

# **Bexhill to Hastings Link Road**

## **Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual Impact**

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## **13 Landscape and Visual Impacts**

### **13.1 Introduction**

#### ***Scope of the Assessment***

13.1.1 The scope of this chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) is to:

- Provide a description and evaluation of the existing landscape and townscape resource and various visual receptors within the Combe Haven Valley and surrounding area;
- Identify landscape, townscape and associated visual impacts arising from the Scheme;
- Consider the impact of the Scheme upon both the physical and cultural elements that collectively define the landscape and townscape character of the Study Area;
- Assess the significance of the predicted construction and operational impacts of the Scheme taking into consideration proposed mitigation measures to reduce potential adverse landscape, townscape and visual impacts; and,
- Assess the secondary effects of changes in traffic volumes on a wider Study Area including the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

#### ***The Study Area***

13.1.2 The scope of the Study Area identified for the purposes of the landscape, townscape and visual impact assessment is indicated in Figure 13.1. It extends from Watermill Lane in the west to the Hollington Stream valley in the built up area of Hastings in the east and from Crowhurst village/Swainham Lane in the north to the main coastal railway in the south. This Study Area covers the area with potential direct landscape, townscape and visual impacts of the Scheme and will be referred to as 'Study Area 1'.

13.1.3 The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Volume 11 recommends that all visual receptors within the visual envelope or Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) within flat landscapes should be assessed up to a distance of 1km of the centre line of the Scheme. To allow for potential longer views into the area, the scope of the ZVI would extend beyond this distance and the Study Area boundary to include elevated viewpoints towards the Scheme, particularly from the AONB in the north and the urban area of Hastings in the east. The ZVI at the Opening Year (Year 1) and the Design Year (Year 15) are shown in Figure 13.15A and 13.5B.

13.1.4 Surrounding areas outside the defined Study Area 1 would be affected by the secondary effects predicted to result from changes to traffic volumes on surrounding roads. The Study Area for this wider assessment is indicated on Figure 13.20. This is based on the traffic model Study Area and

extends from the A271 Ashburnam Road in the west to A259 Rye Road in Hastings to the east and the A21 at Watlington in the north to the A259 coast road in the south. This will be referred to as Study Area 2. The scope of the landscape and townscape assessments will cover the ZVI up to 1km from the Scheme as a minimum, with a wider assessment being undertaken where deemed necessary to provide better appreciation of the secondary effects of changes in traffic volume.

## **13.2 Method of Assessment**

### ***Existing Guidance***

13.2.1 There are several sources of relevant guidance for assessing the landscape, townscape and visual impacts of new development projects. The primary guidance for assessing the landscape and visual effects of road schemes is provided in DMRB Vol.11, Section 3, Part 5, with additional guidance with respect to appraising the impacts of all transport schemes provided in the Department for Transport's Web-Based Transport Analysis Guidance (WebTAG)

13.2.2 Further guidance is provided by the *Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (GLVIA) published by the Institute of Environmental Assessment and the Landscape Institute (Second Edition 2002). Detailed guidance for undertaking landscape character assessments to inform planning policy and decisions is also provided in the *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland* published jointly by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002).

13.2.3 Guidance for assessing and reducing the impact of proposed lighting schemes has been obtained from *Lighting the Countryside: Towards Good Practice*, Office of The Deputy Prime Minister (2001) and *Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Light Pollution* published by the Institute of Lighting Engineers (2000).

13.2.4 All these various forms of current guidance are used for the purposes of assessing the impacts of the Scheme upon the existing landscape and townscape character of the Study Area and upon potential visual receptors. However, in recognition of the nature of the proposed Scheme, the guidance contained within DMRB Volume 11 forms the basis of the landscape and visual impact assessment and is supplemented as appropriate by the remaining guidance available. Due to the lack of comprehensive existing townscape assessment guidance, this approach is also adopted for the assessment of townscape impacts with reference being made to the advice contained within WebTAG on this topic area.

### ***Legislative and Policy Framework***

13.2.5 The High Weald AONB located to the north of the Scheme was designated in 1983 under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, Part IV, in order to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.

13.2.6 Other legislation, policy and strategies relevant to the Scheme include:

- Planning Policy Statement 7;
- The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000;
- East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011;
- Hastings Local Plan (Adopted April 2004);
- Rother District Local Plan, (Adopted July 2006);
- North Bexhill Strategic Framework, East Sussex County Council and Rother District Council (1993);
- The Countryside Agency (1999) – Countryside Character Volume 7: South East & London;
- The High Weald; Exploring the Landscape of the AONB, Countryside Commission, 1994;
- East Sussex Trees and Woodland Strategy, (TAWS), East Sussex Woodland Forum 1990;
- Remoteness at the Local Scale, an Application in East Sussex, East Sussex County Council (ESCC), 1997;
- East Sussex Landscape Assessment, published on ESCC website summer 2007; and,
- CPRE (Council for the Protection of Rural England) Tranquil Areas Studies 1995 and 2006).

### ***Surveys Undertaken***

13.2.7 Initial desktop and walkover surveys were undertaken to define the landscape and visual constraints within the Study Area sufficient to help determine and appraise the preferred route. This assessment is based on walkover surveys resulting in detailed character and visual analysis. The methodologies for these surveys are covered in detail in relevant sections below.

### ***Methodology for Landscape and Townscape Impact Assessment***

13.2.8 The landscape is a combination of both cultural and physical characteristics and components, which give rise to patterns that are distinctive to particular localities and help to define a sense of place. The landscape is not therefore simply a visual phenomenon but relies upon other influences including topography, land use land management, ecology, and cultural associations.

13.2.9 Landscape encompasses the whole external environment including cities, towns and small settlements. The character of the urban area can be defined as townscape and is relevant to this assessment as the Scheme would directly affect the urban area of Bexhill. There would be secondary effects due to changes in traffic volumes on parts of Hastings, Battle and the villages of Crowhurst, Catsfield and Ninfield. Townscape is the interaction of

both the physical and social characteristics of the urban environment and the way in which they are perceived. Physical characteristics include urban structure, grain and the spaces between buildings which together combine to create the layout of the urban environment. Other physical characteristics include the height and mass or scale of buildings and their appearance in terms of both materials used in construction and detailing. The social characteristics of a townscape are determined by how the physical characteristics are used and appreciated by the community. The interrelationships of these characteristics give a place its character and distinctive identity.

13.2.10 Desktop and field surveys have been undertaken to identify landscape types within the Study Area 1. Landscape types are distinct types of landscape that share broadly similar combinations of geology, landform, topography and drainage; these are identified on Figure 13.5.

13.2.11 Detailed field surveys were carried out to identify landscape character areas for Study Area 1, using the customised field survey sheets contained within Appendix 13-A of the ES. Landscape character areas are single unique areas in the landscape or townscape, which have a particular sense of place. These are discrete areas of a particular character reflected by differing vegetation, settlement and field patterns and other landscape characteristics; these are identified in Figure 13.6.

13.2.12 Other factors which would be considered as part of the landscape character assessment are local cultural considerations and sense of place. The survey sheets provided the opportunity to record both the objective elements within the landscape or townscape in question and the subjective impressions of the viewer. A representative photograph was taken from each survey point and an assessment made as to the quality, value and sensitivity to the change of the character area in question. This in accordance with the guidance provided in the GLVIA publication (2002). The location of survey points has been agreed with the local planning authority and Natural England.

13.2.13 The character of the wider Study Area 2 has not been considered to this level of detail. The character areas considered for the assessment of changes in traffic volumes is based on the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) character areas, County Landscape Assessment 2007. These are identified on Figure 13.20.

13.2.14 The information obtained from the field survey exercise was supplemented by a review of existing Local and Structure Plans. Supporting strategies were also reviewed together with existing landscape character assessments at national, regional and local level which encompass the Bexhill and Combe Haven areas, in order to inform the landscape and townscape assessments.

13.2.15 Having drawn together the baseline information this was then used to describe the character of the landscape and townscape by character area. Landscape character assessment is concerned primarily with landscape character, rather than with landscape quality or value. These factors are considered relevant where assessment is being used to inform environmental

impact assessments. Subsequently, each landscape and townscape character area is evaluated in relation to quality, value and sensitivity to change in accordance with the criteria contained in the following tables, in order to help assess the relative significance of the landscape or townscape impacts associated with the Scheme.

***Landscape and Townscape Quality Evaluation Criteria***

13.2.16 Quality would be defined in accordance with The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Volume 11, Section 3, Part 5 and further refined using GLVIA (2002). Quality of the Landscape and Townscape is defined according to Table 13.1 and 13.2 respectively.

**Table 13.1 Landscape Quality Evaluation Criteria**

<b>Quality Classification</b>	<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>
<b>Exceptional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rich, distinctive, unique or outstanding natural landscape character</li> <li>• Strong landscape structure, characteristics, patterns and unified combination of landform and landcover;</li> <li>• Good condition – appropriate management for land use and landcover;</li> <li>• Distinct features worthy of conservation;</li> <li>• Unique sense of place;</li> <li>• No detracting features;</li> <li>• Strong sense of tranquillity reflected in extensive ‘Most Tranquil Areas’; and,</li> <li>• Areas of exceptional remoteness, some wilderness</li> </ul>
<b>High</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very attractive, semi-natural or farmed landscape with distinctive or unusual features;</li> <li>• Strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns and balanced combination of landform and landcover;</li> <li>• Appropriate management for land use and landcover but potentially scope to improve;</li> <li>• Distinct features worthy of conservation;</li> <li>• Strong sense of place;</li> <li>• Occasional detracting features;</li> <li>• Sense of tranquillity, smaller zones of Most Tranquil Areas; and,</li> <li>• Areas of remoteness and exceptional remoteness.</li> </ul>

<b>Quality Classification</b>	<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>
<b>Good</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attractive semi-natural or farmed landscape with some distinctive features;</li> <li>• Recognisable landscape structure, characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and landcover are still evident;</li> <li>• Scope to improve management for land use and landcover;</li> <li>• Some features worthy of conservation;</li> <li>• Sense of place;</li> <li>• Some detracting features;</li> <li>• No 'most tranquil areas'; and,</li> <li>• Areas of remoteness, rarely exceptional remoteness</li> </ul>
<b>Ordinary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commonplace farmed landscape with limited variety or distinctiveness;</li> <li>• Distinguishable landscape structure, characteristic patterns of landform and landcover often masked by land use;</li> <li>• Scope to improve management for land use and landcover;</li> <li>• Some features worthy of conservation;</li> <li>• Some detracting features;</li> <li>• No relatively tranquil areas; and,</li> <li>• No areas of remote landscape.</li> </ul>
<b>Poor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dull landscape which has lost most of its natural features;</li> <li>• Weak or degraded landscape structure, characteristic patterns of landform and landcover are often masked by land use;</li> <li>• Mixed land use evident;</li> <li>• Lack of management and intervention has resulted in degradation;</li> <li>• Frequent dominant detracting features;</li> <li>• Disturbed or derelict land requires treatment;</li> <li>• Least tranquil areas; and,</li> <li>• No remote landscape</li> </ul>

Sources:

*Modification of criteria contained in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2002) and DMRB Vol. 11.*

*Remote areas are determined according to Remoteness at the Local Scale (ESCC 1997) and are shown in Figure 13.2*

*Tranquil areas are determined according to Tranquil Areas South East Region (CPRE 2005,) and are shown in Figure 13.3.*

**Table 13.2 Townscape Quality Evaluation Criteria**

<b>Quality Classification</b>	<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>
<b>Exceptional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very attractive, unique or outstanding townscape character with clearly distinctive characteristics;</li> <li>• Widespread use of quality materials;</li> <li>• Very strong urban structure, characteristic patterns and balanced combination of built form and open space;</li> <li>• Good condition – appropriate management for land use;</li> <li>• Distinct features worthy of conservation;</li> <li>• Unique sense of place; and,</li> <li>• No detracting features.</li> </ul>
<b>High</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very attractive townscape with distinctive features and elements;</li> <li>• Evident use of quality materials;</li> <li>• Strong urban structure, characteristic patterns and balanced combination of built form and open space;</li> <li>• Appropriate management for land use with limited scope to improve;</li> <li>• Distinct features worthy of conservation;</li> <li>• Strong sense of place; and,</li> <li>• Occasional detracting features.</li> </ul>
<b>Good</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attractive townscape with some distinctive features;</li> <li>• Recognisable urban structure, characteristic patterns and combinations of built form and open space;</li> <li>• Scope to improve management for land use;</li> <li>• Some features worthy of conservation;</li> <li>• Sense of place; and,</li> <li>• Some detracting features.</li> </ul>

Quality Classification	Evaluation Criteria
<b>Ordinary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commonplace and unremarkable townscape with limited variety or distinctiveness;</li> <li>• Distinguishable urban structure, characteristic patterns of built form and open space;</li> <li>• Scope to improve management for land use;</li> <li>• Some features worthy of conservation; and,</li> <li>• Some dominant detracting features.</li> </ul>
<b>Poor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monotonous and uniform townscape often in decline;</li> <li>• Weak or degraded urban structure, characteristic patterns and combination of built form and open space;</li> <li>• Lack of management has resulted in degradation;</li> <li>• Frequent dominant detracting features; and,</li> <li>• Disturbed or derelict land requires treatment.</li> </ul>

Source:

*Modification of criteria contained in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2002) and DMRB Vol. 11.*

### **Landscape and Townscape Value**

13.2.17 This chapter will appraise landscape value using a set of indicators, this is done by assessing:

- The importance of these characteristic features;
- Why and who they are important to;
- Their relationship in overall landscape patterns; and,
- Level of value at the local, county, regional or national scale.

13.2.18 The Landscape and Townscape Value Criteria are detailed in Table 13.3 and 13.4 respectively.

**Table 13.3 Landscape Value Criteria**

<b>Value</b>	<b>Typical Criteria</b>	<b>Typical Scale</b>	<b>Typical Examples/Features</b>
<b>Very High</b>	Very attractive and rare  Exceptional landscape quality  No or limited potential for substitution	International or National	World Heritage Site, National Park, AONB or key elements/features within them.
<b>High</b>	Very attractive or attractive scenic quality and in part rare  High or good landscape quality  Limited potential for substitution.	National, Regional, District or Local	National Park, AONB, Areas of Great Landscape Value (or similar designation) or key elements within them.
<b>Medium</b>	Typical and commonplace or in part unusual  Ordinary landscape quality  Potential for substitution	Regional, District or Local	Generally undesignated but value expressed through local cultural associations or through demonstrable use.
<b>Low</b>	Monotonous, degraded or damaged;  Poor landscape quality;  Can be substituted.	District or Local	Certain individual landscape elements or features may be worthy of conservation and landscape either identified or would benefit from restoration or enhancement.

Source:

*Modification of criteria contained in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2002)*

**Table 13.4 Townscape Value Criteria**

<b>Value</b>	<b>Typical Criteria</b>	<b>Typical Scale</b>	<b>Typical Examples/Features</b>
<b>Very High</b>	Very attractive and rare; Exceptional townscape quality  No or limited potential for substitution.	International or National	World Heritage Site Archaeological Important Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs), sites of national importance recorded on the Sites & Monuments Record (SMR) or National Monuments Record (NMR) and Listed Buildings
<b>High</b>	Very attractive or attractive and in part rare  High or good townscape quality; Limited potential for substitution.	National, Regional, District or Local	Archaeological Important Areas, SAMs, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Tree Preservation Order (TPOs) and sites of national, regional or local county importance recorded on SMR or NMR.
<b>Medium</b>	Typical and commonplace or in part unusual  Ordinary townscape quality  Potential for substitution.	Regional, District or Local	Generally undesignated by value expressed through literature and cultural associations or through demonstrable use. May contain Listed Buildings, TPOs and sites of county or local importance recorded on SMR.
<b>Low</b>	Monotonous, degraded or damaged  Poor townscape quality  Can be substituted.	District or Local	Certain individual landscape elements or features may be worthy of conservation and townscape would benefit from restoration or enhancement.

Sources:

*Modification of criteria contained in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Second Edition) 2002 and Web TAG 3.3.8*

### ***Landscape and Townscape Sensitivity***

13.2.19 Effects of the Scheme on landscape character generally will be assessed using DMRB Volume 11 supported by Transport Analysis Guidance (Web Tag Unit 3.3.7, The Landscape Sub Objective and Tag Unit 3.3.8, the Townscape Sub – Objective.) and GLVIA. East Sussex has a rich resource of valued landscapes. The importance of its landscapes is recognized in national terms in that two thirds of the county is designated as AONB. This includes the Sussex Downs and the High Weald.

13.2.20 The remainder of the county although not containing nationally designated landscapes consists almost entirely of varied, attractive and valued landscape and many areas are the subject of nature conservation designations. The landscape of the Combe Haven Valley is not subject to designation at national, regional or local level. Nevertheless it is recognized as an attractive landscape situated close to urban areas and this has been taken into account in the landscape design and assessment.

13.2.21 GLVIA and the Countryside Agency advocate that sensitivity studies are carried out at regional level to inform strategic and local development frameworks.

13.2.22 The sensitivity of each landscape and townscape character area relating to the Scheme and the scope for mitigation measures has been assessed in accordance with *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, Second Edition, 2002 and *Landscape Assessment Guidance – Countryside Agency (Topic Paper 6, Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity)*.

13.2.23 Landscape character sensitivity is based on judgements about sensitivity of aspects most likely to be affected e.g. natural, cultural, aesthetic factors. This combined with visual sensitivity and landscape value identifies the capacity of the landscape to accommodate a specific type of change.

13.2.24 Other factors which have been taken in to account in assessing the sensitivity of the landscape resource are existing trends for change in the landscape which may be due to natural process or human activities. Landscapes exhibiting reduction in management due to changed farming practices can be considered less sensitive to change. The Evaluation Criteria of the sensitivity to change of a landscape or townscape are defined in Table 13.5.

**Table 13.5 Sensitivity to Change Evaluation Criteria**

<b>Sensitivity to Change</b>	<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>
<b>High</b>	A landscape or townscape sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape or townscape character, features or elements.
<b>Moderate</b>	A landscape or townscape capable of accepting limited proposed change with some effects on landscape or townscape character, features or elements.
<b>Low</b>	A landscape or townscape capable of accommodating considerable proposed change without effects on landscape or townscape character, features or elements.

***Landscape and Townscape Impact Significance Criteria***

13.2.25 Having completed the character and evaluation assessments, the various landscape and townscape impacts of the Scheme were identified taking into consideration all mitigation measures developed throughout the Scheme design process to avoid or reduce potential adverse impacts. The identification of landscape and townscape impacts are clearly distinguished between impacts upon the physical resource and those associated with amenity and views in order to avoid double counting.

13.2.26 In order to assess the relative significance of the landscape and townscape impacts identified, due regard was given to the combination of the magnitude of the impacts in question and the quality, value and sensitivity to change of the affected landscape or townscape resource. For example, a high quality and valued landscape may not necessarily be significantly adversely affected if a new road or road improvements can be comfortably set into the local topography and mitigation in keeping with the surrounding landscape character can be used to integrate the proposals into the landscape.

13.2.27 Conversely, significant adverse impacts could occur in a less attractive or valued landscape if the magnitude of change is high and mitigation and integration prove difficult.

13.2.28 The definitions contained in the following tables were then used to ascribe a degree of significance to each impact in accordance with the requirements set out in the Scoping Report.

13.2.29 The assessment of significance requires judgement in balancing the complex relationships between the different components of the landscape or townscape in question. The definitions in Table 13.6 and 13.7 should be used to give a general overview and cannot be considered to be prescriptive.

**Table 13.6 Landscape Impact Significance Criteria**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Substantial Beneficial (positive)</b>	<p>The Scheme would enhance the landscape because they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate very successfully with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>• Enable the restoration of highly valued characteristic features, partially lost or diminished as the result of changes resulting from intensive farming or inappropriate development;</li> <li>• They would enable a very strong sense of place and scale to be restored through well-designed planting and mitigation measures, that is, characteristic features are enhanced through the use of local materials and species used to fit the proposal into the landscape;</li> <li>• Enable considerable improvement in landscape condition through compensation and long term management;</li> <li>• They enable a strong sense of quality to be restored or enhanced through beneficial landscaping and sensitive design in the landscape; and,</li> <li>• The proposals would increase the value of the landscape in the regional context</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate Beneficial (positive)</b>	<p>The proposals provide an opportunity to enhance the landscape because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They fit very well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>• There is potential, through mitigation, to enable the restoration of characteristic features, partially lost or diminished as the result of changes resulting from intensive farming or inappropriate development; and,</li> <li>• They would enable a sense of place and scale to be restored through well-designed planting and mitigation measures, that is, characteristic features are enhanced through the use of local materials and species used to fit the proposal into the landscape.</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate Beneficial (positive)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They enable some sense of quality to be restored or enhanced through beneficial landscaping and sensitive design in a landscape which is not of any formally recognised quality;</li> <li>• Enable improvement in landscape condition through compensation and long term management;</li> <li>• Enable improvement in landscape quality; and,</li> <li>• Increase the value of the landscape in the local context.</li> </ul>

Score	Comment
<b>Slight Beneficial (positive)</b>	<p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fit well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>• Incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure they would blend in well with surrounding landscape;</li> <li>• Would enable some sense of place and scale to be restored through well-designed planting and mitigation measures;</li> <li>• Maintain or enhance existing landscape character in an area which is not a designated landscape, nor vulnerable to change;</li> <li>• Enable some improvement in landscape condition through compensation and long term management;</li> <li>• Enable slight improvements in landscape quality; and,</li> <li>• Slightly increase the value of the landscape in the local context.</li> </ul>
<b>Neutral</b>	<p>The proposals are well designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>• Incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure that the Scheme would blend in well with surrounding landscape features and landscape elements;</li> <li>• Avoid having an adverse effect on the current level of remoteness and tranquillity (where this exists) of the landscape through which the route passes;</li> <li>• Maintain existing landscape character in an area which is not a designated landscape, this is, neither national or local high quality, nor is it vulnerable to change; and,</li> <li>• Have a balanced impact on landscape quality and value through mitigation and compensation.</li> </ul>
<b>No Change</b>	<p>No discernable deterioration or improvement in landscape character.</p>
<b>Slight Adverse (negative)</b>	<p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not quite fit the landform and scale of the landscape;</li> <li>• Cannot be completely mitigated for because of the nature of the proposal itself or the character of the landscape through which it passes; and,</li> <li>• Affect an area of recognised landscape quality.</li> </ul>

<b>Score</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Moderate Adverse (negative)</b>	<p>The proposals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Out of scale with the landscape, or at odds with the local pattern and landform;</li><li>• Not possible to fully mitigate for, that is, mitigation would not prevent the Scheme from scarring the landscape in the longer term as some features of interest would be partly destroyed or their setting reduced or removed;</li><li>• Would have an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality or on vulnerable and important characteristic features or elements; and,</li><li>• In conflict with local and national policies to protect open land and nationally recognised countryside as set out in PPG7 and PPG2.</li></ul>
<b>Substantial Adverse (negative)</b>	<p>The proposals are very damaging to the landscape in that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are at considerable variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape;</li><li>• Are likely to degrade, diminish or even destroy the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting;</li><li>• Would be substantially damaging to a high quality or highly vulnerable landscape, causing it to change and be considerably diminished in quality;</li><li>• Cannot be adequately mitigated for; and,</li><li>• Are in serious conflict with government policy for the protection of nationally recognised countryside as set out in PPG7.</li></ul>

**Table 13.7 Townscape Impact Significance Criteria**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Substantial Beneficial (positive)</b>	<p>The proposals would enhance the townscape because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They enhance the layout, mix, scale, appearance, human interaction and cultural aspects of the townscape;</li> <li>• They enable the restoration of the characteristic features of the townscape, partially lost or diminished as the result of changes resulting from inappropriate development;</li> <li>• They enable a sense of place and scale to be restored through well-designed mitigation measures, that is, characteristic features are enhanced through the use of local materials to fit the proposal into the townscape;</li> <li>• They enhance the character of the townscape through beneficial and sensitive design in a townscape which is not of any formally recognised quality;</li> <li>• They would enhance the quality of the townscape in a townscape which is not of any formally recognised quality; and,</li> <li>• They would enhance the value of the townscape at a regional level.</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate Beneficial (positive)</b>	<p>The proposals provide an opportunity to enhance the townscape because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They fit very well with the layout, mix, scale, appearance, human interaction and cultural aspects of the townscape;</li> <li>• There is potential, through mitigation, to enable the restoration of characteristic features, partially lost or diminished as the result of changes resulting from inappropriate development; and,</li> <li>• They would enable a sense of place and scale to be restored through well-designed mitigation measures, that is, characteristic features are enhanced through the use of local materials to fit the proposal into the townscape.</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate Beneficial (positive)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They enable some sense of quality to be restored or enhanced through beneficial and sensitive design in a townscape which is not of any formally recognised quality; and,</li> <li>• They would enhance the value of the townscape at a local level.</li> </ul>

<b>Score</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Slight beneficial (positive)</b>	<p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fit well with the layout, mix, scale, appearance, human interaction and cultural aspects of the townscape;</li> <li>• Incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure they would blend in well with surrounding townscape;</li> <li>• Would enable some sense of place and scale to be restored through well-designed mitigation measures;</li> <li>• Maintain or enhance existing townscape character in an area which is not designated for the quality of its townscape, nor vulnerable to change; and,</li> <li>• Maintain or enhance the value of the townscape.</li> </ul>
<b>Neutral</b>	<p>The proposals are well designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complement the layout, mix, scale, appearance, human interaction and cultural aspects of the townscape;</li> <li>• Incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure that the Scheme would blend in well with surrounding townscape features and elements;</li> <li>• Maintain existing townscape character in an area which is not a designated townscape, this is, neither national or local high quality, nor is it vulnerable to change; and,</li> <li>• Maintain existing quality and value.</li> </ul>
<b>No Change</b>	<p>No discernable deterioration or improvement in landscape character</p>
<b>Slight Adverse (negative)</b>	<p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not quite fit the layout, mix, scale, appearance, human interaction and cultural aspects of the townscape;</li> <li>• Cannot be completely mitigated for because of the nature of the proposal itself or the character of the townscape through which it passes;</li> <li>• Affect an area of recognised townscape quality; and,</li> <li>• Impact on the value of an area of valued townscape.</li> </ul>

Score	Comment
<b>Moderate Adverse (negative)</b>	<p>The proposals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of scale or at odds with the layout, mix, scale, appearance, human interaction and cultural aspects of the townscape;</li> <li>• Not possible to fully mitigate for, that is, mitigation would not prevent the Scheme from scarring the townscape in the longer term, as some features of interest would be partly destroyed or their setting reduced or removed;</li> <li>• Would have an adverse impact on a townscape of recognised quality or on vulnerable and important characteristic features or elements;</li> <li>• Would impact on the quality of townscape; and,</li> <li>• Would decrease the value of the townscape in the local context.</li> </ul>
<b>Substantial Adverse (negative)</b>	<p>The proposals are very damaging to the landscape in that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are at considerable variance with the layout, mix, scale, appearance, human interaction and cultural aspects of the townscape;</li> <li>• Are likely to degrade, diminish or even destroy the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting;</li> </ul>
<b>Substantial Adverse (negative)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would be substantially damaging to a high quality or highly vulnerable townscape, causing it to change and be considerably diminished in quality;</li> <li>• Cannot be adequately mitigated for;</li> <li>• Would have a significant impact on the quality of the townscape; and,</li> </ul> <p>Would have a significant impact on the value of the townscape in the regional context.</p>

Source:

Modification of criteria contained in WebTag Unit 3.3.8

### **Effects of the Scheme on Landscape and Townscape**

13.2.30 The effects of the Scheme on each landscape character area, which would be directly affected within the Study Area 1, will be assessed. For each character area this will describe the effects on landscape features, landform, cultural considerations, remoteness and quality.

13.2.31 A detailed assessment of impacts of the Scheme will be made on each townscape character area in Study Area 1, which would be directly affected by the Scheme. This will assess the impacts on urban grain, features,

quality and cultural considerations as well as on individual features and elements.

13.2.32 An assessment has been made of potential secondary effects of the Scheme on surrounding areas, specifically increase or reduction in traffic on urban and rural roads and the resulting effects on the surrounding landscape and townscape. This will include the surrounding countryside, villages and the urban areas of Hastings and Battle. This assessment will use the wider Study Area 2 identified in Figure 13.20. The impacts will be scored according to Tables 13.6 and 13.7 above

### ***Methodology for Visual Impact Assessment***

13.2.33 Visual assessment has been carried out in accordance with DMRB Vol. 11, Section 3 Part 5, Chapter 5; Visual Impact Assessment Methodology and with reference to GLVIA. Detailed surveys have been undertaken to define the visual envelope or ZVI for the Scheme and prepare visual impact schedules in order to assess likely effects upon key visual receptor groups such as viewers within residential properties, users of Public Rights of Way and permissive paths. These surveys will also identify the nature of existing lighting within the Study Area 1 in order to help in the assessment of the impacts of lighting associated with the Scheme. A baseline study indicating sensitive receptors and views from villages, residential properties, Public Rights of Way and other public viewpoints. Sensitive receptors have been identified in the urban areas of Bexhill and Hastings. Views from the High Weald AONB to the north will be considered. Key viewpoints are identified on Figure 13.9 and illustrated in Figure 13.10.

13.2.34 An initial desktop study was undertaken to identify the potential ZVI of the Scheme taking into consideration the likely screening effects of topography, vegetation and intervening buildings. The ZVIs are displayed in Figure 13.15. For the purposes of this assessment, the ZVI is defined as the area from which the Scheme would be visible. Site surveys were then subsequently undertaken during both winter and summer months in order to ascertain likely sensitive visual receptors and to corroborate and revise as necessary the ZVI. Visual receptors identified included private residences, public or institutional buildings, commercial or retail premises, designated public rights of ways (PROWs) and unofficial paths and open space areas. Unofficial footpaths and PROWs that would be lost to the Scheme were also identified and realigned, or new sections of footpath included in the assessment. The assessment of the potential views from the new road has been undertaken using the guidance contained in DMRB Volume 11, Section 3, Part 9, the detailed analysis of this is presented in Chapter 6: Travel and Transport.

13.2.35 The ZVI was compiled assuming the observer's height as 1.7m at eye level and takes into consideration both the potential visual intrusion of the road itself, including allied earthworks and the visual impact of associated traffic. A height of 5m above carriageway level was taken to represent the height of the average commercial vehicle. The ZVI model uses tree and hedge heights as at summer 2006. The visual impact of structures and lighting will be assessed separately.

13.2.36 Having completed the field surveys, the visual impacts of the Scheme were identified taking into consideration all mitigation measures developed throughout the Scheme design process with the exception of off-site planting proposals. Both day and night-time impacts as a result of roadside lighting and head light impacts were identified. Visual impacts were considered on a winter day in the Opening Year and on both a winter and summer day in the Design Year to take into account the seasonal variations of vegetation cover and the time that soft landscaping mitigation proposals would take to reach maturity and form an effective visual screen at a predicted average height of 8.5m. Technical guidance on the predicted heights of trees and shrubs is presented in Appendix 13-G. The ZVI boundary shows the extent of the visibility of the Scheme during the summer months at first year of opening and 15 years after. Although it is acknowledged that there would be a slight reduction of screening value from hedges and tree belts in the winter months due to the nature of the tree and woodland cover in the area. The winter and summer ZVI areas would not differ significantly. Similarly the density and depth of mitigation planting would create a visual barrier giving the same effect in winter and summer.

13.2.37 All visual receptors were then categorised by their sensitivity to change depending upon the type of visual receptor affected and the location and context of the views in question in accordance with the guidance contained in the GLVIA publication (2002). This assessment was then combined with an assessment of the magnitude of the visual impact. This was based upon the scale of the change in the view, its duration and the angle of view in relation to the receptor. The number of potential receptors was also taken in to consideration in the assessment of magnitude of visual impact. Other factors to be taken into consideration will be the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development and the extent of the area over which the changes would be visible. The approximate length of road visible from selected key viewpoints will be indicated. The definitions contained in Table 13.8 were then used to determine the significance of the visual impacts of the Scheme. These significance criteria have been derived from those outlined in the GLVIA publication and the Scoping Report with only minor modification.

13.2.38 Views from residential and commercial properties were considered from ground floor level at the front and rear of the property from as near to the potentially affected building or property as possible without trespassing on private land. The potential for visual impact from other than ground floor or surrounding gardens and car parks has been recorded. Details of views from residential and commercial properties are provided in Appendix 13-B and 13-C respectively.

13.2.39 Views from PROW were assessed at 100m intervals along the routes and from key viewpoints, and are presented in Appendix 13-D.

13.2.40 The potential visual effects of increased or reduced traffic on roads in the surrounding areas have been assessed using the published traffic data in Chapter 6: Travel and Transport. Where settlements have large numbers of high sensitivity receptors facing the roads affected, an assessment has been made of the visual improvement or degradation in their view, as identified in Table 13.8 below. This assessment will depend on whether there are

significant percentage increases or decreases in passing traffic. These changes are assessed in Table 13.9.

13.2.41 This initial assessment will be qualified by the following additional considerations:

- The existing traffic flows, i.e. if these are below 5000 AADT (annual average daily traffic) the percentage change would not be significant depending on the other qualifying criteria;
- The length of road affected by changes;
- The type of road, i.e. rural green lane or busy urban distributor road; and,
- The sensitivity of the location and whether it passes through designated landscape or townscape (i.e. AONB or Conservation Areas).

13.2.42 Views from residential properties and other high sensitivity receptors facing on to the roads affected by changes in traffic volumes will be included in the overall assessment of visual effects. The significance criteria are as summarised in the section that discusses Operational Visual Impacts.

**Table 13.8 Visual Impact Significance Criteria**

<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>Magnitude</b>	<b>Impact High Sensitivity</b>	<b>Impact Low Sensitivity</b>
Visual Receptor Groups with a High Sensitivity to Visual Change, i.e. viewers within residential properties, using footpaths and engaged in other informal recreation.	Where intrusive elements of the Scheme would be the dominant feature of the scene to which other elements become subordinate, markedly affecting and changing the visual quality of the scene.	Severe Adverse	Substantial Adverse
Visual Receptor Groups with a Low Sensitivity to Visual Change, i.e. viewers within commercial, industrial, agricultural educational and community premises	Where intrusive elements of the Scheme would form a major and immediately apparent part of the scene that affects and changes its visual quality.	Substantial Adverse	Moderate Adverse
	Where intrusive elements of the Scheme may form a visible and recognisable new element within the scene and may be readily noticed by the observer.	Moderate Adverse	Slight Adverse

	Where intrusive elements of the Scheme would be a minor component of the wider view and may be missed by the casual observer – awareness of the proposals would not have a marked effect on the scene.	Slight Adverse	Negligible
	A very small part of the intrusive elements of the Scheme are discernible and/or it is at such a distance that it is scarcely appreciated and would have little impact on the scene.	Negligible	Negligible
	Where no part of the intrusive elements of the Scheme is discernible.	No change	No Change
	Where the Scheme would cause a barely perceptible improvement in the existing view	Slight Beneficial	Negligible
	Where the Scheme would cause a noticeable improvement in the existing view	Moderate Beneficial	Slight beneficial
	Where the Scheme would cause a significant improvement in the existing view	Substantial beneficial	Moderate beneficial

Source:

*Modification of criteria contained in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2002)*

**Table 13.9 Visual Impact Significance Criteria of Changed Traffic Volumes**

<b>Traffic volume change</b>	<b>Sensitivity of Receptor</b>	<b>Impact</b>
+0-15%	High	Negligible
+15-50%	High	Slight Adverse
+50% or more	High	Moderate Adverse
-15% or less	High	Negligible
-15-50%	High	Slight Beneficial
-50% or more	High	Moderate Beneficial

### ***Methodology for Photomontages***

13.2.43 Key viewpoints across the Study Area 1 of the Scheme have been selected in consultation with the local planning authority and Natural England, these are identified on Figure 13.9. Technical details of this methodology are provided in Appendix 13-F.

13.2.44 These have been produced following GLVIA (2002) and The Landscape Institute Technical and Environment Committee. (June 2004): Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/04 *Use of Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Assessment*.

13.2.45 Photographs were taken using an SLR 35mm camera fitted with a 50mm lens, then transposed on to a digital format. The locations selected for photomontages are from key viewpoints. All photomontages would represent the Scheme during the Opening Year (Year 1) and the Design Year (Year 15). The 15 year assessment takes into account consideration of screening effects of landscape mitigation planting.

### ***Impact of Scheme Lighting***

13.2.46 A baseline assessment has been made of the existing levels of road and other lighting in the rural and urban areas. Photographs, found in Figure 13.10, have been taken of the existing night time situation (November 2006) from selected viewpoints identified on Figure 13.9. Guidance for assessing the impacts of new and improved lighting in rural and urban areas has been obtained from *Assessment of Lighting Towards Better Practice* Department for Communities and Local Government (ODPM 2006) and Guidance notes for the *Reduction of Obtrusive Light*, Institute of Lighting Engineers (2005).

13.2.47 An assessment has been made of the impact of vehicle headlights on the surrounding rural and urban areas from the proposed road.

## 13.3 Landscape Baseline Conditions

### *Landscape Context*

13.3.1 The Study Area 1 and landscape designations are indicated on Figure 13.1 which comprises the Combe Haven Valley and surrounding landscape and townscape. The northern part of the Study Area 1 is in the High Weald AONB.

13.3.2 The Combe Haven area lies between, and on the edge of, the towns of Bexhill and Hastings, on the southern edge of the High Weald. It shares many characteristics of the High Weald landscape:

- Rolling terrain,
- Abundant woods, trees and hedges;
- Streams; and,
- Farms and settlements sited prominently on ridges.

13.3.3 The landscape to the north of Bexhill is dominated by the Combe Haven Valley and surrounding ridges. This broad, flat-floored main valley curves north then west. With its ecologically important and visually distinctive wetlands, notably the Filsham reed beds, the valley is the focus of the Study Area 1. The tributary valleys running in to the Combe Haven Valley create a ridge and valley system, particularly marked on the north side of the Combe Haven.

13.3.4 Settlements within the Study Area 1 include the urban area of north Bexhill, the western edges of Hastings and the village of Crowhurst to the north. Other wise there are scattered farms, usually on the surrounding ridges. Some of these are small settlements with several residential buildings associated with the farms for example Hillcroft, Hye House, Actons and Worsham Farms.

13.3.5 The area has local value as accessible, attractive countryside, with public and permissive footpaths.

### *Landform and Drainage Patterns*

13.3.6 The series of ridges extending in to the valley rise to 45m AOD at Hye House Farm and Upper Worsham Farm and 35m AOD at Upper Wilting and Little Worsham Farms. The artificial hill created by the Pebsham landfill operation will have a final height of 36m AOD after settlement. The urban area of Bexhill slopes gradually towards the sea from the Worsham ridge. The urban extension of Hastings at Bulverhythe is on the flat coastal flood plain. The west St Leonard's area, which forms the eastern edge of the Study Area 1, rises gradually to the urban parts of Hastings. The land to the north of the Combe Haven rises up to the Battle to Hastings Ridge (136m AOD) and the High Weald AONB.

13.3.7 The Combe Haven River valley runs from west to east and is the main valley. The tributary streams of the Watermill Stream, Powdermill Stream and Decoy Stream run into the Combe Haven from the north creating a distinctive ridge and valley system. The streams emerging in the south side of the valley are smaller. The Pebsham Stream and springs arising on Worsham Farm and Glovers Farm run in to the valley from the south. These have created a ridge and valley system on the south side of the main valley.

### ***Land Cover***

13.3.8 Figure 13.8 shows the vegetation pattern within the Study Area 1. The Combe Haven valley floor and main tributary valleys are floodplain grassland. There are fields within the floodplain where scrub is encroaching and changing the open nature of the valley. The historic pattern of drainage channels support reeds and other wetland habitat species. The Filsham and Glyne Gap reed beds are therefore significant landscape and habitat features. Above the floodplain on the valley slopes there is a mix of arable, rye grass ley and pasture.

13.3.9 The surrounding ridges support significant areas of woodland, much of this is semi-natural ancient deciduous woodland. The largest area of woodland is in the west of the Study Area 1 between Combe Haven Valley and Watermill Stream, notably Cole Wood, Park Wood and Hanging Wood. There are ghyll woodlands in the Decoy Stream valley linking Chapel, Little Bog and Decoy Pond woods. The disused railway running through the urban area of Bexhill and into the Combe Haven Valley supports mature secondary woodland. This extends in to the valley on the embankments of the dismantled railway. The woods around the urban edge of Bexhill are significant in softening the impact of the built up area on the countryside, for example Levetts, Roundacre and Pebsham Woods. The heavily treed railway line from Hastings to Crowhurst merges with the significant woods of Redgeland Park and Marline Woods to give a heavily wooded cover to the north-east of the area.

13.3.10 The agricultural fields on the slopes surrounding the main Combe Haven Valley are generally enclosed by mature hedges with scattered mature trees. There are significant mature and ancient hedgerows in the Glovers and Worsham Farm areas. The hedgerow structure on the Powdermill Valley slopes has fewer substantial hedges and more remnant hedges. The tall overgrown hedge surrounding Adams farm is an exception to this. To the west of Acton's and Glovers Farm the hedges are low and intermittent with the exception of those associated with the ancient track and bridleway between Buckholt Lane and Hillcroft Farm. This is linked to a significant hedge/tree belt to the north of Acton's Farm. There is also a significant hedge to the north of Glovers Farm, which links the disused railway to the allotment garden hedge. There is a strong hedge structure on the north slopes of the Combe Haven Valley between Adam's Farm and Upper Wilting Farm. The hedges, tree belts and woodland on these slopes give this area a heavily wooded appearance.

13.3.11 There is not a heavy tree cover in the urban area of Bexhill, the vegetation on the disused railway line being an exception. Similarly trees on Bexhill Down and in Sidley Wood are significant. The tree lined avenues in the older settlements along Hastings Road and Chantry Lane are also significant.

Much of the tree cover is in the older settlements of Sidley and Old Town and in gardens. New planting associated with King Offa Way contributes to the urban tree cover. There are some mature oak trees scattered in the urban area, notably around Woodsgate Park Bridge.

13.3.12 There are significant areas of woodland within the western built up area of Hastings, notably the Hollington Stream Valley and Church Wood. Planting associated with the new development areas and the Queensway is maturing to create a woodland setting for the suburban areas.

### ***Landuse***

13.3.13 Most of the Combe Haven Valley is in mixed agricultural landuse. The open levels which are subject to seasonal flooding are mainly under pasture. There are areas of arable farming on the slopes rising out of the valley. There are equestrian interests on some farms notably Acton's, Bynes, Haven on the Hill, Buckholt, Upper Wilting, Glovers and Pebsham. The disused railway on the south side of the valley is used as an informal path from the urban area of Sidley giving access to footpaths which cross the valley. The northern part of the railway from Adam's Farm to Crowhurst Road is in private ownership and is used for clay pigeon shooting. The Pebsham landfill site will be restored to public open space. The area to the south of the landfill site has been restored as sports pitches. There are several wooded areas which are not in commercial forestry and are generally unmanaged some of these have informal recreational value as they are close to the urban area, for example Levetts Wood, Roundacre Wood, Church Wood and Marline Wood.

13.3.14 The urban areas are mainly residential with some commercial centres. There is a large caravan holiday park on the eastern slopes of the Combe Haven Valley and a balancing pond used for fishing adjacent to Queensway. Queensway is also the focus of urban edge industrial estate developments.

### ***Cultural Associations***

#### ***Belle Hill and Wrestwood Estate***

13.3.15 The area of Belle Hill originally grew up around the Napoleon barracks which were established around Belle Hill and Old Town. The remainder of the barracks were removed when King Offa's Way was built in 1978–1980. The construction of King Offa Way swept away much of Belle Hill, the road which linked Old Town to Bexhill Down. Other notable buildings which were removed by the King Offa Way scheme were Belle Hill laundry and the Corn Stores. The former served the many private schools for which Bexhill was well known in the early to mid 20th century. The laundry also thrived due the growing popularity of the town as a seaside resort during late Victorian times and rapid increase in hotels in the area.

13.3.16 Wrestwood Mansion and surrounding estate was owned by Sir Edward Baldwin Malet from 1837 to 1908. He was a wealthy local benefactor and his widow established the Malet Memorial Institution as a recreational and

religious meeting place for local men. This building became the Church of the Good Shepherd and is now a Chinese restaurant on the junction of Belle Hill and London Road. The mansion is now St Marys Wrestwood Educational Trust on Wrestwood Road.

#### *Railway Bexhill to Crowhurst*

13.3.17 The Bexhill branch line was constructed between 1887 and 1902, this linked Bexhill to Crowhurst. A grand suburban station was built in Crowhurst at the junction of the new railway spur in 1902, in anticipation of expansion of development. The railway was removed as part of the Beeching closures and the viaduct across the Combe Haven Valley was finally demolished in 1969. The abutments of this are still evident as significant and heavily wooded features extending in to the valley. There was a station at Sidley and the old Station House was opposite the Pelham Hotel on Holliers Hill. There is a goods shed on the opposite side of the disused railway here which is now derelict. The original railway bridges are still in use as access routes across the disused railway line at Woodgate Park, Ninfield Road and Glovers Lane.

#### *Historic Settlements and Farmsteads*

13.3.18 Prior to the coming of the railway and the rise in popularity of Bexhill as a seaside resort in the late Victorian period, the original settlements were a series of scattered villages and farms. The village of Sidley Green was linked to the fishing village of Bexhill via Holliers Hill and Chantry Lane. The old town of Bexhill was the core of the village and the area between here and the coast was undeveloped. There was a settlement at Glyne Gap as this was the nearest accessible part of the coast between cliffs. Bexhill was linked to Glyne Gap and Hastings via Lodge Hill, now Wrestwood Road and Hastings Road. The Barracks were located around Bexhill Down, to the west of Bexhill.

13.3.19 There were many scattered farms, some of which no longer exist. Some, such as Belle Hill Farm, were swallowed up by the expanding urban development. Belle Hill Farm was owned by Samual Scrivens who laid out the southern part of London Road (originally Lower Station Road) from Victoria Road in the south to Belle Hill. This linked the coastal development to the main Bexhill Common Road. The northern part of London Road was built by 1925 as a direct connection to the growing Sidley area.

13.3.20 Many of the existing farms have retained the same names since the maps of late 1700s and early 1800s Other farms to the north of Sidley which have since disappeared include Ingrams Farm and Woods Farm , to the north of Sidley and Combe Farm to the north of Combe Wood, little evidence of these buildings exist today.

13.3.21 Crowhurst is noted for its Home of Healing founded by Reverend Howard Cobb in 1928 and its ancient yew trees, thought to be some of the most ancient in existence.

### *Brick Works*

13.3.22 Small brick works were scattered across the area and there is still evidence on the ground of local clay workings. There were brick works at Sidley Green, to the east of Levetts Wood and in Pebsham east of Roundacre Wood. The rapid development during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century would have provided a demand for bricks which are a characteristic and vernacular building material for this area at the time.

### ***Landscape Assessment Framework***

13.3.23 The Countryside Character Map of England Volume 7: South East and London (Countryside Agency 1999) is a study at the regional scale which identifies broad landscape character areas across England. The entire Study Area 1 is within the High Weald character area.

13.3.24 The following is a summary of the key characteristics for the High Weald character area from this document:

- A well wooded landscape rising above the Low Weald and deeply incised to give a complex pattern of ridges and steep stream valleys;
- Distinctive and scattered sandstone outcrops rise above the farmland and woodland;
- Heathland at Ashdown Forest;
- Main roads and settlements are sited along prominent ridges-lines with a dense network of small winding lanes linking scattered villages, hamlets and farms;
- Legacy of the early iron industry, based on sandstone, ore, water and timber;
- High forest, small woods and copses and a network of hedges and shaws link small irregular fields created from cleared woodland. Flower rich meadows bordered by species rich hedges. Quiet pastoral landscape with mixed farming predominating;
- Fruit and hop cultivation; and,
- Distinctive red tile, brick, local stone and timber building materials. Local building materials characterize the area but recent 'suburbanisation' of farm buildings is eroding distinctiveness in many places.

13.3.25 The key characteristics from the Countryside Character Map of England Volume 7: South East and London (Countryside Agency 1999) which are relevant to the Study Area 1 are in summary:

- A well wooded landscape rising above the Low Weald and incised to give a complex pattern of ridges and stream valleys;
- Main roads and settlements are sited along prominent ridges-lines with a dense network of small winding lanes linking scattered villages, hamlets and farms;

- Legacy of the early iron industry, coppice woodland and hammer ponds based on sandstone, ore, water and timber;
- High forest, small woods and copses and a network of hedges and shaws link small irregular fields created from cleared woodland. Meadows bordered by species rich hedges. Quiet pastoral landscape with mixed farming predominating; and,
- Red tile, brick and timber are characteristic of historic settlements, farms and cottages. Local building materials characterize the area but recent 'suburbanisation' of farm buildings is eroding distinctiveness in many places.

13.3.26 The relevant forces for change are:

- Development around built up areas;
- Loss of characteristic landscape features, hedgerows, meadows, and wooded ghylls due to inappropriate management;
- Fragmentation of agricultural holdings, introduction on non-characteristic materials and planting;
- Pressures on the landscape from new main roads;
- An increase in traffic on small roads and lanes;
- Loss of remoteness and erosion of local character; and,
- Decline in traditional management of small coppice woods.

13.3.27 The High Weald, Exploring the Landscape of the High Weald AONB (Countryside Commission 1994). This document is a regional landscape assessment covering the area of the High Weald AONB. It was produced as a collaboration between The Countryside Agency, East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent and Surrey County Councils. It is an advisory document and not Supplementary Planning Guidance.

13.3.28 According to the above document the northern part of the Study Area 1 lies at the western edge of the Brede character area:

*“On the steeper slopes near Hastings and Battle smaller fields and a predominance of pasture give the landscape a less intensively farmed feel, interspersed by the subtle influence of the pony paddocks and barbed wire of the urban edge”.*

13.3.29 The pressures on this area are :

- Increasing traffic on country lanes;
- Suburbanization;
- Agricultural diversification;
- Lack of woodland and hedgerow management;
- Loss of hedges; and,
- Degradation of ponds.

13.3.30 East Sussex Trees and Woodland Strategy (East Sussex Trees and Woodland Forum 1990) is a county level landscape assessment document which identifies landscape character areas based on 1km Ordnance Survey grid squares. It is not Supplementary Planning Guidance but a technical landscape assessment available as a tool to all those involved in arboricultural or forestry activities in the county. The Study Area 1 falls into the following areas:

Combe Haven Basin: *“Series of small winding High Wealden Valleys converging to form the tract of levels which curve east and south to reach the sea at Glyne Gap, between Hastings and Bexhill. Distinguishing features of the area include views of the sea and coastal towns and the historic parklands of Battle Abbey. The area is influenced by the adjacent urban areas, with Hastings Town Development Area encroaching, a number of power lines and caravan sites, but much pleasantly rolling, well wooded countryside.”*

Bexhill: *“Large 20<sup>th</sup> Century mainly residential town built on gently sloping ground. The seafront severed from rest of town by railway has notable features, e.g. De La Warr Pavilion. Bexhill Old Town with its church, Church Street and Manor grounds is of particular note. The town is marginally but vitally separated from Hastings St Leonards by Glyne Gap and Combe Haven Valley, a fragile but vital green space with Galley Hill of some local dominance and attraction.”*

Hastings: *“The High Weald sandstone ridges meet the sea at Hastings creating a series of headlands particularly to the east of the town. The Castle takes advantage of the West Hill and other Old Town buildings relate well to the bold landform. The town has strong ribbon of parks, open spaces, and sheltered ghylls eroded into sandstone, with good trees and woodlands only curtailed by sea winds on the exposed seafront. The bold landforms and woodland have influenced the development of the town and should continue to do so.’*

13.3.31 East Sussex Landscape Assessment (ESCC 2007) is an update of previous assessments at a county scale, it is a technical document produced in consultation with the district and borough councils. The Study Areas 1 and 2 are covered by seven character areas:

- The Combe Haven Basin, 10;
- Bexhill, 30;
- Hastings, 31;
- Pevensey Levels, 25;
- South Slopes of the High Weald, 5;
- Battle 40; and,
- Brede Valley, 11.

*The Combe Haven Basin, 10*

13.3.32 The key characteristics, features and pressures relevant to the Study Area:

- Focal open flat winding valley floor;
- Contrast between open valley floor and slopes;
- Extensive areas of ancient woodland;
- Filsham Reed Beds;
- Urban edges;
- Bexhill Hastings Link Road; and,
- Reducing viability of farming.

13.3.33 The landscape action priorities are:

- Establish strong development boundaries to Hastings and Bexhill;
- The development of proposed Pebsham Countryside Park;
- Urban fringe landscape management;
- Review conservation and enhancement of Combe Haven Valley; Increase flooding areas and wetland and reduce engineered features; and,
- Increase tree cover on slopes to help contain development.

*Bexhill, 30*

13.3.34 The relevant priorities are:

- Traffic management;
- Improved pedestrian and cycle access and tree planting;
- Development of proposed Pebsham Countryside Park in conjunction with other regeneration initiatives; and,
- A tree strategy for the town to strengthen character.

### *Hastings, 31*

13.3.35 The relevant priorities are:

- Improve connections to seafront beach and town;
- Continue the regeneration and improvement programme to the seafront; and,
- Improve western approach through Glyne Gap and Bulverhythe.

### *Pevensey Levels, 25*

13.3.36 Key characteristics, pressures and priorities relevant to the study area are:

- Remoteness;
- Open and flat landscape;
- Traffic on the A259 and rat running in country lanes;
- Agricultural change; and,
- Coastal conservation and managed retreat.

### *South Slopes of The High Weald, 5*

13.3.37 Key characteristics, pressures and priorities relevant to the study area are:

- High Weald landscape, well wooded and remote in places;
- Scattered rural settlement;
- Winding lanes and rat running; and,
- Agricultural change and suburbanisation.

### *Brede Valley, 11*

13.3.38 Key characteristics, pressures and priorities relevant to the study area are:

- Wide river valley, remote and pastoral landscape;
- Historic villages and scattered farm steads on ridges;
- Pressure from holiday developments; and,
- Transport improvements to the A21 and rat running on country lanes.

*Battle, 40*

13.3.39 Key characteristics, pressures and priorities relevant to the study area are:

- Ridge top picturesque historic town, dominated by the Abbey;
- Medieval and Georgian high street attracting high visitor numbers;
- Reduction of Traffic speeds through the town and on approaches;
- Rationalisation of Parking, especially in the summer season; and,
- Control of Ribbon development on approaches.

13.3.40 Tranquil Areas were mapped nationally for England and Wales the maps were drawn at a regional level, ignoring the most local effects (England Map, South East Region (CPRE and Countryside Commission 1995)). They are defined as “*places which are sufficiently far away from the visual or noise intrusion of development or traffic to be considered unspoilt by urban influences*”. The Study Area 1 is not within an area of tranquillity according to this study, there are areas to the north of Crowhurst and within the AONB which are mapped as tranquil.

13.3.41 Saving Tranquil Places (CPRE 2006) is a national map of tranquillity produced by CPRE to build on the previous work using more sophisticated mapping techniques and extensive public consultation. These maps are not an update of the original maps because the methodology is not directly comparable.

*“The methodology developed differs from the previous work on tranquillity mapping in four key ways:*

- *Rather than starting with an ‘expert’ definition of what comprises tranquillity, we have started with extensive public and stakeholder consultation To define what factors contribute to and detract from tranquillity;*
- *Previous work has focused exclusively on factors that detract from tranquillity. Our approach includes factors that contribute to, as well as detract from tranquillity;*
- *We use the term ‘relative tranquillity’ to describe what we are mapping. Relatively tranquil areas are those which have higher scores for the positive factors, than other areas. Our maps reveal areas, both large and small, where people are likely to experience tranquillity. But they do not include sharp lines dividing tranquil from non tranquil areas; and,*
- *Our approach incorporates more advanced modeling techniques to look at the diffusion of these factors.”*

13.3.42 In 2000 a critique of the original CPRE maps was published. It argued that what was needed was a measure of tranquillity that included all, and only those sources of disturbance which people feel actually damage

tranquillity; and which weighted them in proportion to peoples "*perceptions of relative impacts on tranquillity*".

13.3.43 The maps have been produced using a Geographic Information System on 500m grid squares. The mapping produces a spectrum of more or less tranquil areas. The tranquillity mapping for East Sussex is reproduced in Figure 13.3A and, for Study Area 1, in Figure 13.3.

13.3.44 There is a gradation of increasing tranquillity away from the urban areas of Bexhill and Hastings. There is a small pocket of tranquillity in the Combe Haven Valley and extending west onto the heavily wooded ridge of Buckholt Farm in the centre of the Study Area 1, this is relative to the disturbance of the urban area. There are small pockets of relatively most tranquil areas in the High Weald to the north of the Study Area 1 around Dallington and Darwell and an extensive area to the east of Rye at Camber. There are also tranquil areas on the Pevensey Levels.

13.3.45 Remoteness at the Local Scale, An Application in East Sussex (ESCC 1997) is a topic paper of the East Sussex Landscape Assessment. The work in East Sussex has been concerned with remoteness rather than tranquil areas (see CPRE definitions above). Tranquillity is defined in the document according to the CPRE quotes above. According to the ESCC study "*Remoteness, on the other hand, implies an ability to experience a degree of solitude as well as separation from noise and visual disturbance and urban-associated activity, so it is more affected by scattered development, and sometimes less affected by distant noise sources.*"

13.3.46 As shown in Figure 13.2, part of the Combe Haven basin is identified as an area of exceptional remoteness, which is surrounded by remote countryside. There are other areas of remote landscape to the north and west of the Study area 1 and pockets of exceptional remoteness in the High Weald AONB and on Pevensey Levels.

### **High Weald AONB**

13.3.47 AONB policy is dealt with in detail in Chapter 5. The north part of the Study Area 1 is within the High Weald AONB. AONBs are designated by the Countryside Agency subject to confirmation by the Secretary of State, under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The primary objective of designation is to have regard to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the landscape.

13.3.48 The Character Map of England identifies the entire Study Area 1 as being in the High Weald character area, including the urban areas of Hastings and Bexhill. In terms of regional character this is the case as it has the typical characteristics of this character description. However not all of this regional landscape Character Area is within the High Weald AONB because it is not of the same quality as the designated landscape.

13.3.49 The boundaries to the AONB generally follow identifiable features in the landscape in this case Henleys Down Road, Crowhurst Road and Swainham Lane. For this reason the boundaries are not necessarily the limit of the High Weald landscape character. Indeed, in this Study Area 1 the countryside adjacent to the AONB is of similar character to the AONB landscape, but not necessarily of the same quality. Local character areas for Study Area 1 are identified on Figure 13.6. These have been evaluated using the Evaluation Criteria in Table 13.1 and the evaluation summary in Table 13.10.

13.3.50 The High Weald AONB, character area 15, is identified as High Quality landscape. Character area 14A is of similar character, but the quality of the area is affected by the urban expansion of Hastings and is therefore considered to be 'Good'. Character Areas 3, 6 and 7 have similar character to the High Weald AONB, but are not of the same quality and are therefore categorized as Good landscape. Area 1, the valley floor is categorized as Good landscape but is of a different character to the High Weald AONB. Those areas immediately to the north of the valley are also valued for their nationally significant wildlife importance. The character areas to the south of the valley, 5 and 2, are of similar character but are of lower quality due to proximity to the urban area and urban influences on the landscape. Other character areas are urban.

13.3.51 There is in effect a buffer zone to the AONB landscape; this is identified in Figure 13.4. As described above this is an area of similar character but not of the same quality as the AONB landscape and not covered by the same planning policies. This is supported by East Sussex Brighton and Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011 AONB policy EN2 (f) is as follows:

"Conserving and enhancing landscape quality and character will be the primary objective in the Sussex Downs and High Weald AONBs. This will be sought through measures including :-

*f)... minimising the impact of any development within AONBs, or close to them and affecting their setting, by measures to carefully integrate the development*

*into the AONB landscape and, where appropriate, providing compensating environmental resource for any necessary loss that is accepted.”*

### **Character of the Study Area 1**

13.3.52 The Study Area 1 is identified on Figure 13.1. For the purposes of this assessment the area has been divided into broad landscape types. As defined below the sensitivity of these different landscape types to the proposed type of development is assessed. The detailed assessment of impacts is based on the two most distinctive features of the Study Area 1:

- The broad flat-floored main valley curving north then west, with its ecologically important and visually distinctive wetlands, notably Filsham Reed Beds Local Nature Reserve which is within the Combe Haven (SSSI) This valley and particularly its broad open floor is the focus of the Study Area 1.
- The impact of the adjacent urban areas, including prominent built-up edges, the conspicuous Pebsham landfill site, pylons, development and recreational pressures. This impact is less obvious towards the north-west, but is everywhere evident. The development along Filsham Ridge, and the landfill site, are widely visible, particularly from the open valley floor.

### **Landscape Types**

13.3.53 These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character. They may occur in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography and drainage patterns. Landscape types are identified in Figure 13.5.

13.3.54 These are landscape areas which occupy a significant area. They are not the same as landscape character areas, which may contain more than one landscape type. The following landscape types are found within the Study Area 1:

#### *A - Open valley floor and levels*

13.3.55 The main area of this type lies along Combe Haven, extending north from Bulverhythe before curving westwards for about 3 km. The main tract of levels ends near Acton's Farm, but narrow bands extend up side valleys to Crowhurst as the Powdermill Stream valley and into the Watermill Stream valley. A smaller area of levels extends north from Glyne Gap towards Pebsham.

#### *B - Ridges and slopes overlooking the levels*

13.3.56 These combine with the levels to create the distinctive landscape of the main valley. Slopes are gentle and the contrast with the flat valley floor is emphasized by a strong pattern of woods, trees and hedges. Open views across the levels are interspersed with secluded dips and closed woodland

areas, with farm building groups adding to the variety. The following distinct ridges are apparent:

- The ridge crowned by Hillcroft Farm. This ridge is open, but patterned with hedges and trees, and with conspicuous buildings and tree groups on its crest. Some of these buildings are traditional, but others are modern and rather intrusive;
- The Buckholt Farm ridge. This is a broader ridge, but the steeper slopes. Areas where it descends to the valley are emphasized by bold woodland belts;
- The rolling slopes of Worsham ridge on the south side of the valley; and,
- Adams Farm ridge which is heavily treed.

#### *C - Rolling countryside away from the main valley*

13.3.57 This is the area away from the main valley, and visually more separate from it than the ridges and slopes. It is most extensive in the south and west of the Study Area 1 and extends into the AONB north of Crowhurst. The upper Watermill Stream valley, north of Buckholt Farm, is included in this landscape type. This area is the westward continuation of the main valley; however the flat valley floor fades away and is of lesser landscape significance.

13.3.58 The gently rolling terrain of this landscape type is complemented by a rich tapestry of fields, hedges, trees and woods. Some of the woods are extensive. There is a scatter of farms and dwellings, but the rolling terrain and trees create good cover.

13.3.59 The urban edge of Bexhill is well hidden in all but the closest views. North of the valley the areas with this type of landscape occur along Crowhurst Road, along the railway and north into the AONB. Blocks of woodland such as Monkham Wood and Redgeland Wood separate it from the slopes adjacent to the main valley. The area across the railway is influenced by Queensway and the built up area of Hastings.

#### *D - Built-up areas*

13.3.60 These are areas in which building development is dominant or conspicuous. They include the east of Bexhill and the communities of Old Town, Sidley and Pebsham. The urban edge of Bexhill is enclosed largely by mature woodland around Sidley. The eastern edges of the town at Pebsham are intrusive in the neighbouring countryside and from long views on the Hastings ridge.

13.3.61 Also within the Study Area 1 is the urban area of west Hastings including St. Leonard's on sea, Bulverhythe, Filsham and Queensway. Despite an abundant tree cover, particularly north of the railway, the rolling or sloping terrain sometimes increases the visual impact of development from surrounding countryside.

13.3.62 This is particularly the case on Filsham ridge, where the housing development and holiday park are visible from the west, particularly the open levels around Combe Haven. However some of the new residential estates east of Queensway are set in a pleasantly secluded, woodland environment, and time may further soften their impact as new planting matures.

*E - Green corridors and spaces within the built-up areas*

13.3.63 These are areas of open, or partially open, land further extending into the built-up areas of Bexhill and Hastings. These areas are urban in character, and closely associated, both visually and functionally, with adjacent built-up areas.

13.3.64 The significant areas in Bexhill are:

- The corridor of mainly undeveloped, partly wooded land along the disused railway line;
- Bexhill Down; and,
- Open space and playing fields on restored landfill in Bulverhythe.

13.3.65 The significant areas in Hastings are:

- The open space along Filsham Valley (much of it school grounds and playing fields but with areas of wetland and woodland);
- Churchwood, within the new housing expansion area east of Queensway; and,
- Hollington Stream valley.

13.3.66 A third area - the narrow belt of levels at Glyne Gap - could be included in this type, but is also open levels, and somewhat less urban in character and has therefore been identified more closely with Landscape Type A.

*F - Landfill and reclaimed land*

13.3.67 This area includes Pebsham landfill, associated substantial structures and their environs, and the reclaimed recreational land to the south. The impact of the landfill, and the large buildings to the west of it, is substantial throughout this area, and beyond. The flat open-ness of the playing fields to the south enhances the impact. Landscape Character and Sensitivity.

*Landscape Character Areas:*

13.3.68 By comparison to landscape types these are single unique areas and are discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape character. These areas share general characteristics with other areas but have their own particular identity. The Study Area 1 has been divided into 15 landscape character areas. Landscape character areas are identified in Figure 13.6.

*Landscape and Townscape character areas*

13.3.69 The Study Area 1 has been divided into areas of distinct character. This includes all urban and rural areas. Figure 13.6 shows that where appropriate, areas are subdivided to identify areas of urban and rural character. These areas possess distinctive landscape character and a degree of visual unity and are often areas to which local people can relate. Landscape character areas often do not have precise boundaries, but they usually possess a 'heartland' or 'focus'. The latter particularly applies to townscape, which gives them distinctiveness.

13.3.70 Some of the character areas are entirely rural and some urban. Where there are urban areas within rural character areas, these have been subdivided to identify the specific character of the urban and rural parts. The urban area of Bexhill, part of which would be directly affected by the Scheme, has been studied in greater detail than other urban areas within the Study Area 1. The detailed urban character areas are identified on Figure 13.7 and are included in Table 13.10.

13.3.71 Key characteristics and forces for change for each character area are described below, with a more detailed description of each area and supporting photographs provided in Appendix 13-A. The location and angle of view of each photograph is shown on Fig 13.9.

13.3.72 The wider Study Area 2 has been identified in order to assess the changes in traffic volumes in surrounding areas, as illustrated on Figure 13.20. Table 13.10 identifies the wider character areas which may be affected by these changes and the relative quality and value of these areas. These areas are based on the County Landscape Assessment (ESCC 2007).

**Table 13.10 Landscape and Townscape Evaluation Summary**

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Quality (DMRB)</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Sensitivity to Change</b>	<b>Management Opportunities</b>
1. Combe Haven Valley Floor	<b>Good</b> Attractive countryside; strong sense of place; historic land use; and, remote and quiet pastoral landscape.	<b>Medium</b> Local value; high wildlife value; and SSSI /LNR.	<b>High</b> Sensitive wildlife designations; little scope to mitigate as flat; and, open valley long views across area from surrounding ridges	Strengthen wildlife structure; manage water levels in ditches; retain seasonal flooding; and, retain and manage trees in valley floor.
2. Glyne Gap/ Pebsham	See sub-division below	-	-	-

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Quality (DMRB)</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Sensitivity to Change</b>	<b>Management Opportunities</b>
2a) Rural Pebsham	<b>Ordinary</b> Urban fringe; and, some rural character retained.	<b>Medium</b> Local value as strategic gap; wildlife value; SNCI; recreational value; and, Listed Building.	<b>Moderate</b> Wildlife interest in the reed beds; constraints of landfill; and, open slopes to north very visible.	Strengthen landscape structure; restored landfill; and, proposed Pebsham Countryside Park.
2b) Filsham Ridge	<b>Ordinary</b> Urban part of area on Filsham Ridge; and, intrusive from valley.	<b>Low</b> Holiday park for visitors; local residents; and, Listed Building.	<b>Low</b> Built up residential area and large holiday park; and, views across Combe Haven Valley from urban area.	Reduced traffic on Harley Shute Road; street tree planting; and, environmental improvements.
3) Watermill Stream Valley	<b>Good</b> Attractive rural landscape; High Weald characteristics; strong field patterns; historic structure; and, remote and quiet landscape.	<b>Medium</b> Local value; equestrians and walkers; historic landscape; and, ancient woods.	<b>Moderate</b> Topography and vegetation could provide cover; features sensitive to change hedges and trees; views down valley from AONB boundary; enclosure from ridges, woods, hedges and tree belts; and, scattered trees in valley floor.	Landscape structure could be strengthened, replace boundary hedges and tree planting; reduced traffic on Catsfield Road; and, retain and manage trees in valley floor.
4) Buckholt Farm / Watermill Lane	<b>Good</b> Attractive rural landscape; mature hedges ; and, historic field pattern intact.	<b>Medium</b> Local value; accessible from the urban area; and, ancient woodland.	<b>Moderate</b> Features such as hedges and tree belts sensitive to change; and, few long views across enclosed area.	Retention of field pattern; management of woods and hedges; and, diversification of farms.
5) Preston Hall/ Worsham	See sub-divisions below	-	-	-

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Quality (DMRB)</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Sensitivity to Change</b>	<b>Management Opportunities</b>
5a) Preston Hall	<b>Ordinary</b> Urban fringe rural landscape; some mature hedges; historic field pattern intact; and, urban influences.	<b>Medium</b> Local value close to urban area; Listed Buildings; and, ancient woodland.	<b>Low</b> Rolling and wooded landscape allows scope for change; features such as hedges and tree belts sensitive to change; influence of urban area; views from urban area and local footpaths; and, enclosed area.	Strengthen hedgerow and woodland structure; manage woodlands for recreation; and, strengthen rural/urban edge.
5b) Worsham Farm	<b>Ordinary - Good</b> Attractive rural landscape; mature hedges and historic field pattern intact; and, urban influences	<b>Medium</b> Local value close to urban area; Listed Building; ancient woodland; and, SNCI.	<b>Low</b> Rolling and wooded landscape allow scope for change; features such as hedges and tree belts sensitive to change; views from urban area; and,. long views down Combe Haven.	Strengthen hedgerow and woodland structure; manage woodlands for recreation; and, strengthen rural/urban edge.
6) Powdermill Valley	<b>Good</b> Attractive countryside High Weald character in north; some deterioration of field pattern and remnant hedges; 'improved' stream channel; and, quiet rural area.	<b>Medium</b> Local value as rural stream valley; Listed Buildings; SNCI; and, 1066 Country Walk.	<b>Moderate</b> Less wooded and more open. features such as hedges and tree belts sensitive to change; quiet countryside away from village; and, views down Combe Haven and Powdermill Valley from ridges.	Strengthen hedgerow and woodland structure; more naturalistic Powdermill Stream channel; and, reduce impact of modern farm developments.

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Quality (DMRB)</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Sensitivity to Change</b>	<b>Management Opportunities</b>
7) Crowhurst Road /Upper Wilting	<b>Good</b> Attractive countryside, High Weald character; strong historic field patterns and ponds; and, quiet, but north influenced by traffic on Crowhurst Road	<b>Medium</b> Local value; ancient woodland; SSSI; and, Listed Buildings.	<b>Moderate</b> Topography and woodland afford cover; rural character vulnerable to change; features such as hedges and tree belts sensitive to change; local views from AONB; and, views from the south side of the Combe Haven.	Management of woods and hedges; and, reduced traffic on Crowhurst Road.
8) North Bexhill	See sub-divisions below	-	-	-
8a) North Sidley	<b>Ordinary</b> Older residential areas with mature trees have better urban grain; occasional development, which is out of character; and, tree cover on disused railway.	<b>Medium</b> Local centre; historic green; Listed New Inn; and, TPOs.	<b>Low</b> Derelict disused railway corridor; few long views within townscape; and, views north out of area to local countryside.	Environmental improvements to main shopping street; street tree planting; environmental enhancements; and management of disused railway land.
8b) Bexhill Down	<b>Ordinary</b> Primarily residential area; few distinctive features; foci or landmarks; tree cover in disused railway.	<b>Medium</b> Schools; Bexhill Down; historic open space; and TPOs.	<b>Low</b> Derelict disused railway corridor; and, few long views within townscape.	Street tree planting; environmental enhancements;. management of disused railway land; redevelopment of goods yards and depots on disused railway land; and, development improvements on school sites.

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Quality (DMRB)</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Sensitivity to Change</b>	<b>Management Opportunities</b>
8c) London Road North	<b>Ordinary</b> Unremarkable residential terraces of varying age developed around London Road; and, tree cover in disused railway.	<b>Medium</b> Densely developed older residential area of local value; hospital; school; and, TPOs.	<b>Low</b> Derelict disused railway corridor on boundary of area; few long views; and, some views from raised ground in east.	Reduced traffic on London Road and opportunities for environmental improvements; street tree planting; and, reduce severance effect of traffic on A259 to Old Town and town centre.
9) Central Bexhill	See sub-divisions below	-	-	-
9a) London Road South	<b>Ordinary</b> Older established residential /commercial area with good urban grain; and, intrusive trading estate.	<b>Medium</b> Local value as Civic Centre; and, Listed Buildings.	<b>Low</b> Densely developed; and, few long views within area.	Environmental improvements to industrial estate and main shopping street; street tree planting; improve road layout at A259 junction; and, traffic on A259 severance and noise impacts.
9b) Old Town	<b>Good</b> Historic centre of Bexhill with many distinctive buildings in local vernacular.	<b>High</b> Old Town conservation area and Listed Buildings; and, TPOs.	<b>Moderate</b> Historic grain of townscape sensitive to change; and, few long views across area.	Conservation of historic features; traffic management; and, improved pedestrian access from areas to north.
10) East Bexhill	See sub-divisions below	-	-	-
10a) Ancaster / Hastings Road	<b>Ordinary</b> Some fine tree lined avenues and older residential areas with good urban grain	<b>Medium</b> Local value; educational focus; and, TPOs.	<b>Moderate</b> Some long views across the town to the sea and views north to countryside.	Reduce severance effect of traffic on the A259; improve appearance of retail and industrial estates; and, street tree planting.

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Quality (DMRB)</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Sensitivity to Change</b>	<b>Management Opportunities</b>
10b) Pebsham	<b>Ordinary</b> Suburban residential area with few distinctive features; little local vernacular; and, few focuses of character.	<b>Medium</b> Local value.	<b>Moderate</b> Views to countryside in the north.	Street tree planting and planting around urban edge.
<b>Hastings</b>				
11) Bulverhythe	<b>Ordinary- Low</b> Dominated by through traffic and some characteristic older residential terraces	<b>Low</b> Local value, some vernacular pubs and terraces; a SAM; and, a Listed Building.	<b>Low</b> Densely developed and mainly residential and few views across area.	Reduction of traffic on A259; redevelopment of brown field land and environmental enhancements; improve access to coast; and, environmental improvements to the Combe Haven Stream channel.
12) West Woods	<b>Ordinary</b> Expansion area to Hastings and generally well planned in landscape setting.	<b>Medium</b> Residential; commercial; and ancient woodlands within urban areas.	<b>Moderate</b> Increased traffic on Queensway; long views into area from south; and, views out across urban areas to sea.	Management of ancient woodland and new planting
13) Hollington Stream	<b>Ordinary</b> Suburban expansion of Hastings and some attractive well treed avenues.	<b>Medium</b> Some older areas with Edwardian and Victorian villas and Filsham Valley linear open space.	<b>Moderate</b> Reduced traffic on Harley Shute and Filsham Roads; potential increased traffic in Wishing Tree area; and, long views down Combe Haven Valley.	Environmental improvements to Harley Shute Road, Filsham and Wishing Tree Roads, including street tree planting
14) West Ridge	See sub-divisions below	-	-	-

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Quality (DMRB)</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Sensitivity to Change</b>	<b>Management Opportunities</b>
14a) Rural	<b>Good</b> Attractive wooded landscape on south facing ridge.	<b>Medium</b> Countryside adjacent to urban area; AONB buffer zone; ancient woodland; LNR; and, Listed Buildings.	<b>Moderate</b> Open to long views from south AONB buffer zone.	Management of woodland; clearly defined development boundaries; and, reduce impact of urban edges.
14b) Urban	<b>Ordinary</b> Expansion area for development on south side up to AONB boundary	<b>Medium</b> Some older institutional buildings with local character; ribbon development along road; new housing development on ridge slopes; and, AONB boundary.	<b>Moderate</b> Increased traffic; long views to countryside in north and across urban area to sea.	Traffic management on ridge; reduced traffic on Battle Road; potential improvements to Baldslow Junction.
15) Crowhurst High Weald, Including part of Crowhurst Village	<b>High</b> Attractive landscape; rolling countryside typical of High Weald; well wooded; and, historic settlement and field patterns	<b>High</b> Local value as AONB countryside; ancient woodland; LNR; and, Listed Buildings in Crowhurst Village	<b>High</b> Rolling countryside; features such as hedges and tree belts sensitive to change; long views from the higher ground, down the Combe Haven and urban area to the sea, but interrupted by extensive tree and hedgerow cover	Reduction in traffic on rural roads

### ***Landscape and Townscape Character Areas – detailed appraisal***

#### *1) Combe Haven Valley Floor*

13.3.73 This character area is the flat floor of the Combe Haven Valley. Views of the Combe Haven Valley Floor are shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 5. The boundaries are poorly defined as the valley floor extends into the tributary stream valleys. These valleys are identified as separate character areas, as the main valley has a distinct character and is visually contained from most viewpoints by the surrounding ridges. Hedges and other tree belts or woodland contain the valley and distinguish the valley from the tributary valleys.

13.3.74 This is the most distinctive landscape character area. Its main feature is the broad tract of open level, and most notably the Filsham Reed Beds Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

13.3.75 The best views of the valley and levels are from the Filsham ridge near the railway bridge. This view is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 1. Three public footpaths cross the area north to south, including the 1066 Country Walk. There are other permissive paths along the Combe Haven Valley river. Within the levels, particularly the reed beds, there is a strong sense of remoteness, accentuated by the tall reeds that rustle in the wind. This is a valuable, attribute in an area close to, and accessible from, major built-up areas.

13.3.76 West of the Filsham Reed Beds the levels are mainly damp, rushy pasture with reeds and sedge along watercourses. The field boundaries are mainly ditches with associated tall reed vegetation. The intricate field patterns are defined by these.

13.3.77 There is a historic drainage pattern identifiable on the historic map of 1783 (Yeakell and Gardner's Sussex 1778-1783). There are no occupied buildings or settlements within the valley floor; this contributes to the sense of remoteness.

13.3.78 Key features of the area's character are:

- The predominantly open character;
- Watercourses, which apart from the main, embanked Combe Haven, also consist of many smaller channels, often lined by reeds, sedge, and scattered alder and willow. All of these, including Combe Haven itself, are straightened, man-made watercourses;
- The embankments of the old railway. Its wooded embankments protrude into the valley on either side, the Victorian brick viaduct which crossed the levels must once have been a conspicuous feature was demolished in 1969 and little trace of it remains;
- Regular seasonal and long periods of flooding; and,
- Probably the best lowland valley outside the AONB areas in East Sussex.

### *Detracting features and forces for change*

13.3.79 The main detracting features are outside the character area but have an influence on views out:

- Pebsham Landfill with its high northern end conspicuous in many views south and west across the valley. In addition to the visual intrusion, there is noise and smell. These effects should diminish in a few years as the landfill is completed and the land restored;
- The housing estates and Combe Haven Holiday Park on the slopes of Filsham ridge, particularly that south of the railway. This development is widely visible from the open valley floor and slopes, even from the west of the area;
- Some modern farm buildings and structures, particularly on the ridges north of the valley;
- Changes in farming practices reducing management and allowing scrub and rank vegetation to encroach; and,
- Changes in water regimes and seasonal flooding allowing scrub and rank vegetation to encroach.

### *2) Glyne Gap – Pebsham*

13.3.80 This area extends from the edge of the levels in the Combe Haven Valley southwards to the Coast Road at Glyne Gap and the coastal development at Bulverhythe. Its eastern boundary is the Filsham Ridge up to Harley Shute Road. To the west the boundary is formed by the built-up edge of Pebsham and Pebsham Wood. The area is subdivided into rural Pebsham 2a), illustrated on Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 12, and urban Filsham Ridge 2b), Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 32. The latter is the built-up Filsham ridge, west of Harley Shute Road.

13.3.81 This area does not have such a strong character focus as the Combe Haven Valley Floor. However the levels and reed beds at Glyne Gap are the most notable feature and a significant focus. They extend north from the A259, curving westwards to the south of Pebsham Farm. The reed beds have a striking similarity to the Filsham Reed Beds, but are smaller, drier and much more tightly defined by development to the east and west. In the north of the area the slopes are open and undeveloped. In the east, the Filsham ridge is developed down to the edge of the floodplain of the Combe Haven. This affords long views from Harley Shute Road down the Combe Haven Valley. Despite the close proximity and visual impact of built-up areas, the reedy levels in Glyne Gap are a surprisingly peaceful place, and a valuable 'green gap' separating Bexhill and Hastings.

13.3.82 The other key features are:

- The extension of Combe Haven Valley where the river turns south to the sea. Despite the proximity of the Combe Haven Caravan Park to the east and the Landfill to the west, the Haven forms a pleasant, if narrow, green corridor, lined by willows and poplars and with a footpath on its western side giving ready access to the open valley further north;

- Pebsham Ridge and southern slopes of the Combe Haven Valley;
- Pebsham Wood occupies the northern slopes of a small stream valley, which is floored by reedy wetland and a large pond. Trees on the south side of the valley combine with the wood to create a pleasantly secluded, sheltered local landscape. The housing estates of Pebsham are mostly concealed behind the trees;
- The slopes south of Pebsham Farm are patterned with hedges, rows of conifers and horse paddocks. These slopes are part of the 'green gap' between Bexhill and Hastings, and are traversed by well-used footpaths. Views of the built-up areas and the landfill, which also generates noise, are offset to some extent by views to the reed beds and the sea beyond;
- Pebsham Farm comprises a pleasant traditional brick and tile farmhouse in a prominent position on the ridge; and,
- Pebsham playing fields occupy reclaimed land south of the landfill and are flat, open and rather bleak. However they are another key part of the strategic gap.

13.3.83 Detracting features in this character area are:

- Pebsham landfill has an impact on the whole area, generating noise and smell as well as visual eyesore. Its impact is increased by its height, forming as it does the eastern end of Pebsham Ridge. However its impact would eventually decline as landfill is completed and the area is restored to merge with the natural topography. The restored landfill area would form the gateway to the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park and be an important recreational area for the surrounding population;
- The waste derived fuel plant and associated chimney. This is sited south west of the landfill and the scale ensures a substantial impact on the area. It is to be hoped that tree planting would eventually soften the impact, but it is always likely to be significant;
- The waste water treatment works sited to the west of the landfill site is large and intrusive and is sited high on the slopes of Pebsham Ridge;
- The scale and location of Combe Haven Caravan Park. on the slopes of Filsham Ridge make it a dominant feature, overlooking the whole area from the east. Tree planting within the site is gradually maturing and softening its impact; and,
- Built-up edges are conspicuous, particularly that overlooking Glyne Gap from the raised ground to the east. Trees soften the edge of Pebsham, particularly towards its northern end. The new housing and caravan site to the west side of Harley Shute Road.

### 3) *Watermill Stream Valley*

13.3.84 This area is the north-western extension of the Combe Haven Valley where Watermill Stream Valley joins the Combe Haven Valley. It is bounded to the north by the Henleys Down Road along the ridge crest between Henley's Down and Crowhurst. To the west its boundary is less well defined, but roughly follows Watermill Lane. To the east the Byne's and Hillcroft Farm ridge forms a strong boundary. To the south, the area is bounded by the edge of the

Combe Haven level. The view from Henleys Down Road is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 28.

13.3.85 This character area is relatively simple, with the valley itself the clear focus. Open levels, though present in the south-east, are much less of a focus than in the main Combe Haven Valley, and disappear westwards.

13.3.86 The other key features are:

- The Watermill Valley is the most rural part of the Study Area 1, and the most remote from built-up areas;
- The wooded slopes of the Buckholt Farm Ridge to the west. These slopes are accentuated by a belt of fine woodland, which curves around the lower slopes to merge with the extensive coppice woodland of Park Wood;
- The pattern of woods, fields and hedges on the northern slopes and in the valley itself. A large number of small woods, linked by hedges, create a strong pattern on these wide, gentle slopes;
- Farm building groups are sited boldly on the ridges around the valley. Most notable, in both character and setting, is Bynes Farm and Haven on the Hill, splendidly sited on the crest of the ridge to the south and dominated by the fine traditional farmhouse. Trees enhance the building group. Acton's Farm and associated buildings are to the south;
- The bold ridges enclosing the valley on either side give a remote and secluded character;
- The Watermill Stream is small but pleasant, and its environs are the most unspoilt and peaceful part of the area, yet accessible by public footpaths; and,
- Trees and scrub in the valley break up views across the area and increase the wooded character.

13.3.87 The most notable detracting feature is the major power line, which crosses the northern slopes from east to west, with tall pylons. This is visible from the whole area. The only other significant detracting feature is modern farm buildings, particularly associated with Hye House and Hillcroft Farms to the east.

13.3.88 Through traffic using the lane on the north boundary as a rat run through Crowhurst detracts from the rural character, it should be noted that these lanes are on the boundary of the AONB.

#### *4) Buckholt Farm - Watermill Lane*

13.3.89 This character area lies at the western end of Study Area 1. Its boundaries are not well-defined, but it is bounded to the north by Park Wood and the Buckholt Farm Ridge, and to the east by Ring Wood. A ridge west of Freezeland Lane forms a western boundary, but to the south the area is bounded by the north side of the Combe Haven Valley. A view of this character area is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 22.

13.3.90 The main character focus is Buckholt Farm on a prominent ridge. The area is a fairly homogeneous tract of rolling countryside.

13.3.91 The other key features are:

- This area lacks steep slopes or bold topographic features but consists of small-scale, gentle east-west valleys resulting in gently rolling terrain; and,
- The bold framework of woods is the most distinctive feature of the area. Ring Wood in the east separates the area from the Watermill Valley. Park Wood, Cockerel's Wood and Cole Wood are all substantial areas of woodland. These woods give the whole area a secluded and sheltered character. Apart from a few glimpses, there is little impression of the proximity of Bexhill, and much of the built-up edge is well screened by trees.

13.3.92 The main detracting features are:

- The Scattered Ribbon development along Watermill Lane and Freezeland Lane, partly screened by trees; and,
- Some modern farm or farm-related buildings, particularly at Preston Hall and Buckholt Farm, though the visual impact of these is not viewed from wide areas.

#### *5) Preston Hall - Worsham Farm*

13.3.93 This is another area where boundaries are not very clearly defined. To the south, the edge of Bexhill does form a clear boundary. To the west and north-west, hedge and tree-lined tracks (bridleways), coupled with faint ridges form the boundary as far as Acton's Farm. To the east, Pebsham Wood and ridge defines the area. The northern boundary is the edge of the Combe Haven Valley floor. There is no clear character focus in this fairly homogeneous area, though the western reaches of the Combe Haven Stream valley provides some focus. The area is divided into two areas: 5(a) Preston Hall and 5(b) Worsham Farm. Views into these areas are shown in Figure 13.10, Veiwpoints 33 and 13 respectively.

13.3.94 Area 5a) is the area to the west, with the listed Preston Hall as its focus. Area 5b) consists of the Glovers Farm to Worsham Farm area. These areas differ in that the Preston Hall area is more discrete and enclosed with few long views into or out of the area. The Worsham Farm area is more open rolling countryside forming the south side of the Combe Haven Valley. Both of these areas are distinct from surrounding character areas in that they are influenced by the urban areas and have urban fringe characteristics.

13.3.95 Other key features in this character area are:

- Gently rolling terrain in this area resembles Buckholt Farm - Watermill Lane. However there is a significant ridge line running west to east right through the south of the area, linking The Mount, Upper Worsham Farm and the Pebsham Ridge. North of this ridge, the rolling countryside slopes gently but steadily north towards the Combe Haven Valley floor. These slopes are diversified by several tiny valleys, or folds. South of the ridge a

gentle, fairly open valley abuts onto the urban edge of Bexhill;

- Though it is less heavily wooded than the Buckholt Farm - Watermill Lane area, trees and woodlands are an important part of this area's character. Combe Wood is the largest single woodland block but there are numerous smaller tree groups and scattered hedgerow trees. Levett's Wood and associated tree belts are important as they enclose the urban edge of Sidley. The area is patterned by small fields and hedges, particularly north of the ridge-line;
- There is a good network of footpaths and bridleways, which give ready access to the area and are often lined by hedges and trees;
- The ridge, and the north facing slopes offer some fine views across Combe Haven, often framed by trees;
- The line of the long-disused railway runs north from Sidley, curving east around Combe Wood before turning north to cross the valley near Adam's Farm. Its wooded embankments protrude into the valley on either side; and,
- Some farm building groups are conspicuous on the slopes and ridges above the valley, notably Glovers Farm and Worsham Farm. These groups are a mixture of traditional and modern buildings. Preston Hall is more tucked away at the head of the Combe Haven Valley.

13.3.96 The main detracting features in this character area are:

- The fairly open, unattractive built-up edge south of Worsham Farm - The impact of this is mainly limited to the area south of the Worsham Farm ridge-line;
- Modern farm buildings that have a significant impact on the ridge-line, particularly at Upper Worsham Farm, where they create conspicuous clutter; and,
- The Mount is crowned by a conspicuous communications mast, and by a rectangular reservoir mound.

#### 6) *Powdermill Valley*

13.3.97 This is a small valley character area bounded by Crowhurst village in the north, by the Hillcroft Farm ridge to the west and Adams Farm ridge to the east. In the south the boundary is the edge of the more open Combe Haven Valley floor. A view of Powdermill Valley is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 6.

13.3.98 The focus of this area is the flat-floored valley of the Powdermill stream extending south towards Combe Haven. It is more sheltered, small-scale and intimate than the main valley, and the valley floor, though quite open, is patterned with fields and hedges and there is little wetland. The alder lined stream valley is an important feature.

13.3.99 Other key features in the Powdermill Valley character area are:

- The tops of the ridges on either side of the valley carry abundant trees and hedges, which give them a wooded appearance contrasting with the

more open valley floor. The eastern slopes are particularly well-wooded;

- Some farm building groups are conspicuous on the slopes and ridges above the valley, notably Hillcroft and Adams Farms. These groups are a mixture of traditional and modern buildings. Hye House Farm is in the north-west corner;
- Proximity to the village - The area is adjacent to, and visible from, the southern edge of Crowhurst village; and,
- Views - There are occasional fine views from the bridleway on Hillcroft Farm ridge across the Combe Haven Valley.

13.3.100 The detracting features of the Powdermill Valley character area are:

- Pylons - A large power line crosses the northern end of the valley; and,
- Modern farm buildings - These are mainly associated with Hye House and Hillcroft Farms. Other structures are well contained by trees.

#### *7) Crowhurst Road - Upper Wilting Farm*

13.3.101 This area is bound by the Queensway to the east and by the Adam's Farm ridge to the west. The northern boundary is the north side of Whitefield and Park Woods. To the south, the boundary is the bottom of the slope and the open levels of Combe Haven Valley floor. A view of the Crowhurst Road – Upper Wilting Farm character area is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 25.

13.3.102 The focus of this area is Upper Wilting Farm and a secondary focus is the small, secluded Decoy Valley. It is flat-floored, but of closed character, partly wooded and with no public access. It is therefore very different in character from the open Combe Haven Valley.

13.3.103 Other key features of this area are:

- Woods - Decoy Pond Wood, Chapel Wood, Little Bog Wood and Marline Wood SSSI are the main woods, but the area has a generally wooded character;
- Decoy valley is inaccessible and visually isolated; it has a tranquil, rural character; and,
- Railway in deep cutting.

13.3.104 There are no significant detracting features apart from a group of farm sheds at Decoy Farm, which is visible in long views across the valley.

#### *Bexhill*

13.3.105 Bexhill on Sea arose as a medieval trading port, built on gently sloping ground before it was transformed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the seventh Earl De La Warr into an exclusive seaside resort. By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the resort began to lose its appeal and became more residential in nature, while retaining much of its quiet Edwardian character. The town is now comprised of several merged villages. It is marginally separated from Hastings by Glyne

Gap and Combe Haven Valley. At the eastern end of the town the railway severs the town from the seafront.

13.3.106 Bexhill has developed from the core of original villages and the Edwardian seaside town between the Old Town and the sea. The development in between is mostly infill residential development which has grown up in the inter war period and since the end of the Second World War. Much of the development is similar in age and character and the distinction between different areas is fairly subtle.

#### *8) North Bexhill*

13.3.107 The urban area of Bexhill is considered in greater detail than other urban areas, which are not directly affected by the Scheme. Figure 13.6 shows that the north Bexhill character area is entirely within the urban area of Bexhill. It extends from Sidley in the north to the A259 in the south. The eastern boundary is less distinct but is considered to be the edge of older and denser development, which grew up around the London Road and linked the Old Town with Sidley. North Bexhill has developed around the original village of Sidley and the A259, Little Common Road. With the coming of the railway the area to the east of this has grown up along the London Road. The busy A259 and King Offa Way artificially create a boundary to the south of this character area separating areas of similar character. Similarly the disused railway and the belt of semi-mature trees, which has grown up since the closing of the line, create a severance effect within the townscape. This tree feature links up with the trees on Bexhill Down.

13.3.108 Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 20 shows the view south along London Road in in the North Bexhill character area.

13.3.109 Other features are the Green at Sidley and the various open spaces within the urban area. The gently rolling nature of the landscape means there are few long views out of the area or prominent features.

13.3.110 There is a commercial centre at Sidley and some businesses on the A259. Otherwise the area is largely residential in character.

13.3.111 The area can be subdivided in to three character areas: North Sidley; Bexhill Down and London Road North.

#### *8a) North Sidley*

13.3.112 The heart of this area is the original village of North Sidley. Remnants of the village character are still evident although this has been mostly swallowed up by later development. The area is bounded by the commercial area of Ninfield Road in the south and countryside to the north, Wrestwood Road to the east and Watermill Lane in the west. The area is mixed age high density residential development with a local commercial centre on Ninfield Road.

13.3.113 The busy Ninfield Road shopping area is a social focus for the area. The existing railway corridor is overgrown and inaccessible due to the steep banks and frequent flooding. It has little value as a recreational resource and attracts vandalism and tipping. A view along Ninfield Road is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 40.

13.3.114 Other features are:

- The Green and listed New Inn which sits on it;
- The brick constructed Ninfield Road railway bridge, and the bridge at Glovers Farm;
- Levetts Wood on the urban edge; and,
- Views to the countryside from the north of the area

13.3.115 The main detracting feature is traffic on the Ninfield Road, which constricts free flow of pedestrians to the shops and schools.

#### *8b) Bexhill Down*

13.3.116 This area is bounded to the east by, the disused railway line and to the north by Ninfield Road. The western boundary is difficult to define as the residential areas to the west of the railway developed later than most areas to the east and the suburban residential development spreads west with few distinctive boundaries. The A259 Little Common Road and Belle Hill make the boundary to the south.

13.3.117 This gently undulating landscape affords few long views, but there are views across the area from the higher areas in the north. However, few landmarks or high points are seen from within the area. A view north along Buxton Drive is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 41.

13.3.118 Key features in the Bexhill Down character area are:

- The Bexhill Down is a well treed open area with a distinctive character of its own and an important gateway to the town centre;
- Egerton Stream runs in open channel through the west of the area. This open corridor and associated trees are a feature;
- Woodsgate Park Bridge is a brick built railway crossing; and,
- Tree cover in the disused railway line.

13.3.119 The main detractors in this townscape are:

- The depot areas adjacent to the old railway, notably those close to Ninfield Road;
- The groups of flat roofed and prefabricated buildings to the east of Bexhill College do not follow the urban grain and are intrusive in the local area; and,
- Lack of management on the disused railway has led to fly tipping in the accessible areas especially close to roads and footpaths.

### *8c) London Road North*

13.3.120 This is bounded by the disused railway line to the west, to the east by St James Road and Holliers Hill and to the north by Wrestwood Road. The A259, King Offa Way is the boundary to the south. A view of London Road North is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 42.

13.3.121 There are few landmark buildings within this townscape.

13.3.122 Key features in the London Road character area are:

- Some older buildings of note in the local context are the Chapel at the junction of London Road and Belle Hill, the old school buildings and adjacent barracks;
- The older, Victorian and Edwardian terraces, give an element of maturity to this area; and,
- Tree cover on the disused railway line.

13.3.123 Detracting features include traffic on the A259, which severs this area from the southern part of Bexhill and Old Town. The wide road junction with London Road conflicts with the local scale and the urban grain. Traffic on London Road restricts pedestrian movement across London Road, particularly at the southern and close to the junction with the A259.

### *9) Central Bexhill*

13.3.124 This is the area to the south of the A259 and includes Bexhill Old Town. This part of the town has developed around the Old Town the landscape is gently sloping towards the sea, although the Old Town was built on a raised area. A view of Amhurst Road in Central Bexhill is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 34.

13.3.125 The area can be subdivided in to two character subdivisions: London Road South and the Old Town.

### *9a) London Road South*

13.3.126 This area is bounded by the A259 in the north, Amherst Road and Old Town to the east and the railway to the south.

13.3.127 This area is the extension of the seaside Edwardian town north from the station. It is centered on what was originally Lower Station Road and has been renamed London Road at some point in time. The urban grain is generally good but is disrupted by the large light industrial development, which has been developed on the disused railway. Tree cover is sparse and largely limited to gardens. A view down Eastwood Road in the London Road South character area is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 43.

13.3.128 There are few foci or features within this area:

- The Town Hall and adjacent green is a pleasant space in the townscape;
- The London Road is a busy commercial area, surrounded by residential streets.

#### 9b) *Old Town*

13.3.129 The Old Town sits on an area of slightly higher ground and affords long views to the sea. This area is bounded by King Offa Way to the north, Amherst Road to the west, Manor Road in the east and the southern boundary is the railway line. The key feature in this area is the picturesque old part of Bexhill centered on St. Peters Church, Church Street and Manor Gardens. This part of the town is a conservation area and there are no significant detractors. A view down Church Street is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 44.

13.3.130 The improved A259 King Offa Way has been designed to improve traffic flow through the town and provide a bypass for through traffic in the Old Town. This has been effective and the Old Town is very quiet as a result. However the road does have a severance impact on the townscape and divides the Old Town from the town to the north.

#### 10) *East Bexhill*

13.3.131 This area of mainly residential development is the urban extension of Bexhill eastwards towards Hastings. The area slopes gently to the sea from the higher ground in the north. This affords long views to the sea from some areas. There are some large educational establishments in the area with landmark buildings. Much of the area is post War residential development. The Ravenside Retail Park and adjacent industrial estate is an unsympathetic development at the extreme eastern end on the former gas works site. A view west along De La Warr Road is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 35.

13.3.132 The area can be divided into two character sub divisions: the Ancaster/Hastings Road and Pebsham.

##### 10(a) *Ancaster/Hastings Road*

13.3.133 The boundaries of this area are Holliers Hill and Manor Lane to the west, Glyne Gap to the east and Wrestwood Road/Hastings Road to the north. The railway line is a convenient boundary to the south. A view along Hastings Road is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 45.

13.3.134 The key features of this area are:

- The higher ground on Worsham Ridge, which slopes down towards the sea. This area affords long views south across Bexhill to the sea. From the north of the area there are views to the local ridge at Worsham Farm; and,
- The large buildings and open spaces associated with the Charters Ancaster School campus are local focus of character.

13.3.135 There are few detractors within the area:

- Derelict land on Galley Hill View, adjacent to the railway, which is due to be developed;
- The light industrial estate at the east end and Ravenside Retail Park in Glyne Gap - These areas of large sheds contrast with the residential grain of the townscape; and,
- Severance effect of traffic on De La Warr Road.

#### *10(b) Pebsham*

13.3.136 This area is distinct from the previous area due to the proximity to the countryside. The boundaries of this area are the open countryside to the west, north and east and Wrestwood Road Hastings Road to the south. The view down Seabourne Road is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 46.

13.3.137 The key features are in the Pebsham character area are:

- The views across the countryside to the north;
- Ancaster House School, which is now converted to flats; and,
- The attractive central public open space on Seabourne Road.

13.3.138 There are no obvious detractors within this area.

#### *Hastings*

##### *11) Bulverhythe*

13.3.139 This urban area is bounded by Glyne Gap and the Hastings Borough boundary to the west, the edge of Combe Haven Caravan Park and Harley Shute Road to the east. The open playing fields and Glyne Gap to the north and the coast to the south. A view along the Bexhill Road in Bulverhythe is shown in Figure 13.9, Viewpoint 36.

13.3.140 The area lacks a key focus of character but local townscape features are:

- The open space of Glyne Gap with its reed beds dominates the western end;
- The seafront is a key focus but is severed by the railway from the built up area;
- The low cliffs, beach and grassy space at the western end of the seafront are a local feature;
- The Combe Haven flowing through the built up area is a green intrusion in to the urban area; and,
- The pubs, including the Listed Bull Inn, on the main road at either end of the area

13.3.141 The detracting features of this area are:

- Traffic on the A259 through this area - This includes heavy lorries accessing the waste sites and almost constantly queuing traffic;
- Poor environment, road related clutter and pollution on this road;
- The large railway sheds and water tower adjacent to the railway;
- The open built up edges to the north and west; and,
- Poor unattractive access to the beach from residential areas over an intimidating footbridge or via the tunnel at Glyne Gap.

13.3.142 This area is mainly residential in character, with some commercial development on the main road and between the road and the sea. There is an air of dereliction associated with the railway development. The older residential areas have local seaside character, which is degraded by surrounding neglected areas. Traffic on the A259 Hastings Road severs the community and cars dominate the area.

## 12) West Woods

13.3.143 This is the north-western edge of Hastings Borough. It is defined to the east by the ridge crest running south from Beauport and Castleham towards Filsham, and to the south by Queensway. It extends north to the Battle Ridge, and west to the ridge at Breadsell Lane (which is also the Borough boundary). A view down Icklesham Drive is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 37.

13.3.144 This is the newest part of the built-up area, originally the Town Development Area and developed since the 1970's. Most of the area consists of planned residential and industrial development with abundant open space and tree planting. Substantial portions of the original coppice woodland have been retained so that the area has a wooded character. The best surviving woods include part of Church Wood and its ghylls. However despite its wooded feel, development dominates most of the area, particularly the huge Castleham industrial estate on the ridge, and the broad swathe of Queensway.

13.3.145 Key features of the landscape in West Woods are:

- Church-in-the-Wood and its coppice woodland surrounds, a tranquil, secluded place despite the encircling development;
- The reservoir at Crowhurst Road;
- The bold valley form; and,
- Fine views across the countryside to the sea from the northern end and ridges.

13.3.146 The detracting features include:

- Houses and factories creeping over the ridge crest to the east;
- The pylon line crossing the area; and,
- The rather open, untidy environs of the reservoir.

#### *13) Hollington Stream*

13.3.147 The Harley Shute Road area is the lower section of the Hollington Stream Valley. The area is bounded by ridges to the west and east. It extends southwards from Gillsmans Hill to Bulverhythe. This open valley and the stream are the focus of the area. The valley widens, south of the railway, to give a flat, open floor, given over to playing fields. North of the railway the valley floor is a typical narrow, wooded ghyll, closely contained by residential areas. A view of this character area is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 29.

13.3.148 The slopes above the valley floor are mostly built up with residential areas, mostly low density mid to late 20th Century suburban housing in standardised street patterns. Small groups of trees, notably Corsican pines, break up some of the residential areas. There is also some open space on the slopes, mainly west of the railway where there are playing fields and scrub woodland. The South Saxons Secondary School, dominates the valley.

13.3.149 The main feature of the landscape is the open space, trees and scrub along the valley floor and western slopes, as well as the Hollington Stream itself. However trees and smaller open spaces within the built-up area are also important.

13.3.150 The main detracting features are:

- Indistinct urban grain in the estates, especially in the south-west part of the area; and,
- The general lack of distinct character in this suburban residential area, apart from that provided by topography.

#### *14) West Ridge*

13.3.151 The Ridge is the northern boundary of Hastings Borough and generally the limit of the built up area. To the north of the Ridge is the High Weald AONB.

13.3.152 The key features in the West Ridge character area are:

- The ridge and valley topography extending south from the main ridge; and,
- The focus of character is the heavily wooded Marline Ghyll.

13.3.153 The main detractors are:

- Traffic on the Battle to Hastings Road, which gives access to the A21 at Baldslow and Rye in the east;
- The residential development encroaching on the open slopes is a detractor, but this is enclosed by surrounding woodland; and,
- The electricity pylons, which cross in the east.

13.3.154 This area can be divided into two character sub divisions. A view in the rural area 14(a) is shown in Figure 13.10, viewpoint 38 and a view in the built up part of the Ridge, 14(b) is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint no. 39. The urban area is residential.

#### *15) Crowhurst - High Weald*

13.3.155 This area straddles the High Weald AONB boundary and includes the southern parts of Crowhurst village. A significant feature is the heavily wooded ghyll to the east, which supports Marline Wood. A view from the High Weald AONB Footpath 17b is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 15.

13.3.156 The key features in this area are:

- Long views across the Combe Haven Valley, over the urban areas to the sea;
- The wooded stream valleys converging to the south of Crowhurst village, notably the Powdermill stream;
- The gently rolling Wealden countryside;
- The patchwork of woods, fields and hedges, typical of High Weald countryside;
- The strong structure of woods, shaws and hedges in the valley around Marline Ghyll, and its relationship to the topography; and,
- The secluded, shady ghyll streams.

13.3.157 There are few detractors in this area. The electricity pylons which cross the area are visible in many of the views towards the sea.

#### ***Wider Study Area 2***

13.3.158 The Table 13.11 summarises the evaluation for the wider Study Area 2 (Figure 13.20) areas which would be affected by traffic changes.

**Table 13.11 Landscape Evaluation Summary Table Study Area 2**

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Quality (DMRB)</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Sensitivity to Change</b>	<b>Key Characteristics and Forces for Change</b>
Pevensey Levels	Good	Medium	Moderate	Open, flat expanse of wetland grazing marsh extending to the coast; Winding lanes and drainage channels; Isolated farms and settlements; Ribbon coastal development; Traffic on A259 and rat running in lanes; Intrusive coastal development; Urban expansion; and, Agricultural management.
South Slopes of High Weald	High	High	Moderate	High Weald landscape; Intricate pattern of ridges and ghylls; Abundant woodland; Scattered villages and farm settlements; Historic field patterns; Part within AONB; Traffic on country lanes; Suburbanisation and ribbon development; Decline of woodland; and, Urban fringe of Bexhill.
Combe Haven Valley	Good	Medium	Moderate	Battle ridge to north; Flat valley floor; Winding valley and ridges with abundant woodland; Part within AONB; Urban expansion reducing viability of farming; and, Proposed link road.
Brede Valley	High	High	High	Flat open levels on valley floor; Wooded valley slopes with farm settlements and orchards; Within AONB; Caravan and chalet development;. Urban expansion on Hastings Ridge; Loss of orchards; and, Transport improvements A21 and A259.

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Quality (DMRB)</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Sensitivity to Change</b>	<b>Key Characteristics and Forces for Change</b>
West Bexhill	Good	Medium	Low	Suburban post war expansion of Bexhill merging the villages of Cooden and Little Common; Traffic on A259; and, Pressure for residential and business development.
Hastings Marina, St. Leonards/ Old Town	High	High	High	Historic centre and Conservation Areas of Hastings and seafront; Fine Regency buildings; Traffic on the seafront road severs the beach from the town; and, Need for environmental enhancement of seafront.
North Hastings	Good	Medium	Moderate	Varied urban expansion of Hastings north to the ridge; Development on slopes and cliffs giving long views and distinctive terraces; Open spaces and parks in deep stream valleys; Need for environmental improvements to some areas and regeneration; New development on the urban edges, notably the ridge to the north; and, Traffic on the Ridge and A259.
Battle	High	High	High	Historic ridge top town with fine architecture and distinctive Abbey; Medieval and Georgian High Street and conservation area; Within AONB; Through traffic on the busy main road through village; and, Parking pressures.

### ***Visual Baseline***

13.3.159 The Study Area 1, shown in Figure 13.1, covers the area which could have potential views to the Scheme, as defined previously. Figures 13.15A and B display the ZVIs for the Scheme at the Opening year and the Design Year respectively. Key viewpoints and footpath reference numbers are identified in Figure 13.9. Supporting photographs from key viewpoints are shown in Figure 13.10.

#### *Views from the AONB*

13.3.160 There are views across the Study Area 1 from outside the study area in the AONB north of Crowhurst. The higher ground rising to Hastings Ridge in the north affords long views across the Study Area 1 to the sea. There are some views in to the Combe Haven Valley from parts of the High Weald AONB, however the pattern of woodland, tree belts and hedges obscures views to the valley from much of this area.

13.3.161 There are long views from the Hastings - Battle Ridge south across the valley and surrounding urban area to the sea. These include views from footpaths in the High Weald AONB, notably 21a. This view is shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 38.

13.3.162 Closer views into the Study Area 1 from the AONB can be gained from paths and roads in and around Crowhurst. There are long views across the valley to the Pebsham and Worsham ridges from footpaths 21c, 21d and 20. As shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 15 from Footpath 17b there are glimpses between hedges and woods and the lower parts of the Combe Haven Valley are obscured by woodland from these areas. Henleys Down Road, Crowhurst Road and Swainham Lane form the southern boundary of the AONB.

13.3.163 Within the Study Area 1 there are views from the lanes on the boundary of the AONB, these are identified on Figure 13.9. The most notable of these are:

- Views down the Watermill Valley and into the west end of Combe Haven Valley from Henley's Down Road Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 28;
- Glimpses across the eastern part of Combe Haven Valley and into Decoy Valley, between trees and hedges, from Crowhurst Lane, between Crowhurst and Queensway, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 25. This also affords long views across the valley to the Pebsham landfill site and the sea;
- Views from Crowhurst Road towards Adam's Farm, the Powdermill Valley and across to the wooded ridge on the opposite side, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 27; and,
- Views from Swainham Lane to the Chapel Wood Ridge, Decoy and Upper Wilting Farms, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 26.

### *Views within the Combe Haven Valley*

13.3.164 Key viewpoints, visual barriers and locations for photographs are shown on Figure 13.9 and supporting photographs from key viewpoints are shown in Figures 13.10 Viewpoint 1 to 39. Other photograph locations, from Viewpoints 40 to 46, inform the character area assessment and are not key viewpoints for the visual assessment of the proposed Scheme

13.3.165 The Combe Haven Valley is a visually unified and contained landscape; there are long views across the area from the surrounding ridges and within the wide flat valley. These views are localized to within the valley landscape.

13.3.166 The key views from public footpaths in the valley are from:

- Footpaths in the east of the valley;
- Paths across the middle of the valley; and,
- Paths at the west end of the valley.

13.3.167 There are long views from footpaths at the east end of the valley looking west. Panoramic views across the valley are broken by the woodland, which extends in to the valley on the disused railway embankments.

13.3.168 There are views from the east end of Combe Haven Valley from footpaths 28, 23a, 29b and 21 shown in Figure 13.10 from Viewpoints 1, 3, 4 and 23 respectively. Views within this area tend to be dominated by the activity and visual intrusion of the landfill site. Path 23a, Viewpoint 3 is in the bottom of the valley and long views to the west are obscured by woodland on the ridges, notably on the disused railway line embankments and by scrub within the valley itself. There are views from here to surrounding ridges and notably the top of the landfill site. The view from footpath 28, Viewpoint 1 near Harley Shute Road, provides the best vantage point for long views down the valley, taking in the ridges on both sides.

13.3.169 The 1066 Country Walk crosses the middle of the valley from Pebsham to Crowhurst. There are views across the valley to the ridge on the opposite side from the higher ground at Worsham Farm. These are narrow views as Combe Wood and vegetation on the railway viaduct obscure wider views. As the path crosses the middle of the valley there are wide views along the valley to the west and east and views up to the surrounding ridges. Within the Powdermill Valley the views are enclosed by the ridges to west and east, there are longer views looking south down the Powdermill Valley to the Worsham Ridge, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 7.

13.3.170 At the west end of the valley there are two footpaths, one crossing from Glovers Farm to Actons Farm, path 33, and one crossing from Worsham Farm to Actons Farm paths 31a and b. These merge into a public bridleway 34, to continue up the Hillcroft Ridge to Crowhurst on path 13 a, b and c. Path 15 drops down to Crowhurst on the east side of Hillcroft ridge (Viewpoint 8). These PROWs afford long views across the valley to the Hillcroft and Adams

Farm ridges and some long views towards Filsham and the urban edge of Hastings. The bridleway, pat no. 13b and 13c, across Hillcroft Ridge is largely enclosed by tall hedges. There are views between the buildings at Hye House Farm down the Powdermill Valley to the Combe Haven Valley. This bridleway continues west to meet the Buckholt Lane Byway. This part of the bridleway is enclosed by hedges and does not have long views across the valley.

13.3.171 The footpath 32a, crossing from Glovers to Worsham Farm affords some views into the western end of the valley, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 24, further east views from this path are obscured by vegetation on the disused railway and Combe Wood.

13.3.172 The disused railway line is an informal permissive path from Glovers Lane in to the countryside and it links the footpaths which cross the valley from north to south. Much of this is enclosed by dense vegetation; however there are views through gaps across the western end of the Combe Haven Valley to the Hillcroft and Adams Farm ridges on the north side and the Watermill and Powdermill valleys, Figure 13.10, Viewpoints 13 and 14.

#### *Views From the Urban Areas*

13.3.173 There are long views across the area from the urban areas of Hastings in the east. The most significant view is from Harley Shute Road close to the railway bridge. This is a long view across most of the Combe Haven Valley from an elevated position. The wooded ridges extend in to the valley obscuring views to the tributary valleys on the north side. Upper Wilting Farm is prominent on the ridge to the north in these views and the landfill site is on the ridge to the south.

13.3.174 Similar views, albeit it from a lower level and glimpsed between buildings can be gained from the residential development on Filsham Road, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 32. There are more restricted views across the area from the Combe Haven Holiday Park but views down the valley are obscured by the landfill site and the tree belt on the boundary of the site.

13.3.175 There are long views down the Combe Haven Valley and the ridges on either side from the elevated parts of the urban area of Hastings in the east. Notably from areas west of Filsham Road, in Gresham Way and St. Dominics Close, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 29 and 30 respectively. There are long views across the valley and the urban areas to the sea from The Ridge at Hastings in the north, Figure 13.10, Viewpoints 38 and 39.

13.3.176 Generally long views across the Study Area 1 from the built up area of Bexhill are obscured by landform and woodland. From the residential area of Pebsham there are views to the countryside at Worsham Farm but long views across the valley are obscured by the Worsham Ridge, Combe and Pebsham woods. There are views in to Glyne Gap and playing fields from the urban area of Bulverhythe. Long views across the Study Area 1 from Glyne Gap are obscured by the Pebsham Ridge, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 12. There are views from the residential area on the north edge of Sidley and Glovers Lane into the western end of the Combe Haven Valley, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 31.

13.3.177 Within the built up area of Bexhill there are few long views or significant visual landmarks. Old Town is on an area of raised ground and there are local views to the church, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 44. There are longer views across the town from the ridge in the eastern parts of the town around Hastings Road. These look across the countryside in the Study Area 1 in the north and the sea to the south. There are few long views in the London Road and Sidley area, Figure 13.10, Viewpoints 40 and 41. Other views of London Road are on Figure 13.10 Viewpoints 17, 18 and 20 and Belle Hill junction Viewpoint 16. Views along the disused railway line are from the bridge at Ninfield Road, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 21 and Woodsgate Park Bridge, Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 19.

### ***Lighting Baseline***

13.3.178 Photographs of the existing night time situation from key rural viewpoints within the Study Area 1 are provided in Figure 13.10, locations are indicated on Figure 13.9, photographs 1, 31, 47, 48 and 49. These photographs were taken using a long exposure with a 35mm camera on a tripod, manual focus and 200ASA film. These locations have been selected as the most representative viewpoints, which provide an assessment of the existing light intrusion in the night time sky. The photographs were taken on the same night in November 2006.

13.3.179 The proposed Scheme would have new street lighting at the junction of London Road and the A259 at Belle Hill. At Belle Hill there is street lighting that currently lights the A259 and London Road junction and traffic light control. New lighting around the junction would be assessed in the context of the existing urban scene. The urban area of Bexhill has not been included in these photographs, as the Scheme would not have a significant impact on the existing situation.

13.3.180 The existing junction of Crowhurst Road and Queensway is currently unlit and not controlled by traffic signals. The Scheme design would require street lighting and new traffic signals at the Queensway junction.

13.3.181 The Queensway is unlit and at this point there are no light columns or traffic signals in the area of the proposed junction. Photographs 47A and B, 48A and B indicate the existing situation at both day and night in the location of the proposed junction with Queensway. Passing car headlights provide the light in these images. There is little glow in the night sky at these locations. The road is in cutting and screened from the lights in adjacent residential areas. There is a background of urban lighting in the Church Wood area to the east of Queensway. There are no long views in to this part of Queensway, established tree planting and deep cutting on either side of Queensway forms an effective visual screen to neighboring properties on the Church Wood estates. Properties to the south and west are also screened by mature trees. The key visual receptors would be users of the proposed road between Crowhurst Road and Queensway.

13.3.182 From Henleys Down Road to the west of Crowhurst there are views down the Watermill Stream valley. A night time view was taken from this point, as photograph 49. The lights on the urban areas of Bexhill and Hastings give

off a glow above the distant ridge. The countryside in the valley between appears dark from this viewpoint.

13.3.183 The night time assessment from Glovers Lane is shown in Figure 13.10, from Viewpoint 31. The glow of lights on the horizon, probably originates from the Battle ridge and in the foreground from Crowhurst village. The scattered farms in between and properties on Henley's Down Road give off some limited glow and the landscape in the valley between is quite dark.

13.3.184 The view from Harley Shute down the Combe Haven Valley at night is shown in Figure 13.10, from Viewpoint 1. The valley is dark from this location with scattered areas of light glow evident on the distant ridge. This is from the edge at Bexhill and Sidley and other ridge top settlements.

## **13.4 Landscape Mitigation Strategy**

### ***Description of the Scheme***

13.4.1 A full description of the Scheme design, landscape design and mitigation measures is provided in Chapter 3A: Scheme Information. The proposed Scheme, including Greenway and associated mitigation measures are described in the context of the landscape appraisal. The loss of landscape features such as trees, hedges, buildings and bridges is described in this chapter.

### ***Key Objectives***

13.4.2 The primary objectives of the landscape mitigation are as follows:

- To retain a green corridor in the urban area by retaining and bringing into management as many trees as possible;
- To create a new townscape at the London Road/Belle Hill junction as an environmental enhancement;
- Strengthen the local identity of the townscape in detailed design of bridges and other structures;
- Maximise replacement tree planting to enhance the green corridor;
- To keep the level of the road as low as possible in the landscape;
- To use earthworks, as far as they relate to the landscape character and scale, to seek to minimise the visual and noise impact of vehicles up to 5m high on the BHLR;
- To develop the road and its non motorised user functions, its mitigation and compensation to be complementary to the character of the area;
- To minimise impact upon listed buildings;
- To minimise impact upon farms;
- To minimise impact on characteristic landscape features such as ancient hedges, mature trees, and wetland areas;

- To avoid protected habitats;
- To bring areas of unmanaged woodland in to positive management where they help to integrate the road;
- To achieve a balance of cut and fill spoil and grade out embankment slopes to marry in to existing landform in character with local topography;
- To minimise visual impact of the Scheme on properties, footpaths, and places of public access as far as practicable;
- To integrate environmental barriers into the receiving landscape and where possible substitute noise attenuation fencing with earth mounds to achieve operational requirements of the noise design;
- To ensure landscape planting proposals are in character with and provide an enhancement to the surrounding landscape;
- To redirect footpaths and bridleways across the road by the shortest possible routes and at reasonable gradients;
- Improve access to the countryside by providing a multi-use greenway; and,
- To ensure landscape design and management proposals reflect the long term aspirations of adjacent landowners.

#### 13.4.3 Key mitigation measures during the construction phase would be:

- To minimise lorry movements in and out of the site by using cut and fill to recycle all excavated material on site;
- Wherever possible sustainability processes would be followed;
- The contractor would use directional lighting to minimise light pollution from the site;
- Haul roads would be from either end of the Scheme and accessed from existing main roads to minimise impacts on minor roads and residential properties;
- The site would be kept tidy and adequate wheel wash facilities would be provided;
- Existing trees and hedges would be protected in accordance with BS 5837:2005 *Trees in Relation to Construction*;
- Temporary stockpiling of materials would be avoided where possible; where these are necessary piles would not exceed 4m and would be kept within the site boundaries;
- The structures strategy would aim to minimise impacts on local roads and residents;
- Site compounds would be located in visually discrete locations and away for residential properties; and,
- Health and safety and environmental protection procedures will be followed at all times.

## 13.5 Construction Impacts

### **Overview**

13.5.1 The Scheme would be constructed over a 2 year period and potential landscape and visual impacts would not simply be confined to the permanent or operational impacts of the Scheme. Temporary or construction impacts would range from site clearance works, including vegetation removal, demolition of a number of properties and three railway bridges through to general construction activities such as to create embankments, excavate cuttings and construct the main carriageway and associated structures.

13.5.2 Stockpiled topsoil would be placed within the earthworks area, away from trees and hedges to ensure that they are retained. All trees and hedges to be retained would be protected accordance with to BS 5837 *Trees in Relation To Construction*. The total clearance, and construction period is planned over two years.

13.5.3 Construction traffic would be restricted to the new road route with 20% using the disused railway line in Bexhill. Construction traffic for the rural area would approach from the east; therefore 80% of the construction traffic would avoid the urban area. The accepted industry standards would be followed to minimise impacts during construction, such as:

- Road cleaning;
- Retaining a tidy site;
- Use of designated haul roads;
- Directional lighting; and,
- Designated working hours

### ***Landscape Impacts During Construction***

13.5.4 The assessment of construction impacts on landscape and townscape character have been carried out using the criteria identified in Tables 13.6 and 13.7. The construction impacts upon the landscape character areas that are either directly or indirectly affected by the Scheme are summarised in Table 13.12. The Scheme would have no impact upon the remaining landscape character areas identified in the baseline conditions and marked no change.

**Table 13.12 Landscape and Townscape Impacts During Construction**

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Direct/Indirect</b>	<b>Duration of Construction</b>	<b>Impact</b>
1) Combe Haven Valley Floor	Indirect	2 Years	Moderate Adverse
2) Glyne Gap/ Pebsham	Sub-divided	-	-
2a) Rural Pebsham	Indirect	2 Years	Neutral
2b) Filsham Ridge	Indirect	2 Years	Neutral
3) Watermill Stream Valley	Direct	2 Years	Moderate Adverse
4) Buckholt Farm / Watermill	Indirect	2 Years	Neutral
5) Preston Hall Worsham Farm	Sub-divided	-	-
5a) Preston Hall	Indirect	2 Years	Neutral
5b) Worsham Farm	Direct	2 Years	Substantial Adverse
6) Powdermill Valley	Direct	2 Years	Substantial Adverse
7) Crowhurst Road / Upper Wilting	Direct	2 Years	Substantial Adverse
<b>Bexhill</b>			
8) North Bexhill	Sub-divided	-	-
8a) North Sidley	Direct	2 Years	Moderate Adverse
8b) Bexhill Down	Direct	2 Years	Moderate Adverse
8c) London Road North	Direct	2 Years	Moderate Adverse
9) Central Bexhill	Sub-divided	-	-
9a) London Road South	Direct	2 Years	Neutral
9b) Old Town	-	2 Years	No change
10) East Bexhill	Sub-divided	-	-
10a) Ancaster/ Hastings Road	Indirect	2 Years	Neutral
10b) Pebsham	-	2 Years	No change
<b>Hastings</b>			
11) Bulverhythe	Indirect	2 Years	Neutral
12) West Woods	Indirect	2 Years	Slight Adverse
13) Hollington Stream	Indirect	2 Years	Neutral
14) The Ridge a) and b)	Indirect	2 Years	Neutral
15) Crowhurst High Weald	Indirect	2 Years	No change

### ***Construction Impacts on Character Areas***

#### *1) Combe Haven Valley Floor*

13.5.5 The construction would be on the edges of this character area and would avoid designated wildlife areas. The construction of earthworks would be phased over the two year construction period and would be on the boundary of this character area in the Powdermill Valley. Site clearance operations and construction of earthworks would impact on the quiet and remote character of this area as would activity associated with the construction of overbridges at Acton's Farm, Hillcroft Farm and Adams Farm. The construction of the Greenway would be carried out parallel to the main works. The earthworks would provide a screening effect during carriageway construction and therefore reduce the impact on the character of this area. As the works are on the periphery of the character area the overall impact during construction would be Moderate Adverse.

#### *2) Glyne Gap /Pebsham*

13.5.6 The Scheme construction would not physically impact on this area. There would be some disturbance to the quiet character of the northern parts of the area from the activities associated with the road construction. This is some distance from the area and on the opposite side of the ridge at Upper Wilting Farm. This needs to be considered in the context of background noise impacts on the area from the landfill site which is due to be completed in 2008. Construction traffic would use the A259 road through Glyne Gap at the edge of this character area, 40% of the total construction traffic would use this route. The impact of construction is considered to be Neutral.

#### *3) Watermill Stream Valley*

13.5.7 Site clearance operations would involve removal of hedges and scrub vegetation to the north of Acton's Farm and clearance of vegetation on either side of the bridleway to Hillcroft Farm and Buckholt Lane. This would impact on the quiet and remote character of the area. There would be a mobile office and welfare unit in the vicinity of the bridge during the middle stages of construction.

13.5.8 The creation of the cutting west of Acton's Farm and formation of earthworks would impact on local character and change the local topography. Construction of the overbridge at Acton's Farm and the open structure stream crossing at Watermill Stream would have an impact on character as would the formation of landscape earthworks on either side of the route in this section. Construction of the carriageway would be the final disturbance in the area, particularly in the open section across the stream. The impact on the character of this area during construction is considered to be Moderate Adverse as it would be restricted to the extreme southern part of the area.

#### *4) Buckholt Farm /Watermill Lane*

13.5.9 This relatively quiet area of countryside may experience some background disturbance from the construction activities but the impact is considered to be Neutral as there would be no direct physical impact on the area.

#### *5) Preston Hall/Worsham Farm*

##### *5a) Preston Hall*

13.5.10 The construction of the Scheme would not have a direct impact on this part of the character area. There would be some disturbance during the two year construction period but these needs are to be considered against the background of traffic on Watermill Lane and proximity to the urban area of Bexhill. The potential impacts on this area are considered to be Neutral.

##### *5b) Worsham Farm*

13.5.11 Site clearance would involve removal of vegetation in the disused railway line and some sections of hedges to the north-west of Glovers Farm. The demolition of the railway bridge at Glovers Farm and period of construction of the replacement bridge would have an impact on local landscape character. There would be a mobile office and welfare unit in the vicinity of the bridge during the early stages of construction. New cut and fill over farmland and the creation of earthworks for mounds and ponds on either side of the road route would cause considerable change and disruption to the local landscape character.

13.5.12 There would be a topsoil storage mound to the west of Acton's Farm for the duration of the works. The construction of the open structure over the Combe Haven would also have an impact. The construction of the new bridge, the Greenway and road surface in this area would impact on the rural character. This would be mitigated from local footpaths once the mounding is constructed. Landscape Impacts on this area during construction are likely to be Substantial Adverse.

#### *6) Powdermill Valley*

13.5.13 Site clearance would involve removal of some remnant sections of hedgerow and scrub within the valley. The main construction works in this character area would involve the creation of the cuttings at Hillcroft and Adam's Farm, filling of farmland across the valley, rerouting of the Powdermill Stream, creation of the borrow pit, attenuation ponds and extensive mounding. The movement of plant would have an adverse impact on the quiet and remote character of this area.

13.5.14 There would be a mobile office and welfare unit in the vicinity of the bridges during the early stages of construction. The construction of overbridges at Hillcroft and Adam's Farm and Powdermill Stream Bridge

would have a further impact. Users of the 1066 Country Walk and the bridleway from Acton's to Hillcroft Farm would be affected by diversions of these routes and construction of overbridges. Construction of the new accommodation works and the overbridge at Adams Farm would impact on this character area. The impacts on this valley are restricted to the southern edge and are for a short section of route. For this section they are likely to be Substantial Adverse.

#### *7) Crowhurst Road/Upper Wilting*

13.5.15 Site clearance would involve removal of some mature tree belts and hedges in the Decoy Valley. Trees would be removed from either side of Crowhurst Road, where the route would cross from woodland adjacent to the railway cutting. There would be mobile offices and welfare facilities which would have a short term impact on parts of the character area.

13.5.16 The main earthworks operations which would impact on the character of the area would be the cut section rising out of the Powdermill Valley, fill on both sides of the railway, cut and fill between Crowhurst Road and Queensway. The cutting adjacent to Queensway is in an area where there has been disturbance during the construction of Queensway therefore this part of the character area is less sensitive to disturbance. The main site works compound would be sited in this area, between the railway and Queensway. There would be an earthmoving plant parking area to the west of Crowhurst Road on the line of the Scheme in a proposed cutting. This would have an impact but should be considered in the context of proximity to the existing roads and urban area.

13.5.17 Construction of structures over Decoy Stream, the accommodation overbridge at Adam's Farm and the railway bridge would have an impact on the area. Construction traffic would enter the site from Queensway via the haul route which would carry 80% of this traffic. Closure of Crowhurst Road to through traffic would benefit residents and the character of the rural lane. The overall construction impacts on this area would be likely to be Substantial Adverse.

#### *8) North Bexhill*

##### *8a) North Sidley*

13.5.18 Site clearance operations would involve felling of trees along the disused railway line and around Ninfield Road Bridge. The demolition of the Ninfield Road Bridge would involve considerable disruption to this townscape. This would be extended by the need to relocate services and provide continuous access on this main road. Construction of the new bridge at Glovers Farm would impact on residents on the north side of this character area for the period of time it would take to construct this. There would be a mobile office and welfare unit in the vicinity of the Ninfield Road Bridge during the early stages of construction. The construction of retaining walls would also cause some disruption, but this and the carriageway construction activities would be at the bottom of a deep cutting. Construction impacts on the character of the area are likely to be Moderate Adverse.

### *8b) Bexhill Down*

13.5.19 Site clearance operations would have an impact on the local townscape character, particularly the clearance of trees and other vegetation. These activities would be mainly contained within the existing rail corridor apart from in the working area for the bridges where other trees would be cleared for the construction area. The Woodsgate Park Bridge would be replaced, causing disruption during the period of demolition and reconstruction.

13.5.20 The demolition and reconstruction of the bridge at Woodsgate Park would impact on neighbouring properties especially the flats surrounding Woodsgate Park. The construction of the underpass at Chapel Path would impact on the local townscape. There would be temporary site accommodation buildings around Woodsgate Park during the early stages of construction. There would be traffic entering the site from the southern end of the Scheme, 20% of construction traffic would enter the site from the haul route through this character area. Construction impacts on this area are likely to be Moderate Adverse.

### *8c) London Road North*

13.5.21 Site clearance would involve demolition of a Victorian residential terrace of properties on London Road at the junction with Belle Hill. This would impact on the character of this townscape area and alter the urban grain. The demolition of the Rother depot, the school nursery and other structures that do not fit as well with the urban grain would impact on the character of the area during construction. There would also be disturbance from activities along the route, although this would be contained in the railway corridor. A site compound would be located on the site of the demolished buildings for the duration of the construction. There would be increased works traffic during this period, 20% of site traffic would enter the area from this haul route. Other site traffic would pass through this area on the A259 to access Queensway. The construction impacts on this area are likely to be Moderate Adverse.

## *9 Central Bexhill*

### *9a) London Road South*

13.5.22 There would be some construction impact on the northern boundary of this area where a new junction is constructed with the A259. There would be some increased traffic, up to 40% of construction traffic would use the A259 on the north side of this area, as this is a main A road these impacts are likely to be Neutral.

### *9b) Old Town*

13.5.23 There would be no construction impacts on this area.

### *10 East Bexhill*

#### *10a) Ancaster Hastings Road*

13.5.24 There would be increased traffic through the area on the King Offas Way and De La Warr Road as up to 40% of traffic would use this route to access Harley Shute Road and Queensway from the west. This would not have a significant impact on this main A road. The construction impacts on this area would be Neutral.

#### *10b) Pebsham*

13.5.25 There would be no construction impacts on this area.

### *11 Bulverhythe*

13.5.26 There would be increased traffic through the area on the A259 as 40% of traffic would use this route to access Harley Shute Road and Queensway from the west. This would not have a significant impact on this main A road. The construction impacts on this area would be Neutral.

### *12 West Woods*

13.5.27 The construction of the Queensway junction with the proposed Scheme would have an impact on the very edge of this area. There would be increased traffic on the boundary edge of this area on Queensway from both directions as 40% of traffic would use this route to access the site from the south and 40% from the north. The construction impacts on this area would be Slight Adverse.

### *13 Hollington Stream*

13.5.28 There would be increased traffic on the boundary of this area on Harley Shute Road as 40% of traffic would use this route to access Queensway from the west. The construction impacts on this area would be Neutral.

### *14 The Ridge*

13.5.29 There would be increased traffic on the north and east boundaries of this area on Battle Ridge and Queensway as 40% of traffic would use this route to access Queensway from the Ridge. The construction impacts on this area would be Neutral.

### *15 Crowhurst High Weald*

13.5.30 There would be no construction impacts on this area.

### ***Visual Impacts During Construction***

13.5.31 The assessment of the visual impacts during the construction period has been carried out using the criteria identified above and in Table 13.8. The visual impacts during construction are summarised in Tables 13.13 and 13.14. Detailed information on visual impacts from properties, key viewpoints and footpaths is provided in Appendix 13-B, 13-C and 13-D. The main intrusive features during construction would be earth moving machinery, soil piles, site compounds and bare earth associated with mounding and cuttings. Site clearance and demolition activities would have a visual impact as would the activities associated with constructing new structures.

13.5.32 The assessment takes into account the fact that noisy construction machinery and activities would draw the observer's eye to the site and therefore increase the general awareness of the works.

### ***Visual Impacts of Demolition***

13.5.33 Clearance activities would introduce excavators in to the rural areas bringing visual disturbance into remote areas. Storage of stockpiled chippings for reuse would have a temporary impact in local views.

13.5.34 The demolition of properties at Belle Hill Junction would have a visual impact on neighboring properties and surrounding public areas. There are no long views into these areas. Demolition of the bridges at Woodsgate Park, Ninfield Road and Glovers Farm would cause similar disturbance to residents and pedestrians in the area. Views from properties overlooking the road construction on London Road would be opened to the construction (numbers 104 – 160 even side); these properties would overlook the site compound and crusher plant.

### ***Visual Impacts of Earthworks Construction***

13.5.35 The creation of earthworks would have a visual impact in the rural and urban areas. Restricted access to the works via the disused railway would limit this impact to properties immediately adjacent to the works. The movement of earthmoving equipment in the countryside would have a visual impact on users of Rights of Way, particularly the 1066 Country Walk and Acton's Farm bridleway. The movement of cut and fill materials would be as close to the source as possible and a balance achieved to avoid importation of fill material. There would be some visual disturbance during the construction of cuttings at Acton's, Hillcroft, Adams Farm and Chapel Wood.

*Visual Impacts on Residential Properties*

13.5.36 The clearance of vegetation on the route would have a visual impact on properties which are adjacent to the disused railway line in the urban area. There would be visual disturbance caused by the loss of trees and views that would be opened up to the houses on the other side of the railway. Where vegetation is to be retained to the rear of numbers 219 to 305 London Road, the visual impact of site clearance and construction works would be less than for those properties where no vegetation would be retained on the adjacent disused railway line. Trees retained on the bank west of the Sidley depot and former goods yard would afford some screening to the construction activities for properties in Birch View, and Highfield Gardens.

13.5.37 Residential properties on the route which would suffer considerable visual disturbance during the construction period are the farm houses at Glovers Farm, Acton's Farm and Adams Farm. Other residences which would experience visual disturbance during the construction but are more than 100m from the proposed works are Hillcroft Farm, The Briars and Upper Wilting Farm. The properties Hollyhocks and Upper Wilting Farm Cottages would experience minor disturbance, particularly from the Greenway construction and accommodation works to Crowhurst Road. The location of the site compound and construction of the junction at Queensway may cause some minor disturbance to the property Sanctuaire on Crowhurst Road, but this is well screened by vegetation.

**Table 13.13 Construction Impacts on Residential Properties**

Section of Scheme	Level of Visual Impact							
	Sev. Adv.	Sub. Adv.	Mod. Adv.	Sli. Adv.	Neg.	No Cha.	Sli. Ben.	Mod. Ben.
Belle Hill to Glovers Farm	-	53	62	102	40	29	-	-
Glovers Farm to Adams Farm	-	7	2	6	161	46	-	-
Adams Farm to Queensway	-	-	1	6	-	16	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>60</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>91</b>	-	-

Notes:

17 Properties would be demolished in the Belle Hill to Glovers Farm section  
 Blocks of flats are counted as one property

*Visual Impacts on Community Premises*

13.5.38 There would be a substantial visual impact on Bexhill High School during construction, especially upon the grounds, some windows overlook the site but most of the buildings face away from the works. The nursery buildings of this school would be demolished and replaced elsewhere. King Offa School has no views in to the site. Sidley County Primary School is on higher ground overlooking the site there is a dense tree belt on the boundary of the school which largely screens views to the site. There would be substantial impact on views to the site from the car park of the Bexhill Leisure Centre, however there are no windows on the side of the building overlooking the site.

*Visual Impacts on Commercial Premises*

13.5.39 Some commercial premises on London Road would have glimpses to the site between terraced houses. These would not be significant in the context of traffic on the road. Properties on London Road and Holliers Hill which back on to the railway line would experience some visual impacts during construction. Those immediately adjacent to the railway, the Nook and Old Station House would suffer a moderate adverse impact during the construction phase as there are open views from these. The Pelham Hotel would suffer moderate adverse visual impacts during the demolition and reconstruction of the Ninfield Road Bridge.

13.5.40 Residential properties on farms have been assessed as such and are included in Table 13.13 and the working farm buildings and fields are assessed in this section and included in Table 13.14. The proximity of the construction works to some farm buildings and fields would mean that several would experience a moderate to substantial visual impact during the construction period.

**Table 13.14 Construction Impacts on Commercial Properties**

Section of Scheme	Level of Visual Impact							
	Sev. Adv.	Sub. Adv.	Mod. Adv.	Sli. Adv.	Neg.	No Cha.	Sli. Ben.	Mod. Ben.
Belle Hill to Glovers Farm	-	-	10	1	1	4	-	-
Glovers Farm to Adams Farm	-	3	5	-	-	1	-	-
Adams Farm to Queensway	-	1	1	4	-	1	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	-	-

*Visual Impacts on Public Rights of Way*

13.5.41 The public footpaths which cross the Scheme at Chapel Path and Bancroft Road would suffer substantial visual impacts during the construction period. These would need to be closed or diverted during construction and these impacts would be intermittent. There would be views in to the site from Belle Hill and London Road in the urban area these visual impacts would be greatest during the demolition and site clearance periods of construction.

13.5.42 There would be considerable visual impact on the rural footpaths in the Study Area 1 during the construction period. These are summarised in Table 13.15 and in Appendix 13-D.

**Table 13.15 Construction Impacts PROW, Permissive Paths and Tracks**

Section of Scheme	Level of Visual Impact (metre lengths)							
	Sev. Adv.	Sub. Adv.	Mod. Adv.	Sli. Adv.	Neg.	No Cha.	Sli. Ben.	Mod. Ben.
Belle Hill Grovers Farm	-	80	30	-	-	754	-	-
Grovers Farm to Adams Farm	-	5578	2612	925	188	12678	-	-
Adams Farm to Queensway	-	-	110	-	-	10	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>5658</b>	<b>2752</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>13442</b>	-	-

**13.6 Operational Impacts**

***Impact on Landscape and Townscape Character Areas***

13.6.1 This section describes the potential impact of the Scheme on landscape features such as landform, vegetation, cultural heritage and settlement in each character area. The Table 13.16 is a summary of those impacts on each character area. The following section goes on to describe the impacts in detail. The impacts have been assessed in accordance with the landscape and townscape impact criteria in Table 13.6 and 13.7 respectively. The impact significance would also take in to account the quality, value and sensitivity of each character area, as identified in Table 13.10. The assessment also takes in to account potential impacts of reduced or increased traffic in each character area as a result of the Scheme.

**Table 13.16 Operational Landscape and Townscape Impacts**

Character Area	Type of Impact (Indirect/Direct)	Daytime Impacts - Opening Year	Daytime Impacts - Design Year	Night time Impacts - Opening Year	Night time Effects - Design Year
1) Combe Haven Valley Floor	Direct	Sl. Adverse	Neutral	Sl. Adverse	Neutral
2) Glyne Gap/ Pebsham	See subdivisions below	-	-	-	-
2a) Rural Pebsham	Indirect	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
2b) Filsham Ridge	Indirect	Sl. Beneficial	Sl. Beneficial	Neutral	Neutral
3) Watermill Stream Valley	Direct	Sl. Adverse	Sl. Adverse	Sl. Adverse	Neutral
4) Buckholt Farm / Watermill Lane	Indirect	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
5) Preston Hall Worsham	See subdivisions below	-	-	-	-
5a) Preston Hall	Indirect	Neutral	Neutral	Sl. Adverse	Neutral
5b) Worsham Farm	Direct	Mod. Adverse	Sl. Adverse	Sl. Adverse	Neutral
6) Powdermill Valley	Direct	Mod. Adverse	Sl. Adverse	Sl. Adverse	Neutral
7) Crowhurst Road /Upper Wilting	Direct	Mod. Adverse	Sl. Adverse	Sl. Adverse	Sl. Adverse
<b>Bexhill</b>					
8) North Bexhill	See subdivisions below	-	-	-	-
8a) North Sidley	Direct	Sl. Adverse	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
8b) Bexhill Down	Direct	Sl. Adverse	Neutral	Sl. Adverse	Neutral
8c) London Road North	Direct	Sl. Adverse	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Character Area	Type of Impact (Indirect/Direct)	Daytime Impacts - Opening Year	Daytime Impacts - Design Year	Night time Impacts - Opening Year	Night time Effects - Design Year
9) Central Bexhill	See subdivisions below	-	-	-	-
9a) London Road South	Indirect	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
9b) Old Town	Indirect	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
10) East Bexhill	See subdivisions below	-	-	-	-
10a) Ancaster/Hastings Road	Indirect	SI Beneficial	SI Beneficial	Neutral	Neutral
10b) Pebsham	Indirect	N C	N C	N C	N C
11) Bulverhythe	Indirect	SI Beneficial	SI Beneficial	Neutral	Neutral
12) West Woods	Indirect	SI Adverse	SI Adverse	SI Adverse	SI Adverse
13) Hollington Stream	Indirect	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
14) West Ridge	See subdivisions below				
14a) Rural	Indirect	N C	N C	N C	N C
14b) Urban	Indirect	SI Adverse	SI Adverse	Neutral	Neutral
15) Crowhurst High Weald	Indirect	SI Beneficial	SI Beneficial	Neutral	Neutral

Notes:

NC - no change

SI - slight

Mod - moderate

### **Operational Impacts on Character areas**

#### **1) Combe Haven Valley Floor**

13.6.2 The Scheme with associated earthworks and presence of moving vehicles would have an impact on the character of this area as the earthworks would extend in to the northern edge. There would be a direct impact on the remote character of the area from noise associated with moving traffic. The impact of the Scheme on remote landscape is shown by comparing Figure 13.2 with 13.19. There would be an impact on the relative tranquillity at the

lower end of the scale as identified by CPRE (2006) and shown in Figure 13.3 and 13.3A.

13.6.3 The proposed mitigation measures would substantially reduce noise impacts intruding into this character area. To a lesser extent the introduction of cyclists in to the area on the Greenway would have an impact on remote character. The design of the Scheme would allow some areas of remote landscape to be retained in the Combe Haven Valley Floor.

13.6.4 Earthworks and the water retention ponds on the southern side of the road in the Powdermill valley area would introduce new landscape features just within this character area, however the new landform would help to define the Combe Haven character area and tie the Scheme in to the existing topography. These earthworks would help to integrate the Scheme in to the landscape. Figure 13.18, Cross Section E illustrates the design of the Scheme on the edge of this character area.

13.6.5 The Greenway would run along the northern edge of this character area, within the footprint of the Scheme. It would introduce cyclists and walkers and therefore increased disturbance around the edge of the valley floor, sometimes in an elevated position. This would not have a significant impact on the valley floor as the Greenway would be enclosed by a hedge for most of its length. The Greenway would be open to the character area for a short section of about 240m where it crosses the Powdermill Stream. There would be a slight impact on the field pattern of a small part of this character area where some ditches and a section of hedge would be affected, as identified in Figure 13.17 and Appendix 13-H. This would be replaced with a marsh area and ponds which would form part of the mitigation works

13.6.6 The route alignment is designed to avoid the open area of the Combe Haven Valley floor and therefore retain the integrity of this character area. The Scheme would provide an opportunity to manage water levels in this area, to retain seasonal flooding and retain the water levels in the ditches. This is important in maintaining the characteristic vegetation and historic character of the area. The impact on this character area is considered to be Slight Adverse on day of opening and reducing Neutral after 15 years.

## *2) Glyne Gap – Pebsham*

### *2a) Rural Pebsham*

13.6.7 The overall impact is considered to be Neutral as there would be no direct impacts and no changes in traffic volumes.

### *2b) Filsham Ridge*

13.6.8 The proposed Scheme would not have a direct impact on the landscape of this character area. There would be a reduction in traffic in Glyne Gap, on the southern boundary of the area. There would also be a reduction in traffic on Harley Shute Road on the eastern boundary. As shown in Figure 13.21 and assessed in Appendix 13-E, these reductions would affect the very

edges of the area, giving a slight benefit. As these reductions are on the margins of the character area the overall impact is considered to be Slight Beneficial.

### 3) *Watermill Stream Valley*

13.6.9 The Scheme would intrude into the remote rural character of this area and impact on areas of exceptional remoteness. This is shown by comparing Figure 13.2 with 13.19. There would be an impact on relative tranquillity at the lower end of the scale, as identified by CPRE (2006) and displayed in Figure 13.3 and 13.3A, on the southern boundary of this area. There would be increased noise levels into this area from the road but the mitigation measures are designed to minimise the impact of increased noise in this countryside.

13.6.10 The road construction would impact on the ridge and valley landscape where it crosses the Watermill Stream Valley. However, the route alignment has been designed to minimise intrusion into the open valley landscape and the need for deep cuttings across the ridges. It would be in cutting through the ridge to the west of Acton's Farm. The cut slopes on the west side would be rolled over at the top to create more natural slopes, therefore reducing the impact on the local landform. This is shown in Figure 13.18, Section B.

13.6.11 The road emerges from this cutting to cross the Watermill Stream Valley on an embankment. This would effectively truncate the valley and separate it from the Combe Haven Valley floor. The Scheme design aims to create a new landform across the Watermill Valley and the associated earthworks would be tied in to the ridges on either side. A cross section of proposed earthworks adjacent to Hillcroft ridge is shown in Figure 13.18, Section C.

13.6.12 Proposed woodland blocks, hedges and scrub areas would help to integrate the proposed Scheme into the local landscape and replace features which are lost. The restoration of meadows, wet grassland and fen would restore a distinctive natural character to the landscape adjacent to the Scheme. Planting would be used to integrate the embankment and earthworks into the landscape. This would be tied in to existing tree belts to the north of Acton's Farm.

13.6.13 The Watermill Stream Bridge would be a new structure in the local landscape. This would be set within woodland planting which would afford some screening from wider views and create a setting within which its impact would be minimal. The overbridge crossings and public rights of way diversion routes at Acton's Farm and Hillcroft Farm would be over cutting and designed to blend in to the local landscape.

13.6.14 The surfaced and partially fenced Greenway would introduce a new feature into the rural landscape. In this character area the Greenway follows an existing bridleway and track but the provision of a segregated cycle/pedestrian route and bridleway would have a wider footprint than the existing track. The segregated routes lie on either side of a tall hedge which

would help to integrate the Greenway into the surrounding landscape. A section of about 30m of hedge would be affected by the Greenway in this area.

13.6.15 The road alignment avoids major tree belts and woodland. The Scheme would remove a section of mature hedgerow on either side of the Acton's Farm access track. A further section of mature hedgerow would be lost to the west of Acton's Farm. Other less significant hedges and scrubby willow areas would be affected close to the Watermill Stream crossing.

13.6.16 The significant hedge on either side of the bridleway to Hillcroft Farm would be severed and removed on each side of the track. The total areas of vegetative features affected in this character area are indicated on Figure 13.17 and listed in Appendix 13-H. The road alignment and Scheme design has been adjusted to avoid significant hedgerow oaks in this area.

13.6.17 The Scheme would impact on the southern edge of this character area of moderate sensitivity and create a new landform between the Watermill and Combe Haven Valleys. The alignment and other mitigation measures would contribute to the integration of the Scheme into this character area. There would be significant traffic reductions on Henleys Down Road on the northern boundary of the character area, which is also the AONB boundary. Assessments of the visual impact as a result of traffic changes are contained in Appendix 13-E. The impact of the Scheme on this character area is considered to be Slight Adverse on day of opening and remaining as Slight Adverse after 15 years.

#### *4) Buckholt Farm / Watermill*

13.6.18 The road would not have a direct physical impact on this area. Figure 13.2 and 13.19 show the presence of the road would introduce minor disturbances to the remote character of the area. There would be an impact on relative tranquillity at the lower end of the scale on the eastern boundary of this area. The CPRE Tranquil Areas are shown Figure 13.3 and 13.3A. Figure 13.21 and Appendix 13-E indicate that there is would also be a significant decrease in traffic on Watermill Lane. The overall impact on this character area of moderate sensitivity is considered to be Neutral and the same at 15 years, as positive and negative impact are considered to offset each other.

#### *5) Preston Hall Worsham Farm*

##### *5a) Preston Hall*

13.6.19 There would be no direct impact on this character area. As shown in Figure 13.2 and 13.19, this area is not considered to be remote. Figure 13.3 shows that the area is considered to be relatively less tranquil, due to proximity to the urban edge. There would be benefits from reduction in traffic on Watermill Lane. The impact on this character area is considered to be Neutral and the same at 15 years.

### *5b) Worsham Farm*

13.6.20 As shown in Figure 13.2 and 13.19, there is some remoteness merging into exceptional remoteness in the northern part of this character area. The Scheme would cut through this area and impact on the remote character. Figure 13.3 shows that there is low relative tranquillity in this area, due to proximity to the urban edge. This section of road is generally near existing grade with a slight embankment and low bridge at the north end, across the Combe Haven River. The road would cut across the grain of the landscape and truncate the existing valley. The proposed earthworks on either side of the road would help to integrate the road in to the setting and create a new landform at the head of the valley. Figure 13.18A shows the proposed earthworks in cross section.

13.6.21 The road emerges from the urban area in the existing railway cutting. There is a short section on low embankment before it crosses the Combe Haven River. The impact on landform is minor here as the alignment would avoid significant changes in level. The main impact would be the severance of the end of the valley. This impact would be mitigated with regrading of slopes to tie in with the existing landform. Woodland planting would reinforce the new landform and the new woodland would be tied into existing shaws and hedges to strengthen the new landscape.

13.6.22 The brick built railway overbridge at Glovers Farm would be lost, but would be replaced with a modern structure to give access to Glovers Farm. This bridge would accommodate the Greenway as well. This would require removal of trees on either side of the railway cutting. Trees would also be lost within the working area required to construct the bridge.

13.6.23 The Greenway would be split into two tracks through this section, one for equestrians to the west of the road and another for a shared cycle/footpath to the east. The impact of these tracks in this character area is not considered to be significant in the context of the Scheme. The Greenway would follow existing contours and a hedge planted on the west side would help to integrate it into the surrounding landscape. The Combe Haven Underbridge would be a new structure in this landscape. The proposed earthworks and planting surrounding this structure would help to integrate it in to the character of the area.

13.6.24 Impacts on the existing vegetation features are indicated on Figure 13.17 and listed in Appendix 13-H. There would be an impact on trees in the disused railway cutting. The greatest loss would be where the road emerges from the urban area. Approximately 27 trees would be removed between Glovers Lane and the proposed Glovers Farm access bridge. The remaining 5,530m<sup>2</sup> would be managed by thinning and coppicing. These trees are self seeded and all of a similar age and as a result many are spindly and unstable. Some hedgerow would be lost from field boundaries on this part of the route. Where the route crosses the Combe Haven some riverside scrub would be lost. Extensive wood and hedge planting would be part of the road mitigation to replace trees and hedges lost to the Scheme.

13.6.25 The impact on this character area of low sensitivity is likely to be Moderate Adverse on day of opening, reducing to Slight Adverse after 15 years.

#### 6) *Powdermill Valley*

13.6.26 The Scheme is on the edge of the Powdermill Valley character area. As shown in Figure 13.2 and 13.19, the Scheme would intrude into the remote rural character of this area. The area is on the lower scale of relatively most tranquil, and there would be an impact on tranquillity. Figure 13.3 shows the CPRE Tranquil Areas. Noise impacts from the road would be substantially reduced by the proposed new landforms minimising the effects upon the valley floor, although the spread of noise would be a little further on the hillsides.

13.6.27 The alignment of the road through this area would impact on the traditional field pattern and cut across the grain of the landscape. The Scheme design aims to create a new landform and a defined boundary between the Combe Haven Valley floor and the Powdermill Valley. The alignment has been adjusted to avoid the open levels but at the same time cut through the lowest part of the ridge system on the north side of the valley. The road is in cutting through the southern end of the Hillcroft Farm ridge and the cut slopes on the north side would be rolled back at the top to reduce the impact of the cutting. This part of the Scheme is shown in cross section in Figure 13.18, Cross Section D.

13.6.28 Earthworks on the south side of the road would form a new side slope to the Combe Haven Valley and spur to the Hillcroft Ridge. The proposed road crossing the Powdermill Valley would cut across the grain of the landscape. This cutting would be integrated into the existing landform by gentle mounding on either side. This is shown in Figure 13.18, Cross Section E. The creation of wetlands and some open water adjacent to the Powdermill Stream would enhance the character of this area. Much of the valley is currently farmed as arable crops and the landscape structure is weak where hedges have been removed and wet meadows drained.

13.6.29 There would be accommodation overbridges south of Hillcroft Farm and Adams Farm which would introduce new features into the rural landscape. The bridge at Hillcroft Farm would be integrated into the local landscape with earthworks and planting. The Powdermill valley and stream crossing would have an impact on the local landscape but would be integrated by new landform and proposed planting. The Adams Farm overbridge would have an impact on the setting of the listed farmhouse. The Greenway runs parallel and close to the proposed road across this area and on the south side, it would be enclosed by a hedge for most of its length.

13.6.30 The deep cutting to the south of Adam's Farm would have an impact on the local topography and character of the ridge. The impact of the deep south facing cut slope would be reduced by introduction of a 'shelf' with planting part way up. Otherwise side slopes would be quite steep to maximise noise benefits, minimise the Scheme footprint and avoid intrusion into the SSSI. At Adam's Farm the scope to do this is limited because of the impact on

the listed farmhouse and associated trees. Planting would be used to provide a buffer to the farmhouse and tie in with existing woodland.

13.6.31 The road alignment has been adjusted to avoid significant hedges and mature trees. Sections of hedge would be lost on either side of the bridleway up to Hillcroft Farm. This is also referred to in the Watermill character area, as this is on the boundary between the two areas. The road cuts through two remnant hedges in the valley, where short sections would be lost, however the alignment takes advantage of existing gaps.

13.6.32 Mature trees lost to the Scheme here include three significant trees, a poplar, a willow and an oak. Other understorey and smaller trees include oak, hawthorn, maple and willow, 20 trees in total. Remaining trees in the grounds of Adams Farm and on the disused railway would be brought into management. Impacts on vegetation are shown on Figure 13.17 and listed in Appendix 13-H.

13.6.33 Some significant trees would be lost to the cutting south of Adam's Farm and the impacts on vegetation are shown in Figure 13.17 and in Appendix 13-H. Trees would be lost where the road would cut through the disused railway embankment, 45 trees in total, including 19 oaks, 4 ash and the rest hawthorn. The extensive mitigation planting would ultimately increase the tree and hedgerow cover in this area.

13.6.34 Planting of woodland and hedges would tie in to existing hedges and tree belts. Woodland planting would be used to integrate the Scheme and particularly the cut slopes and new earthworks.

13.6.35 There would be a significant impact on the listed farmhouse at Adam's Farm. The road would introduce noise and vehicle movement into this remote rural area where there are no roads at present.

13.6.36 There would be significant reductions in traffic on Sandrock Hill in the north-east corner of this character area. The Visual Impact Schedule on traffic changes is contained in Appendix 13-E. The overall impact of the Scheme on this character area, of moderate sensitivity, on day of opening would be likely to be Moderate Adverse, this would reduce to Slight Adverse after 15 years.

#### *7) Crowhurst Road – Wilting Farm*

13.6.37 As shown on Figure 13.2 and Figure 13.19, there would be an impact on remote landscape in this character area. Figure 13.3 shows that there is low relative tranquillity in this area, due to proximity to the urban edge. The introduction of increased traffic noise and vehicle movement would impact on the rural character of this area and these needs to be considered in the context of existing traffic on Crowhurst Road. There would be a significant reduction in traffic on Crowhurst Road, particularly by year 15. The Visual Impact Schedule on traffic changes is contained in Appendix 13-E.

13.6.38 The sequence of cuttings and embankments in this section of the Scheme would cut across the local topography and grain of the landscape. The alignment and detailed design of the Scheme has attempted to minimise the physical impact on this landscape whilst avoiding trees and hedges in this area. The Scheme emerges from the cutting south of Adam's Farm onto embankment, north of Decoy Wood and then goes into cutting south of Chapel Wood.

13.6.39 The embankment over Decoy Stream would be mitigated with earthworks to tie the embankment into the existing slope. The route would be on embankment to carry it over the Hastings to London railway line and in cutting where it joins the Queensway. The embankment over the railway line and the cutting adjacent to the Queensway would go against the grain of the landscape. The proposed junction with the Queensway would be in cutting. The existing tree cover would further screen the junction.

13.6.40 The crossing of the Decoy Stream and underbridge would introduce new features into this rural landscape. The road would be carried over Crowhurst Road and would then bridge the railway on a high embankment. This would be screened by existing woodland and new woodland planting to tie into this. The Scheme alignment has been taken in cutting to the north of the listed Upper Wilting Farm House to reduce the impact on the building and the farm holding. The Greenway would generally follow the existing contours on the south side of the proposed road.

13.6.41 In order to achieve reasonable gradients for cyclists there would be two sections where it would come away from the road. Where the proposed road crosses the tree belt to the east of Adam's Farm and existing tree belts the alignment of the Greenway has been pulled back close to the road to minimize the impact on these areas and avoid intrusion into the SSSI. To the east of Decoy Wood the cycle/footpath part of the Greenway would extend south to follow a more gentle gradient than the bridleway, which would be aligned with the proposed road. This cycle/footpath section would be against the background of an existing area of woodland and would follow the edge of the fields, therefore minimising the impact on the existing landscape pattern. Where possible the Greenway would cross hedges and tree belts through existing gaps to minimize the impact on these features, however it would impact on a mature hedge, which is included in the summary of impacts on vegetation below. The section east of Upper Wilting Farm would follow Crowhurst Road to join Queensway.

13.6.42 Some significant well treed hedges or field boundaries would be affected, including a section north-west of Decoy Wood at chainage 4450 and another north-east of Decoy Wood on the Decoy Stream.. The impacts of the Scheme on Vegetation are shown in Figure 13.17 and are assessed in Appendix 13-H. The Scheme would impact on the tree belt on both sides of Crowhurst Road.

13.6.43 The road alignment has been adjusted to avoid any significant impact on the Marline Valley Woods SSSI which is semi-natural Ancient Woodland, and a Local Nature Reserve. There would be loss of mature trees and woodland adjacent to the railway cutting. An area of scrubby woodland would be lost on the slope approaching Queensway junction. This needs to be

considered in the context of the heavily wooded landscape to the north. Total losses of vegetation features in this character area are shown on Figure 13.17 and listed in Appendix 13-H.

13.6.44 The existing woods of Decoy, Little Bog and Chapel Woods, as well as the many tree belts and shaws would help to integrate the road in to this landscape. Considerable planting would be carried out to strengthen the existing woodland structure. Extensive areas of woodland would be incorporated into the Scheme and managed to ensure the long term stability and protection, including Little Bog Wood. The proposed embankment over the railway line would be screened by the existing woodland and the proposed tree planting. Extensive new woodland planting on either side of the proposed embankment would be tied into the existing wood to strengthen the local wooded character of the area.

13.6.45 There would be a significant reduction in traffic on Crowhurst Road as a result of the Scheme, particularly by the Design Year. The Visual Impact Schedule on traffic changes is contained in Appendix 13-E. This character area is of moderate sensitivity and the overall impact on this character area is considered to be Moderate Adverse on day of opening and reducing to Slight Adverse after 15 years.

#### *8) North Bexhill*

##### *8a) North Sidley*

13.6.46 This is the area of north Bexhill and north of Ninfield Road. The location of this character area is shown in Figure 13.7. The road alignment would follow the existing railway line through the built up area of Bexhill. As the road would be in an existing cutting the potential impacts on the landform and the urban grain would be minimised.

13.6.47 The proposed road would introduce a new noise source into the quiet residential area of North Sidley. The road would be in deep cutting and noise fencing would be used at the top of the cuttings to minimise noise impact on the adjacent houses. This would also screen views to the road.

13.6.48 The loss of trees in the cutting would result in a loss of the tree feature in the short term. The existing tree cover is important in the local urban area as a focus of townscape character. However the trees have not been managed since the closing of the railway in the 1960s, they are self seeded and all of a similar age. Most are therefore spindly specimens and overcrowded, with many windfalls leaning on other trees. In the longer term management of the remaining existing trees and the new planting associated with the road would provide a more stable and better managed tree feature.

13.6.49 There would be some trees retained at the top half of the existing cutting, these would be managed to ensure long term safety and preservation. The impact on existing vegetation is shown on Figure 13.17 and listed in Appendix 13-H. In total about 47 trees would be removed for the construction

of the Ninfield Road Bridge. A further 93 trees would be removed between Ninfield Road and Glovers Lane.

13.6.50 The existing brick railway bridge which carries Ninfield Road would be lost as a feature in the urban environment. This bridge is not of great architectural merit but it does lend some historic character to this part of Bexhill and reminder of the railway heritage. The replacement bridge would be a larger structure. The development would change the character of this area of townscape. There would be loss of trees to the working area for the Ninfield Road Bridge as detailed above.

13.6.51 Replacement tree planting would be carried out on both sides of the road to replace trees lost to the Scheme. This would be a mix of species to create a varied and more interesting tree feature in the urban area than the existing limited species mix.

13.6.52 The reduction of traffic on Wrestwood Road, and Holliers Hill would improve the townscape character in this area. The visual impacts of changes in traffic volumes are shown in Figure 13.21 and assessed in Appendix 13-E. The creation of a well designed, managed and permanent tree feature as part of the Scheme would enhance the character of this area. The impact on this area of low sensitivity would be Slight Adverse on day of opening and reducing to Neutral after 15 years when the proposed planting would have matured.

#### *8b) Bexhill Down*

13.6.53 The Scheme generally works with the urban grain in that it follows an existing transport corridor and is parallel to London Road. The proposed landscape treatment would improve the quality and management opportunities in this currently unmanaged area. Proposed management and replanting of the railway corridor would give an opportunity to provide a permanent green corridor in the townscape. The loss of the brick bridge crossing at Woodsgate Park would impact on the historic character. This would be replaced with a modern structure which would be larger in scale.

13.6.54 The redesign of the Belle Hill junction and southern end of London Road would provide an opportunity to improve the urban grain. An urban green space would be created opposite the remaining terrace of houses on London Road. The redesign of the junction and landscape treatment in this area would restore the urban grain and create a more attractive environment.

13.6.55 There would be a severance impact of the traffic on the proposed road between this area and London Road. However, access across the railway land is at present difficult and hazardous as the area is overgrown and fly tipped. Crossing points are limited to the footpaths at Chapel Path, Bancroft Road and Woodsgate Park Bridge. The Scheme would improve pedestrian movement in the area by providing a path under the road at Chapel Path and a redirected path to link this with the Bancroft Road Path.

13.6.56 The introduction of a new road into the area would impact on the properties which back on to the disused railway line. The existing self sown trees and scrub would be replaced by new planting with an increased variety of species to create a better amenity feature.

13.6.57 These properties would suffer increased disturbance to the rear and in back gardens. This would be mitigated with noise fencing and other compensation measures, where appropriate.

13.6.58 The loss of trees in the disused railway would impact on the townscape in an area where there are few trees. This would be a short term impact as new planting of a more varied nature and with secure long term management would replace this tree feature. The alignment of the road in this narrow corridor has been adjusted to retain groups of mature trees where possible and to protect existing badger setts, especially north of Woodsgate Park Bridge.

13.6.59 The construction of the bridge at Woodsgate Park would require removal of mature trees which are important in the local landscape, notably some mature oaks. The total area of trees in this corridor which would be affected by the Scheme summarised in Figure 13.17 and assessed in Appendix 13-H. Approximately 130 trees would be lost between Ninfield Road and Woodsgate Park bridges and another 13 to the south of Bancroft Road path. A 45m length of Leyland hedge would be lost in the school grounds.

13.6.60 The overall impact on this area of low sensitivity is considered to be Slight Adverse on the day of opening and reducing to Neutral at year 15.

#### *8c) London Road North*

13.6.61 The boundary of this character area is the railway line itself. The impacts on the character of area would be much the same as those described for the Bexhill Down character area above. The benefits for this area would be greater in the longer term than the disbenefits.

13.6.62 There would be demolition at the southern end of the Scheme which would impact on local townscape as it would open this area up and increase the size of this junction, working against the urban grain. The loss of the Victorian terrace of houses on the west side of London Road would remove the symmetry of the street in this location.

13.6.63 The removal of the row of shops facing the A259 including the fish and chip shop would have an impact on the scale of the local townscape. The removal of the Rother District Council depot area and the random assortment of prefabricated buildings on the school site in London Road would improve the townscape and provide an opportunity to redesign the urban layout.

13.6.64 The redesign of the Belle Hill junction and southern end of London Road would provide an opportunity to improve the urban grain. An urban green space would be created opposite the remaining terrace on London

Road. The redesign of the junction and landscape treatment in this area would restore the urban grain and create a more attractive environment.

13.6.65 There would be benefit to the townscape from reduction in traffic on London Road, and King Offas Way. The visual impacts resulting from traffic changes are shown in Figure 13.21 and assessed in Appendix 13-E. This would improve the environment for residents and provide opportunities for environmental improvements.

13.6.66 The impact of the Scheme on this area of low sensitivity would be Slight Adverse on day of opening and reducing to Neutral at year 15.

#### *9) Central Bexhill*

##### *9a) London Road South*

13.6.67 The proposed road development would not have a direct impact on this area. The reduction in traffic on the A259 would potentially improve access to this area for residents and visitors to the town centre and seafront. The impacts of traffic changes are shown on Figure 13.21 and assessed in Appendix 13-E. Access for residents from this area to the facilities north of the road should be improved, including the Leisure Centre, schools and Bexhill Down. There would be significant traffic increases on the A269 London Road South, The impacts on this area would be Neutral as a result of the Scheme.

##### *9b) Old Town*

13.6.68 The proposed road alignment would not impact directly on this area. Reduction in traffic would make it possible for secondary traffic measures to improve pedestrian access to the Old Town on Chantry Lane for pedestrians, local traffic and cyclists. Reduction in traffic on De La Warr Road would improve the environment on the northern boundary of this area and in this part of the Old Town Conservation Area. The impacts of traffic changes are shown on Figure 13.21 and assessed in Appendix 13-E.

13.6.69 As secondary measures associated with the Scheme and traffic reduction benefits it may be possible to introduce a signal controlled one way system, working on the narrow section of Chantry Lane at the junction with Holliers Hill. There would be a Neutral impact to this area of high sensitivity as a result of the Scheme.

#### *10) Eastern Bexhill*

##### *10a) Ancaster Hastings Road*

13.6.70 There would be no direct impacts of the Scheme on this area. Reduction in traffic on De La Warr Road, would improve permeability by making north south crossing of this road easier for local traffic and pedestrians. The visual impacts resulting from changes in traffic volumes are shown in Figure 13.21 and assessed in Appendix 13-E. There would also be

traffic reductions on Hastings Road and King Offas Way. There would be a Slight Benefit to this area of moderate sensitivity as a result of the Scheme.

*10b) Pebsham*

13.6.71 There would be no direct effects on the character of this area and therefore No Change.

*11) Bulverhythe*

13.6.72 There would be traffic reductions on Bexhill Road and the visual impacts as result of changes in traffic are shown on Figure 13.21 and assessed in Appendix 13-E. The Scheme is likely to have the following effects on this area:

- Potential for environmental improvements to the main A259 road;
- Improved linkages and access across the area for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Improvements to community well being; and,
- Improvements to the water levels and access in the Combe Haven Stream.

13.6.73 The impact of the Scheme is considered to be a Slight Benefial to this area of low sensitivity at the day of opening and similarly at the Design Year.

*12) West Woods*

13.6.74 This character area has seen much change in recent years and is an area of urban expansion. From this point of view the landscape is not particularly sensitive and can accommodate change to road layouts with only a local impact. The proposed Scheme junction with Queensway would impact on this area.

13.6.75 The new road would emerge in cutting into the existing Queensway cutting. There is no significant roadside vegetation here apart from recent plantings and scrub. The proposed planting would integrate the junction into the local landscape.

13.6.76 There would be increases in traffic on Queensway which forms the boundary of this character area. The visual impacts that would result from changes in traffic are shown in Figure 13.21 and assessed in Appendix 13-E.

13.6.77 Queensway is designed as a distributor road in a wide green corridor with no overlooking houses. The impact of increased traffic on the character is therefore absorbed by the nature of the road. The impact on this area of moderate sensitivity is considered to be Slight Adverse at day one and in the Design Year.

### *13) Hollington Stream*

13.6.78 Harley Shute Road carries traffic going to and from the A259 Bexhill Road through Bulverhythe. The area would benefit from a reduction in traffic on Harley Shute Road. The visual impacts that would result from changes in traffic are shown in Figure 13.21 and assessed in Appendix 13-E. This reduction in traffic should benefit regeneration opportunities around the junction with Bexhill Road and provide scope for environmental improvement.

13.6.79 This would benefit large numbers of residents who would have improved access across the area. Access to the many schools in this area would be safer, notably West St Leonard's and those in Filsham Valley. There would be traffic increases on Gillsmans Hill on the north boundary of this character area.

13.6.80 The impact of the Scheme on this area of moderate sensitivity is considered to be Neutral.

### *14) The Ridge*

#### *14a) Rural*

13.6.81 The rural part of this character area would experience no effects as a result of the proposed Scheme and would have No Change.

#### *14b) Urban*

13.6.82 The urban part of the character area would experience an increase in traffic emerging on to the Ridge from Queensway which forms the eastern boundary of this area. Increases on West Ridge and on Queensway would be significant,

13.6.83 The overall impact on this area of moderate sensitivity would be Slight Adverse.

### *15) The High Weald*

13.6.84 There would not be a direct physical impact of the Scheme on this character area or the High Weald AONB.

13.6.85 There would be considerable benefits to the character of the rural lanes from reduction of traffic. The greatest reduction would be on Henleys Down Road which is on the southern boundary of the character area. There would also be traffic reductions on Ballards Hill, Chapel Hill and Sandrock Hill through the village. The visual impacts that would result from changes in traffic are shown in Figure 13.21 and contained in Appendix 13-E.

13.6.86 The impacts on this area of high sensitivity are considered to be Slight Beneficial at opening and in the Design Year.

*Secondary Effects of Traffic Changes on Study Area 2*

13.6.87 Table 13.17 summarises the traffic impacts on the wider Study Area 2. A significance score has been given to each of these areas based on the same criteria used to score the impacts on landscape and townscape. The visual impacts that would result from changes in traffic are shown in Figure 13.21 and contained in Appendix 13-E.

**Table 13.17 Study Area 2 Operational Landscape and Townscape Impacts**

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Sensitivity to Change</b>	<b>Effects of traffic changes</b>
Pevensey Levels	Moderate	There would be a significant traffic reduction on the Hooe Road from the A259 to Hooe Common through this character area leading to a Moderate Beneficial impact.
South Slopes of High Weald	Moderate	There would be significant traffic reduction on the rural B2095 from Hooe Common to Ninfield. For the Opening Year there would be significant traffic reduction on the A271 Ashburnum Road in the AONB leading to a Moderate Beneficial impact.
Combe Haven Valley	Moderate	There would be significant reductions in traffic on the B2204 road between Ninfield and Catsfield. Within the AONB there would be significant reductions on the B2095 Powdermill Lane from Catsfield to Battle, part of which is in the Battle Conservation Area. Reference should also be made to the impacts on the A2100, which forms the boundary with the area Brede Valley character area. The overall impact would be Moderate Beneficial.
Brede Valley	High	There would be a significant reduction of traffic on the A2100 Hastings Road between Battle and Queensway this forms the southern boundary to this area between the Combe Haven area and is within the AONB. There would be increased traffic on the A2100 and A2093 Ridge which is the southern boundary of this area and the AONB but is within the urban area of Hastings. There would be increased traffic filtering into this area from the Ridge onto rural roads in the AONB. The overall impact would be Neutral.
Bexhill	Low	There would be significant increased traffic in west Bexhill on the A259 Barnhorn Road, Little Common Road Sutherland Av, and St Mary's Lane. The overall impact would be Slight Adverse.
Hastings Marina, St. Leonards/ Old Town	High	There would be significant decreased traffic through the coastal part of Hastings, including the conservation areas of Marina, St Leonard's, the town centre and Old Town. The overall impact would be Slight Beneficial.
North Hastings	Moderate	There would be increases in traffic on the Ridge, as described under Brede Valley. There would be increases on Gillsmans Hill, and to a lesser extent on Ironlatch Ave. and Sedlescombe Road North. The overall impact would be Negligible.
Battle	High	There would be significant reductions in traffic on Battle High Street, which is in a Conservation Area. Greater reductions on the Powdermill Lane junction with the A2100 within the Conservation Area. The overall impact would be Slight Beneficial.

## ***Operational Visual Impacts***

### *Visual Impact Schedules and Drawings*

13.6.88 The ZVI for the Scheme is indicated on Figures 13.15A and B, this has been calculated for the Scheme at Opening Year or day of opening and at the Design Year (year 15) to indicate the effect of mitigation planting. The key viewpoints and photomontage locations are indicated in Figure 13.9.

13.6.89 Visual Impact Schedules (VIS) of detailed impacts from key receptors are reproduced in Appendix 13-B, 13-C, 13-D and 13-E.

13.6.90 These impacts are illustrated on the Visual Impact Drawings (VIDs) shown on Figure 13.11, 13.12, 13.13 and 13.14. The VIDs indicate the impact on properties on the day of opening and at the Design Year.

### *Views from Residential Properties*

13.6.91 The level of visual impact for residential properties is summarised in Table 13.18 below. The visual impact upon properties in the Opening Year in winter is shown in italics and the operational impacts during the winter months of the Design Year, following the establishment of planting, are shown in bold.

13.6.92 The detailed tables of visual impact from individual properties which may be affected is provided in Appendix 13-B. Visual impacts on individual residential properties are mapped on the VIDs on Figure 13.11, 13.12, 13.13 and 13.14.

13.6.93 Figure 13.21 indicates changes in traffic volumes in Study Area 2 and Appendix 13-E is an assessment of the visual impacts of traffic changes.

**Table 13.18 Operational Impacts on Residential Properties**

Section of Scheme	Level of Visual Impact							
	Sev. Adv.	Sub. Adv.	Mod. Adv.	Sli. Adv.	Neg.	No Cha.	Sli. Ben.	Mod. Ben.
Belle Hill to Glovers Farm	-	-	<i>68</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>42</i>	-
	-	-	<b>3</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>
Glovers Farm to Adams Farm	-	-	<i>7</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>162</i>	<i>47</i>	-	-
	-	-	-	<b>5</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>53</b>	-	-
Adams Farm to Queensway	-	-	-	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>20</i>	-	-
	-	-	-	-	<b>2</b>	<b>21</b>	-	-
Totals	-	-	<i>75</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>214</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>42</i>	-
	-	-	<b>3</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>

Notes:

*blocks of flats are counted as one property*

*Numbers in italics represent the visual impact upon properties in winter of the Opening Year.*

*Numbers in bold represent the operational impacts during the winter months of the Design Year, following the establishment of planting.*

**Table 13.19 Operational Impacts of Traffic Changes on Residential Properties**

Road Name	Number of Properties	Significance of impact
<b>Rural Routes</b>		
1) B2095 Powdermill Lane	110	Moderate Beneficial
2) B2095 Hooe Road	113	Moderate Beneficial
3) Watermill Lane	105	Moderate Beneficial
4) Henleys Down Rd.	42	Slight Beneficial <i>Moderate Beneficial</i>
5) Crowhurst Road /village	47	Slight Beneficial
<b>Battle</b>		
6) High Street , Battle	138	Slight Beneficial
7) A2100 Hastings Road	198	Slight Beneficial
8) A271 North Trade Rd.	132	Slight Beneficial
9) Ashburnham Rd.	18	Slight Beneficial <i>Negligible</i>
<b>West Bexhill</b>		
10) Barnhorn Rd.	120	Slight Adverse
11) A259 Little Common Rd.	167	Slight Adverse
12) Cooden Sea Rd.	167	Negligible
13) Sutherland Ave.	47	Slight Adverse
14).St Mary's Lane	25	Slight Adverse
<b>Bexhill</b>		
15) A269 London Rd.	131	Slight Beneficial
16) A269 London Rd South.	71	Slight Adverse
17) King Offa Way	7	Slight Beneficial
18) De La Warr Rd,	144	Slight Beneficial
19) Wrestwood Rd.	176	Negligible
20) Hastings Rd.	76	Negligible <i>Slight Beneficial</i>
<b>Hastings</b>		
21) Chowns Hill	22	Slight Adverse
22) Gillsmans Hill	34	Slight Adverse
23) Ironlatch and Blackman Aves.	239	Negligible
24) A259 Bexhill Rd.	307	Slight Beneficial
25)Crowhurst Rd.	2	Negligible
26) Filsham Rd.	100	Slight Beneficial <i>Negligible</i>
27) Harley Shute Rd.	198	Slight Beneficial
28) Queensway	0	Mod. Adverse
29) Napier Way	7	Negligible
30) A2100 The Ridge	212	Slight Adverse
31) A2100 The Ridge east of Queensway	1	Negligible
32) A21 Sedlecombe Rd. Nth	114	Negligible
33) A259 Hastings seafront	744	Slight Beneficial

Notes:

*Impacts in italics would in the Design Year*

### *Key Receptors*

13.6.94 The key residential receptors in the urban areas would be mainly concentrated in the following areas:

- Properties adjacent to the disused railway line in Bexhill;
- Properties adjacent to the Belle Hill junction;
- Properties with views across the countryside on the northern edge of Sidley;
- Properties on Harley Shute Road and on Filsham Ridge;
- Properties on the slopes to the west of Filsham Road in Hastings; and,
- Harley Shute Road.

13.6.95 In the rural areas the key residential receptors would be:

- The scattered farm settlements which overlook the valley;
- Properties at the east end of Crowhurst Lane;
- Properties on Henleys Down Road, to the west of Crowhurst;
- Henleys Down Road, west of Crowhurst;
- Crowhurst Road between Crowhurst and Queensway; and,
- Glovers Farm.

### *Residential Properties in Bexhill*

13.6.96 Properties on London Road at the Belle Hill junction would have direct views to the Scheme. At present they are very close to traffic on London Road and some overlook the Rother District Council depot. There would be scope here to improve the outlook of these properties by the creation of a landscaped open space. Noise fencing at 1.8m high would be provided for the length of the urban section on both sides, this would also reduce the visual impact of the road from the gardens and ground floor of properties.

13.6.97 From Belle Hill junction north to Ninfield Road the visual impact on properties in Bancroft Road and London Road would be from back gardens and windows to the rear of properties. The Scheme would introduce a new built feature into an area which is currently undeveloped. The mitigation is designed to retain the green outlook for properties which overlook the Scheme and the impact would be considerably reduced once trees have matured.

13.6.98 There would be a slight impact on some properties on the east side of London Road which look between the houses opposite the disused railway. This should be considered in the context of reduced traffic on London Road which would improve the overall visual environment for these residents.

13.6.99 The odd numbered houses from 219 to 305 London Road have a buffer zone of wooded land which would be retained and managed as part of the Scheme mitigation and as badger habitat. From 307 to 327 London Road

there is less space to retain a buffer strip between the properties and the Scheme.

13.6.100 The garden of The Old Station House provides a buffer between 327 to 337 London Road. The Scheme would have a moderately adverse visual impact on The Old Station House. From Brook House North, properties on Buxton Drive, Birch View and Highfield Gardens are separated from the road corridor by the old station depot area and existing trees on the bank which would be retained and managed.

13.6.101 From Ninfield Road, north the road would be in deep cutting, there would be an impact on views from flats and houses immediately above the cutting. Proposed tree planting throughout this urban section on both sides of the proposed road would replace trees lost to the Scheme. This tree feature, in conjunction with existing trees to be retained and managed would screen the road from these houses in the longer term.

13.6.102 Noise fencing at 1.8m in height would be provided for the length of the urban section on both sides. This would reduce the visual impact of the road from the gardens and the ground floor of properties.

13.6.103 There would be an impact on the rural outlook of properties which face north, over the countryside, in Glenburn Close, St James's Close and Glovers Lane. The property Bridgend looks straight towards the Scheme and the impact would be reduced by proposed planting. Extensive earthworks and planting on both sides of the road would mitigate the impacts on properties on the north side of Sidley.

#### *Residential Properties in Hastings*

13.6.104 There are extensive views down Combe Haven Valley from Hastings. The main viewpoint is on Harley Shute Road, by the railway bridge and on the footpath running west from this.

13.6.105 Views from this area would be of limited sections of the Scheme where it travels in and out of cutting and disappears behind existing woods. From most views in this area the longest section of road visible at any one time would be about 400m in the Opening Year. The closest visible parts of the Scheme from where vehicles could be seen are the Glovers Farm to Actons Farm section which is over 2km from the west of Hastings and would be barely discernable from these viewpoints. The ZVIs shown on Figure 13.15A and B indicate that there may be glimpses of short sections. The visible section would be considerably reduced from these areas by the Design Year to very limited areas in the residential area off Harley Shute Road.

13.6.106 The vegetation on the disused railway line embankments, constrict long views down the valley and conceals the sections of the Scheme where it crosses the Combe Haven, Watermill and Powdermill Valleys on embankment. Views to the Decoy Stream crossing are largely concealed by Monkham and Decoy Woods.

13.6.107 From most views in this area the impacts are considered to be slight and the proposed mitigation planting would reduce these impacts to almost negligible after 15 years.

13.6.108 There are long views from residential areas higher up the Filsham Ridge. Properties in Gresham Way and surrounding roads enjoy long views down Combe Haven Valley. The Scheme would be visible in short sections of 100-200m maximum length, where it crosses the head of the Combe Haven Valley. The nearest visible section would be over 2km distance at the Powdermill Stream crossing and therefore barely discernable, particularly by the Design Year where it would be visible from a much smaller area, as shown on the ZVI in Figures 13.15A and 13.15B.

#### *Residential Properties in Rural Areas*

13.6.109 There would be views from the grounds around Glovers Farm some of which would be close views of the road which would have a substantial impact. These views would be reduced to a much more limited part of the farm by the Design Year when mitigation planting has matured. Views to the road from the farmhouse itself are obscured by a large agricultural building. It is proposed to bring the Greenway around the farmhouse on an existing track, this would be visible from the farmhouse. Acton's Farm house would have visual impact from the road, particularly in the Opening Year. The mitigation planting would reduce this impact on close views, but there would be glimpses to the Adam's Farm cutting from the gardens and surroundings of Acton's Cottage.

13.6.110 The Hillcroft Farm settlement would have views towards the Scheme where it crosses the Powdermill valley on embankment. The Scheme would be screened from the farmhouse by the extensive earthworks and proposed planting across the Powdermill Valley. Views from the listed house called Royal Oak are obscured by intervening buildings. There would be views from Hye House Farm Cottages to the Powdermill Valley section of the Scheme and to the Watermill Valley section from Haven on The Hill and some of the grounds around Bynes farmhouse.

13.6.111 There are views down the valley from Crowhurst Village and some properties on the higher ground would have glimpses to the Scheme. These are distant views which would be significantly reduced by the growth of planting by the Design Year.

13.6.112 There would be views towards parts of the Scheme where it crosses the Decoy Valley from properties on Crowhurst Road, including The Briars, and The White House at Lower Wilting Farm. The visual impact on the Briars would be Slight Adverse on the day of opening reducing to negligible by the Design Year. The White House would have no views to the Scheme as the property is screened by existing trees. Properties at the east end of Crowhurst Road are close to the proposed junction with Queensway but are well screened by existing trees and woods and landform. There is one property on Crowhurst Road, Sanctuaire, which is to the south of the proposed junction with Queensway. This is screened from the road by trees and landform.

13.6.113 Properties on Crowhurst Lane would benefit visually from reduced traffic on the lane. The property, Hollyhocks, would have an impact from new traffic signals on Crowhurst Road and the Greenway to the rear of the property. Properties around the Upper Wilting Farm area would have views to the Greenway but not to the Main Scheme.

#### *Impacts of Traffic Changes on Residential Properties*

13.6.114 The visual impacts on properties as a result of traffic changes are summarised in Table 13.19 above, also found on Figure 13.21 and Detailed analysis is provided in Appendix 13-E.

13.6.115 There would be an overall Moderate Benefit to the visual amenity for properties in rural lanes to the west of Bexhill and in the AONB to the north due to the reduction in traffic as a result of the Scheme.

13.6.116 The historic town of Battle would benefit from the reduction in traffic, providing a Slight Benefit impact for properties on the A271 North Trade Road, the High Street and A2100 Hastings Road.

13.6.117 Properties facing the A259 to the west of Bexhill would experience Slight Adverse impacts as a result of traffic increases.

13.6.118 There would be Slight Beneficial visual impacts for properties to the east of the Scheme, including the A259 De La Warr Road and London Road.

13.6.119 The A259 through Bulverhythe, Harley Shute Road and Filsham Road would experience Slight Beneficial impacts as a result of traffic reduction due to the Scheme. This would benefit a considerable number of residential properties as well as schools.

13.6.120 The A259 through Hastings, along the seafront and through Old Town, traverses several Conservation Areas and dense development with many blocks of flats. Residents would experience a Slight Benefit due to reduction in traffic through this area.

13.6.121 There would be increases in traffic in parts of Hastings as a result of the Scheme, notably on the Ridge and Gillsmans Hill where residents would experience Slight Adverse impacts. Queensway would experience a Moderate Adverse impact from traffic increases. This road was designed as a distributor road with no residential properties facing it. It is also lined with dense tree belts on either side to screen the road from surrounding development areas.

#### *Commercial Properties*

13.6.122 A detailed assessment of visual impacts on commercial properties is provided in Appendix 13-C. Commercial properties are considered to be of lower sensitivity to visual impacts than residential properties. The assessment has been carried out from all shops, offices and other businesses which would overlook the road. Commercial properties to be demolished have been noted

as such. In the urban area these impacts are very local to the road corridor due to the alignment in the existing railway cutting and screening afforded by buildings on either side of the corridor.

13.6.123 The impact on working farms has also been assessed in detail in Appendix 13-C. The impact from farm buildings has been assessed as well as impacts on workers in the field. Glovers Farm would have views from the farm buildings and surrounding farm land as the Scheme would cut through this land holding. These impacts would reduce to slight adverse by the Design Year, due to proposed planting.

13.6.124 The Scheme would directly impact on land at Acton's Farm. The visual impact on the farm buildings and land would be Slight Adverse by the Design Year.

13.6.125 The Scheme would cross part of Buckholt Farm and there would be an impact on the farmland but not on the farm buildings which would reduce to Negligible by the Design Year.

13.6.126 There would be a visual impact on the farm land and buildings of Hillcroft Farm. This would be Moderate Adverse at the Opening Year, reducing to Slight Adverse by the Design Year. Similarly the visual impact on neighboring Bynes Farm and Haven on the Hill would be Slight Adverse from the stables and surrounding land. Off site planting would be offered to this property to help reduce visual impact, but there would still be slight adverse impact.

13.6.127 The Scheme would cut across Decoy Farm, having a Moderate visual impact at the Opening Year, reducing to Slight by the Design Year. Other farms in the north-east of the Study Area, on Swainham Lane and Crowhurst Road, would experience some visual impact at the Opening Year, the longest section of the Scheme visible from any viewpoint here would be 200-300m. These impacts would be negligible by the Design Year, with only very small area off Swainham Lane having any views to a maximum of 100m section of the Scheme. This is shown in the ZVIs in Figures 13.15A and B.

13.6.128 For most part this would reduce to negligible by the Design Year. Upper Wilting Farm would be the worst affected farm. However, proposed planting would reduce impacts on the working farm to negligible by the Design Year.

#### *Community Facilities*

13.6.129 These are considered in Table 13.20 below as they are low sensitivity receptors. The Leisure Centre car park at Belle Hill would be adjacent to the Scheme. Views to the Scheme would be screened by a 1.8m high noise fence and belt of tree planting. There are no windows in the Leisure Centre on the side overlooking the Scheme.

13.6.130 King Offa School is set back from the proposed Scheme and there would not be any views to the Scheme from the school or its grounds.

13.6.131 Sidley County Primary School is to the west of the disused railway cutting close to Ninfield Road Bridge. The school buildings would not overlook the site and there would only be views to the Scheme from the edge of the school grounds as a tree belt encloses the grounds, restricting potential views to the Scheme.

13.6.132 The Scheme would impact on the grounds of Bexhill High School and nursery. The nursery would be demolished and replacement buildings provided elsewhere, away from the Scheme. The proposed 1.8m high noise fence and a belt of tree planting would reduce views to the road from the High School grounds.

13.6.133 The level of visual impact for commercial and community properties are summarised in Table 13.20 below. The visual impact upon properties in the Opening Year in winter is shown in italics, whilst operational impacts during the winter months of the Design Year, following the establishment of planting, is shown in bold. The detailed tables of visual impact from individual properties which may be affected is provided in Appendix 13-C contained in Vol. 2 of the ES. The VIDs map visual impacts on individual commercial or community properties and farmland are shown in Figure 13.11, 13.12, 13.13 and 13.14.

**Table 13.20 Operational Impacts on Commercial and Community Properties**

Section of Scheme	Level of Visual Impact							
	Sev. Adv.	Sub. Adv.	Mod. Adv.	Sli. Adv.	Neg.	No Cha.	Sli. Ben.	Mod. Ben.
Belle Hill to Glovers Farm	-	-	-	<i>9</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1</i>	-
	-	-	-	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	-
Glovers Farm to Adams Farm	-	-	<i>3</i>	<i>5</i>	-	<i>1</i>	-	-
	-	-	-	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	-	-
Adams Farm to Queensway	-	-	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	-	-
	-	-	-	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	-	-
<b>Totals</b>	-	-	<i>4</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>1</i>	-
	-	-	-	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	-

Notes:

*Numbers in italics represent the visual impact upon properties in winter of the Opening Year.*

*Numbers in bold represent the operational impacts during the winter months of the Design Year, following the establishment of planting.*

### *Views From Public Rights of Ways*

13.6.134 The levels of visual impact experienced by viewers along the lengths of PROW and permissive paths during the winter of the Opening Year of the Scheme are summarised in Table 13.21. The visual impact of the Scheme in the Opening Year is shown in italics whilst residual impacts during the winter months of the Design Year following the establishment of planting mitigation are shown in bold.

13.6.135 A more detailed analysis of visual impacts along the length of the Scheme from PROW is provided in Appendix 13-D and in VIDs Figs 13.11 and 13.13.

13.6.136 The key viewpoints and photomontage locations are indicated in Figure 13.9 and photomontages from the most representative views are reproduced in Figure 13.16. The ZVIs of the Scheme, represented by the visibility of a 5m vehicle to a standing pedestrian is identified in Figure 13.15.

13.6.137 The Table 13.21 below does not include views to the Main Scheme from the Greenway as it is considered to be part of the Scheme. The visual impact of the Greenway has been included in the overall assessment of views to the Scheme. The assessment does take into account views to the Scheme from redirected paths which would cross the new road on bridges.

13.6.138 The Main Scheme would be visible from several footpaths which cross Combe Haven Valley and on the surrounding slopes.

13.6.139 The most significant of the footpaths in the valley is the 1066 Country Walk, Bexhill Link. Figure 13.10 and 13.16, viewpoint and photomontage locations 5 and 7 show that this crosses the centre of the valley and would pass under the Scheme. There would be views of the road from sections of this path and close views along the road from the accommodation bridge. Close views and those from the levels would be mitigated by the proposed earthworks and planting.

13.6.140 There would be an impact on views from footpaths at the west end of Combe Haven Valley, notably those crossing the valley from Glovers Farm to Acton's Farm. This is shown in Figure 13.10 at Viewpoint 10 and 13. Most of the impacts to these views would reduce to Slight Adverse after the Design Year. Others which have direct views down the Scheme would remain with an impact assessed as Moderate Adverse, but this is usually for short sections. There are views from the disused railway line which is not a PROW, but is an established recreational route. An example of this is shown in Figure 13.10 Viewpoint 14, which is also a photomontage location shown on Figures 13.10 and 13.16.

13.6.141 The impact from the railway line would be Moderate Adverse in the Opening Year, reducing to Slight Adverse by the Design Year. These views are restricted to gaps in the tree belt along the railway line, and shown in Figures 13.11 and 13.13. There would be a significant impact on sections of

the bridleway between Acton's and Hillcroft Farms and shown in Figure 13.9 and 13.10 and the VID Figure 13.13.

13.6.142 The impact of the Scheme would change across the valley with existing vegetation and landform screening it from some areas. The greatest impact would be from the overbridges which would carry these realigned paths across the Scheme. The proposed mitigation environmental design measures would reduce the length of paths that would experience these views.

13.6.143 There are long views from the footpath which crosses the east side of the Combe Haven Valley from north of Pebsham landfill site to Harley Shute Road. The Scheme would have an impact from sections of these paths which at present enjoy rural views down the valley. The alignment of the road would minimise these impacts, as much of the route would be concealed by landform and vegetation. Proposed earthworks and planting would further reduce this impact, especially on more distance views to the road. The ZVIs shown in Figure 13.15A and 13.15B indicate that the closest visible moving vehicles would be over 1km distance from these views and therefore barely perceptible. Views to the road from these paths are considered to be negligible.

13.6.144 The greatest impact would be from footpath 29b, Viewpoint 4, just to the north of Pebsham landfill site and shown in Figure 13.9 and 13.10. This is the highest point with wide views across the valley. However impacts from this point would reduce to Slight Adverse by the Design Year. Viewpoint 1, also shown in Figure 13.9 and 13.10, has long panoramic views down the Combe Haven Valley. The ZVIs in Figure 13.15A and 13.15B indicate that much of the Scheme would be obscured from this viewpoint by existing landform and woodland and the main views are to the Actons to Adams Farm section of the Scheme. As this would be 1.5km away the impact would be slight adverse at opening year reducing to negligible by the Design Year.

13.6.145 Most of the key viewpoints are from the footpaths which cross the Study Area and have been included in the assessment from footpaths above. Other key viewpoints are from local roads. There are long views down the Watermill Stream Valley from the Henleys Down Road to the west of Crowhurst. These are generally through gaps in hedges displayed in Figure 13.10, Viewpoint 28. This is also a photomontage location as shown in Figure 13.16. The view from here would be over 1km from the nearest part of the Scheme and the impact would be Slight Adverse in the Opening Year, reducing to negligible by the Design Year.

13.6.146 From Crowhurst Road between Crowhurst and Queensway there would be glimpses to the Scheme through gaps in hedges. There would be a view to the Powdermill Stream crossing from the entrance to Crouchers Farm, Viewpoint 27 which is a photomontage location shown in Figure 13.10 and 13.16. From Viewpoint 25, which is also a photomontage location, shown in Figure 13.16, there would be views to the Decoy Stream crossing from which the impact would be Moderate Adverse on day of opening and reducing to Slight Adverse by the Design Year.

13.6.147 There would be occasional glimpses to the Scheme from Swainham Lane, as shown in Viewpoint 26 in Figure 13.10. The impact to this view would be Slight Adverse on day of opening reducing to Negligible by the Design Year. There are long views for the urban area of west St Leonard's in Hastings. Viewpoint 32 is from the residential development off Harley Shute Road, the visible part of the Scheme from Glovers Farm to Acton's Farm is 3-4 kilometers away from this viewpoint, and the impacts from here would be Negligible.

13.6.148 There are long views down the Combe Haven Valley from residential areas higher up on Filsham Ridge to the east, which are shown in Figure 13.10, Viewpoints 29 and 30. The distance and alignment of the proposed road and associated earthworks and planting would mean the impacts from here would be Negligible.

**Table 13.21 Operational Impacts PROW, Permissive Paths and Tracks**

Section of Scheme	Level of Visual Impact (metre lengths)							
	Sev. Adv.	Sub. Adv.	Mod. Adv.	Sli. Adv.	Neg.	No Cha.	Sli. Ben.	Mod. Ben.
Belle Hill to Glovers Farm	-	<i>80</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>779</i>	-	-
	-	<b>80</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>754</b>	-	-
Glovers Farm to Adams Farm	-	<i>805</i>	<i>4033</i>	<i>3374</i>	<i>828</i>	<i>12826</i>	-	-
	-	<b>360</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>3174</b>	<b>1222</b>	<b>16290</b>	-	-
Adams Farm to Queensway	-	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>10</i>	-	-
	-	-	-	<b>100</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>60</b>	-	-
Total	-	<i>1085</i>	<i>4063</i>	<i>3524</i>	<i>878</i>	<i>13615</i>	-	-
	-	<b>440</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>3304</b>	<b>1232</b>	<b>17104</b>	-	-

Notes:

*Numbers in italics represent the visual impact upon properties in winter of the Opening Year.*

*Numbers in bold represent the operational impacts during the winter months of the Design Year, following the establishment of planting.*

#### *Views from the High Weald AONB*

13.6.149 There are long views towards the Combe Haven Valley from parts of the High Weald AONB in the north. The ZVIs indicate that there would be views of traffic on the road from these areas. However, it has not been possible to identify any public viewpoints from which significant views of the road could be won. Views from the AONB are over 1km away from the nearest part of the Scheme.

13.6.150 The movement of vehicles through the landscape from this distance would be barely perceptible and is not considered to be significant. From the AONB the Scheme would be obscured by the landform on the north side of the valley and the frequent trees and hedges in this landscape. These distant views from the north are looking towards the Glovers Farm to Actons Farm part of the Scheme this would be up to 2km away from the AONB footpaths and therefore barely perceptible and would be seen with a background of urban edge development.

13.6.151 The alignment of the road around the west and north side of the valley would help to obscure the views to the road from these distant points. The proposed environmental design would further reduce the impact from the AONB. There would be views to the road from Swainham Lane as it crosses Decoy Stream Valley. These would be obscured to some extent by Chapel

Wood and Little Bog Wood and in the long term by extensive mitigation planting.

### ***Impact of Scheme Lighting***

#### *Belle Hill Junction to Bancroft Road Path*

13.6.152 The existing junction is well lit as a main road through the urban area and this would be lit with 12m columns as part of the Scheme. The impact on the 6 properties facing Belle Hill would be no greater than existing lighting impacts. The access from London Road onto the Scheme would be lit with 8m columns.

13.6.153 There would be an increase in the number of columns opposite 11 properties on the east side of London Road and a resultant increase in lighting to the front of these. Properties 167, 169 and 171 London Road and 53 and 43 Bancroft Road would experience increased light to the front and rear of the property in areas which currently have minimal lighting. The impact of lighting to the rear of properties would be reduced by mitigation planting in the longer term. Improved lighting in the alley ways at Chapel Path and Bancroft Road would increase pedestrian safety and security.

#### *Queensway*

13.6.154 The existing road at Queensway is not lit and there are views at night in Figure 13.10 at Viewpoints 48 and 47. The Scheme would introduce 35 12m columns into this landscape. The lighting of Queensway itself would be in well treed cutting. There would be increased glow in the night sky from this lighting and this would be seen against a background of the built up area to the east.

13.6.155 The use of flat glass high pressure sodium lamps for all lighting would concentrate the light and minimise light spillage around all junctions.

### ***Car Head Light Impacts from the Scheme***

13.6.156 The Scheme would be enclosed for most of its length and this is detailed further in Chapter 6: Travel and Transport. The urban section from the A259 junction to Woodsgate Park Bridge would be enclosed by a 1.8m high noise fence on either side. There would be mounded areas between the road and properties on Bancroft Road and planting on both sides of the road. Head light glare to the rear of properties on London Road and Bancroft Road would not be experienced from the ground floors.

13.6.157 The headlight glare would be visible from top floors, as the road would run parallel to the boundaries, the glare would be directed along the road and not towards properties. By the Design Year, the trees would have reached an average height of 6 – 8.5m and should cut out any visible headlight glare, especially during the summer months.

13.6.158 From Woodsgate Park to Ninfield Road Bridge the noise fencing would be continuous on both sides of the road, cutting out headlight glare to the ground floor of properties. There would be an area of mature trees retained between the Scheme and the rear of properties on London Road from Rother Court to number 275 which would cut out headlight glare. In the properties from 275 to 285, the existing garage block would block any potential impact from headlights.

13.6.159 The rear of properties on Bancroft Road on the other side of the Scheme would be screened by proposed mounding and planting, reducing headlight glare from Slight Adverse at opening year to negligible by the Design Year to Negligible by the Design Year.

13.6.160 From 307 to 333 London Road, the noise fencing would be continuous at the top of the cutting on both sides of the road. This would cut out any headlight glare to the houses on both sides. The properties on London Road are set back with an average 20m length of garden and associated vegetation between the Scheme and the properties. Properties on the west side of the road on Buxton Drive and Highfield Gardens would not suffer headlight glare as the houses are above the railway cutting and set well back.

13.6.161 From Ninfield Road Bridge to Glovers Farm the road would be in deep cutting with noise fencing at the top of the cutting on both sides. This and associated planting would cut out any headlight glare to properties alongside the road.

13.6.162 The section of the road from Glovers Farm to Hillcroft Farm would be enclosed by mounding from the Opening Year and maturing woodland by the Design Year. Where there would be gaps in the mounding at stream crossings the road is enclosed by noise fencing. Headlight glare would be concentrated along the road corridor and there would be little spillage into the surrounding countryside, especially by the Design Year. The impact of headlight glare would be Slight Adverse reducing to Negligible

13.6.163 Glovers Farmhouse is screened from views to the road by buildings. Acton's Farmhouse faces towards the road and any potential glare would not be directly towards the property. By the Design Year, woodland planting would screen this property from potential glare.

13.6.164 From Hillcroft Farm to Queensway the road would be enclosed by earthworks and sections of noise fencing across the Powdermill and Decoy Stream valleys. This would restrict headlight glare from the road, especially by the Design Year when new planting on either side of the road has matured to 6-8m.

13.6.165 The farmhouse at Adams Farm would be screened from glare by the existing trees and woodland which would be retained and managed as part of the Scheme. There would be longer views of the Scheme from the top of the bridge and embankment across the railway and Crowhurst Road. This would generate some headlight glare to the countryside, however this would not affect any properties and by the Design Year it would be screened by

proposed planting. The impact on rural areas would be Slight Adverse at Opening Year reducing to Negligible by the Design Year.

## **13.7 Conclusions**

### ***Landscape and Townscape Impacts***

13.7.1 The Scheme lies within an area of townscape in the urban area of north Bexhill and passes into the countryside to the north of the urban area. North Bexhill has developed from the core of original villages and historic farmsteads which were scattered across the area. The area developed around the Napoleonic Barracks, Old Town and the village of Sidley.

13.7.2 Following the development of the railway branch line from Bexhill to Crowhurst in 1897 to 1902 the London Road North was constructed and associated houses in the early 1900s. Much of the development is similar in age and character and the distinction between different areas is fairly subtle. Most of the area is terraced or semi detached residential housing with occasional business uses. The Scheme would follow the existing disused railway corridor through this residential urban area. Ninfield Road and Holliers Hill in Sidley form the commercial centre in this part of Bexhill. This is a thriving centre with shops, schools offices and garage premises.

13.7.3 North Bexhill is severed from Bexhill Old Town and the seaside resort of Bexhill by traffic on the busy A259 road. Traffic on London Road is also intrusive and prevents easy access for pedestrians from west to east. Traffic on the A259 through Bulverhythe and on Harley Shute Road in Hastings has a significant impact on the quality and accessibility of the townscape.

13.7.4 The rural landscape to the north of Bexhill is dominated by the Combe Haven Valley. The High Weald AONB extends just south of Crowhurst and touches on the Study Area 1 to the north. The Combe Haven Valley is of local significance as a landscape feature and is a pleasant rural area of farmed landscape. Much of the valley is of designated wildlife significance, notably the wetlands and woods. The northern side of the valley at the top of the enclosing ridges is considered to form a good quality rural buffer between the AONB and non-designated landscapes to the south. Part of the valley is recognized as being remote countryside (ESCC 2001) and on the lower scale of relative tranquillity (CPRE 2005).

13.7.5 The ridge and valley landscape provides an opportunity to find a road alignment which would not impact on the character of the AONB to the north.

### ***Construction Impacts on Landscape and Townscape***

13.7.6 The construction impacts of the Scheme on the landscape in the rural areas would be Substantial Adverse as much of the construction would be in open countryside. The construction impacts in the urban area would be largely confined to the disused railway corridor and would not disrupt the grain of the townscape. The movement of vehicles in and out of the site and disruption caused by bridge demolition and reconstruction would have an overall Moderate Adverse impact.

### ***Operational Impacts on Landscape and Townscape***

13.7.7 The Scheme would impact on the landscape to the north of Bexhill, however the horizontal and vertical alignment has been modified to avoid impact on the open levels. The considerable earthworks associated with the Scheme would create new landforms between the main valley and its tributary valleys. These and associated noise fencing would minimise the noise impact on the surrounding countryside and enable the retention of remoteness in part of the valley.

13.7.8 The overall impact on the landscape to the north of Bexhill would be Moderate Adverse at year of opening, reducing to Slight Adverse by the Design Year once the extensive mitigation planting has established.

13.7.9 The overall impacts on the townscape of Bexhill in the Opening Year are considered to be Neutral, as the alignment in the disused railway corridor would reduce the impact on the urban grain. The traffic benefits in the urban areas of Bexhill and Hastings would balance the impact of introducing a new road into the area. The environmental design of the Scheme would mitigate the impact of demolition on the urban grain. The effects would remain Neutral by the Design Year.

13.7.10 The use of an existing and derelict transport corridor would minimise the impacts on the townscape and provide opportunities for environmental enhancements. Traffic reduction on the A259 east of the Belle Hill junction and London Road would benefit the character of the area. There would be secondary benefits in Bulverhythe and Harley Shute Road. Secondary benefits would be greater, should streetscape improvements be implemented as secondary measures in Bulverhythe, London Road and Ninfield Road through Sidley.

### ***Key Visual Receptors***

13.7.11 Key visual receptors within the Study Area 1 of the Scheme are properties which back on to the disused railway line in Bexhill. Other receptors are properties overlooking the countryside to the north of Sidley. The scattered farms on ridges around the Combe Haven Valley are key receptors in the rural area.

13.7.12 Some properties on the lanes to the north of the area would have views to the Scheme. Other key receptors would be users of PROW and permissive paths which cross the valley. Other less sensitive receptors would be farm workers around the farm buildings and out in the fields as well as other viewers in commercial and office premises.

### ***Construction Impacts on Visual Receptors***

13.7.13 The overall visual impact during construction is considered to be Moderate Adverse on residential and commercial properties. The visual impact on PROW during construction would be Substantial Adverse as many of these would have direct and close views to the construction of the Scheme.

### ***Visual Impacts on Residential Properties***

13.7.14 Of the 478 residential properties within Study Area 1, 76 would experience Moderate Adverse visual impacts on day of opening reducing to 4 properties after the Design Year. A further 82 properties would suffer a Slight Adverse visual impact in the Opening Year, reducing to 72 by the Design Year. There would also be 214 residential properties that would experience Negligible impacts in the Opening Year, this would increase to 242 by the Design Year. There would be slight visual benefits, due to traffic reduction and improved townscape design, for 42 properties at year of opening increasing to Moderate Beneficial for 23 of these by the Design Year. In conclusion the majority of residential properties would experience Negligible visual impact in the Opening Year and also by the Design Year.

### ***Visual Impacts on Commercial Properties***

13.7.15 Of the 32 commercial properties within the Study Area 1, the commercial properties most severely affected would be the farms. A few commercial properties in the urban area would also be affected. Three properties would have Moderate Adverse visual impacts at Opening Year, reducing to none in the Design Year. There would be 16 properties with slight visual impact at the Opening Year reducing to 7 at the Design Year. Five properties would have Negligible impact at the Opening Year, increasing to 13 at the Design Year as the maturing planting reduces impacts on some of the properties. There would be one property experiencing slight visual benefits due to traffic reduction. The rest would have no change in visual amenity. The overall impacts on commercial properties at the Opening Year would be Slight Adverse reducing to Negligible for the majority by the Design Year.

### ***Visual Impacts on Public Rights of Way***

13.7.16 Of the 22,775m of PROW and permissive paths in the Study Area 1, 1085m length of path would experience a Substantial Adverse visual impact on day of opening, reducing to 440m at the Design Year. A further 4063m length would have Moderate Adverse visual impact at the Opening Year, reducing to 885m by the Design Year. A further 3524m of paths would experience Slight Adverse visual impacts in the Opening Year, reducing to 3304m by the Design Year. In the Opening Year there would be Negligible impact on 878m of path, increasing to 1232m by the Design Year as the impact reduces with the effects of mitigation planting. The majority of paths in the Study Area 1 would experience No Change in visual amenity at the Opening Year with this length increasing by 3,489m at the Design Year. The overall visual impacts on PROW by the Design Year would be Slight Adverse.

### ***Visual Impacts on Footpaths Outside the Study Area 1 in the AONB***

13.7.17 Views from the AONB are distant and because of the alignment of the Scheme on the north side of the valley views from the AONB would be largely obscured particularly once the mitigation planting has established. The visible part of the Scheme from these views would be the Glovers to Adams Farm section which would be seen against the urban area and would be a minimum 2km distance. The overall impact on views from the AONB outside Study Area 1 would be No Change at the Design Year.

### ***Impacts of Traffic Changes Due to the Scheme***

13.7.18 The reduction in traffic on the wider Study Area 2 would provide an overall Slight Beneficial impact on the landscape of the AONB. There would also be benefits and the rural lanes accessing the villages of Hooe, Ninfield, Catsfield and Crowhurst. There would be a Slight Benefit to the historic town of Battle and also on the A259 through Hastings seafront Conservation Areas.

### ***Landscape and Townscape and Visual Impacts***

13.7.19 Taking in to consideration all of the mitigation and benefits associated with reduced traffic in sensitive areas of landscape and townscape, the overall impacts for landscape and townscape are considered to be Slight Adverse. The overall visual impacts of the Scheme would be Slight Adverse.