

Examination Statement

Land West of Selsfield Road Ardingly (Draft Allocation SA25)



Appendix 2.0

Ardingly Landscape Character Assessment - produced by Hankinson Duckett Associates (HDA)

Ardingly Landscape Character Assessment for Ardingly Parish Council



July 2012

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1. Introduction

1.1 This 'Landscape Review and Assessment of Ardingly Parish' has been commissioned by Ardingly Parish Council to inform and support the preparation of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan. The Brief put forward seeks to:

- Assess the character of the Ardingly Parish landscape and its sensitivity and capacity to accommodate change and future development, in order to inform the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Determine key views that influence the setting of the village, key aspects of the village's character including conservation aspects and development history.
- Evaluate and appraise key sites to determine:
 - Sites that have inherent landscape quality that are particularly sensitive, which define the character of the village
 - Sites where potential development would have least impact on the landscape and character of the village

1.2 In order to fulfil the Brief, we have used a Landscape Character Assessment methodology to identify character areas within the Parish, which can then be analysed to determine which areas are highly sensitive and define the character of the village and which have the capacity for development.

1.3 Natural England describes landscape character as what makes an area unique. It is defined as "a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, be it natural (soil, landform) and/or human (for example settlement and development) in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another "(Ref 1).

1.4 The report divides the landscape into areas of specific landscape character and considers them against a range of criteria tabulated form in section 5, as explained below. The landscape value, sensitivity and capacity of each area are analysed in Appendix 2 and summarised in the final column of the tables. This information will be brought together in the summary and conclusions, to determine which sites display landscape character of high quality, that should be preserved and put forward sites which have the capacity for development and would have the lowest impact on the landscape and character of the village.

2. Approach

2.1 The Landscape Assessment has been developed through a series of stages, with each stage feeding information on to the next. The first stage was to gather background information on the Parish and surrounding areas (section 3). This took the form of a desk study, collating data already available on the character of the Parish, and a field assessment undertaken by a competent Landscape Architect.

2.1.1 The data has been analysed (sections 4) and the Parish divided into areas of distinct Landscape character (section 5). Each character area has been assessed individually in the tables in section 6. The information for each area has then been used to assess the sensitivity and landscape value of each area, which combine to give each area's landscape capacity (section 6). The evaluation for each character area is shown in Appendix 2 and the results are shown in the final column of the table.

2.1.2 The results of the landscape capacity study were then used to set out our summary and conclusions (section 7) in order to fulfil the brief, explaining which areas of Ardingly Parish:

- Have an inherent landscape quality that is particularly sensitive, which defines the character of the village
- Have the potential for development and would have least impact on the landscape and character of the village

3. Background

3.1 Desk study

3.1.1 Initially, a comprehensive desk-top assessment of the local area was undertaken to form the basis of the assessment and assist in identifying the Parish landscape character areas, which in turn define the study area for the assessment. Desk study data consider includes:

- Geology and soils;
- Topography;
- Land use (based on aerial photography);
- Regional landscape character areas;
- District landscape character and capacity assessments;
- Historic landscape characterisation;
- Development plan designations including local landscape, nature conservation, and heritage designation;
- Key public rights of way (e.g. long distance footpaths) and notable view points;
- Areas at risk of flooding.

3.1.2 The data was analysed and set out in working plans, tables, figures and text, and used to review the existing landscape character assessments and provisionally subdivide the County/District character areas into draft landscape character areas appropriate to the Parish scale. The outer boundary of these character areas in turn formed a draft study area boundary.

3.2 Field Assessment

3.2.1 The assessment is underpinned by field assessment carried out during early May 2012 by an experienced Landscape Architect, overseen and reviewed by the Project Director.

3.2.2 Field assessment involved travelling extensively throughout Ardingly Parish and the immediate surroundings, with extra focus on vicinity of the settlement edge of Ardingly village. This involve recording variations in landscape character on field survey sheets and making a working photographic record, including (list is not exhaustive): local topography, existing land uses and vegetation structure, condition of landscape elements (trees, hedges etc), streams/ditches, character of the built edge of settlements, intervisibility between settlements, local landmarks and visual detractors, relationship with the AONB and key views.

4 Landscape Structure Analysis

4.1 The aim of landscape structure analysis is to distil out the main elements which contribute to the character, structure and setting of the settlements and the AONB. This section includes an evaluation of the existing Landscape Character Context (section 4.2, Plan HDA1 and Appendix 1) and Ardingly and Context (section 4.3) which looks at the Parish in detail and sets out our initial analysis of the area. Plans HDA 2 – 6 give a visual representation of our findings.

4.2 Landscape Character Context

There are national, regional and district scale landscape character assessments that cover the landscape around Ardingly Parish. The national scale assessment has not been analysed for this assessment, as more detailed data is available.

4.2.1 Regional Scale

Mid Sussex District is covered by three regional character areas: Low Weald (121), High Weald (122) and South Downs (125). Ardingly Parish falls within the High Weald regional character area.

4.2.2 District Scale (see plan HDA 1)

The Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex, published in November 2005, Sub-divides the regional character areas into 10 distinct landscape character areas, which coincide with the West Sussex County scale character areas.

Ardingly Parish is located predominantly within the High Weald, with the Ouse Valley character area running broadly east-west to the south of Ardingly reservoir, at the south-western corner of the Parish. Key characteristics of Landscape Character area 6, The High Weald and Character Area 9 - the Ouse valley (Ref 2) are discussed in detail in Appendix 1.

4.2.3 Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study (see plan HDA 1)

In 2007, HDA prepared the Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study which considered the landscape capacity for strategic scale development in Mid Sussex, focusing on the landscape surrounding towns and villages in the District.

The study divided the landscape surrounding Ardingly into four local landscape character areas, numbered 30-33 as shown on plan HDA 1, which were judged to have Low or Medium capacity for strategic scale development overall. A summary of these areas is also included in Appendix 1.

4.2.4 **The High Weald AONB**

Ardingly Parish in its entirety falls within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This is an important consideration when assessing the landscape character of the area, along with the landscape sensitivity and subsequent capacity of the Parish. The significance and key characteristics of the High Weald AONB are set out in Appendix 1.

4.3 Ardingly village and the local landscape context (see plans HDA 2 - 6)

4.3.1 Ardingly Parish is located between Haywards Heath to the south, West Hoathly to the east, Turners Hill to the north and Balcombe to the west. Surrounding Ardingly Parish are the Parishes of Worth (to the north), West Hoathly (north-east), Lindfield (to the south), Cuckfield (to the south-west) and Balcome (to the west). The steep wooded valleys to the east and west of the Parish limit visibility between Ardingly and West Hoathly to the east or Balcombe to the west. The larger town of Haywards Heath lies approximately 3.5 miles to the south of the Parish boundary.

4.3.2 The land use within the Parish is predominantly agriculture, with grazed pasture and some agricultural fields (plan HDA 2). Fields are generally small and irregular – in keeping with the character of the High Weald. The Parish is well wooded, with much of the woodland occurring on the valley sides of the gill streams. Hedgerows are the dominant field boundary and often define the edges of the rural lanes that wind through the Parish.

4.3.3 The changes in topography are one of the key characteristics of the Parish (plan HDA 3). There is a strong east to west ridgeline running to the north of the Parish. From this high ground, further ridges run south, one on the western edge of the Parish and one running down the eastern side of the Parish (called Ardingly Ridge for the purposes of this report). Local roads Ardingly Road (the B2028), Back Lane and Paddockhurst Lane follow the line of these ridges. The settlement of Ardingly is based at the southern end of Ardingly Ridge, where a spur of the ridge line curves round to the west in a loose 'c' shape. Generally the landform rises from the south to the north of the Parish, although this rise is far from uniform, with gill streams and associated valleys extending north along the eastern and western sides of the Parish. This incised and ridged landform is a typical characteristic of the High Weald AONB. Along the southern section of the Parish, to the south of Ardingly village and reservoir, the variations in landform are gentler and increasingly consistent with the landscape character of the Ouse Valley.

4.3.3 Ardingly Parish has a number of places of local and national interest (plan HDA 4). Wakehurst Place and its grounds, form part of Kew Gardens and host the 'Millennium

Seedbank' an internationally important seed collection. The gardens are also Grade II listed under the Parks and Gardens register. To the immediate north of Ardingly village is the South of England Agricultural Showground, which hosts this annual event in early June. Organisations of local importance include: Ardingly College – a local employer and source of community facilities, Ardingly Reservoir, Ardingly Activity Centre – providing water sports activities on the reservoir, Hapstead Hall – a venue for local meetings and events and a number of shops, pubs and a Post Office.

4.3.4 There are two conservation areas within Ardingly village, one encompassing the historic centre of the village to the west and one to the north east of the village. There are numerous footpaths and bridleways around the village and extending out through the Parish. The High Weald Landscape Trail runs across the Parish from the south-west to the north-east. As well as being within the AONB, Ardingly Parish has two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) both based in areas of ancient and gill woodland. Ardingly Reservoir is designated as a Local Nature Reserve (plan HDA 4).

4.3.5 Plan HDA 5 picks out the key points from the text above and preceding plans in order to clearly show the basis for our analysis. This includes:

- The main ridge and valley features
- Ardingly Village settlement
- 3 local focal points – Wakehurst Place, Ardingly Showground and Ardingly College – all of which have local / regional / national importance.
- The key roads that run through the Parish
- The High Weald Landscape Trail and other Public Rights of Way.

The AONB designation will have a significant constraining effect on the potential for development within the Parish. Three broad areas have been identified which display characteristics that are representative of the High Weald AONB landscape and are wholly rural in character. These are characterised as: High Weald AONB, South High Weald and Ouse Valley. A brief summary of the landscape character of each area is shown on the plan. The high landscape quality of the three broad character areas means that any development is likely to have a high impact on the landscape in these areas. The Assessment then went on to focus on the areas within the Parish immediately surrounding Ardingly Village.

4.3.6 Ardingly village is based along a significant ridgeline (Ardingly ridge), which runs from north to south (plan HDA 6). There are also prominent ridges to the east of Ardingly Parish. Most of the settlement within the study area is based on the ridge tops. The land slopes steeply away from Ardingly ridge to the east and more gently to the west and south. The 'c' shaped ridge that Ardingly village is based on has a shallow valley running south from the centre of the village and separating the two sides of the village.

- 4.3.7 The high level of tree cover is an important factor within Ardingly Parish. Much of the existing settlement is screened from view from the wider landscape, by woodland (plan HDA 6). Any future development would need the appropriate level of screening in order to fit in with existing settlement patterns and minimize the impacts on the surrounding AONB landscape.
- 4.3.8 Key views have been identified on plan HDA6. These views are often associated with public footpaths, providing some of the most attractive recreational routes within the Parish and identify the south and east of Ardingly village as areas of particular importance. These views are an important part of the local character and should be retained. Key views have also been identified from the ridge-tops to the east of Ardingly Parish. This highlights the fact that new development within Ardingly Parish could have effects on the surrounding AONB – whether inside the Parish or in an adjacent Parish. One of the features of the High Weald landscape is the views from one ridge-top to another across wooded valleys.
- 4.3.9 A number of plateau landscapes have also been identified on plan HDA6. These mark areas along Ardingly ridge where new development may fit with the existing settlement pattern. They are not proposed sites – as other factors discussed above may mean that they may not be suitable for development, but they would have substantially less impact on the surrounding areas of AONB.

5 Ardingly Parish Landscape Assessment

5.1 Landscape characterization

5.1.1 Drawing on the initial desk study, landscape structure analysis and the field assessment, the study divides the landscape into Parish scale landscape character areas of specific landscape character.

5.1.2 Landscape character often crosses administrative boundaries, and to provide context to Ardingly village, the landscape character areas are included beyond the Parish boundary where appropriate, resulting in a study area which overlaps into the surrounding Parish of West Hoathly.

5.1.3 Ardingly Parish has been divided into 24 Local Landscape Character Areas. These have been shown and listed on plan HDA 7.

5.2 Analysis of Parish scale Landscape Character Areas

5.2.1 The characteristics of each Parish scale landscape character area is analysed against criteria identified in Topic Paper 6 of the Countryside Agency's landscape Character Assessment Guidance, along with identification of any designations, and consideration of the historic landscape characterisation of the area. This information is then fed into the landscape sensitivity and landscape value assessments.

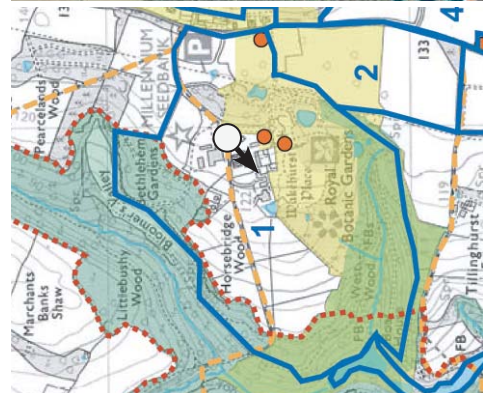
5.2.2 A detailed methodology for our analysis can be found in Appendix 2. The landscape value, sensitivity and capacity assessments of each District scale character area are found in Appendix 2 and are summarised in tabulated form in Section 6 below.

Analysis of Parish Scale Landscape Character Areas

- 1 Wakehurst Place Parkland
- 2 Ardingly Road Western Parkland
- 3 Ardingly Western Ghyll Woodland
- 4 Fulling Mill Farmland
- 5 Ardingly Showground
- 6 Long Shaw Eastern Slopes
- 7 Ardingly Eastern Plateau
- 8 Withyland Eastern Slopes
- 9 Ardingly South Eastern Assart
- 10 Standgrove Place Northern Slopes
- 11 Ardingly College
- 12 College Farm Valley
- 13 Ardingly Reservoir
- 14 Ardingly Western High Weald
- 15 Ardingly Southern Farmland
- 16 Munnion Road Western High Weald
- 17 Ardingly Southern Woodland
- 18 Lissadell Northern Pasture
- 19 Church Lane Green Space
- 20 Knowles Farm Southern Pasture
- 21 Ardingly Showground South
- 22 Ardingly Parish South-East High Weald
- 23 Ardingly Parish South-West Valley
- 24 Ardingly Parish North High Weald

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>1</p> <p>Wakehurst Place Parkland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Grade II Registered parks and gardens - Borders Wakehurst & Chiddingfold Woods SSSI - Manor house is a listed building - Mid Sussex Local Plan; Policy AR6 - further development will only be permitted where there is no impact on character, appearance or setting of site / surroundings 	<p>Formal Parkland</p> <p>Early Post-medieval</p> <p>Post-medieval gentrification / designed landscape</p>	<p>Landscape analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wakehurst Place is a Manor house (National Trust Property) with visitor centre, grounds and Millennium Seed Bank. The manor house dates back to mid 13th Century. • There is a cluster of buildings in the centre of the character area, which includes Wakehurst Place historical manor, visitor centre and manor outbuildings, along with the contemporary buildings of the Millennium Seedbank and glasshouses. • 40ha of gardens, parkland and woodland. The parkland is to the east of the house, gardens to the west - along with a number of fields in pasture. All are enclosed by woodland. • Contains formal and informal gardens, showcasing plant and tree species from around the world. It is a designed landscape with numerous connecting pathways. • Parkland, manor and visitor centre are all sited on a plateau at 125-135m AOD. To the west, the land slopes down sharply to Ardingly Brook and Westwood Lake. • Character area has formal ponds of varying sizes and Westwood Lake is present in the south-western corner of the area. • Attractive landscape, can be busy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Ancient woodland - Small irregularly - Steep valley to south of area. - Locally distinctive / important development / facility 	<p>Wakehurst Place has a unique and recognised character within the parish and would be highly sensitive to any development out of context.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Major</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible</p>

Parish character area with photograph location



Millennium Seedbank

Designed Landscape

Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>2</p> <p>Ardingly Road</p> <p>Western Parkland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Grade II Registered parks and gardens - Mid Sussex Local Plan; Policy AR6 - further development will only be permitted where there is no impact on character, appearance or setting of site / surroundings - Listed buildings to north (Wakehurst Place) and east (Little London) 	<p>Formal Parkland</p> <p>Early Post-medieval</p> <p>Post-medieval gentrification / designed landscape</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located on a plateau at 125 - 135m AOD. • Comprises of flat pasture with mature parkland trees. • Bound to the east by Selsfield Road, to the north by Wakehurst Place car park, to the west by Tillinghurst Farm and by the agricultural showground to the south. Separates Wakehurst Place and Little London. • Part of setting to Wakehurst Place. • Flatter and more open than a typical High Weald landscape. • Public footpath runs adjacent to the southern boundary. • Post and rail fence along the road edge, which is unusual for the area - gives open views into fields. • Hedgerows form the southern boundary and part of western boundary, which are much more in keeping with local character. • Mixture of tree types. • Tranquil but clearly designed, with formal influence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Associated with the locally distinctive / important Wakehurst Place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part of a Registered Park and Garden- and a setting to a listed building. Parkland is an uncommon landscape character within Ardingly Parish. Sensitivity = Substantial Landscape Value = Substantial Capacity = Negligible / Low

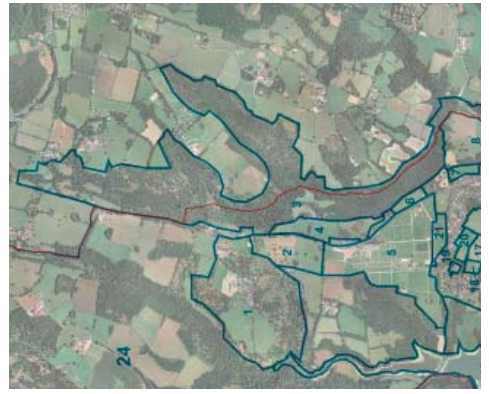
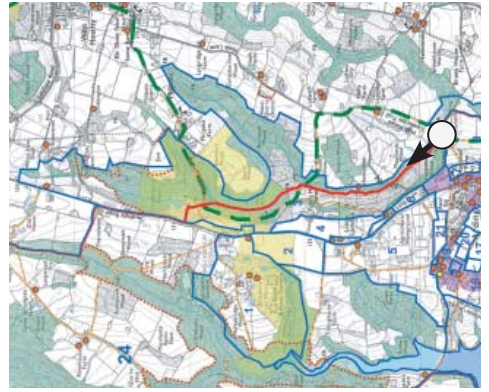
Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>3</p> <p>Ardingly Western Ghyll Woodland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Wakehurst and Chiddingly Wood SSSI - Ancient woodland - High Weald Landscape Trail runs through it 	<p>Combination of Ghyll Woodland Aspart, Ancient semi-natural woodland and plantation woodland</p> <p>Mixture of Medieval and 20th Century plantation</p> <p>1-5% boundary loss</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Densely wooded valley with Cob Brook running through the centre. • Steep valley sides ranging from 125m AOD at the highest point, down to 45m AOD in the valley floor. • Mixture of Ancient broadleaved and plantation woodland - located on the lower slopes to the east of Ardingly showground. • There is no settlement within the woodland and only one lane passes through the area. • Public rights of way, including the High Weald Landscape Trail, run through the woodland. • The northern section of the character area is designated as Wakehurst and Chiddingly Wood SSSI. • Very enclosed landscape, with no views of settlement and little human influence. • Forms a natural, wooded and rural edge to Ardingly Parish. • Screens views of Ardingly from the east and increases visual separation of ridgetop settlements. • Feeling of tranquillity and wildness with little human influence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Ancient tracks - Ancient woodland - Medieval landscape - Deeply incised ridged landform - Gill streams 	<p>Natural and attractive woodland characteristic of the AONB. Recreational resource for the Parish</p> <p>Sensitivity = Major</p> <p>Landscape Value = Major</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible</p>

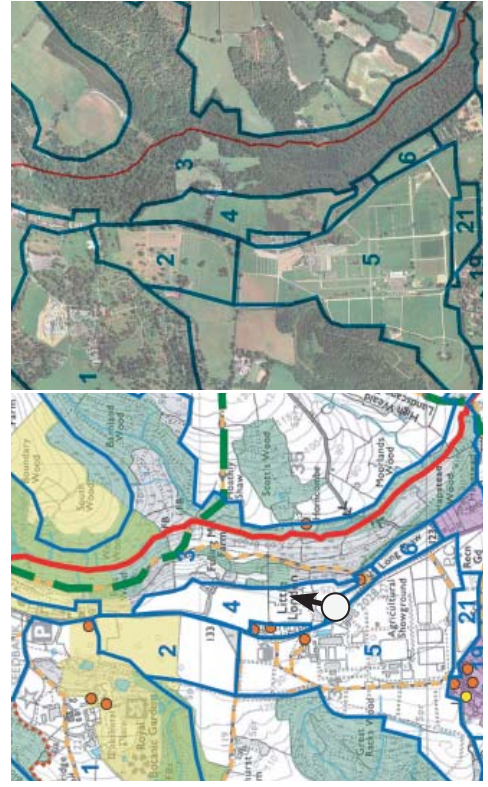
Parish character area with photograph location



Hapstead Wood

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>4</p> <p>Fulling Mill Farmland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Listed buildings along western edge at Little London. Includes: The Gardeners Arms pub and The Mount. Hickpots is a listed building to the south of the area. 	<p>Informal fieldscapes</p> <p>Late 20th Century</p> <p>1-25% boundary loss</p>	<p>Comprises of 3 fields to the east of the B2028, Seisfield Road. Two fields are to the north of Little London hamlet and one is to the south.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives a rural setting to Little London with some views east. • Bound to the east by woodland. • Fields are on a plateau at 125 - 135m AOD. They are broadly level to the west but slope down steeply at the eastern edge of the character area. • Enclosed pasture with hedgerow boundaries to the west along the road edge. The northern field has trees along the western boundary. • There are some views of the ridge to the east, particularly from the northern fields. • Irregular shaped fields with some boundary loss to the north. Post and wire fencing is in place where boundary loss has occurred. • Small scale and intimate landscape, although feeling of enclosure is reduced by elevated position with scenic views over the valley. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Small irregularly shaped fields - Ancient woodland to east of character area 	<p>Rural landscape on ridge top- would be consistent for development pattern. Fields form the setting to the listed buildings at Little London. Views to the east.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Moderate</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Low</p>

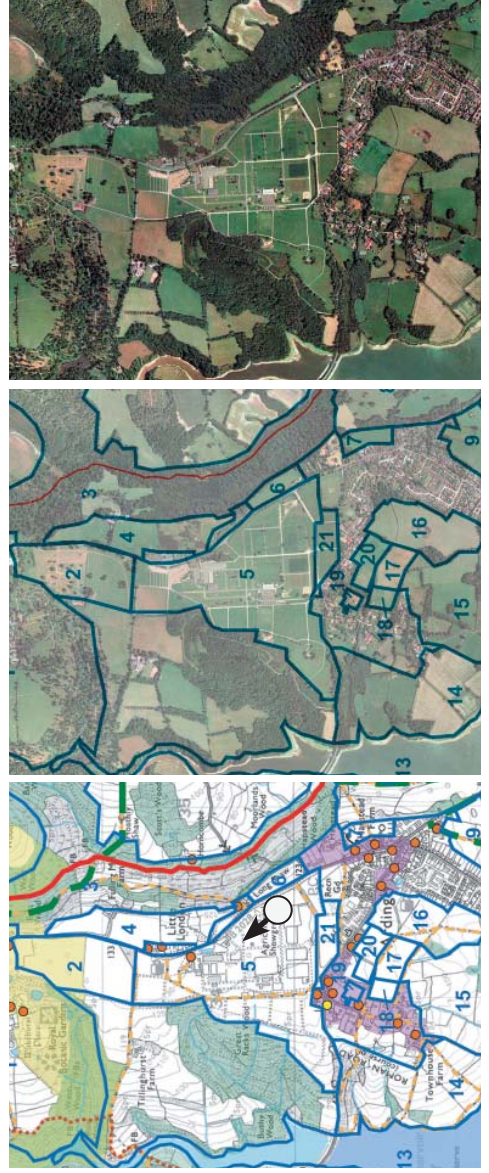
Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>5</p> <p>Ardingly Showground</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Borders Ardingly Conservation areas to south-west and south-east - Bolney Farm Listed building is located to the north-east of the character area. - Mid Sussex Local Plan; Policy AR5 - further development will not be permitted where excessive traffic would be generated 	<p>Sports fields</p> <p>Late 20th Century</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located to the north of Ardingly and south of Wakehurst Place. Bordered by Selsfield Road to the east and Great Racks Wood to the west. • Situated on a plateau at 125m AOD. Gently sloping to the south. • Flat organised landscape with linear pattern of roads, tracks and paths used for the South of England Agricultural Show. • Linear tree planting along routeways • Closely mown grass • Public footpaths run through it • Some large low level buildings and car parking • Areas of Showground are fenced - 2m weldmesh • Recreation ground and school playing field to the south share characteristics • Low hedge forms eastern boundary. There is intervisibility between Showground and Selsfield Road. Signing and entrance features at vehicular entry points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Locally distinctive / important development / facility - Named as a visitor attraction in the Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment for the 'High Weald' character areas. 	<p>Sensitivity = Moderate</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Medium</p>

Parish character area with photograph location



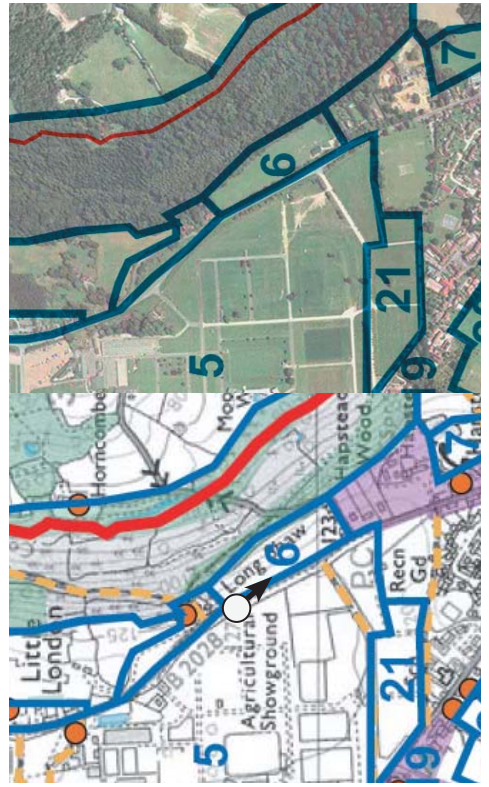
Photograph showing key characteristics



Example of Showground buildings and fencing

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>6</p> <p>Long Shaw Eastern Slopes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Borders Ardingly Conservation areas to south 	<p>Informal fieldscapes</p> <p>Late 20th Century</p> <p>0-25% boundary loss</p>	<p>Comprises of a rectilinear field in pasture that slopes down gently to the east.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bound to the west by Selsfield Road and to the east by Hapstead Wood. There are properties to the north and south of the character area and Ardingly showground lies to the west. • High enclosure with woodland on one edge and other boundaries formed by tall hedges with hedgerow trees. The roadside boundary is dense and very close to the road edge, screening any views of the field. • The southern boundary is adjacent to Ardingly's eastern Conservation Area. • Intervisibility with Cobb Cottages and an associated barn from the south-west corner of the character area. • Located on the ridgeline. • There are scenic views across the valley to the ridgeline in the east, towards the High Weals Landscape Trail and Pickeridge farm. • Post and rail fencing is present within the hedgerow boundaries. • Rural and in good condition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Hedgerow boundaries and high enclosure. Partly contained on one edge by woodland. - Located on ridge-line with views across adjacent valley to the east. 	<p>Enclosed parcel of land on ridge top.</p> <p>No views from road, but visible from the conservation area to the south and the ridgeline to the east. Access would be difficult without removal of high quality hedge.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Moderate</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Medium</p>

Parish character area with photograph location



Eastern boundary hedge

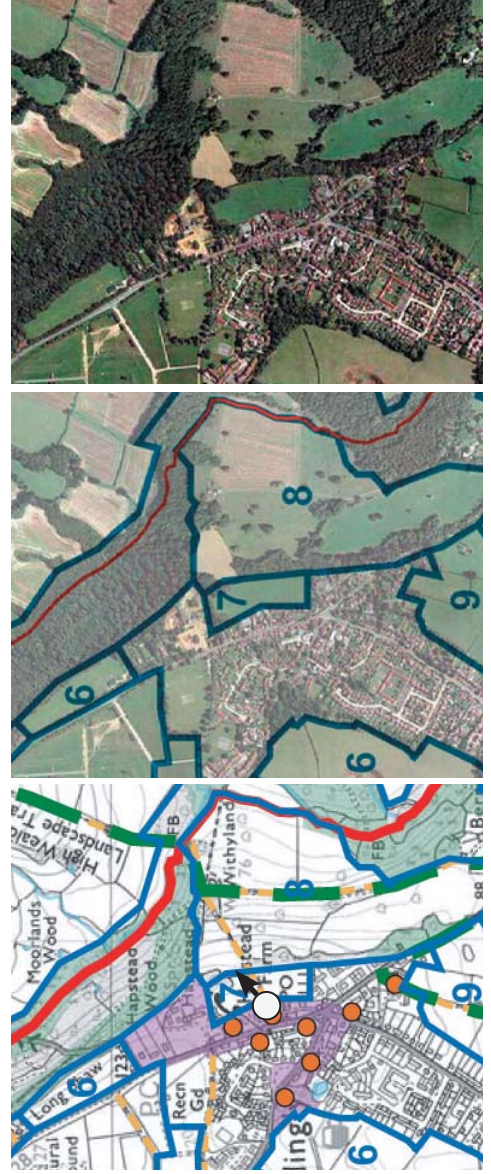
Selsfield Road

Ardingly Showground

Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>7</p> <p>Ardingly Eastern Plateau</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Borders Ardingly Conservation areas to north and west - Public right of way passes through area connecting to the High Weald Landscape Trail. 	<p>Informal fieldscapes</p> <p>Early 20th Century</p> <p>76-99% boundary loss</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprises of pasture contained by housing to the north, west and south. This has an urban influence on the field. • Situated on a plateau. Slopes gently to the east. • Irregular field shape. • Adjacent to a conservation area to the north and west, with two listed buildings to the west. Forms part of the setting to these features. • The High Street and local shops sit to the west, beyond the line of housing that borders the character area. • A tree belt runs along the eastern boundary, giving a sense of enclosure and blocking the long views to the east. Hapstead Mews and rooftops of housing along the north western edge can be seen from Pickeridge Farm and Highbrook, present on the ridge tops to the east. • A Public right of way runs across the site, later joining the High Weald Landscape Trail, with several informal pathways crossing the field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small irregularly shaped fields - Adjacent to the ridgeline settlement of Ardingly. This settlement pattern is typical of the High Weald and Ardingly village. 	<p>Enclosed parcel of land on ridge top. No views from road, but partially visible from the Conservation Area to the south and the ridgeline to the east. Access would be difficult.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Slight</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Medium / High</p>

Parish character area with photograph location

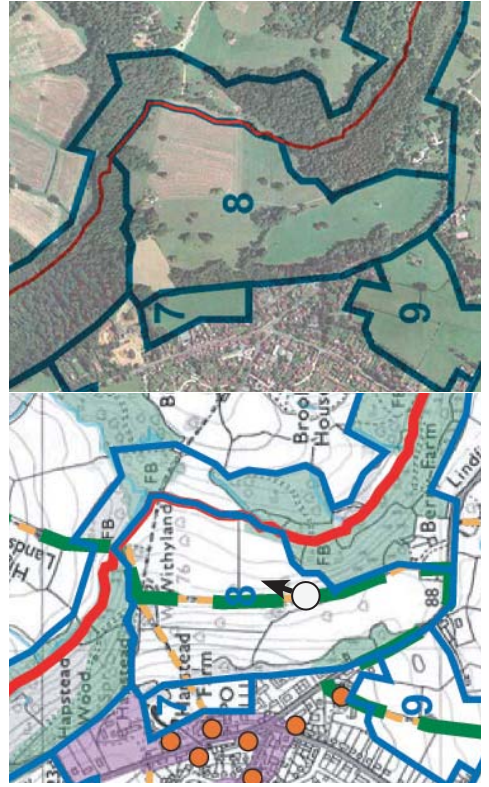


Photograph showing key characteristics



Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>8</p> <p>Withyland Eastern Slopes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Public rights of way pass through area, including the High Weald Landscape Trail - Ancient Woodland to north 	<p>Informal fieldscapes</p> <p>Early 20th Century</p> <p>76-99% boundary loss</p>	<p>Fields are irregular and vary in size. Boundary loss has led to a more open character, although it retains a rural and scenic character.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slopes down to the east, towards Cob Brook. Slopes are steeper on the western side of the character area. These have been planted with broadleaved parkland trees, which make the area distinctive when viewed from the ridges to the east. • Bordered by woodland / trees to the north, east and west, which gives a feeling of enclosure and separation from Ardingly Trail, run through the character area. • Public rights of way, including the High Weald Landscape Trail, run through the character area. <p>Long ranging views across the valley to the east from footpaths. Farmsteads including Pickering Farm, Hammingdon Farm and Brook House Farm, can be seen on the ridges to the east. Views to the west are contained by the rising landform and vegetation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withyland Farm is the only property within the area. • Strong rural character and beautiful scenery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Ancient woodland - Irregularly shaped fields - Steep slope falling away from ridge line. - Distinctive views of AONB landscape - Gill streams 	<p>Low lying, east facing slopes with long views across valley.</p> <p>Rural and attractive landscape - visible from surrounding ridges.</p> <p>Recreational uses</p> <p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible / Low</p>

Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics



View from High Weald Landscape Trail

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>9</p> <p>Ardingly South Eastern Assart</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Public rights of way pass through area, including the High Weald Landscape Trail 	<p>Assart</p> <p>Medieval</p> <p>No boundary loss</p>	<p>South facing pasture with strong hedgerow boundaries. Fields are small and irregular.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The High Weald Landscape Trail runs through the character area, from north to south. • Long views of the AONB landscape to the south. Views are contained to the north, east and west by the landform and vegetation. • Bound to the north and west by the settlement of Ardingly. Long back gardens and vegetation screen views of properties. Fields in character area form setting to this south-eastern edge of Ardingly. • Land falls away from the eastern edge of the village to the south-east. • No woodland within character area, but trees line eastern and western edges. Some distinctive planting of Scots Pine trees, which are unusual species for the area. • Rural and peaceful character. The south facing slope allows views of the wider wealden landscape, giving a feeling of openness but the hedge and tree planting contain the area, preventing it from feeling exposed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ancient woodland - Small irregularly shaped fields - Medieval landscape - Landform sloping away from ridge. - Distinctive views of AONB landscape <p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible / Low</p>	<p>South-east facing slopes that form the setting to the eastern edge of Ardingly. Landscape is intact and rural with long scenic views.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible / Low</p>

Parish character area with photograph location



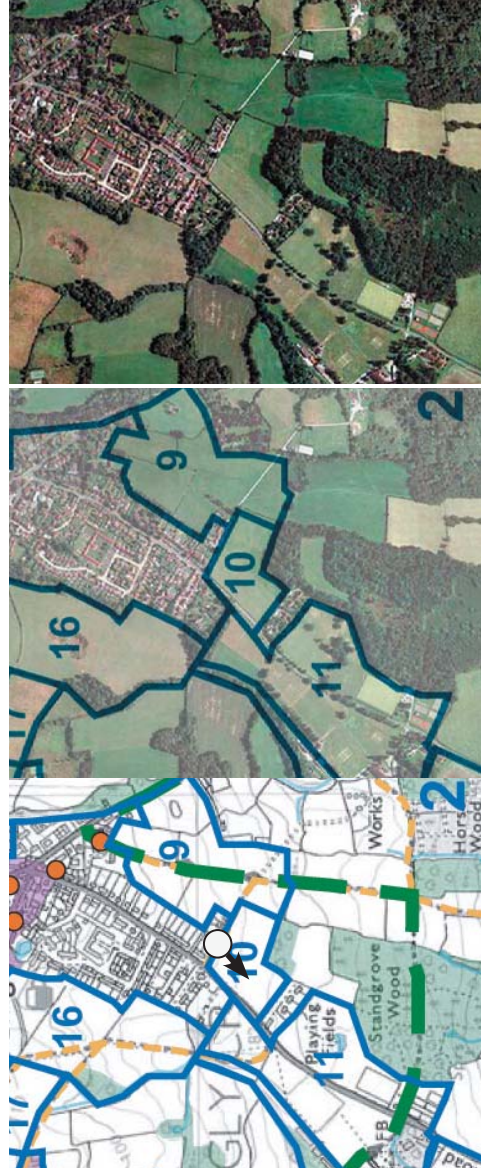
Photograph showing key characteristics



High Weald Landscape Trail

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>10</p> <p>Standgrove Place Northern Slopes</p>	- AONB	Assart Medieval No boundary loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small, L-shaped shaped pasture field. • Bound to the west by College Road, with strong hedgerow boundary to road. • Southern edge of Ardingly is clearly visible to the north. A line of houses is also visible to the south. • Slopes from high point in north-west, down to the south eastern corner, between 85-95m AOD. It is at a lower level than Ardingly Village, which is largely based on the ridge top at 115-125m AOD. • The south-eastern boundary is formed by broadleaved woodland. The eastern and western boundaries are formed of hedgerows, whereas the northern boundary comprises of a chestnut pale fence, which allows intervisibility between the field and settlement to the north. The field forms part of the rural setting for the south of the village. • Intact and historic landscape. • Views of the wealden landscape to the south-east, particularly from the northern edge of the character area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ancient woodland - Small irregularly shaped fields - Medieval landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small field on low lying ground, with views to the south-east. Visual links with Ardingly and Standgrove place. Setting to south-eastern edge of Ardingly Sensitivity = Substantial Landscape Value = Moderate Capacity = Low

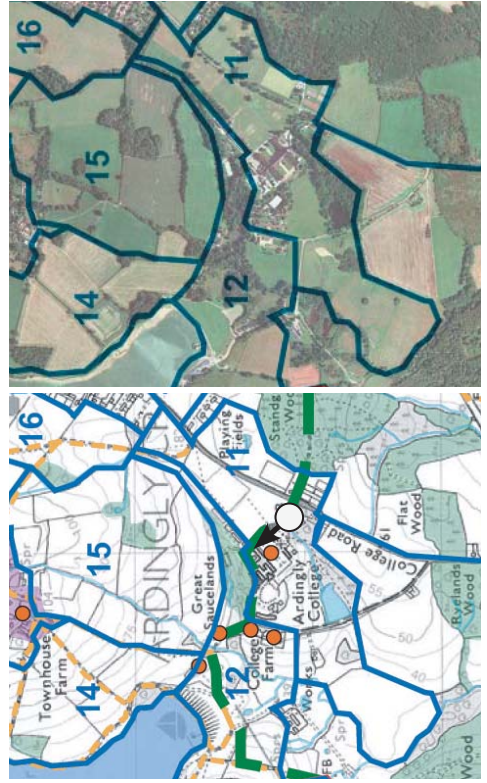
Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>11</p> <p>Ardingly College</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Public rights of way including the High Weald Landscape Trail - pass through area - Listed building, built in 1864-5 - Mid Sussex Local Plan; Policy AR3 - further development will only be permitted where there is no impact on character, appearance or setting of site / surroundings 	<p>Sports fields</p> <p>Early modern</p>	<p>Landscape analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College buildings with associated playing fields. Fields are closely mown with intact hedgerow boundaries. • Settlement of Ardingly can be seen from northern pitches. • The College buildings are a distinct feature within the landscape. They comprise of large brick buildings with formal landscapes and tree planting. The College also contains sporting facilities including sports halls and hard courts. • College Road runs through the character area, along with three public rights of way. The High Weald Landscape Trail runs across the character area. • Generally flat topography with a gentle south-west facing slope. Shares some of the characteristics of the Ouse Valley, particularly towards the southern section of the character area. • Ponds and water features can be found across the area. • Main College buildings are listed. • The location of the school development is inconsistent with the ridgeline settlement pattern of the High Weald. • The College access road also provides access to Ardingly Reservoir. • Attractive and well kept landscape with a distinct character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Locally distinctive / important development / facility 	<p>Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)</p> <p>A formal educational landscape with numerous playing fields. An important recreational resource for the Parish.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Moderate</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Low</p>

Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics



Playing field adjacent to College

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>12</p> <p>College Farm Valley</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Public rights of way pass through area - including the High Weald Landscape Trail - Ancient woodland within character area - Listed buildings within character area - Part of area falls within floodplain 	<p>Regenerated / informal fieldscapes</p> <p>Early modern</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow, steeply sided valley, with Ardingly college to the east and Ardingly Reservoir to the west. • Listed buildings within character area. Includes College farm, Great Saucelands and Little Saucelands. Farms are only settlement within character area. Area provides setting to the listed buildings. • Trees along valley floor and a pond sited in the south-west. Two streams run through the valley, feeding into Shell Brook to the south. Part of the area is within the floodplain. • No formal boundaries • Intimate character with limited visibility. Valley is one of the lowest points in the Parish. • Well used by visitors. Footpaths run through it, including the High Weald Landscape Trail. Ardingly Reservoir Activity Centre and visitor car park is situated to the south-west of the character area. • Area is secluded and peaceful, with tree cover providing containment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Ancient woodland - Historic farmsteads - Small irregularly shaped fields - Narrow valley - Locally distinctive / important development / facility 	<p>Low lying and secluded valley with a number of listed buildings. Flatter land is within flood-plain.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible / Low</p>

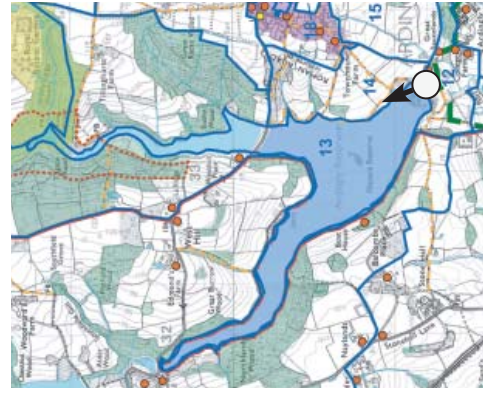
➤ Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>13</p> <p>Ardingly Reservoir</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Public rights of way go around southern and eastern edge - Local Nature Reserve - Mid Sussex Local Plan; Policy AR4 - intensification of use restricted where there would be impacts on the environment or existing recreational activities 	<p>Reservoir</p> <p>Late 20th Century</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Large reservoir located on the western edge of Ardingly Parish and directly to the west of Ardingly village. • The reservoir is set in a valley and can be seen from the higher landscape to the south-east of Ardingly Village, as well as the ridge top to the south-west of the reservoir. However, the dense tree cover surrounding the reservoir blocks many views from the surrounding areas, particularly to the north and west. • The reservoir forms an attractive feature within the landscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Locally distinctive / important development / facility - Listed as a major reservoir with the Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 	<p>Large reservoir to the south-west of Ardingly Parish</p> <p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible / Low</p>

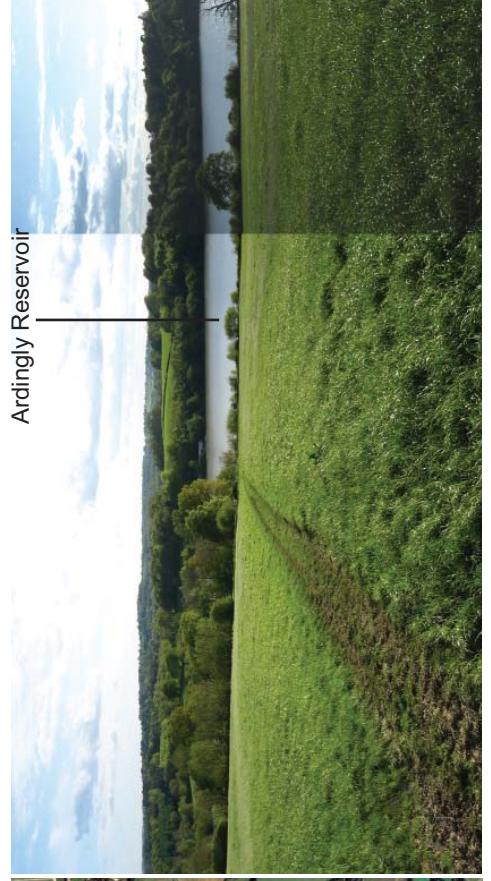
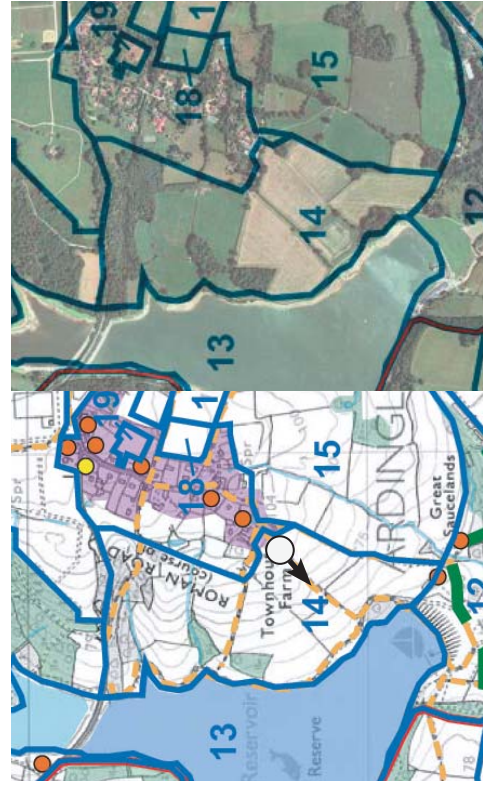
Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>14</p> <p>Ardingly Western High Weald</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Public rights of way pass through area - Listed buildings and conservation area to the north east of the character area 	<p>Assart</p> <p>Medieval</p> <p>1-25% boundary loss</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South and west facing pasture with strong hedgerow boundaries. Fields are small to medium sized and irregular shaped. • Fields slope steeply down from Ardingly Village settlement on the ridgeline in the north-east, to Ardingly Reservoir in the south west. • Public rights of way run through the character area. • Long views of the Reservoir and AONB landscape beyond to the south and west. The character area is open and visible from the tops of ridges to the south and west. • The character area forms the setting to the western edge of Ardingly. • Rural, beautiful and tranquil character. Slopes allows views of the wider landscape, giving a feeling of openness. • On the western slopes, streams run down the slope to the reservoir. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Historic farmsteads - Ancient tracks - Ancient woodland - Small irregularly shaped fields - Medieval landscape - Deeply incised ridged and faulted landform - Gill streams - Wide river valleys - Locally distinctive / important development / facility - Distinctive views of AONB landscape 	<p>South and west sloping pasture with attractive views of the reservoir and surrounding countryside. Setting of Ardingly to the south-west.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Major</p> <p>Landscape Value = Major</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible</p>

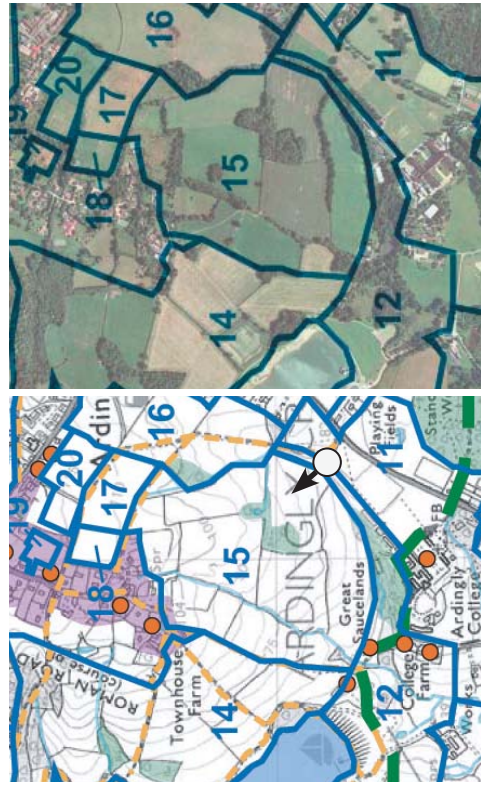
Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>15</p> <p>Ardingly Southern Farmland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Listed buildings and conservation area to the north west of the character area - Small areas of Ancient Woodland 	<p>Assart</p> <p>Medieval</p> <p>1-25% boundary loss</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South facing pasture and some arable fields with strong hedgerow boundaries. Fields are small to medium sized and irregular shaped. • Fields are gently sloping from Ardingly Village settlement on the ridgeline in the north-west, to Ardingly College in the south east. • There is no public access to the character area. • The character area is enclosed by patches of woodland - some of which is ancient woodland - and tree planting along boundaries. Tree planting along the northern edge screens views of the area from Ardingly Village. • Rural and peaceful character, with no roads or settlement within the character area. • Streams run down the slope to the valley on the southern boundary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No settlement within area - Ancient woodland - Irregularly shaped fields - Medieval landscape - Deeply incised ridged and faulted landform - Gill streams - Wide river valleys 	<p>South facing pasture with no public access and contained from surrounding areas by wood. Rural character.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible / Low</p>

Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>16</p> <p>Munnion Road</p> <p>Western High Weald</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Public rights of way pass through area - North-west corner is adjacent conservation area 	<p>Formal enclosure</p> <p>Early post-medieval</p> <p>1-25% boundary loss</p>	<p>• South and west facing pasture with strong hedgerow boundaries to south and west. Fields are small to medium sized and irregular shaped. Woodland runs down the south-western and southern boundaries.</p> <p>• Fields slope steeply down from Ardingly Village settlement on the ridgeline in the north-east, to the lower edge of the village to the south east. A shallow valley runs up the character area from the south, forming a division between the eastern and western arms of the village.</p> <p>• A Public right of way runs through the character area.</p> <p>• Views of the village edge to the east along with long views of the AONB landscape beyond to the south. The character area is open and visible from the tops of ridges to the south and west.</p> <p>• The character area forms the setting to the central and south-western edge of Ardingly.</p> <p>• Rural and peaceful character. Slopes allows views of the wider landscape, giving a feeling of openness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ancient woodland - Small irregularly shaped fields - Medieval landscape - Landform slopes down from ridge. - Distinctive views of AONB landscape to the south 	<p>South and east sloping pasture with attractive views of the AONB landscape to the south. Setting to a large part of the village and separates the eastern and western sides of the village.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible / Low</p>

Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>17</p> <p>Ardingly Southern Woodland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Public rights of way along northern and southern boundaries 	<p>Formal enclosure</p> <p>Early post-medieval</p> <p>1-25% boundary loss</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newly established plantation woodland with mixed broadleaf species. • Situated in the 'gap' between the western and eastern parts of Ardingly Village. • Footpaths run across the northern and southern edges of the character area. • Dense tree planting gives high enclosure and screens views from and into the village to south. • Woodland planting follows the recommendations of the High Weald AONB management plan. • No infrastructure or settlement within the character area. • Has a quiet, rural and intimate character. • Character area is on plateau. Land is generally flat with a slight slope to the south-east. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New woodland closely follows wider landscape character - Creation of woodland falls in line with AONB management strategy. 	<p>Newly established woodland to south of Ardingly village</p> <p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Low</p>

Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics



Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>18</p> <p>Lissadell Northern Pasture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Public rights of way along northern and southern boundaries - Conservation area to west along Church Lane 	<p>Formal enclosure</p> <p>Early post-medieval</p> <p>1-25% boundary loss</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two rectangular fields with post and rail field boundaries. • Flat closely grazed pasture. • Situated to the east of the historic part of Ardingly Village and the Conservation Area, which runs along Church Lane. No listed buildings are visible from the character area. • Footpaths run across the northern and southern edges of the character area and have a high degree of intervisibility with the two fields. Lissadell property can be seen to the south. • A formal line of poplar trees lines the eastern boundary. Trees and vegetation run along the south and western boundaries. • Telegraph poles cross the fields. • The fields are open, but contained by surrounding vegetation, which screens any long views • Has a quiet and rural character but is not representative of the wider AONB or High Weald landscape character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Typical village edge landscape with few characteristics that are typical of the wider wealden landscape. 	<p>Flat and rectangular closely grazed pasture to the east of church lane.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Moderate</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Low</p>

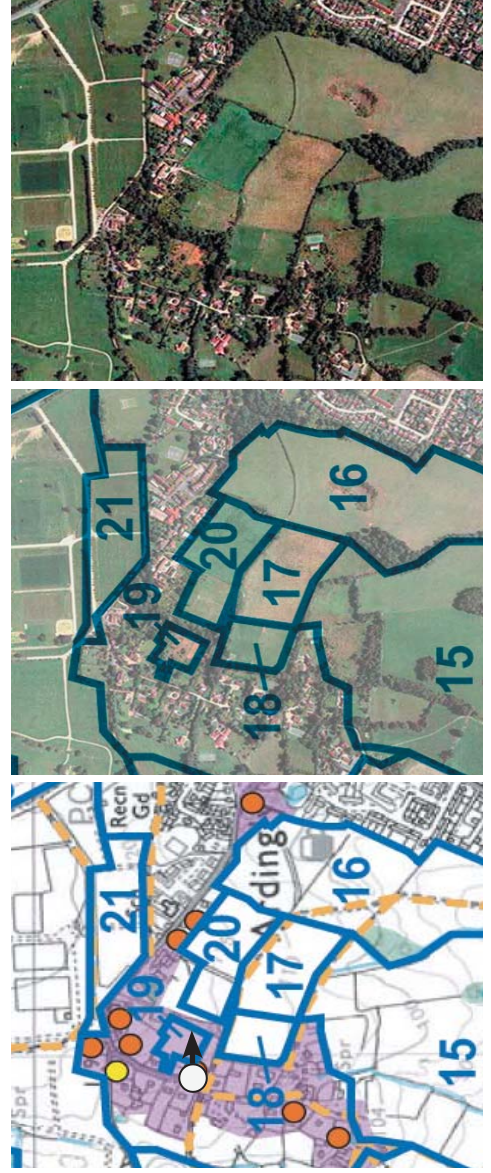
➡ Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>19</p> <p>Church Lane Green Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Within conservation area along Church Lane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal parkland Early modern Large landscaped garden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small enclosed area of undeveloped land. Square shape with hedge and wattle field boundaries. • Flat grassland with ruderal weeds and brambles. • Situated within the historic part of Ardingly Village, a conservation area, which runs along Church Lane. • Only visible from the gated access on Church Lane to the west. High laurel hedgerows along the western edge and line of poplar trees lines the eastern boundary with woodland beyond. • Has a quiet, enclosed and rural character but is not representative of the AONB. Fits in well with the character of the conservation area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domestic landscape, not typical of the High Weald landscape but in keeping with the character of the conservation area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fiat area of undeveloped land to the east of church lane. Sensitivity = Slight Landscape Value = Substantial Capacity = Low / Medium

Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics



Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>20</p> <p>Knowles Farm Southern Pasture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Public right of way along southern boundary - Conservation area to north-west along Church Lane and Street Lane - Listed buildings Knowles Farmhouse and Knowle Cottages to the north along Street Lane 	<p>Formal enclosure</p> <p>Early post-medieval / early modern</p> <p>1-25% boundary loss</p>	<p>Large flat field of closely grazed pasture, divided up by a mixture of permeable fencing types, including post and rail, post and wire and electric fences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situated to the south of Ardingly Village, on the same plateau of higher ground. Back gardens of properties make up the northern boundary. • Intervisibility between the paddocks and housing to the north. Bound by Ardingly Village to the north and west. A conservation area lies to the north-west and listed properties are present to the north of the character area, along Street Lane. • A footpath runs across the southern edge of the character area and the area can be seen through gaps in the vegetation that lines the footpath. • The fields are open, but contained by surrounding vegetation, including the new woodland to the south, which screens any long views to the south. • The area is influenced by the village settlement to the north. • The character is pleasant but is not representative of the wider AONB or High Weald. 	<p>- Typical village edge landscape with few characteristics that are typical of the wider wealden landscape.</p>	<p>Flat and rectangular closely grazed pasture to the south of Street Lane. Urban influences from the village. Would be difficult to access.</p> <p>Sensitivity = Moderate</p> <p>Landscape Value = Moderate</p> <p>Capacity = Medium</p>

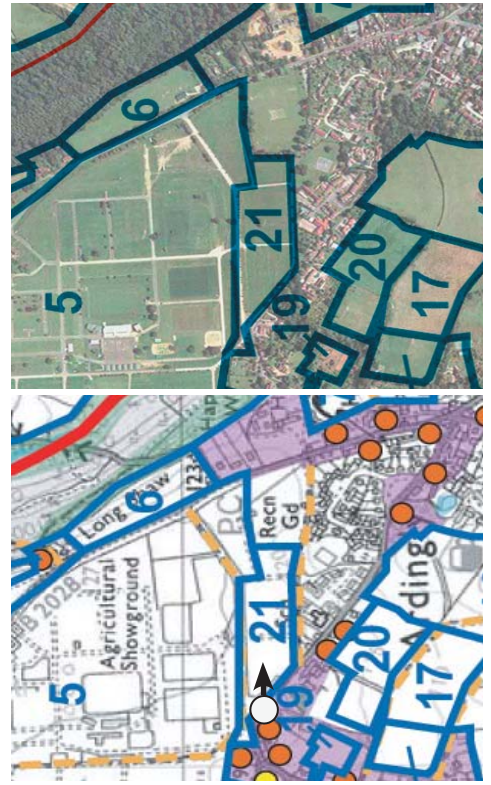
➤ Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>21</p> <p>Ardingly Showground South</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Public rights of way along northern and southern boundaries - Conservation area to south-west along Street Lane - Mid Sussex Local Plan; Policy AR5 - further development will not be permitted where excessive traffic would be generated 	<p>Sports fields</p> <p>Late 20th Century</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located to the north of Ardingly and south of the main Ardingly Showground character area. Bordered by Street Lane to the west and the High Street to the east • Situated on a plateau at 115-125m AOD. Gently sloping to the south. • Flat organised landscape with linear pattern of tracks and paths. Used for recreation and overflow car parking for the South of England Agricultural Show. • Formal linear tree planting along routeways and strong hedgerow boundaries along the roadside boundaries to east and west. • Closely mown grass. • Public footpaths are located to the north and south with informal paths running through it. • Formal and open landscape influenced by Ardingly village and its use. The character is pleasant but is not representative of the wider AONB or High Weald. • Visual links and urban influence from Ardingly village to the south - forms part of the village edge. Views from the conservation area to the south-west are blocked by vegetation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Out of character with High Weald landscape - Part of Ardingly Showground, which is named as a visitor attraction in the Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment for the 'High Weald' character areas. - Village edge landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flat organised landscape on ridge top with urban influences from Ardingly village. New development would have little influence on character of AONB Sensitivity = Sight Landscape Value = Moderate Capacity = Medium / High

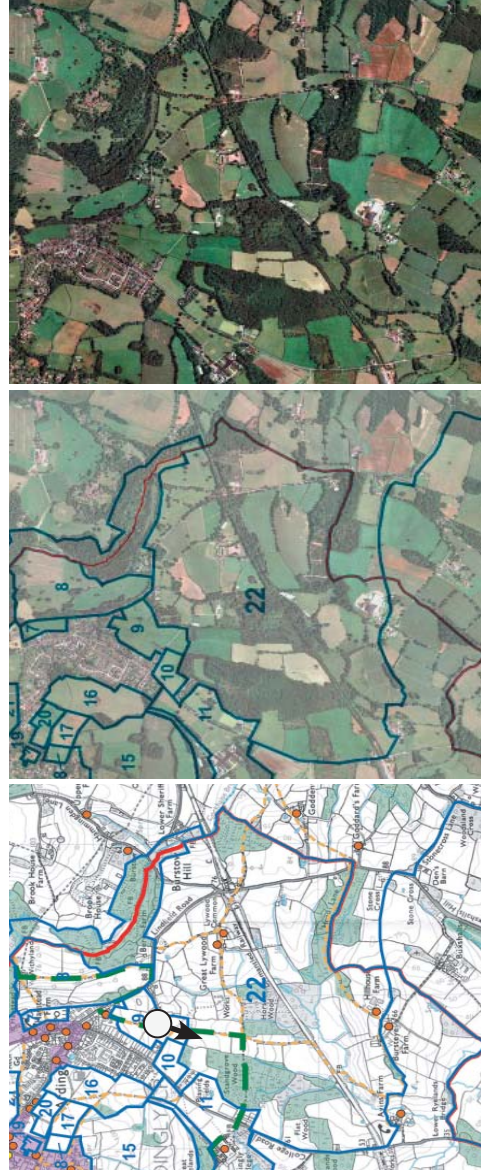
Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>22</p> <p>Ardingly Parish South-East High Weald</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Numerous footpaths including the High Weald Landscape Trail - Bluebell Railway line runs through it - Mid Sussex Local Plan; Policy AR2 - Council wish to retain Bluebell railway site for possible reinstatement - contains listed buildings 	<p>Mixture of Assart and informal landscapes</p> <p>Medieval / late 20th Century</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landform of ridges and valleys, but with gentler slopes than those to the north of the parish. • Pockets of woodland, including Ancient and Ghyll woodland. Woodland generally located in valleys or along the railway line. • Bluebell railway line runs across the character area. • Settlement is limited to isolated farms, many of which are listed. • Only two roads within character area, but numerous public rights of way, including the High Weald Landscape Trail. • Frequent small watercourses and ponds. • Fields are generally small and irregular in shape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Historic farmsteads - Ancient tracks - Ancient woodland - Small irregularly shaped fields - Medieval landscape - Gill streams 	<p>Landscape that is characteristic of the High Weald AONB</p> <p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible / Low</p>

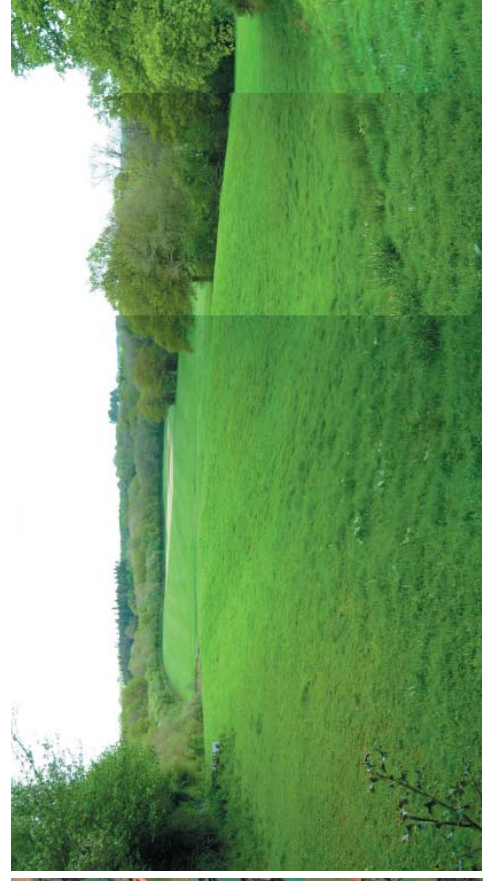
Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>23</p> <p>Ardingly Parish South-West Valley</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - The High Weald Landscape Trail runs through it - Contains Rivers Farmhouse Listed building 	<p>Mixture of Assart and informal landscapes</p> <p>Medieval / late 20th Century</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural valley landscape with undulating landform in place of the steep ridges and narrow valleys of the High Weald. • Extensive tree cover including pockets of woodland, with a large portion being Ancient woodland. • Two railway lines run across the character area. Roads are limited and there are fewer public rights of way in this character than in the High Weald. The High Weald Landscape Trail does run through the area - at the south west corner of Ardingly Parish. • Settlement is limited to isolated farms, many of which are listed. • Frequent small watercourses and ponds. • Fields are generally small and irregular in shape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Historic farmsteads - Ancient tracks - Ancient woodland - Small irregularly shaped fields - Broad, undulating landform - Wide river valleys 	<p>Rural valley landscape with many of the characteristics of the High Weald AONB</p> <p>Sensitivity = Substantial</p> <p>Landscape Value = Substantial</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible / Low</p>

Parish character area with photograph location

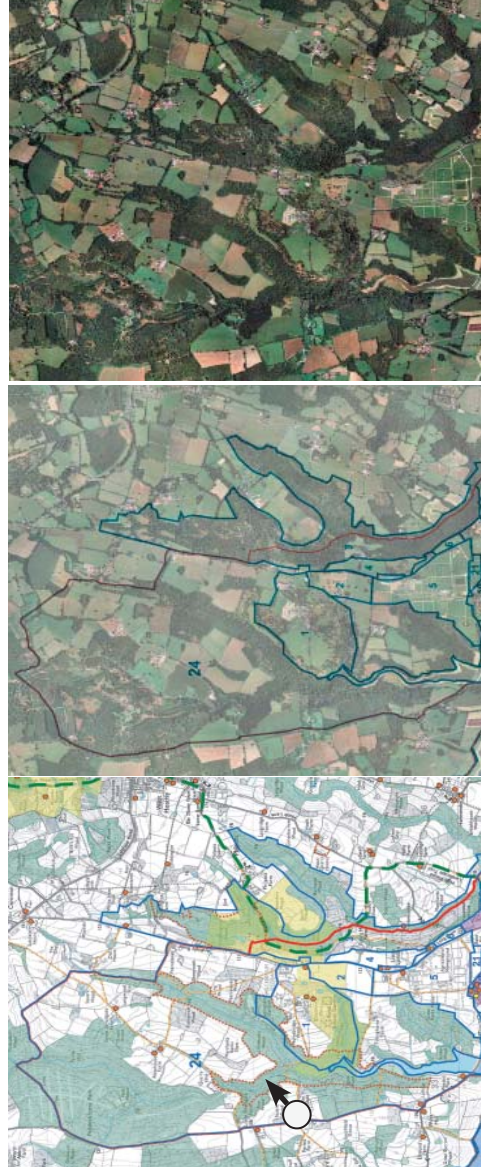


Photograph showing key characteristics

Character Area	Designations and policy	Historic Landscape Characterization	Landscape analysis	Characteristics that fall in line with AONB / Regional assessment	Capacity Summary (see Appendix 2 for analysis)
<p>24</p> <p>Ardingly Parish North High Weald</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AONB - Large portion of woodland is a designated SSSI - Ancient woodland - Numerous public rights of way 	<p>Mixture of Assart and informal landscapes</p> <p>Medieval / late 20th Century</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemplary landscape of the High Weald AONB. • Generally enclosed and intimate but with some long views across valleys from ridge tops. • Well wooded landscape with irregular fields bound by hedgerows or woodland. Contains Wakehurst and Chiddingfold Wood SSSI • Scattered farms and large houses joined by winding rural lanes, bound by hedges to either side. • Dramatic landform of ridges and steep sided valleys. Ghyll woodland present in valleys. • Good network of footpaths. • Frequent scattered ponds and Gill streams running through valleys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dispersed settlement - Historic farmsteads - Ancient tracks - Ancient woodland - Small irregularly shaped fields - Medieval landscape - Deeply incised ridged and faulted landform - Gill streams 	<p>Exemplary landscape of the High Weald AONB</p> <p>Sensitivity = Major</p> <p>Landscape Value = Major</p> <p>Capacity = Negligible</p>



Parish character area with photograph location



Photograph showing key characteristics

7 Summary and Conclusions

The summary and conclusions set out below relate to the brief described in the introduction of this report. The study has identified that the majority of landscape surrounding Ardingly has substantial landscape sensitivity and low landscape capacity for development (plan HDA 8). They are rural areas, inconsistent with the exiting settlement pattern of Ardingly and have limited existing urban influence. This falls in line with the High Weald AONB designation that extends across the Parish.

7.1 Key views

7.1.1 There are prominent views of the wider AONB landscape from a number of character areas, most notably numbers 8, 9 and 14. Areas 4, 6, 13, 16, and 24 also have long views out to the surrounding landscape. The ridgelines and densely wooded landscape limit views of Ardingly village settlement from most of the character areas. Any development within areas 4, 6, 7 and 8 would need to consider the views from the ridgelines to the east of the village. These areas currently form part of the wider view from locations including Pickeridge Farm and Highbrook.

7.2 Gap

The gap between the west and east sides of Ardingly village is maintained by character area 16 (Munnion Road Western High Weald), area 17 (Ardingly Southern Woodland) and, to a lesser extent, area 15 (Ardingly Southern Farmland). The high sensitivity of these landscapes, along with the sloping topography would mean that any development would be out of keeping with the existing settlement of Ardingly. Character areas 18 (Lissadell Northern Pasture), 19 (Church Lane Green Space) and 20 (Knowles Farm Southern Pasture) are much more enclosed and do not add significantly to the perception of a 'gap' between the two areas of settlement.

7.3 Sites with inherent landscape quality

7.3.1 Significant parts of the study area are intact, high quality landscapes (plan HDA 8). Out of the 24 character areas identified, 18 had Low to Negligible landscape Capacity. Landscape areas of particular value are: area 1 - Wakehurst Place Parkland, area 3 - Ardingly Western Ghyll Woodland, area 14 - Ardingly Western High Weald and area 24 - Ardingly Parish North High Weald. These are high quality landscapes which define the character of the Parish.

7.4 Sites that could have the capacity to accommodate further development

7.4.1 From the 24 character areas identified, 3 have been judged to have a medium landscape capacity and only two have a Medium / High landscape capacity. These have been found to be more suitable for development in landscape terms.

7.4.2 Whilst more suitable for development in landscape terms than the majority of character areas, careful consideration must be given to the extent and design of any developments within these areas, taking into account landscape conditions to avoid harmful effect on the surrounding landscape character. Below are the main advantages and disadvantages for development within each area.

7.4.3 The sites with Medium landscape capacity are:

- Area 5 – Ardingly Showground: The landscape is highly organised, artificial and in poorer condition than the surrounding countryside. It has more of an urban influence than the other character areas within the Parish. However the area also has very high cultural associations, with a long established use and is one of the key attractions of Ardingly.
- Area 6 – Long Shaw Eastern slopes: This is a small enclosed landscape to the north of Ardingly village. It is on the ridgeline, so new development would be in keeping with the general settlement pattern of the High Weald, although new housing within this area would substantially expand the village envelope to the north. Any development in this location would have to consider views from the ridgeline settlements to the east. The high quality hedgerow along the western boundary, adjacent to Selsfield Road, is an essential part of the landscape and would need to be retained.
- Area 20 – Knowles Farm Southern Pasture: These fields are flat, well contained by vegetation and are a typical village edge landscape that do not display many of the characteristics of the wider High Weald landscape character. Development within this area would have a limited impact on the surrounding AONB. This area is however close to Ardingly Conservation Area and a number of listed buildings, the setting of which would need to be considered if any development was to be proposed in this area.

7.4.4 The sites with Medium / High landscape capacity are:

- Area 7 – Ardingly Eastern Plateau: This character area is surrounded by housing on three sides, which gives it a strong urban influence. The eastern edge is well screened from much of the wider landscape, although the land use would need to take account of the limited views into the site from the ridge-tops to the east. New development in this area would be in keeping with the ridge-top settlement pattern of Ardingly and would be well placed to access local facilities. This area borders Ardingly Conservation Area (east) which also contains listed buildings, the setting of which would need to be considered if any development was to be proposed in this area. Access to any new development would also be a key issue.

- Area 21 – Ardingly Showground South: As with the Showground area to the north, the landscape is highly organised, artificial and in poorer condition than the surrounding countryside and is not typical of the character of the AONB. Its organised, artificial character and close proximity to the northern edge of Ardingly settlement present an urban influence and development within this area would be in keeping with the settlement pattern of Ardingly. The western edge of this area lies adjacent to Ardingly Conservation Area but there is a strong line of vegetation that screens any views of the character area from the road.

7.5 Preferred option

Our analysis through the character and subsequent capacity assessment has led us to the conclusion that area 21 – Ardingly Showground South is the most suitable area for new development. New housing would be in keeping with the existing settlement pattern of Ardingly and would be close to local services. In addition the area has the potential to be developed without significant impact to the character or appearance of the wider AONB. This character area displays few of the characteristics of the High Weald. Development in this location would have little effect on the landscape as it is bound to the south by existing housing and to the north by Ardingly Showground, which in itself is not representative of the AONB landscape.

References

- Ref 1 - Countryside Agency (now Natural England)/SNH (April 2002), '*Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland*'
- Ref 2 - Mid Sussex District Council (November 2005), '*A Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex*'
- Ref 3 - Prepared for Mid Sussex District Council by Hankinson Duckett Associates (July 2007), '*Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study*'
- Ref 4 - Department for Communities and Local Government (March 2012), '*National Planning Policy Framework*'
- Ref 5 - High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee (2nd Edition, adopted March 2009) '*The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2004 a 20-year strategy*'