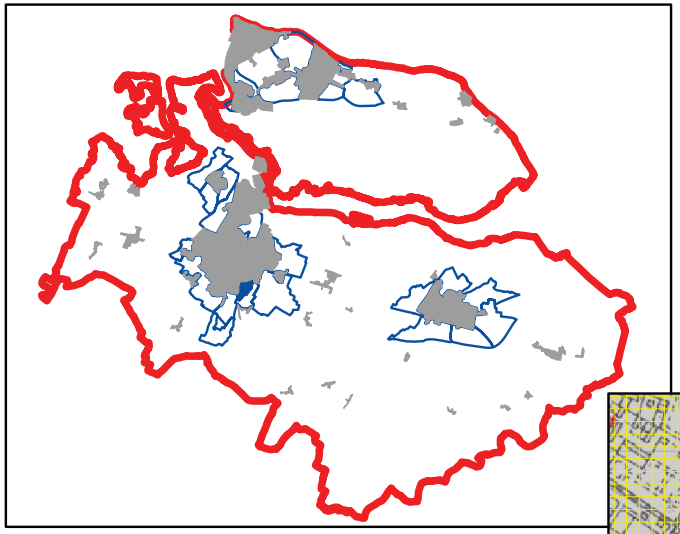

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Study Area 7 - South of Sittingbourne

Legend

- Swale Borough Boundary/Landscape Character Areas
- Urban Areas
- Potential Urban Extension Study Areas
- Potential Employment Sites (as shown in Employment Land Review)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Sites
- Area of High Townscape Value*
- Areas of High Landscape Value*
- Special Landscape Area*
- Conservation Areas
- Scheduled Monuments
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Listed Buildings
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Statutory Local Nature Reserve
- Special Protection Area for Birds
- Special Area of Conservation
- Photograph Location Points

* Local designations as defined in Swale Borough Local Plan Adopted February 2008

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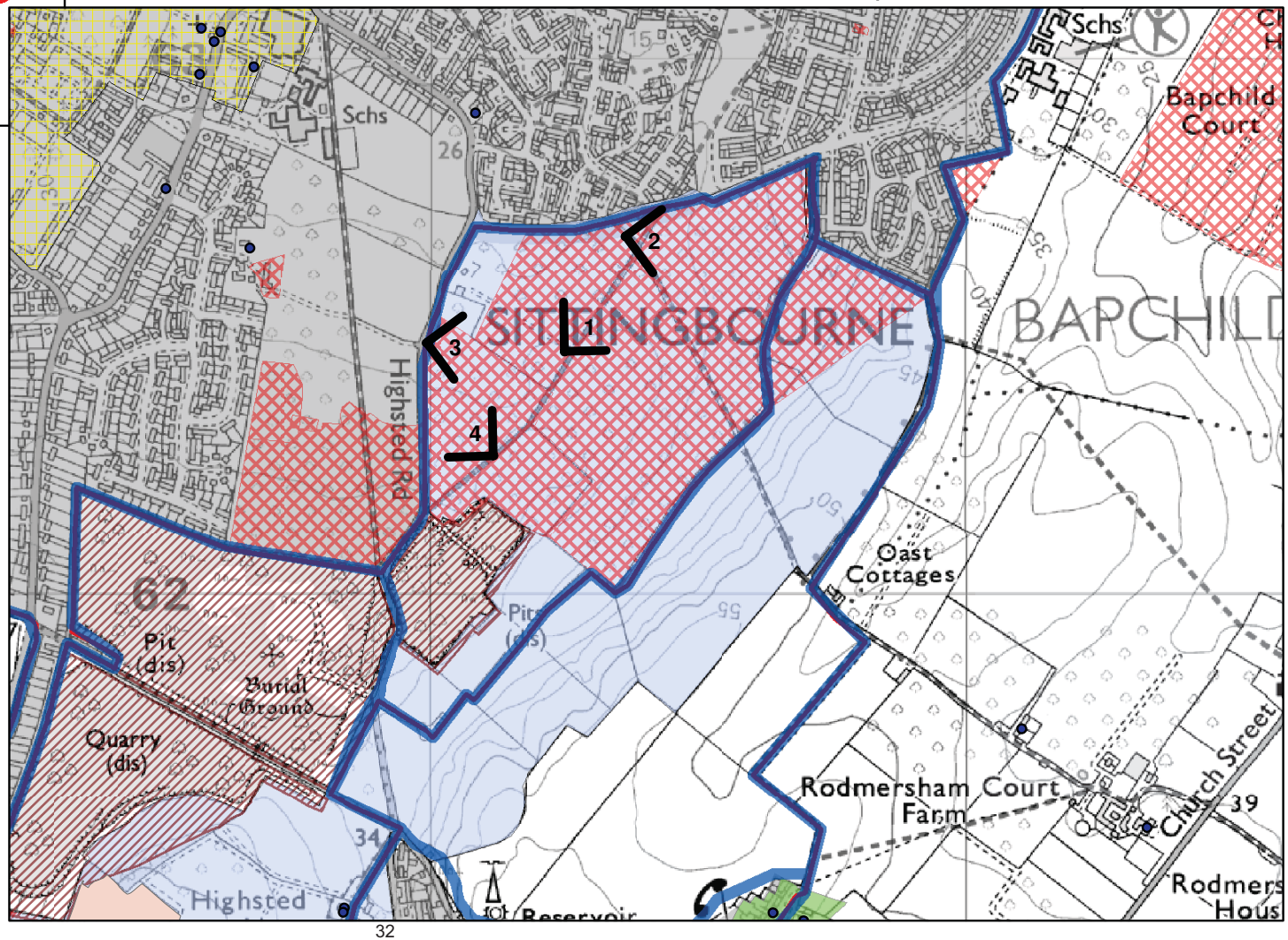

Study Area 7 – South of Sittingbourne

Landscape Character and Urban Edge Influence

Study Area 7 falls within the northern part of the wider Tunstall Farmlands landscape character area. The existing urban edge along the southern boundary of Sittingbourne is clearly defined by the extent of modern housing and a substantial close boarded timber fence. This, along with a tall chain link fence which aligns the southern side of the recent peripheral road, provides a harsh and visually prominent urban edge in views from the south. To the west recent housing abuts Highstead Road, although hedgerows along the road soften the urban edge and maintain a rural character. Although this landscape is influenced by the visual prominence of the existing urban edge, there are few urban influences throughout the landscape.

Local Landscape Sensitivity: Moderate

- Clear views of the urban edge of Sittingbourne, although the ridgeline to the south east visually encloses the landscape.
- Landscape has been opened up in places as a result of agricultural intensification, although remaining orchards and shelter belts provide visual enclosure.
- Distinctiveness and sense of place provided has been compromised at the urban edge by the visual prominence and encroachment of recent housing and harsh boundary treatment.
- Sensitivity increases to the south from where the urban edge is not evident and the distinctiveness and remoteness of the landscape are stronger.

Landscape Value: Moderate

- North Downs Special Landscape Area.
- Highstead Quarries Local Wildlife Site.
- Orchards provide scenic quality and a sense of remoteness and tranquillity.

Capacity to Accommodate Change: Moderate

Arable fields are well contained by the existing urban edge, remaining orchard blocks to the south and the ridgeline which rises to the south east. Minor expansion of the residential edge of Sittingbourne would perhaps be appropriate to the very north and north west of this location, although the outlook from the existing urban edge should be considered. Further residential development would be most appropriate if it was at the same scale and density as existing housing to the north and west. Sensitive extension of the urban edge would potentially improve and soften the boundary between the urban and rural area.

Landscape Value	Low	Moderate	High
High	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Low	High	High	Moderate

Landscape Sensitivity

It is not considered that any large scale commercial or industrial development would be appropriate within this area because it would conflict with the small scale development along the existing urban edge.

Guidelines and Mitigation

- Refer to Generic Guidelines for all Study Areas.
- Conserve the sense of remoteness within the Highstead dry valley, and ensure any further minor development does not encroach on this strong characteristic of the wider landscape.
- Consider views from higher ground to the east and utilise the rising ridgeline to contain any further development.
- Conserve the disused quarry, maintaining the value provided through its status as a Local Wildlife Site.
- Create a softer urban edge to the north, using native planting to soften boundary fences.
- Conserve and enhance hedgerow planting along Highstead Road.
- Conserve orchards and shelter belts east of Highstead Road, which provide a rural outlook for properties to the west and would help to screen any further development to the east.

Study Area 7 – South of Sittingbourne

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Study Area 7 – South of Sittingbourne

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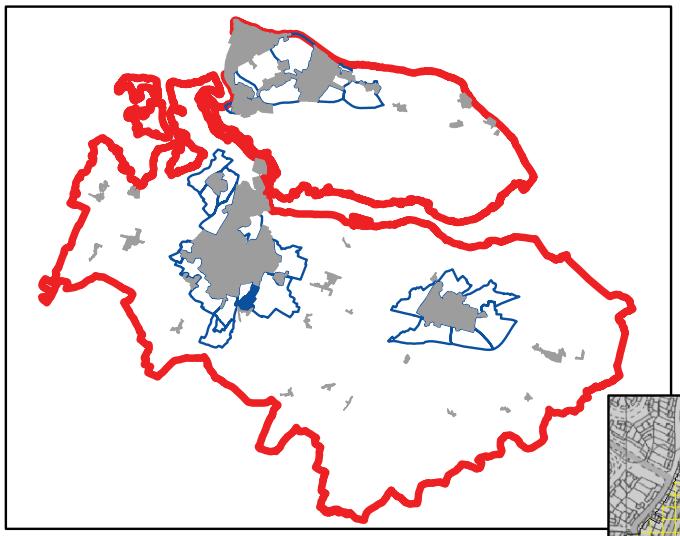

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Study Area 8 - South of Sittingbourne

Legend

- Swale Borough Boundary/Landscape Character Areas
- Urban Areas
- Potential Urban Extension Study Areas
- Potential Employment Sites (as shown in Employment Land Review)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Sites
- Area of High Townscape Value*
- Areas of High Landscape Value*
- Special Landscape Area*
- Conservation Areas
- Scheduled Monuments
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Listed Buildings
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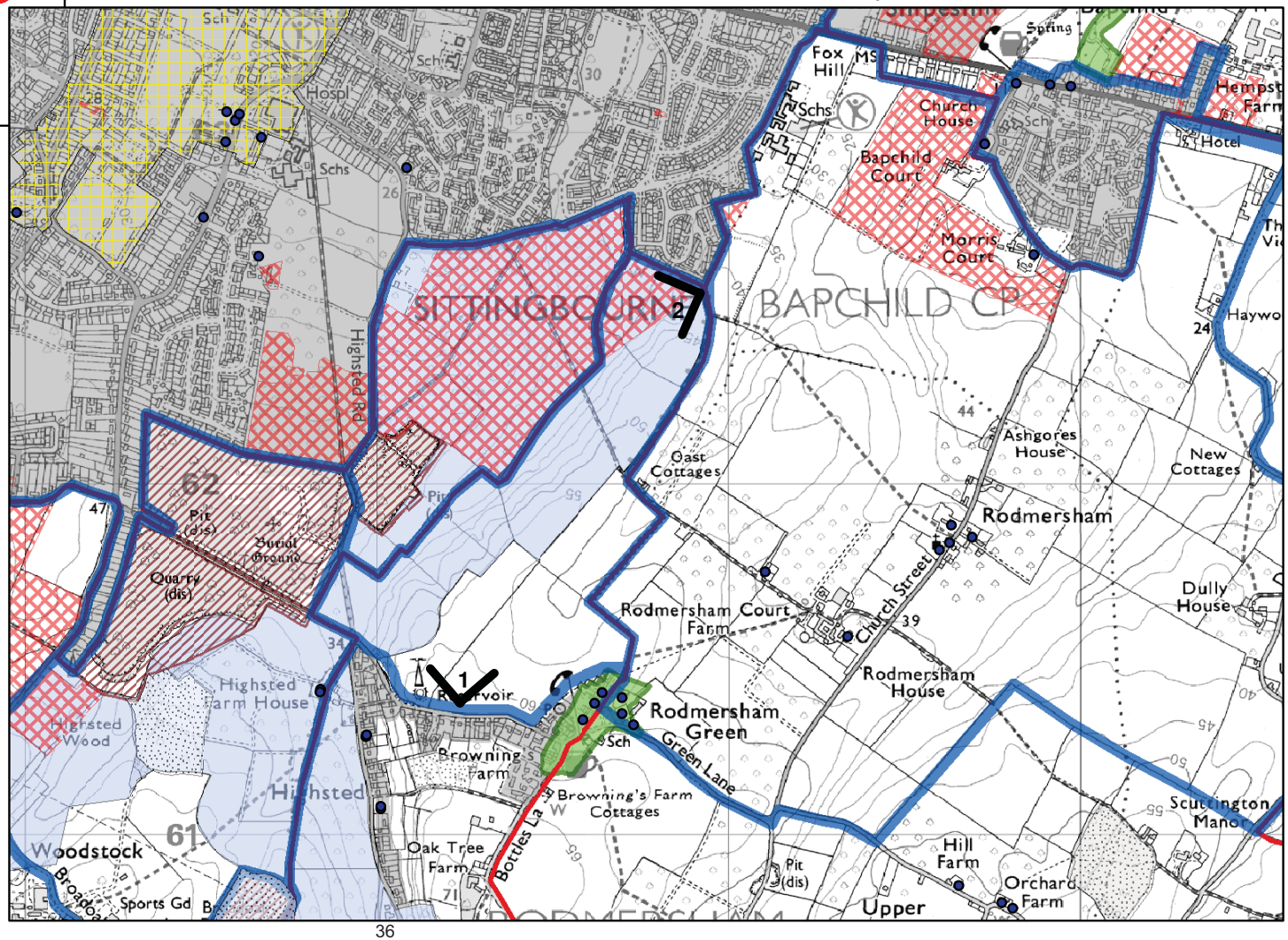

Study Area 8 – South of Sittingbourne

Landscape Character and Urban Edge Influence

Study Area 8 falls within the northern part of the wider Rodmersham and Milstead Dry Valley landscape character area. The existing urban edge is reasonably well softened by a belt of vegetation which runs along residential plot boundaries. Whilst there are elevated views across much of Sittingbourne from higher ground along the ridge and at Highstead and Rodmersham Green, the landscape has a tranquil and rural character which feels detached from Sittingbourne and its urban edge. The landscape provides a gap between Sittingbourne and the rural settlements of Highstead and Rodmersham Green and it is not physically influenced by the urban area.

Local Landscape Sensitivity: High

- Highly visible landscape.
- Distinctive exposed and open landform, characterised by the wide elevated views.

Landscape Value: Moderate

- North Downs Special Landscape Area.
- Scenic quality provided by the wide elevated views and sense of openness which contrasts with the urban area of Sittingbourne.

Capacity to Accommodate Change: Low

Very minor expansion of the residential urban edge would be acceptable to the very north of the Study Area at the lower end of the ridge. This could form part of any minor urban extension occurring to the very north of Study Area 7 to the west. Additional housing would be most appropriate if it was at the same scale and density as existing housing on the urban edge. However, sensitive treatment of the urban boundary would be essential in this highly visible location.

Landscape Value	Low	Moderate	High
High	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Low	High	High	Moderate

Landscape Sensitivity

Guidelines and Mitigation

- Refer to Generic Guidelines for all Study Areas.
- Conserve the sense of remoteness within the Highstead dry valley, and ensure any further minor development does not encroach on this strong characteristic of the wider landscape.
- Conserve the open and undeveloped character of the ridge.
- Conserve and restore hedgerows and vegetation belts to maintain and enhance the landscape structure.
- Maintain the buffer of open landscape between Sittingbourne and Rodmersham Green to protect the integrity of the rural settlements.
- Enhance the boundary treatment along the urban edge to the north with further native planting.
- Ensure any minor residential expansion is softened by native planting.
- Enhance hedgerow planting along road between Highstead and Rodmersham to help restore the landscape and reduce visibility of any further development along the urban edge.

Study Area 8 – South of Sittingbourne

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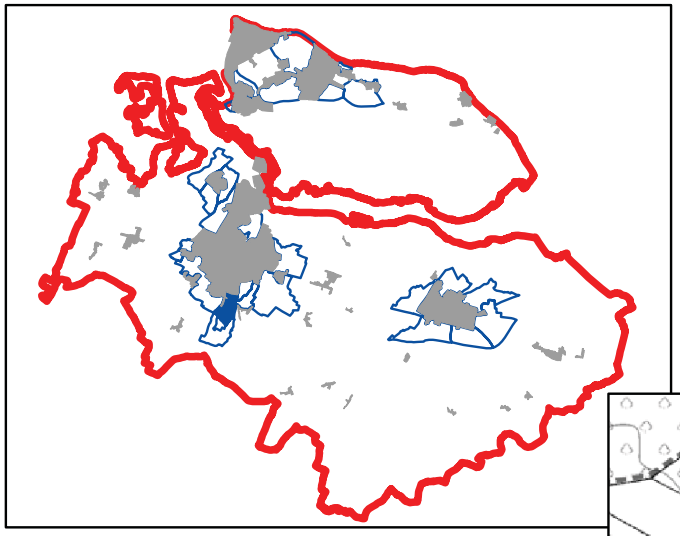

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Study Area 9 - South of Sittingbourne

Legend

- Swale Borough Boundary/Landscape Character Areas
- Urban Areas
- Potential Urban Extension Study Areas
- Potential Employment Sites (as shown in Employment Land Review)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Sites
- Area of High Townscape Value*
- Areas of High Landscape Value*
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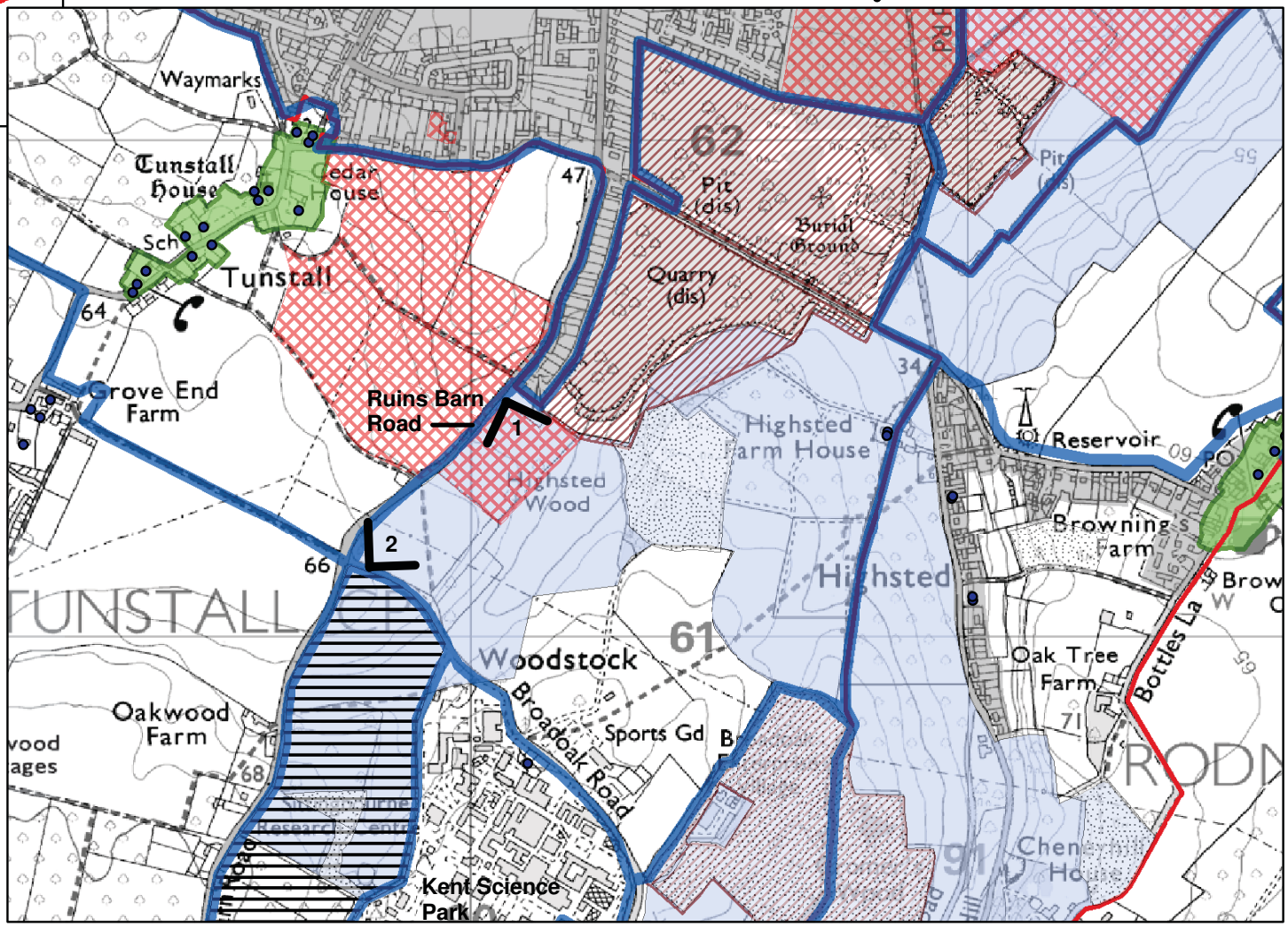

Study Area 9 – South of Sittingbourne

Landscape Character and Urban Edge Influence

Study Area 9 falls within the northern part of the wider Tunstall Farmlands. The existing urban edge is well softened by trees and shrubs within Highstead Quarries Local Wildlife Site. Whilst housing along the urban edge is evident, the prominence of the urban edge is restricted by the distance and intermittency of views across Highstead Quarries. The undulating landscape has a strongly rural and parkland character, with a significant number of ancient oak trees clustered along Ruins Barn Road and isolated throughout areas of arable farmland. There are very few urban influences although Kent Science Park, comprising large modern buildings and tall security fencing, is situated along Broadoak Road to the south. Whilst there are some clear views of parts of Kent Science Park from Broadoak Road, the undulating landform, strong vegetation belts, hedgerow network and woodland blocks reduce the visual prominence of the complex.

Local Landscape Sensitivity: High

- Highly visible landscape.
- Distinctive parkland landscape provided by the undulating landform, ancient oak trees and woodland blocks.

Landscape Value: Moderate

- North Downs Special Landscape Area.
- Ancient Woodland at Highstead Wood.
- Highstead Quarries Local Wildlife Site.
- Listed Buildings at Highstead Farm House.
- Scenic quality provided by the undulating landscape and parkland character.

Capacity to Accommodate Change: Low

There is a low capacity to accommodate change in this Study Area. The existing urban edge is very subtle and does not impinge on the rural and parkland character of the wider landscape.

Landscape Value	Low	Moderate	High
High	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Low	High	High	Moderate

Landscape Sensitivity

However a very minor extension of housing along Ruins Barn Road would be acceptable within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Site (SHLAA), where a small parcel of land appears to have no current usage and is physically and visually well contained by field boundaries and existing vegetation belts. It would be most appropriate if any further development in this location comprised a single line of well spaced out houses, to maintain the subtle character of the urban edge and the transition between the urban and rural areas.

Guidelines and Mitigation

- Refer to Generic Guidelines for all Study Areas.
- Conserve the undeveloped, rural and parkland character of the landscape.
- Maintain the subtlety of the urban edge by conserving tree and woodland cover.
- Conserve the disused quarry, maintaining the value provided through its status as a Local Wildlife Site.
- Maintain a landscape gap between housing along Ruins Barn Road and Broadoak Road to conserve views across rural parkland landscape.
- Accommodate any further housing along Ruins Barn Road within the existing field boundaries.
- Conserve mature oak trees along Ruins Barn Road and accommodate any access around them.
- Conserve and extend the existing vegetation belt to the east of the SHLAA to form a continuous link with Highstead Wood.
- Create a native vegetation belt along the southern boundary between the SHLAA and arable land to the south.

Study Area 9 – South of Sittingbourne

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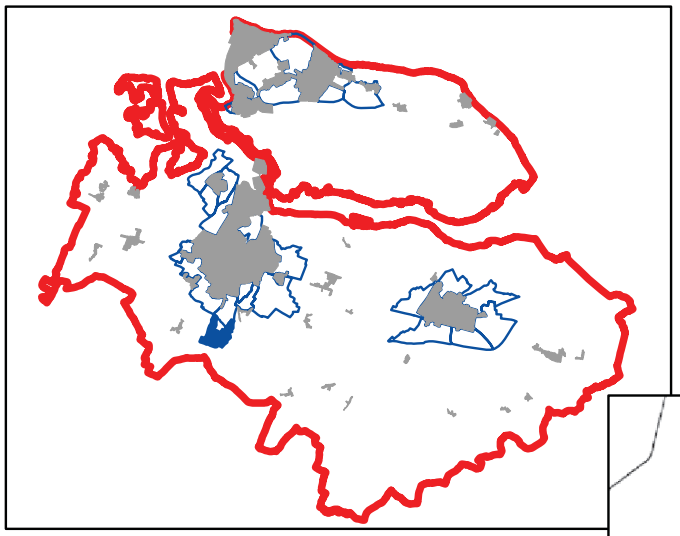

Study Area 10 - South of Sittingbourne

Legend

- Swale Borough Boundary/Landscape Character Areas
- Urban Areas
- Potential Urban Extension Study Areas
- Potential Employment Sites (as shown in Employment Land Review)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Sites
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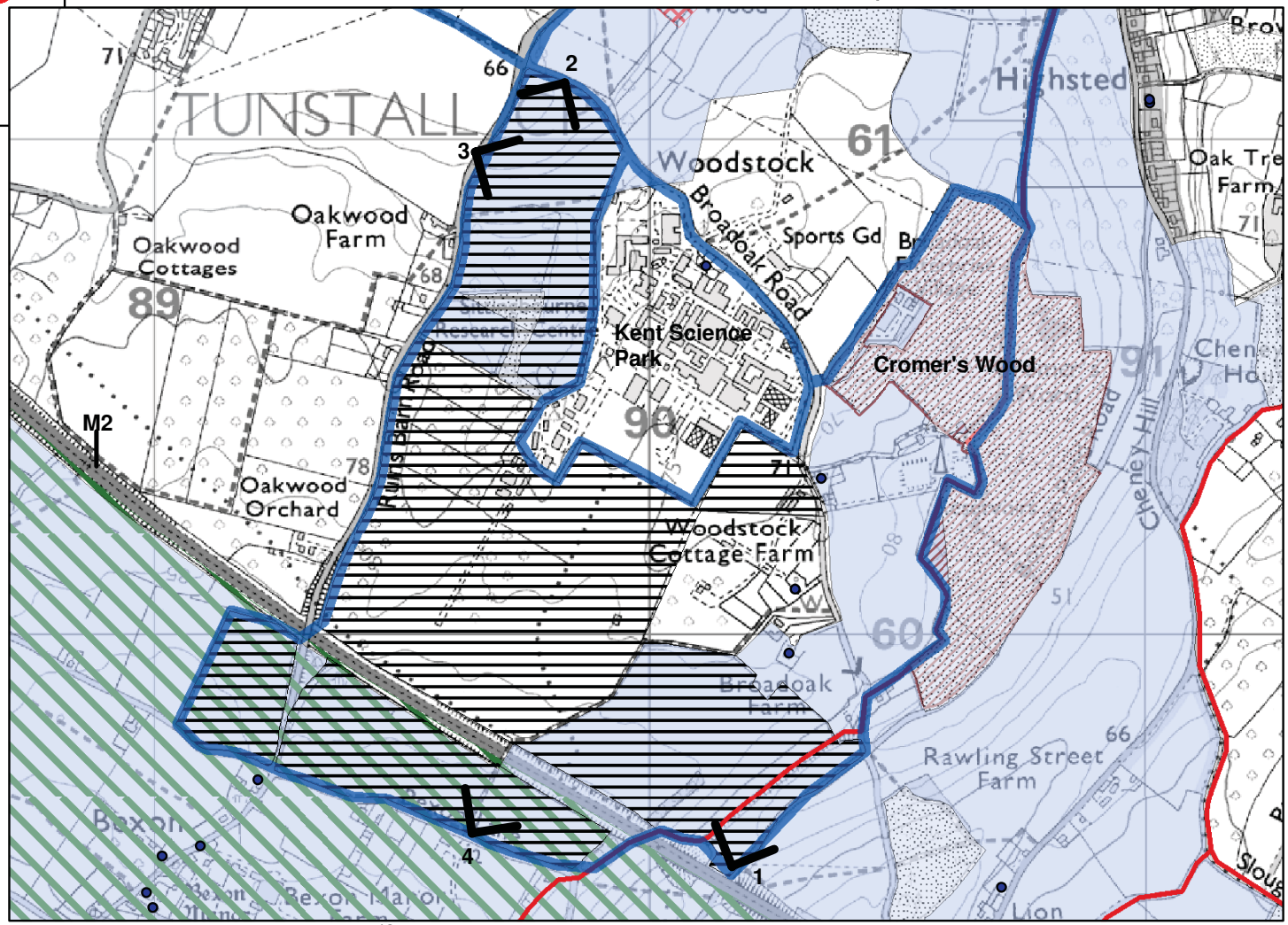

Study Area 10 –South of Sittingbourne

Landscape Character and Urban Edge Influence

Study Area 10 falls within the eastern part of the wider Tunstall Farmlands landscape character area. This Study Area is located to the south of the Kent Science Park, and does not relate directly to the urban edge of Sittingbourne. There are very few urban influences throughout the Study Area, and whilst the Kent Science Park is evident in some views, it is generally very well sited within the topography. The landscape has a rural character, where hedgerows and strong tree belts contain some views across the undulating arable landscape.

Local Landscape Sensitivity: High

- Highly visible landscape in areas where vegetation allows over the undulating landscape.
- Distinctive parkland landscape provided by the undulating landform, ancient oak trees and woodland blocks.

Landscape Value: High

- Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the south of the M2.
- Partially within the North Downs Special Landscape Area.
- Listed Buildings scattered along Broadoak Road.
- Cromer's Wood Local Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve.
- Very attractive undulating rural landscape, with parkland characteristics.

Capacity to Accommodate Change: Low

There is a low capacity to accommodate change in this Study Area. The landscape does not relate directly to the urban edge of Sittingbourne and the Kent Science Park does not impinge significantly on the wider landscape because it is well incorporated into the landform and vegetation. However, any additional development around the Kent Science Park would potentially open up views of the existing development because of vegetation removal.

Landscape Value	Low	Moderate	High
High	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Low	High	High	Moderate

The landscape to the south of the M2 is extremely sensitive because it forms part of the nationally designated Kent Downs AONB. The landscape immediately to the north of the M2 provides the immediate setting and foreground of the Kent Downs AONB, demonstrating a continuation in landform. Much of this landscape is also visible from the Kent Downs AONB.

Guidelines and Mitigation

- Refer to Generic Guidelines for all Study Areas.
- Do not develop within the Kent Downs AONB unless there is an overriding case of need, in line with AONB policy. Refer to the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2009 - 2014 (First Revision 2009) for policies relating to the management of the Kent Downs AONB.
- Conserve the rural setting of the Kent Downs AONB.
- Conserve the rural and largely undeveloped valley landscape and the parkland characteristics.
- Conserve and enhance the existing framework of hedgerow and tree belt vegetation.
- Plant new parkland oak trees so that they mature to replace ageing specimens when they die.
- Improve the existing screening of the Kent Science Park and the M2 through implementing native planting screening.
- Conserve and continue the management of locally significant flora and fauna within Cromer's Wood.
- Create a development brief and landscape strategy that limits visual impact on the wider landscape and defines the parameters for the type, scale and extent of any essential development with the overall objective to conserve characteristic landscape elements, protect views from outside the area and accommodate further development as subtly as possible.
- Conserve the scale and rural character of the narrow roads.
- Respect the setting of Listed Buildings along Broadoak Road.

Study Area 10 – South of Sittingbourne

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Study Area 10 – South of Sittingbourne

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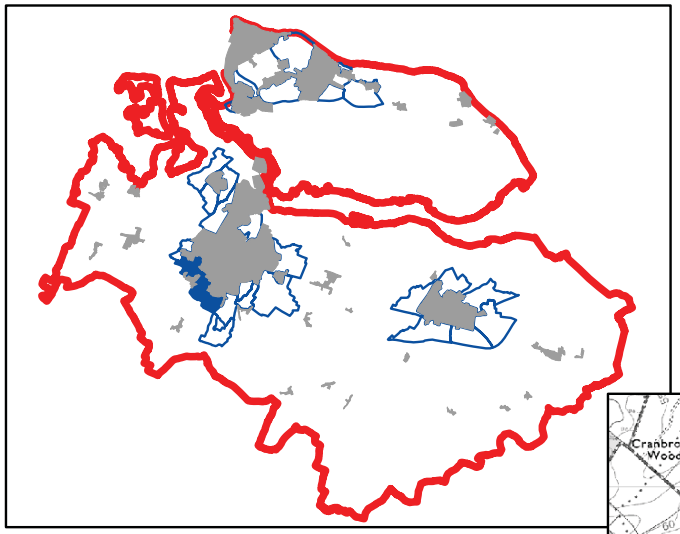

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Study Area 11 - South West of Sittingbourne

Legend

- Swale Borough Boundary/Landscape Character Areas
- Urban Areas
- Potential Urban Extension Study Areas
- Potential Employment Sites (as shown in Employment Land Review)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Sites
- Area of High Townscape Value*
- Areas of High Landscape Value*
- Special Landscape Area*
- Conservation Areas
- Scheduled Monuments
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Listed Buildings
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Statutory Local Nature Reserve
- Special Protection Area for Birds
- Special Area of Conservation
- Photograph Location Points

* Local designations as defined in Swale Borough Local Plan Adopted February 2008

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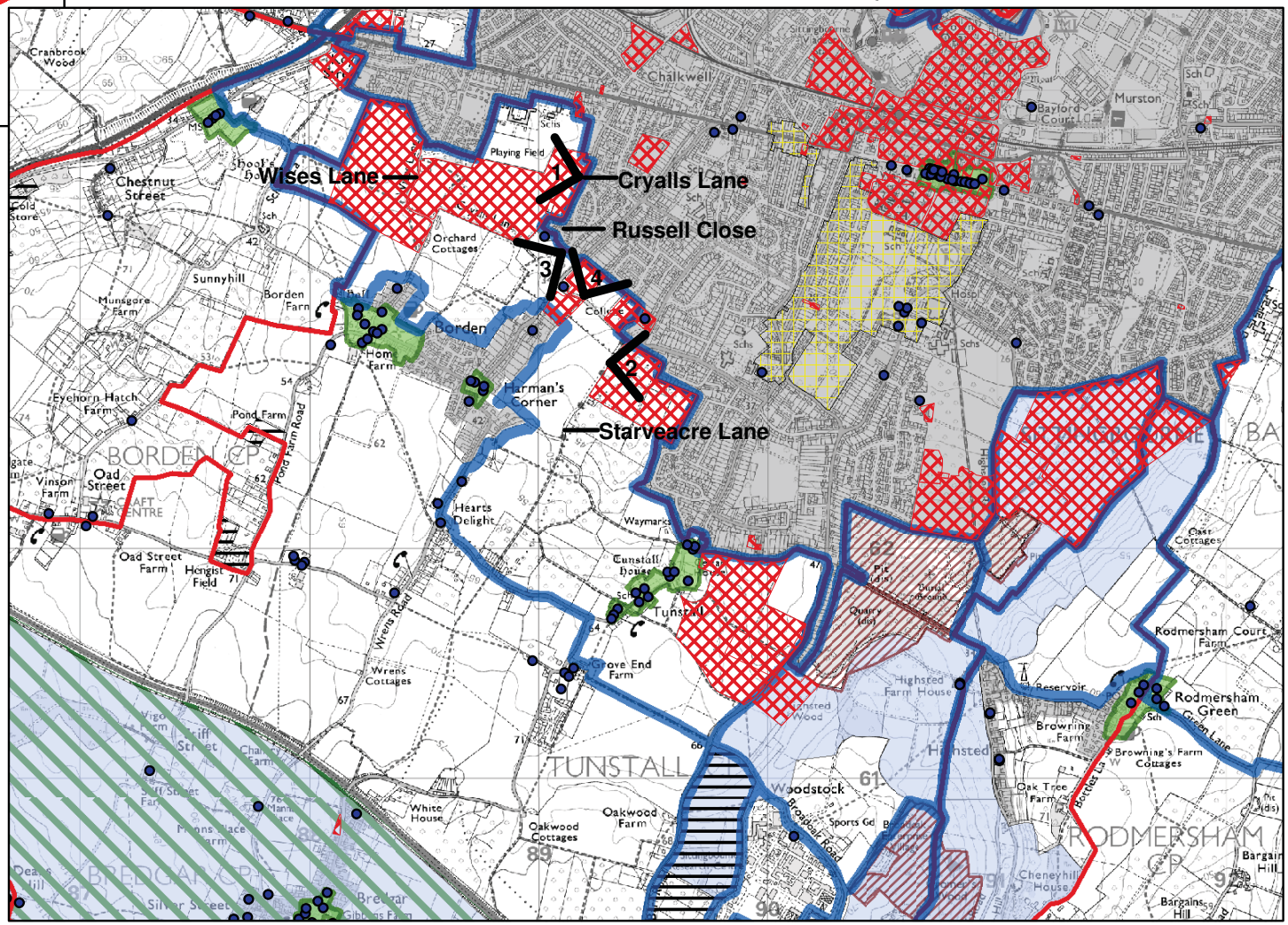

Study Area 11 – South West of Sittingbourne

Landscape Character and Urban Edge Influence

Study Area 11 falls within the northern part of the wider Tunstall Farmlands landscape character area. The existing urban edge forms a strong boundary between the extent of Sittingbourne and the surrounding landscape, and there is a quick transition between the urban and rural areas. This landscape has a largely rural character, although urban influences include allotments and equestrian grazing areas along Riddles Road, areas of derelict cherry orchard around Crysalls Lane, playing fields/recreation grounds and inappropriate use of coniferous species to visually screen recent housing development east of Wises Lane.

Local Landscape Sensitivity: High

- Much of the landscape has been opened up as a result of agricultural intensification.
- The settlement of Tunstall and surrounding traditional fruit orchards are distinct and historic.
- The integrity and rural setting of Tunstall and Borden is sensitive.

Landscape Value: Moderate

- Scenic quality of orchards, some grazed, and traditional rural settlement/buildings.
- Tunstall Conservation Area.
- Numerous Listed Buildings.
- Value expressed through nature reserve designation north of Borden.

Capacity to Accommodate Change: Low

Minor expansion of residential development could potentially be accommodated in small areas which relate well to, or are currently influenced by, the existing urban edge. Further residential development would be most appropriate if it was designed at the same scale and density as existing housing on the urban edge. Minor residential expansion could potentially be located:

Landscape Value	Low	Moderate	High
High	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Low	High	High	Moderate

Landscape Sensitivity

- Where there are currently derelict orchards west of Crysall Lane and south of Russell Close.
- East of Starveacre Lane and immediately adjacent to the existing urban edge, where orchards are currently managed.

It is not considered that any large scale commercial or industrial development would be appropriate within this area because it would detract from the intimate, small scale and rural character of the landscape.

Guidelines and Mitigation

- Refer to Generic Guidelines for all Study Areas.
- Conserve the rural setting of, and the small scale field pattern around, Tunstall Conservation Area.
- Respect the setting of listed buildings on the urban edge.
- Maintain a landscape gap between the edge of Sittingbourne and Borden to protect the integrity of Borden.
- Retain area of public open space and mature trees north of Riddles Road.
- Use derelict and managed orchards and existing hedgerows as a framework to locate any extended residential development within.
- Soften the urban edge with native planting.
- Consider views across open farmland towards the urban edge in development proposals and use native species to create a softer urban edge which respects the landscape setting.
- Conserve the quick transition between urban and rural areas.

Study Area 11 – South West of Sittingbourne

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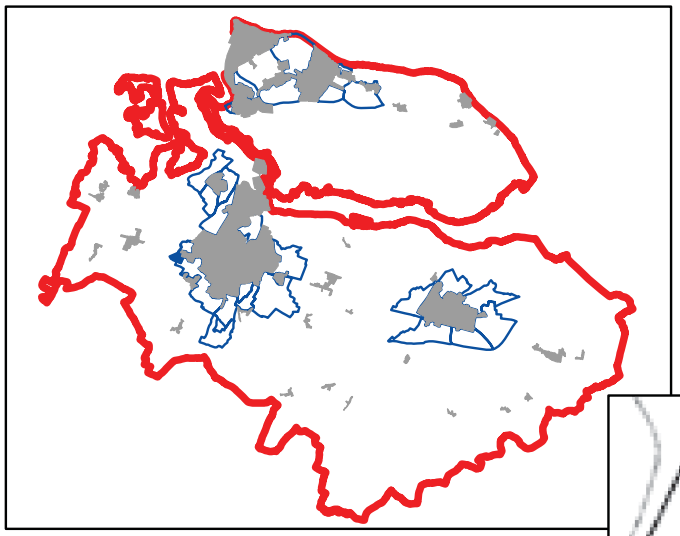

Study Area 12 - West of Sittingbourne

Legend

- Swale Borough Boundary/Landscape Character Areas
- Urban Areas
- Potential Urban Extension Study Areas
- Potential Employment Sites (as shown in Employment Land Review)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Sites
- Area of High Townscape Value*
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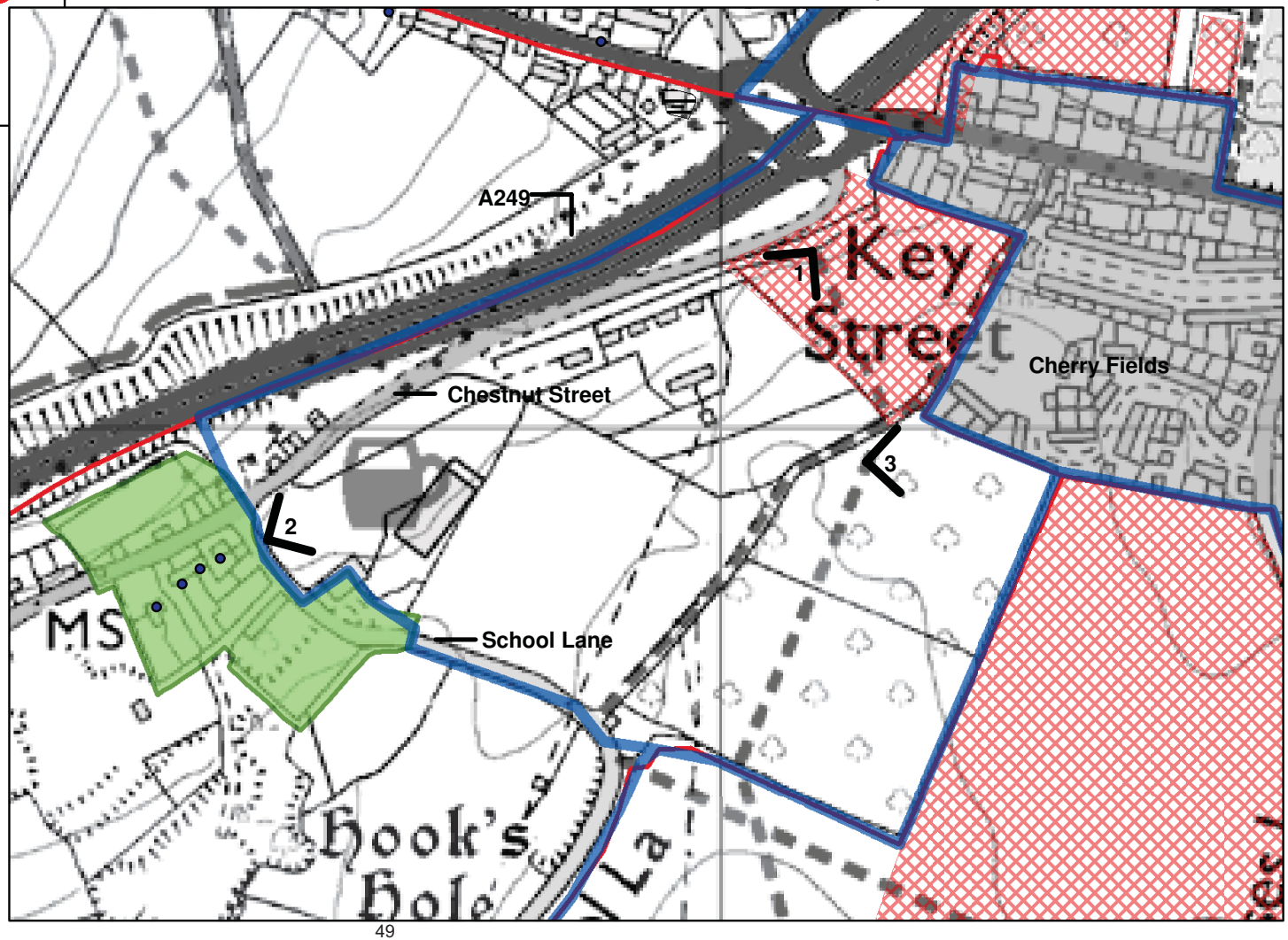

Study Area 12 – West of Sittingbourne

Landscape Character and Urban Edge Influence

Study Area 12 falls within the northern part of the wider Borden Mixed Farmlands landscape character area. The landscape is heavily influenced by the urban edge of Sittingbourne, and there is a lack of tranquillity with the presence of the electricity sub station east of Key Street, the busy A249 and the junction with the A2. Development extends along Chestnut Street. Odd parcels of land are situated east of Chestnut Street, between areas with clearly defined land uses. A disused and derelict orchard is situated to the north, between the edge of Sittingbourne and the electricity sub station, and paddocks used as equestrian grazing appear slightly awkward between Chestnut Street and large industrial buildings to the east.

Further east, away from Chestnut Street and the A249, the landscape becomes more tranquil and rural. Development along School Lane has a small scale village character which is detached from the urban edge.

Local Landscape Sensitivity: Moderate

- Views restricted by topography and vegetation.
- Indistinct landscape which is heavily influenced by the edge of Sittingbourne and road infrastructure.
- Increased sensitivity to the south west where the landscape forms the setting of distinct historic buildings within Chestnut Street, Borden, Conservation Area.

Landscape Value: Low

- No landscape/biodiversity/heritage designations within the Study Area.

The Chestnut Street, Borden, Conservation Area which contains several Listed Buildings is situated outside the area to the south.

- Degraded landscape with a poor sense of remoteness and tranquillity.

Capacity to Accommodate Change: High

Whilst the degraded quality of the landscape and the existing influence of the urban edge of Sittingbourne make the very northern part of this landscape acceptable for development, the sensitivity of the landscape as the setting of Chestnut Street, Borden, Conservation Area and the rural character of the landscape to the south should be taken into consideration.

Landscape Value	Low	Moderate	High
High	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Low	High	High	Moderate

Residential or small scale commercial development could potentially be accommodated on land which is currently a disused orchard between the edge of Sittingbourne, Chestnut Street and the electricity sub station.

A minor extension of residential development, designed at the same scale and density as existing housing at Cherry Fields, could potentially be accommodated on arable land directly east of the electricity sub station where the land is visually contained by hedgerows.

Very low density residential development could potentially be accommodated east of Chestnut Street, north of School Lane and west of the industrial sheds.

Guidelines and Mitigation

- Refer to Generic Guidelines for all Study Areas.
- Consider prominent views from the Sittingbourne slip road from the A249 in any development proposals, and soften views with planting.
- Consider the setting of the Chestnut Street, Borden, Conservation Area and Listed Buildings within any further development proposals.
- Conserve the rural and small scale character of School Lane.
- Conserve the vegetation belts around Cherry Fields and highway planting along Maidstone Road.
- Create a buffer of native vegetation to the north of the electricity sub station.
- Conserve, restore and enhance hedgerow boundaries throughout the arable landscape.
- Ensure any development north of School Lane is low density and respects the character, style and materials of historic properties within Chestnut Street, Borden.
- Soften the industrial sheds to the north of School Lane with native planting.

Study Area 12 – West of Sittingbourne

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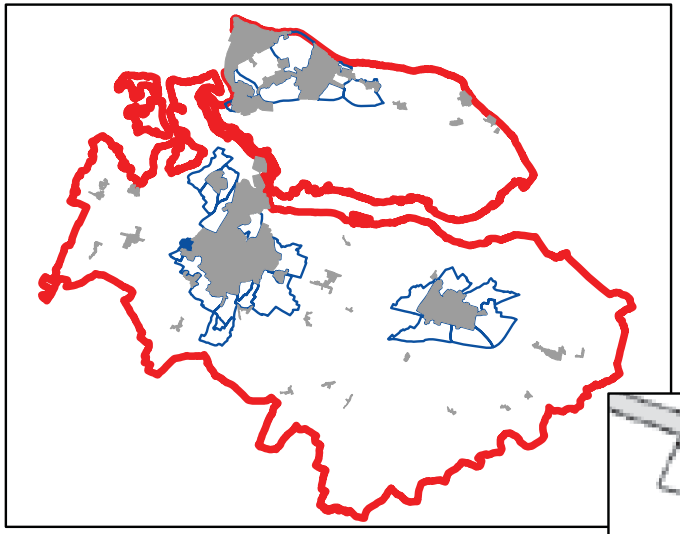

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Study Area 13 - West of Sittingbourne

Legend

- Swale Borough Boundary/Landscape Character Areas
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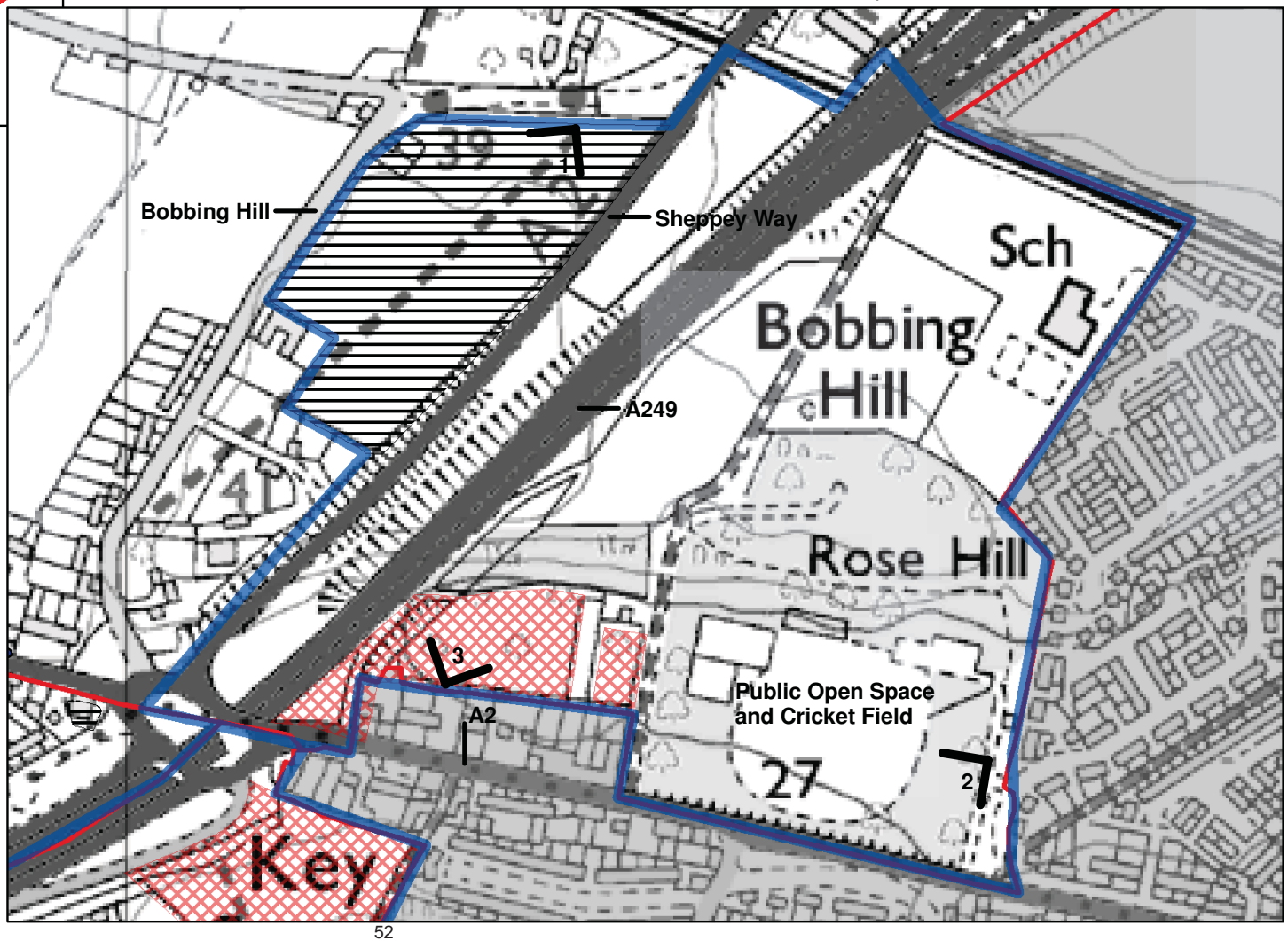

Study Area 13 – West of Sittingbourne

Landscape Character and Urban Edge Influence

Study Area 13 falls within the south eastern part of the wider Iwade Arable Farmlands landscape character area. The landscape is heavily influenced by the urban edge of Sittingbourne and road infrastructure, and there is a lack of tranquillity with the presence of the A2, Sheppey Way and the A249. The existing residential edge of Sittingbourne is clearly defined where it abuts the public open space and cricket field. East of the A249, the landscape is evidently well attached to the urban area of Sittingbourne and is clearly influenced by the urban area in terms of its land use.

West of Sheppey Way, the landscape is more rural, smaller scale and less influenced by the edge of Sittingbourne because it is physically separated by Sheppey Way and the A249.

Local Landscape Sensitivity: Moderate

- Views restricted by woodland around the public open space and highway vegetation.
- Distinctive character provided by the public open space, oval cricket field, mature trees and woodland at Rose Hill.

Landscape Value: Moderate

- No landscape/biodiversity/heritage designations within the Study Area.
- Value expressed through land use as a public open space and cricket field.

Capacity to Accommodate Change: Moderate

It is not considered that there would be any significant potential to develop land and extend the urban edge of Sittingbourne to the east of the A249 because of the value and importance attached to the use of the land as a public open space and cricket field. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Site (SHLAA) comprises woodland and scrub, including numerous mature trees. This land would be difficult to develop because it would be difficult to access and would entail the removal of a significant amount of vegetation which currently provides some visual screening function between the existing urban edge of Sittingbourne and the A249.

Landscape Value	Low	Moderate	High
High	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Low	High	High	Moderate

Landscape Sensitivity

West of Sheppey Way, where the landscape has a more rural feel, some housing could potentially be accommodated as an extension of linear housing along Bobbing Hill. However, a significant block of employment land would be out of keeping. Housing would be most appropriate if it was designed at the same scale and density as existing nearby housing.

Guidelines and Mitigation

- Refer to Generic Guidelines for all Study Areas.
- Conserve the public open space, cricket field and trees/woodland to the north of the A2.
- Conserve and enhance the woodland buffer between the existing urban edge and the A249.
- Replace conifer screening belts with native species.
- Create linear residential housing along Bobbing Hill, which respects the existing pattern of development and maintains a gap between any further development and Sheppey Way.
- Develop a native planting buffer to the west of Sheppey Way to screen views of the road and traffic from any further development.

Study Area 13 – West of Sittingbourne

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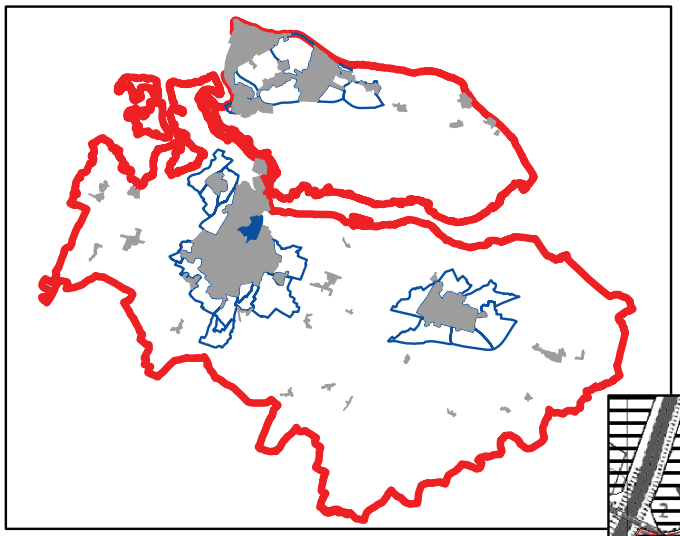

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Study Area 14 - North of Sittingbourne

Legend

- Swale Borough Boundary/Landscape Character Areas
- Urban Areas
- Potential Urban Extension Study Areas
- Potential Employment Sites (as shown in Employment Land Review)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Sites
- Area of High Townscape Value*
- Areas of High Landscape Value*
- Special Landscape Area*
- Conservation Areas
- Scheduled Monuments
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Listed Buildings
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Statutory Local Nature Reserve
- Special Protection Area for Birds
- Special Area of Conservation
- Photograph Location Points

* Local designations as defined in Swale Borough Local Plan Adopted February 2008

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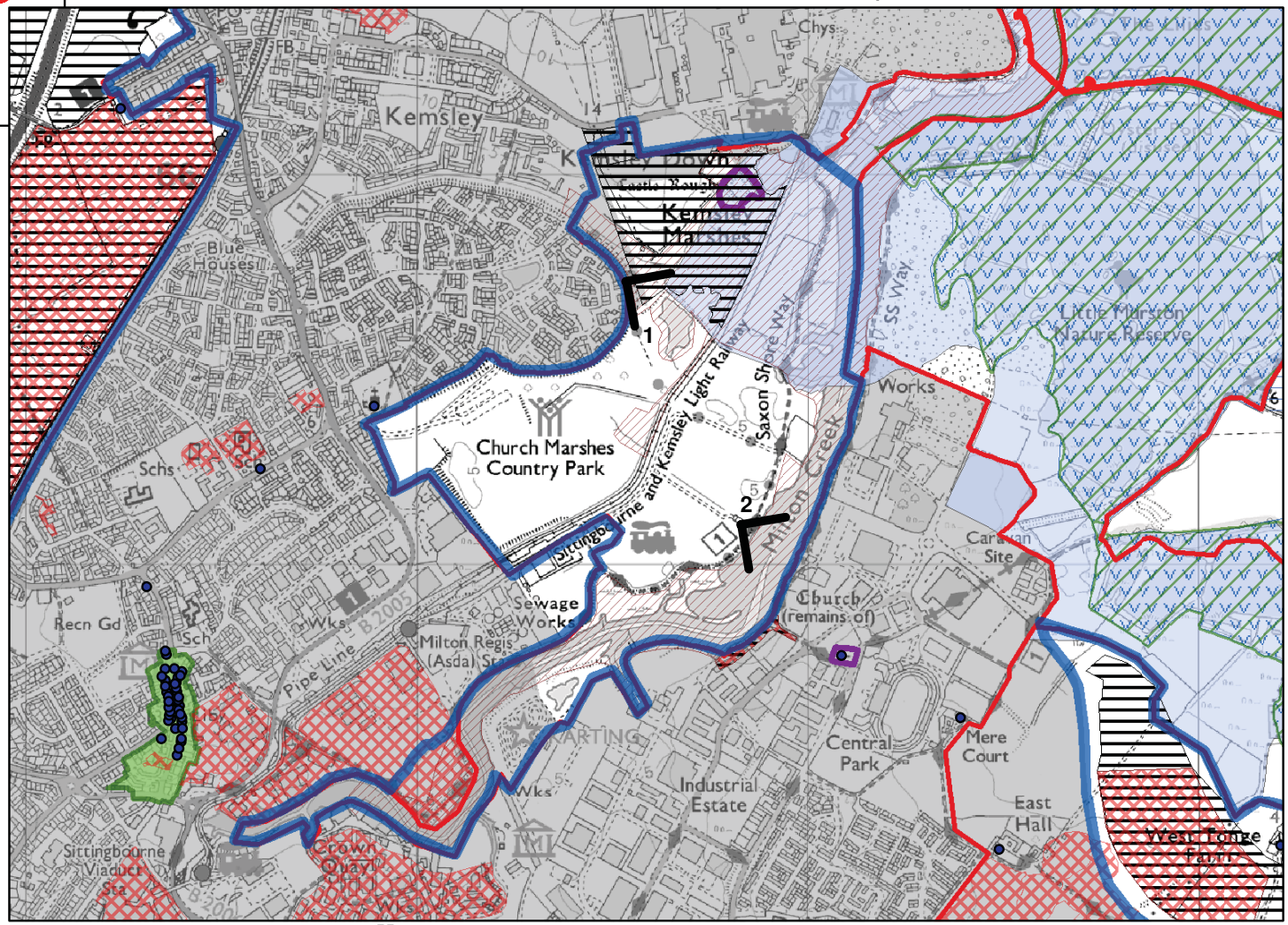

Study Area 14 – North of Sittingbourne

Landscape Character and Urban Edge Influence

Study Area 14 falls within the southern part of the wider Chetney and Greenborough Marshes landscape character area. Although the landscape shares some landscape attributes belonging to the wider and more remote marshland to the north, this Study Area is significantly influenced by the urban edges of Sittingbourne which engulf its perimeter. Recent housing overlooks Church Marshes Country Park, whilst Kemsley Paper Mill to the north and a significantly sized industrial estate abuts Milton Creek to the north. The Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road (under development) will further increase the amount of urban influence.

Local Landscape Sensitivity: Moderate

- Highly visible landscape.
- Distinctive elements including Milton Creek and Kemsley Marshes, which are valuable in terms of biodiversity and landscape character.
- Urban influence provided by the surrounding built environment detracts from the some marshland qualities such as wide open views and big skies.

Landscape Value: High

- Scheduled Monument (Castle Rough Moated Site).
- Partially within the North Kent Marshes Special Landscape Area.
- Milton Creek, Sittingbourne, Local Wildlife Site.
- Value expressed through recognition of the area as Church Marshes Country Park and the open space this landscape provides within the urban and heavily industrial surroundings of Sittingbourne.
- Value expressed through the Sittingbourne and Kemsley Light Railway.
- Value expressed through the Saxon Shore Way promoted as a National trail/Long Distance Route.

Capacity to Accommodate Change: Low

There is a low capacity to accommodate change in this Study Area because much of it forms Church Marshes Country Park, and Milton Creek restricts development to the east. Whilst the integrity of the marshland is significantly affected by adjacent industrial activity, this landscape is sensitive in terms of providing a landscape buffer between areas of Sittingbourne and a green link from the centre of Sittingbourne to the open marshland to the north.

Landscape Value	Low	Moderate	High
High	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Low	High	High	Moderate

Landscape Sensitivity

Guidelines and Mitigation

- Refer to Generic Guidelines for all Study Areas.
- Resist further development within this Study Area to maintain the green gap along Milton Creek from Sittingbourne to the extensive marshes to the north.
- Conserve the landscape elements which are characteristic of the wider marshland which this area forms part of.
- Any further essential development should have regard to the forthcoming highway development in terms of location and outlook.
- Consider highly sensitive views from the marshland to the north in any development proposals.

Study Area 14 – North of Sittingbourne

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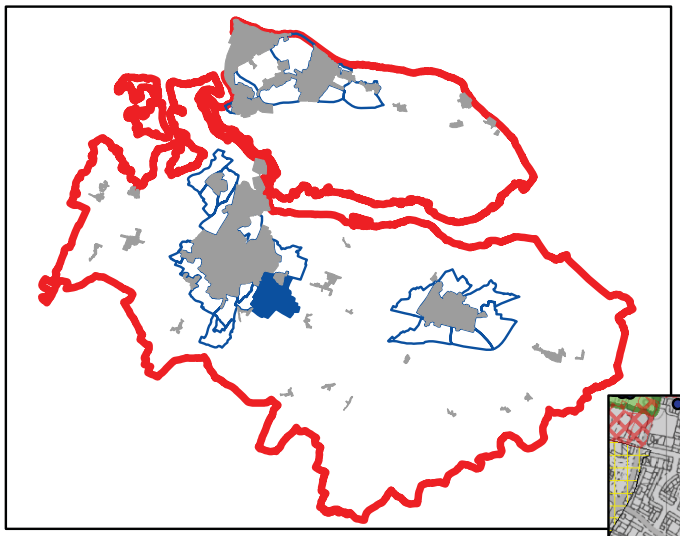

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Study Area 15 - South East of Sittingbourne

Legend

- Swale Borough Boundary/Landscape Character Areas
- Urban Areas
- Potential Urban Extension Study Areas
- Potential Employment Sites (as shown in Employment Land Review)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Sites
- Area of High Townscape Value*
- Areas of High Landscape Value*
- Special Landscape Area*
- Conservation Areas
- Scheduled Monuments
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Listed Buildings
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Sites
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- Special Protection Area for Birds
- Special Area of Conservation
- Photograph Location Points

* Local designations as defined in Swale Borough Local Plan Adopted February 2008

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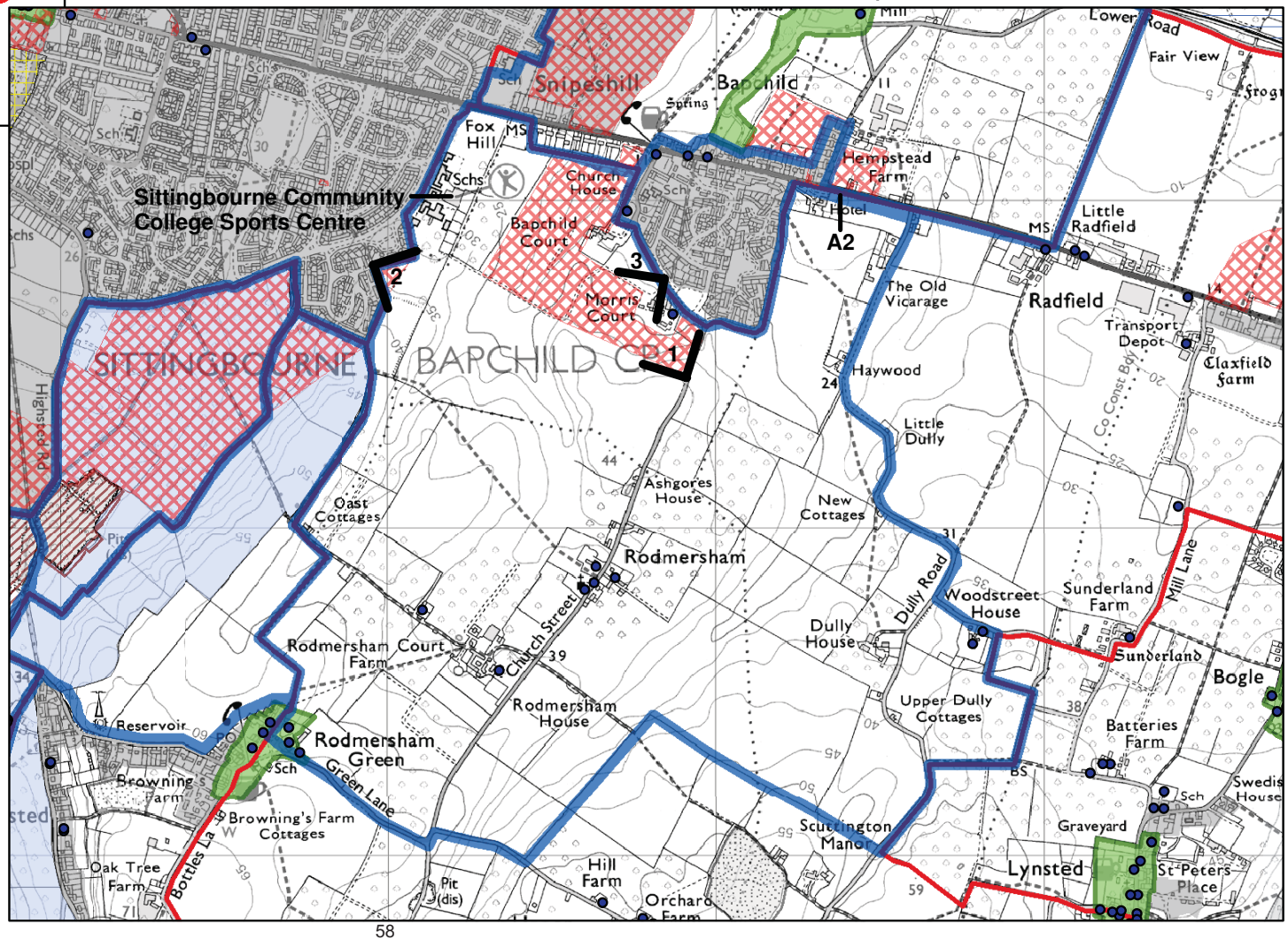

Study Area 15 – South East of Sittingbourne

Landscape Character and Urban Edge Influence

Study Area 15 forms the northern part of the wider Rodmersham Mixed Farmlands landscape character area. The landscape has a remote and rural character and the existing urban edges are not clearly visible from the surrounding landscape because of intervening landform and field boundary vegetation. There are few urban edge influences on the landscape which include a complex of large buildings at Sittingbourne Community College Sports Centre and adjoining recreation grounds, and commercial development along the A2 at Snipeshill and east of Bapchild. However the existing urban edges are generally well softened by native planting, and integrated areas of public open space which help to make the transition between the urban and rural areas reasonably subtle.

Local Landscape Sensitivity: High

- Distinctive built environment.
- Some orchards, although there has been vast hedgerow loss in places which have been opened up to arable land.
- High visibility, with long views across arable areas.

Landscape Value: Moderate

- Rodmersham Green Conservation Area.
- Numerous Listed Buildings in Rodmersham Green, Rodmersham and Morris Court on the periphery of Bapchild.
- Attractive built environment and rural settlements.
- Value expressed through use of land as recreation ground on edge of Sittingbourne.

Capacity to Accommodate Change: Low

Landscape Value	Low	Moderate	High
High	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Low	High	High	Moderate

Landscape Sensitivity

The landscape south of the A2 forms open space between the periphery of Sittingbourne and the separate settlement of Bapchild. Although housing at Snipeshill along the A2 links the two urban areas, development is linear along the A2 and there is still a marked transition between the edges of Sittingbourne and Bapchild. In order to retain the integrity of Bapchild, it is not considered appropriate to extend the edges of Sittingbourne, or south along the A2 around Snipeshill. Further to the south much of the land adjacent to the eastern edge of Sittingbourne forms part of a locally valued recreation ground, and because the landform rises to the south any further development would be clearly visible from the surrounding landscape.

However, there would perhaps be some potential to extend the residential edge along the southern edge of Bapchild where the landscape is well contained by the landform which rises to the south. Any further development would be most appropriate if it comprised small scale and reasonably low density residential development which would relate to the existing residential periphery of Bapchild.

Guidelines and Mitigation

- Refer to Generic Guidelines for all Study Areas.
- Maintain open landscape between Sittingbourne and Bapchild to retain the integrity of the two settlements.
- Resist extending the edge of Sittingbourne so that it becomes visible in westward views from the valley which contains Rodmersham Green Conservation Area.
- Resist further development which would widen the linear housing along Snipeshill and weaken the integrity of Bapchild.
- Integrate public open spaces to mimic the existing residential layout in any further development south of Bapchild.
- Respect the setting of Morris Court Listed Building in any further development to the south of Bapchild.
- Ensure any further development south of Bapchild is contained by the landform within views from the landscape to the south.

Study Area 15 – South East of Sittingbourne

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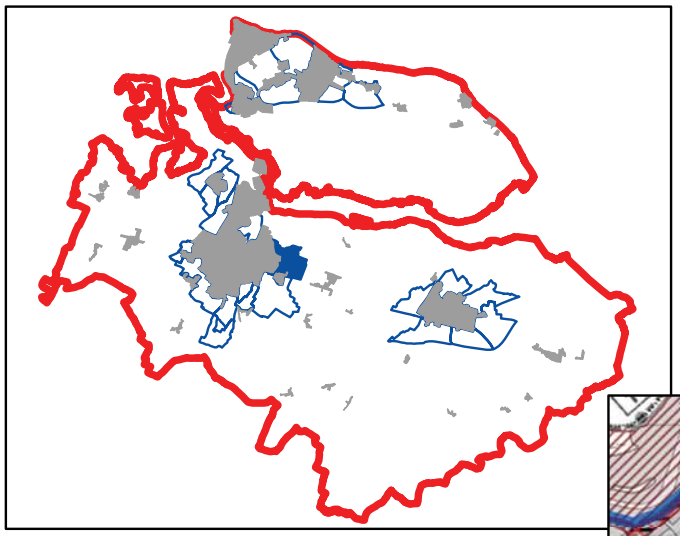

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Study Area 16 - East of Sittingbourne

Legend

- Swale Borough Boundary/Landscape Character Areas
- Urban Areas
- Potential Urban Extension Study Areas
- Potential Employment Sites (as shown in Employment Land Review)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Sites
- Area of High Townscape Value*
- Areas of High Landscape Value*
- Special Landscape Area*
- Conservation Areas
- Scheduled Monuments
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Listed Buildings
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Statutory Local Nature Reserve
- Special Protection Area for Birds
- Special Area of Conservation
- Photograph Location Points

* Local designations as defined in Swale Borough Local Plan Adopted February 2008

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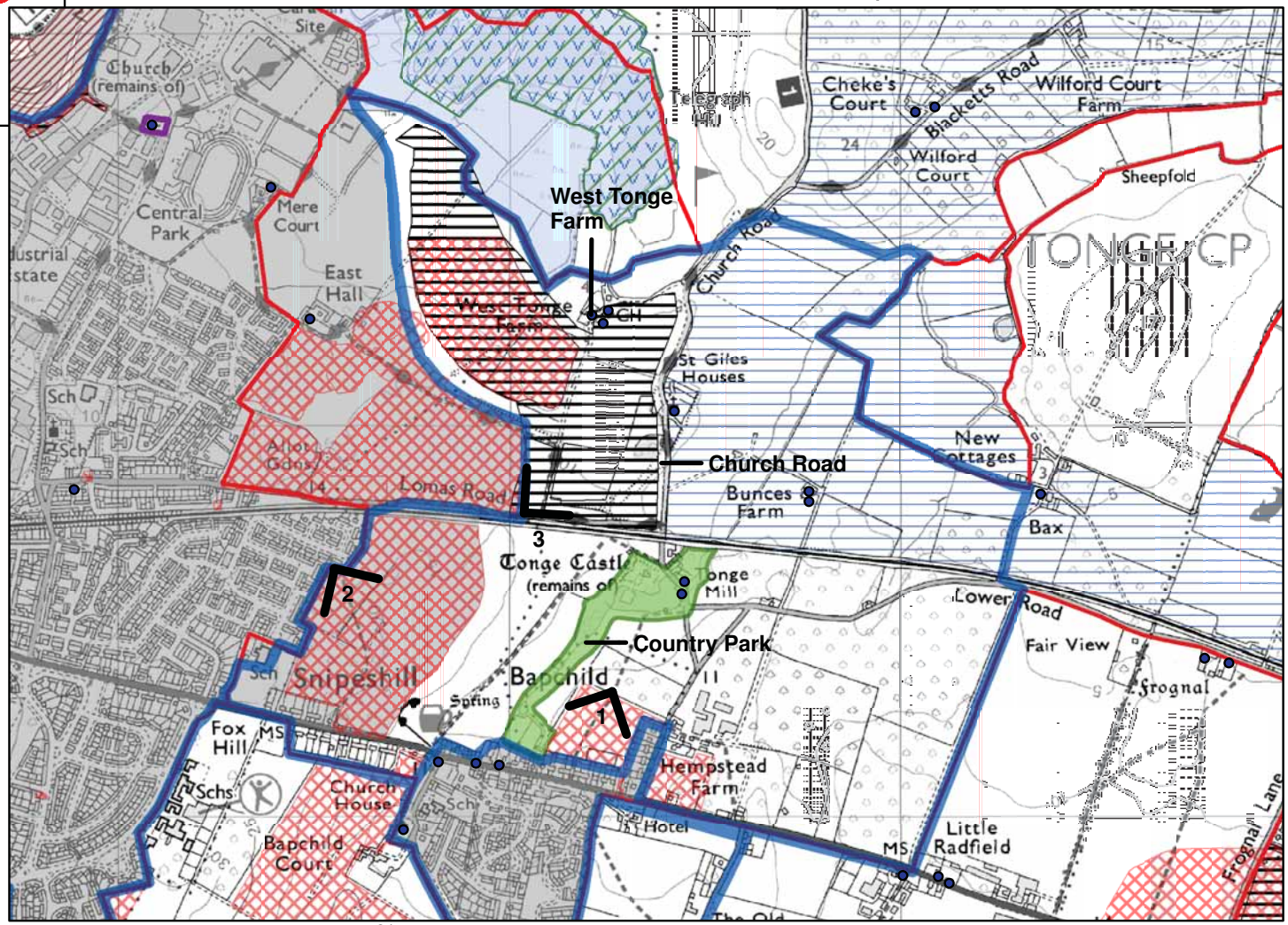


Study Area 16 – East of Sittingbourne

Landscape Character and Urban Edge Influence

Study Area 16 forms the western part of the wider Teynham Fruit Belt landscape character area. The existing urban edge is formed by the residential edge to the west of Sittingbourne, and housing at Snipeshill and Bapchild along the A2. South of the railway line, from the landscape to the north of Bapchild, views of the residential edge of Sittingbourne are largely restricted by the gently rising landform and hedgerow vegetation. However, the northern edge of housing within Snipeshill and Bapchild is visible from the landscape to the north, and there is an urban edge character derived from the noisy influence of the A2 and commercial development along its route. North of the railway line the landscape is more rural and less influenced by the A2 corridor, and the urban edge retains strong rural characteristics including both established and new fruit orchards. However, the golf course at Telegraph Hill, new housing and commercial development which is extending into the countryside to the north of Lomas Hill and large industrial buildings on the eastern edge of Sittingbourne provide some urban influence.

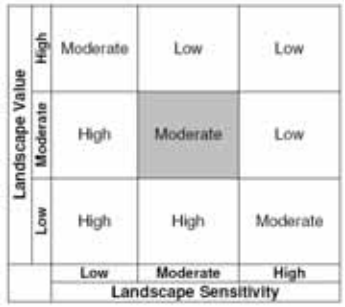
Local Landscape Sensitivity: Moderate

- Open views in areas of hedgerow loss, although some enclosure provided by landform, hedgerows and orchards.
- Traditional buildings and distinctive qualities provided by Tonge Mill and the remaining mill pond.
- Modern farming practices, equestrian grazing and urbanisation along the A2 have degraded parts of the area.
- Sensitivity increases to the north where the landscape forms the foreground to the marshes, and to the east of Church Road where Bunces Farm is raised on higher ground.

Landscape Value: Moderate

- Tonge Conservation Area and Listed Buildings at Tonge Mill, Bunces Farm and West Tonge Farm.
- Area of High Landscape Value east of Church Road.
- Adjoining North Kent Marshes Special Landscape Area.
- Saxon Shore Way National Trail/Long Distance Route.

Capacity to Accommodate Change: Moderate



In order to retain the integrity of the separate settlement of Bapchild and to respect the rural valley setting of Tonge Conservation Area, it is not considered appropriate to extend the edge of Sittingbourne significantly between Snipeshill and the railway line. A very minor extension of the residential edge would perhaps be acceptable along this urban edge where existing strong hedgerow boundaries would prevent the extended urban edge from being visible from the valley which contains Tonge Conservation Area. To the north of Bapchild an extension of the existing residential edge would perhaps be appropriate within the boundaries of the SHLAA, which could potentially visually improve the urban edge. To the east of Baphild, however, new orchard planting supports the wider network of fruit belt landscape, and it is not considered appropriate to encroach further into this traditional landscape. North of the railway line and Lomas Road, a degree of medium scale commercial and residential development would perhaps be appropriate, where the land relates well to recent development along the existing urban edge. However, highly sensitive views from the marshland should be taken into consideration, and further development should be balanced with maintaining the largely undeveloped character of this landscape.

Guidelines and Mitigation

- Refer to Generic Guidelines for all Study Areas.
- Maintain open landscape between Sittingbourne and Bapchild to retain the integrity of the two settlements and resist further development which would widen the linear housing along Snipeshill and weaken the integrity of Bapchild.
- Ensure no adverse impacts would be inflicted on the SPA to the north of West Tonge Farm in any further development.
- Resist extending the edge of Sittingbourne so that it becomes visible in westward views from the valley which contains Tonge Conservation Area.
- Respect the setting of Tonge Conservation Area in any further residential development north of Bapchild by softening the urban edge with native planting.
- Consider sensitive views from the open marshland to the north in any development west of West Tonge Farm, and minimise the impacts of external lighting on the dark night time character of the marshland.
- Integrate areas of potential grazing marsh and intertidal habitat within any further development proposals west of West Tonge Farm.
- Respect the setting of Listed Buildings and conserve the rural, open and undeveloped character of the landscape immediately surrounding Church Road.

Study Area 16 – East of Sittingbourne

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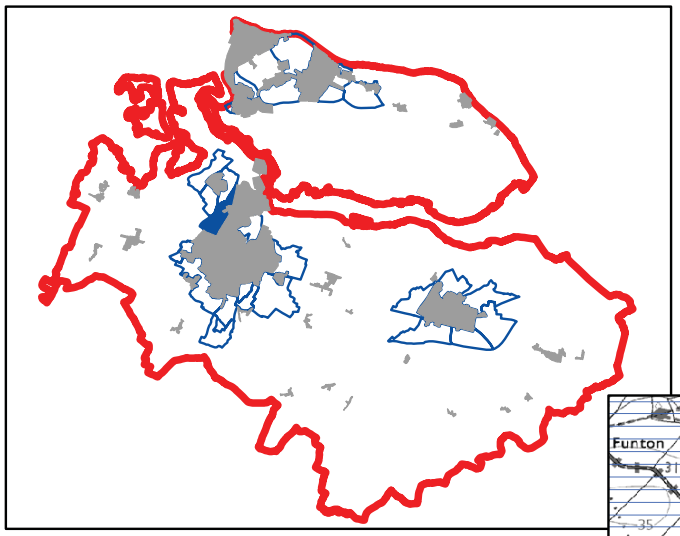

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Study Area 17 - North West of Sittingbourne

Legend

- Swale Borough Boundary/Landscape Character Areas
- Urban Areas
- Potential Urban Extension Study Areas
- Potential Employment Sites (as shown in Employment Land Review)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Sites
- Area of High Townscape Value*
- Areas of High Landscape Value*
- Special Landscape Area*
- Conservation Areas
- Scheduled Monuments
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Listed Buildings
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Ancient Woodland
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Statutory Local Nature Reserve
- Special Protection Area for Birds
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- Photograph Location Points

* Local designations as defined in Swale Borough Local Plan Adopted February 2008

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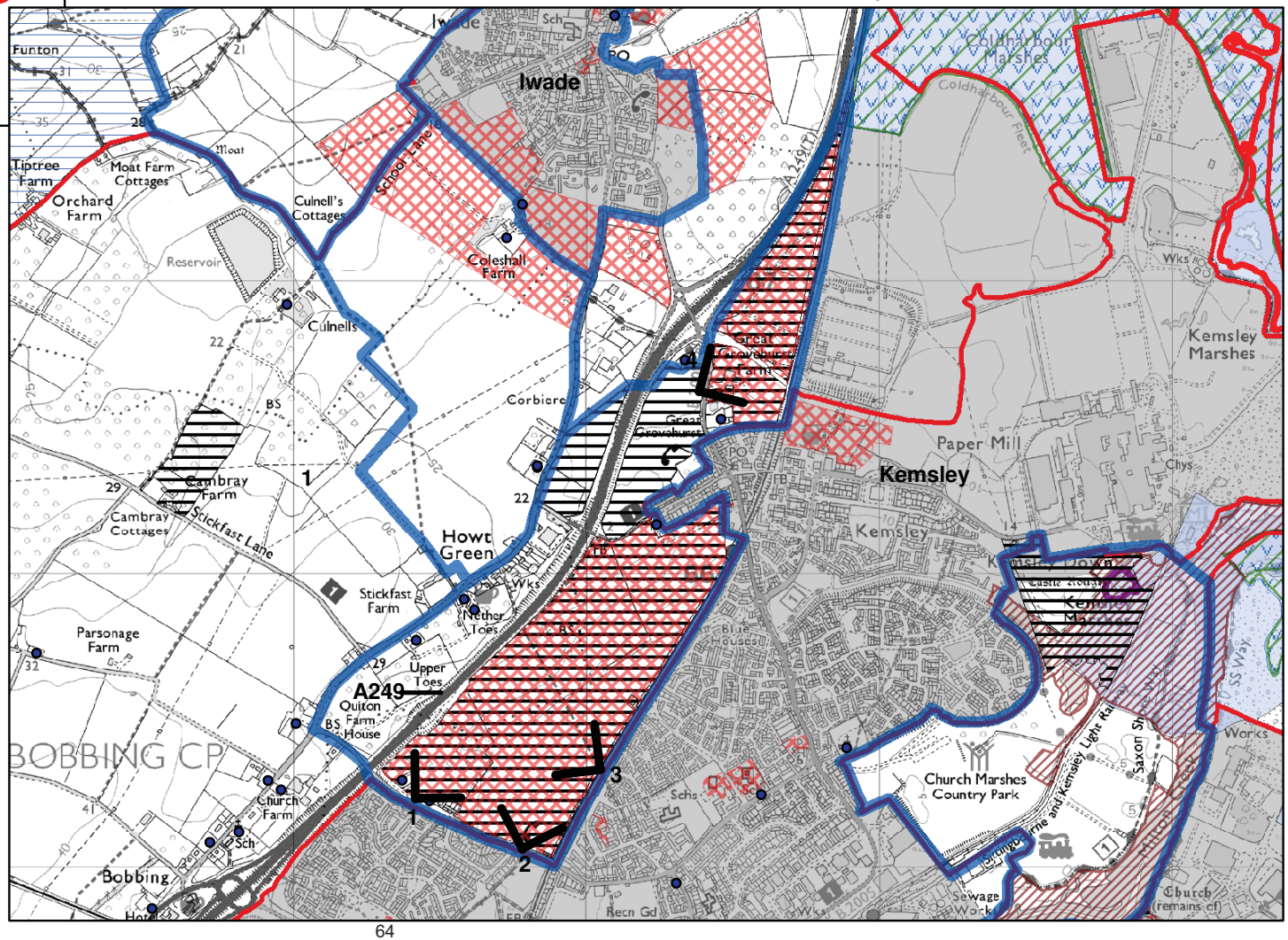

Study Area 17 – North West of Sittingbourne

Landscape Character and Urban Edge Influence

Study Area 17 falls within the eastern part of the wider Iwade Arable Farmlands landscape character area. The existing urban edge comprises a strong boundary, which is well contained in part by the railway line. The busy A249 provides a strong urban influence, and the visual prominence of the existing residential edge of Sittingbourne and large scale industrial/commercial development at Kemsley imposes a strong urban fringe character on the landscape. West of the A249 at Howt Green, the landscape is slightly more detached from the urban area of Sittingbourne because it is physically and visually separated by the A249.

Local Landscape Sensitivity: Moderate

- Long open views across the arable landscape.
- Many historic features have been removed with agricultural intensification and previous brickearth extraction.
- Scattered historic buildings and shelter belts still exist as a legacy of past activities.
-

Landscape Value: Low

- Listed Buildings along the edge of Sittingbourne and at Howt Green.
- In general the landscape is heavily influenced by the existing urban edge and the A249 corridor, and there is a poor sense of remoteness and tranquillity.

Capacity to Accommodate Change: High

The landscape relates well to the urban edge of Sittingbourne, and residential and commercial development would perhaps be acceptable within the SHLAA to the west of Sittingbourne and east of Howt Green and the A249. Further development would be most appropriate if it was designed at the same scale and density as existing residential development to the east and south.

Landscape Value	Landscape Sensitivity: Low	Landscape Sensitivity: Moderate	Landscape Sensitivity: High
High	Moderate	Low	Low
Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Low	High	High	Moderate

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 relates well to 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. Retaining this area as open landscape would be particularly important if the boundary of Iwade is extended closer towards the A249. In addition, some of this land was raised in association with the A249 construction. Therefore, much of this landscape is open and quite visible, and it would not be suitable for large commercial buildings. Development would be particularly undesirable west of the A249, in order to retain the rural character, and prevent continuous ribbon development, along the road which passes through Bobbing and Howt Green.

Guidelines and Mitigation

- Refer to Generic Guidelines for all Study Areas.
- Maintain a buffer of open landscape between the edges of Sittingbourne and Iwade.
- Encourage wetland and/or intertidal habitat where there is potential to the north where the land forms part of the periphery of the marshland to the north.
- Create a landscape strategy for any new development to sit within, including public open space.
- Conserve and enhance existing hedgerows and shelter belts and utilise as part of a wider landscape framework.
- Respect the setting of Listed Buildings by retaining an element of open space around such properties and ensuring any further development relates to them in terms of scale and style.
- Retain a buffer of undeveloped land/open space along the A249 and screen the highway and traffic with native planting.
- Conserve the rural character of the landscape and the contrast in character between the east and west of the A249.

Study Area 17 – North West of Sittingbourne

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Study Area 17 – North West of Sittingbourne

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