to understand the origin and function of routeways and their features. Previous studies have suggested a partnership working approach with Highways Authorities, parish councils and others to develop a design code for rural lanes promoting the use of characteristic boundaries and minimising the impact of intrusive highway engineering and signage. Opportunities exist to retain and restore turnpike features (e.g. milestones, toll houses); finger posts and boundary stones. An campaign has been proposed, to raise awareness of the sensitive character of ancient routeways, targeting all users of the network, motorised and non-motorised.
- 6.3.27 **Operational needs of major houses** – country houses offer opportunities as educational and visitor attractions, but it is important to consider their economic roles within larger agricultural estates.
- 6.3.28 **Tourism and education** - A number of historic industries including Wealden iron, the cloth industry and brick and tile manufacture could benefit from a more focused approach to visitor strategies and educational opportunities. This could be achieved through more research on individual industries and the relationships between them. There is scope for schools and volunteers to assist with research and recording.
- 6.3.29 **Medieval settlements** – further studies to investigate the abandonment of villages and to extend the research base.
- 6.3.30 **Hidden assets** – a targeted review of 20th century buildings in Sevenoaks.
- 6.3.31 **Orchards** - mechanisation and other commercial factors have led to bigger orchards and the loss of hedgerows, threatening the intimate patchwork of holdings and the traditional pattern to farming. Whilst the commercial realities must be recognised, orchards could form part of a broader tourism strategy to celebrate the identity of Kent as 'the Garden of England'.
- 6.3.32 **Hops** – positive efforts should be made to encourage the re-instatement of hop farms and opportunities to document the social history of the hop industry through local events and social media. It could also include an improved way finding strategy including sign/trail markers, information boards at important structures and establishing a main hub where the route begins. Proposals have also been set out for the creation of a hop and beer trail to improve links between railway line and hop industry.
- 6.3.33 **Railways** – a targeted strategy to research and consider potential to list or locally list railway assets as part of the broader heritage visitor strategy.

6.4 NEXT STEPS

6.3.34 **Churches** – opportunities exist to enhance the setting of churches, for example opportunities for public realm enhancement, boundary improvements, wayfinding and interpretation. Where possible, proposals should capture the communal significance of these religious spaces, for example famous events and life events of notable local people e.g. births, marriages and deaths.

4. Tourism

6.3.35 The opportunities heading for each sub-theme contains a number of proposals which relate to the review of existing arrangements, or, where appropriate, a more proactive approach to the management and stewardship of the District's historic assets which could tie into tourism or visitor opportunities.

6.3.36 **The historic environment should sit more clearly within a sustainable tourism strategy, focusing on the marketing of sites of heritage interest and geological / landscape features alongside proposals for improved access, research, interpretation, understanding and enjoyment.** A number of priorities have emerged through the work to date and it is strongly recommended that the Council progress a wide programme of activities, incorporating more detailed feasibility and scoping as appropriate

6.3.37 **A number of historic industries could benefit from a more focused approach to visitor strategies and educational opportunities.** This could be achieved through more research on individual industries and the relationships between them. There is scope for schools and volunteers to assist with research and recording. Heritage Trails or the placing of "geocaches" at principal assets could be a way of achieving this.

6.4.1 The consultant team is preparing a second stage report which will assess the strategies and emerging policies of the new Local Plans against the stage 1 findings and make recommendations for inclusion of the historic environment in strategic and targeted policies, and for raising awareness of the cross-cutting benefits of the historic environment for social, economic and environmental well being.



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Fig 14 - Geology and National Character Areas: British Geological Survey and Natural England <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>

Fig 15 - Historic Landscape Characterisation: Archaeology Data Service and Historic England

Fig 16 - Landscape character areas: SDC

Fig 17 - Summary of landscape assets: Registered Parks and Gardens - Historic England; Kent Compendium's List of historic parks and gardens - KCC; Ancient woodland - <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/ancient-woodlands-england2>; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - <http://www.landscapesforlife.org.uk/>; Ancient woodland - TWBC; Green Belt: Department for Communities and Local Government

Fig 18 - Registered Parks and Gardens - Historic England; Kent Compendium's List of historic parks and gardens - KCC

Fig 19- Scheduled Monuments - Historic England; Ancient Routes and Rural Lanes - TWBC

Fig 21 - Conservation areas: TW (some have been traced)

Fig 23 - Listed Buildings: Historic England (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/data-downloads/>)

Fig 26 - Heritage at risk: Historic England

Fig 36 - Possible medieval farmsteads: KCC

Fig 53 - Farmsteads: KCC

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