2.0 METHODOLOGY
2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Approach

2.1.1 Landscape Character Assessment is a tool that allows landscape character to be understood, explained and described in a transparent and objective way. It does this by identifying the variations in physical, natural and cultural attributes, and experiential characteristics, that makes one area of landscape distinctive from another at a range of spatial scales. Landscape Character Assessment also recognises how landscapes have changed over time, and acknowledges the influence of human activities on the landscapes.

2.1.2 The general approach to the study is in accordance with the established principles of ‘Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland’ 4. In respect to making judgments about landscape sensitivity and capacity, the study’s approach has been informed by Topic Paper 6 5 taking into account current best practice and CBA’s experience from other similar studies.

2.1.3 The Guidance promotes the benefits of involving stakeholders who are representative of communities of interest and communities of place in the preparation of Landscape Character Assessment studies. In line with the requirements of the brief, no stakeholder consultation has been undertaken by CBA as part of the assessment process.

2.1.4 An important principle of good practice in Landscape Character Assessment is that studies should make a clear distinction between:-

- **Landscape Characterisation** – the relatively value-free process of identifying, classifying and describing areas of distinctive character; and

- **Landscape Evaluation** – the more subjective process of making judgements, which may use one or a combination of approaches, depending on the purpose of the exercise.

2.1.5 In line with the objectives of the Brief, the study was undertaken at two different scales of assessment appropriate to the purpose of the exercises:

- The settlement setting assessments were undertaken at a scale of 1:10,000 to provide a finer grain of detail for each of the relevant study areas.

2.1.6 The landscape characterisation and evaluation methodologies used for each of the scales of assessment are detailed below.

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4 Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland (Countryside Agency/Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002).
2.2 1:25,000 Landscape Characterisation

Study Area

2.2.1 The study area for the assessment of the District’s landscapes outside of the High Weald AONB and the South Downs National Park is shown on Figure 2.1.

Desk-Based Studies

2.2.2 The initial stage of the Landscape Character Assessment process involved desk-based studies to bring together existing information about the landscape within the study area.

2.2.3 A series of physical, historic and natural landscape attribute map overlays were prepared using available datasets, including:

- Aerial photography (land cover)
- OS 1:25,000 maps (topography, drainage, settlement patterns, woodland, field patterns, etc)
- Historic Landscape Character data
- Designated historic assets (scheduled monuments, conservation areas, listed buildings, historic parks and gardens, etc)
- Ancient Woodland data
- Designated wildlife sites and nature reserves

2.2.4 The landscape within the study area was systematically divided into discrete and relatively homogenous tracts of land at a scale of 1:25,000 to identify physical, historic and natural landscape elements that occur in repeating patterns. The boundaries of these landscape units were tested and validated by field survey work, and provided a basis for defining a preliminary landscape classification.

2.2.5 This stage also involved research to identify and review the main physical, historic and natural components of the landscape that have influenced the shape and use of the landscape within the study area. This research drew on a variety of documents, maps and digital data that helped to describe the physical geography and cultural history of the study area.

2.2.6 The landscape character context and classification hierarchy for the District was reviewed, described and mapped, which included consideration of the following:

- National Character Areas information.
- East Sussex County Landscape Character Assessment.
- Landscape Character Assessments within adjacent areas (such as the South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment etc).

Field Surveys

2.2.7 Field survey work was undertaken during May, June and July 2014 by a team of experienced surveyors to validate the draft landscape classifications defined by the desk-based analysis, the boundaries of which were refined where appropriate to reflect conditions on the ground.

2.2.8 Structured survey forms were completed from 2/3 viewpoints within each Local Landscape Character Area to record the assessor’s observations in relation to landform, landscape elements and aesthetic (perceptual) factors, and note how these contribute to defining the key characteristics of the landscape.

2.2.9 The field survey forms (which include photographs) were used to inform the character descriptions. The field survey forms are included as Appendix 3.

Landscape Classification

2.2.10 The findings of the desk-based studies and field survey work were used to confirm the landscape classification map for the study area. The map defines ‘Local Landscape Character Types’ and ‘Local Landscape Character Areas’, which are defined as follows:

- **Local Landscape Character Types** are distinct types of landscape within the study area that exhibit a relatively homogenous pattern of physical and cultural attributes, including geology, landform, historical evolution and land use. They are generic in nature and may reoccur in different parts of the study area, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of landscape characteristics.

- **Local Landscape Character Areas** are discrete geographical areas of distinctive character within a Local Landscape Character Type. They are unique areas that comprise a particular pattern of physical and cultural characteristics that combine to create a distinctive sense of place, even though they may share some generic landscape characteristics with other areas encompassing the same Local Landscape Character Type.

2.2.11 The boundaries of the confirmed Local Landscape Character Types and Local Landscape Character Areas were mapped within a GIS over OS mapping, and the polygons digitised to an accuracy of 1:25,000. The Local Landscape Character Areas are ‘nested’ within the relevant Local Landscape Character Types to give a hierarchical classification that sits within the County Landscape Character Areas and National Character Areas.
Settlements within the High Weald Landscape:
1. Bolebroke
2. Boreham Street
3. Buxted
4. Cade Street
5. Cowbeech
6. Crowborough
7. Cross-in-hand
8. Danehill
9. Fletching
10. Forest Row
11. Framfield
12. Frant
13. Groombridge
14. Gun Hill
15. Hammerwood
16. Hasting
17. Hartfield
18. Heathfield
19. Horam
20. Maresfield
21. Mayfield
22. Ninfield
23. Old Heathfield
24. Otterfield
25. Pevensey & Westham
26. Polegate
27. Rotherfield
28. Rye
29. Sennelers Green
30. Sissinghurst
31. Snowdown
32. Withyham
33. Waldron
34. Voisey's Cross
35. Warbleton
36. Westham
37. Westfield
38. White Cliffs
39. Wadhurst
40. Winchelsea
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Character Descriptions

2.2.12 The findings of the desk-based studies and field survey work were used to inform character descriptions for each defined Local Landscape Character Type. In each case, the character description information is provided under the following headings:

- Location and Boundaries
- Key Characteristics
- Physical Landscape Character
- Historic Landscape Character

2.2.13 A concise description of the character of each constituent Local Landscape Character Area within the Local Landscape Character Type is also provided.
2.3 1:10,000 Settlement Setting Characterisation

Study Area

2.3.1 The settlements included in the settlement setting assessments are as listed in Appendix 1 and shown on Figure 2.1. The study area for the market town assessments are based on an approximately 1km square area with an approximately 0.5km square area used for the villages.

Desk-Based Studies

2.3.2 Before embarking on field survey work, preparatory desk-based studies were undertaken for each settlement to bring together and analyse available information about the landscape within the study areas. For each settlement, the desk-based studies involved the following tasks:

- Where relevant, a review of the character assessment information for settlements covered by the Wealden Landscape Character Assessment & Development Option Evaluation Study*
- Where relevant, a review of the Local Landscape Character Types and Local Landscape Character Areas around each settlement from the Landscape Character Assessment at the 1:25,000 contextual scale and review of the inherent landscape and visual sensitivities for each Landscape Character Area.
- Analysis of the historic landscape character data† to provide an overview of different types/ages of historic fields, field boundaries and woodland, and other historic uses such as coppicing and the iron industry, which survive and are still visible as remnant historic features within the current landscape.
- Identification of conservation designations.
- Definition of preliminary Landscape Setting Areas, based on analysis of local variations in landscape character around the settlements.

2.3.3 Landscape Setting Areas are discrete geographical areas of distinctive character defined at 1:10,000 scale that provide the landscape setting for a settlement. They are unique areas that comprise a particular pattern of physical and cultural characteristics that combine to create a distinctive sense of place. Where Landscape Setting Areas lie within the 1:25,000 assessment study area, they generally ‘nest’ within the classification of Local Landscape Character Areas.

Field Surveys

2.3.4 For each settlement, observations in the field were undertaken involving the following tasks:

- Refining the boundaries of the preliminary Landscape Setting Areas.
- Identifying and recording positive and negative landscape features and characteristics (including significant views into and out of the settlement).
- Recording and analysis of information to inform the evaluation of the landscape within each Landscape Setting Area.

Character Descriptions

2.3.5 The findings of the desk-based studies and field survey work were used to inform character descriptions for the landscape setting of each settlement. In each case, the character description information is provided under the following headings:

- Settlement Profile
- Landscape Character – provides (i) signposts to the relevant County Landscape Character Areas (see Figure 3.1) and, where applicable, the relevant Local Landscape Character Areas (see Figures 2.1 and 3.2) - or a brief overview description of the landscape surrounding the settlement that provides the landscape context for the respective settlement; (ii) a summary overview of the landscape setting’s key features and distinctive characteristics; and (iii) identifies the distinctive characteristics of each Landscape Setting Area.

Assessment Plans

2.3.6 For each settlement, the character descriptions are supported by an assessment plan showing the following information:

- Landscape Setting Areas
- Landscape Features and Characteristics
- Conservation Designations

2.3.7 A glossary for the plan’s key is provided in Appendix 2. It should be noted that a standard key is used on the settlement maps for consistency. Not all landscape features and conservation designations on the key are necessarily found within each study area, and therefore specific items may not be mapped in some cases. Datasets provided have been used in their unaltered state, and therefore mapped data may extend beyond the areas described within the text (for example, the Historic Landscape Characterisation data used to define Remnant Historic Landscapes may extend to within the defined ‘urban areas’ of the settlements which is outside of the Landscape Setting Areas).

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* Wealden District Local Development Framework: Landscape Character Assessment & Development Option Evaluation Study (February 2009, The Landscape Section of East Sussex County Council for Wealden District Council)
† Data provided by East Sussex County Council from the East Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation Project
2.4 Landscape Evaluation

2.4.1 In line with the objectives of the Brief, the following landscape evaluation methodology has been developed that applies to both scales of assessment. The landscape evaluation considers the following:

- The inherent landscape sensitivity of a Local Landscape Character Type, Local Landscape Character Area or Landscape Setting Area to change.
- The landscape value of a Local Landscape Character Type, Local Landscape Character Area or Landscape Setting Area.
- The indicative landscape capacity of a Local Landscape Character Type, Local Landscape Character Area or Landscape Setting Area to accommodate a particular type of development.
- The contribution of a Landscape Setting Area to a settlement’s landscape setting.

Landscape Sensitivity

2.4.2 Landscape sensitivity is a combination of the sensitivity of the landscape resource (in terms of both its character as a whole and the individual elements contributing to character); and the visual sensitivity of the landscape, assessed in terms of a combination of factors such as views, visibility, the number and nature of people perceiving the landscape (visual receptors). For the purposes of this study, the term ‘overall landscape sensitivity’ is used to refer primarily to the inherent sensitivity of the landscape itself, irrespective of the type of change or development that may be under consideration.

2.4.3 Drawing on the information and analysis from the desk-based studies and field surveys, the overall landscape sensitivity of an area is evaluated on the basis of combining judgements about the landscape’s strength of place and visibility.

2.4.4 The landscape’s strength of place is evaluated in terms of its distinctiveness and continuity/time depth in accordance with Matrix 2.1.

Matrix 2.1: Strength of Place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctiveness</th>
<th>Recent</th>
<th>Historic</th>
<th>Ancient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indistinct</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinct</td>
<td>Very Weak</td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique/Rare</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Very Strong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4.5 ‘Distinctiveness’ refers to the presence of positive features of a place which contribute to its special character and strength of place. For the purposes of this assessment, the following definitions apply with regards to the distinctiveness criteria for evaluating a landscape’s strength of place in Matrix 2.1:

- Indistinct: Landscapes with limited positive features or characteristics.
- Distinct: Landscapes with notable positive features or characteristics that make a moderate contribution to its special character and strength of place.
- Unique/Rare: Landscapes with very distinctive positive features or characteristics that make a substantial contribution to its special character and strength of place.

2.4.6 ‘Continuity/time depth’ refers to the historic dimension of the landscape and how old the landscape is in terms of its surviving features. For the purposes of this assessment, the following definitions apply with regards to the continuity/time depth criteria for evaluating a landscape’s strength of place in Matrix 2.1:

- Recent: Landscapes predominantly dating from 1800 to present day (Source: Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation, August 2010)
- Historic: Remnant Historic Landscapes predominantly dating from 1600 to 1800 (Source: Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation, August 2010)
• **Ancient**: Remnant Historic Landscapes predominantly pre-dating 1600, as indicated by presence of Ancient Woodland, and Historic Landscape Character ‘interpretation of character’ listed below (Source: Natural England, May 2014; Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation, August 2010):

- Aggregate assart
- Cohesive assart
- Consolidated strips
- Co axial fields
- Brooks innings
- Strip fields
- Irregular piecemeal enclosure

- Regular piecemeal enclosure
- Medieval deer park
- Medieval enclosure
- Ancient hill fort
- Ancient fort
- Prehistoric Earthworks

2.4.7 Further information and interpretation about the above terms can be found in Volume II of the Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (August 2010).

2.4.8 The inherent visibility of the landscape (i.e. the degree of opportunities for extensive views) is evaluated in terms of the relative dominance of landform/topography and the degree of tree cover in accordance with Matrix 2.2.

Matrix 2.2: Visibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landform</th>
<th>Enclosed</th>
<th>Intermittent</th>
<th>Open</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insignificant</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparent</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4.9 ‘Landform’ refers to the topography or physical shape of the landscape. For the purposes of this assessment, the following definitions apply with regards to the landform criteria for evaluating a landscape’s visibility in Matrix 2.2:

- **Insignificant**: Landscapes with limited topographical variation, predominantly low-lying landforms.
- **Apparent**: Landscapes with a mixture of topographical features, predominantly gently undulating ridges and valleys.
- **Dominant**: Landscapes with dominant topographical features, predominantly strongly undulating ridges and valleys.

2.4.10 ‘Tree Cover’ refers to the patterns of woodland, hedgerow trees and field trees in the landscape. For the purposes of this assessment, the following definitions apply with regards to the tree cover criteria for evaluating a landscape’s visibility in Matrix 2.2:

- **Enclosed**: Landscapes with a high level of tree cover, characterised by limited opportunities for extensive views.
- **Intermittent**: Landscapes with a moderate intermittent level of tree cover, characterised by more opportunities for extensive views.
- **Open**: Landscapes with limited tree cover, characterised by widespread opportunities for extensive views.

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8 Assart - an area of land that has had trees and undergrowth removed and the ground broken up in preparation for cultivation (http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/assart)
The overall landscape sensitivity of an area is evaluated on the basis of combining judgments about the landscape’s strength of place and its inherent visibility in accordance with Matrix 2.3.

Matrix 2.3: Overall Landscape Sensitivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength of Place</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Very Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Strong</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visibility

Very Low | Low | Moderate | High | Very High

2.4.12 For the purposes of this assessment, the overall landscape sensitivity categories are as defined in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Overall Landscape Sensitivity Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Landscape Sensitivity Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>The landscape is assessed as having a lack of distinctiveness and continuity/time depth (the landscape is of recent origin with few features of historic interest), and it may also have very limited visibility due to dominant landforms and a high level of tree cover.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>The landscape is assessed as having few distinctive features and characteristics that provide continuity/time depth, and typically has limited visibility due to apparent landforms and intermittent tree cover.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>The landscape is assessed as having some distinctive features and characteristics that provide continuity/time depth, and typically has moderate visibility due to apparent insignificant landforms and intermittent/open tree cover.</td>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>The landscape is assessed as having some unique/rare characteristics that are distinctive and provide continuity/time depth, and typically has high visibility due to limited topographical variation and tree cover.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>The landscape is assessed as having many unique/rare characteristics that are very distinctive and provide considerable continuity/time depth (the landscape is of ancient origin with many features of historic interest), and it may also have very high visibility due to very limited topographical variation and tree cover.</td>
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Landscape Value

2.4.13 Landscape value is concerned with the relative value that is attached to different landscapes. In a policy context the usual basis for recognising certain highly valued landscapes is through the application of a local or national landscape designation. A landscape may also be valued by different communities of interest for many different reasons without any formal designation, recognising, for example, perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness; special cultural associations; the influence and presence of other conservation interests; or the existence of a consensus about importance, either nationally or locally.

2.4.14 For the purposes of this study, landscape value is assessed on the basis of the following criteria recommended by current best practice guidance:

- **Landscape condition**: the physical state of the landscape, and its intactness, from visual, functional, and ecological perspectives. It also reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements which make up the character in any one place.
- **Scenic quality**: the way in which landscapes appeal primarily to the visual senses.
- **Rarity**: the presence or absence of unique/rare features and elements in the landscape.
- **Representativeness**: whether the landscape contains a particular character, and/or features and elements, which are judged to be worthy of representing (such as pockets of ancient remnant woodland or an intricate network of hedgerows for example).
- **Conservation values**: the presence of features of particular wildlife, geological, archaeological, historic/cultural conservation interest and value (as recognised by established designation systems) that add to the value of the landscape as well as having value in their own right.
- **Sense of wildness/tranquillity**: the existence of relatively remote areas in the landscape which provide a sense of wildness or tranquility. Such areas are typically characterised by low levels of disturbance, an absence of detracting elements (such as built development, industry, traffic, noise, movement, the presence of people and artificial lighting) and the presence of positive landscape features (such as the naturalness of the landscape, presence and visibility of rivers and sea and the visibility of woodland).
- **Associations**: the cultural associations of the landscape with particular people, artists, writers or other media, or events in history.

* Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland: Chapter 7 – Making judgements based on landscape character.
### Table 2.2: Landscape Value Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape Value Category</th>
<th>Definition/Criteria</th>
<th>Typical Examples/Features</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Very High</strong></td>
<td>• Very many and/or extensive important features of conservation value&lt;br&gt;• Very strong landscape condition due to very unified landscape pattern and few visual detractors&lt;br&gt;• Very prominent culturally important landmarks provide orientation/strong strength of place&lt;br&gt;• Very many rare landscape features/characteristics contribute to a very strong strength of place&lt;br&gt;• Very strong sense of wildness/tranquility&lt;br&gt;• Very strong cultural associations with prominent people/important events</td>
<td>• World Heritage Site, National Park, AONB or key elements/features within them&lt;br&gt;• Areas of exceptional remoteness&lt;br&gt;• Relatively moist tranquil areas&lt;br&gt;• Wildlife areas of international or national value&lt;br&gt;• Providing setting for internationally buildings or cultural features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
<td>• Many and/or extensive important features of conservation value&lt;br&gt;• Strong landscape condition due to unified landscape pattern and limited visual detractors&lt;br&gt;• Prominent culturally important landmarks provide orientation/strong strength of place&lt;br&gt;• Many rare landscape features/characteristics contribute to a strong strength of place&lt;br&gt;• Strong sense of wildness/tranquility&lt;br&gt;• Strong cultural associations with prominent people/important events</td>
<td>• National Park, AONB, Areas of Great Landscape Value (or similar designation) or key elements/features within them&lt;br&gt;• Areas of remote countryside&lt;br&gt;• Wildlife areas of national value&lt;br&gt;• Providing setting for Listed Buildings or nationally important cultural features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>• Some important features of conservation value&lt;br&gt;• Moderate landscape condition due to relatively coherent landscape pattern and some visual detractors&lt;br&gt;• Culturally important landmarks present but not prominent&lt;br&gt;• Some rare landscape features/characteristics contribute to a strength of place&lt;br&gt;• Limited sense of wildness/tranquility&lt;br&gt;• Limited cultural associations with prominent people/important events</td>
<td>• Generally undisigned but value expressed through local cultural associations or through demonstrable use&lt;br&gt;• Potential areas of remote countryside&lt;br&gt;• Wildlife areas of local value&lt;br&gt;• Providing setting for locally valued buildings or cultural features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low</strong></td>
<td>• Limited important features of conservation value&lt;br&gt;• Poor landscape condition due to incoherent landscape pattern and many visual detractors&lt;br&gt;• No culturally important landmarks present&lt;br&gt;• Few rare landscape features/characteristics&lt;br&gt;• No sense of wildness/tranquility&lt;br&gt;• No cultural associations with prominent people/important events</td>
<td>• Certain individual landscape elements or features may be worthy of conservation and landscape would benefit from restoration or enhancement&lt;br&gt;• No areas of remote countryside&lt;br&gt;• Relatively least tranquil areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Landscape Capacity

2.4.16 Landscape capacity refers to the ability of a landscape to accommodate change or development without significant adverse effects on its character. Landscape capacity reflects the inherent sensitivity of the landscape resource and its visual sensitivity, and the value attached to the landscape or to specific elements. For the purposes of this study, the term ‘indicative landscape capacity’ is used to refer to the capacity of the landscape to accommodate a specific type and nature of change or development within defined parameters.

2.4.17 Evaluation of a landscape’s capacity to accommodate development is a complex issue and is not a scientific absolute. The evaluation of landscape capacity is based on the assessor’s professional judgement about the sensitivity and value of the Landscape Setting Area considered as a whole.

2.4.18 The capacity evaluation for each landscape unit does not necessarily assume that this capacity applies consistently across the entire landscape unit. For example, it is possible for a certain amount/scale of development, where carefully sited, well-designed and with suitable landscaping mitigation, to be accommodated in a landscape unit assessed as having an overall low or moderate capacity. Conversely, in a landscape unit assessed as having an overall high capacity to accommodate most scales of development, it is possible for the capacity to be reduced in parts of the landscape unit due to site-specific constraints (for example, as shown on the relevant settlement assessment map in the case of Landscape Setting Areas). This is reflected in the landscape capacity evaluation methodology set out below.

2.4.19 The settlements for which the capacity of their surrounding landscapes to accommodate residential and commercial development has been evaluated are those settlements identified in Policy WCS6 of the Wealden Core Strategy (as listed in Appendix 1).

2.4.20 In addition, the capacity of the District’s landscapes outside of the High Weald AONB and the South Downs National Park to accommodate renewable energy development (solar farms and wind turbines) has also been evaluated (see Section 7.0).
The indicative capacity of a landscape to accommodate development (taking into account the scope for mitigation) is evaluated based on combining judgments about its landscape sensitivity with judgments about its landscape value as set out in Matrix 2.4.

Matrix 2.4: Indicative Landscape Capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape Sensitivity</th>
<th>Landscape Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the purposes of this assessment, the indicative landscape capacity categories are as defined in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Indicative Landscape Capacity Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative Landscape Capacity Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>The landscape is assessed as having very high landscape sensitivity and very high landscape value. Very limited potential to accommodate any scale of new development as this is highly likely to erode the positive key features and characteristics of the landscape, which are desirable to safeguard in line with relevant national/local planning policy objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>The landscape is assessed as having high landscape sensitivity and high landscape value. Large or medium-scale new development is likely to erode the positive key features and characteristics of the landscape which are desirable to safeguard in line with relevant national/local planning policy objectives. Taking into account site-specific constraints, there may be potential to accommodate some small-scale development in specific locations within the landscape with lower landscape sensitivity, subject to appropriate siting, design and landscaping mitigation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>The landscape is assessed as having very low to moderate landscape sensitivity and high landscape value, or moderate to high landscape sensitivity and low to moderate landscape value. Subject to appropriate siting, design and landscaping mitigation, medium and small-scale new development could potentially be accommodated without eroding positive key features and characteristics which are desirable to safeguard. Taking into account site-specific constraints, there may also be potential to accommodate some large-scale new development in specific locations with lower landscape sensitivity, subject to appropriate siting, design and landscaping mitigation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>The landscape is assessed as having low to very low landscape sensitivity and low to moderate landscape value. Subject to appropriate siting, design and landscaping mitigation, large, medium and small-scale new development could potentially be accommodated within the landscape without eroding positive key features and characteristics which are desirable to safeguard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>The landscape is assessed as having very low landscape sensitivity and very low landscape value. Subject to appropriate siting, design and landscaping mitigation, large, medium and small-scale new development could potentially be accommodated without eroding positive key features and characteristics which are desirable to safeguard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4.23 In order to assess the suitability of a landscape to accommodate development in line with the objectives of the Brief, it has been necessary to make a number of assumptions about the nature of potential development types under consideration. For the purposes of this assessment, the development scenarios defined in Table 2.4 are assumed, based on the following general considerations:

- The nature/scale of existing and potential development types within the District (and/or County where relevant).
- In respect of renewable energy development specifically, current technology characteristics and likely commercial viability in relation to generation capacity.

Table 2.4: Indicative Development Scales Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative Development Scale</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Large</strong></td>
<td>Housing development: over 50 residential dwellings comprising detached, semi-detached or terraced buildings, up to two storeys in height, with plot/street layouts and densities in line with current policy requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment development: large scale commercial buildings with substantial footprints, generally up to 10-12m in height, and including parking/service areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Services/community development: large scale buildings with substantial footprints, up to three storeys in height, including large parking/service areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Renewable energy development: clusters of 3 or more commercial 2.3MW wind turbines, generally up to 100m in blade tip and large-scale commercial solar farm installations (2-3m high solar panels on sites generally over 10ha).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Medium**                  | Housing development: 11 to 50 residential dwellings comprising detached, semi-detached or terraced buildings, up to two storeys in height, with plot/street layouts and densities in line with current policy requirements. |
|                             | Employment development: medium-scale commercial buildings, generally up to 10-12m in height, including modest parking/service areas. |
|                             | Services/community development: medium scale buildings, up to two storeys in height, including modest parking/service areas. |
|                             | Renewable energy development: single commercial 2MW wind turbine, generally up to 100m in blade tip and medium-scale commercial solar farm installations (2-3m high solar panels on sites generally between 10 to 30ha). |

| **Small**                   | Housing development: 10 or less residential dwellings comprising detached, semi-detached or terraced buildings, up to two storeys in height, with plot/street layouts and densities in line with current policy requirements. |
|                             | Employment development: small commercial buildings, generally up to 10-12m in height, including small parking/service areas. |
|                             | Services/community development: small buildings, of one storey in height, including small parking/service areas. |
|                             | Renewable energy development: small-scale 1kW-6kW domestic/off-grid wind turbines, generally 6-12m to blade tip and small-scale commercial solar farm installations (2-3m high solar panels on sites generally 10ha or less). |

2.4.24 The potential to mitigate adverse effects of change in a particular landscape will depend on the factors that determine its landscape and visual sensitivity. For the purposes of this assessment, landscapes evaluated as having some capacity to accommodate a particular type of development are considered to have potential for mitigation based on the following siting, design and landscaping mitigation principles:

- New development siting, design and landscaping responds to the landscape features, characteristics and special qualities that give the landscape its unique sense of place and local distinctiveness.
- New development avoids adverse impacts on the setting of culturally important landmarks, remnant historic landscapes and significant views.
- The use of appropriate building and hard/soft landscaping materials that are complementary to local vernacular design.
- Use of materials with appropriate finishes and colours that help to blend new buildings and structures into the surrounding landscape.
- New planting of woodland and tree belts (using native species to reinforce local distinctiveness) designed to create a strong sense of enclosure (where appropriate), frame views, provide screening and soften impact of built development, that links with existing vegetation to create a cohesive landscape framework to help integrate new development into the landscape.
- Existing structure planting, including shelter belts, woodland and hedgerows, is retained and augmented by new structure planting to provide screening for new development (including reinforcement of landscape buffers along sensitive urban edges and to soften hard urban edges where appropriate), and appropriately managed to provide a strong and enduring backdrop to frame views.
- Multi-functional green networks are created as planting, open space and recreational corridors.
- Where opportunities exist, the improvement and restoration of degraded landscape at a local scale.
Landscape Contribution to Settlement Setting

2.4.25 ‘Settlement Setting’ refers to the surroundings in which a settlement is experienced, its local context, embracing present and past relationships between the settlement and the adjacent landscape. The settlements for which the contributions of their landscape settings have been evaluated are those settlements with existing or potential Conservation Areas (as listed in Appendix 1).

2.4.26 Drawing on the information and analysis from the desk-based studies and field surveys, the contribution that the character of each Landscape Setting Area makes towards the setting of the settlement is evaluated in line with the criteria set out in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: Landscape Contribution to Settlement Setting Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Contribution</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Contribution</td>
<td>The Landscape Setting Area has a very strong strength of place due to its distinctiveness and long continuity/time depth (presence of remnant ancient landscapes that are unique/rare features of special historic interest), and very high inter-visibility and strong functional associations with the historic core of the settlement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Contribution</td>
<td>The Landscape Setting Area has a moderate strength of place due to its distinctiveness and moderate continuity/time depth (presence of remnant historic landscapes that are distinctive features of some historic interest), and moderate inter-visibility and some functional associations with the historic core of the settlement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited Contribution</td>
<td>The Landscape Setting Area has a limited strength of place due to its lack of distinctiveness and continuity/time depth (landscapes that are of more recent origin with few features of historic interest), and limited inter-visibility and weak functional associations with the historic core of the settlement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>