

**Consultant's report on the  
possible alternative boundary  
from north of Petersfield running  
east across to Pulborough**

This report was commissioned by Defra from Natural England. It represents Natural England's best interpretation of the alternative South Downs National Park boundary from north of Petersfield running across to Pulborough proposed by the inquiry inspector but does not reflect their position on what constitutes the most appropriate boundary for the South Downs National Park.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Appointment

- 1.1.1 Alison Farmer Associates was appointed by Natural England in March 2007 to undertake research and evaluation to define a recommended revised South Downs National Park boundary based on an *indicative line* put forward by the South Downs Public Inquiry Inspector.
- 1.1.2 This report sets out the approach used to determine a revised National Park boundary, the results of the assessment and detailed boundary recommendations.

### 1.2 Background to Study

- 1.2.1 Natural England (formerly the Countryside Agency) is the statutory body responsible for designating National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in England. The South Downs National Park (Designation) Order 2002 was made on the 18 December 2002 by The Countryside Agency and detailed the area the Agency believed merited designation according to the statutory criteria.
- 1.2.2 The proposed boundary was considered in detail at Public Inquiry between November 2003 and March 2005. The Inspector has now prepared his report in light of representations made at Inquiry and advice from his Landscape Assessor but to date the Designation Order remains to be confirmed by the Minister.
- 1.2.3 The Inspector in his report recommends the designation of an extensive tract of land as the South Downs National Park. He also recommends a revision to the boundary between sections E to H inclusive. In making this latter recommendation the Inspector has provided an '*indicative line*' and advises that a more definitive boundary line is now identified based upon this.
- 1.2.4 The recommended revised boundary presented in this report will be used to supplement the Inspector's Report, aid the Minister in his decision making and be used in any further consultation on the National Park boundary.

### 1.3 Brief and Scope of Work

- 1.3.1 The aim of this piece of work has been to define and recommend a clearly identifiable alternative National Park boundary line for sections E to H based on the Inspectors *indicative line* and analysis provided by the Inspector and his Landscape Assessor.
- 1.3.2 The study area comprises, at a broad scale, land within and adjacent to the Wealden Greensands and more specifically the River Rother Valley and A3 corridor. The study area and length of the '*indicative line*' stretches from Blackmoor in the northwest to Pulborough in the east (Refer Inspector's Report Plan 1A/1B, Volume 3).
- 1.3.3 The approach adopted in defining and recommending a revised boundary has been based on an understanding of landscape character and the issues raised by the Inspector and the Landscape Assessor notably the need to:
- exclude lower quality landscape and to

- exclude land which is of non-chalk character other than where there is a strong visual link or other association with the core chalk downs.

1.3.4 It has also utilised the Countryside Agency's Approach to defining National Park boundaries (refer section 2.5 below). This approach was previously used to define the proposed South Downs National Park boundary considered at Public Inquiry.

## **1.4 Structure of Report**

1.4.1 This report is divided into two sections as follows:

- Section two considers the approach and methodology used in this assessment. It first considers the findings of the Inspector and Landscape Assessor and the conclusions reached in relation to the River Rother Valley and A3 corridor which form the basis for this work. It goes on to set out how landscape character assessment is used as a framework for evaluation, how matters of landscape character and other associated issues are considered and how the extent of association with the core chalk downs is determined. Finally it sets out the Countryside Agency's Approach to defining National Park boundaries.
- Section three sets out the results of the assessment first in general terms and then in detail in table format. The boundary has been divided into five sections which share similar characteristics for ease of presentation. For each section the recommended revised boundary is described in words and the rationale and issues taken into account in defining the exact boundary are presented. This text is supported by mapped data which has been provided separately in MapInfo format on an OS Mastermap base.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 In highlighting the need for this work the Inspector recommended that:  
*'sections E through to H be reviewed to exclude lower quality landscapes and non-chalk landscape other than where the latter have a strong visual link or other association with the core chalk downs.'*<sup>1</sup>
- 2.1.2 In response to his recommendation this study comprises three stages as follows:
- Stage I: To identify lower quality landscapes to be excluded
- Stage II: To identify non-chalk landscapes to be excluded
- Stage III: To define a precise boundary based on the findings of stages I and II
- 2.1.3 In order to adopt an approach which is consistent with decision making applied by the Inspector and analysis of the Landscape Assessor it has been important to fully understand and embrace their assessment and conclusions. They review the landscape against the statutory criteria for designation and decide which tracts do, or do not, merit designation in the National Park. In particular they conclude that the A3 corridor between Petersfield and Woolmer Forest and land around Coldwaltham should be excluded from the Proposed South Downs National Park (PSDNP). In addition the Assessor identifies specific geographical areas as failing to meet the Natural Beauty criterion (summarised in section 2.2.13 below). This study embraces these conclusions as a starting point and does not review tracts of land in relation to the statutory criteria for designation. Instead this study focuses on land surrounding the *indicative line* put forward by the Inspector, reviews the landscape in relation to landscape quality, and associated issues raised by the assessor (i.e. tranquillity), association to the core chalk downs landscape and seeks to define a detailed boundary line. The methodology adopted reflects this focus.

### 2.2 Review of Assessor's Analysis

- 2.2.1 The Landscape Assessor undertook a detailed examination of the landscape types<sup>2</sup> within the Rother Valley and A3 corridor and this is summarised below.

#### **A3 Corridor**

- 2.2.2 He concluded the following in relation to the landscape types associated with the A3 corridor (all references relate to the Assessor's Report Annex B):
- The Pastures (Hangers Associated) did not meet the natural beauty criterion (para 3.3.2)
  - The Mixed Farmland and Woodland did not meet the natural beauty criterion (para 3.31)
  - The Hangers on Greensands did meet the natural beauty criterion (para 3.33)
  - The Open Farmland on Greensand did meet the natural beauty criterion (para 3.36)

<sup>1</sup> Inspector's letter to the Secretary of State, and Inspector's Report Part 2(a) para 2.71.

<sup>2</sup> As defined in the East Hampshire and Sussex Downs landscape character assessments.

- 2.2.3 He also considered the Hangers on Greensand and Open Farmland on Greensand landscape types to express strong visual and character association with the core chalk of the South Downs (paras 3.35 and 3.36 respectively).
- 2.2.4 The Assessor concluded (para 3.49) that the proposed National Park boundary north of Petersfield *'should follow easily recognisable features along the eastern limit of the Hangers on Greensand landscape type'* and that south of Petersfield the boundary *'should follow the northern edge of the Hangers on Greensand landscape type.'*

#### **River Rother Valley**

- 2.2.5 The Assessor concluded the following in relation to the landscape types associated with the River Rother Valley:
- Sandy Arable Farmland did not meet the natural beauty or recreation criteria (paras 2.18 and 2.22)
  - The River Rother Floodplain did meet the natural beauty criterion (para 2.24)
  - The Wooded Ridges did meet the natural beauty criterion (para 2.31)
  - The Heathland Mosaic did meet the natural beauty criterion (para 2.26)
  - The Scarp Footslopes did meet the natural beauty criterion (para 2.29)
- 2.2.6 Having ruled out the **Sandy Arable Farmland** he then went on to explain why landscapes which meet the natural beauty criterion *still did not merit inclusion* within the proposed South Downs National Park (PSDNP).
- 2.2.7 He ruled out the inclusion of **The River Rother Floodplain** from the NP based on the fact it was surrounded by Sandy Arable Farmland and not contiguous with the wider NP land (para 2.37).
- 2.2.8 He ruled out **Heathland Mosaic** on the basis of different character and that it is not dominated by the chalk (paras 2.33 and 2.39).
- 2.2.9 He ruled out the **Wooded Ridges** on the basis that they were physically separated from the wider tract of land to be included in the PSDNP by Sandy Arable Farmland and that they are of different character and not dominated by the chalk (para 2.39).
- 2.2.10 He did not rule out the **Scarp Footslopes** - he considered them to meet the statutory criteria for designation and to be dominated by the chalk escarpment (para 2.33).
- 2.2.11 The Assessor concluded (para 2.40) that the National Park boundary needed to be *'redrawn along features within the scarp footslopes'* landscape type.

#### **The Inspector's Indicative Line:**

- 2.2.12 The indicative line presented by the Inspector does not fall along the Hangers on Greensand landscape type adjacent to the A3 corridor nor solely within the Scarp Footslopes landscape type between Petersfield and Pulborough as suggested by the Landscape Assessor. Instead it follows the edge of the A3 in the west and extends across the Scarp Footslopes, Sandy Arable Farmland, River Rother Floodplain and Heathland Mosaic as it moves east. The Inspector noted that land of differing character to the chalk could still be included in the PSDNP where it meet the statutory designation criteria and showed strong association (particularly visual) with the chalk.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Paras 2.51-2.54 of Inspector's Report, Conclusions re non-chalk landscapes.

### Specific Land Excluded by the Landscape Assessor

2.2.13 The Assessor concluded that the following specific geographical areas did not meet the natural beauty criterion:

- **Corridor of A3, the B2070 and the main London to Portsmouth railway** (sound and movement of traffic) (para 3.21)
- **B2070, A272 and Petersfield by-pass** and their interchanges (embankments, lighting columns, road signage) (para 3.21)
- **South and east of Petersfield** (hedgerow removal, field amalgamation, loss of hedgerow trees, impact of urban edge) (para 3.22)
- **Route of B2070** from Bolinge Hill Farm access to Sheet and from Hill Brow to Rake (linear residential and commercial development, car parking, boundary treatment, pony paddocks) (para 3.23)
- Town of **Petersfield** (recent unremarkable development which overwhelms the historic core and lack of integration with surrounding landscape) (para 3.29)
- Landscape surrounding **Steep Marsh** (horse paddocks, residential development, planting and boundary treatment) (para 3.32)
- Land adjacent to **Greatham village** (linear development, noise from A3 and MoD land, military character) (para 3.45)
- **West Heath Common** (sand quarry - visual and noise impact, wire fencing, low grade buildings, horse grazing, overhead transmission lines) (para 2.27)
- Land in the vicinity of **Quebec** (overhead transmission line, field amalgamation, presence of pylons, large farm buildings) (para 2.30)
- **Chithurst towards Buriton** (overhead power lines) (para 2.12)
- Urban influences in the vicinity of **Fittleworth, Tillington, Rogate, Midhurst and Petworth** (para 2.12)
- **S.E. of Petworth** - field amalgamation, loss of hedgerow trees, intensive cultivation, pig rearing, horse grazing and paddocks (para 2.17)

## 2.3 Landscape Character

- 2.3.1 The East Hampshire Integrated Management Guidelines (1998) and Sussex Downs Landscape Character Assessment (1996) have been used as a framework for analysis during this study and referred to in the analysis tables in section 3.0 below. Since the Inspector and Landscape Assessor reported on the PSDNP boundary, a more recent landscape assessment has been undertaken for the South Downs (including all land within the designation order). This assessment was completed in 2006 and updates the earlier assessments making some minor adjustments to the boundary of landscape character types and updating issues and pressures. This more recent assessment has been used in this study as supplementary information.
- 2.3.2 The use of local character assessments in this study is consistent with the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland<sup>4</sup> which states in relation to landscape designations that: *“Once a broad area has been selected for national designation or recognition, a map of landscape character at the local level can help to define detailed boundaries”*.
- 2.3.3 Characterisation can help in determining the extent to which the landscape under consideration shares characteristics with landscapes within the wider proposed National Park, i.e. whether it is a natural extension of the existing designation or is fundamentally different (although differences do not necessarily rule out inclusion so

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<sup>4</sup> Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland, 2002, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Agency.

long as there are significant 'unifying factors' particularly visual links or associations). At a more detailed level, characterisation may also help to indicate where a National Park boundary should be located to be legible and meaningful in landscape terms.

- 2.3.4 Not all of any given landscape character type is necessarily included within the recommended revised boundary. Land of similar character may need to be excluded for a variety of reasons, for example because the landscape's key characteristics and features are in poor condition. This underlines the fact that characterisation is just the starting point for boundary definition. Boundary decisions are not made on landscape character grounds alone - the key considerations for this study are set out in sections 2.4 and 2.5 below. Nevertheless, landscape character may inform decisions on the inclusion of land and the definition of a boundary line.

## 2.4 Identifying Land to Exclude: Quality and South Downs Character

- 2.4.1 In light of the differences between the Landscape Assessor's recommendation and the Inspector's *indicative line* this study has reviewed the Landscape Assessor's analysis both through desk study and site assessment focusing on the landscapes through which the *indicative line* passes and those that lie between the *indicative line* and core chalk downs landscape - in this area reflected by the chalk escarpment to the south and west.

- 2.4.2 In particular, and in accordance with the Inspector's request (para 2.1.1 above), close attention has been paid to the quality of the landscape and to association with the core chalk downs character. Where land is specifically identified by the Assessor as not meeting the natural beauty criterion this conclusion has been accepted and care taken to ensure consistency in decision making where similar issues arise elsewhere.

### **Stage I: Landscape Quality and Associated Issues**

- 2.4.3 Landscape quality is based on judgements about the physical state of the landscape, about 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 of any one place<sup>5</sup>. The Landscape Assessor set out the overall issues which detract from and undermine the quality and condition of the relevant landscape character types. He also highlighted issues relating to the influence of incongruous features and tranquillity. These issues have been used as a basis for assessing the landscape in the vicinity of the *indicative line* and have been used to develop a set of questions which have been referred to during field evaluation as follows:

- What are the key characteristics of this landscape?
- Are the landscape features well managed and in good condition?
- Have key features been lost or removed?
- Is there a strong landscape pattern which shows cohesiveness and integrity (visually, historically or in terms of nature conservation)?
- Are there elements which are incongruous or out of keeping which detract from the quality of the area or cause fragmentation (physically or visually)?
- Are there factors which detract from the area's tranquillity (built development, noise, artificial lighting)?

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<sup>5</sup> Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland, 2002, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Agency Para 7.8

**Stage II: Association with the Core South Downs Character**

2.4.4 The Landscape Assessor also set out where visual links with the chalk can justifiably be used to include non-chalk landscapes which meet the statutory criteria for designation within the PSDNP<sup>6</sup>. These issues have formed the basis of the following set of questions which have been used in the field during evaluation.

- Does the chalk escarpment form a dominant characteristic in this landscape (as a result of proximity, scale and arresting/dramatic character)?
- Does the escarpment impart a strong 'South Down' character on the area as a result of extent of escarpment visible i.e. a large proportion of the escarpment is visible (horizontal skyline or vertical profile) and/or there are uninterrupted and frequent views.
- Does the character of the landscape, distance from the escarpment and nature of the downland being viewed strengthen or weaken any visual link?

## 2.5 Defining a Detailed Boundary Line

**Stage III: The Countryside Agency's Approach**

2.5.1. The definition of a detailed boundary line is informed by the Countryside Agency's Approach<sup>7</sup> to defining National Park boundaries, which is based on the Hobhouse<sup>8</sup> boundary considerations.

2.5.2 The approach comprises a series of considerations intended to help with drawing a boundary that is practical, consistent and well-reasoned. Table 1 below summarises the relevant considerations, and gives further explanation of the way in which these considerations have been interpreted by the Inspector and Landscape Assessor in the context of the PSDNP. The numbers in brackets indicate the original numbering used in Countryside Agency Board Paper. Text includes the boundary consideration and any explanatory notes. Not all of the boundary considerations have been listed here, as some (1, 2a-d, and 3) deal with broader issues of evaluation and are not relevant to detailed boundary setting.

Table 1: Boundary considerations and interpretation

Boundary Consideration	Interpretation by Inspector and Landscape Assessor
The National Park boundary should not be regarded as a sharp barrier between areas of differing landscape quality and recreational experience. In most situations there will be a <b>transition</b> of landscape quality across a sweep of land. The boundary chosen should be an easily identifiable feature within the transition (4)	The boundary should be drawn towards the high quality end of the transition in a manner that includes high quality land and excludes pockets of lesser quality land
Wherever possible an <b>easily distinguishable physical boundary</b> should be chosen. This is both for administrative reasons and for the convenience of the visiting public. Roads and railways frequently provide such a boundary (2e).	

<sup>6</sup> Para 6.149 Landscape Assessor's Report, Annex A.

<sup>7</sup> As defined in the Countryside Agency Board Paper (AP00/30) and used during the definition of the Proposed South Downs National Park boundary.

<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Town and Country Planning, Report of the National Parks Committee (England and Wales), 1947, Cmnd 7121, HMSO.

Where <b>local government boundaries</b> follow suitable lines, it may be administratively convenient to adopt them. In the majority of cases, however, they will be unsuitable. Local government boundaries are usually unsuitable because they follow no defined physical feature, may be subject to alteration and seldom conform to the limits of landscape quality and recreational value (2f).	
<b>Towns and villages</b> should not normally be cut in two by a National Park boundary: inclusion or exclusion should normally depend on their contribution as a whole to the character and purposes of the Park. This may include a contribution to the Park's economy and community life, and a value for visitors; e.g. provision of accommodation, access to public transport, information or other services (2g).	A settlement should only be included if it lies within a sweep of countryside that clearly meets the designation criteria, having regard to the influence of the settlement on the land in question. An additional consideration may be the degree to which countryside penetrates a settlement and the strength of any visual or other associations.
<b>Unightly development</b> on the edge of a National Park should generally be excluded, although the possibility of its modification or screening should not be overlooked where the immediately surrounding country claims inclusion (2h).	
Land allocated in adopted development plans as to be worked for the <b>quarrying and mining</b> of important deposits on the margins of a National Park, should normally be excluded from the Park, unless the land will be restored to a land use and quality which contributes to Park purposes. This approach also applies to <b>major industrial and commercial developments</b> for which land is allocated in adopted development plans at the time of designation. (2i)	Land at the edge of the designated area having the benefit of planning permission for major built development should be excluded from the National Park
<b>Features of scientific, historic or architectural value</b> (e.g. Nature Reserves, important archaeological sites and Ancient Monuments) which are situated on the margins of a National Park should be included where practicable (2j).	Providing that they are within an area that meets the statutory criteria

## 2.6 Data Sets and Reference Material

2.6.1 The following data sets have been utilised during the course of this study:

- East Hampshire AONB Integrated Management Guidelines (1998)
- Sussex Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment (1996)
- South Downs Landscape Character Assessment (2006)
- Nature Conservation Designations (NNR, Ramsar, SAC, SPA, SSSI and relevant citation sheets and condition reports)

- Areas of Chalk Grassland habitat (Source: <http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/rte.asp?id=54>)
- Cultural Designation (Scheduled Monuments, Historic Parks and Gardens - Source: English Heritage)
- Open Access Land including National Trust Land (source: Natural England and Ordnance Survey data)
- Adopted Local Plans for East Hampshire, Chichester and Horsham Districts
- Minerals and Waste Plans for Hampshire and West Sussex
- Tranquillity mapping prepared by CPRE (2006)
- Aerial photography (source: Natural England)

2.6.2 This study has not included any formal consultations with third parties such as local planning authorities or conservation organisations.

### 3.0 PROPOSED REVISED BOUNDARY

#### 3.1 Key Findings and Overview

3.1.1 In applying the methodology set out above and defining a revised boundary the following number issues have been highlighted:

- **Landscape Character:** Changes in character are usually gradual. The Assessor's recommendation to follow the edge of character types can therefore only be taken as a general guide to which the boundary setting approach is applied.
- **Visual Association:** In drawing a boundary not all land within the boundary line will have views/association with the chalk escarpment to the same degree. A balance therefore needs to be reached in deciding which land to include and how far the boundary should extend.
- **Transitions:** Where landscape character and quality is in transition the boundary line should be drawn within the transition. In some instances changes in quality may be patchy, resulting in small areas of lesser quality land within broader areas which are high quality overall. When drawing the boundary to include high quality landscape on the edge there are occasions when small areas of lesser quality land between the chalk escarpment and the proposed boundary line may be included. This is considered acceptable where these areas are isolated within a tract of higher quality landscape.
- **Boundary line:** In drawing a line to a clear feature on the ground, land may be the same quality and character both sides of the feature.
- **Clear Line on the Ground:** In some situations the boundary may extend across an area between two clear boundary features and may not follow a clear feature on the ground for that short distance e.g. where a boundary crosses a road or where a short section of field boundary is missing between two areas of woodland. This approach is adopted only where no other suitable boundary option exists and/or where an alternative boundary may become overly convoluted.
- **Features of Interest:** When attempting to include features of interest on the edge it may not always be possible to include a statutory designation (e.g. SSSI) in its entirety where there is no clear feature to follow.

3.1.2 In general the key issues which have been addressed in this study include the extent of influence of the A3 corridor, the need to be consistent in decision making and the appropriateness of including areas of heathland within the revised boundary. As an overview these issues have been addressed in the following ways:

- **The A3 Corridor:** The revised boundary has been drawn back to the west of the A3 corridor so it is close to the greensand hangers. This is in response to the influence of the A3 (noise, movement of traffic and associated development) and proliferation of pony paddocks around Steep Marsh. The result is a revised boundary which is in places convoluted particularly around Steep Marsh.
- **The Need for Consistency:** The boundary is also drawn back to the south of Petersfield due to the influence of the A3 but also the precedent set by the

Assessor's recommendation to exclude land around Quebec. Again the boundary in places is convoluted as a result.

- **Inclusion of Heathlands:** Further east the boundary is drawn to include high quality heathlands (e.g. Ambersham Common) which are significantly influenced by the presence of the chalk escarpment to south (strong visual association). Heathlands which have been replanted with coniferous forestry have generally lost their heathland character and have limited visual association with the chalk. These areas where practical have therefore been excluded. In defining a clear boundary on the ground in the vicinity of Steadham and Iping Common some land adversely affected by noise from the A272 and with weaker visual association with the chalk has been included in order to identify a clear boundary line on the ground.

## 3.2 Boundary Tables

3.2.1 The boundary tables below have been divided into five discrete sections namely:

- Blackmoor to Steep Marsh
- Steep Marsh to Stroud
- Stroud to Trotton
- Trotton to Sutton Common
- Sutton Common to Coldwaltham

3.2.2 The tables for each section firstly set out the relevant landscape character types, provide an overview of the recommendation and a detailed description of the boundary line. They then go on to highlight relevant issues raised by the Landscape Assessor with cross references to the Landscape Assessor's Report, Annex B. Finally detailed analysis on the quality of the landscape, South Downs character and boundary considerations are provided. The boundary line has been mapped on drawings at 1:25,000 scale<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> The drawings are provided separately to this report and can be obtained from Natural England.

### 3.2.3 Blackmoor to Steep Marsh

<p><b>Landscape Character:</b>          East Hants AONB Integrated Management Guidelines (1998) – Mixed Farmland and Woodland and Hangers on Greensand          South Downs Landscape Assessment (2006) – Mixed Farmland and Wooded Vale (K2) and Greensand Terrace (J1)</p>
<p><b>Overview:</b>          Here the recommended revised boundary is pulled back to the west of the A3 to exclude lower lying land that forms part of the Mixed Farmland and Woodland landscape type. This takes on board comments by the Assessor in relation to landscape tranquillity and quality issues and recommendations for the revised boundary line. The result is to exclude some areas of lower lying farmland which have a strong visual relationship with the hangers but which in themselves are of lesser quality and/or influenced by the A3.</p>
<p><b>Boundary Description:</b>          From the clay pits on Honey Lane the boundary heads west along the southern edge of the lane. It then turns south following the edge of woodland in a southerly direction and then a line of mature trees which flank the edge of an orchard plantation in an easterly direction. It continues in a straight line to the edge of Ironpaddock Copse heading east and then south. The boundary then joins the western edge of a track and continues southwards as far as Southerington Lane. The boundary turns east and follows the southern edge of the lane before turning south along the western edge of another lane past Brockridge Dairy. Where the road bends round to the right the boundary crosses the road and continues to head south along the eastern vegetated edge of a hollow lane now used as a footpath before joining Church Lane at Copse House. It continues along the western and then southern edge of Church Lane and then turns sharply to the southwest following the southeast vegetation edge of another sunken lane as far as the B3006. The boundary crosses the B3006 heading south for a short distance before picking up the western side of Snailing Lane. The boundary follows the edge of the lane just beyond Primmers. It then leaves the lane and follows the southern vegetated edge of a hollow way southwest to Hawkey Road. It continues along the southern edge of Hawley Road in a southeasterly direction before turning to follow the western boundary of Mill Lane. On crossing the Bat's Brook it follows the centre of the brook eastwards and then heads south along a hedgerow to join a sunken lane/bridleway turning southeast past Woolshers. It then joins the northern edge of a lane leading to Flexcombe for a short distance before heading south along a hedgerow and then a stream along the southern edge of woodland. It continues along a ditch and hedgerow and through woodland copses before joining a track. It continues along the northern side of the track in a southwesterly direction before turning southwards along the road which leads into Steep Marsh.</p>
<p><b>Rationale and Boundary Considerations:</b></p> <p><b>Issues Raised by Assessor:</b>          Para 3.21 <i>'Although there are some sections where the A3 is in cutting, I find that sufficient lengths are level with the surrounding landscape for the sound and movement of traffic to be highly noticeable in the adjacent flat or gently undulating open farmland'.</i></p> <p>Para 3.49 <i>'North of Petersfield, the eastern boundary of the proposed National Park should follow easily recognisable features along the eastern limit of the 'Hangers on Greensand' landscape type.</i></p> <p>Para 3.34 <i>Noise from the A3 and MoD land, together with the strong military character of the immediate areas, undermines the quality of the adjacent landscape [to Greatham Village].....the quality of the majority of the buildings and of the surrounding landscape is not sufficiently high to warrant the inclusion of the village.</i></p> <p><b>Quality Issues:</b>          Para 3.32 <i>'West of the A3 the Hangers on Greensand landscape type remains intimate, secluded landscape with distinctive hanger woodlands on the steeper escarpment and enclosed pasture, interspersed with woodland, on the flatter ground'.</i></p>

Land between the Hangers on Greensand landscape type and A3 comprises relatively flat low lying farmland. Here the condition of landscape features is mixed - in some areas there are thick hedgerows and hedgerow oaks relating to earlier enclosure patterns and remnant parkland (Blackmoor House), where as in other areas there is evidence of intensive agriculture, field amalgamations and recent enclosures particularly around Blackmoor and Greatham and closely trimmed hedgerows south of Lyss Place. In addition the land immediately adjacent to the A3 is affected by traffic noise and movement which undermines tranquillity.

**South Downs Character:**

Para 3.35 *'I find the chalk and Greensand hangers possess many of the characteristics of the 'South Downs' chalk downland. In view of their strong visual association, similar topography and related landscape character, I consider that they form part of the same extensive tract'.*

The 'Hangers on Greensand' reinforce the impact of the adjacent chalk 'Scarp-Hangers' and provide a physical and visual connection to the main chalk spine. Land within the Mixed Farmland and Woodland landscape type which lies immediately adjacent to the hangers has a strong visual association with them as a result of the physical proximity, contrast in topography (which heightens the scale of the hangers) and the dominance and frequency of views.

**Transition:**

There is a transition between the hangers and the A3 relating to decreasing dominance of the hangers and increasing influence of the A3 traffic noise and visual intrusion. The boundary is drawn within this transition close to the edge of the Hangers on Greensand landscape type.

**Easily distinguishable physical boundary:**

Between Honey Lane and Sotherington Lane the boundary cuts across agricultural land including an area used as orchards as part of the Blackmoor Estate. The boundary in this area follows the edge of woodland and orchard plantation and a farm track but for a short section follows no clear boundary on the ground between the edge of an orchard and Ironpaddock Copse. This was considered acceptable in light of the short length of boundary involved and there being no suitable alternative.

Between Sotherington Lane and Steep Marsh the boundary follows lanes, hollow ways and stream courses all of which are easily identifiable.

**Local government boundaries:**

N/A

**Towns and Villages:**

The village of Greatham is excluded in line with the Assessor's recommendation.

**Unightly development:**

N/A

**Land allocated for development:**

There are no known proposed development sites in the vicinity of the recommended revised boundary line.

**Features of scientific, historic or architectural value:**

All SSSIs and SACs associated with the hangers landscape are included in their entirety. SNCI woodlands at the foot of the hangers are also included in their entirety where possible e.g. Lawrence's Copse and Great Wood. The proposed revised boundary follows a number of characteristic and ancient sunken lanes which flank the base of the hangers and includes them within the recommended revised boundary.

### 3.2.4 Steep Marsh to Stroud

<p><b>Landscape Character:</b>          East Hants AONB Integrated Management Guidelines (1998) – Pastures: Hangers Associated, Hangers on Greensand and Mixed Farmland and Woodland          South Downs Landscape Assessment (2006) – Mixed Farmland and Wooded Vale (K1) and Greensand Terrace (J1)</p>
<p><b>Overview:</b>          Here the recommended revised boundary is pulled back to the west of the A3 to exclude land which has been affected by the urbanising influences of Steep Marsh, Steep and Stroud and by areas of pony paddocks and intensive agriculture whilst still including the Hangers on Greensand landscape type within the proposed National Park. This takes on board comments by the Assessor in relation to landscape tranquillity and quality issues and recommendations for the revised boundary line. The result is a complex and convoluted boundary and one which excludes land that otherwise has a strong association with the chalk and greensand hangers.</p>
<p><b>Boundary Description:</b>          The boundary crosses and leaves the lane to pick up a minor stream heading southwest. On crossing a track it adopts the eastern edge of The Moors woodland heading south. On meeting a footpath it turns west to follow the footpath north of Steep Farm before rejoining the southeast edge of Northfield Wood. It continues westwards along the southern edge of Northfield Wood as far as Mill Lane and then turns north along the eastern boundary of the lane. On reaching the junction with another lane it turns west along the northern edge of the lane towards Island Farm. At the next two road junctions the boundary follows the lanes to the left before heading south towards Stoner Lodge. Here it crosses the road to adopt the northern edge of a track leading to Ridge Farm before turning south along a hedgerow and drain to meet Ridge Common Lane. It continues along the northern edge of the lane before taking a ditch northwest, then field boundaries to meet Lythe Lane. It follows the northeast side of the lane for a short distance before crossing to follow a track and then a hedgerow heading south. Where the hedge meets a narrow band of woodland it cuts through the woodland to the southern side and follows the edge of the woodland in a northerly direction. It then adopts the next hedgerow to the south towards Rothercombe Farm. It extends around the northern edge of the farm following the farm track and hedgerows before adopting a series of hedgerows south, east and then south again. It then follows the backs of properties along hedgerows to Ash Barn where it joins the A272 Winchester Road.</p>
<p><b>Rational and Boundary Considerations:</b></p> <p><b>Issues Raised by Assessor:</b>          Para 3.31 <i>'Mixed Farmland and Woodland landscape type have been so degraded by the combined effects of the settlements, road and rail links, that the track no longer meets the natural beauty criterion'.</i></p> <p>Para 3.32 <i>'To the north of Petersfield, the more undulating and enclosed landscape of the 'Pastures (Hangers Associated)' landscape type extends to the village of Steep. The intricate pattern of smaller fields, hedgerows and small woodlands, strongly undulating landform and views of the chalk and Upper Greensand Hangers combine to make this area very distinctive. Horse paddocks, extensive residential and other development, planting and boundary treatment of a suburban character have fragmented the character of the area, particularly on the rural fringes, as at Steep Marsh, however. Commuter short-cuts or 'rat runs' have also caused erosion of some of the small winding lanes, while the general amount of traffic further reduces the characteristic sense of remoteness and tranquillity of the area.'</i></p> <p><b>Quality Issues:</b>          The landscape in this area is more undulating and topographically varied than to the north and south, extending the influence of the greensand scarp and creating a well wooded small scale and intimate landscape. Nevertheless, proliferation of post and rail and post and wire fencing associated with pony paddocks is evident around Steep Marsh and between this settlement and the A3. Loss of hedgerows and closely trimmed hedges and intensive agriculture is also evident particularly around Aldersnapp Farm. The growth of development associated with Steep Marsh, Steep and Stroud is noticeable in places and the Bedales school extends urbanising influences outwards from the nucleated settlements towards the A3. Noise influence and traffic movement on the A272 between the A3 and Stroud is also evident and detracts from the tranquillity of the area.</p>

**South Downs Character:**

There is a strong visual association between the Pastures (Hangers Associated) landscape type and the dramatic Hangers topography to the west. Also clear views southeast to the chalk escarpment give this area a strong sense of place and association with the core chalk downs. In some areas woodland and topography restrict longer distant views, but the close proximity of the greensand escarpment to the west ensures its presence is keenly felt.

**Transition:**

Transition in this landscape is influenced by the proliferation of pony paddocks, development and intensive agriculture which extends from Steep Marsh, Steep and Stroud towards the A3. The boundary line has been drawn close to the edge of the Hangers on Greensand landscape type in this area.

**Easily distinguishable physical boundary:**

The nature of the urbanising influences felt in this landscape has resulted in the boundary being drawn back from the A3 to exclude affected areas whilst still including the Hangers on Greensand landscape type. In doing so the boundary follows lanes, field boundaries, ditches, the edge of woodland and property boundaries and is sometimes convoluted and complex.

**Local government boundaries:**

N/A

**Towns and villages:**

Villages of Steep Marsh, Steep and Stroud. The Adopted East Hampshire Local Plan shows settlement policy boundaries which define the main areas of built development for Steep and Stroud. All development within the settlement boundaries has been excluded. However there are other developed areas outside settlement boundaries such as the village of Steep Marsh and linear development north of Stroud along Ridge Common Lane. Care has been taken to exclude these developed areas from the proposed revised boundary where they are considered to form part of a recognisable settlement or extends built development character.

**Unightly development:**

Modern development associated with villages of Steep Marsh, Steep and Stroud has been excluded.

**Land allocated for development:**

There are no known proposed development sites in the vicinity of the recommended revised boundary line.

**Features of scientific, historic or architectural value:**

The boundary follows clearly identifiable features at the foot of the Hangers on Greensand and includes all SSSIs and SACs associated with the hangers landscape. The Moors and Northfield woods are both SNCIs on the edge of the boundary and have been included in their entirety.

### 3.2.5 Stroud to Trotton

<p><b>Landscape Character:</b>          East Hants AONB Integrated Management Guidelines (1998) – Mixed Farmland and Woodland, Hangers on Greensand and Open Arable on Greensand          Sussex Downs Landscape Assessment (1996) - Scarp Foothslopes, Sandy Arable Farmland and Heathland Mosaic          South Downs Landscape Assessment (2006) – Mixed Farmland and Wooded Vale (K1) Greensand Terrace (J2), and Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic (L2)</p>
<p><b>Overview:</b>          Here the recommended revised boundary is pulled south to exclude the A3 and associated road junctions and urbanising influence to the south of Petersfield. It is also pulled in close to the chalk escarpment to the north east of Buriton to take account of intensive agriculture, loss of hedgerows and the localised impact of the overhead transmission line. The result is to exclude some areas of the Greensand Terrace landscape type which nevertheless have strong associations with the core chalk downs in part as a result of the close proximity and visual dominance of the chalk escarpment but also the presence of characteristic incised wooded valleys.</p>
<p><b>Boundary Description:</b>          The boundary crosses the A272 and follows its northern edge heading east before turning south along the track to Mustercoombe Farm. It then picks up a small tree lined stream heading south crossing North Stroud Lane. Beyond the next field boundary it continues to follow the stream, crossing under Ramsdean Road at Stroud Bridge and continuing in a southeasterly direction before picking up a hedgerow which intersects with the embankment of the A3. At the A3 the boundary turns southwards following the outer embankments and then turning west along a bridleway which intersects within Western Lane. The boundary then follows the northwest edge of the lane turning northwest and then south excluding New Barn Cottages. It continues on this track for approximately 500 metres before crossing the A3 and adopting the B2070 heading northeast. At the roundabout the boundary turns along the southern edge of Greenway Lane crossing the railway. Where the road bends to the south the boundary carries straight on along a hedgerow and then north along another hedgerow joining a farm track and the Petersfield Road. It follows the eastern edge of the road north before adopting a track which leads away from the road in an easterly direction. The boundary follows this track and then the western edge of woodland before meeting a tree lined stream.</p> <p>From here the boundary follows the centre of the stream in an easterly direction as far as the B2146. On reaching the B2146 it heads south along the western road verge up the hill, bending round to the east and then leaves the road to follow the edge of woodland heading in a southerly and then westerly direction. It then follows the northern edge of a track west and then north around Nurstead Farm to join North Lane. It adopts the northern and western edges of North Lane heading south and then turns east along the southern verge of Pitcroft Lane. At Cowhouse Farm it follows the eastern hedgerow boundary to the farm and then follows hedgerows eastwards. The boundary takes a dog leg along a farm track and then a hedgerow passing to the south of Old Ditchham. The boundary crosses the road and follows its southern edge as far as the junction with the B2146. Here it heads south along the western edge of the road, then crosses the road and continues along the southern edge of woodland and then hedgerows as far as a track and adopts the southern edge of the track continuing eastwards to a minor lane junction. It then continues in an easterly direction on the southern edge of the lane before turning north along the eastern edge of another lane at the next junction. Before reaching West Harting the boundary turns eastwards again leaving the lane to follow a ditch.</p> <p>The boundary continues along a ditch and then the southern edge of woodland before intersecting with a treed sunken lane. It follows the northern boundary of the lane as far as North Lane. Crossing North Lane it continues along the eastern verge northwards towards Nyewood. After Champs Farm the boundary turns east along the southern boundary of a farm track and then along hedgerows as far as the disused railway. Here it adopts the outer edge of the treed disused railway line heading east until it intersects with a hedgerow heading northeast before following a short section of post and wire fencing and then joining the edge of a woodland. It follows the western edge of the woodland and then the hedgerow boundary to a property first turning west and then north till it meets with Dumpford Lane. It then follows the southern edge of Dumpford Lane as far as Dumpford before picking up Terwick Lane as far as the A272 east of Trotton.</p>

### **Rational and Boundary Considerations:**

#### **Issues Raised by Assessor:**

Para 3.21 *'The corridor containing the A3, the B2070 and the main London to Portsmouth railway has an extensive impact on its hinterland'.....'The embankments, lighting columns and proliferation of road signage, associated with the B2070, A272 and the Petersfield by-pass and their interchanges, together have a strong urbanising effect upon the landscape. The tract of land so affected extends to several kilometres, comprising most of the 'Mixed Farmland and Woodland' landscape type'.*

Para 3.22 *'To the south and east of Petersfield, hedgerow removal, field amalgamation and the loss of hedgerow trees have reduced the quality of the 'Mixed Farmland and Woodland' landscape type. Although this gently sloping landscape has extensive views to the chalk escarpment to the south and Hangers to the west, it has little capacity to absorb the noise and visual impacts associated with the southern urban edge of Petersfield and the transport infrastructure.'*

Para 2.30 *'Near Quebec and to the south of the overhead transmission line, to the east of Goose Green and west of Nyewood, has been affected by field amalgamation, the presence of pylons and highly visible large-scale farm buildings. These are significant detractors in this flatter, more open area and combine to create an unremarkable landscape.'*

Para 2.27 *'West Heath Common, which lies to the north-west of Nyewood...a large proportion of the heathland is taken up by a working and sand quarry. Although the sand pit is mostly well screened by woodland, it is visible from the chalk escarpment ....the farmland that surrounds the pit to the south and east is characterised by a proliferation of wire fencing and scatter of low-grade buildings, used in connection with horse grazing, and the dominating presence of the adjacent overhead transmission line.'*

#### **Quality Issues:**

The boundary in this section is drawn close to the A3 along the road embankments. In this area (south of Petersfield) the road passes through the Hangers and Arable on Greensand landscape types (or Greensand Terrace In South Downs LCA). As such the land is more undulating and the road better integrated into the landscape compared to areas further north. The varied topography and increased tree cover in this area means that both the noise and visual intrusion of the road is not as widely felt as it is further north and tranquillity is less affected and the landscape remains dominant. The quality of the immediate landscape to the west of the road remains high and therefore it was felt appropriate to extend the boundary line to follow the road embankments for the area around Weston.

The issues raised by the Assessor for land around Quebec were also found to exist to the north of Cowhouse Farm and Old Ditcham. Here the influence of intensive agriculture, field amalgamation, closely trimmed hedges and the presence of overhead transmission lines are all evident. For consistency the boundary has been pulled back to the south to exclude the areas affected. The result however is to exclude the high quality incised and wooded valley to the east of Nursted which has a strong visual association with the core chalk downs (see below).

North of Nyewood and Dumpford Lane the land drops into the Rother Valley and is affected by the overhead transmission line. While parts of this valley are of an enclosed and intimate character while other areas are more open and reflect intensive arable cultivation with some field boundary loss.

Land between Dumpford Lane and the chalk escarpment comprises an area of unspoilt mixed farmland (with a greater predominance of pasture compared to land to the north). Overall the landscape has a well wooded character derived from hedgerow trees and vegetation along the disused railway line. The field boundary pattern is intact and in good condition and there are no overt man made built features which strengthens the sense of tranquillity (with the exception of the northern edge of Nyewood). There are high quality wet pastures to the east of Nyewood with open views to the chalk escarpment, while in contrast to the west of the village the woodland is poorly managed and there is evidence of fly-tipping.

#### **South Downs Character:**

In the area west of the A3 the footslopes are dominated by the dramatic landform of Butser Hill to the south which imposes a strong character and association with the core chalk downs on this surrounding area.

The Greensand Terrace landscape type which flanks the bottom of the chalk escarpment forms a distinctive ridge of higher land and foreground to views of the chalk escarpment when viewed from the north. When travelling along the B2146 past Stanbridge Farm there is a strong sense of rising onto more undulating landscape associated with the chalk escarpment foothills. Similarly the wooded valleys associated with streams which have cut down into the greensand are characteristic and give this area within 2km of the escarpment a strong association with the core chalk downs. From the Scarp Footslopes or Greensand Terrace landscape types the adjacent steep chalk escarpment is visually dominant.

North of Dumpford Lane the visual association with the chalk escarpment to the south is lost as the land dips down into the River Rother Valley while from Dumpford Lane itself there are memorable and elevated views to the chalk escarpment which is both distinctive and a dominant skyline feature.

**Transition:**

N/A

**Easily distinguishable physical boundaries:**

The boundary follows field boundaries, stream courses, roads/lanes throughout this section. There is a short section of boundary east of Nyewood between the railway and woodland which follows a limited length of post and wire fence. Although not ideal this boundary option was considered the most appropriate on landscape grounds and acceptable in terms of the short distance of post and wire fence involved.

**Local government boundaries:**

Between Stroud and the A3, and between Bolinge Hill Copse and B2146 the boundary follows the parish boundary which is marked by field boundaries and the course of a stream.

**Towns and villages:**

The Inspector's indicative line splits the settlement of Nyewood.

The hamlet of West Harting and village of Nyewood are both excluded from the recommended revised boundary as they lie on the fringes of high quality landscape and neither are exceptional in their character or quality.

**Allocated development:**

There are no known proposed development sites in the vicinity of the recommended revised boundary line.

**Unightly development:**

Pylons traverse this landscape affecting a localised area between Harting Pool and Pitcroft Lane and to the north of Nyewood. There is no known opportunity for the impact of these pylons to be mitigated.

**Features of scientific, historic or architectural value:**

The scheduled monument located on the dramatic chalk outlier of Torberry Hill is included in its entirety as is the characteristic chalk grassland habitat which surrounds it. Woodland within the incised river valley east of Nursted is an SNCI but has been excluded due to difficulty in finding a clear line on the ground which still excludes land of lesser quality north of Cowhouse Farm.

### 3.2.6 Trotton to Sutton Common

<p><b>Landscape Character:</b>  Sussex Downs Landscape Assessment (1996) – Scarp Footslopes, Heathland Mosaic and Sandy Arable Farmland  South Downs Landscape Assessment (2006) – Mixed Farmland and Wooded Vale (K1), Greensand Terrace (J2) and Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic (L2)</p>
<p><b>Overview:</b>  Here the recommended revised boundary is drawn to include areas of high quality heathland with strong visual association with the core chalk downs and areas on the margins of the national park which are recognised for their nature conservation interest. Heathland which has been planted for commercial forestry, which has lost its heathland character and has limited outward views has been excluded. Similarly land which forms part of the Heathland Mosaic landscape type but which faces northwards to the River Rother Valley and has weak visual association with the core chalk downs has also been excluded where feasible. The result is to include only parts of the Heathland Mosaic landscape character type.</p>
<p><b>Boundary Description:</b>  The boundary follows hedges and fencing along the southern edge of the A272 cuttings/embankments heading in an easterly direction as far as the junction with Minstead Lane where it turns south along the western edge of the lane. Beyond Minstead House the boundary continues to follow the track heading south to the line of the disused railway. Here it crosses the disused railway and continues along the southern tree lined edge of the railway in an easterly direction before adopting a hedgerow heading south and then east to the south of Woolbeding Cottage. It then flanks the southern edge of the cottage access track to meet Bepton Road.</p> <p>From the Bepton Road the boundary heads south along the road before turning east along the northern edge of a tract at Fairfield and then field boundaries east and then north east as far as Pitsham Lane (path). It then turns south along the southwestern edge of the minor lane (path), then along a field boundary southwest of Pitsham Brickworks before rejoining the path past Pitsham Place to the A286. It crosses the road and follows hedgerows east and then north before joining a narrow lane/footpath and then the lane of Dunford Hollow. On reaching the lane it turns east adopting the northeast edge of the lane and passing Dunford House. Where the lane takes a right angled turn the boundary continues to follow the lane past Oastcroft and Walkers Farm and then turns east along a hedgerow and footpath.</p> <p>On reaching an area of heathland the boundary follows the old hedge bank (marked by a low bank and mature trees) which currently separates woodland plantation from the heathland area. It follows this boundary to the south of Goldballs Plantation for some distance heading in a southeast or northerly direction. The boundary then follows a footpath as far as a major east-west track where it turns east along the southern edge of the track and then south east along another major track through woodland. At the junction with a small stream it adopts the course of the stream heading north east as far as the disused railway. It then follows the southern edge of the track with runs along the railway crossing New Road and the northern boundary of Ambersham Common. It then turns south and east along hedgerows/post and wire fencing. Where it intersects with a small stream the boundary adopts the course of the stream turning sharply southwest through woodland to the intersection with the road at Hoyle Farm. Here it follows the southern edge of the road heading east turning left at each road junction. Beyond Shrublands it leaves the lane and follows a small stream eastwards through Graffham Common woodland plantation as far as Barnett's Bridge. Here it turns south along the southwestern side of the lane keeping left at the first road junction. At the next road junction the boundary turns northeast along a minor lane and beyond Main Wood Cottage it turns east along the edge of woodland and a ditch and then south along a track and the straight edge of the coniferous plantation of Ducton Common. At the junction with the road the boundary turns east along the southern road edge as far as the junction with the A285. Here it turns north along the eastern edge of the road before turning east again along Burton Park Road. It continues along this road as far as the junction with Coates Lane where it continues east along the road towards Coates. Where the lane bends to the north the boundary continues straight on following the northern boundary to a hollow way/bridleway to the north of Sutton Common.</p>

### **Rational and Boundary Considerations:**

#### **Issues Raised by Assessor:**

Para 2.26 *'Some adverse development and dense planting of conifers in parts.....this landscape generally retains a strong sense of place and is of high quality. Numerous paths and tracks provide excellent access to a relatively wild and remote landscape experience.'*

Para 2.33 *'Heathland Mosaic landscape type....has a strong enclosed character and few views of the chalk ridge'*

Para 2.36 *'Heathland Mosaic landscape type....[has a] distinctly different landscape character to the rolling chalk downland of the 'South Downs'.*

Para 2.39 *'Heathland Mosaic landscape type are not of 'South Downs' character and should not be included with the chalk downland in the proposed National Park.*

#### **Quality Issues:**

South of Midhurst the landscape is relatively flat with well trimmed hedgerows and fewer hedgerow trees and generally lacks distinction. Here the urban edge of Midhurst exerts an influence and the traffic on the A286 affects tranquillity on land immediately adjacent. Further to the east the land rises and becomes more wooded and has a high degree of intactness and tranquillity.

Within the Heathland Mosaic landscape type, landscape quality of heathland habitat has been undermined in places by areas of coniferous plantation. Where heathland habitat and unenclosed common land remains it is generally in good condition comprising a mosaic of heather, acid grassland, bracken, gorse and oak-birch woodland (e.g. Sutton Common and Lord's Piece, Lavington Common and Ambersham/Heyshott Common). Overall this is a quiet landscape with little evidence of overt human development. In some places however there is evidence of sand extraction and the northern sections of Trotton, Iping and Stedham Commons are adversely affected by noise intrusion from the A272.

The Scarp Footslopes landscape type is also in good condition comprising mixed farmland with well defined hedges and hedgerow trees. The result is a relatively well wooded character. Around Graffham the area has been influenced by the proliferation of stud farms and horse paddocks which have introduced areas of post and rail and some post and wire fencing. Nevertheless, the condition of characteristic landscape features such as hedges and hedgerow trees and woodland copses are intact and the area is regarded as having high landscape quality overall. The high quality of the landscape is particularly notable in areas around Burton and Bignor Parks where estate management is evident.

#### **South Downs Character:**

The extent to which the Heathland Mosaic landscape type expresses association with the chalk escarpment and core chalk downs varies. In some places particularly where there are coniferous plantations or where the land drops northwards into the River Rother valley these visual links are poor or non-existent. However in other areas particularly where the heathland habitat remains there are often open views from elevated locations southwards towards the chalk across well wooded unspoilt rural countryside. In these instances the elevation of the heathland ridge enables uninterrupted views to considerable lengths of the escarpment which is generally between 2 and 4km away. The escarpment is clearly recognisable, distinctive and has a visual dominance. The open access land offered in areas of heathland also increases the opportunities for these views to be appreciated. These areas are considered to be strongly influenced by the visual presence of the core chalk downs despite their obviously different heath character.

The northern edge of some of the heathlands and of the Heathland Mosaic and Sandy Arable Farmland landscape types faces northwards into the Rother Valley. These areas are therefore not visually associated with chalk escarpment to the south and have been excluded where feasible.

From within the Scarp Footslopes landscape character type the visibility of the chalk escarpment also varies due to woodland and tree cover. However there are frequent glimpsed views to the escarpment, many of which are dramatic and arresting e.g. across Burton Mill Pond, around Graffham and from north of Bepton.

**Transition:**

There is a transition in landscape quality around Graffham as a result of linear development and stud farms and around Minstead Road as a result of past sand extraction and farming activity. This results in a number of patches of lesser quality landscape. These patches of lesser quality land are not regarded as sufficiently widespread to result in the exclusion of the whole tract of land and the boundary is drawn along a clearly definable boundary to the north.

**Easily distinguishable physical boundaries:**

The Inspector's indicative line follows the disused railway line in places. However this was found to be an unsuitable boundary in some places as it is often overgrown and not clearly marked by anything on the ground. However, in other places the disused railway was well enough defined to provide an easily distinguishable physical boundary.

**Local government boundaries:**

Between Fairfield and Pitsham Lane (path) the boundary follows a short section of parish boundary which is also marked by a hedgerow with hedgerow trees. Between Heyshott Common and Little London the boundary follows the course of a stream which is also the local parish boundary. Similarly across Graffham Common the boundary follows the course of a small stream which for part of its length is also the local parish boundary.

**Towns and villages:**

Linear development has occurred in the area around Graffham and has a localised urbanising influence on the landscape. Nevertheless, this development is not widespread, is associated with generally high quality landscape and has a strong visual association to the core chalk downs to the south. Land further to the north of the settlement is also of high quality and as such Graffham does not lie at the edge of the proposed national park and has therefore been included in the recommended revised boundary.

**Unightly development:**

Land affected by the urban influence of Midhurst, active sand pits east of Midhurst (Dunford Rough), inactive sand pits at Heath End, and brickworks at Pitsham Lane have been excluded. Noise impact of A272 affects the northern parts of Trotton, Iping and Stedham Commons. Despite a decline in the tranquillity of these latter areas the boundary has been drawn to the north along the A272 in order that it follows a clear line on the ground and includes valuable heathland habitat on the edge of the national park.

**Land allocated for development:**

An additional area of sand extraction is proposed adjacent to the active site at Dunford Rough north of Dunford House in the West Sussex Minerals Local Plan 2003. This area has been excluded and the recommended revised boundary drawn to the south.

**Features of scientific, historic or architectural value:**

All of the following designations lie on the edge of the proposed revised boundary and have been included in their entirety where feasible.

- The heathland habitats associated with Iping Common are a SSSI and Local Nature Reserve. This area is actively managed with appropriate grazing and rhododendron control such that its condition is recovering.
- Heyshott and Ambersham Common are designated SSSI the majority of which is in favourable condition or recovering. Part of the SSSI to the north around Little London is excluded in part due to its condition (declining/no change) but also because finding a clear line on the ground was problematic.
- The heathland north of Lavington Common is also designated SSSI and is in favourable condition. And managed by the National Trust.
- Burton Mill Pond and mixed broadleaved woodland is designated a SSSI in favourable and recovering condition.
- Scheduled monuments (Bronze Age barrows) on Sutton Common and Heyshott Common.
- Registered Park and Garden at Burton Park and Bignor Park.

The local parkland at Coates Castle has not been included due to difficulty in locating a) a clear line on the ground, b) excluding land of lesser quality and c) excluding land with a weak association to the core chalk downs.

### 3.2.7 Sutton Common to Coldwaltham

<p><b>Landscape Character:</b> Sussex Downs Landscape Assessment (1996) – Scarp Footslopes, Heathland Mosaic and Sandy Arable Farmland South Downs Landscape Assessment (2006) – Greensand Terrace (J2), Mixed Farmland and Wooded Vale (K1) and River Floodplain (F4)</p>
<p><b>Overview:</b> Here the recommended revised boundary is pulled south to exclude the A29 corridor, associated development, pony paddocks around Watersfield and land of lesser landscape quality. In identifying a clear line on the ground it has not been possible to include areas designated for their conservation value in their entirety.</p>
<p><b>Boundary Description:</b> From here the boundary follows the bridleway along the northern edge of the common and then the hedgerow on the eastern side of the bridleway as it turns south defining the eastern edge of Sutton Common. On intersecting with the road the boundary crosses it and turns southeast along the southwestern side of the road. At the road junctions it continues to head south, past Millmeads Farm to intersect with a small tree lined stream. Here it turns east following the centre of the stream before continuing along hedgerows. The boundary passes around the western and southern hedgerow boundaries of a property before joining the A29 and turning to head south. It follows the western side of the road a short distance before crossing it and adopting the southern edge of a farm track heading east towards Timberley Farm. It follows the southern boundary of the farm before crossing the railway and continuing northwards along the eastern edge of the embankment as far as London Road where it adopts the southern edge of the road as far as Pulborough Bridge.</p>
<p><b>Rational and Boundary Considerations:</b></p> <p><b>Issues Raised by Assessor:</b> <i>Para 2.23: 'Busy roads, extensive development of a suburban character, especially to the south of the A29 at Coldwaltham, roadside commercial development, the Hardham water supply works and a proliferation of wire fencing and outbuildings associated with horse grazing. I consider that these detractors are all the more intrusive because of the flat topography and combine to lend the area an urban fringe character. The visual impact of Coldwaltham, the railway and busy A29 also dominate the generally open land to the south-east'.</i></p> <p><b>Quality Issues:</b> Landscape quality and condition issues are evident around the A29 north of Bury to Watersfield and west to Bury Mill Farm fishing lakes. In this area the field boundaries are well trimmed and often gappy. Some boundaries have been lost altogether and replaced by post and wire fencing. There is some evidence of pony paddocks on the outskirts of Watersfield and the fishing lakes to the west have altered the character of the landscape. Development along the A29 (including two petrol stations also detracts locally) and traffic noise undermines tranquillity locally. Pony paddocks have eroded the historic field pattern at Newoods Farm through subdivision with post and wire fencing. Westwards the landscape is in good condition and there are high quality wet pastures immediately to the west of the railway line.</p> <p><b>South Downs Character:</b> There are numerous close proximity views to the chalk escarpment from this landscape where the escarpment is a key defining feature in views and an easily recognisable landmark. Although some areas of the Scarp Footslopes are enclosed due to woodland planting where there are glimpsed views they are outstanding.</p> <p><b>Transition:</b> N/A</p> <p><b>Easily distinguishable physical boundaries:</b> The boundary follows tracks, roads and railway line for most of its length. Between the A29 and minor lane south of the fishing lakes it follows field boundaries and a stream. All these features are recognisable on the ground.</p>

**Local government boundaries:**

N/A

**Towns and villages:**

The village of Watersfield was split in two by the Inspector's indicative line. This settlement was reviewed and was not considered to be surrounded by high quality landscape, nor was it of outstanding quality in itself and has therefore been excluded from the recommended revised boundary.

**Unightly development:**

The A29 has a significant visual and audible impact on the immediately surrounding land. Linear development has also occurred along this route.

**Land allocated for development:**

A small housing site has been allocated in the Horsham Local Plan to the north of Watersfield between Sandy Lane and Colebrook Lane. This land is not included within the recommended revised boundary.

**Features of scientific, historic or architectural value:**

West of the railway there are areas of high quality wet pasture which are designated a Site of Nature Conservation Importance. It has not been possible to find a clear line on the ground which enabled these areas to be included without bringing in other lesser quality land.