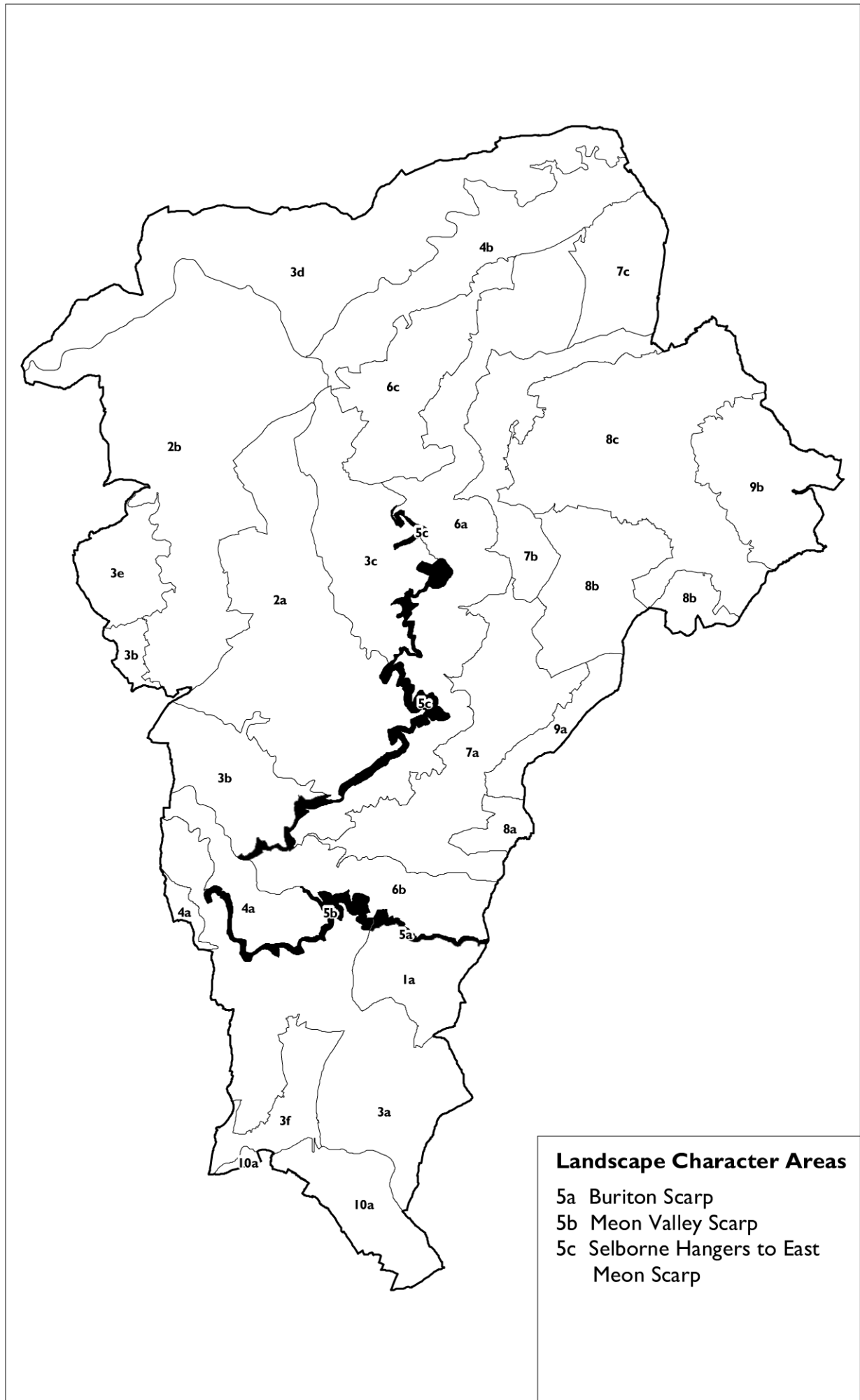
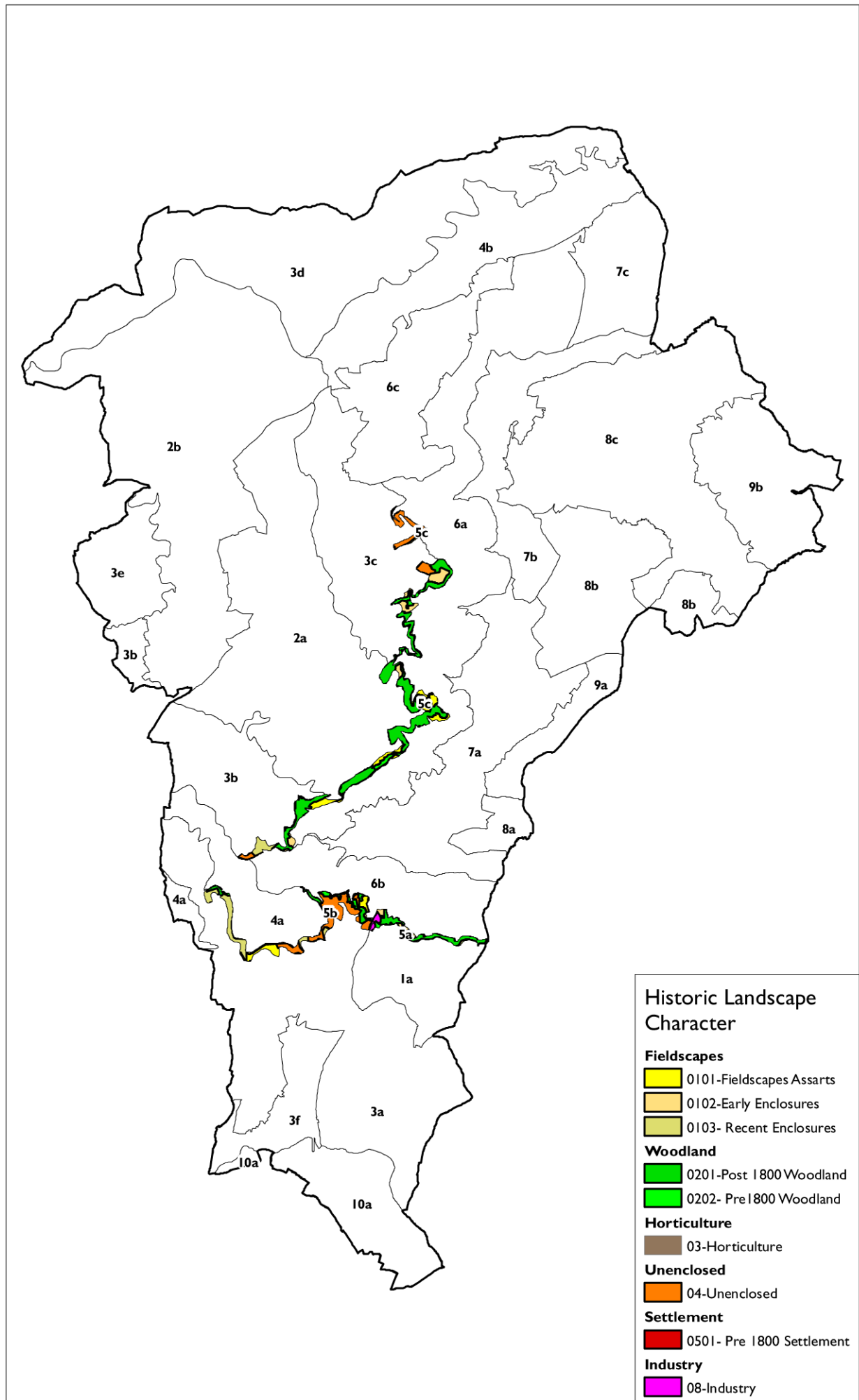


Landscape Type 5 : Major Scarps



Landscape Type 5 : Major Scarps



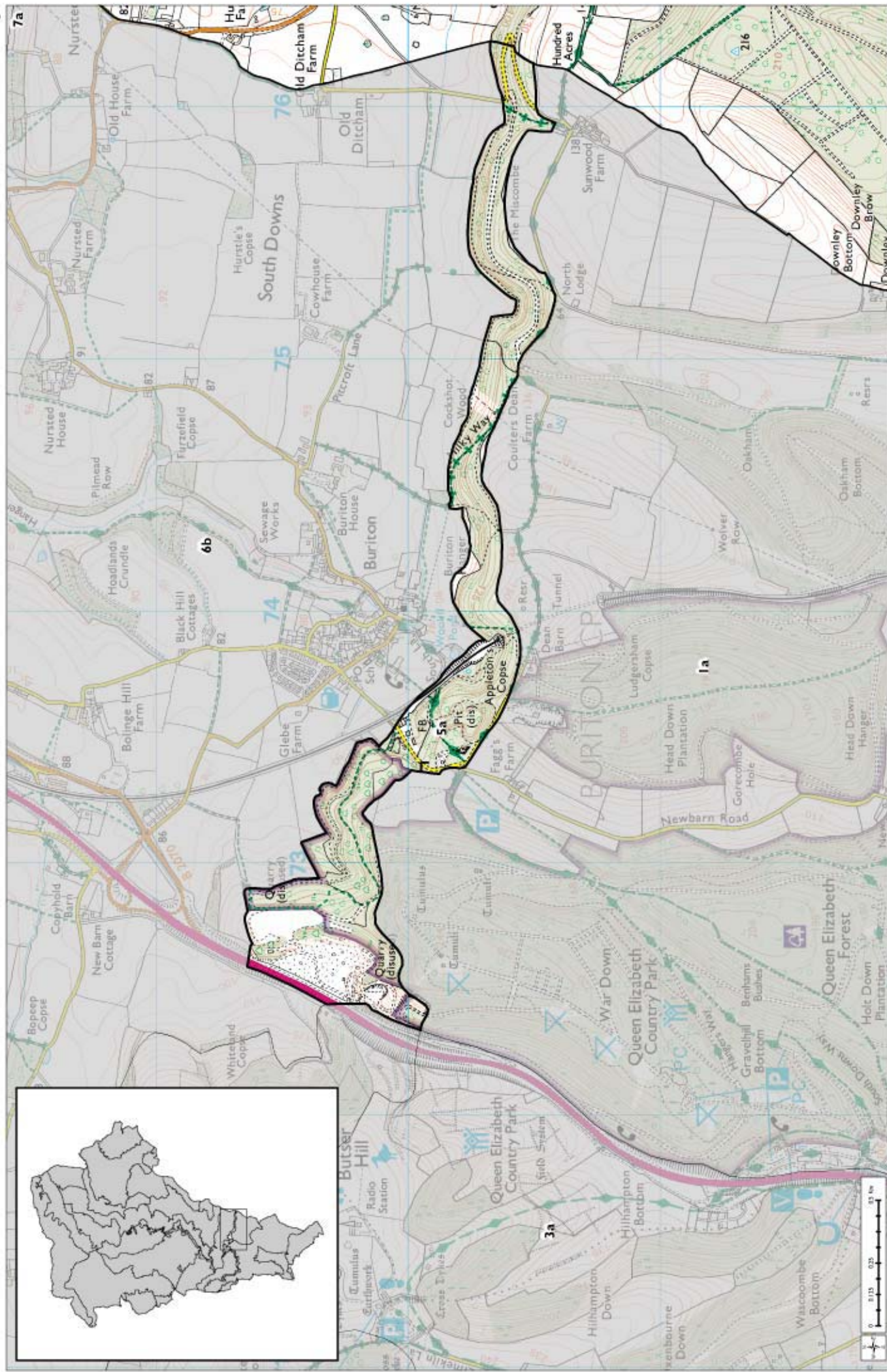
LANDSCAPE TYPE 5: MAJOR SCARPS

- 5.1 The scarp is a visually distinct landscape type forming the northern and eastern edge of the chalk rising steeply from the lower lying land of the Greensand and the Weald. It forms a prominent backdrop, skyline and landmark feature for a wide area beyond the East Hampshire. The scarp is either open or wooded along its length.

Key Characteristics

- A linear landscape forming the northern and eastern edge of the chalk - deeply indented winding belt, with a steep scarp faces and a high prominent ridgeline creating a strong skyline, although this is softened in areas of woodland cover.
- Remarkably consistent in height and slope profile throughout its length as a result of the lithological uniformity of the chalk bedrock.
- From open summits there are panoramic views across the lowlands to the north. The scarp forms a distinctive backdrop ridgeline in views from this area.
- Precipitous upper slopes are grazed grassland, scrub or clothed in dense woodland 'hangers' - mixed farmland extends onto the shallower lower slopes in places.
- Contains extensive areas of chalk grassland.
- Notable for the absence of buildings on the slope itself.
- Deeply sunken lanes and tracks, known as bostal tracks, cut the escarpment and link the lower land to the chalk uplands. Some 'gaps' cut by valleys form important communication routes.
- Large number of recreational sites - frequently associated with hilltop historic monuments or panoramic viewpoints, plus areas of open access land (on chalk grassland).
- Occasionally marked by chalk pits on the scarp slopes and masts along the crest which are highly prominent in views.

Character Area 5a: Buriton Scarp





5A: Buriton Scarp

Location and Boundaries

- 5A.1 The *Buriton Scarp* is distinguished as a separate character area by virtue of its densely wooded land cover, distinct from the more open scarp to the west. It extends from the A3 in the west to the district boundary in the east. The northern and southern boundaries of the *Buriton Scarp* are defined by topography. The southern (top) boundary has been drawn along the crest of the scarp which is clearly defined by a change in density of contours. The northern (lower) boundary is less well defined and has been drawn along field boundaries roughly representing the break in slope. From the scarp top there are panoramic views northwards.

The character area is wholly within the South Downs National Park. It forms part of a much larger character area extending to east beyond the district boundary.

Key Characteristics

- A dramatic steep north-facing chalk escarpment, precipitous in places, much of it clothed by woodland to produce a soft, irregular texture masking the slope profile.
- Remarkably consistent in height throughout its length as a result of the lithological uniformity of the chalk bedrock.
- A well wooded scarp, much of it ancient woodland of pre-1800 date, e.g. Appleton Copse, Buriton Hanger and Cockshot Wood.
- A secret, secluded character contrasting with the exposed open scarp top.
- At the foot of the scarp where the slopes are less steep the land is ploughed for crops – here the open field contrast with the well wooded scarp face.
- Notable for the absence of buildings on the slope itself.
- Isolated chalk pits associated with the former agricultural lime-burning industry occur on the scarp, although many are concealed by vegetation.
- Elevated landform provides panoramic views over the *Greensand Hills* to the north - the climb through dense woodland builds a sense of anticipation for the views from the open summits.

Physical Landscape

- 5A.2 This character area forms part of the striking chalk escarpments which cuts across the East Hampshire District. The steep landform is a result of erosion and undercutting of the chalk mass which has revealed the bands of Upper, Middle and Lower Chalk. The scarp is gradually moving southwards as erosion of the adjacent softer beds to the north undermine the chalk scarp. The escarpment is remarkably constant in height and slope profile throughout its length as a result of the

lithological uniformity of the chalk bedrock and forms a prominent visual feature within the landscape.

- 5A.3 The chalk bedrock has resulted in well drained calcareous soils, but the steep slopes have generally not been cultivated and extensive swathes of hanger woodland characterise the scarp face as at Appleton Copse, Buriton Hanger and Cockshot Wood.
- 5A.4 Occasional abandoned quarries along the scarp face reveal the exploitation of chalk in the past to produce lime for fertilising the acidic soils of the farmland of the Low Weald to the north. These quarries now contain ecologically notable habitats, for example Buriton chalk Pit LNR.
- 5A.5 At the foot of the scarps where the slopes are less steep the land is often ploughed and arable fields have encroached up the slope in places. Soil creep is evident on the steepest slopes where the surface of the scarp is wrinkled into terraces – this is particularly evident on a sunny day when shadows highlight these terraces.

Perceptual/Experiential Landscape

- 5A.6 The dramatic scale of the landform and the large swathes of woodland create a large scale exposed landscape which is dominant in views to the north, and at close quarters creates a dark, imposing and even oppressive feature. The woodland cover provides consistency across the scarps, resulting in a unified and harmonious landscape with a muted 'natural' character.
- 5A.7 The steepness of the scarp means there is little human activity. As a consequence this is a quiet landscape which, combined with the swathe of woodland, is perceived as highly natural and tranquil. The South Downs Way/Hangers Way cuts across the scarp linking Buriton with Queen Elizabeth Country Park. Otherwise there are few rights of way or roads. In contrast, the western boundary is formed by the A3 which climbs the slope through a cutting with steep engineered banks forming a dominant visual feature and a local source of noise and disruption.
- 5A.8 The dramatic character of the chalk scarp forms a very prominent feature marking the northern edge of the South Downs and has been a source of literary and artistic inspiration for centuries.

Biodiversity

- 5A.9 The scarp is well wooded with extensive and unbroken oak, ash and beech hanger woodland, the majority of which carries local SINC designation. Species-rich woody scrub is also characteristic of the scarp. Occasional dew ponds and abandoned chalk quarries also occur and are support ecologically notable habitats, for example Buriton Chalk Pit LNR.

Historic Character

- 5A.10 The steep scarps have always been a marginal zone. Even at the height of arable cultivation of the downland, during the Romano-British period, the scarps were too steep for ploughing and remained wooded. The survival of significant blocks of pre-

1800 woodland provides evidence of medieval and early post-medieval woodland exploitation, e.g. coppicing and charcoal burning.

5A.11 There is very little evidence for human modification of the scarp apart from the ancient route of the South Downs Way which crosses the slope and the rail line which runs in a tunnel through the scarp. There is evidence of former trackways, many of them sunken and terraced diagonally into the hillside, which traverse the slopes, historic routes linking the downland pastures and scarp foot arable fields. Small chalk quarries are associated with the former agricultural lime-burning industry. At Buriton, a larger quarry associated with more extensive chalk extraction is also present.

- Survival of significant blocks of pre-1800 woodland provides evidence of medieval and early post-medieval woodland exploitation, e.g. coppicing and charcoal burning.
- Small chalk pits provide evidence of the former agricultural lime-burning industry;
- Sunken terraced trackways form an integral part of former agricultural systems, linking downland pasture with scarpfoot arable land.

Settlement Form and Built Character

5A.12 The steep wooded slopes of the scarp are characterised by the absence of settlement. The springline settlement of Buriton is located at the foot of the scarp and is described as part of *Character Area 6B Ramsdean – Buriton Greensand Terrace*

EVALUATION

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

5A.13 Due to the prominent position of the scarps within the overall landscape, they are highly sensitive to change. Key sensitivities include:

- The open and undeveloped skylines which are highly visible and particularly sensitive to any form of development or vertical structures such as telecommunication masts, power lines and wind turbines.
- The extensive views from the scarp, across adjacent lower lying landscapes and to the *Greensand Hills*, that are vulnerable to change which would affect the special remote character of the scarps.
- The distinctive smooth slope profile, which could potentially be vulnerable to any change (cutting, extraction etc).
- The scrub and ancient woodland cover which provide texture, create dramatic shadows, and are of great biodiversity interest. Hanger woodland is an internationally important habitat and is particularly vulnerable to storm damage.
- The subtle presence of rough sheep tracks and rights of way that zig zag across the scarps. These are vulnerable to damage by intensive recreational use, notably off road vehicles.

- The sense of tranquillity, remoteness and space that results from the overall low incidence of human activity and absence of development.

5A.14 The steep scarps are extremely prominent in views from adjacent landscapes making them very visually sensitive. Buriton Scarp is a key feature in views from more settled low lying landscapes, such as around Petersfield in East Hampshire. Of particular sensitivity is the skyline of the scarp which is most often viewed in against an open sky.

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

5A.15 **The overall management objective should be to conserve the dramatic combination of steep landform and woodland cover, and strong scarp skyline.**

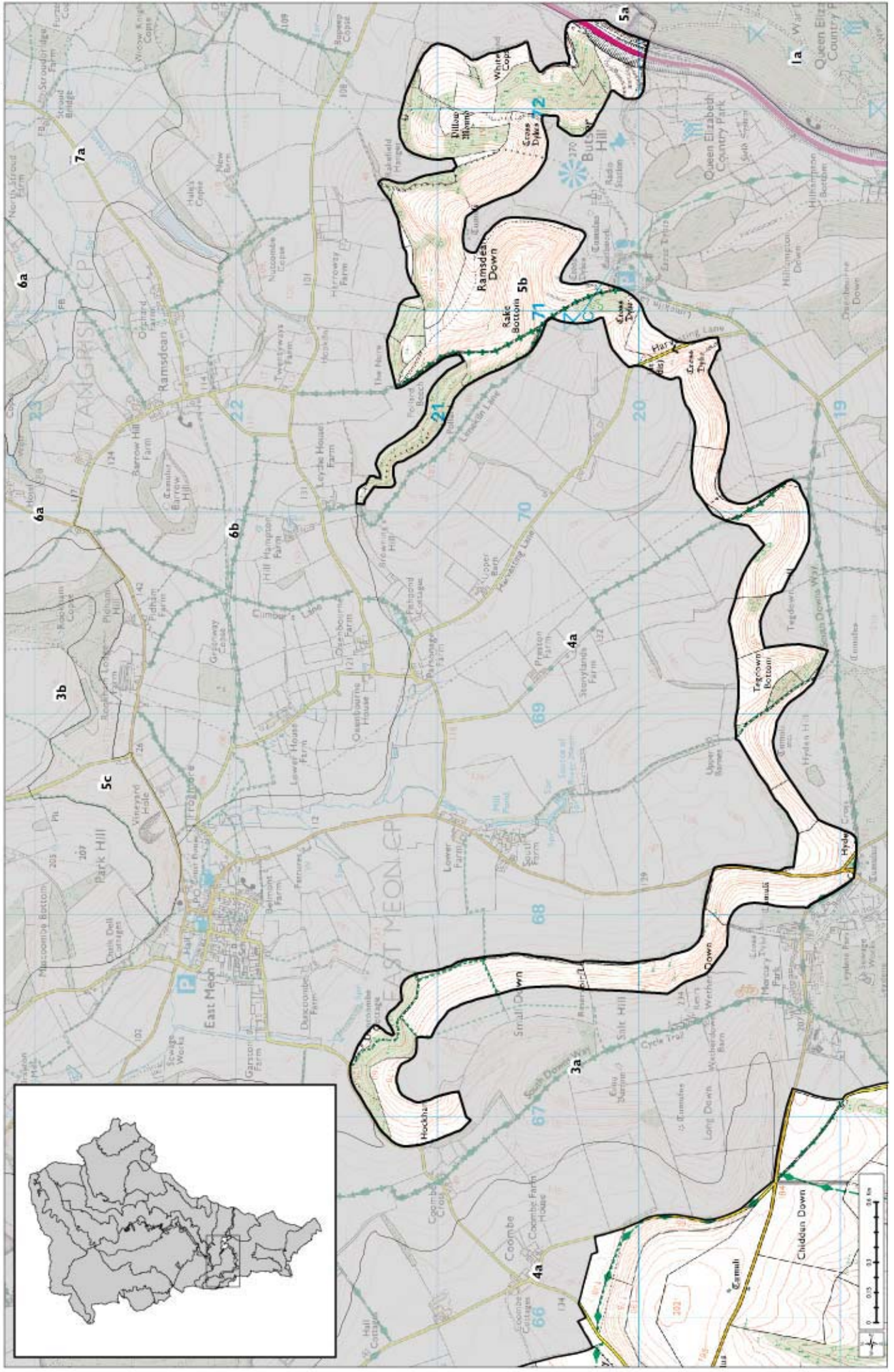
Landscape Management Considerations

- Manage hanger woodland to ensure a diverse species and age structure by light thinning, clearance of some of the scrub, re-coppicing and replanting as necessary. This will also minimise risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds.
- Maintain open panoramic viewpoints across the surrounding lowlands.
- Maintain the continuity of woodland cover and avoid felling or creation of harsh woodland edges, which are visually intrusive on the scarp slope.
- Manage recreational use, particularly intensive uses, to respect the special character of the scarp and key features of chalk grassland, ancient trackways, sense of remoteness and tranquillity.
- Encourage the creative restoration of redundant chalk quarries, exploiting the potential for geological interest, nature conservation, and recreation, and ensuring they blend with their surroundings.
- Conserve the tranquillity of the scarp, resisting road improvements on the historic tracks and lane that traverse the scarp – manage the verges to avoid erosion and encourage species diversity.

Development Considerations

- Conserve the wooded, undeveloped character of the scarp.
- Maintain the wooded and undeveloped skyline – avoid siting of buildings, telecommunication masts, power lines and wind turbines on the sensitive skyline and maintain the backdrop of open skyscape.
- Consider the impact of any change (development) in views from the scarp.
- Seek opportunities to reduce the visual and aural impact of the A3(T).

Character Area 5b: Meon Valley Scarp





5B: Meon Valley Scarp

Location and Boundaries

- 5B.1 Located in the south of the district, the *Meon Valley Scarp* is a short length of open scarp that wraps around the northern edge of the downland, between Small Down in the west and Butser Hill in the east, rising above the Meon Valley. The boundaries are defined predominantly by topography. The southern (top) boundary has been drawn along the crest of the scarp which is clearly defined by a change in density of contours. The northern (lower) boundary is less well defined has been drawn along field boundaries representing the break in slope. There are panoramic views over the Meon Valley and Rother Valley to the north – with the *Selborne Hangers to East Meon Scarp* (5C) forming a backdrop to this view.

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

Key Characteristics

- A dramatic steep north-facing chalk escarpment exhibiting a distinctive concave-convex slope profile, indented by coombes, and enclosing the head of the Meon Valley.
- The scarp is particularly prominent around Butser Hill where the crest of the scarp reaches 250m AOD.
- The scarp supports little woodland, revealing its open smoothly eroded form and supporting extensive areas of chalk grassland habitat and some chalk heath e.g. Butser Hill SAC.
- Previously valued as sheep pasture – the chalk grassland now coincides with areas of Open Access land.
- The steep slopes at Ramsdean Down contain numerous earthworks, including cross-dykes, and the shallower slopes reveal prehistoric field systems.
- Deeply sunken ancient lanes and tracks cut the escarpment and link the lower land to the chalk uplands e.g. linking Tegdown Bottom and Tegdown Hill. These now form public rights of way up the scarp and onto the downs.
- At the foot of the scarp where the slopes are less steep the land is ploughed for crops - here colours contrast with the muted grey-green colours of the scarp face.
- Open, undeveloped skyline viewed against an open sky backdrop.
- The elevated landform provides panoramic views over the Meon Valley and Rother Valley to the north - the *Selborne Hangers to East Meon Scarp* forms a backdrop to this view. Southwards across the dipslope there are extensive views to the south coast.

Physical Landscape

- 5B.2 This is a short section of open chalk scarp enclosing the head of the Meon Valley – it is particularly prominent around Butser Hill where the crest of the scarp reaches 250m AOD. The dramatic steep north-facing chalk escarpment exhibits a distinctive concave-convex slope profile, indented by coombes. These were mostly formed by post-glacial stream erosion and subsequent erosional action from springs at the base of the chalk. The chalk bedrock has resulted in well drained calcareous soils, but the steep slopes have generally not been cultivated. The character area is notable for its open character and extensive chalk grassland habitats, particularly on the slopes of Butser Hill where some rare chalk heath is found. The scarp supports little woodland, revealing its open smoothly eroded form.
- 5B.3 At the foot of the scarps where the slopes are less steep the land is often ploughed and arable fields have encroached up the slope in places. Soil creep is evident on the steepest slopes where the surface of the scarp is wrinkled into terraces - this is particularly evident on a sunny day when shadows highlight these terraces.

Perceptual/Experiential Landscape

- 5B.4 The dramatic scale of the landform and the large swathes chalk grassland create a large scale exposed landscape which is dominant in views from an extensive area. The elevated landform provides panoramic views over the Meon Valley and Rother Valley to the north - the open summits have an exposed, remote character. At the foot of the scarp where the slopes are less steep the land is ploughed for crops - here seasonal change in land use contrasts with the muted grey-green colours of the scarp face.
- 5B.5 The section of scarp away from the A3(M) is particularly tranquil due to the relatively low density of public rights of way, high proportion of natural habitat and few roads. However, close to the A3(M) traffic noise is present. There is a notable absence of chalk quarries in this character area.
- 5B.6 Much of the scarp is Open Access land coinciding with the areas of chalk grassland. Ancient, deeply sunken lanes and tracks cut the escarpment and link the lower land to the chalk uplands e.g. linking Tegdown Bottom and Tegdown Hill. These now form public rights of way up the scarp and onto the downs.
- 5B.7 The dramatic character of the major chalk scarps have been a source of literary and artistic inspiration for centuries and have also featured in many postcards and paintings, their strong structural form providing an impressive composition.

Biodiversity

- 5B.8 Almost unbroken tracts of unimproved chalk grassland, scrub and hanger woodland are present along the scarp slopes and these contribute to the outstanding ecological importance of the landscape type. Butser Hill SAC is of international importance for both its yew woodland, and distinctive lichen flora, which is thought to be the richest of any chalk grassland site in England.
- 5B.9 Occasional areas of arable land, improved pasture grassland and semi-natural woodland occur on more shallow slopes along the scarps.

Historic Character

- 5B.10 The steep slopes Ramsdean Down are covered in earthworks including cross-dykes and prehistoric field systems on the shallower slopes which have been preserved by the grazing land use.
- 5B.11 The steep scarps have always been a marginal zone - even at the height of arable cultivation of the downland, during the Romano-British period, the scarps were too steep for ploughing and remained usable only as sheep pasture. The value of the scarps, however, is clear from the fact that the original woodland cover was completely cleared. Only very small and isolated clumps of pre-1800 woodland now survive. Fields patterns include a mix of modern fields, recent enclosures with assarts present at Tegdown. The predominantly open character today indicates its value in the past as sheep pasture.
- 5B.12 The main indication of human modification of the scarps comprises the numerous trackways, many of them sunken and terraced diagonally into the hillside, which traverse the slopes providing a historic link between the downland pastures and the scarpfoot arable fields. There are also a number of small isolated chalk pits associated with the former agricultural lime-burning industry.

Key Historic Characteristics

- Open scarps provide a sense of space and indication of the value of the scarps for sheep grazing;
- Absence of woodland indicates extent of past land clearance;
- Small isolated chalk pits provide evidence of the former agricultural lime-burning industry;
- Sunken terraced trackways form an integral part of former agricultural systems, linking downland pasture with scarpfoot arable land.

Settlement Form and Built Character

- 5B.13 The area is characterised by the absence of development, with the main concentration of settlement within the adjacent valley (East Meon). On the crest of the scarp, the buildings of Mercury Park/Leydene Park, a former MoD base are a dominant feature.

EVALUATION

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

- 5B.14 The scarps are prominent within the overall landscape and are therefore highly sensitive to change. Key sensitivities include:
- Large swathes of chalk grassland which are of national ecological value and are important in revealing the profile of the chalk. Without effective management strategies, undergrazing and encroachment of scrub will have a strong visual impact as well as an effect on biodiversity.

- The tranquillity of the scarp, which is impinged upon in places by the A3(M).
- Panoramic views over the Meon Valley and Rother Valley to the north, such as from the viewpoint on the scarp crest at Butser Hill.
- Open and undeveloped skylines which are highly visible and particularly sensitive to any form of built development or vertical structures such as telecommunication masts, power lines and wind turbines.
- The skyline is especially sensitive to lightspill from development.
- Distinctive smooth concave-convex slope profiles of the scarps which are vulnerable to further mineral extraction or erosion particularly in areas with no woodland cover.
- Scrub and hanger woodland on the scarps which provide texture, create dramatic shadows, and are of great biodiversity interest. Hanger woodland is an internationally important habitat and is particularly vulnerable to storm damage.
- The subtle presence of rough sheep tracks and rights of way that zig zag across the open scarps. These are vulnerable to damage by intensive recreational use, notably off road vehicles.
- Cross-dykes and prehistoric field systems on the slopes of Ramsdean Down which have been preserved by the grazing land use.

5B.15 The steep scarps are extremely prominent in views from adjacent landscapes making them very visually sensitive. Of particular sensitivity is the skyline of the scarp which is most often viewed in against an open sky.

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

5B.16 **The overall management objective should be to conserve the dramatic landform and open skyline, with extensive areas of chalk grassland exposing the scarp profile.**

Landscape Management Considerations

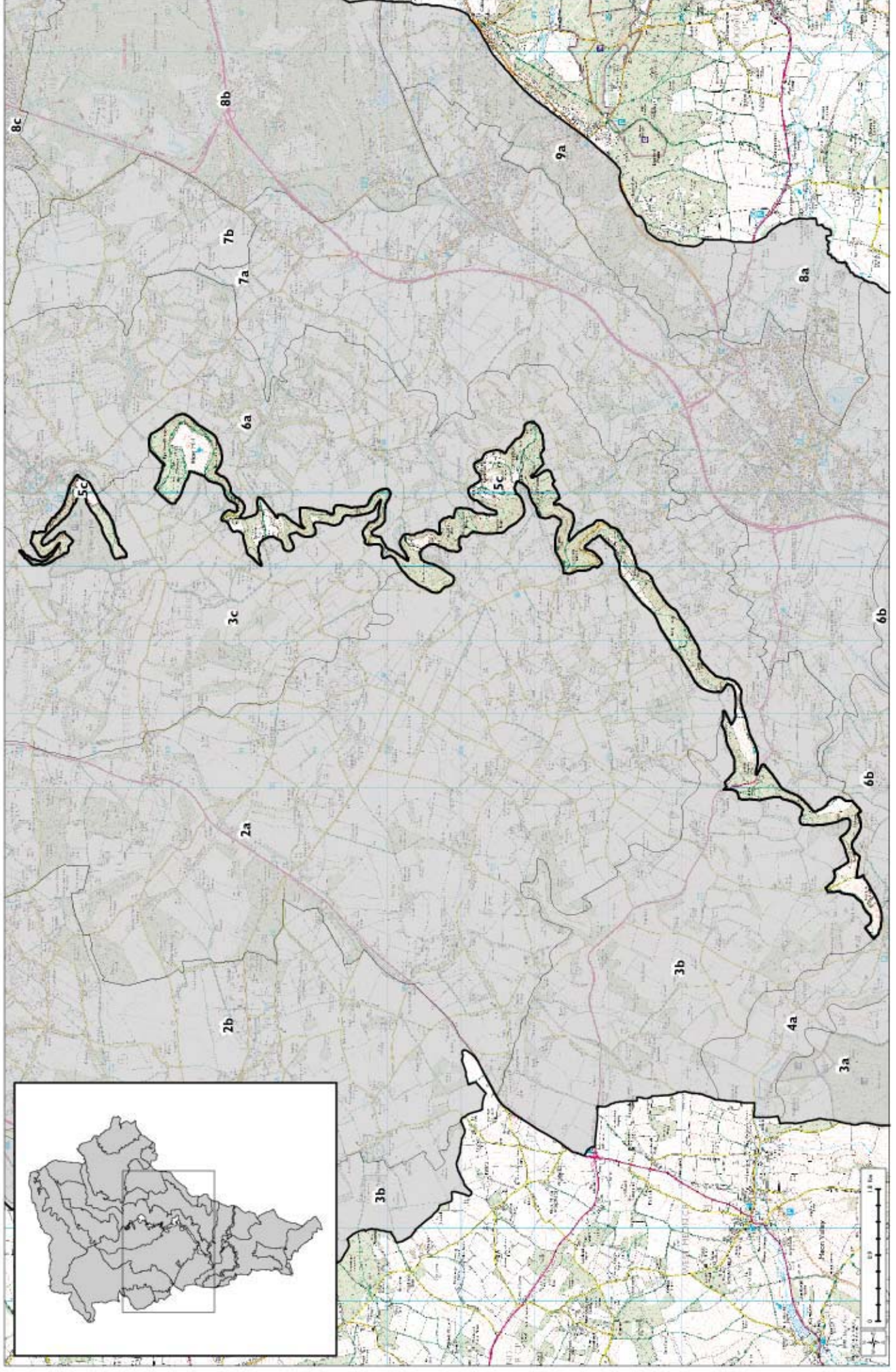
- Conserve cross-dykes and prehistoric field systems on the slopes of Ramsdean Down by continuing to graze the sites.
- Protect and continue to manage (graze) the existing chalk grassland and support the continued creation of chalk grassland creating large continuous areas of grassland, which reveal the smoothly rolling landform.
- Maintain opportunities for panoramic views over the Meon Valley and Rother Valley to the north.
- Manage hanger woodland to ensure a diverse species and age structure by light thinning, clearance of some of the scrub, re-coppicing and replanting as necessary. This will also minimise risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds.

- Where boundaries are necessary, promote the use of visually permeable boundaries such as post and wire fencing to maintain a smooth and continuous scarp profile.
- Manage recreational use, particularly intensive uses, to respect the special character of the scarp and key features of chalk grassland, ancient trackways, sense of remoteness and tranquillity.
- Encourage the creative restoration of redundant chalk quarries, exploiting the potential for geological interest, nature conservation, recreation, and ensuring they blend with their surroundings.
- Maintain the contrast between the grassland scarp and arable lowland - aim to revert arable fields back to pasture where they are encroaching on the scarp face.
- Avoid encroachment of agricultural fields onto the scarp crest from the dip-slope side of the downs. Encourage restoration of arable and improved pasture to chalk grassland to eliminate the harsh lines on the scarp crest.
- Conserve the tranquillity of the scarp, resisting road improvements on the historic tracks and lanes that traverse the scarp – manage the verges to avoid erosion and encourage species diversity.

Development Considerations

- Consider opportunities to reduce traffic noise from the A3(M).
- Conserve the open, undeveloped character of the scarp.
- Maintain the open and undeveloped skyline of the dramatic steep north-facing chalk escarpment – avoid siting of buildings, telecommunication masts, power lines and wind turbines on the sensitive skyline and maintain the backdrop of open skyline.
- Consider the impact of any change (development) in views from the scarp.
- Corridor impact of any change on the scarp crest on views to the scarp, for example lightspill in relation to redevelopment at Leydene Park.

Character Area 5c: Selborne Hangers to East Meon Scarp





5C: Selborne Hangers to East Meon Scarp

Location and Boundaries

- 5C.1 The *Selborne Hangers to East Meon Scarp* is comprised of two sections of densely wooded east-facing scarp which form a central spine within the district. The first is a continuous scarp extending from the slopes above East Meon Village in the south to Noar Hill in the north. The second is a short section of wooded scarp that wraps around the eastern edge of Selborne Hill. The boundaries of *Selborne Hangers to East Meon Scarp* are defined predominantly by topography. The western (top) boundary has been drawn along the crest of the scarp which is clearly defined by a change in density of contours. The eastern (lower) boundary is less well defined has been drawn along field boundaries. There are panoramic views over the lowlands to the east.

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

Key Characteristics

- A dramatic steep east-facing chalk escarpment, much of it clothed by hanger woodland to produce a soft, irregular texture that masks the slope profile.
- The scarp is dominant in views from the lowland with prominent landform features along the crest such as Wheatham Hill seen against a backdrop of open sky.
- Remarkably consistent in height throughout its length as a result of the lithological uniformity of the chalk bedrock.
- Clothed in ancient beech dominated hanger woodlands which are of particular visual, historic, and ecological interest. International biodiversity value represented by the East Hampshire Hangers SAC (Stonar Hill).
- The scarp contains some small areas of nationally important chalk grassland habitat e.g. at Noar Hill (which includes juniper scrub) and Selborne Common.
- Deeply sunken ancient lanes and tracks cut the escarpment and link the lower land to the chalk uplands e.g. Button's Lane, Warren Lane, Old Litten Lane. Many of these are now public rights of way onto the Downs.
- Communication routes climb the scarp in coombes, for example the A272 at Limekiln Copse.
- At the foot of the scarp where the slopes are less steep the land is ploughed for crops – here the open field contrast with the well wooded scarp face.
- A number of small isolated chalk pits associated with the former agricultural lime-burning industry are visible on the scarp, although many are masked by vegetation. Vineyard Hole is a particularly prominent feature in views of the scarp.

- Forms a dramatic backdrop to the undulating lowlands to the east.
- Panoramic views – the climb through dense woodland builds a sense of anticipation for the views from the open summits. The Shoulder of Mutton offers extensive views encompassing Guildford to the north and the Solent to the south.
- Strong associations with the naturalist Gilbert White including the route of the famous ‘Zig Zag’ path at the Wakes, Selborne. The dramatic landscape has been a source of artistic and literary inspiration. The poet Edward Thomas lived in the area.

Physical Landscape

- 5C.2 This is the only section of exclusively east-facing scarp in East Hampshire, forming the edge of the Hampshire Downs, and is extremely well wooded throughout its length. The steep almost precipitous landform at the junction of the chalk and Upper Greensand, is formed by the erosion and undercutting of the chalk mass revealing bands of Upper, Middle and Lower chalk. The scarp is gradually moving westwards as erosion of the adjacent softer beds to the east undermine the chalk scarp.
- 5C.3 The East Hampshire Hangers are a major feature of this east facing scarp and are of international biodiversity value (notified as a SAC), particularly for the beech and lime dominated woodlands which have a very rich woodland ground flora.
- 5C.4 In addition to woodland, the scarp includes a large area of species-rich chalk grassland, most notably at Noar Hill and Selborne Common - these sites are of national importance and notified as SSSI. There are a number of abandoned chalk quarries on the scarp face, which reveal the exploitation of chalk in the past to produce lime for fertilising soils of the adjacent farmland. Some of these are hidden by woodland, for example the former quarries at Limekiln Copse, while others are highly visible on the scarp, for example Vineyard Hole above Frogmore.
- 5C.5 At the foot of the scarps where the slopes are less steep the land is often ploughed and arable fields have encroached up the slope in places. Soil creep is evident on the steepest slopes where the surface of the scarp is wrinkled into terraces - this is particularly evident on a sunny day when shadows highlight these terraces.

Perceptual/Experiential Landscape

- 5C.6 This section of scarp is accessible due to the good network of public rights of way, including the Hangers Way, which follow contours. However, it retains a remote and tranquil character due to the high incidence of semi-natural habitats and absence of built features. Land in National Trust ownership at Selborne Hanger provides further opportunities for countryside access.
- 5C.7 The climb through dense woodland builds a sense of anticipation for the views from the open summits, where there are panoramas stretching to Guildford and the south coast. This is an exhilarating exposed landscape contrasting with the secret, secluded character of the hanger woodland.

- 5C.8 The landscape has inspired many writers and painters. Gilbert White lived in Selborne, a village nestled at the foot of the chalk scarp. The landscape around him inspired him to write 'The Natural History of Selborne', published in 1789. White's home the Wakes (in character area 6A) includes a small areas of parkland as well as the famous 'ZigZag' path and is included on the English Heritage Register. William Cobbett, writing in 1830, found Selborne just as Gilbert White had described writing 'Nothing can surpass the beauty in these dells and hillocks and hangers, which last are so steep that it is impossible to ascend them except by means of a serpentine path'. The poet Edward Thomas, who lived in Steep, was also inspired by this landscape. Thomas' memorial stone is located on Shoulder of Mutton Hill.

Biodiversity

- 5C.9 The East Hampshire Hangers are a major biodiversity feature of this east facing scarp and are of international value (notified as a SAC), particularly for the beech and lime dominated woodlands which have a very rich woodland ground flora.
- 5C.10 The scarp also supports a large area of species-rich chalk grassland, most notably at Noar Hill and Selborne Common – these sites are of national importance and notified as SSSI.
- 5C.11 The almost unbroken tracts of hanger woodland interspersed with chalk grassland and scrub present along the scarp slopes contribute to the outstanding ecological importance of the landscape.

Historic Character

- 5C.12 The steep scarps have always been a marginal zone - even at the height of arable cultivation of the downland, during the Romano-British period, the scarps were too steep for ploughing and remained usable only as sheep pasture and woodland.
- 5C.13 The area is characterised by its steep slopes, and almost continuous cover of woodland, mostly pre-1800 date extending as a belt between Selborne to East Meon. Occasional gaps in the ancient woodland cover have been infilled by more recent woodland growth, indicating neglect during periods of agricultural depression, or occasional deliberate ornamental or economic planting.
- 5C.14 The main indication of human modification of the scarps comprises the numerous trackways, many of them sunken and terraced diagonally into the hillside, which traverse the slopes. These trackways were crucial elements in the sheep-corn husbandry regime and provided links between the open downland and the cultivated footslopes. There are also a number of small isolated chalk pits associated with the former agricultural lime-burning industry.

Key Historic Characteristics

- Survival of significant blocks of pre-1800 woodland providing evidence of medieval and early post-medieval woodland exploitation, e.g. coppicing and charcoal burning.
- Small isolated chalk pits providing evidence of the former agricultural lime-burning industry.

- Sunken terraced trackways forming an integral part of former agricultural system, linking downland pasture with scarpfoot arable.

Settlement Form and Built Character

- 5C.15 There is no settlement on the scarp as a result of the steep topography. Spring line villages such as Selborne occur at the foot of the scarp in the adjacent Greensand Terrace landscape (6A).

EVALUATION

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

- 5C.16 Due to the prominent position of the scarp within the landscape, the scar is highly sensitive to change. Key sensitivities include:
- Hanger woodland which is of international ecological significance and forms part of the East Hampshire Hangers SAC.
 - Small areas of species-rich chalk grassland at Noar Hill (which includes juniper scrub) and Selborne Common.
 - Ancient lanes and tracks on the scarp which are vulnerable to erosion.
 - The tranquility of the scarp, as a result of the presence of semi-natural habitats and absence of human influences.
 - Panoramic views from open summits – sense of isolation and exhilaration. Such views are especially vulnerable to changes in surrounding landscapes.
 - The subtle presence of rough sheep tracks and rights of way that zig zag across the open scarps, which are vulnerable to damage by intensive recreational use, notably off road vehicles.
 - Sense of tranquillity, remoteness and space that results from the overall low incidence of human activity and absence of development.
- 5C.17 The steep scarps are extremely prominent in views from adjacent landscapes making them very visually sensitive. Of particular sensitivity is the skyline of the scarp and distinctive landform features such as the open hill summits which are most often viewed in against an open sky.

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

- 5C.18 **The overall management objective should be to conserve the dramatic landform and open skyline, with extensive areas of biodiversity-rich hanger woodland, mixed with an irregular mosaic of chalk grassland.**

Landscape Management Considerations

- Support conservation and management for ancient beech, yew and lime woodlands which is of international ecological significance and forms part of the East Hampshire hangers SAC.

- Monitor and control presence of exotic species in ancient hanger woodland. Manage to ensure a diverse species and age structure by light thinning, clearance of some of the scrub, re-coppicing and replanting as necessary. This will also minimise risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds.
- Maintain a balance between wooded and open areas.
- Protect and continue to manage (graze) the existing chalk grassland, for example at Noar Hill and Selborne Common, and support the continued creation of chalk grassland between the wooded areas. Conserve, and extend, sites supporting juniper scrub e.g. at Noar Hill.
- Conserve the tranquility of the scarp.
- Protect the character of the narrow lanes that ascend the chalk scarp. Manage traffic and recreational use.
- Manage recreational use, particularly intensive uses, to respect the special character of the scarp and key features of chalk grassland, ancient trackways, sense of remoteness and tranquillity.

Development Considerations

- Conserve the undeveloped character of the scarp.
- Maintain the open/wooded skyline – avoid siting of buildings, telecommunication masts, power lines and wind turbines on the sensitive skyline and maintain the backdrop of open skyline.
- Consider the impact of any change (development) in views from the scarp.