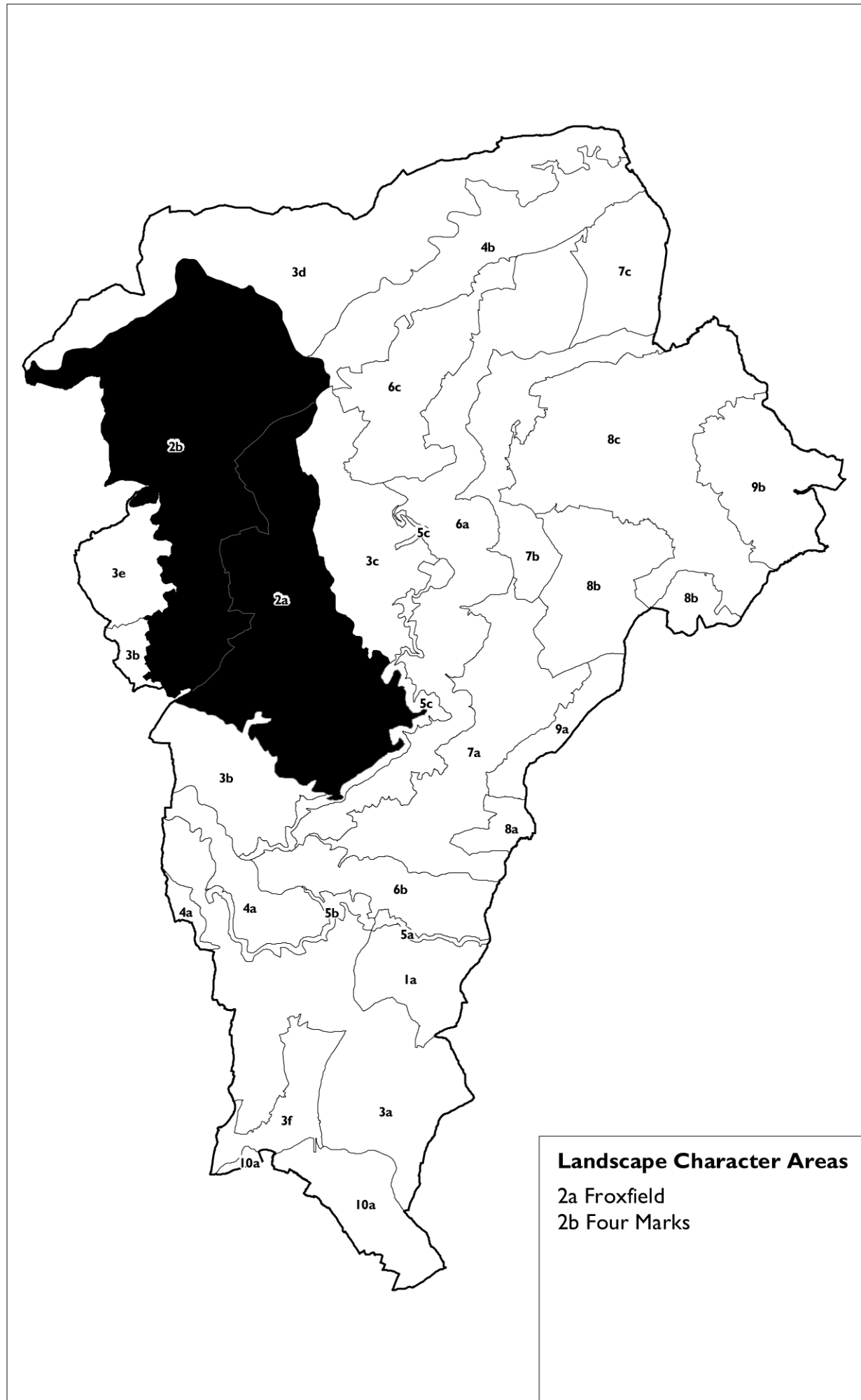
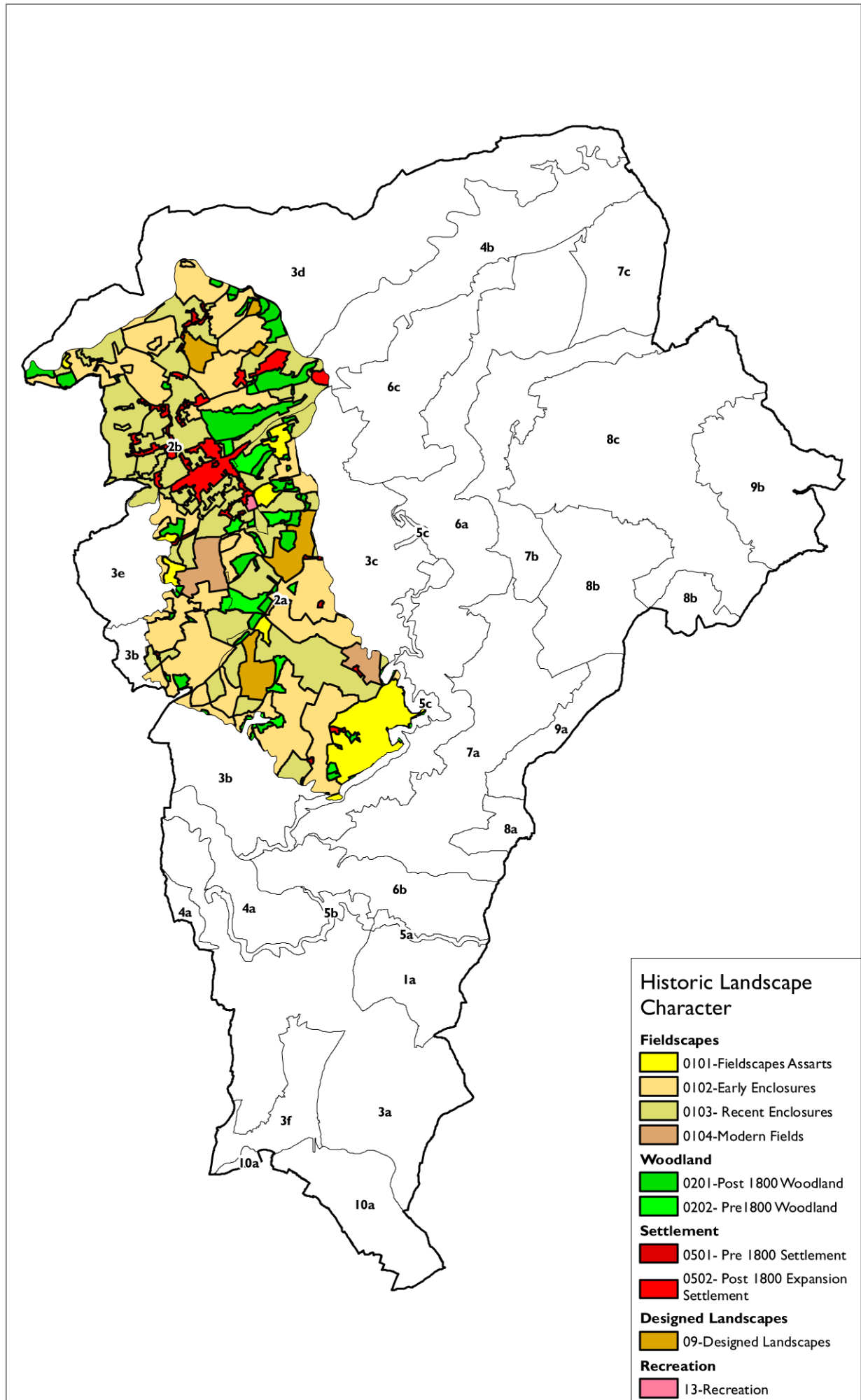


Landscape Type 2 : Clay Plateau



Landscape Type 2 : Clay Plateau



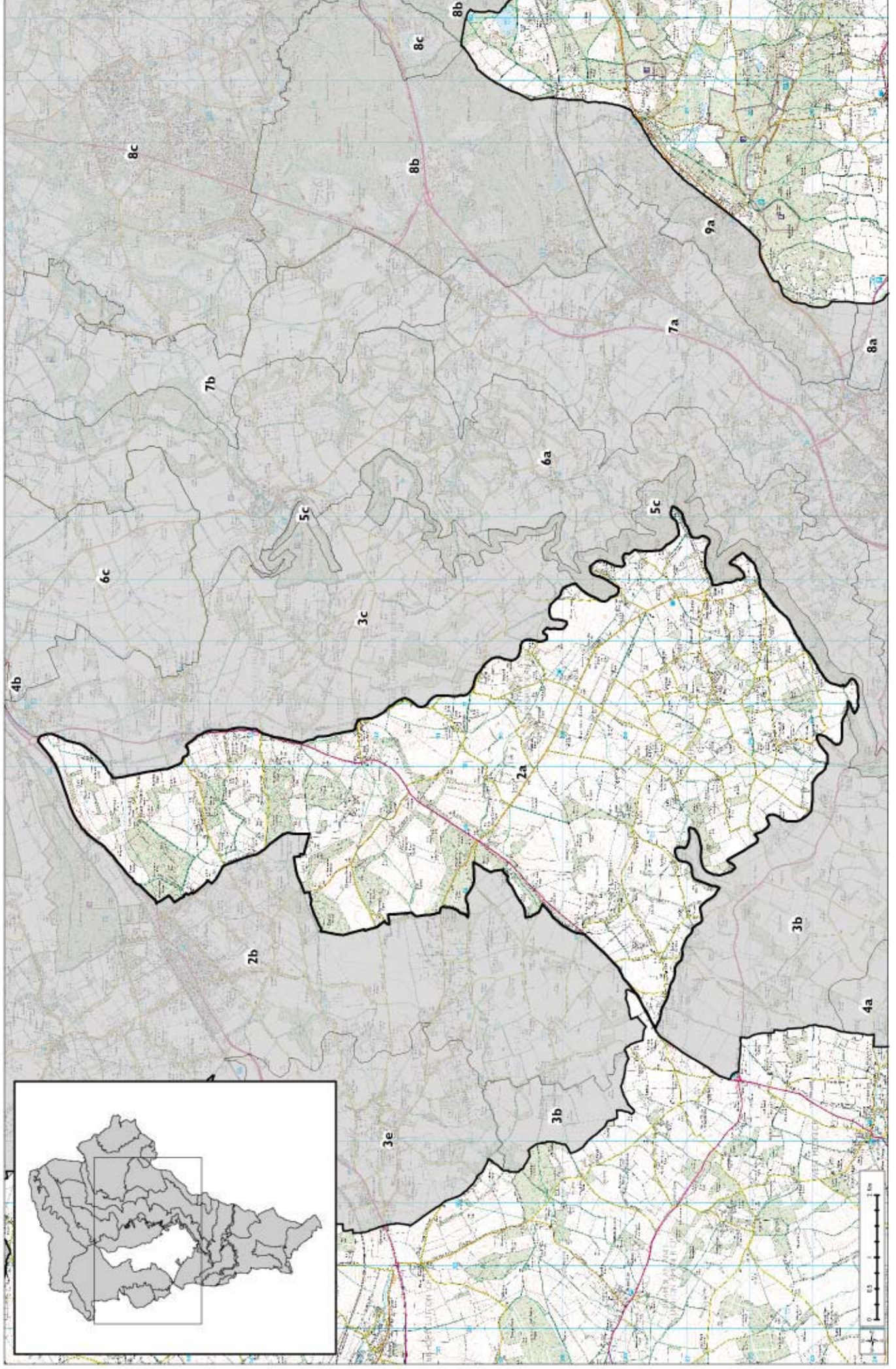
LANDSCAPE TYPE 2: CLAY PLATEAU

- 2.1 The *Clay Plateau* comprises an elevated block of clay-capped chalk in the western part of the East Hampshire. The boundaries of this landscape type are defined by the extent of the virtually continuous drift deposit of clay with flints that caps the chalk.

Key Characteristics

- Chalk overlain by shallow continuous clay capping resulting in poorer heavier soils.
- Large tracts of elevated gently undulating countryside.
- A predominantly pastoral farmland landscape with some arable fields.
- Varying enclosure - open and exposed in higher plateau areas with occasional long views, with a more enclosed landscape in relation to woodland cover.
- Survival of original pre 1800 woodland and presence of oak as a key species in hedgerows and woodland.
- Varied field pattern including irregular blocks of fields are evidence of 15th –17th century enclosure and a more regular field system represents 18th and 19th century enclosure.
- Limited settlement comprising dispersed farmsteads and occasional small nucleated villages/hamlets with church spires forming distinctive landscape features.
- Presence of round barrows indicative of a Bronze Age ritual landscape.
- Narrow, little used lanes bordered by wide verges and ditches and limited rights of way network.
- Small scale historic parkland landscapes, some relating to a history of hunting.
- A peaceful and in places a still and empty landscape.

Character Area 2a: Froxfield





2A: Froxfield Clay Plateau

Location and Boundaries

- 2A.1 The *Froxfield Clay Plateau* comprises a broad elevated block of clay capped chalk in the central part of East Hampshire District, extending between Chawton in the north and Froxfield in the south. The extent of the overlying clay with flint drift defines the boundaries of the character area to the south and east. To the north and west the edge of the character area is delineated by the designated National Park boundary and the transition to a more settled landscape around Four Marks.
- 2A.2 The area comprises two distinct landscapes; the area to the west of the A32 is more wooded with wetter soils and areas of former common land. To the east of the A32 the land is higher with more limited woodland cover. The area is considered as a single character area with common patterns of historical evolution and unifying features including the presence of parkland.

The character area is wholly within the South Downs National Park. The boundaries are contiguous with the South Downs LCA.

Key Characteristics

- Elevated gently undulating domed plateau defined by the shallow continuous clay capping which overlies the chalk bedrock.
- Clay capping gives rise to poorer heavier soils which have not in the main been as intensively farmed and improved as those of the chalk landscapes.
- Fields are predominantly pasture for grazing with limited arable cropping. The field pattern includes some of late medieval origin and some relating to planned enclosure during the 18th-19th centuries.
- A significant area of medieval assarts (fields cut from woodland) occurs around Froxfield Green/High Cross, which are visible as small, irregular fields set within a wooded context.
- Woodland occurs throughout the plateau - significant areas of ancient woodland occur in the northern part of the character area (e.g. Dogford Wood, Plash Wood and Lord's Wood) with small copses, sweet chestnut coppice and game coverts elsewhere.
- Presence of oak as a key species in hedgerows and woodland and coppiced hedgerows are characteristic with a high proportion of holly.
- Varying enclosure - open and exposed in higher plateau areas (e.g. centrally around Colemore) with a more enclosed landscape in relation to woodland cover (e.g. in the north and south of the area).
- Low settlement density with isolated farmsteads of 18th-19th century origin set within areas of recent enclosure, and small nucleated villages of medieval origin (e.g. High Cross) lying within sheltered low-lying areas and surrounded by earlier

enclosures. Some of the isolated farmsteads represent shrunken medieval hamlets.

- Historic parkland landscapes at Rotherfield Park and Basing Park (both English Heritage registered) provide evidence of the history of hunting in this area. The area is characterised by a number of small local historic parks (e.g. Pelham Place and Coles).
- Remnant former commons such as Colemore Common, support wood pasture which has a high biodiversity value.
- Field ponds provide locally important habitats.
- Narrow, little used rural lanes cross the area, often bordered by wide verges and ditches.
- A still and tranquil landscape with a strong sense of remoteness. Within this, the A32 is a busy corridor of movement and noise cutting across the plateau.

Physical Landscape

- 2A.3 The Froxfield Clay Plateau is found on the elevated chalk upland of the Hampshire Downs. The extensive deposits of clay-with-flint that overlies the chalk result in poorer heavy soils. This gives rise to a landscape dominated by pasture, and blocks of woodland with limited arable cropping, compared to the chalk downland.

Fields are defined by woodland edges and hedgerows. Oak is dominant in woodland, hedgerows and as a hedgerow tree species. There is evidence of more heathy vegetation occurring in relation to acidic soils with bracken frequently in hedgerows.

Perceptual/Experiential Landscape

- 2A.4 This is a landscape of both openness and enclosure due to the variation in landform, field size and extent of hedgerow and woodland cover. Occasionally very long views in open, higher areas amplify the sense of remoteness. Elsewhere, tall hedgerows along roads and woodland blocks provide containment and enclosure.
- 2A.5 This is a simple landscape composed of few elements, farming is not overly intensive, settlements are few and small in scale, and there is little traffic on the rural lanes. The busy A32, which cuts across the plateau being an exception. Overall this landscape has a strong sense of remoteness and stillness.
- 2A.6 This area is characterised by the absence of open access land with a limited rights of way network linking farms and villages. There are a number of historic parkland landscapes with a deer park recorded at Rotherfield (listed grade II* on the English Heritage register) and another at Basing Park (also grade II). A number of local parks and gardens occur including a late 18th century park at Pelham Place and a later park at Broadhangers. Some public access to these historic landscapes is possible. Otherwise this area is not obviously used for recreational purposes, with no specific attractions or recreation facilities. Although there is no registered common land there are occasional areas of relic common (e.g. Newton Common) which are now wooded.

- 2A.7 The First World War poet Edward Thomas lived in the parish of Froxfield and drew inspiration from this and adjacent landscapes. Writing in one of his poems:

*“Some day, I think, there will be people enough
In Froxfield to pick all the blackberries out of the hedges of Green Lane,
The straight Broad lane where now September hides herself
In bracken and blackberry, harebell and dwarf gorse.”*

Biodiversity

- 2A.8 The character area has retained significant woodland cover, including a number of ancient woodland sites. The largest ancient woodlands, are found in the north of the character area, for example Plash wood, Maryland copse and Winchester wood. A large number of these woodland blocks are designated as SINC, and are notable for supporting a range of plant species indicative of ancient woodland cover, and provide important habitat for a range of faunal species, including breeding birds. The ancient woodlands have been traditionally managed under a coppice with standards regime, although many have been neglected over recent decades. There are further areas of plantation woodland, and several areas of former common as a Colemore Common and Newton Common, which have regenerated as secondary woodland or replanted. In addition there are numerous small field copses and plantations associated with the historic estate landscapes.
- 2A.9 Further important ecological features include numerous scattered field ponds and a relatively intact hedgerow network, which provides important wildlife habitat and enhances habitat connectivity within the agricultural landscape.

Historic Character

- 2A.10 The downland soils capped by clay-with-flint tended to be avoided by prehistoric farmers as the soil was too intractable and acidic, although the evidence of flint scatters suggests some utilisation of patches of better soil is likely. The presence of round barrows (known locally as the ‘Devils Jumps’ part of a Barrow Cemetery near Fawley Lane) indicates that the area was valued at least for ritual purposes during the Bronze Age. There is some evidence to suggest that further tree clearance of the clay areas was undertaken by Romano-British farmers who had the benefit of improved ploughing technology to tackle the heavy soils.
- 2A.11 The earliest Anglo-Saxon settlers are thought to have avoided the areas of clay-with-flint. Later communities settled along the river valleys, with Alton becoming a market centre, but also expanded onto the downland, with some of the original settlements surviving into later centuries as isolated farms. It is likely that woodland regenerated on much of the clay.
- 2A.12 A sheep-corn husbandry system developed throughout the medieval period. This system was far less efficient than that practised on the more open chalk downs and the pasture was less extensive due to the increased woodland cover, and sheep were often required to graze common wood pastures, together with cattle and pigs, producing a pastoral system reminiscent of the Weald. The woodland was exploited

for a wide range of craft industries. At this time the small settlements centred around churches as at Froxfield and Privett, were established.

- 2A.13 This area of the downs were also used to a great extent for hunting with deer parks recorded in several locations. Much of this land was not available for agriculture, although areas of common land were accessible. Basing Park (Grade II) includes the site of a 12th century castle, with remnants of the medieval park pale still evident. Rotherfield Park (Grade II*) also has its origin as a deer park with a subsequent 18th/19th century landscape park. There are numerous examples of small gentry houses and associated parks.
- 2A.14 During the later medieval and early post-medieval periods (15th-17th centuries), the open fields around many of the medieval settlements were enclosed, producing irregular blocks of fields and these are still evident. The downland between probably remained unenclosed, although some of it may have been cultivated during the high point of medieval settlement during the 13th century and subsequently abandoned. There are several examples of deserted medieval villages within the character area.
- 2A.15 Much of the landscape type was enclosed during the 18th-19th centuries, creating more regular field systems, although the area also includes blocks of irregular assarts such as around High Cross and Froxfield Green. Blocks of medieval woodland also survive throughout the landscape, indicating that the medieval clearance was piecemeal (reflecting poorer soils), together with smaller clumps of post-1800 plantation, many of which originated as game coverts.

Key Historic Characteristics

- Historic parkland landscapes with origin as medieval hunting parks and subsequent 18th century designed landscapes (Rotherfield Park and Basing Park).
- Survival of significant blocks of pre-1800 (ancient) woodland provides evidence of medieval and early post-medieval woodland exploitation, e.g. coppicing and charcoal burning.
- Small medieval nucleated settlements indicative of the medieval manorial system. Absence of large-scale settlement indicative of the marginal nature of landscape.
- Varied field systems, much modern enclosures but significant areas of assarts and copses.
- Medieval nucleated settlements - indicative of the medieval manorial system.

Settlement Form and Built Character

- 2A.16 The settlement pattern in this area is characterised by a low density of dispersed settlement. The typical settlement form is relatively late in origin, and comprises isolated farmsteads of 18th-19th century origin set within areas of recent enclosure derived from former sheepwalk. However, some of the farmsteads are of medieval origin and represent former dependent hamlets which have subsequently shrunk. The deserted medieval village at Colemore is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

- 2A.17 There are several small nucleated settlements of medieval origin lying within sheltered folds on the plateau as at Privett, Froxfield Green, High Cross and East Tisted, based around a distinctive church and often a village green and pond. The Victorian church (on a medieval site) at Privett has been described as a 'town church in the country' - its tall spire providing a landmark on the plateau.
- 2A.18 The houses and associated buildings forming part of the large estates as at Basing Park and Rotherfield Park are distinctive within the wider landscape. The gate lodges at Rotherfield, for example, being a prominent feature on the A32. The adjacent village of East Tisted is characterised by early 19th century estate cottages associated with Rotherfield Park in groups and singles. There are in addition a number of small locally important historic parks across the area, with similar distinctive building including lodges and farms.
- 2A.19 The settlement edge of Four Marks, extends to the boundary of the character area.
- 2A.20 Building materials are typically flint, red brick and clay tiles.

EVALUATION

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

2A.21 Key sensitivities include:

- The pockets of original pre-1800 (probably medieval) woodland which provide enclosure, biodiversity interest and textural contrast (e.g. Dogford Wood, Plash Wood and Lord's Wood).
- The historic parkland landscapes including the former medieval deerparks and 18th century designed landscapes at Rotherfield and Basing, Pelham Place and Broadhangers.
- The remnant former commons at Colemore Common and Newton Common.
- The varied field patterns, including significant areas of assarts (e.g. at High Cross/Froxfield Green) and the presence of large areas of pasture managed by grazing.
- The low density of settlement and pattern of very small contained nucleated villages.
- Some long open views in higher areas which amplify the sense of remoteness.
- The strong rural, tranquil character arising from the simple landscape pattern, quiet roads and very low density of settlement.
- Views to church spires, as at Privett, and their open setting which provide a point of reference in the landscape.
- Intact hedgerow network with hedgerow trees which create a strong landscape pattern as well as seclusion and enclosure.

- 2A.22 Where there is woodland cover in this landscape type the visual sensitivity of the landscape is reduced. The more open elevated areas that afford long views across the plateau are the most visually sensitive part of this landscape.

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

- 2A.23 **The overall management objective should be to conserve the remote, quiet character of the landscape, formed by the pasture and woodland mosaic, quiet lanes and sparse settlement.**

Landscape Management Considerations

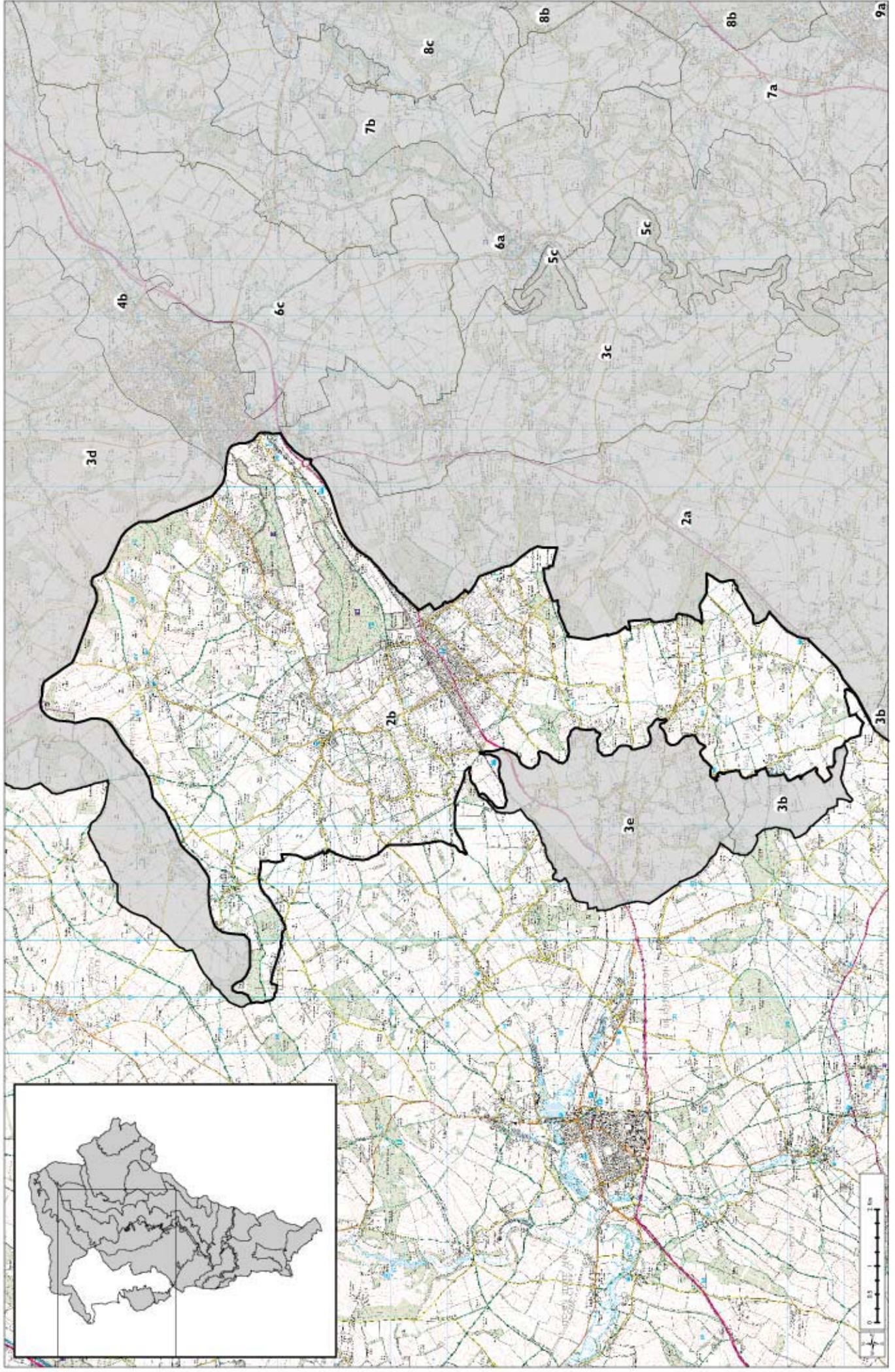
- Conserve the remnant features of the former medieval deer parks at Rotherfield and Basing and the 18th century designed landscapes and their settings, encouraging the management/restoration of permanent pasture, parkland trees, avenues and clumps of trees and associated buildings and estate features.
- Encourage biodiversity enhancement within parkland areas to include low intensity management of grassland areas, conservation of veteran trees and retention of deadwood habitats.
- Conserve the ancient woodland and linking hedgerow network and hedgerow trees which provide enclosure in this landscape and form a strong landscape pattern and important wildlife corridors.
- Encourage the reinstatement of woodland management by coppicing to reinstate the neglected stands of old coppice woods.
- Manage woodland to ensure a diverse (indigenous) species and age structure to minimise risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds. Promote interest in, and marketing of, local wood products, including wood for fuel.
- Consider opportunities for reinstating grazing and restoring wood pasture management to commons.
- Seek to ensure that this remains as a predominantly pasture landscape managed by grazing. Conserve remaining areas of semi improved grassland.
- Conserve the diversity of field patterns and particularly the assarts.
- Conserve the numerous small field ponds which are a feature of this landscape.

Development Considerations

- Conserve the very low density of settlement, quiet roads and rural lanes, and consequent deeply rural character and strong sense of remoteness and stillness associated with the plateau.
- Conserve the small nucleated character of the villages centred around a church or green/pond, and absence of larger or extended settlements.
- Ensure that new farm buildings and associated storage structures and working areas are sensitively sited and screened to reduce their impact in the landscape.

- Maintain open views and across the higher plateau areas which contrast with the more enclosed areas contained by woodland.
- Avoid road ‘improvements’ and addition of signage that would alter the rural character of the quiet lanes. Control erosion of verges.
- Conserve historic landscapes and their settings, encouraging the management/restoration of permanent pasture, parkland trees, avenues and clumps of trees.
- Ensure the settlement edge of Four Marks does not encroach into the area.
- Conserve views to church spires and their open setting which provide a point of reference in the landscape – of particular importance is the prominent and distinctive church spire at Privett.

Character Area 2b: Four Marks





2B: Four Marks Clay Plateau

Location and Boundaries

- 2B.1 The *Four Marks* character area is defined by the extent of a shallow but virtually continuous deposit of clay with flint which caps the chalk bedrock geology. The south eastern boundary is formed by the South Downs designated National Park boundary; beyond this the clay capping continues over chalk but the area is less settled. To the north and west the chalk bedrock continues but the clay capping is less continuous. The character area boundaries roughly following the extent of the clay.

The character area is not in the South Downs National Park.

Key Characteristics

- Elevated undulating plateau with an almost continuous clay cap overlying the chalk bedrock. A more rolling landform is evident to the north around Bentworth indicating the transition to the chalk downland.
- A landscape of dominated by pasture but also with some arable fields, reflecting variations in soil type and including considerable areas of pasture managed by horse grazing.
- Fields of late medieval origin in the north and south of the area with the central part of the character area comprising distinctive planned enclosure of the late 19th century (at Four Marks, Dry Hill and Medstead).
- Ancient woodlands have been replanted, and often comprise a mix of broadleaved and coniferous tree species. The majority are relatively small, although occasional large blocks such as Chawton Park Wood and Bushy Lease Wood occur.
- Occasional areas of neutral grassland and ponds and a relatively intact hedgerow network contribute to the ecological value of the landscape.
- Tree cover creates a secluded and enclosed landscape contrasting with the openness of the arable fields.
- Parkland as at Bentworth, Medstead and Thedden is of local importance (Hampshire Register).
- Settlement includes isolated farmsteads of 18-19th century and of medieval origin and small nucleated villages of medieval origin (Medstead and Bentworth) and a higher settlement density and distinctive pattern of former small-holder plots of more recent origin around Four Marks.
- Cut by the A31 but otherwise a network of rural roads cross the area.
- A good rights of way network, including parts of the historic route of the Pilgrim's Way (linking Winchester and Canterbury - much of it now formed by

the A31) and St. Swithun's Way between Winchester and Farnham, as well as a network of quiet rural lanes.

- Despite the density of settlement around the A31 at Four Marks this is a peaceful and in places a tranquil and rural landscape.

Physical Landscape

- 2B.2 An elevated undulating plateau landscape formed by extensive superficial deposits of clay with flint overlying the chalk bedrock geology. Clayey and fine silty soils that are often very flinty support a mix of arable farmland and pasture as well as retaining significant areas of woodland. In some areas the landform, for example to the north around Bentworth has a rolling 'downland' character. Occasionally, the edge of the clay at its junction with the underlying chalk forms a minor but steep scarp, as at seen around Ropley.
- 2B.3 The most elevated land lies in the centre and to the north east of the character area, around the settlement at Four Marks. Four Marks village is the third highest point in the county, with a trig point at Semaphore Farm in Telegraph Lane. From here there are extensive views to the south/southeast as far as Butser Hill and the South Downs scarp. There are further local views out from Four Marks, for example towards Farleigh Mount. The higher land also corresponds with the occurrence of significant areas of ancient woodland, e.g. at Old Down Wood, Chawton Park Wood, Bushy Leaze Wood. Field boundaries are varied with some tall hedges, post and wire, well trimmed and unmaintained hedgerows. Water is not a particular feature of the landscape however a number of ponds occur throughout the area (e.g. Oakmoor Hill Pond, Five Ash Pond and Swellinghill Pond).

Perceptual/Experiential Landscape

- 2B.4 In the central and north east part of the area this is a landscape of enclosure and seclusion corresponding to the woodland and tree cover. The northern and southern parts of the character area are more open, providing a contrasting perceptual experience. Tree cover often restricts views, however on higher land there are long views across the character area and beyond towards Butser Hill as well as some local views.
- 2B.5 The A31 cuts through the centre of the character area and has created a corridor along which modern development has spread. The area is, otherwise served by a network of quiet winding rural roads. The central part of the plateau is contained by extensive tree cover, which integrates and provides a framework for the settlement at Four Marks, Dry Hill and Medstead. The northern and southern parts of the character area have a more rural agricultural character. Overall, despite the density of settlement around Four Marks, this is a peaceful and, in places, a tranquil and rural landscape.
- 2B.6 There is no open access land although a good rights of way network links the settlement. The route of the Pilgrim's Way linking Winchester and Canterbury passed through this area (much of the historic route now represented by the A31). The recent St. Swithun's Way provides a link between Winchester and Farnham (the start of the North Downs National Trail). The Watercress Line also runs through

this area, in a corridor parallel to the A31. Alton Abbey (a Benedictine Monastery in the Church of England) and Bentworth Hall associated with Bentworth Park are further features.

- 2B.7 East End Farm (near Bentworth) was leased by George Wither Senior, in 1580 and as such is the likely birthplace of the poet George Wither, in 1588.

Biodiversity

- 2B.8 Although dominated by agriculture (pasture and arable), this character area supports occasional woodland blocks, many of which are of ancient origin, particularly on higher and sloping ground. Many of the ancient woodlands have been replanted, and often comprise a mix of broadleaved and coniferous tree species. The majority are relatively small, although large blocks such as Chawton Park Woods and Bushy Lease Wood also occur. A number of woodland sites are of county importance and identified as SINCs.
- 2B.9 Other features of ecological note include occasional areas of plantation woodland, neutral grassland and ponds. A relatively intact hedgerow network, also provides additional wildlife habitat and enhances habitat connectivity within the agricultural landscape.

Historic Character

- 2B.10 An archaeological monument (SAM) consisting of several barrows and an unclassified earthwork occurs close to Medstead. Part of the Devils Jumps (Round Barrow cemetery) is also included in the southern part of the character area. The presence of these monuments suggests that the area was valued at least for ritual purposes during the Bronze Age.
- 2B.11 Blocks of fields of late medieval origin occur in the north and south of the character area, these represent enclosure of the open fields around medieval settlements during late medieval and post-medieval periods.
- 2B.12 The central part of the character area comprises distinctive planned enclosure of late 19th century date, mostly smallholdings associated with post-medieval settlements at Four Marks, Dry Hill and Medstead. These comprise small rectilinear plots associated with linear roadside settlement, and reflect the influx of smallholders in the years before and after the First World War, attracted by the railway. The pre-existing landscape was of early enclosure around 16th-17th farmsteads, with scattered blocks of recent enclosure on areas of former common land. The skeleton of this landscape survives in the winding network of lanes and tracks, into which the later rectangular field patterns have been fitted. This is a distinctive landscape and represents 'alternative' lifestyle choices by groups of artists and/or disillusioned ex-soldiers eager to escape the society that sent them to the trenches.
- 2B.13 Areas of recent enclosure of 18th-19th century date also occur around Bentworth. A distinctive block of smallholdings around Beech dates to the late 19th-early 20th centuries.
- 2B.14 Fields of recent enclosure occur around the post 1800 expansion settlements (e.g. adjacent to Four Marks, Beech and Medstead) with fields of early enclosure found in

the less settled, lower lying northern and southern parts of the character area. Some very large modern fields occur north of Monkwood.

- 2B.15 Smaller areas of recent enclosure in the southern part of the character area reflect enclosure of common land (e.g. West Tisted Common) from the 18th century onwards.
- 2B.16 The survival of this ancient woodland in the north eastern part of the character area (Chawton Park Wood, Bushy Leaze Wood and North Wood) may be associated with the presence of several parks in the vicinity. There are several existing parks of local importance on the Hampshire Register. Chawton Park still exists as parkland in the adjacent character area (3c) and is likely to have extended further west in the past. The EH Register mentions two parks in the manor during the medieval period - evidenced by place-names Old Park Farm; Chawton Park Wood, which contains earthwork remains of the park pale, as does Bushy Leaze Wood. The early enclosure around Old Park Farm would suggest this park was disused by the later medieval period (it does not appear on John Speed's map of 1611). There is an absence of historic parkland in the rest of the character area reflecting the agricultural emphasis of the landscape.

Key Historic Characteristics

- Survival of Bronze Age Barrows (SAM) indicative of a prehistoric ritual landscape.
- Historic parkland landscapes in the north-east part of the character area.
- Survival of significant blocks of pre-1800 (ancient) woodland provides evidence of medieval and early post-medieval woodland exploitation, e.g. coppicing and charcoal burning.
- Distinctive planned enclosure of late 19th century date, mostly smallholdings associated with post-medieval settlements at Four Marks, Dry Hill and Medstead.

Settlement Form and Built Character

- 2B.17 Overall, the area is characterised by a low settlement density with isolated farmsteads of 18th-19th century origin set within areas of recent enclosure, and isolated farmsteads of late medieval origin set within areas of mainly early enclosure, with 18th-19th century farmsteads grafted on later. Some of the isolated farmsteads may represent shrunken medieval hamlets.
- 2B.18 Small nucleated villages of medieval origin are surrounded by earlier enclosures e.g. Medstead or surrounded by recent enclosures e.g. Bentworth, probably representing 18th-19th century modification of earlier enclosed landscape.
- 2B.19 Higher settlement density, of more recent origin, is found around Four Marks. Veterans of the Crimean War, who were allocated plots for their smallholdings, originally settled the village of Four Marks. Many of these have subsequently been redeveloped with more modern and imposing residences.
- 2B.20 Although much of the central part of the character area is settled, the density appears low due to large gardens and tree cover. The scattered nature of development and presence of trees and boundary vegetation softens and integrates

development into the landscape. More recently, many of these smallholder plots have been redeveloped with houses of greater size and massing and in some cases loss of screening vegetation and construction of hard boundaries along the frontages of properties. Cumulatively, these small scale changes have altered the local landscape character, creating the impression of a more 'built-up' landscape in parts.

2B.21 Characteristic building materials include flint, red brick and clay tiles.

EVALUATION

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

2B.22 Key sensitivities include:

- Areas of original pre-1800 woodland (Old Down Wood, Chawton Park Wood, Bushy Leaze Wood) which provide enclosure, biodiversity interest and textural contrast.
- Woodland and hedgerow tree cover, which creates seclusion and enclosure and helps integrate built development.
- The character of the rural lanes particularly the hedgerows and grass verges are especially sensitive, to loss as a result of redevelopment of former small- holder plots.
- Small-scale piecemeal character of settlement around Four Marks, Dry Hill and Medstead and the need to avoid over-development of plots and retain enclosing vegetation and boundaries.
- The existing small historic parklands (at Bentworth, Medstead and Thedden) and former (Chawton Old Park) historic parklands.
- The occasional archaeological monuments (SAMs) - round barrows.
- Fields of late medieval origin.
- The agricultural mosaic and especially areas of grazed pasture and need to ensure good management of areas used for horse grazing.
- The quiet rural road network and overall peacefulness of the landscape.
- The A31 corridor and need to retain an open undeveloped rural landscape, along the road corridor, for example between Four Marks and Alton.

2B.23 In areas of extensive woodland and tree cover the visual sensitivity of the landscape is reduced with opportunity for planting mitigation. However, this lower visual sensitivity is critically dependent on retention of trees and hedgerow boundaries. Views from more open elevated areas increases sensitivity.

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

2B.24 **The overall management objective should be to conserve the peaceful rural landscape of the Four Marks Clay Plateau, maintaining the rural**

character created by the unifying woodland/tree cover and farmland mosaic.

Landscape Management Considerations

- Conserve the original pre-1800 woodland, tree cover, hedgerows and hedgerow trees which provide enclosure in this landscape and form a strong landscape pattern and important wildlife network.
- Seek to reinstate active management of ancient woodlands traditionally managed under a coppice with standards regime.
- Manage woodland to ensure a diverse (indigenous) species and age structure to minimise risk of damage as a result of increased storminess and high winds. Promote interest in, and marketing of, local wood products, including wood for fuel.
- Monitor regeneration of hedgerow trees and consider opportunities for re-planting.
- Conserve areas of pasture and seek to ensure good management of horse grazing, including retention of hedgerow boundaries, management of the sward and avoiding proliferation of buildings/sheds etc.

Development Considerations

- Conserve the current density of settlement, quiet roads and consequent peaceful and in places rural character of the landscape.
- The form of settlements should be perpetuated by limiting backland development, emphasising the existing street pattern and retaining the loose dispersed pattern. Seek to avoid redevelopment of smallholder plots with buildings of greater size/massing and incongruous (sub)urban style.
- Conserve and enhance the soft boundaries and verges of the small plots (Four Marks, Dry Hill and Medstead) particularly frontages along rural lanes. Ensure retention of existing native hedges as well as beech/laurel hedges and associated grass verges. Seek to limit construction of hard or ornamental boundaries fencing which create a more urban character.
- Maintain individual settlement identity and limit linear expansion and infilling between existing settlements e.g. Beech and Medstead, and Medstead to Four Marks. Retain an undeveloped rural road corridor along the A31 and important open gaps, for example between Alton and Four Marks.
- Ensure that new farm buildings and associated storage structures and working areas are sensitively sited and screened to reduce their impact in the landscape.
- Avoid road 'improvements' and addition of signage that would alter the rural character of the quiet lanes.

- Encourage sensitive integration of fencing, tracks, hardstanding, jumps and other paraphernalia that are associated with hobby farms or private stables and that fall outside planning control.