Ashford Local Development Framework
Landscape Character Study
for Ashford Borough Council & English Partnerships

ASSESSMENT & DATA SET : Stour Valley
November 2005
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November 2005
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The reports were compiled with the above plus:

Paul Mamo
Roger Cooper
Shinshiro Ito
Lukas Boras
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Preface

The Landscape Character Study was carried out following guidelines set out by the Countryside Agency. The landscape was divided into Landscape Description Units (LDUs), based on the Historic landscape characterisation study for Kent 2001. The Study Area was divided up into sectors from A - G the order was the priority at the time for looking at areas concerned with GADF to feed into the planning of those areas - F and G being landscapes that would not be considered for development.

Each LDU parcel was assessed from an average of 3 points - larger LDUs had more reference points than smaller ones - by two surveyors. Landscape Description Units were based on the Kent Historic Landscape Character Study 2002; Landscape Character Areas of Kent were taken from the Babtie/KCC report 2004.

All sites were viewed from public rights of way using a combination of transport by car and walking footpaths and bridleways. Site notes were recorded on a two-sided A4 record sheet by hand and later transferred to the word documents contained in this data set.

Each LDU is numbered, each filed photograph carries the LDU reference and a photograph location number reference - e.g. D1.3 for LDU D1, third photograph location. The photographs have been saved as jpegs and were generally taken at 1Gb resolution. This data set includes the location maps for the key photographs taken of each LDU. The photographs plus a digital set of the data sheets are contained in a CD bound into the back cover of the data set.

Ordnance Survey maps have been used as a base for hand-drawn plans and scanned for location of photographs etc are reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO Ashford Borough Council License No LA077038 © Crown copyright. All rights reserved.

For the assessments the LDUs were grouped by similarity into large blocks we have called District Landscape types (DLT). The 58 DLTs were assessed to fall into one of nine categories used by the County Landscape Character Study. A team of four senior landscape architects and ecologists visited each area as a travelling collegium over a period of four days making on site assessments and checking these by return to specific areas. These first thoughts were then tested by the same team in the studio a few days later to check for consistency of appraisal. Then each area was check against the field sheets. This work has been presented in these documents as tables.

All photographs © studio engleback. A read only CD of the photo database and maps are located in the back of landscape character report 122/doc/014

Studio Engleback November 2005
The Ashford Character Study Area
Black line shows Kent County Landscape Character Areas
Red fine lines show Historic Landscape Character Parcels used as a basis for the Landscape Description Units (LDUs) in this study
White lines show District Areas as defined in the assessment
Section 1  Introduction
Introduction

The Kent Landscape Character Study

The Stour Valley incorporates the flat-bottomed floodplain of the Great Stour and Little Stour rivers. It is a narrow character area which runs from south west of Canterbury, then through the city itself and on to Grove at the edge of the Chisleth marshes. The Little Stour drains a small area from Wickhambreaux and Wingham down to its outlet on the marsh of West Stourmouth.

The valley is well contained as the fertile, well cultivated sides rise resolutely on either side of the flat valley floor. Near Canterbury, the banks are steeper and accentuated by woodland on the tops. At Chatham and Stamford Street the slopes are dramatically steep.

The course of the river winds through wet, marshy and reed fringed land which has scrub and dense riparian vegetation along the river margins. Agriculturally, it is classified as poor, the alluvial soils being generally waterlogged with some peat.

Wetland pasture is still much in evidence although larger arable fields sweep up the valley sides, such as near Trenleypark Wood. The pasture still exists in small pockets either side of the meandering river, where it is drained by a close network of regular ditches. A variety of scrub vegetation and trees, including poplars and willows, line the ditches and enclose small spaces within the valley.

There are few routes which cross the two valleys, but busy feeder roads to the industrial units and the main routes out of Canterbury traverse the length of the Great Stour. A railway line enforces the impact of the transport corridor, and inhibits access across the valley. Near the urban areas, the valley is noisy and fragmented.

Both rivers are characterised by the old watermills which can be found along their courses. At Wickhambreaux, the tall weatherboarded mill house provides a striking feature at the edge of the picturesque village. Mill ponds and mill races are part of the watercourse, now redundant and overgrown in many cases, such as in Milner Close near Fordwich.

The much shorter course of the Little Stour runs through a banked canalised section through the tiny hamlet of Seaton. The river was diverted during the 18th century to serve a purpose-built mill and now follows a shallow depression through wetland pasture.

Gravel extraction has been a major influence on the valley landscape. Wet pits cover vast areas of the valley floor from Chilham to Upstreet. Old pits with open water, spits and islands, and the surrounding marshland, provide Kent’s most extensive water and wetland habitats at Westbere Marshes, Stodmarsh and Preston Marshes.

The Ashford Landscape Character Study

- 100 % of this County Landscape Character Area (CLA), however we consider that the character extends into the neighbouring Wye Stour Valley CLT bounded by the Ashford Canterbury railway on the West
- There are 12 Landscape Description Units (LDUs) in this CLA lying within the study area.
- The LDUs are based on the Historic Landscape Character map for Kent, there are 4 Historic landscape character types in this study area:
  - HLT 1 - Field Patterns
  - HLT 7 - Valley Floor and Water Management
  - HLT 11 - Recreation
  - HLT 12 - Extractive and other industry
- We have grouped these into 4 District Landscape Types (DLTs)

In carrying out the survey and discussing the results we find that there are a minor adjustment that should be made to the County Landscape Character Area Boundary:

- Adding D12 and D13 that follow the River and are bounded by the Canterbury railway line from the Wye Stour Valley CLT
- Adding D1, D3, D4, D6 and D14 from the Stour Gap CLA as these areas follow the Stour floodplain north of Ashford, and we read them as part of the Stour Valley Area.
- D14 reduced in size to account for new development in its northern portion.
- Removing the Campbell’s factory (D2) as this is clearly part of the town.

Assessment

Many of the judgements made about landscape are subjective but the process of landscape assessment provides a robust methodology based on current best practice.

The physical attributes of the landscape are considered in conjunction with the historical and cultural influences, nature conservation interests and landuse. These factors are analysed further in the field to determine the key characteristics, aesthetics, visual unity, ecological integrity, condition of heritage features and impact of built development. The condition and sensitivity of each character area is then determined.

Condition describes the integrity and unity of the landscape such as its functional integrity and visual unity - for example an urban fringe with many detracting elements and loss of unifying features will be of poor condition.

Sensitivity of the landscape refers to its overall character and quality and the extent to which these factors will be tolerant of change in general.

Capacity determines the ability of the landscape to accommodate change without causing loss of the essential character and local distinctiveness. Capacity will vary according to the type and nature of change being proposed.

The matrix combines condition and sensitivity which indicates the area’s ability to accommodate change and the appropriate land management or use, and will assist in the overall policies or development that might be appropriate to a particular area.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Sensitivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

[Image of matrix combining condition and sensitivity]
Location of Stour Valley Landscape Character Area within study area

Location of Stour Valley District Areas
Based on an OS Map Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO
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Landscape context

**Geology**
The area lies over alluvial soils associated with the river Stour, but the underlying rock is Wealden Greensand in the south, corresponds to mineral workings now flooded in the bend of the river, Gault Clay in the central area as far as Wye and chalk on the rising ground to the North Downs.

**Flooding**
Stour and the tributaries from the east are all prone to flooding the high water table means that fields are crossed with characteristic drainage dykes, and natural vegetation in uncultivated areas reverts to willow carr, reedbeds and mire.

**Heritage**
The North Downs Area of Outstanding natural Beauty (AONB) frames the area to the north. The old village of Kennington to the west is a Conservation Area.

**Ecology**
The river Stour corridor is a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) with Otters and Water Voles noted. The flooded mineral workings, willow carr and reedbeds are becoming a significant resource around the Julie Rose Stadium.

**Features lost since the 1870s**
There were scattered hedgerow trees to the field boundaries to the north of Willesborough Lees and trees were shown dotted along the River Stour. A significant length of hedgeing has been lost north and south of the Julie Rose stadium, but it would appear that the floodplain either side of the river was not divided into fields and may have been an area or wet pasture.
Ecology

Features lost since 1870's

+ Julie Rose
Stadium
Section 2  Assessment
Assessment Summary

This county area sits to the north of Ashford covering part of the Great Stour Valley and bounded by the Ashford – Canterbury railway on the West. The M20 lies to the southern boundary.

We have made some major adjustments to the Kent CLA boundary by including the low lying areas on the edges of the Ashford fringe from the Stour Gap CLA as these areas follow the Stour floodplain north of Ashford, and read as part of the Stour Valley Area. Likewise we have extended the area northwards to include the valley which was part of the Wye Stour Valley CLA.

The amended Stour Valley area includes the whole of the Great Stour valley from the flooded gravel pits adjacent to the Julie Rose Stadium and northwards as the Stour meanders through farmland towards Wye. The landscape is drained by deep dykes with open large arable fields extending up to the river, which is delineated in places by mature willows. There are some discrete areas of pasture and damp alder woodland with willows and white poplar. Towards Ashford the flooded gravel pits with wet meadows and streams are an important wildlife habitat especially for over wintering birds, and the park at Bybrook is a local recreational area with pond. There are expansive views towards Ashford and the North Downs.
### Characteristic Features

#### Landuse
- Farming
- Recreation
- Parkland
- Woodland
- Business Park
- Plant Nursery

#### Topography
- Flat
- Gently undulating
- Rolling
- Steeply sloping
- Lakes/ponds
- River/streams/dykes

#### Vegetation cover
- Intact hedgerows
- Hedgerow trees
- Feature trees
- Evidence of hedgerow clearance
- Evidence of woodland loss

#### Farming type
- Predominantly arable
- Mixed farming
- Mainly pasture
- Wet meadows

#### Local vernacular
- Ragstone, pegtiles, ship lap
- Oast house

#### Visibility
- Open long distance
- Intermittent
- Restricted

---

View west towards Ashford from Blackwell Road

Meandering Great Stour near gravel pits looking towards Ashford

Flooded gravel pits adjacent to Julie Rose stadium
Distinctive Elements

**Flooded Gravel Pits**
Former gravel pits restored to open water. Some (not much) reed fringe. Wide, gently sloping rough grass/meadow edges – docks and thistles very apparent. Many swans, coots, gulls, Canada geese.

**Great Stour River**
Open large fields in fertile flood plain. Very slight slope to river. Crossed by a series of deep dykes. Mainly open arable, with some pasture to north (west of the river). Scattered trees along river which is denuded of vegetation in places. Fine views to the North Downs.
Detractors

Campbells Factory and Julie Rose Stadium
The industrial buildings on the outskirts of Ashford are prominent within local views.
Section 3  Field Work & Data Sheets
SV 1 Bybrook

Location of SV 1 within Stour Valley

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District Landscape Type: SV 1 Bybrook
Comprising: D24

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- Floodplain between housing and the sewage works of parkland character with recreational fields and pond with new planting.

ANALYSIS

Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern of elements:</th>
<th>moderate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detracting features:</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinctiveness:</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural heritage:</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecology:</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionality:</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A coherent pattern of elements with semi-natural habitats.

Sensitivity

| Sense of place:           | moderate |
| Landform:                 | high    |
| Extent of tree cover:     | moderate|
| Visibility:               | moderate|

A recent landscape but with a peaceful established feel. Views are restricted and inward looking.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

conserve
SV 2 Longport Bridge

Location of SV 2 within Stour Valley

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District Landscape Type: SV 2 Longport Bridge
Comprising: D1

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

• Gently rolling farmland with distinctive edge to floodplain and wet meadow adjacent to the Campbells Factory.

• A steep stream cuts through the area, lined with alders and some willows and ash. The M20 is screened by trees, but is audible.

• The Stour Valley Walk crosses the area.

• Long distance views to the North Downs.

ANALYSIS

Condition

Pattern of elements: moderate
Detracting features: moderate
Distinctiveness: high
Cultural heritage: low
Ecology: high
Functionality: high

A coherent pattern of elements, interrupted slightly by the Campbells Factory. High ecological value with wet meadow, streams and waterside trees.

Sensitivity

Sense of place: moderate
Landform: high
Extent of tree cover: moderate
Visibility: high

Some sense of continuity over time and sense of place, with high visibility.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

conserve & create
- create wetlands/ marshes as part of country park with good footpath links to town
- conserve existing ditches and wet meadows
**SV 3 North of Conningbrook**

**Location of SV3 with Stour Valley**

**District Landscape Type: SV 3 North of Conningbrook**
Comprising: D3, D4, D6

**CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES**

- Flooded gravel pits with gently sloping rough grass/meadow edges that are important for overwintering birds and mammals.
- Wide open arable fields within the floodplain of the Great Stour which is delineated in places by isolated willows.
- Many hedgerows have been lost.
- Open views to the Campbell’s Factory, Julie Rose Stadium and North Downs.

**ANALYSIS**

**Condition**

- Pattern of elements: low
- Detracting features: high
- Distinctiveness: moderate
- Cultural heritage: low
- Ecology: high
- Functionality: high

A variable pattern of elements with extensive arable fields and semi-natural lakes and river features.

**Sensitivity**

- Sense of place: moderate
- Landform: high
- Extent of tree cover: low
- Visibility: high

The river, wide open floodplain and long distance views to the North Downs gives some sense of place. The area is highly visible.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**conserve & create**
SV 4 Wye Stour Valley

District Landscape Type: SV 4 Wye Stour Valley
Comprising: D5, D8, D9, D10, D11, D12, D13

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- The wide open floodplain of the Great Stour Valley with large arable fields extending to the meandering river which is delineated in places by mature willows or discrete areas of alder carr.
- The fields are intensively cultivated drained by deep dykes and hedgerows have been cleared. Areas of pasture to the northwest of the river.
- Flooded gravel pit with damp alder woodland, willows and white poplar.
- The railway bounds the north western edge.
- Expansive views towards Ashford and the North Downs.

ANALYSIS

Condition

| Pattern of elements: | poor |
| Detracting features: | moderate |
| Distinctiveness: | moderate |
| Cultural heritage: | low |
| Ecology: | moderate |
| Functionality: | high |

Floodplain is intensively managed and few landscape signatures remain. The railway impacts into the area.

Sensitivity

| Sense of place: | poor |
| Landform: | high |
| Extent of tree cover: | low |
| Visibility: | high |

The sense of place has been lost by intensive agriculture. High visibility with expansive open long distance views.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

restore & create
- restore flood meadows
Stour Valley
SV1: Bybrook
ASHFORD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT
FIELD STUDY SHEET 1
Survey Date: 5.11.04 Reference: D14 Location: North of sewage works Surveyors: LH/MG

Study sector: Kennington M (Map ref: TR022439)

County Landscape Character Area: The Stour: Stour Gap

Historic Landscape Type: 7.1 miscellaneous valley bottom paddocks and pastures

Boundaries: New housing to north; D15 to east; sewage works to south; sports pitches to west

TOPOGRAPHY

Dominant Apparent Insignificant

Landform

floodplain

Views out (long/short/restricted)

restricted, inward looking

TREE COVER

Dominant Apparent Insignificant

Key visual elements

boundaries, new planting

Views within (filtered/framed/open/restricted)

Modified landscape.

Noise from Ashford, fringing housing

ENCLOSURE PATTERN

Dominant Apparent Insignificant

Key visual elements

Foliage and scale

SETTLEMENT & BUILT FEATURES

Dominant Apparent Insignificant

Key visual elements

lighting, recreational features, urban edge

LANDUSE

Dominant Apparent Insignificant

Key visual elements

Recreation

Seasonal variation

KEY CHARACTERISTICS – in what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?

Natural features

Recreational, ecological features

River at boundary, stream, pond

Species associations

Willow, rushes

Landuse/Farm type

Primary

Woodlands

Coppice/plantation

Small blocks of new planting

species

Willow, hazel, ash, oak, alder, viburnum, cherry, poplar

Tree cover

Groups/wood/shelterbelt

mature poplar and willow along river at parcel edge

species

Field boundaries

Hedges, ditches, fence, electric

Highways and footpaths

Major road/local road/local access

no public access

Other features

(such as tree-lined lanes)

Built features

Villas/hall/town/castle

Urban edge/pavements/most/new housing

Other features

(such as moats)

D14 North of Bybrook Sewage Works
Photograph locations/ direction

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Stour Valley

**SV2: Longport Bridge**
Context:
Kent LCA: The Stour: Stour Gap
HLT: 7.1 Miscellaneous valley bottom paddocks and pastures

Aesthetics – what is your overall impression of this area?

TOPOGRAPHY
Dominant
Apparent
Insignificant

Landform
Gently rolling fields to north and flood plain

Views
To Campbells factory in D2 and North Downs

TREE COVER
Dominant
Apparent
Insignificant

Key visual elements
Treed edges and isolated alders on river bank

Views within
Yes – open fields divided by river and deep cut drains

ENCLOSURE PATTERN
Dominant
Apparent
Insignificant

Unenclosed

Key visual elements
Edges and stream/drain/river corridor

SETTLEMENT & LANDUSE
Dominant
Apparent
Insignificant

Unsettled

Key visual elements
D2

Key characteristics – in what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?

Natural features
River and streams

Species associations
Alder, willow, isolated ash, some rushes

Farm type
Arable

Woodlands
Wooded strip to M20

New planting by river 1-2yrs old

Species
Pine, elder, ash, oak, birch, sycamore, hazel

Hedgerow trees
On south side

Species
Oak, ash

Other trees
Heritage features

Species
Hawthorn, bullace, holly, hazel, dogwood, ivy

Field boundaries
Alder stand, high hedges near road/south on bank/change of level

Species

Highways
Verges

Stour Valley Walk crosses parcel

Buildings
Villas

Other features
Herdsmen

D1 North of the M20 corridor
Photograph locations/ direction

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Stour Valley

SV3: North of Conningbrook
**Context:**
Kent LCA: The Stour: Stour Gap
HLT: 12.2 Active and disused gravel and clay workings

**Aesthetics – what is your overall impression of this area?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPOGRAPHY</th>
<th>Key visual elements</th>
<th>Views Occurring</th>
<th>(\sqrt{\text{View}})</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>Valley floor – flooded gravel pit</td>
<td>To North Downs and Greensand ridge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insignificant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TREE COVER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key visual elements</th>
<th>Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lakes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ENCLOSURE PATTERN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key visual elements</th>
<th>Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hedge to Willesborough Road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SETTLEMENT & LANDUSE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key visual elements</th>
<th>Seasonal variation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Brief description:**
Former gravel pits restored to open water. Some (not much) reed fringe. Wide, gently sloping rough grass/meadow edges – docks and thistles very apparent. Many swans, coots, gulls, Canada geese.

**Visual unity – assess the overall unity of the landscape and note the significance of detracting features**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detractors:</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Busy Willesborough Road and view to factory</td>
<td>Fragmented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ecological integrity – how well does this area of countryside function as a habitat for wildlife?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of semi-natural habitat</th>
<th>Ecological corridors</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreated habitat not yet mature</td>
<td>Lakes in crook of Great Stour</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Intensity of land use**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition of heritage features – assess current condition and make note of vulnerability to change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tree Cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Field Boundaries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Other features**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Impact of built development – how well does modern development respect local vernacular, character and sense of place**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Siting</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factory and Julie Rose stadium</td>
<td>Adjacent</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>HIGH Moderate Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**D6 West of Goose Green**

**Brief description:**

**Visual unity – assess the overall unity of the landscape and note the significance of detracting features**
Open views across site to Downs and wooded Greensand Ridge

**Detractors:**
- Campbells factory

**Ecological integrity – how well does this area of countryside function as a habitat for wildlife?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of semi-natural habitat</th>
<th>Ecological corridors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>River Great Stour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Intensity of land use**
Low

**Condition of heritage features – assess current condition and make note of vulnerability to change**

**Tree Cover**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Field boundaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Field boundaries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Map reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West of Goose Green</td>
<td>TR036433</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Settlement & Landuse**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key characteristics – in what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Natural features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stream running down to the valley at the south tip of D7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Farm type** | **Other** |
| Primary Arable | |

| **Woodlands** | **Species** |
| Seasonal variation | |

| **Hedgerow trees** | **Species** |
| Seasonal variation | |

| **Other trees** | **Species** |
| River bank | Willows, alder |

| **Field Boundaries** | **Species** |
| Removed or absent | |

| **Highways** | **Other features** |
| Narrow grass verges | |

| **Buildings** | **Villages** |
| Farmsteads | |

| **Other features** | |
| Electric cables on timber posts. |
ASHFORD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT
FIELD STUDY SHEET 1

Date: 18/10/04
Location: D5 North of Chapel Bridge
Map reference: TR034438

Context:
Kent LCA: Stour – Stour Valley
HLT: 12.2 Active and disused gravel and clay workings

Aesthetics – what is your overall impression of this area?

TOPOGRAPHY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Apparent</th>
<th>Insignificant</th>
<th>Landform</th>
<th>Views Out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>flooded gravel pit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TREE COVER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Apparent</th>
<th>Insignificant</th>
<th>Key visual elements</th>
<th>Views within</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Surrounded by planting</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ENCLOSURE PATTERN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Apparent</th>
<th>Insignificant</th>
<th>Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SETTLEMENT & LANDUSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Apparent</th>
<th>Insignificant</th>
<th>Unsettled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key characteristics – in what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?

Natural features
- Pond and typha stand.
- Deep dyke.
- Wet meadow edge

Species associations
- Juncus/Typha/Phragmites, willows, elders,
- Alder, ferns, rush, water mint, some Typha.
- Rose, alder, thistles, teasel

Farm type
- Primary
- Other

Woodlands
- Mature teaters
- Planted damp woodland

Species
- Willows various, white poplar, alder

Hedgerow trees
- Mature teaters

Species

Other trees
- Mature teaters

Species

Field Boundaries
- Mature teaters

Species

Highways
- Verges

Other features
- Buildings
- Viaducts
- Barns

Impact of built development – how well does modern development respect local vernacular, character and sense of place

Type
- Siting
- Design
- Extent

High
- Moderate
- Low
## TOPOGRAPHY
- **Apparent Landform:** Falling to Great Stour
- **Views Out:** Extensive: North Downs

## TREE COVER
- **Apparent Key visual elements:** Sporadic riverside trees. Some hedgerows
- **Views within:** Open

## ENCLOSURE PATTERN
- **Insignificant Key visual elements:** Remnant hedges and drains
- **Pattern:** Open fields

## SETTLEMENT & LANDUSE
- **Apparent Key visual elements:** Arable floodplain
- **Seasonal variation:**

### Key characteristics – in what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?

| Natural features | Great Stour River | species associations: Willow, alder |
| WOODLAND | Management features: Small wood to east – wet? | species:  |
| HEDGEROW TREES | Management features: To edges with D7/D9/D10 | species: Oak, ash, alder, field maple, dead elm |
| OTHER TREES | Management features:  | species: Alder, willow |
| FIELD BOUNDARIES | Management features: With D7 road to river, Dry ditch on NE boundary | species: Bullace, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, willow |
| HIGHWAYS | Verges: Grass verge along lane in east | Other features: Stour Valley Walk |
| BUILDINGS | Villages: Small cottage in south-east | Farmsteads:  |
| OTHER FEATURES | Deep drains, some flowing | Typha/Juncos |

## Aesthetics – what is your overall impression of this area?

- **TOPOGRAPHY:** Apparent
- **TREE COVER:** Apparent
- **ENCLOSURE PATTERN:** Insignificant
- **SETTLEMENT & LANDUSE:** Apparent

## Visual unity – assess the overall unity of the landscape and note the significance of detracting features

**Detractions:**
- Hedgerow and riverside tree clearance (Intact)

## Ecological integrity – how well does this area of countryside function as a habitat for wildlife?

**Extent of semi-natural habitat:**
- Small woodland to east: Moderate
- River and drains: Moderate

## Intensity of land use
- High - Arable

## Condition of heritage features – assess current condition and make note of vulnerability to change

| Tree Cover | Extent: Scattered | Age Structure: Mature | Condition: Good |
| Field Boundaries | L ditch, some remnant hedges |
| Other features | Stour Valley Walk: Tranquil |

## Impact of built development – how well does modern development respect local vernacular, character and sense of place

- **Type:** Ashford fringe
  - Charter House prominent.
  - Any extension to Ashford would be very apparent
- **Siting:** Low
- **Design:** Low
- **Extant:** Low
### D9A Blackwall Farm

#### Study Sector:
Kenington

#### County Landscape Character Area:
Brabourne Lees Mixed Farmlands

#### Historic Landscape Type:
1.15 Small rectilinear with wavy boundaries

#### Boundaries:
Outside of study area to east, pasture of D10 north; D8

#### TOPOGRAPHY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Sector</th>
<th>Kenington</th>
<th>Map ref: TR038445</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### TREE COVER
- **Apparent**
  - Key visual elements
    - Linear woodland belts and blocks
  - Views within
    - Framed in places by woods and the topography

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN
- **Apparent**
  - Key visual elements
    - Hedgerows and streams
  - Pattern & scale
    - Mix of small to large enclosures. Large arable fields west of Sales wood

#### SETTLEMENT & BUILT FEATURES
- **Insignificant**
  - Key visual elements
    - Farms and farm outbuildings, isolated
  - Pattern
    - Barns

#### LANDUSE
- **Apparent**
  - Key visual elements
    - Arable, rough pasture, horse and sheep pasture, poultry kept in woods, paths for recreation, shooting.
  - Seasonal variation
    - Yes

#### KEY CHARACTERISTICS
- **Natural features**
  - Rivers/streams
    - Pond and some ditches, streams
  - Woodlands
    - Coppice/plantation
    - Sales wood is coppice. Linear wood to south looks similar (no access)
  - Woodland type
    - Primary
    - Arable
  - Woodland extent
    - Moderate +
  - Species associations
  - Species
    - Oak, Elder, Hornbeam, Hazel, Holly. Mature stools, poor field layer.
  - Plant diversity
    - Moderate +
  - Wetland vegetation in places, some mature standards in some hedgerows

#### Tree Cover
- **Apparent**
  - Species
    - Ash, field maple, oak, elder, poplar, blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel
  - Species associations
Photograph locations/ direction
**ASHFORD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**

**FIELD STUDY SHEET 1**

**Survey Date:** 3.11.04  **Reference:** D10  **Location:** East of Spearpoint Corner  **Surveyors:** AK/MG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Sector:</th>
<th>Kennington</th>
<th>(Map ref: TR037445)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Landscape Area:</td>
<td>Brabourne Lees Mixed Farmlands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Landscape Type:</td>
<td>7.1 Miscellaneous valley bottom paddocks and pastures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundaries:</td>
<td>D9 arable to south; D8 floodplain farmland elsewhere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOPOGRAPHY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Apparent</th>
<th>Insignificant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Landform | Flat | Views out (long/remote)
| Long views north and west to North Downs, south to Ashford, restricted east by tree cover |

**ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Apparent</th>
<th>Insignificant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Species Associations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scattered scrub along boundary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawthorn, oak</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SETTLEMENT & BUILT FEATURES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Apparent</th>
<th>Insignificant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pattern</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footpath to southern boundary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LANDUSE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Apparent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grazing pasture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY CHARACTERISTICS** – In what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural features</th>
<th>River/ stream/ pond</th>
<th>Species associations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landuse/farm type</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Pasture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodlands</td>
<td>Coppice/ plantation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree cover</td>
<td>Groups/ hillock/ meadow/ scrub/ hedge/ scatter/ plantation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedge/shrub</td>
<td>Species</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field boundaries</td>
<td>Stock fence/ hedge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways and footpaths</td>
<td>Major road/ railway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other features</td>
<td>Reservoir/ mill/ church/ castle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Brief summary description:**
Small parcel comprising single open pasture, remnant hedgerow scrub to east, post and wire fencing. Fine long views to North Downs. Bounded by D8 and D9.

**Visual context and unity** – assess the views, outlook, adjacent landuses and overall unity of the landscape and note any detracting features and their significance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noise from A2070</th>
<th>Intact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Ecological context** – how well does this area of countryside function as a habitat for wildlife?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of semi-natural habitat and patches</th>
<th>Ecological corridors and networks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Condition of heritage features** – assess current condition and make note of vulnerability to change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tree Cover</th>
<th>Age structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remnant hedge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Boundaries</th>
<th>Survive of historic land pattern and condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other features</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Impact of built development** – how well does modern development respect local vernacular, character and sense of place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Siting</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other features [such as moats]</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban edge/ pyramids/ mausoleums/ new housing</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**D10 East of Spearpoint Corner**
Photograph locations/ direction
Brief summary description:
Small, regular shaped parcel comprising an open, flat arable field and a peripheral
smaller section of pasture. Notable mature strip of continuous hedgerow and ditch to
east, otherwise hedge clearance and barbed wire fencing. Railway line bounds site to
western edge, mixed farmland bounds elsewhere.

Visual context and unity – assess the views, outlook, adjacent landuses and overall unity
of the landscape and note any detracting features and their significance

Ecological integrity – how well does this area of countryside function as a habitat for
wildlife?

Extent of semi-natural habitat and
patches
Strong continuous section
of hedge and ditch to
east

Ecological corridors and
networks

Condition of heritage features – assess current condition and make note of vulnerability
to change

Tree Cover
Age structure
Species

Field Boundaries
Survival of historic field pattern and condition

Good
Variable
Poor

Species

Other features

Impact of built development – how well does modern development respect local
vernacular, character and sense of place

Type
Siting
Design
Extent

Good
Variable
Poor

High
Moderate
Low

Intact
Interrupted
Fragmented

Moderate

Low

High

Mature

Variable

Poor

Good
Variable

Poor

High

Moderate

Low
Photograph locations/ direction
### Survey Date: 3.11.05  Reference: D12  Location: South of Browning Bridge  Surveyors: AK/MG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Sector:</th>
<th>Kenington</th>
<th>(Map ref: TRC1454)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County landscape Character Area:</td>
<td>Wye; Stour Valley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Landscape Type:</td>
<td>7.1 Miscellaneous valley bottom paddocks and pastures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundaries:</td>
<td>ME/NW open countryside beyond development area; Wye in centre; D13 SW; D8 to S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### TOPOGRAPHY
- Appleton
  - Flat valley floor, two small slopes on E.
  - Views out (long/short/restricted) from edges, long towards North Downs to north and east; towards Ashford fringe to south.

#### TREE COVER
- Insignificant
  - Key visual elements
    - Apparent on boundaries beyond north section; few isolated scrub areas.
  - Views within (intermediate/open/restricted)
    - Open over valley floor, across fields to houses in centre and North Downs.

#### ENCLOSURE PATTERN
- Apparent
  - Key visual elements
    - AbSENT boundary with D13, Ditches between fields, verges.
  - Roman and scale
    - Tall herbs at many field boundaries on south half.

#### SETTLEMENT & BUILT FEATURES
- Apparent
  - Key visual elements
    - Few isolated houses at boundary; Train station and railway, Urban in Wye.

#### LANDUSE
- Dominant
  - Key visual elements
    - Arable and hay meadows, floodplain, recreation.
  - Seasonal variation
    - Deciduous trees.

### KEY CHARACTERISTICS – in what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?

#### Natural features
- Riv{er}/knoll/ponds
  - Stream on E boundary: Great Stour river.

#### Landscape/form type
- Primary
  - Arable

#### Woodlands
- Coppice/pompon
  - Willow carr in south, Conifer plantation beyond NE border; Semi-natural wet woodland along NW boundary

#### Tree cover
- Groups/line/redcedar/wildshrub/shrub
  - Alder, elder, ash

#### Field boundaries
- Hedges/shrubs/stock fence/electric
  - South-> Stream in grassy embankment at E and N North-> Streams and wet woodland

#### Highways and footpaths
- Major road/footway/local road/country lane/public access
  - Great Stour valley path through south half: Other unmanaged across the SW border and the NW and NE areas. Roads crosses the railway line at Wye, with old style railway gates, Railway crosses area in N

#### Built features
- Vehicular/veh/ground/roadway/inn/estate/roads
  - Concrete bridge over the railway at Wye station

### Other features
- (such as moats)

### Brief summary description:
A long large parcel of valley bottom flood plain characterised by the Great Stour River and its many associated streams. A mainly flat landscape where the drier lands are mainly used for arable, hay meadows and/or possibly pasture. Several paths cross or borders the corridor, offering recreation. An urban impact in the middle zone at Wye plus a railway station and line bisecting the north zone. High ecological value due to wetland corridors.

### Ecological integrity – how well does this area of countryside function as a habitat for wildlife?
- Extent of semi-natural habitat and patches
  - Stour river, slow, with good vegetated banks
  - Possible vulnerability from sewage works to west.

### Condition of heritage features – assess current condition and make note of vulnerability to change
- Tree cover
  - Age structure, regeneration
  - Variable

### Impact of built development – how well does modern development respect local vernacular, character and sense of place
- Type
  - Housing
    - Stling
    - Siting
    - Design
    - Extent
    - Visible impact
      - Moderate

### Other features
- The Stour Valley walk is a colourful attractive path with poppy, butter- and dragonflies and fragrant speathistle etc.

### D12 South of Browning Bridge

**Reference:** D12 ctd.
### Brief Summary Description

Long patch between Stour River and railway. Arable use, poor ecological value, no good verges. Fine long views to west, north and east towards North Downs.

### Visual Context and Unity

- Assess views, outlook, adjacent landuses and overall unity of the landscape and note any detracting features and their significance.

- **Railway to western boundary**
  - Impact: Low

### Ecological Integrity

- How well does this area of countryside function as a habitat for wildlife?

- **Extent of semi-natural habitat and patches**
  - Ecological corridors and networks: Verge and some hedges along railway. Poor herblayer.
  - Impact: Low

- **Intensity of land use and habitat trend**
  - Moderate

### Condition of Heritage Features

- Assess current condition and make note of vulnerability to change.

- **Tree Cover**
  - Age structure: Mature
  - Species: Hawthorn, oak, goat willow

- **Field Boundaries**
  - Survival of historic field pattern and condition: Gappy over mature hedge to west. Poor on east edge.
  - Species: Hawthorn, oak, goat willow

- **Highways and Footpaths**
  - Railway at boundary

- **Built Features**
  - Small building adjacent to railway

- **Other Features**
  - Urban edge, pylons, masts, new housing

### Topography

- Slight slope to east

### Tree Cover

- **Key Visual Elements**
  - **Boundary Hedgerows**
  - Views within the area: Open

### Enclosure Pattern

- **Key Visual Elements**
  - Large, regular

### Settlement & Built Features

- **Unsettled**
  - **Pattern**
  - **Landuse**

### Key Characteristics

- In what way do the following contribute to local distinctiveness?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural Features</th>
<th>Landuse/farm type</th>
<th>Species Associations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rivers, Knolls, Ponds</td>
<td>Primary Arable</td>
<td>Linear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodlands</td>
<td>Coppice/plantation</td>
<td>Species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Cover</td>
<td>Groups: mixed, hedgerow, scattered, shelterbelt</td>
<td>Species: Hawthorn, oak, goat willow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Boundaries</td>
<td>Hedgerow trees along railway</td>
<td>Species: Hawthorn, oak, goat willow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways and Footpaths</td>
<td>Major road/railway/local road/footpath/no public access</td>
<td>Other features: Railways at boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built Features</td>
<td>Verge, remnant, rams, churches, ways</td>
<td>Other features: Small building adjacent to railway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Features</td>
<td>(such as moats)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**D13 East of Wilmington Farm**
Photograph locations/ direction

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