

Intersection of the updated Canterbury District LCA and Biodiversity Appraisal and planning policies

Green Gaps (Policies OS6 and OS7)

1.1 This short paper sets out how the LCA and Biodiversity Appraisal has considered Green Gaps including any recommendations and implications that have emerged from the process.

1.2 A number of Green Gaps are identified by CCC in Policies OS6 and OS7, which are designated “*to retain separate identities of existing settlements, by preventing their coalescence through development*”. These are illustrated on **Figure 1.1**, and are:

- Between the urban areas of Herne Bay and Whitstable
- Between Canterbury and Sturry
- Between Sturry and Westbere
- Between Sturry and Hersden
- Between Sturry and Broad Oak
- Between Blean and Rough Common
- Between Canterbury and Tyler Hill
- Between Canterbury and Bridge

1.3 Specific planning policy has not been considered within the LCA, however the importance of landscapes for the separation of settlements is referred to within the LCA. Table 1.1 below provides details of the landscape character areas which include Green Gaps under Policies OS6 and OS7, and

the relevant sections of the LCA which refer to the areas covered by the Green Gaps policies.

1.4 Recommendations for possible amendments to the Green Gaps are also provided, including in LCAs where there are no current Green Gaps, where the assessment has indicated potential for new gaps, notably given development proposed as part of strategic allocations. Detailed justification of existing Green Gaps and definition of new gaps/boundaries would need to be subject to separate more detailed criteria-based study.

Next Steps

1.5 The process of completing the Landscape Character Assessment and Biodiversity Appraisal for Canterbury District has highlighted some areas for further reinforcement and revision to Green Gaps. Green Gaps are at a different scale and purpose to Character Assessment and any changes will require a more detailed criteria-based study.

1.6 Example criteria used in other similar studies have included assessment of:

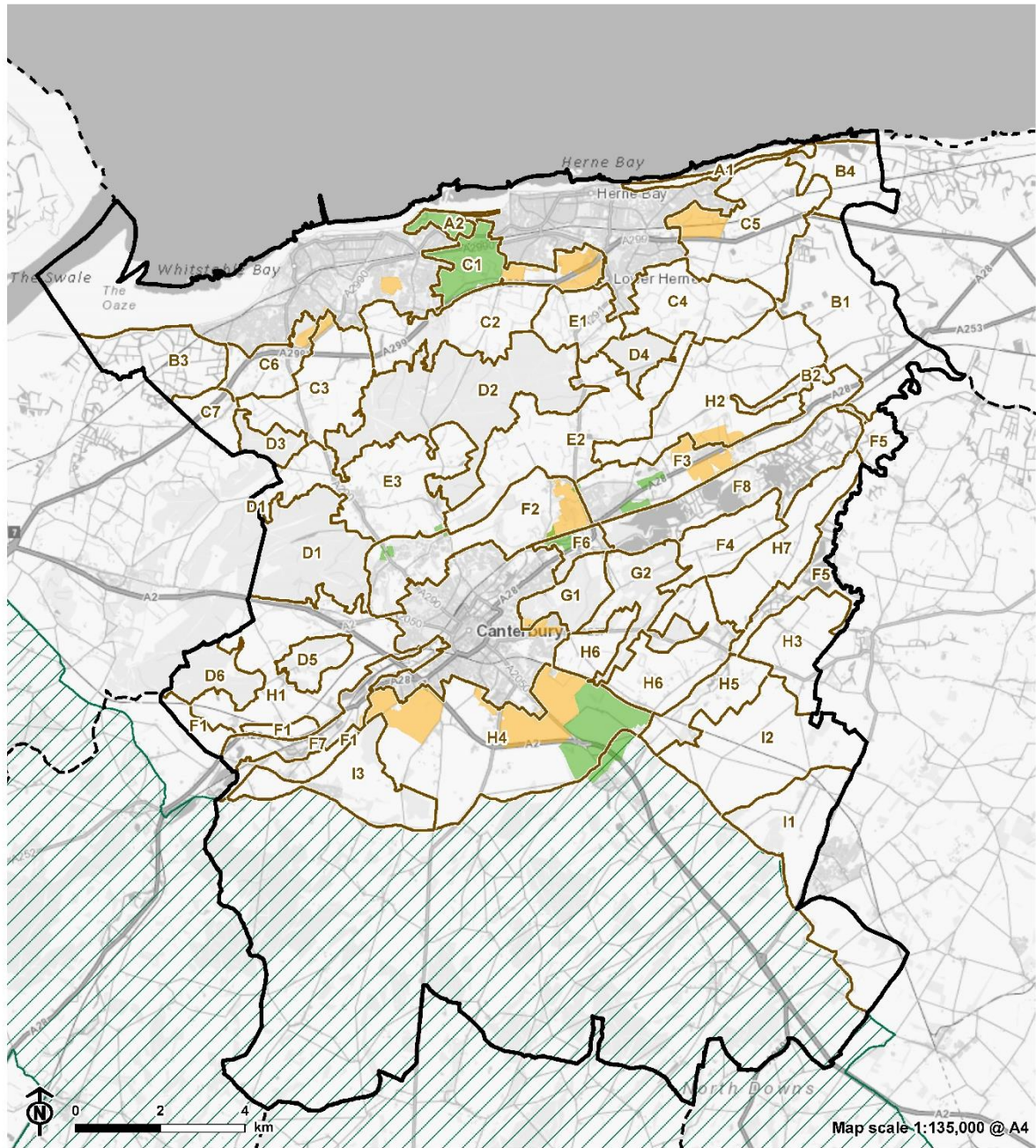
- Existing settlement identity and pattern
- Landscape character
- Visual character

1.7 Practical considerations including the size of the gap and enhancement potential for the landscape also form part of a Green Gap assessment. The full criteria table used for a similar Green Gaps study is provided in **Appendix A**.

Figure 1.1: Green Gaps

Canterbury Landscape Character
Assessment and Biodiversity Appraisal

Canterbury City Council



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CB_EB:Packham_B LUC Fig1_10717_r0_GreenGaps_LCA_StrategicAllocations 15/02/2021
Source: Canterbury City Council, LUC

LCA with Green Gaps and Strategic Allocations

- Canterbury City Council Boundary
- Adjacent Local Authority
- Landscape Character Area
- Green Gap
- Strategic Allocations
- Kent Downs AONB

Table 1.1: Green Gap Assessment Areas

| LCA | Area of Green Gap within LCA (ha) | Percentage of LCA within existing Green Gap (%) | Location | Key features | Identified as a sensitivity in LCA update | Relevant guidelines in LCA update | Recommendations |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| A1: Beltinge Coast | n/a | n/a | Between Herne Bay and Reculver | Coastal cliffs | Undeveloped and open coastal cliffs provide separation and an open 'gap' between Herne Bay and Reculver. | Any proposals for further development on the cliff top or extension of development eastwards should be carefully designed, consider the landscape setting and character and ensure that the sense of remoteness and gap between Herne Bay and Reculver is retained. | Consideration of whether a Green Gap is appropriate between Herne Bay and Reculver or if covered by undeveloped coast policy. The undeveloped coast policy provides a similar level of protection. |
| A2: Swalecliffe Coast | 63 | 88.5 | Between Herne Bay and Whitstable | Recreational land Agricultural land Caravan/chalet park Sewage works | Strategic importance as a buffer of undeveloped coastal land between the towns of Whitstable and Herne Bay, helping retain their separate identities and preventing coalescence. Open undeveloped coastal character with general absence of built development (other than the sewage works and caravan/chalet park). | Respect and strengthen the function as a Green Gap/buffer between Herne Bay and Whitstable, avoiding any further urbanising development and improving the overall visual quality. Maintain a sense of openness and views out to sea and along the coast. | Landscape has an important function as a Green Gap. Retain at existing extent. |
| C1: Chestfield Gap and Greenhill | 199 | 53 | Between Herne Bay and Whitstable | Open rural landscape separating the settlements of Whitstable and Herne Bay between the edges of Swalecliffe, Chestfield, Studd Hill and Greenhill. Good PRoW, which provide access to the surrounding settlements of Chestfield, Greenhill and | An open agricultural landscape providing contrast to surrounding densely developed urban areas forming a valuable gap between Whitstable and Herne Bay. | Seek to develop an improvement strategy to create a positive image to the area itself, whilst separating and creating distinctive identities to the neighbouring urban areas of Chestfield, Greenhill and Studd Hill and role as a green buffer between Herne Bay and Whitstable. This would require a partnership approach of landowners and CCC. Resist pressures for further linear development along the transport corridors to help reinforce the open rural setting between Herne Bay and Whitstable. | Landscape has an important function as a gap. Retain at existing extent. |

| LCA | Area of Green Gap within LCA (ha) | Percentage of LCA within existing Green Gap (%) | Location | Key features | Identified as a sensitivity in LCA update | Relevant guidelines in LCA update | Recommendations |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| | | | | Herne. | | | |
| E1: Herne Common | n/a | n/a | | Ridge of pasture and parkland | No | No | Further study is required to determine whether a new Green Gap is required between Herne Common and Herne Bay/Herne given strategic allocation extending from the southern edge of Herne Bay south of A299. |
| E3: Amery Court Farmland | 3 | 0.4 | Between Tyler Hill and University of Kent Campus | Large arable field | No, not a character area wide sensitivity (gap is a very small part of area) | Conserve the rural character of the landscape ensuring that it continues to play a role in the separation of Blean and Tyler Hill with Rough Common and the University of Kent to the south. | The gap here is very small – equivalent to one field within E3. There is potential to extend the gap to cover fields to the north, plus land within LCA E2 and F2 to the east of Tyler Hill. Further study would be required to define. |
| F1: Stour Valley Sides | n/a | n/a | | Sloping large arable fields between small settlements | No | No | Further study required to determine whether a new Green Gap is required between the strategic allocation at Cockering Farm and Chartham. |
| F2: Stour Valley Slopes There are a number of very small gaps within this character area | 7.3 | 1.2 | Between Blean Rough Common and University of Kent Campus | Pasture fields with sports grounds for surrounding educational establishments | Rural landscape which provides a gap between adjacent small settlements including Rough Common, Tyler Hill, Broad Oak, Sturry and the University of Kent. | Conserve the rural character of the landscape ensuring that it continues to play a role in the separation of Rough Common and Blean; the University of Kent and Tyler Hill; and Sturry and Canterbury. Ensure development does not extend north of this area into the more rural Blean landscape. | Retain at existing extent. |
| | 2.1 | 0.3 | Between Tyler Hill and University of Kent Campus | Blocks of priority habitat deciduous woodland connect to the Blean Woods to the north and north-west | | | Consider whether a Green Gap is required in this location, as the gap is between the University campus and properties on Canterbury Hill Road, rather than ensuring the separation of two settlements. |
| | 1.3 | 0.2 | Between Sturry and Broad Oak | Pasture field | | | The strategic allocation effectively merges Sturry and Broad Oak. This small gap creates a sense of separation |

| LCA | Area of Green Gap within LCA (ha) | Percentage of LCA within existing Green Gap (%) | Location | Key features | Identified as a sensitivity in LCA update | Relevant guidelines in LCA update | Recommendations |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | along Herne Bay Road. |
| | 4.3 | 0.7 | Between Canterbury and Sturry | Large arable field | | | Important as part of larger gap extending south of the railway (F6). Valuable given strategic allocation at Broad Oak. |
| F3: Hersden Ridge includes 3 areas of Green Gap | 1.6 | 0.3 | Between Sturry and Broad Oak | Pasture field | The role of the LCA in providing separation between Sturry and Hersden / Westbere, where development is limited. | Conserve areas of rural and wooded character where they provide a well-defined distinction between the rural landscape and the settlement edges of Sturry, Westbere and Hersden | Retain at existing extent. |
| | 15.3 | 2.6 | Between Sturry and Westbere | Woodland and lowland fen | | | Retain at existing extent. |
| | 11.2 | 1.9 | Between Sturry and Hersden | Pasture fields and woodland | | | Retain at existing extent. |
| F6: Stour Valley - Sturry and Fordwich | 21.4 | 21.8 | Between Canterbury and Sturry | Flat marshy fields, greenhouses and sports fields | The role of the LCA in providing rural separation between Canterbury and Sturry / Fordwich, where development is limited. | Conserve the rural character of the landscape with its well-defined distinction between the rural landscape and the settlement edges of Canterbury and Sturry / Fordwich. | Potential to increase the gap in this area - further study required to define the extent of gap. |
| F7: Stour Valley West | n/a | n/a | | Flat floodplain of the Great Stour | No | Conserve the undeveloped character of the landscape, ensuring it continues to play a role in providing a setting to Chartham and an approach to Canterbury. | Further study required to determine whether a new gap is appropriate with new strategic allocation at Cockerling Farm. |
| H4: Nackington Farmlands | 235 | 16.5 | Between Canterbury and Bridge | Large arable fields | The dominant agricultural character extending to the urban edge of Canterbury and role of the area in providing a rural landscape between the city and outlying settlements of Patixbourne, Bridge and Lower Hardres. | Conserve the rural character of the landscape ensuring that it continues to play a role in providing a rural separation between Canterbury and the outlying villages of Bridge, Patixbourne and Lower Hardres | Retain at existing extent. |
| H6: Littlebourne Fruit Belt | n/a | n/a | | Gently rolling landscape with orchard and hop production and arable fields | The role of the LCA in contributing towards the rural setting to the historic city of Canterbury, in separating Canterbury with outlying villages to | Conserve the rural character of the landscape ensuring that it continues to play a role in the separation of Canterbury with outlying villages to the east, and the separation of Bekesbourne / Patixbourne and | Further study required to determine whether a gap is appropriate between the edge of Canterbury and villages – area around Little Barton Farm and |

| LCA | Area of Green Gap within LCA (ha) | Percentage of LCA within existing Green Gap (%) | Location | Key features | Identified as a sensitivity in LCA update | Relevant guidelines in LCA update | Recommendations |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|----------|--------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| | | | | | the east and the rural separation provided between Bekesbourne / Patribourne and Littlebourne. | Littlebourne. | the Hoath. |

Undeveloped Coast (Policy LB3)

1.8 This section sets out how the LCA and Biodiversity Appraisal as considered Undeveloped Coast, including any recommendations and implications that have emerged from the process.

1.9 CCC's Policy LB3 relates to the undeveloped coastline in the district. This is a planning policy which aims to retain the "*unspoilt scenic quality or scientific value of the undeveloped coast*". The LCA update does not specifically refer to planning policy, however the undeveloped coast is an important part of the landscape character of Canterbury district. There are four areas of Undeveloped Coast, as illustrated in **Figure 1.2**.

Table 1.2 below sets out which LCAs contain areas of Undeveloped Coast as defined in Policy LB3, and the relevant sections of the LCA which refer to the areas designated as undeveloped coast.

Next Steps

1.10 The process of completing the Landscape Character Assessment and Biodiversity Appraisal for Canterbury District

has highlighted some areas for further reinforcement and revision to the Undeveloped Coast Policy, as noted above.

1.11 The coast comprising of marshes, low cliffs, minor valleys, and shingle ridges is an important and distinctive part of the District character and should be conserved through the undeveloped coast policy.

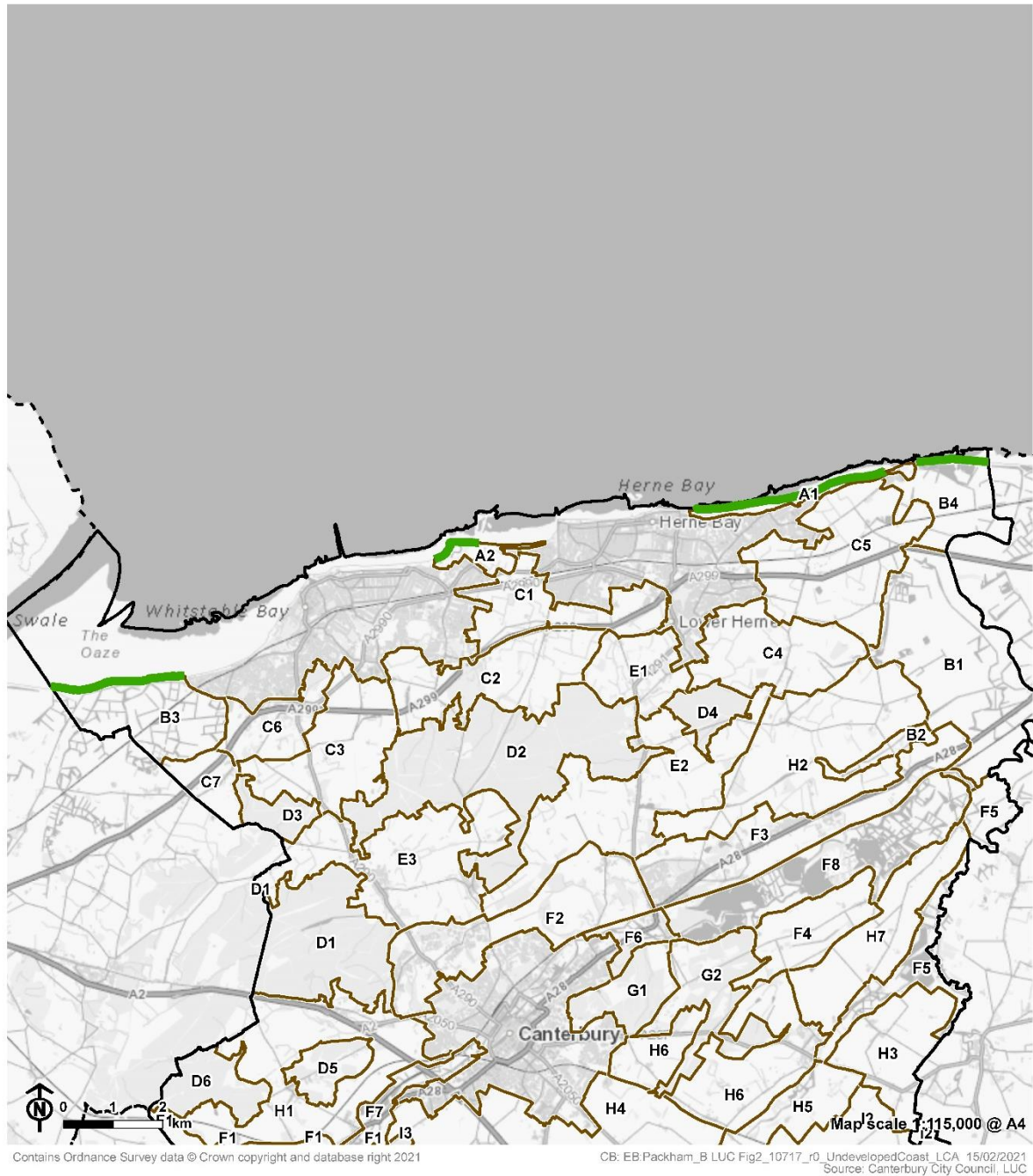
1.12 It is also important to consider the importance of the open coast and beach within settlement boundaries which have an important character, visual, ecological, recreational functions, and deserve conservation and enhancement.

1.13 A more detailed seascape character assessment could be undertaken to highlight the importance of these assets and the associated intertidal areas.

Figure 1.2: Undeveloped Coast

Canterbury Landscape Character
Assessment and Biodiversity Appraisal

Canterbury City Council



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CB: EB Packham_B LUC Fig2_10717_r0_UndevelopedCoast_LCA 15/02/2021
Source: Canterbury City Council, LUC

LCA with Undeveloped Coast

- Canterbury City Council Boundary
- Adjacent Local Authority
- Landscape Character Area
- Undeveloped Coast

Table 1.2: Undeveloped coast

| LCA | Total length of undeveloped coast (km) | Percentage of coastline designated as undeveloped coast (%) | Location | Key features | Identified as sensitivity in LCA update | Relevant guidelines in LCA update | Recommendations |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| A1: Beltinge Coast | 3.94 | 85 | Between lookout station at The Downs and edge of car parking at Reculver | Entirely undeveloped. An exposed coastal landscape. | Undeveloped and open coastal cliffs provide separation and an open 'gap' between Herne Bay and Reculver. | Conserve the open 'wild' undeveloped character landscape and avoid the introduction of both large scale or incongruous elements as well as small scale elements that could create a more managed or cluttered character. | Further study to determine whether to extend undeveloped coast to Reculver. |
| A2: Swalecliffe Coast | 1.1 | 46 | Between Whitstable settlement edge and caravan park | Open coastline with shingle beach and extensive mudflats uncovered at low tide. The shingle spit at Long Rock is a key feature. Few buildings other than a single terrace of coastguard cottages, holiday parks and the sewage treatment plant. | Open undeveloped coastal character with general absence of built development (other than the sewage works and caravan/chalet park). | Respect and strengthen the function as a Green Gap/buffer between Herne Bay and Whitstable, avoiding any further urbanising development and improving the overall visual quality. Maintain a sense of openness and views out to sea and along the coast. Avoid over development/intensification of development/permanent buildings on holiday park sites maintaining low rise, temporary character of buildings and coastal character. | Further study to determine whether to extend undeveloped coast to the settlement edge of Herne Bay. |
| B3: Seasalter Coastal Marshes | 2.76 | 100 | | Flat open grazing marsh and alluvial marshland underlain by marine alluvial deposits and small raised outcrop of London Clay. | General absence of development/settlement across the area contributing to the sense of openness and remote qualities. | The open character of most marshland landscapes accentuates the visual impact of many proposals over a wide distance as compared with more enclosed landscape types. Avoid proposals that can result in the interruption of views of large open skies or horizons or impinge on the remote undeveloped quality of marshland and its shoreline. | Retain undeveloped coast designation. |
| B4: Reculver Coastal | 1.46 | 100 | | Development confined to bungalows and | Extensive open views and 'big skies' across | Work with natural coastal processes to conserve and | Retain undeveloped coast designation. |

| LCA | Total length of undeveloped coast (km) | Percentage of coastline designated as undeveloped coast (%) | Location | Key features | Identified as sensitivity in LCA update | Relevant guidelines in LCA update | Recommendations |
|---------|--|---|----------|--|--|---|-----------------|
| Marshes | | | | mobile homes/holiday park at Reculver. | marshland and the Isle of Thanet to the east, and of seascape horizons to the north. An open, expansive landscape, with a strong sense of isolation and remoteness. | enhance the coastal landscape, including the distinctive pattern of shingle beach and intertidal mudflats. Avoid proposals that can result in the interruption of views of large open skies, long-distance views across the marshland including to adjacent Thanet District, and views out to sea. Avoid proposals that introduce vertical or incongruous elements to the horizons or impinge on the remote undeveloped quality of marshland and its shoreline. Any development on the low-lying areas should ensure that the sense of heritage, remoteness and tranquillity is retained. | |

Protection of Existing Protected Open Space (Policy OS9)

1.14 CCC's Policy OS9 aims to protect areas of existing open space for their contribution to recreational or visual amenity. The LCA update does not refer to planning policy, however the open spaces may have some landscape importance, and be referred to within the LCA. **Table 1.3** below lists the LCAs in which there are Existing Protected Open Spaces (OS9), and the relevant parts of the LCA which refer to the areas designated as Existing Protected Open Space (OS9). **Figure 1.3** illustrates the Existing Protected Open Spaces (OS9) which lie within the study area of the LCA (i.e. outside of settlement boundaries).

1.15 This review assesses how the Existing Protected Open Spaces (OS9) are considered within the Landscape Character assessment and Biodiversity Appraisal. It only considers those open spaces that form part of the rural landscape and not those within settlement boundaries.

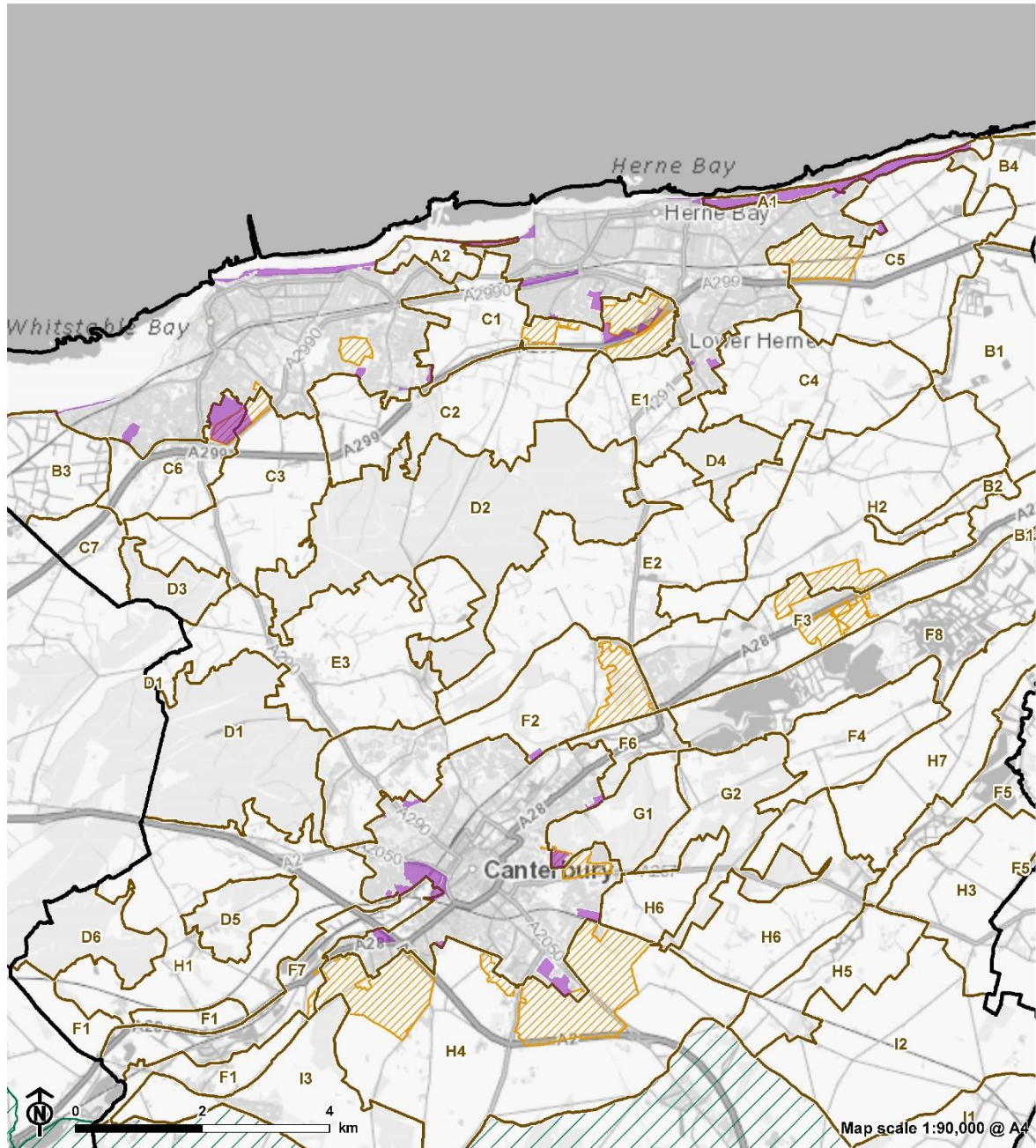
Next steps

1.16 The Existing Protected Open Space (OS9) policy areas are at a different scale and purpose to the character assessment and biodiversity appraisal. Where these areas have particular or distinctive characteristics or biodiversity, they may be referenced in the document. Any detailed review of these areas would require a separate targeted study.

Figure 1.3: Existing Protected Open Spaces

Canterbury Landscape Character
Assessment and Biodiversity Appraisal

Canterbury City Council



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CB: EB:Packham_B LUC Fig3_10717_r0_OpenSpace_LCA_StrategicAllocations 15/02/2021
Source: Canterbury City Council, LUC

LCA with Existing Protected Open Space and Strategic Allocations

- Canterbury City Council Boundary
- Adjacent Local Authority
- Landscape Character Area
- Strategic Allocations
- Existing Protected Open Space
- Kent Downs AONB

Table 1.3: Protection of Existing Protected Open Space (OS9)

| LCA | Total area of Existing Protected Open Space within LCA (ha) | Percentage of area within Existing Protected Open Space (%) | Location | Key features | Identified as sensitivity in LCA update | Relevant guidelines in LCA update | Recommendations |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| A1: Beltinge Coast | 47.7 | 71.5 | All of the LCA with the exception of area around Reculver Towers. | <p>Entirely undeveloped, with the adjacent settlement of Beltinge extending from Herne Bay on the cliff top.</p> <p>Popular area of public open space managed as the Reculver Country Park with long distance walking and cycling routes along the cliff top.</p> | <p>Valued for recreational use, including the Saxon Shore Way Long Distance Footpath, Oyster Trail cycling route and Reculver Country Park.</p> <p>Undeveloped and open coastal cliffs provide separation and an open 'gap' between Herne Bay and Reculver.</p> <p>Simple, uncluttered 'semi-wild' landscape character.</p> | <p>Conserve the open 'wild' undeveloped character landscape and avoid the introduction of both large scale or incongruous elements as well as small scale elements that could create a more managed or cluttered character.</p> <p>Protect the valued recreational use of the landscape, seeking to manage recreation in line with biodiversity priorities.</p> | Retain as Existing Open Protected Space. |
| A2: Swalecliffe Coast | 4.8 | 6.7 | A strip along the coastline from the holiday park to the settlement edge of Herne Bay. | <p>Few buildings other than a single terrace of coastguard cottages, holiday parks and the sewage treatment plant.</p> <p>Recreational access along the coast including the long-distance route of the Saxon Shore Way and Oyster Cycle Trail plus open public recreation land and playing fields.</p> | <p>High visibility along the open shoreline and out to sea vulnerable to further offshore development and changes within adjacent urban areas.</p> <p>Opportunities for public recreation, including public rights of way such as the Saxon Shore way/Oyster Trail and England Coast Path providing access to coastal wildlife/birds which are vulnerable to disturbance.</p> | <p>Respect and strengthen the function as a Green Gap/buffer between Herne Bay and Whitstable, avoiding any further urbanising development and improving the overall visual quality. Maintain a sense of openness and views out to sea and along the coast.</p> | Further study to determine boundaries, and relationship to the Green Gap policy. |
| C1: Chestfield Gap and Greenhill | 10.4 | 2.77 | East of Bullockstone Road. | <p>Good PRow, which provide access to the surrounding settlements of Chestfield, Greenhill and Herne.</p> | <p>Recreational value associated with PRow network linking into the settlements.</p> <p>Green corridor and setting of the old and new Thanet Way.</p> | <p>Opportunities for green infrastructure links associated with new development include safe access across the Old Thanet Way and into Herne Bay as well as enhancing rights of way access across the A299 and potentially linkages to The Blean.</p> | Further study to determine boundaries in light of the Herne Bay Golf Course Strategic Allocation. |

| LCA | Total area of Existing Protected Open Space within LCA (ha) | Percentage of area within Existing Protected Open Space (%) | Location | Key features | Identified as sensitivity in LCA update | Relevant guidelines in LCA update | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| | | | | | | Improve the appearance of the transport corridors of the old Thanet Way, A299 and London to Ramsgate Railway. Maintain the sense of a green corridor along the old Thanet Way with wide grass verges, cycle access, and hedge and tree boundaries. Seek to improve biodiversity through appropriate management of verges and tree planting. | |
| C3: Court Lees and Millstrood Farmlands | 4.5 | 0.9 | Small area north-west of the A290 Old Thanet Way. | <p>Crossed by main road corridors of the Old Thanet Way and New Thanet Way (A299), which are generally well integrated within the landform although with local visual and aural influence.</p> <p>PRoW provide recreational access and the Crab and Winkle Way is a major recreational connection between the coast, Blean and Canterbury City along the eastern boundary.</p> | <p>Green corridors and rural setting of the Old Thanet Way and New Thanet Way that cross through the landscape.</p> <p>Good network of PRoW including the Crab and Winkle Way and valued for recreation and access from settlements to wider countryside and The Blean (Clowes Wood and Ellenden Wood) including key crossing points of the A299.</p> | <p>Consider opportunities for green infrastructure links associated with new development including maintaining access to the recreational resource and green lung at Duncan Downs (in adjacent LCA) by creating a linking east – west green corridor towards the Crab and Winkle and any opportunities associated with the Gorrell Stream.</p> <p>Improve the appearance of the transport corridors of the Old Thanet Way and A299 New Thanet Way. Conserve the open rural setting along corridors, resisting any unsympathetic linear development along corridors to help reinforce the open rural setting. Manage roadside verges and hedges to enhance the rural character and biodiversity.</p> | Retain as Existing Protected Open Space. Protect and enhance the area in relation to Thanet Way Whitstable Strategic Allocation – may require more detailed boundary definition in relation to allocation. |
| C6: Wraik Hill | 30.4 | 12.7 | Between settlement edge of Seasalter | Duncan Down registered as a Village Green provides an | Importance of Duncan Down and Gorrell valley as rural | Continue to manage Duncan Down to continue to provide | Conserve and enhance Existing Protected Open |

| LCA | Total area of Existing Protected Open Space within LCA (ha) | Percentage of area within Existing Protected Open Space (%) | Location | Key features | Identified as sensitivity in LCA update | Relevant guidelines in LCA update | Recommendations |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| | | | and the A2990 Thanet Way, around Duncan Down. | <p>important natural recreational space for Whitstable. A connected informal footpath network extends across Wraik Hill.</p> <p>An informal secluded rural quality persists, although the Thanet Way in cutting is an audible influence over much of the area.</p> | <p>informal recreational resource for Whitstable plus connected informal rights of way network at Wraik Hill.</p> <p>Sense of a green corridor – with cycle track and wide grass verges and hedges along the Old Thanet Way (see also C1, C3).</p> | <p>a recreational resource of rural character of amenity grass, woodland and wetland. Maintain existing informal recreational access and connections into the adjacent existing and new urban areas by providing green corridors for people and wildlife through new development (Millstrood Farm), including linking existing residential areas to community facilities.</p> <p>Maintain the sense of a green corridor along the old Thanet Way with wide grass verges, cycle access, and hedge and tree boundaries. Seek to improve biodiversity through appropriate management of verges and tree planting, including areas now encapsulated within development.</p> | Space in light of the Thanet Way Whitstable Strategic Allocation. |
| F2: Stour Valley Slopes | 2.32 | 0.4 | Small area east of Folly Farm north of the railway line. | n/a | n/a | n/a | Small area within the LCA that is not specifically referenced. Review Existing Protected Open Space, and whether it still fits the criteria for designation. |
| F7: Stour Valley West | 1.69 | 0.58 | Small area of meadow next to the settlement edge of Canterbury. | Good network of PROW crossing the valley and running along the valley floor, allowing recreational access. | <p>The open flat river floodplain with the meandering Great Stour River and open lakes has a strong sense of place.</p> <p>Rural grazing marsh and floodplain provide important setting to historic Chartham and Canterbury City.</p> | <p>Conserve the undeveloped character of the landscape, ensuring it continues to play a role in providing a setting to Chartham and an approach to Canterbury City.</p> <p>Continue to provide and promote opportunities for</p> | Retain Existing Protected Open Space and potential for extension of boundaries. |

| LCA | Total area of Existing Protected Open Space within LCA (ha) | Percentage of area within Existing Protected Open Space (%) | Location | Key features | Identified as sensitivity in LCA update | Relevant guidelines in LCA update | Recommendations |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | wider public access from the heart of the city, while also managing recreation pressures. Retain a natural and informal character to existing and new features, including a muted colour scheme for car parks, footpaths and interpretation. | |
| GI: Old Park | 5.8 | 2.6 | East of Northgate, south of Timpson Wood. | Former ancient royal deer park with small blocks of ancient woodland and subsequent uses as military training ground resulting in a historically unenclosed landscape with low intensity use. | Valued for informal recreational use extending into the heart of the city. | Provide opportunities for wider public access from the heart of the city, supporting proposals that allow for recreation, leisure and amenity uses. Seek opportunities to promote understanding of the rich cultural history of Old Park. | Review Existing Protected Open Space designation in light of Howe Barracks Strategic Allocation. |
| | 0.1 | 0.06 | | | | | |

Appendix A: Possible criteria for confirming or defining Green Gaps

Green Gaps assessment criteria

| Criterion | Explanation | Indicators of a weak gap | Indicators of a strong gap |
|---|---|---|---|
| Existing settlement identity and pattern | Assess the extent to which the settlements or neighbourhoods that lie adjacent to the gap have an individual townscape character and identity that contribute to existing settlement pattern. | <p>The individual townscape character, form and pattern of the settlements or neighbourhoods that lie adjacent to the gap are not distinct.</p> <p>Loss or partial loss of the gap would not adversely affect the existing settlement pattern.</p> | <p>The individual townscape character, form and pattern of the settlement or neighbourhoods that lie adjacent to the gap are distinct.</p> <p>The presence of Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings are indicators of individual settlement character.</p> <p>The gap plays a role in settlement separation and pattern.</p> |
| Landscape character | Assess the landscape character of the area between the settlements or neighbourhoods and any land use and landscape features within the gap that contribute to its character as open and undeveloped land. | <p>There are significant man-made features or urban land uses that contribute to the developed character of the landscape.</p> <p>The area lacks typical elements of rural vegetation e.g. farmland, hedges, trees etc, which contribute to an undeveloped character.</p> <p>The area has a suburban character and residential areas outside defined settlement boundaries weaken the perception of the gap as 'countryside'.</p> | <p>Existing rural land uses contribute to the open and undeveloped character of the landscape, e.g. agriculture, horticulture, forestry.</p> <p>The landscape has significant landscape features that contribute to its undeveloped character.</p> <p>There is a low density or absence of development.</p> |
| Visual character | Assess the visual character of the area between settlements and any views to settlements or from settlements into the open countryside that contribute to that character and provide visual separation between settlements or neighbourhoods. | <p>Views to and from the settlement do not contribute positively to the visual character of the area.</p> <p>There is a clear inter-visibility between the settlements due to a lack of vegetation.</p> <p>Intervisibility alone does not indicate a weak gap and this criteria interplays with settlement identity and pattern e.g. intervisibility of contrasting settlement types may contribute to a stronger gap function.</p> | <p>Views to and from the settlement contribute positively to the visual character of the area (e.g. views mentioned in the Landscape Character Assessment/ Conservation Area appraisal).</p> <p>There are limited/no views between settlements.</p> <p>Landscape elements, such as hills, ridges, and/or tall vegetation within the gap contribute to the sense of visual separation between the settlements.</p> <p>Alternatively, where there is intervisibility or a narrow gap,</p> |

| Criterion | Explanation | Indicators of a weak gap | Indicators of a strong gap |
|-----------|-------------|--------------------------|--|
| | | | <p>the view shows clearly differing settlement character and identity e.g. between an expanding urban edge and distinct rural village.</p> <p>Open vistas and long views may also indicate a strong gap where they are an important part of the character of the landscape</p> |

Practical considerations

| Criterion | Explanation | Indicators |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Gap extent | <p>Assess the role of the extent of the gap in maintaining physical separation between settlements or neighbourhoods.</p> <p>What is the physical extent of the area between settlements? What are the key routes between settlements?</p> <p>Appropriateness of distances will vary from area to area and are intrinsically linked to characteristics and features of the landscape which sits between settlements i.e. gaps should have the sense of leaving one settlement, moving through the gap before entering a different settlement.</p> | <p>The gap is less than 2km away from a neighbouring settlement</p> <p>The gap should be of sufficient size to make it practical to develop policies for its protection, management and planning.</p> <p>A distance further than 2km could be considered too great to prevent the coalescence of two settlements.</p> |
| Boundary defensibility | <p>Boundaries of the existing Important Local Countryside Gaps should follow physical features on the ground, taking into account potential new boundary features that may alter the risk of settlement coalescence.</p> <p>Review the pressures on the land between the settlements from draft allocations and promoted sites.</p> | <p>The gap is not subject to draft allocation, or future infrastructure projects.</p> |
| Potential for enhancement | <p>Review existing environmental designations (both national and local level ecological and cultural heritage designations), priority habitats and recreational features (including PRoW, cycle paths, open access land/registered common land, allotments, amenity green spaces) to provide an indication of the value of the landscape.</p> <p>Other sources of information include Canterbury District Green Infrastructure.</p> <p>Use this to consider the potential enhancements to existing open space, wildlife areas, cultural heritage and access to the countryside (via PRoW etc).</p> | <p>Presence of green space and recreational values- highly accessible green space, presence of PRoW, recreational facilities e.g. sports pitches, play areas and parks</p> <p>Ecological values (environmental designations indicating higher Green Infrastructure value (indicated through the presence of SSSI, SINCs, National and Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland etc).</p> |