

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE:

Greensand Hangers

Unique to East Hampshire



SIMILAR AND ASSOCIATED TYPES HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT AND BOROUGH LEVEL ASSESSMENTS

Basingstoke:	n/a
East Hampshire	Greensand Terrace (includes whole of escarpment at District level)
Eastleigh	n/a
Fareham	n/a
Gosport	n/a
Hart	n/a
Havant	n/a
New Forest	n/a
Rushmoor	n/a
Test Valley	n/a
Winchester	n/a

SIMILAR AND ASSOCIATED TYPES IN NEIGHBOURING AUTHORITY ASSESSMENTS

Dorset	n/a
West Berkshire	n/a
West Sussex	n/a
Wiltshire	n/a

KEY IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS AND BOUNDARY DEFINITIONS

- The scarp face of the Upper Greensand escarpment, below the taller Chalk Scarp in East Hampshire and more broken and shorter face than the latter.
- Deeply sunken lanes exposing blocky creamy coloured malmstone – and revealing gnarled tree roots.
- Few buildings- but very distinctive malmstone and redbrick detailings and settlement confined to the crests of the hangers.
- Distinctive ancient and semi natural hanger woodland clings to the steep slope and thin soils – and dominates the views from the adjoining clay lowlands.
- Undisturbed landscape and generally uncultivated – with little archaeology.
- Few fields although small fields do occur in less steep parts.
- The twisting sinuous scarp face creates a series of headlands along the length of the Hangers increasing the perception of woodland cover.
- Occasional elevated views through gaps in woodland across to the Western Weald give a great sense of prospect.

PHYSICAL

GEOLOGY, LANDFORM, ELEVATION:

Bedrock and Superficial Geology: Formed from Upper Greensand, a calcareous sandstone and siltstone. Historically an important building stone; know as malmstone.

Landform and Elevation: Scarp face rising from the gault clay vale to the east, varying in steepness, but in general less steep than the chalk scarp to the west. Ranging in height from 20 to 40metres from the foot to the top of the scarp, making them smaller than the Chalk Scarp landscape type.

SOILS TYPES:

Typical soil type pattern:. Soils are very thin, well drained loamy, shallow and stony – type 571i.

FUNCTIONS:

Hydrological function:

Food and Biomass: Could only support small scale operations in line with maintaining biodiversity of the ancient woodlands.

Biodiversity potential:. Supports predominantly ancient woodland, little of which is replanted.

LANDCOVER AND LAND USE PATTERN:

Dominated by the extent of ancient Hanger woodlands that cling to the steepest slopes. Historical mining as building stone as it outcrops close to the surface, now, no mining takes place of this resource in this area.

HYDROLOGY:

Small streams cut through these steep woodlands.

EXPERIENTIAL

ACCESS AND TRANSPORT ROUTES:

Deeply sunken lanes which expose the geology and gnarled tree roots. Although there is little open access or registered common land, the are is well served by public rights of way including the long distance Hangers Way.

TRANQUILLITY:

There is a very strong sense of rural tranquillity which results from the absence of overt human impact and very few houses. Noise from the A3 is a major detraction in this otherwise tranquil landscape.

BIODIVERSITY

The Greensands Hangers landscape character type is a wooded agricultural landscape comprising a habitat mosaic of deciduous woodland and woodland plantations, both mixed and coniferous, with improved grassland and arable land.

Plantation woodlands can include sweet chestnut plantations, a distinctive habitat associated with this landscape and often located on the site of former heathlands or ancient woodlands, thus supporting small rides and glades where species can have heath association. Deciduous woodland is a key feature of the Greensand Hangers landscape character type and the landscape appears probably more wooded than it is due to the topography of the woodlands:

clinging to steep slopes. Woodland is mainly ancient and semi-natural consisting predominantly of beech woodland with areas of yew, wych elm and ash woods.

Ash woodland has a more open canopy than beech woodland enabling a significant understorey, with holly, and rich ground flora, including bird's nest orchids and green hellebore, to generate. Ash and Yew often generate in open patches of the beech woods, after the loss of beech trees, providing variation. Small patches of wet woodland also exist. Deciduous woodland is fragmented throughout the character type, although there is a significant area of interlinked woodland, including Hartley Wood, Coombe Wood and Wick Wood.

The habitat mosaic is most diverse in the north of the Greensand Hangers landscape character type, with lowland acid grassland and heath mosaics, unimproved neutral grasslands, orchards which can be of high conservation value, marshy grasslands and tall herbs, along with scrub and swamp vegetation.

The East Hampshire Hangers BOA exists within this landscape character type and identifies opportunities for lowland calcareous grassland, lowland mixed deciduous woodland and lowland meadow habitat creation and enhancement.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

ARCHAEOLOGY

The lack of monumental sites despite the topographic prominence of the location may reflect a more wooded nature where even prominently located sites would be hidden by the wooded landscape and more prominent chalk scarp backing the greensand. There is a prominent hill fort at Worldham located because of the topographic prominence and defensive advantage that the land form offers. Other than this Iron Age site there is no settlement.

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The steep slopes has protected this landscape from human exploitation. Almost exclusively classified as pre 1810 hangers, HLT 4.6 are linear woodlands with irregular boundaries and often linked with adjoining assart fieldsapes. There is little post 1810 hanger woodland

HISTORIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Settlement types by form: Very little development within this type, some adjoining on the flatter terrace landscape.

Building materials and type;

Extensive use of malmstone where there are houses – often of 18th century and

VISIBILITY

Prominency: Locally very prominent from lower adjoining areas and from further afield – such as the South Downs ridge. They are an iconic feature of the East Hampshire landscape together with the hangers associated with the chalk scarp.

Enclosure: The sheer extent of mature woodland gives a strong feeling of enclosure and very limited intervisibility with adjoining landscapes. Although the occasional glimpsed views through the woodland canopy give a great sense of prospect and elevation. Often the road user is cocooned in tunnel like sunken lanes, which even in the height of summer are dark.

Public perceptions: