

## Generic Guidelines

- Where development is deemed acceptable, it should be designed sensitively in order to strengthen local landscape character, and improve urban edges. To help achieve this, consider landscape character descriptions and landscape guidelines set out within Swale Landscape and Biodiversity Appraisal (Jacobs Third Draft February 2010).
- Consider guidelines set out with the Kent Design Guide (Kent County Council 2005/2006), particularly with regard to respecting landscape context and character, appropriate scale and massing, boundary treatment, the design of open spaces and landscaping within new developments.
- Any significant development should be subject to detailed landscape and visual impact assessment and a development brief/landscape strategy.
- Consider the impacts on the highly sensitive Kent Downs AONB, including impacts on views towards and from the AONB and impacts on its landscape setting, in any development proposals.
- Refer to the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2009 - 2014 (First Revision 2009) for policies relating to the management of the Kent Downs AONB.
- Consider highly sensitive views from open marshland and avoid proposals that would be unduly prominent in highly visible locations.
- The impacts of lighting should be considered in any development proposals, with particular focus on minimising the impact on the dark night time character of the North Kent Marshes.
- Conserve the setting of Listed Buildings, including their relationship to the farmland/landscape which constitutes their setting and forms part of their history.
- Heights of new development should relate to existing development and be appropriate to the location and character of the landscape.
- Utilise the landform to contain development.
- Resist straight edges around any areas of new development areas, and integrate development into the contours.

## Conclusion

Figure 2 illustrates the capacity to accommodate change in each Study Area, and Table 4 provides a summary of the landscape capacity analysis in each Study Area.

**Table 4: Summary Table**

| Study Area                      | Landscape Sensitivity | Landscape Value | Capacity to Accommodate Change |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. North of Faversham           | High                  | Moderate        | Low                            |
| 2. North East of Faversham      | High                  | High            | Low                            |
| 3. East of Faversham            | Moderate              | Moderate        | Moderate                       |
| 4. South East of Faversham      | Moderate              | Moderate        | Moderate                       |
| 5. South West of Faversham      | Moderate              | Moderate        | Moderate                       |
| 6. West of Faversham            | High                  | High            | Low                            |
| 7. South of Sittingbourne       | Moderate              | Moderate        | Moderate                       |
| 8. South of Sittingbourne       | High                  | Moderate        | Low                            |
| 9. South of Sittingbourne       | High                  | Moderate        | Low                            |
| 10. South of Sittingbourne      | High                  | High            | Low                            |
| 11. South West of Sittingbourne | High                  | Moderate        | Low                            |
| 12. West of Sittingbourne       | Moderate              | Low             | High                           |
| 13. West of Sittingbourne       | Moderate              | Moderate        | Moderate                       |
| 14. North of Sittingbourne      | Moderate              | High            | Low                            |
| 15. South East of Sittingbourne | High                  | Moderate        | Low                            |
| 16. East of Sittingbourne       | Moderate              | Moderate        | Moderate                       |
| 17. North West of Sittingbourne | Moderate              | Low             | High                           |
| 18. East of Iwade               | Low                   | Low             | High                           |
| 19. South West of Iwade         | Moderate              | Moderate        | Moderate                       |

| Study Area  | Landscape Sensitivity | Landscape Value | Capacity to Accommodate Change |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| 20. North West of Iwade                               | High                  | Moderate        | Low                            |
| 21. West of Rushenden                                 | High                  | Moderate        | Low                            |
| 22. North of Queenborough                             | Moderate              | Moderate        | Moderate                       |
| 23. South East of Sheerness and north West of Minster | Moderate              | Moderate        | Moderate                       |
| 24. South of Minster                                  | Moderate              | Moderate        | Moderate                       |
| 25. North East of Minster                             | High                  | Moderate        | Low                            |
| 26. South East of Minster                             | High                  | Moderate        | Low                            |
| 27. South East of Minster                             | High                  | Moderate        | Low                            |

### Faversham

To the north of Faversham (Study Areas 1 and 2), the landscape capacity is generally low because of the open nature of the landscape and the resultant high visibility. It is also in close proximity to the sensitive North Kent Marshes. To the west (Study Area 6), the landscape has a low capacity to accommodate change because of its high landscape sensitivity and value. To the south and east of Faversham (Study Areas 3, 4 and 5), the landscape has a moderate capacity to accommodate change. Here the landscape is physically and visually contained by vegetation belts and in places by the landform. However where it forms part of the foreground to the Kent Downs AONB the landscape is highly sensitive.

### Sittingbourne

To the south of Sittingbourne and the A2, the landscape generally has a low capacity to accommodate change because it is often locally distinct, has a strong rural character and is not strongly influenced by the existing urban edge of Sittingbourne. However the landscape in Study Area 7 has a moderate capacity to accommodate change, where it is more strongly influenced by the existing urban edge of Sittingbourne. Study Area 12 has a high capacity to accommodate change because the landscape is heavily

## Conclusion

influenced by the existing urban edge and infrastructure routes.

To the east of Sittingbourne, Study Area 16 has a moderate capacity to accommodate change. This landscape performs a useful function by maintaining open space between the settlements of Sittingbourne and Bapchild. The setting of Tonge Conservation Area adds to the sensitivity of the landscape, and restricts the scale of potential urban extension. To the west of Sittingbourne, Study Area 13 would be difficult to develop because a large part of the urban edge comprises a public open space. West of the A249, however, some housing could potentially be accommodated as an extension of existing linear housing.

To the north of Sittingbourne, Study Area 14 has a low capacity to accommodate change because the landscape is sensitive and highly valued. It provides open space between urban areas of Sittingbourne and has marshland elements which link to the wider marshes further north. North west of Sittingbourne, the landscape has a high capacity to accommodate change because east of the A249 it is strongly influenced by the existing urban edge. However, north of the footbridge which crosses the A249, the landscape forms part of the open space between the separate settlements of Iwade and Sittingbourne. Therefore whilst this landscape is strongly influenced by existing development within Sittingbourne and large scale industrial buildings at Kemsley, it would perhaps be appropriate to conserve the open character of the landscape between settlements.

### **Kent Science Park**

Around the Kent Science Park, south of Sittingbourne, the landscape has a low capacity to accommodate change because it is often locally distinct, has a strong rural character and is not strongly influenced by the existing urban edge of Sittingbourne.

### **Iwade**

East of Iwade, Study Area 18 has a high capacity to accommodate change, and further development towards the A249 would potentially create a softer urban edge and promote a stronger identity for Iwade, as well as providing visual benefit in terms of screening traffic on the A249. South of Iwade as well

as providing visual benefit in terms of screening traffic on the A249. South of Iwade a degree of urban expansion could potentially be accommodated in some locations where the landscape is influenced by the existing urban edge. However the landscape is more sensitive in higher locations and does not relate well to the existing urban edge to the south where there is a stronger rural character. To maintain the integrity of the two settlements, it would be advantageous to retain a landscape gap between Iwade and Sittingbourne.

North west of Iwade, Study Area 20 has a low capacity to accommodate change because of its open character and close proximity to highly sensitive views from the marshes to the north.

### **Rushenden and Queenborough**

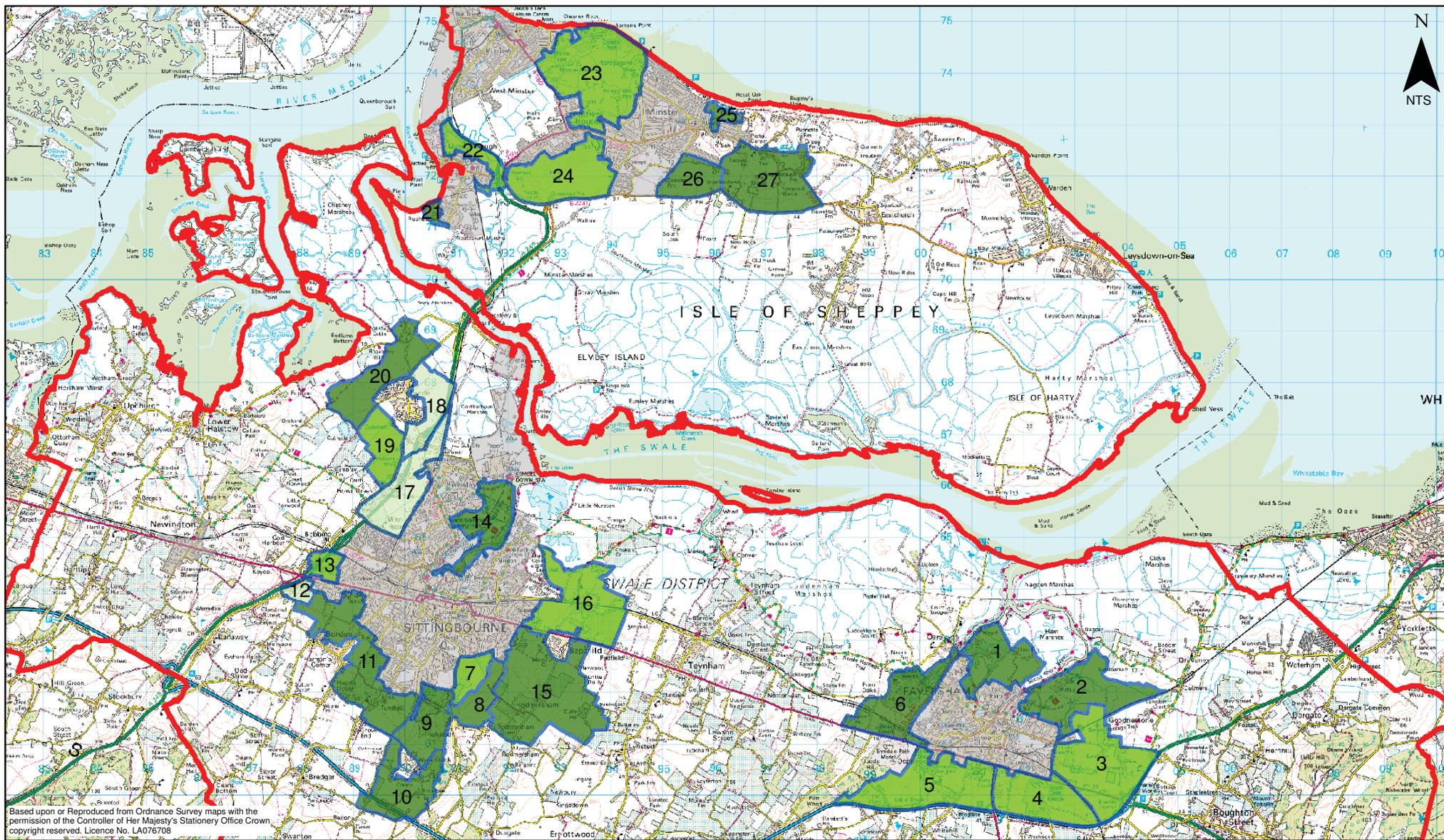
South of Rushenden, Study Area 21 has a low capacity to accommodate change because any further development on the raised landform would be highly visible in views from the marshland to the south. However north of Queenborough, Study Area 22 has a moderate capacity to accommodate change. Whilst the landscape is valued ecologically, it lacks a clear landscape function and is no longer managed through grazing.

### **Minster Sheerness and Queenborough**

South of Minster (Study Area 24) and between Minster and Sheerness (Study Area 23), the landscape has a moderate capacity to accommodate change within pockets of land which are physically and visually well contained by the landform.

East of Minster, Study Area 25 has a low capacity to accommodate change because the open landscape is important as the coastal setting and as open space between residential areas within Minster. South east of Minster, Study Areas 26 and 27 have a low capacity to accommodate change because the open, rising landscape is very prominent in highly sensitive views from the marshland to the south.

The cumulative impact of significant development within Study Areas 24, 26 and 27 would be substantial in terms of highly sensitive views from the marshland to the south.



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**Legend**

- Swale Borough Boundary
- Urban Areas
- Urban Extension Study Areas
- Capacity to Accommodate Change**
- High
- Moderate
- Low\*

- Study Area 1 – North of Faversham
- Study Area 2 – North East of Faversham
- Study Area 3 – East of Faversham
- Study Area 4 – South East of Faversham
- Study Area 5 – South West of Faversham
- Study Area 6 – West of Faversham
- Study Area 7 – South of Sittingbourne
- Study Area 8 – South of Sittingbourne
- Study Area 9 – South of Sittingbourne
- Study Area 10 – South of Sittingbourne
- Study Area 11 – South West of Sittingbourne
- Study Area 12 – West of Sittingbourne
- Study Area 13 – West of Sittingbourne
- Study Area 14 – North of Sittingbourne
- Study Area 15 – South East of Sittingbourne
- Study Area 16 – East of Sittingbourne
- Study Area 17 – North West of Sittingbourne

- Study Area 18 – East of Iwade
- Study Area 19 – South West of Iwade
- Study Area 20 – North West of Iwade
- Study Area 21 – West of Rushenden
- Study Area 22 – North of Queenborough
- Study Area 23 – South East of Sheerness and North West of Minster
- Study Area 24 – South of Minster
- Study Area 25 – North East of Minster
- Study Area 26 – South East of Minster
- Study Area 27 – South East of Minster

\* Where the Capacity to Accommodate Change is low, areas which are suggested to be appropriate for development are those in the event of there being an overriding need for development.

**Figure 2 Capacity to Accommodate Change**