

Dover District Local Landscape Character Assessment



Introduction

- Existing Landscape Assessment was completed by Jacobs in January 2006.
- That study was a high level assessment of different landscape character areas in the district excluding the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- The 24,584 ha outside the AONB were classified into 12 broad areas without consideration of the landscape condition of the areas.
- As part of the Local Plan Review a more comprehensive Landscape Character Assessment has been undertaken

- This work has been undertaken at a finer grain in order to make it more applicable to the needs of the Council
- The survey and report is the product of eight months work by the Principal Ecologist
- Important to note that it has been designed to be a 'live' document rather than something that just sits on a shelf

Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape character assessment (LCA) is the process of identifying and describing variation in character of the landscape. LCA documents identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive by mapping and describing character types and areas. (UK Govt 2014).

- LCA is a well-established technique for informing land use planning at a strategic level. This Local Landscape Character Assessment (LLCA) is to inform land use planning at a scale useful for development management
- It represents the next evolutionary stage in landscape work that started in 1995 (Kent Downs AONB) and was last carried out in Dover in 2006.
- It is compliant with the 2018 NPPF.

The following is an example sheet

Mapping was carried out on Google Earth with supplementary 'ground truthing'. LLCA boundaries will be transferred to GIS and the text will form a searchable 'pop-up' for ease of use.

Analytical tools included

- Kent Landscape Information System
- Kent Historic Environment Record
- Kent Habitat Mapping 1990
- Andrews and Dury Mapping 1769
- Numerous additional web-based resources



- **Geology/Soils:** Thanet beds overlain with marine alluvium in northern part except near Bride Farm where the alluvium runs S towards the Goshall Valley LLCA; soils are mainly very good with some excellent soils near Guston Farm;
- **Landform:** the southern edge of the floodplain of the old Wantsum Channel with the land rising from 2m to 5m on the SW boundary; the land is intersected by drains;
- **Enclosure:** there is little enclosure except that associated with the properties on Richborough Road although there is a notable line of mature willows in the central section between Bride Farm and Guston Farm. Where not intercepted, there are extensive views across the marshes to the N, to the Thanet ridge. Similarly, were the LLCA is not enclosed to the S, there are extensive views over the farmland of the

Cooper Street LLCA;

- **Land use:** predominantly arable farmland with a significant amount of sheep grazing and some horse paddocks; there are a number of properties within the LLCA, both adjacent to Richborough Road, but also set further into the marsh. Guston Farm has 2LBs;
 - **Ecology and Structural Vegetation:** the northern part of the LLCA is part of a LWS (Ash Level and South Richborough Pasture) and also BOA (Lower Stour Wetlands); the margins of the drains support trees such as willows, ash and hawthorn and the drains will provide habitat for shining ram's-horn snail, *Segmentina nitida* and water vole; there is a considerable are of marshy grassland dominated by rushes
 - **Adjacent land:** the LLCA is surrounded by farmland, rising slightly to the S as the land climbs towards the Ash ridge and to the E the land rises more suddenly to the knoll supporting Richborough Castle; elsewhere the land continues to be low-lying reclaimed marsh;
 - **Access:** there is no public access;
 - **Concerns:** none, although loss of views to the N would be detrimental;
 - **Potential for change of use:** the area could be improved for wetland biodiversity as indicated above;
 - **Potential for development:** flood risk and poor access militate against development;
 - **Distinguishing characteristics of the LLCA:** one of the few areas which gives extensive views towards the Ash Level, although it is slightly deceptive in that the land quality here is poorer than that out on the Lev
- Condition** is considered **medium**.

Dover LLCAs



240 LLCAs excluding Dover
and Deal town

100 Mb
100,000 words
340 Pages



Purposes

- **Informing Planning Applications** (the effect of individual proposals)
- **Informing Site Analysis** (landscape absorption capacity for new development)
- **Detailed Information for Appeals** (appellants must address local impact)
- **Identifying Potential Projects** (development of funding bids e.g. UOTD HLF)
- **Assisting Enforcement** (landscape impacts of unauthorised development)

Outcomes

Apart from fulfilling the purposes listed above the work should:

- Help developers and potential investors as the starting point for their designs/proposals;
- Assist in Neighbourhood Planning;
- Provide information for many users – voluntary bodies, schools, community groups;
- Together with the Kent Landscape Information System and the Kent Historic Environment Record provide a rich open-source information resource for the public.

Methodology

Factors considered and scored

- Topographic complexity
- Naturalness
- Historical continuity
- Significant detracting elements
- genius loci*

Together these descriptions form the basis of describing the **condition** of the LLCA

* The 'spirit of the place' – a landscape feature that is overwhelmingly dominant, e.g. Dover Castle

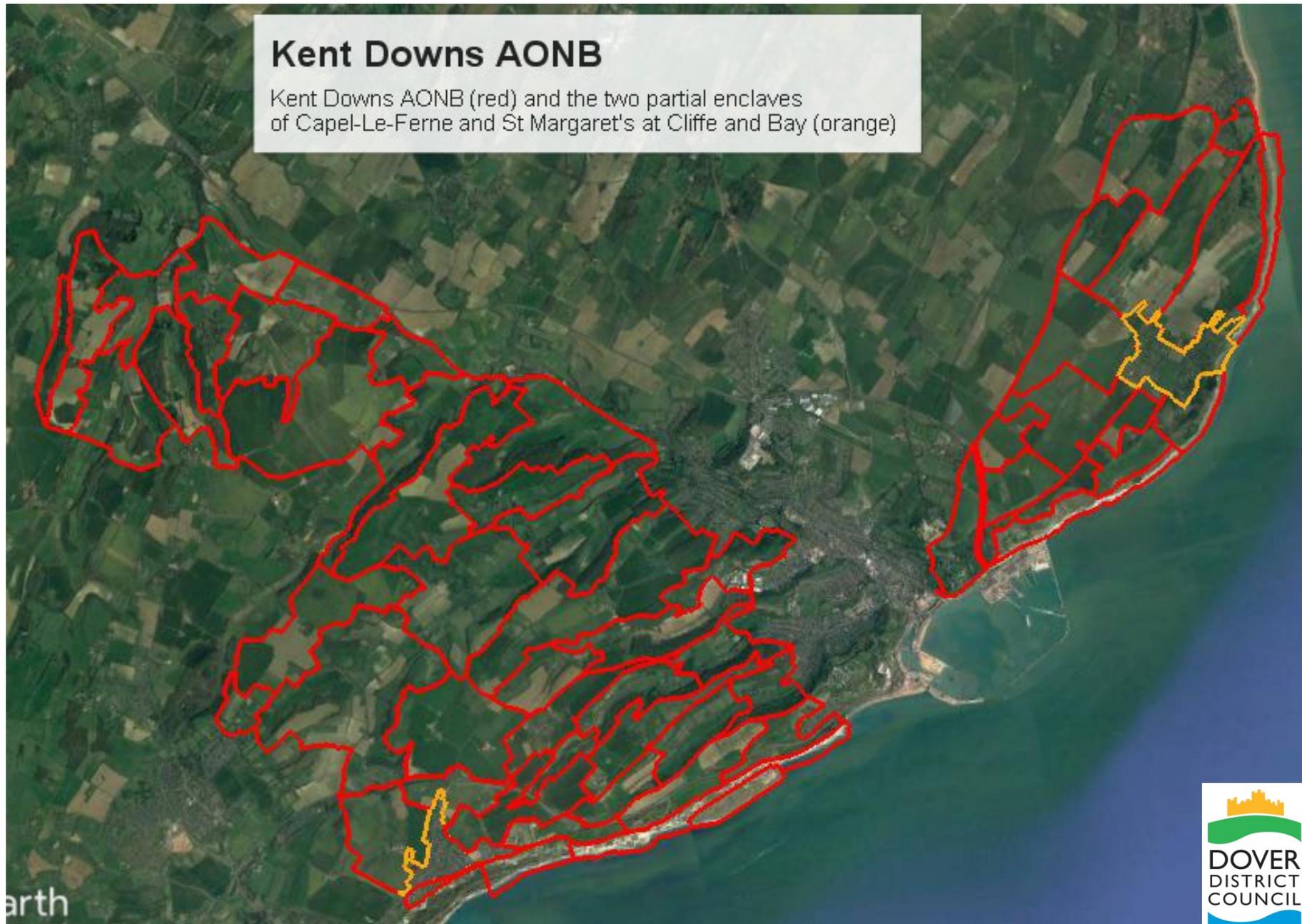
The District was divided into three groups -

- Clays and Sand (North and Northeast)
- Chalk (Centre and South)
- Kent Downs AONB (West and Southeast*)

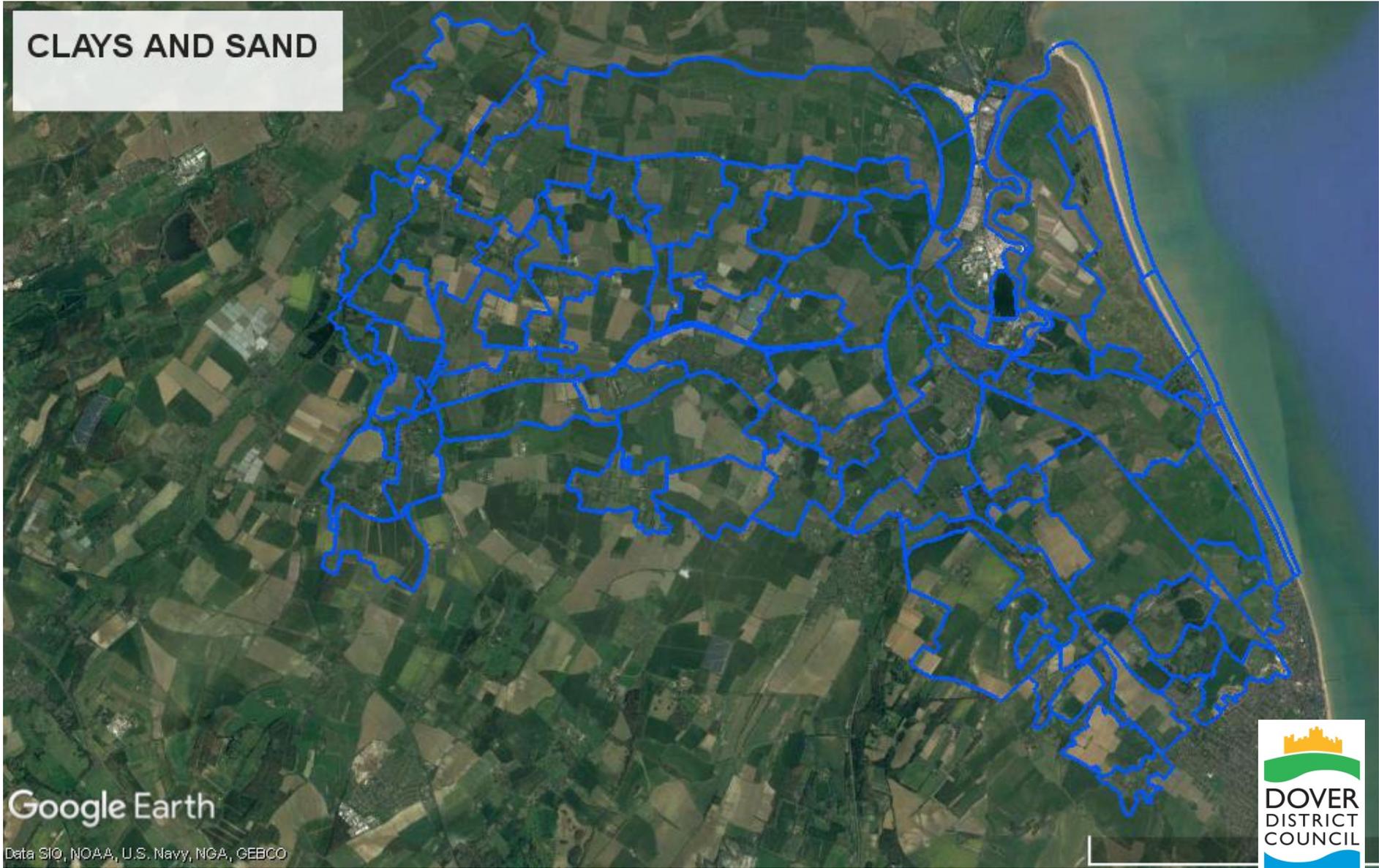
* includes two semi-enclaves – St Margaret’s at Cliffe and Bay, and Capel-Le-Ferne

Kent Downs AONB

Kent Downs AONB (red) and the two partial enclaves of Capel-Le-Ferne and St Margaret's at Cliffe and Bay (orange)



CLAYS AND SAND



Google Earth

Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO

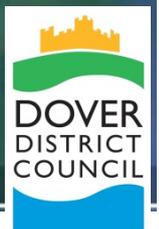


CHALK



Google Earth

Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO



OVERALL SUMMARY OF CONDITION OF THE DOVER LLCAs

Group	Very Poor	Poor	Medium	Good	Very Good	Total LLCAs
AONB	0	7	22	22	4	55
STM+CLF			1	1		2
Clays and Sand	0	9	64	17	1	91
Chalk	0	7	69	16	0	92
Overall	0	23	156	56	5	240

Analysis 1

The overall results show

- better condition (good and above) LLCAs (27/57) in the AONB compared with Clays and Sand (18/91) and Chalk (16/92)
- No significant differences in condition between LLCAs on Clays and Sand or Chalk

Analysis 2

Reasons for Poor and Very Good Condition in LLCAs

AONB

- LLCAs in Poor condition mainly due to trunk roads (A2 and A20) and noise
- LLCAs in Very Good condition due to coastal cliffs and Dover Castle

Clays and Sand

- LLCAs in Poor condition for various reasons: poor building quality, parking, industry, ongoing development, new road
- LLCA in Very Good condition due to naturalness (Shellness)

Chalk

- LLCAs in Poor condition for various reasons, mainly development (past and ongoing), industry, inappropriate land use, new road

OVERALL SUMMARY OF CONDITION AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE DOVER LLCAs

Condition	Percentages		
	Good and Very Good	Medium	Poor
AONB	47	40	13
Clays and Sand	20	70	10
Chalk	17	75	8

The Assessment can indicate areas for conservation or enhancement



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As a working document, this Dover LLCA should be subject to ongoing review to account for development and other changes in the district;

A 'data controller' will be needed to manage updating the LLCAs