

Kent County Council

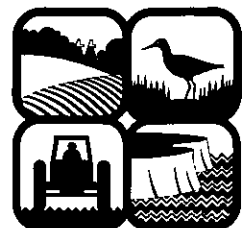
KENT COUNTRYSIDE LOCAL PLAN

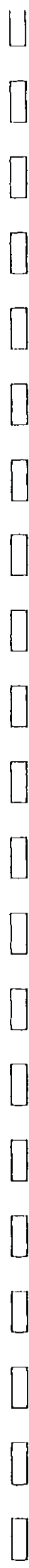
**A subject plan for agriculture,
landscape, nature conservation,
the undeveloped coast and the
Metropolitan Green Belt outer
boundary.**

WRITTEN STATEMENT

**The Kent Countryside Local Plan was
adopted by Kent County Council
on 19th May 1983.**

**W.H. DEAKIN,
County Planning Officer,
Springfield,
Maidstone,
Kent.**





Contents

Paragraph number		Page No.
1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	THE KENT STRUCTURE PLAN	3
3.	DEFINITION OF AREAS OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION	6
3.5	Areas of Special Significance for Agriculture (ASSAs)	7
3.10	Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)	8
3.12	Areas of High Nature Conservation Value (AHNCVs)	9
3.19	Undeveloped Coast	11
4.	INTERPRETATION OF COUNTRYSIDE AND COASTAL CONSERVATION POLICIES	12
4.4	General analysis	12
4.7	Area by area analysis	13
4.11	North Downs SLA and AHNCV	14
4.15	North West Kent Market Garden Belt ASSA	16
4.18	Shorne/Meopham area	16
4.21	North Kent Horticultural Belt ASSA	17
4.23	Stockbury/Chilham area	17
4.25	Goodnestone/Nonington area	18
4.27	North east of Ashford ASSA	18
4.29	Greensand Ridge SLA	18
4.31	Ightham to Pluckley ASSA	19
4.34	South of Ightham	20
4.36	Romney Marsh ASSA	20
4.40	High Weald SLA	21

Paragraph number		Page No.
4.44	Shirley Moor/Rother Levels	22
4.46	Old Romney Shoreline SLA	22
4.49	North East Romney Marsh	23
4.51	North East Kent ASSA	23
4.53	Hoo Peninsula ASSA	24
4.56	Blean Woods SLA	25
4.59	North Kent Marshes SLA and AHNCV	26
4.63	Sandwich Bay/Pegwell Bay SLA and AHNCV	27
4.66	Dungeness SLA & AHNCV	27
4.69	Other Areas	28
4.70	Low Weald	28
4.72	Sheppey Hills	29
4.74	Lower Stour Valley	29
5.	THE METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT: DELINEATION OF OUTER BOUNDARY	31
6.	FINANCE, MONITORING & REVIEW	32
ILLUSTRATIONS		
Fig. 1	Structure Plan supplementary diagram for the countryside and coast	5/6
Fig. 2	Key to area statements	12/13
APPENDICES		
1	Structure Plan objectives and policies for countryside conservation and recreation, the Green Belt and rural settlement	(i)
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and Local Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest • Reserves and other sites managed by the Kent Trust for Nature Conservation (KTNC) • Reserves managed by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) 	(vii) (xvii) (xxi)
GLOSSARY	Abbreviations used in the text	(xxii)

Policies and Proposals

		Page No.
KCP 1:	Application of Policy CC 3 to ASSAs	8
KCP 2:	Application of Policy CC 7 to SLAs	9
KCP 3:	Protection of the Blean Woods' wildlife interest	10
KCP 4:	Application of Policy CC 9 to AHNCVs	11
KCP 5:	Application of Policy CC 10 to the Undeveloped Coast	11
KCP 6:	Application of Policy CC 3 and Policy CC 7 to areas of overlap between ASSAs and SLAs	13
KCP 7:	Definition of the outer boundary of the MGB	31

1.4 A number of other issues are identified and discussed in the Report of Survey and Issues but are not taken forward here because these too lie outside the scope of this Plan.

*Relationship
with other
local plans*

1.5 There are two types of local plans currently being prepared in Kent - district plans and subject plans. District plans relate to either a part of the whole of a District Council area and treat the planning issues in that area in a comprehensive manner. Subject plans provide detailed treatment of a particular description of development or land use. District plans may not overlap each other but may overlap with subject plans. Each type of local plan is of equal standing to any other. This Plan deals with particular subjects throughout Kent and it will therefore overlap both with the district plans and other subject plans such as the Stour Valley Countryside Plan where they occur. The extent of local plans currently approved or in preparation which may affect this Plan's proposals is shown on the Proposals Map.

1.6 It is important that these other local plans have regard to the areas of special significance for countryside conservation defined in this Plan and to the priorities between various countryside interests set out in Chapter 4 below. It is open to local plans in preparation to redefine the areas of special significance for countryside conservation both in terms of other planning matters and also at a larger scale than employed here. It is anticipated that such changes will be minor. In addition such plans can identify features of particular local importance for landscape or wildlife and, if the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food are able to assist, can identify the pattern of agricultural land quality at a more detailed scale.

1.7 In the case of contradiction between local plans, the most recently adopted or approved plan prevails. Where local plans have been prepared in advance of this Plan care has been taken to ensure that their proposals are reflected in this Plan.

1.8 It is important that when other local plans seek to redefine boundaries for areas shown on this Plan's Proposals Map, or to otherwise define or redefine the priority relationship between countryside interests, expert advice is sought from the MAFF as regards agriculture and from the Nature Conservancy Council as regards nature conservation; these bodies may also wish to carry out new survey work to ensure that their interests are properly reflected at the scale at which the plan's proposals are set out.

*Relationship with
Kent Development
Plan (1967
Revision)*

1.9 The policies and Proposals Map in this Plan along with the relevant approved Structure Plan policies replace entirely those policies in the Kent Development Plan (1967 Revision) concerned with agriculture, landscape, nature conservation, and coastal preservation, as well as the coastal preservation areas and Areas of Great Landscape Value defined on the County Map.

2 The Kent Structure Plan

2.1 The Kent Structure Plan was approved by the Secretary of State in April 1980. It is a broad, strategic plan dealing with a wide range of planning matters. It sets out a strategy for Kent which in essence has two themes: The principal theme is the encouragement of growth of economic activity and employment in the interests of wealth creation and improving inadequate local employment opportunities; this is complemented by a conservation theme which in the countryside seeks to promote a healthy rural economy while preserving it from dispersed urban development. This embraces the safeguarding of agriculture as a major industry in Kent and the minimising of the loss to development of agricultural land. The strategic aim is also to conserve and enhance the County's scenic and scientific resources including its broadleaf trees and woodlands and its undeveloped coast (see Appendix 1).

Countryside conservation policies

2.2 Ten countryside conservation policies are set out in pursuit of these objectives (CC 1 to CC 10) and in effect are reinforced by various other Structure Plan policies, for example, many of those for housing, employment and commerce, built environment, the Green Belt and derelict land. Three of the countryside conservation policies are concerned with identifying areas of the County which are particularly important from the standpoints of either agriculture, landscape or nature conservation while another is similarly concerned with lengths of undeveloped coast:

CC 3: Seven areas of Special Significance for Agriculture are defined:

North West Kent Market Garden Belt
Hoo Peninsula
North Kent Horticultural Belt
North East Kent
Ightham to Pluckley
North East of Ashford
Romney Marsh

The Local Planning Authorities will give long term protection to these areas and will give priority to the needs of agriculture over other planning considerations.

CC 7: Special Landscape Areas are defined as follows:

North Downs: including the scarp and crest
Greensand Ridge: from Westerham to Ightham
: South of Maidstone
High Weald
Old Romney Shoreline
North Kent Marshes
Sandwich Bay/Pegwell Bay
Dungeness, and
Blean Woods

The Local Planning Authorities will give long term protection to these areas, which incorporate the Kent Downs and Proposed High Weald AONBs, and will normally give priority to their landscape over other planning considerations.

CC 9: In the following Areas of High Nature Conservation Value, the policy is not to permit development harmful to the maintenance of scarce and potentially vulnerable wildlife habitats:

North Kent Marshes
North Downs Scarp and Crest
Dungeness
Sandwich Bay/Pegwell Bay

CC 10: Development, particularly urban or industrial development, will not be permitted if it materially detracts from the unspoilt scenic quality or scientific value of the undeveloped coastline, whether such development is on the coast or in the adjoining countryside.

These areas of countryside and lengths of coastline are illustrated diagrammatically in the Structure Plan's countryside and coast supplementary diagram. (See overleaf).

2.3 It is important to note that the Structure Plan affords protection to countryside outside the various special policy areas, as well as to that within them. Policies CC 1 and 2 safeguard all productive or potentially productive farmland, particularly that graded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) as Grade 1, 2 and 3A. Policy CC 5 provides general protection against the loss of tree and woodland cover, and promotes tree planting across the whole County although with preference to areas which have suffered most from Dutch Elm disease. Policy CC 6 conserves areas or features of countryside throughout the County where they are scenically and/or historically important. Policy CC 8 protects all Nature Reserves or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), (see Appendix 2), whether or not they fall within an AHNCV. In the 1981 Alteration to the Structure Plan it is proposed to include a policy to protect the scientific interest of sites other than Nature Reserves and SSSIs (CC 10 - see Appendix 1).

*Metropolitan
Green Belt*

2.4 The Structure Plan includes two policies for the Green Belt:

MGB 1: The Metropolitan Green Belt will generally extend for a depth of about 15 miles from the edge of the built-up area of Greater London, that is, to the east of Gravesend, to the west of Rochester, to the west of West Malling, and to the east of Watlingbury and Nettlestead, but, exceptionally, extending to the west of Paddock Wood and east of Tunbridge Wells.

MGB 2: Within the Green Belt, there will be a strong presumption against permitting new development outside the presently defined extent of urban areas and the present built-up extent of any village, unless it conforms with the open recreation functions of the Green Belt or is directly related to agriculture or other uses appropriate to a rural area. Any development approved within the Metropolitan Green Belt will be required to be sited and designed so as to maintain the open character of the area.

The outer extent of the Green Belt is indicated generally in the Structure Plan key diagram.

2.5 Taken together the Structure Plan policies for countryside conservation, effectively reinforced by various other policies, imply a complex pattern of priorities in the countryside across the County both for resistance to development pressures and for fostering particular countryside interests. It is a function of this Plan to make that pattern of priorities explicit and area specific.

Issues:

*.detailed
definition of
special
policy areas*

*.interpretation
of policies*

2.6 Two issues in particular are raised by the Structure Plan's countryside conservation policies, especially CC 3, 7, 9 and 10, which apply selectively rather than on a countywide basis and which are particularly restrictive towards development in general. The first issue is the definition of the areas of countryside and lengths of coastline to which these policies are to be applied, in sufficient detail for development control and other planning purposes; this is taken up in Chapter 3 below. Similarly, Policy MGB 1 gives a general description of the outer extent of the Green Belt but raises the issue of its detailed definition; this is taken up in Chapter 5 below. The second issue is the priorities which are to be assigned to particular policies in particular locations: in particular the resolution of the potential conflict between two policies applying to areas of overlap between Policies CC 3, 7, 9 and 10; and more generally the relationship between all the countryside policies as they apply in different parts of the County. This issue is taken up in Chapter 4 below, which is intended to replace Part 2 of Chapter 10, Countryside Zones, in the Approved Structure Plan. It is proposed to delete Chapter 10 of the First Alteration stage of the Structure Plan. Policies and proposals are set out in this Plan only in relation to the first of these issues while general guidance is provided as to the second.

3 Definition of areas of special significance for countryside conservation

3.1 It is essential that the policy areas for countryside conservation which are broadly illustrated on the Structure Plan's countryside and coast supplementary diagram are defined in detail. The primary reason for doing so is to facilitate the operation of development control by local planning authorities but it will also permit interested parties (e.g. developers, the farming community, statutory undertakers and local interest groups) to see more readily where there are likely to be particularly stringent constraints on development and where preference is likely to be given to or sought for one countryside interest as opposed to another.

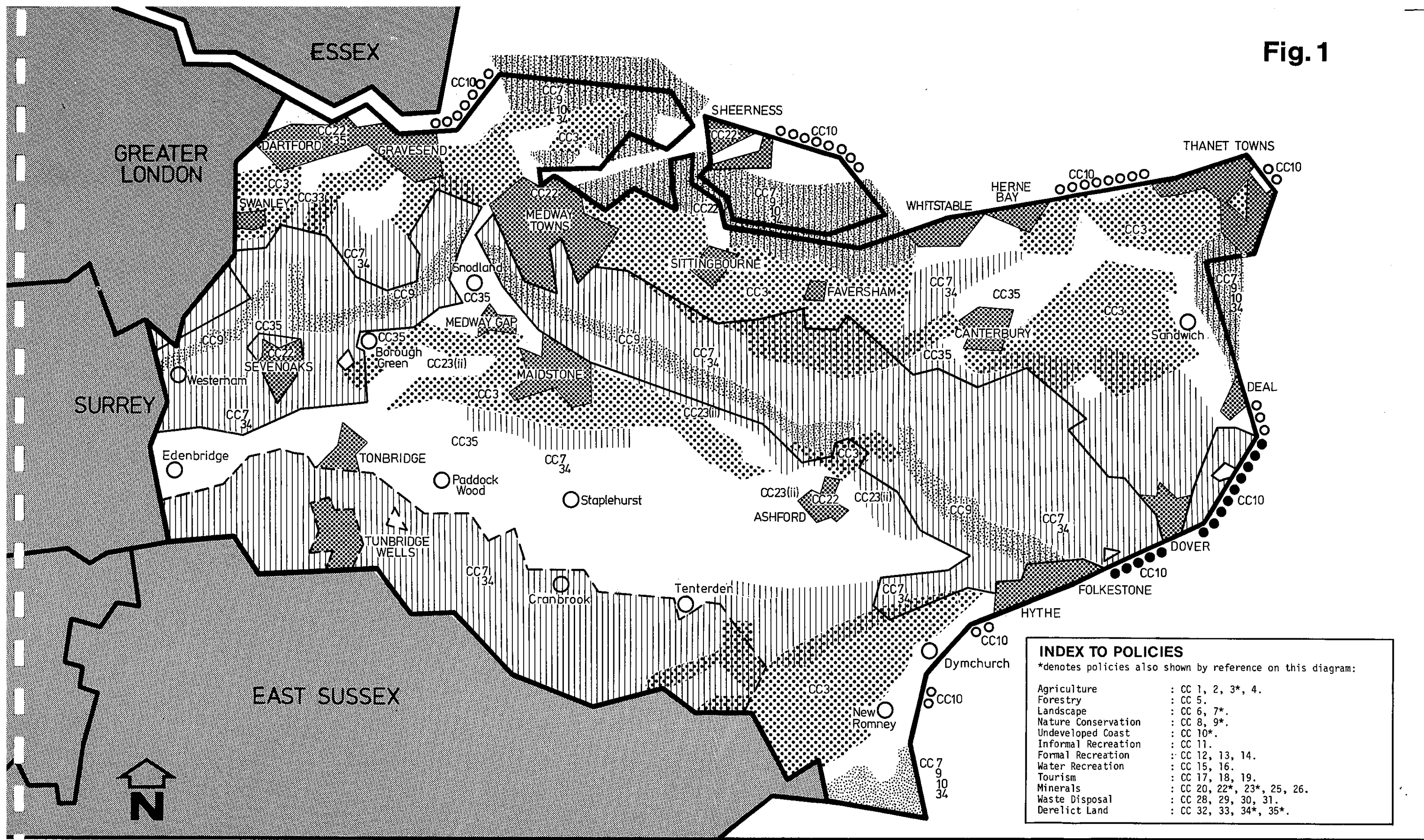
Proposals Map

3.2 The 1:50,000 scale (approximately 1½ inches to 1 mile) O.S. base has been employed for the purposes of defining the policy areas. The justification for adopting this scale is threefold: there is an adequate level of information on the base map to permit the preparation of boundaries which are sufficiently detailed for development control purposes; the scale relates closely to that of the data-base for the ASSAs and AHNCVs; and the overall size of the map for the whole of Kent and the number of its component sheets remain physically manageable. Thus it provides the best balance between detailed definition and overall comprehensibility.

3.3 The boundaries of the various policy areas on the Proposals Map normally follow only features which appear on the O.S. base, which are readily identifiable on the ground and which are unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. Where district plan work has already defined detailed boundaries for the special policy areas at a larger scale, the Proposals Map for this subject plan reflects those boundaries.

3.4 Where there is developed land or land committed to development within the policy areas, to which the relevant countryside conservation policy will clearly not apply, in general no attempt has been made to show the land as excluded from the policy area. This is due to the practical difficulties which would be involved; the only exceptions which have been made involve very extensive areas such as large towns or villages and airfields at the periphery. Where in the future uses so excluded, such as airfields, cease that use the potential for inclusion in the adjacent countryside conservation area will need to be carefully assessed and any alternative use considered in that light. Clearly, the relevant Structure Plan Policies CC 3, 7 or 9 will not normally apply within the confines of existing or committed development. However, there may be exceptions where development proposals within such areas which in other respects would be acceptable within the terms of Structure Plan policies, would nonetheless be likely to materially affect countryside

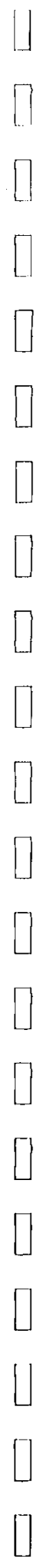
Fig. 1



INDEX TO POLICIES	
*denotes policies also shown by reference on this diagram:	
Agriculture	: CC 1, 2, 3*, 4.
Forestry	: CC 5.
Landscape	: CC 6, 7*.
Nature Conservation	: CC 8, 9*.
Undeveloped Coast	: CC 10*.
Informal Recreation	: CC 11.
Formal Recreation	: CC 12, 13, 14.
Water Recreation	: CC 15, 16.
Tourism	: CC 17, 18, 19.
Minerals	: CC 20, 22*, 23*, 25, 26.
Waste Disposal	: CC 28, 29, 30, 31.
Derelict Land	: CC 32, 33, 34*, 35*.

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Areas of Special Significance for Agriculture | | Areas of High Nature Conservation Value | |
| Special Landscape Areas | | Heritage Coast | |
| Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty | | Other undeveloped coast | |
| Proposed High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty | | Small rural towns | |
| | | Built up areas | |

KENT STRUCTURE PLAN
Countryside & Coast
Supplementary Diagram
July 1977
 As approved by Secretary of State
 April 1980



interests in surrounding special areas. In such circumstances the degree of conflict with the relevant countryside policy will be a material factor to be taken into account. In the same way development proposals outside the special policy areas might have a detrimental impact on the adjacent policy area. Such situations might arise where, for example, there would be likely to be increased recreational pressures which would materially affect ASSAs or AHNCVs, or where development such as mineral workings or other industry would affect AHNCVs in introducing pollution of water or by altering the water-table. In such circumstances the proximity of the special policy area and the impact on it would be a material consideration.

Areas of Special Significance for Agriculture (ASSAs)

3.5 The seven ASSAs defined by Policy CC 3 comprise the most extensive tracts of the very best farmland (i.e. Grades 1 & 2) in Kent, as indicated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's (MAFF) Agricultural Land Classification map of 1970. This is at 1 inch to 1 mile scale and divides farmland into five grades, Grades 1 and 2 being land of exceptional quality while Grade 3 is valuable agricultural land of considerable significance to agriculture; Grade 4 is land of limited potential and Grade 5 has little significance for agriculture. The classification deliberately discounts relatively short-term factors such as farm structure (although this tends to reflect land quality) and is based purely on permanent factors such as climate, relief and soil.

3.6 The ROS includes a map showing the distribution of Grades 1 & 2 land in Kent, a fuller explanation of MAFF's Agricultural Land Classification, and a description of the characteristics of each ASSA.

Basis for defining ASSAs

3.7 A detailed boundary has been prepared for each ASSA by relating the pattern of agricultural land quality shown on MAFF's maps to suitable features on the O.S. base in order to reflect the broad pattern of blocks of high quality land. Lower quality land has been excluded where this can reasonably be done but inevitably small pockets of such land have had to be included in some areas if the concept of large blocks of land is to be maintained. No attempt has been made to include small, outlying, or tenuously linked areas of high grade land as this would invariably necessitate creating outliers to the ASSAs and/or including significant areas of lower quality land, thus detracting from the strategic concept of the policy.

3.8 In three particular locations, between British Legion Village and the western edge of Maidstone, between East and West Malling, and at Ridlands Farm, Canterbury special considerations apply to the extent of the ASSA as shown in this Plan. Some changes to the boundary may be required if, through the Local Plan process, some development in these areas is proved to be necessary.

*Protection of
farmland
outside ASSAs*

3.9 A great deal of farmland of all grades and a significant amount of the higher grades lies outside the ASSAs, and this is given strong protection against loss to non-agricultural development through Policies CC 1 and 2. There is throughout the County a general objective to minimise the loss of all productive or potentially productive agricultural land of all grades. This sees expression in CC 1 which only allows the loss of such land in overriding circumstances. In the case of all land of Grades 1 and 2 and the better Grade 3 land, there is a presumption against development other than for agriculture (CC 2). These policies apply to all agricultural land so graded, whether within an ASSA or not, and provide the basis for the control of development on agricultural land. The concept embodied in CC 3 is significantly different to this overall approach to agricultural land. It is a strategic definition of areas where conditions are particularly suitable for the promotion of agricultural productivity and where long term protection and priority to the needs of agriculture will be given.

KCP 1

STRUCTURE PLAN POLICY CC 3 WHICH DEFINES SEVEN AREAS OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR AGRICULTURE WILL BE APPLIED TO THE AREAS DELINEATED IN THIS PLAN. THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES WILL GIVE LONG TERM PROTECTION TO THESE AREAS AND WILL GIVE PRIORITY TO THE NEEDS OF AGRICULTURE OVER OTHER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS.

Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)

3.10 The eight SLAs defined by Structure Plan Policy CC 7 comprise those areas of the County identified as having particularly attractive and distinctive landscape quality. They include the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the proposed High Weald AONB and the coastline between Deal and Folkestone defined as Heritage Coast. AONB and Heritage Coast definitions are both indications of the national importance of the landscape. In a number of locations the SLAs overlap with ASSAs and this raises issues which are discussed in Chapter 4 below; there are also several cases where SLAs overlap or are co-extensive with Areas of High Nature Conservation Value (AHNCVs) but this does not raise any significant issues because landscape and nature conservation interests are unlikely to be in conflict.

*Basis for
defining SLAs*

3.11 In order to arrive at a detailed boundary for each SLA detailed surveys were conducted, analysing landscape quality as objectively as possible and noting the importance of particular pieces of countryside as foreground to more striking scenery. To a great extent a numerical analysis technique has been employed, but this is not suited to landscapes which lack variety and in these cases a more conventional approach has been adopted. The ROS provides a more detailed explanation of where each of these approaches was adopted and how they operate. It also includes a map showing the output from the numerical analysis, superimposed on AONB and AGLV boundaries. As might be expected the surveys occasionally

*Protection of
landscape
outside SLAs*

identified outlying pockets of high quality landscape. The extent to which such features are incorporated within SLAs is a function of whether their intrinsic character is the same as that of the SLA in question as well as whether they can be included without also necessitating the inclusion of a substantial area of lower quality landscape. Godinton Park, west of Ashford, is an example of where an attractive landscape feature has not been included in the SLA partly for the first of the reasons. In such cases Policy CC 6 provides adequate protection. Smaller areas of local landscape importance may also merit protection, such as green wedges in particular and at the urban/rural fringe in general. These areas offer a contrast to the urban environment and are readily accessible to the urban population, but are often subject to acute pressures for development which contribute to the deterioration of the landscape. With minor exceptions all land which is within an AONB, and therefore recognised to have landscape of national significance, is included within one of other SLA. However the inclusion of land formerly within the AGLV has not been automatic. It has only been included where it was justified in terms of the criteria used in this Plan.

KCP 2

STRUCTURE PLAN POLICY CC 7 WHICH DEFINES EIGHT SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS WILL BE APPLIED TO THE AREAS DELINEATED IN THIS PLAN. THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES WILL GIVE LONG TERM PROTECTION TO THESE AREAS, WHICH INCORPORATE THE KENT DOWNS AND PROPOSED HIGH WEALD AONBs, AND WILL NORMALLY GIVE PRIORITY TO THEIR LANDSCAPE OVER OTHER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS.

Areas of High Nature Conservation Value (AHNCVs)

3.12 The four AHNCVs defined by Structure Plan Policy CC 9 comprise extensive tracts of those habitat types or physiological features represented in Kent which are the most rare and the most sensitive to change. Each of the areas defined is important in a national or an international context, is based upon a single habitat type/feature or a range of related types and has as its core a number of sites which are declared as nature reserves or notified as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Many other sites of importance for nature conservation lie outside the four AHNCVs. A large number of these are SSSIs and so are protected by Structure Plan Policy CC 8 (see Appendices 1 and 2); many others are of more local interest and changes to the Structure Plan in the proposed 1981 Alterations will, if approved, protect them.

3.13 The ROS includes a map identifying the location and extent of Kent's National and Local Nature Reserves and the location and extent of each SSSI and a description of the characteristics of and pressures on each AHNCV. Appendix 2 sets out a description of the grading of SSSIs set out in the publication 'A Nature Conservation Review' (NCR) and identifies the interest of each Nature Reserve and SSSI and any grading in the NCR.

*New/extended
AHNCVs:*

3.14 Subsequent to the submission of the Structure Plan, research has shown that certain further areas of the County may warrant AHNCV status: Shorne and Higham Marshes (east of Gravesend), Hacklinge Marshes (south of Sandwich) and the Blean Woods are all the subject of new and/or extended SSSI notifications further to the NCC's recent review of SSSIs in Kent (see Appendix 2) and have all been identified as of strategic importance for nature conservation.

*North Kent
Marshes*

3.15 Shorne and Higham Marshes are an important extension of the existing marsh habitat and the Cliffe Pools are open water areas attracting extensive populations of wildfowl and waders which contribute to the interest of the Marshes and have a directly supportive function in relation to the Marshes as a whole. It is appropriate therefore to extend the North Kent Marshes AHNCV over this area beyond that shown in general terms in the Structure Plan, notwithstanding that part of the area near Cliffe has planning permission for an oil refinery, which has yet to be implemented.

Sandwich Bay

3.16 The scientific interest of the Hacklinge Marshes area is closely related to that of parts of the Sandwich Bay AHNCV, to which it lies immediately adjacent. It is considered sufficiently important in a supportive role to warrant extending the notation shown diagrammatically in the Structure Plan over this area.

Blean Woods

3.17 The case for defining the Blean Woods as an AHNCV rests on a growing awareness of the wildlife significance of these essentially deciduous woodlands. In particular the national importance of this woodland complex has been recently highlighted because of the presence of the heath fritillary butterfly, which is now considered the British butterfly most threatened with extinction. It only occurs in Blean Woods and a few locations in Devon and Cornwall and its presence in Blean Woods is not limited to nor necessarily always within the areas notified as SSSIs. In the context of alterations to the Structure Plan the County Council are proposing an alteration to Policy CC 9 so as to define the Blean Woods as an Area of High Nature Conservation Value. The following policy is intended to protect the woodland's wildlife interest pending this definition.

KCP 3

DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD BE HARMFUL TO THE MAINTENANCE OF THE WILDLIFE INTEREST OF THE BLEAN WOODS, AS DEFINED IN THIS PLAN, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

*Basis for
defining AHNCVs*

3.18 The extent of each AHNCV has been defined on the basis of habitat type, as indicated principally by the dominant vegetation and or land-form which reflects each AHNCV's particular interest. On a broader basis the same approach was adopted during the preparation of the Structure Plan to select the AHNCVs. Each of these Areas has as its core one or more nature reserves or SSSIs but also includes the countryside surrounding or linking these sites, where this comprises relevant habitats, in order to provide a buffer against off-site development pressures and to conserve a more extensive area of countryside important for its wildlife interest.

KCP 4

STRUCTURE PLAN POLICY CC 9 WHICH DEFINES FOUR AREAS OF HIGH NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE WILL BE APPLIED TO THE AREAS DELINEATED IN THIS PLAN. WITHIN THESE AREAS DEVELOPMENT HARMFUL TO THE MAINTENANCE OF SCARCE AND POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE WILDLIFE HABITATS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

Undeveloped Coast

3.19 The Structure Plan policy for the undeveloped coast is intended to give protection to both the unspoiled appearance and the scientific value of the coastline. It is reinforced by Policies CC 3, 7, 8 and 9 respectively where ASSAs, SLAs, nature reserves/SSSIs or AHNCVs adjoin or embrace the coastline and by Policies CC 5 and 6 where there are important tree features or other landscape features at the coast. Certain parts of the coastline (including most of the cliffs around Thanet) exhibit considerable scientific interest but cannot be described as 'undeveloped' from a visual standpoint; in these cases the Undeveloped Coast notation does not apply and reliance has to be placed on Policies CC 6 and CC 8.

3.20 The ROS suggests that consideration be given to altering the Structure Plan to include a policy dealing with non-statutory sites of importance for nature conservation; where these would apply at the coast they might also support coastal conservation objectives. The ROS also identifies the principal lengths of undeveloped coast around Kent including their character and their relationship with AONBs, Heritage Coast, SLAs, AHNCVs, nature reserves and SSSIs, and discusses development pressures affecting the coast.

*Basis for
defining
Undeveloped
Coast*

3.21 The Undeveloped Coast notation is normally co-extensive with SLAs where these affect the coast, and includes the White Cliffs of Dover Heritage Coast. The extent of the notation reflects the degree to which the coastline and the adjoining countryside has an open, unintruded and unintensively managed character. However, the Proposals Map makes it clear that Policy CC 10 applies in certain areas where there is isolated development at the coast, for example the hoverport and residential development at Pegwell and Sandwich Bays respectively, and where there are significant breaks in coastal development, for example at Swalecliffe and between Hythe and Littlestone.

KCP 5

STRUCTURE PLAN POLICY CC 10 WHICH RELATES TO THE UNDEVELOPED COAST WILL BE APPLIED TO THE AREAS DELINEATED IN THIS PLAN. AT THESE AREAS DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY URBAN OR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED IF IT MATERIALLY DETRACTS FROM THE UNSPOILT SCENIC QUALITY OR SCIENTIFIC VALUE OF THE UNDEVELOPED COASTLINE, WHETHER SUCH DEVELOPMENT IS ON THE COAST OR IN THE ADJOINING COUNTRYSIDE.

3.22 The extent of the coastal hinterland within which development will come within the ambit of Policy CC 10 will vary and is not defined in this Plan. Further discussion of this aspect of implementation is dealt with in Chapter 4.

4 Interpretation of countryside and coastal conservation policies

4.1 The Structure Plan policies for countryside conservation imply a varied pattern of priorities between agriculture, forestry, landscape, nature conservation and coastal conservation within the County. A prime function of this subject plan is to make that pattern explicit in order to assist the local planning authorities in applying the various policies. This is accomplished in this Plan in two main ways - by defining areas of special significance for countryside conservation on an O.S. base map, and by describing the countryside conservation issues in those areas. This chapter is concerned with the latter element. It does not contain specific policies or proposals but provides general guidance for use in making planning decisions.

4.2 Firstly, the interrelationship of the countryside policies is discussed in general terms in order to resolve the issues which this raises at a countywide scale regarding the implications of Policy CC 3 for landscape and nature conservation interests and the application of Policy CC 10, regarding coastal conservation.

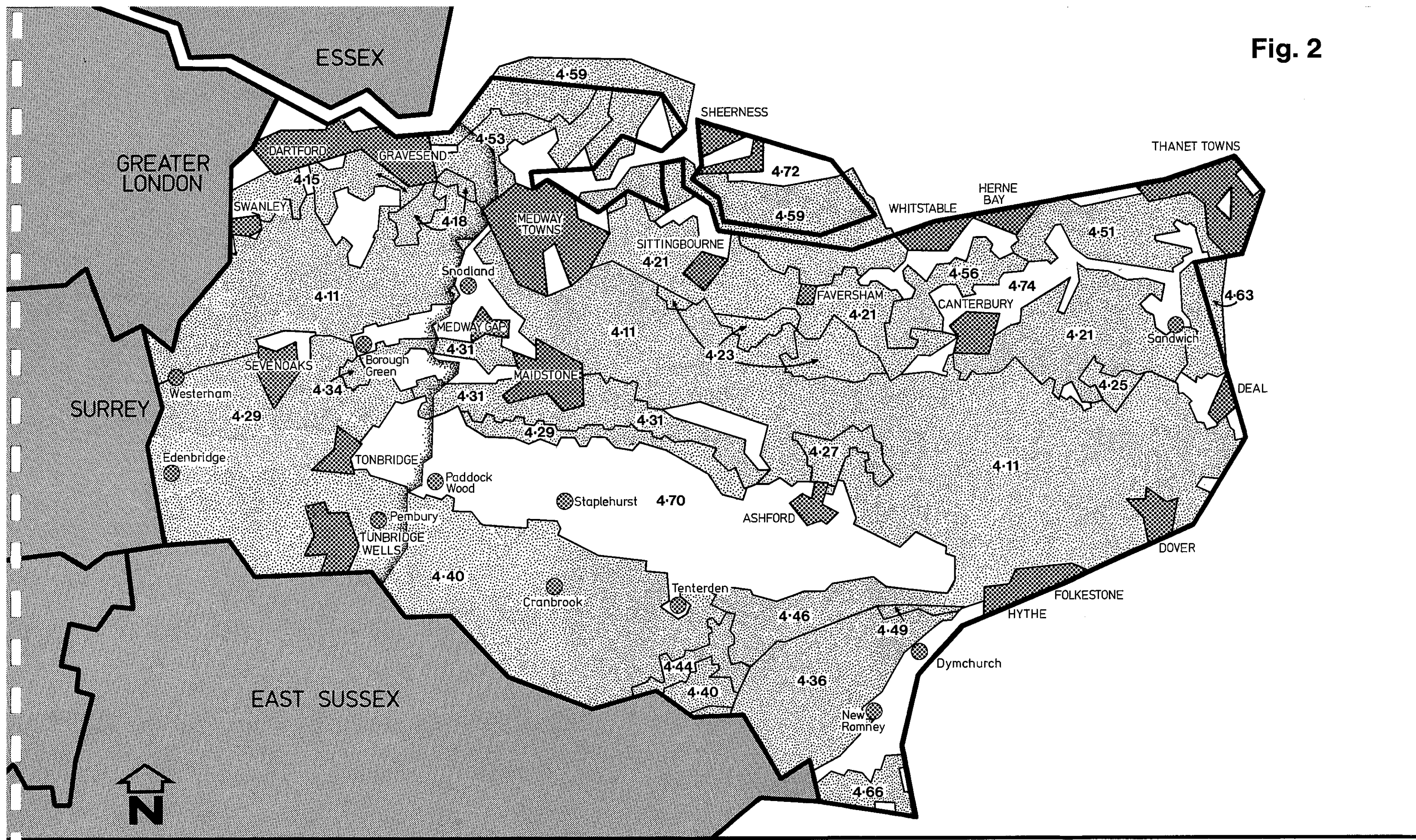
4.3 Secondly, the implications of these general proposals are set out for particular areas of countryside. This area-by-area analysis concentrates on the special policy areas which are defined on the Proposals Map and includes reference to non-countryside Structure Plan policies or strategies where it is important to define their relationship with the countryside conservation policies.

General Analysis

4.4 In interpreting the special policy areas shown in this Plan it is, as a general rule, important to recognise that the necessity of producing a precise line on a map can mask the underlying constraints of the data and the map base necessarily used. But perhaps of greater relevance is that the special countryside interests themselves are often by their very nature not susceptible to precise definition, and sometimes merge one into another over an area of countryside. It will therefore be a matter of judgment as to the priority to be placed on a particular countryside interest at the margins of the areas. In exercising this judgment the advice of the MAFF or the NCC, where appropriate, will be valuable.

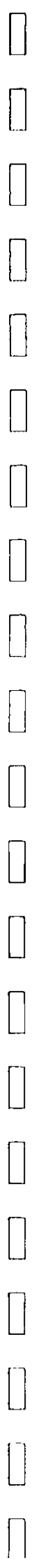
4.5 Structure Plan Policy CC 3 assigns priority to the needs of agriculture over other considerations in ASSAs. Policies CC 5, 6 and 8 respectively seek conservation and replanting of tree and woodland cover; conservation of important landscape features; and conservation of nature reserves and SSSIs. These agricultural and other countryside objectives do not necessarily conflict, and normally the retention

Fig. 2



- Chapter 4 discusses countryside interests for each area shown here.
- Numbers refer to paragraphs in the text, and areas approximate to those on the Proposals Map.

COUNTRYSIDE AREAS



of important landscape or wildlife features need not significantly affect agricultural productivity. There is a duty on all who are involved in the countryside to exercise care for all aspects of its environment. This is reflected in Section 11 of the Countryside Act and accepted in the statement of intent 'Caring for the Countryside' prepared by the National Farmers' Union and Country Landowners' Association. Accordingly, changes required in the interests of agriculture should be exercised with due regard to conserving important wildlife or landscape features. In the case of areas designated as both SLA and ASSA the need for agricultural and landscape policies to co-exist is especially great. In these areas it is important that the essential character which had led to their SLA designation is conserved, and the following policy will apply:

KCP 6

WITHIN THE AREAS DELINEATED IN THIS PLAN AS BOTH ASSAs AND SLAs THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL GIVE PRIORITY TO THE NEEDS OF AGRICULTURE OVER OTHER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS, EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS WHICH ARE IMPORTANT TO THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE AREA AND SHOULD BE CONSERVED.

4.6 The application of Policy CC 10 to the countryside adjoining the Undeveloped Coast also requires comment, as the Proposals Map shows only the lengths of coastline affected rather than precisely defining a coastal hinterland such as the 'Coastal Preservation Areas' of the old Kent Development Plan. The extent to which the policy will apply inland depends on whether a proposed development would affect the landscape or scientific value of the coastline; this in turn depends on the character of that landscape or interest and the nature of the development. A much broader belt of countryside is likely to be involved in low-lying, open landscapes such as the North Kent Marshes, where there are very extensive views across the marshes and the coastline, than in areas where there is higher, more undulating or more heavily wooded countryside adjoining the coastline, limiting views from and of the coastline, such as between Kingsdown and Folkestone. The scale of any proposed development, especially its vertical dimension, is likely to have a bearing on whether it affects the coastline landscape and whether Policy CC 10 applies. Thus it is neither desirable nor practical to define a landward boundary to this policy.

Area by Area Analysis

4.7 The second part of Chapter 10 of the Structure Plan provides an analysis of the County on an area-by-area basis, describing the character of each area, its particular countryside resources and the pressures affecting it; and also setting out the balance of priorities which apply. This approach is appropriate for inclusion in this Countryside Local Plan. Accordingly the following section effectively supersedes much of that part of the Structure Plan. It is important to note that the analysis below is according to a

slightly different pattern to that adopted in the Structure Plan; this has been done in order to more closely reflect the special policy areas for countryside conservation which have now been defined on the Proposals Map.

4.8 The analysis here confines itself to the priority relationship between agriculture, landscape (including tree planting), nature conservation and coastal conservation; and between these interests and recreation. It is appropriate to take recreation into account in this context because the Structure Plan points to the importance of ensuring that recreational use or development does not introduce material conflict with countryside conservation objectives. The priorities to be assigned between recreation and conservation therefore require elaboration with respect to particular areas of the County.

4.9 It is also appropriate to make reference to the Metropolitan Green Belt in view of its function in providing for open recreational uses which might either conflict with conservation objectives or reinforce the Structure Plan priority for informal recreation provision in Mid/North West Kent, which area includes a large overlap with the Green Belt.

4.10 The analysis makes reference to sites which are of importance for nature conservation but which do not fall within nature reserves, SSSIs or AHNCVs, and to landscape features outside SLAs which are of particular scenic value and/or historic interest (including those at the urban fringe). The presence of these interests may have a bearing on the priority which local planning authorities wish to assign to landscape and/or nature conservation interests as opposed to agriculture or commercial forestry; Structure Plan Policies CC 5(i) and CC 6 may apply.

North Downs SLA and AHNCV

4.11 The North Downs SLA comprises the prominent North Downs escarpment together with the chalk scenery of the dip slope and dry valleys to the north, the rising foreground to the south and the coastal cliffs in the Dover vicinity. It is largely an area of outstanding and unspoilt scenic quality. The escarpment and crest are not only visually important but have considerable wildlife interest relating to their permanent grasslands and broadleaf woodlands; hence their definition as an AHNCV. Most of the SLA is designated as the Kent Downs AONB. The coastal cliff scenery from Deal to Dover and Dover to Folkestone is defined as Undeveloped Coast and also forms the White Cliffs of Dover Heritage Coast. A site within the SLA is safeguarded against prejudicial development by Structure Plan Policy TP 20 for the Channel Tunnel terminal which may be established at Cheriton (north of Folkestone). There are many SSSIs in the SLA, most of them concentrated along the escarpment within the AHNCV, and five of them are Graded 1 in the NCR.

4.12 Much of the North Downs is in agricultural use and there are several areas of Grades 1 or 2 farmland. The most extensive of these are in the Cobham/Meopham area, the Goodnestone/Nonington area and particularly between Stockbury and Chilham. These areas form parts of the North West Kent Market Garden Belt ASSA and the North Kent Horticultural Belt ASSA and are dealt with separately in paragraphs 4.15 to 4.17 and paragraphs 4.21 and 4.22 below. There are also concentrations of good land in the Dover/Deal/Tilmanstone area, more scattered blocks in the Dover/Folkestone/Ashford/Canterbury area and a virtually continuous strip at the foot of the escarpment including the Darent Valley from Otford to Eynsford.

4.13 West of the Medway Gap the area lies within the Green Belt and approximately west of Lenham falls within the Mid/North West Kent area which is identified in the Structure Plan as the priority area for improved provision for informal recreation. The whole of the escarpment and the coastline have considerable potential for informal recreation by virtue of the extensive views which can be obtained from them and the fact that the escarpment includes some small areas of Grade 4 land where agricultural use is limited by steep slopes. There is potential for certain types of water recreation in the Darent Valley, which also has considerable wildlife interest.

4.14 The principal countryside issue in the area is conflict between farming interests and landscape/nature conservation. Loss of tree and hedgerow cover and improvement of grassland for agricultural purposes have had a substantial impact on the landscape and wildlife here. The local planning authorities will seek early consultation, with farmers and landowners and the relevant Government departments, on agricultural or forestry proposals which would lead to the loss of these features. Discussions with farming interests will be pursued towards conserving and enhancing the general landscape and nature conservation value of the area. Regard will also be paid to siting and design of agricultural buildings in accord with Policy BE 9 (RS 4) and CC 4, and the co-operation of landowners and farmers will be sought in respect of buildings not the subject of planning control. The major objective is the protection and enhancement of the landscape, which is recognised as being of national importance in the AONB and Heritage Coast. Priority is normally to be given to nature conservation in the ARNCV and SSSIs and to landscape elsewhere in the SLA. Policy CC 5 will be operated towards the maintenance and regeneration of the tree cover, woodland and hedgerows in support of these priorities, as will Policy CC 34 in respect of derelict land. To create opportunities for the enjoyment of the outstanding character of the area, facilities for informal recreation will be encouraged in accord with Policy CC 11 to the extent compatible with the landscape and nature conservation priorities indicated above. The Structure Plan identifies the need for a management plan for the Heritage Coast (see ROS). This plan would provide a detailed basis for establishing priorities between competing pressures in the area.

Priority

North West Kent Market Garden Belt ASSA

4.15 This area comprises two blocks of land which are used extensively for horticulture because of their inherent productive capacity and their proximity to markets for horticultural produce. The easternmost block, in the Meopham/Cobham area, includes more woodland than the majority of the area and forms part of the North Downs SLA. This area is dealt with separately under paragraphs 4.18 to 4.20 below. Elsewhere the landscape has an open appearance.

4.16 The area lies within the Green Belt and the Mid/North West Kent area identified in the Structure Plan as the priority area for improved informal recreation provision. In particular there is potential for informal and water recreation in the Darent Valley, which separates the central and western blocks of the ASSA. The valley also has certain wildlife interest. Policy CC 35 identifies the Darent Valley as an area to receive priority for restoration of derelict land remaining from old mineral workings here. A study has been prepared for that part of the valley within Dartford Borough, dealing inter alia with countryside conservation and recreation.

Priority

4.17 Priority will be given to agriculture in accordance with Policy CC 3, but provision for informal recreation will be promoted in accordance with Policy CC 11 to the extent that this would be compatible with this priority.

Shorne/Meopham area

4.18 In the Meopham/Cobham area and in the vicinity of Shorne are two blocks of land which are of high agricultural quality but which also have particular landscape importance. Consequently they are both defined as within the North Downs SLA but the Meopham/Cobham area is also defined as within the North West Kent Horticultural Belt ASSA while the Shorne area forms part of the Hoo Peninsula ASSA. The Meopham/Cobham area lies within the Kent Downs AONB and includes extensive tree cover, in marked contrast to the open agricultural landscape to the west. At Shorne the land rises from the marshland landscape to the north and is very prominent as viewed from that direction; to the east of the village are several blocks and strips of woodland, while to the west the landscape is more open but is important as foreground to the AONB. The whole area is also visually important in that it separates the Thames-side and Medway urban areas. The woodland generally has wildlife interest, Great Crabbles Wood SSSI being especially important.

4.19 Both of these block of land lie within the Green Belt and the Mid/North West Kent area identified in the Structure Plan as the priority area for improved provision for informal recreation. There is recreational potential relating to the woodlands and the views obtainable over the marshland to the north.

Priority

4.20 The main countryside issue here is the impact on the landscape and on wildlife of development or clearance of tree and hedgerow cover for agricultural purposes. Priority will normally be given to agriculture in accordance with Policy CC 3. However, it is to be exercised in such a way that the essential tree and hedgerow character of the area is not lost, in the interests of the special landscape quality of the area. Policy KCP 6 provides the planning policy basis for this. Policy CC 5 will be operated towards the maintenance and regeneration of tree cover, woodland and hedgerows as appropriate. Provision for informal recreation will be promoted in accordance with Policy CC 11 to the extent compatible with agricultural and landscape interests.

North Kent Horticultural Belt ASSA

4.21 This area comprises a belt of farmland stretching from the Medway Towns to Deal, bisected by the Stour Valley at Canterbury. The soils to the west of the Stour Valley are particularly deep and well drained and due to this factor and particular climatic conditions this is nationally the most favoured area for fruit growing. Elsewhere in the area arable farming is more common. The whole area comprises extensive blocks of Grades 1 and 2 land. Between Stockbury and Chilham are three areas which lie within the Kent Downs AONB and are defined as within the North Downs SLA as well as the ASSA. These areas are dealt with separately in paragraphs 4.23 and 4.24 below. The soils of parts of the ASSA comprise brickearths and consequently there are a number of mineral workings which reduce the land's productive capacity. There are also pressures for urban development as the farmland closely adjoins several urban areas. A small area of Grade 2 land at East Rainham and a much more extensive area of Grade 1 land in the Lower Rainham Road vicinity are excluded from the ASSA because they are detached from the main blocks of high quality land to the east by urban development. Though part of the urban/rural fringe which is readily accessible to the urban population and subject to pressure for development the retention of the area in agriculture is of considerable significance. Policy CC 2 will be exercised to achieve this.

Priority

4.22 The main objective here is the protection of farmland from development and Policies CC 2, CC 3 and CC 34 will be applied to this end. Agriculture will take priority over other countryside interests.

Stockbury/Chilham area

4.23 To the south of the M2 motorway in the vicinities of Stockbury/Bredgar, Newnham, and Sheldwich/Baddlesmere/Chilham/Brenley Corner are three blocks of land which are defined as within both the North Kent Horticultural Belt ASSA and the North Downs SLA. All three form parts of the extensive tract of Grades 1 and 2 farmland to their north and lie within the Kent Downs AONB which extends to their south. Despite their high productive capacity these areas have

retained a measure of the tree, hedgerow and woodland cover which, together with their topography, characterises the landscape of the North Downs dip slope. It is important to retain this landscape and its wildlife.

Priority

4.24 The main countryside issue in these three areas is the potential conflict between farming and landscape or wildlife. Whilst priority will normally be given to agriculture, it is to be exercised in such a way that the essential landscape character and wildlife interest of the area derived from the existing tree cover, woodlands and hedgerows, is not lost. Policy KCP 6 provides the planning policy basis for this. Policy CC 5 will also be applied to this end.

Goodnestone/Nonington area

4.25 To the south and east of Goodnestone (between Deal and Canterbury) is a block of land defined as within both the North Kent Horticultural Belt ASSA and the North Downs SLA. The farmland here forms part of the extensive tract of Grades 1 and 2 land which extends to the north, much of which is very open in appearance. However a considerable amount of tree and woodland cover remains in this southern area and gives to it a particular identity. The parklands at Knowlton and Goodnestone are particularly attractive.

Priority

4.26 As in the Shorne/Meopham area (see above) the main countryside issue here is the potential for landscape change which farming could bring about. Whilst the agricultural priority of Policy CC 3 will normally apply, where it gives rise to pressure for landscape change it is to be exercised in such a way that the essential landscape character of the area is not lost. Policy KCP 6 provides the planning policy basis for this. Policy CC 5 will be applied to conserve existing tree, woodland and hedgerow cover as appropriate.

North East of Ashford ASSA

4.27 An area of Grade 1 farmland extends north of Ashford to the west of the River Stour, linking with the strip of Grade 2 land at the foot of the North Downs Escarpment to form a substantial block of high quality land which is defined as an ASSA. The foot of the escarpment is also included in the Kent Downs AONB and, with the exception of a small area west of Conningbrook, the whole of this block of land acts as foreground to the escarpment, which the River Stour penetrates at this point. This area is therefore defined as within the North Downs SLA.

4.28 The Stour Valley Countryside Plan will be considering the issues raised in this area and will indicate the balance between agricultural and landscape interests.

Greensand Ridge SLA

4.29 The Greensand Ridge forms two prominent outcrops in the Sevenoaks and Maidstone vicinities. Both are very

visible, particularly when viewed from the south. That in the Sevenoaks area is much larger and more heavily wooded, includes a number of SSSIs (mostly relating to the woodlands) and has suffered from mineral working around Borough Green. Both areas lie within the Mid/North West Kent area which is identified in the Structure Plan as the priority area for improved provision for informal recreation and both have recreational potential by virtue of the views obtainable from them over the Low Weald. The Sevenoaks area has greater potential for recreation by virtue of its woodlands and lies within the Kent Downs AONB and the Green Belt. In the Ightham/Plaxtol area the AONB and SLA include a block of Grade 2 farmland which also forms the western extremity of the Ightham to Pluckley ASSA and this area of overlap is dealt with separately in paragraphs 4.34 and 4.35 below. The whole of the northern edge of the SLA in the Maidstone vicinity adjoins this ASSA.

Priorities

4.30 The main countryside issues here are the possible effects of recreational pressures and agricultural practices on the landscape and wildlife value of the woodlands. Nature conservation will receive priority in relation to the SSSIs and landscape will receive priority elsewhere. Policies CC 5 and CC 35 will be applied, in addition to Policies CC 7 and 8, in pursuit of these priorities in order to conserve and replace tree and woodland cover and to restore old mineral workings. Policy CC 11 will be put into effect to promote provision for informal recreation to the extent consistent with the landscape and nature conservation priorities set out above.

Ightham to Pluckley ASSA

4.31 This ASSA, which is one of the most highly productive areas of horticultural land in the country, comprises an extensive belt of Grade 2 farmland (with a small area of Grade 1 land south west of Maidstone) stretching from Ightham almost to Ashford. Between Ightham and Plaxtol, at its western extremity, it overlaps the Greensand Ridge SLA and this area of overlap is dealt with separately in paragraphs 4.34 and 4.35 below. The ASSA excludes a large area of lower quality land and woodland in the Mereworth/Barming vicinity and a number of smaller, outlying areas of Grade 2 to the south of the main belt of better land (see Low Weald, paragraphs 4.70 and 4.71 below).

4.32 The ASSA closely adjoins and separates the Maidstone and Medway Gap urban areas and is under continuing pressure for urban development. The Charing Heath Alder Carr and Chilstone Park SSSI lies within the ASSA. Most of the area lies within the Mid/North West Kent area which is identified in the Structure Plan as the priority area for improved provision for informal recreation. Recreational pressures generated by the Maidstone/Medway Gap urban areas are likely to be experienced in the ASSA, particularly in the more attractive and accessible locations such as the Medway Valley upstream of Maidstone where there may also be conflict between agricultural and landscape interests.

Priorities

4.33 The main countryside issue here is the balance to be sought between agriculture and other interests. Whilst it is appropriate for the agricultural priority of CC 3 to be exercised generally this does not override the exercise of Policy CC 8 in respect of the SSSIs in the area. Policy CC 11 will be employed to promote provision for informal recreation to the extent compatible with these priorities, but there are unlikely to be many opportunities in this respect in view of the need to safeguard agricultural interests.

South of Ightham

4.34 Between Ightham and Plaxtol is a small block of land where the Kent Downs AONB and North Downs SLA are overlapped by the western extremity of the Ightham to Pluckley ASSA. The land is Grade 2 in agricultural quality; almost all of it is in horticultural use and the landscape largely comprises orchards overlooking farmland and woodland to the east. The Buttons Bourne Alder Carr SSSI forms part of the area's eastern margin. It lies within the Green Belt and the Mid/North West Kent area which is identified in the Structure Plan as the priority area for improved provision for informal recreation.

Priorities

4.35 It is important that the priority for agriculture under CC 3 is not exercised in this area at the expense of nature conservation within the SSSI or to the detriment of the essential landscape character of the area. Policy CC 8 and Policy KCP 6 provide the planning policy basis for this. It is unlikely that there will be very significant opportunities for informal recreation here but where such opportunities exist provision for informal recreation will be promoted in line with Policy CC 11 subject to the priorities set out above and provided that there would not be material conflict with the important agricultural interests.

Romney Marsh ASSA

4.36 Romney Marsh comprises a very large block of Grades 1 and 2 agricultural land. The levels around the Isle of Oxney form an extension to the ASSA which is also defined as an SLA and this area is dealt with separately in paragraphs 4.44 and 4.45 below. The north east fringe of the ASSA is also dealt with separately, in paragraphs 4.49 and 4.50 below. Traditionally Romney Marsh is one of the best sheep grazing and fattening areas but more recently grassland has been brought into arable use for main and horticultural crops.

4.37 The landscape of the area, because of its flatness, is pleasant rather than outstanding. However, locally the setting of certain villages is important in landscape terms and the erection of modern farm buildings could, unless sensitively treated, have a substantial visual impact in this open landscape. The Royal Military Canal, which adjoins the northern edge of the area, has traditionally provided a distinctive landscape feature by virtue of its tree cover but has been badly affected by Dutch Elm disease.

4.38 A very large SSSI, Graded 2 in the NCR, has been notified over the western half of the ASSA to reflect the wildlife interest of the dyke system and of the remaining relatively poorly drained areas of marshland. The practice of periodically clearing the dykes of vegetation by mechanical means is generally compatible with the aquatic wildlife associated with them. However the recent introduction of herbicidal methods, both by farmers and on an experimental basis by the SWA, has had a severe effect on this interest. Improved drainage of the remaining wetter areas would seriously affect this interest, too.

Priorities

4.39 The principal countryside issue in this area is the possible effects of agricultural improvement, particularly improved drainage and the use of herbicides on the wildlife interest of the SSSI. Nature conservation will receive priority in the SSSI where there is a material threat to the particular nature conservation interest, and agriculture will receive priority in the remainder of the ASSA (with the exception of the areas of overlap with SLAs, dealt with separately below). The co-operation of farmers and landowners will be sought to retain the remaining tree cover, preserve the setting of villages and minimise the visual impact of new farm buildings as well as to minimise the adverse effects of agrochemical treatments on the wildlife interest of the SSSI. Policy CC 5 will be applied to devote resources to tree planting along the Royal Military Canal to the extent that this can be done without affecting the agricultural priority set out above.

High Weald SLA

4.40 The outstanding and largely unspoilt highly diverse landscape of the High Weald, the majority of which lies in East Sussex, is essentially due to its underlying geology and its extensive, largely deciduous woodlands. Some of the woodland is of ancient origin and is probably a relic of the once extensive forest of Andredsweald. There are also a number of historically important features relating to the Wealden iron industry. The SLA and proposed AONB include the outlying Isle of Oxney and its surrounding levels. The latter form an extension to the Romney Marsh ASSA and are dealt with separately in paragraphs 4.44 and 4.45 below.

4.41 The area includes a variety of valuable wildlife habitats, particularly copses and shaws of relic woodland and deeply incised, narrow valleys or 'ghylls'. There are many SSSIs, mostly relating to woodlands.

4.42 Around Horsmonden/Matfield/Brenchley there are small areas of Grade 2 farmland within the SLA and proposed AONB and horticulture is well established in this vicinity. The SLA has considerable potential for informal recreation relating to its attractive woodlands. From approximately Matfield westwards the area falls within the Green Belt, and pressures for urban development are likely to be particularly strong within this part of the area.

Priorities

4.43 The major objective is the protection and enhancement of the landscape which is recognised as being of national importance in the proposed AONB. Policy CC 8 applies to SSSIs, Policy CC 7 (for SLAs) will be reinforced by Policy CC 6 where there are important historic landscape features, and Policy CC 5 will be applied to conserve and renew tree and woodland cover. Provision for informal recreation will be promoted in accordance with Policy CC 11 (although resources available for this purpose will normally be devoted to the Mid/North West Kent area if a choice has to be made between alternative projects) to the extent that this can be done consistent with the priorities set out above and without materially affecting farming interests.

Shirley Moor/Rother Levels

4.44 Shirley Moor and the Rother Levels form an extension of Romney Marsh surrounding the Isle of Oxney, which is an outlier to the High Weald. Part of the Rother Levels lie within East Sussex. The area exclusively comprises Grades 1 and 2 agricultural land contiguous with that of Romney Marsh and is therefore defined as part of that ASSA. The landscape is flat and open with little tree or hedgerow cover but is important in landscape terms in that it acts as foreground to and is overlooked by the eastern extremity of the High Weald and the western extremity of the Old Romney Shoreline. It is therefore defined as within these SLAs, the Tenterden sewer forming the boundary between them and marking the edge of the proposed High Weald AONB so that part of the area is also likely to be subject to that designation.

Priority

4.45 The principal countryside issue here is the possible effect on the landscape of this area, and particularly of the adjoining higher land, of agricultural developments. The main concern is the loss of what remains of the tree and hedgerow cover. The priority in the area will normally be for agriculture but in view of the landscape considerations it is to be exercised carefully so that loss of the remaining tree and hedgerow cover is minimised. Policy KCP 6 provides the planning policy basis for this. Policy CC 5 will be employed to this end. The co-operation of farmers and land-owners will be sought over this, and in respect of the location, design and landscaping of farm buildings and other structures.

Old Romney Shoreline SLA

4.46 The Old Romney Shoreline represents the early coastal shoreline prior to the formation of Romney Marsh and Dungeness. It extends between the High Weald SLA and proposed AONB at Appledore and the North Downs at Hythe. Approximately east of Bonnington it lies within the Kent Downs AONB. The old shoreline is a prominent relief feature with a substantially wooded crest line, in marked contrast to the Low Weald to the north and to the Shirley Moor/Rother Levels/Romney Marsh/Dungeness areas which it overlooks to the south. Shirley Moor and part of the Rother Levels are

included within the SLA but also lie within the Romney Marsh ASSA and are dealt with separately in paragraphs 4.44 and 4.45 above.

4.47 Parts of the ridge grassland and woodland have wildlife interest and there are two SSSIs (both woodland in character), including that at Ham Street Woods which is Graded 1 in the NCR and which adjoins a National Nature Reserve. Due to its wooded nature and the extensive views obtainable across Romney Marsh and the Channel, the area has considerable potential for absorbing informal recreation activities. The Royal Military Canal, the Napoleonic defence feature at the foot of the ridge, is lined with a high proportion of elm trees which have suffered severely from Dutch Elm disease.

Priorities

4.48 Nature conservation is to receive priority at the nature reserves and SSSIs while landscape is normally to receive priority elsewhere. Policy CC 5 will be employed to conserve and renew tree cover in the area and particular emphasis will be given to promoting tree planting along the Royal Military Canal. Provision for informal recreation will be promoted in line with Policy CC 11 to the extent consistent with the priorities set out above.

North East Romney Marsh

4.49 The north eastern fringe of Romney Marsh, which comprises Grade 2 farmland and forms part of the ASSA, lies within the Kent Downs AONB and the Old Romney Shoreline SLA. At its northern perimeter it adjoins the Royal Military Canal which has suffered from loss of its distinctive tree cover due to Dutch Elm disease. The landscape here is flat but retains some tree and hedgerow cover and acts as foreground to the Old Romney Shoreline which overlooks this area and rises to its north as a prominent and heavily wooded relief feature.

Priority

4.50 The principal countryside issue here is the possible effect on the landscape of development for agricultural purposes, particularly the loss of tree and hedgerow cover. The priority in the area is normally to be for agriculture but in view of the landscape considerations outlined above it is to be exercised carefully so that the loss of tree and hedgerow cover is minimised. Policy KCP 6 provides the planning policy basis for this. Policy CC 5 will be applied to conserve and renew tree cover particularly along the Royal Military Canal and the co-operation of farmers and landowners will be sought as to the design, siting and landscaping of new farm buildings or other structures.

North East Kent ASSA

4.51 The landscape of this area is characterised by gently rolling topography and large arable fields bare of woodlands, trees or hedgerows. The farmland consists of excellent loams, much of it in extensive vegetable growing and mostly

in Grades 1 and 2 of the MAFF land classification. The ASSA adjoins the Undeveloped Coast in the vicinities of Reculver and Pegwell. The coastline east of Reculver, in the vicinity of Plumpudding Island is Grade 3 in quality and is excluded from the ASSA, as is Manston Airfield, the outlying areas of Grades 1 and 2 land east of the A254 and the Thanet Towns coastline. Plumpudding Island and North Cliff are notified as SSSIs and it is likely that the notification of much of the remainder of the Thanet coastline will also be proposed in due course. The scientific interest of the cliffs may be affected by the current programme of coast protection works here. There are pressures on the ASSA from urban development and from tourism.

Priority

4.52 Agriculture is to receive priority within the ASSA in accordance with Policy CC 3 except to the extent that this should be exercised with particular care in respect of development for agricultural purposes at or adjacent to the Undeveloped Coast. The substantial areas of high grade farmland which are separated from the ASSA by urban development are still highly productive and are to be protected from further development by Policy CC 2. Tree planting will be promoted in the ASSA but only in a manner which will not jeopardise agricultural production, e.g. group planting at the farmstead to create features in the open landscape. Provision for informal recreation will be promoted in line with Policy CC 11, to the extent consistent with the priorities set out above.

Hoo Peninsula ASSA

4.53 The Hoo Peninsula ASSA comprises much of the high ground extending from Shorne to Allhallows. By virtue of good soils and climate it contains extensive areas of Grades 1 and 2 agricultural land. There is a good farm structure and fruit, cereals and horticultural crops are produced. A small block of this land, in the Shorne area, also lies within the North Downs SLA and is dealt with separately in paragraphs 4.18 to 4.20 above.

4.54 A large block of land in the Chattenden vicinity is of lower agricultural quality, is less productive and is therefore excluded from the ASSA. It includes blocks of woodland, the scientific interest of which is notified in the SSSIs at Chattenden Wood and Cockham Wood. Great Crabbles Wood SSSI lies within the ASSA; in the Shorne/Higham vicinity. The woodland is also important in that it assists in visually separating the Thames-side and Medway Towns urban areas and provides a contrast to the open agricultural landscape, which has been severely affected by Dutch Elm disease, and the low-lying marshland extending around the ASSA. Extensive views can be obtained from the higher ground over the coastal marshland and the Medway Estuary.

Priorities

4.55 Within the ASSA agriculture will normally be given priority, except that at the SSSIs nature conservation will receive priority. Policy CC 5 will be employed to ensure

conservation of the trees and woodlands outside the SSSIs. Precedence will be given to tree planting schemes in this area as to other parts of North Kent, but planting will only be promoted in a manner which will not jeopardise agricultural production, e.g. group planting at the farmstead to complement the large, open arable fields. There may be opportunities to promote provision for informal recreation, in line with Policy CC 11, consistent with the priorities set out above.

Blean Woods SLA

4.56 The Blean Woods SLA comprises the belt of woodland which extends from west of Canterbury to Herne and includes both the woodland blocks and more open countryside which surrounds and intersperses them, acting as foreground. This is one of the few heavily wooded areas remaining in Kent. Parts of the woodland are ancient in origin and at one time the Blean Woods probably formed an extension to the Challock and Lyminge forests to the south. The woodland comprises both broadleaved and coniferous species and the former are a remnant of the more ancient forest.

4.57 The mixed broadleaved woodlands have considerable wildlife interest relating to the mosaic of habitats provided by the woods, glades and rides and their associated vegetation, insect life and birdlife. Three SSSIs (two of them Graded 1 and 2 in the NCR) have been notified and there is a National Nature Reserve. The Blean Woods have now been identified as the only remaining substantial habitat of the heath fritillary butterfly in Britain; these butterflies occur in colonies which move about from one block of woodland to another within the overall area and depend upon the continuing regime of coppicing. In view of the woodlands' considerable and widespread scientific interest the County Council is to consider defining them as an AHNCV (see 3.17 above) and KCP 3 in this plan provides protection of this interest pending such definition. The way in which the woodland is managed is critical in fostering the wildlife interest here.

Priorities

4.58 Prima facie the woodlands have considerable potential for informal recreation but in particular locations this might affect the wildlife or landscape interest. Nature conservation will receive priority throughout the woodlands and landscape will normally receive priority in the remainder of the SLA. Policy CC 5 will be employed to conserve the appearance and interest of the woodlands and the co-operation of landowners, foresters, the Forestry Commission and the MAFF will be sought to ensure that the large blocks of woodland and their broadleaf character are maintained and that management practices conducive to the wildlife and landscape interest are pursued. Provision for informal recreation will be promoted, in line with Policy CC 11, to the extent compatible with the priorities set out above.

North Kent Marshes SLA and AHNCV

4.59 The coastal marshlands of the Thames and Medway Estuaries and The Swale extend from Gravesend in the west to Seasalter in the east. Between Gravesend and Cliffe the marshes are largely open but development intrudes both from present and the remains of past activities. With the exception of this area, which is excluded from the SLA, the coastal marshes are the largest tract of undeveloped land in the County, combining an open landscape, a quality of remoteness and high scientific value. Extensive areas of the zone are notified as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or are nature reserves, the Medway Marshes and Swale SSSIs Graded 1 in the NCR. The NCC regard the North Kent Marshes as the most critical part of Kent from a nature conservation standpoint and have recently identified a number of particularly important areas of marshland within the overall complex; these include Higham Marshes SSSI. It is therefore proposed that they should also fall within the AHNCV, notwithstanding that the area is affected by the outstanding consent for the oil refinery at Cliffe. The old flooded mineral workings nearby are included both to link the Shorne/Higham area with the main tract of the North Kent Marshes and to reflect the ornithological value of these areas of open water.

4.60 Recently, several areas of marshland previously used for grazing have been drained and ploughed for arable use, sometimes with the assistance of the MAFF and the Southern Water Authority. This is directly in conflict with the traditional landscape. It also seriously affects the wildlife supported by the marshland grazing and ditch systems and this problem is compounded by the use of agrochemicals. There have been and are likely to be pressures to reclaim certain areas of marshland and inter-tidal areas by depositing waste (river dredgings, industrial and domestic waste) and again this is likely to seriously affect the area's appearance and scientific interest.

4.61 The coastal waters adjoining the marshes are a significant water recreation resource. The Medway Estuary is of regional importance for water recreation with comparatively intensive activities which are also pursued at the West Swale, complemented by the Stangate Creek area and the East Swale which are used as cruising waters and quiet water anchorages. In general there is only scope for small-scale growth of facilities in a few appropriate locations. More intensive or widespread recreational activity would be likely to detract from the sense of remoteness now obtained in the area and affect its wildlife interest. Much of the coastline is defined as Undeveloped Coast and Policy CC 10 is likely to apply to an extensive margin of countryside to the south of the coastline because of the open character of the marshland landscape.

4.62 Throughout the area nature conservation and landscape interests are of paramount importance. Discussions with farming and land drainage interests will be pursued towards

Priorities

conserving and enhancing the general nature conservation and landscape value of the area. Opportunities to promote provision for informal and water recreation, in line with Policies CC 11 and 15, will be pursued to the extent consistent with the priorities set out (or to be resolved) as above. Afforestation of the marshland landscape will be resisted as it would be inappropriate in appearance but tree planting will be encouraged in countryside adjoining the marshland (to the extent that this is compatible with agricultural priorities in ASSAs) to counter the effects of Dutch Elm disease (see paragraphs 4.21 and 4.22 above and paragraphs 4.72 and 4.73 below).

Sandwich Bay/Pegwell Bay SLA and AHNCV

4.63 The open and largely unspoilt coastal landscape of Sandwich Bay and Pegwell Bay is defined as an SLA. The area is widely visible from the Ramsgate vicinity and from the agricultural landscape west of here but it is intruded by the hoverport at Pegwell Bay and the industrial development north of Sandwich, which also detract from the area's sense of remoteness. To the south of Sandwich the landscape interest is confined to a relatively narrow coastal strip and the SLA reflects this. The whole of the coastline is defined as Undeveloped Coast.

4.64 There is very high nature conservation interest here, reflected in the area's definition as an AHNCV, particularly regarding the sandy coastal grassland but also as to the succession from mudflats through salt marsh and sand dunes to freshwater marshes in the area between Sandwich and Deal (extending considerably further inland than the SLA) and the geological unconformity in the cliffs at Pegwell Bay. There is an SSSI here, Graded 1 in the NCR. The Southern Water Authority are considering a programme of sea defence works which might affect its interest.

4.65 The area has some scope for informal and water recreation and the Structure Plan identified the need for a local plan here which would inter alia consider the balance to be sought between recreation, nature conservation and landscape. Pending the preparation of such a plan nature conservation is to receive priority in the AHNCV in view of its importance in the area but the provision of opportunities for informal and water recreation will be considered, in line with Policies CC 11 and CC 15, to the extent that this can be done consistent with the above priority.

Priority

Dungeness SLA & AHNCV

4.66 Dungeness is a large shingle foreland of recent geological origin, and is unique in Europe as a coastal land-form. Most of the zone is an SSSI, Graded 1*, i.e. of international importance, in the NCR on the basis of its outstanding entomological, ornithological and botanical interest. In terms of its physiography the area is also of the greatest scientific interest, the structure and development of the shingle

ridges being unique. Part of the zone is also a private nature reserve.

4.67 The southern edge and the tip of the foreland are defined as Undeveloped Coast but the power stations are very intrusive and are excluded from this definition. Despite the visual intrusion presented by this and other development (principally mineral workings) and the fragmentation of the area, large expanses of the distinctive shingle-ridge landscape remain and the area is defined as an SLA.

Local Plan

4.68 The extent of the SLA and AHNCV have been defined in the context of the Dungeness Countryside Plan, which is primarily concerned with the interrelationship of agriculture, landscape and nature conservation and mineral extraction. The balance of priorities between the various countryside interests is set out in that Plan.

Other Areas

4.69 The analysis set out above (paragraphs 4.11 to 4.66) relates to those parts of the Kent countryside defined as ASSAs, SLAs or AHNCVs. A considerable part of the County's countryside and undeveloped coast lies outside these areas, the most extensive tracts being the Low Weald, the Sheppey Hills and the Lower Stour Valley which are each described below. Although not of strategic importance in the sense that the ASSAs, SLAs and AHNCVs are, these areas contain valuable resources, particularly: lengths of coastline defined as Undeveloped Coast, SSSIs and Nature Reserves, farmland, woodlands and other features which have local value in terms of their landscape or their wildlife. The Proposals Map shows the Undeveloped Coast and the Report of Survey identifies some of the other important resources located in these areas.

Low Weald

4.70 The Low Weald comprises an area of mainly open, lowland countryside stretching almost across the County from west to east. The landscape is generally not striking in appearance but does include extensive orchards, small woodlands and hedgerow features, vegetation features associated with river banks and features parklands of larger than local significance. The area includes many villages and small towns as well as the urban areas of Tonbridge and Ashford. The blocks of Grades 1 and 2 farmland between Ightham and Pluckley and to the north east of Ashford are dealt with separately in paragraphs 4.31 to 4.33 and 4.27 and 4.28 respectively.

4.71 There are concentrations of Grades 1 and 2 farmland in the Hythe/Ashford area and the Paddock Wood/Horsmonden/Marden/Yalding area, to which Policy CC 2 will apply. There are also landscape features to which Policy CC 6 applies (e.g. Godinton Park) and several SSSIs, representing a variety of different habitat types, to which Policy CC 8

applies. Tree, hedgerow and woodland cover is important in the area both at specific sites and features which have particular landscape or wildlife interest, and in the context of the contribution to the landscape as a whole, particularly as it is viewed from higher ground to the north and south (the North Downs, Greensand Ridge and High Weald SLAs), and Policy CC 5 applies. Approximately west of the River Medway the area lies within the Green Belt. There is considerable potential for informal or water recreation in certain localities, particularly the Medway Valley.

Sheppey Hills

4.72 This area comprises the high ground of the Isle of Sheppey north of the Swale marshlands and south east of Sheerness, Queenborough and Minster. Most of the land is in agricultural use and the landscape is open with few trees, losses having taken place due to Dutch Elm disease. Substantial parts of the north and east coast remain undeveloped. The Warden Point SSSI is located here. This coastal area is also an important holiday area. It has extensive caravan and chalet sites between Minster and Leysdown and the cliffs towards Minster also have significant geological and wildlife interest. The number of caravan sites and the open landscape often make these developments very intrusive in the rural scene, and in terms of impact on the landscape caravan and chalet site development has reached saturation point. The coast between Sheerness and Minster attracts water recreation uses.

Priorities

4.73 At the Undeveloped Coast, coastal conservation is to take priority with particular reference to the nature conservation interest in the area, especially at the SSSI. Precedence will be given to tree planting schemes in this area as to other parts of North Kent. Planting should complement the bare landscape and include such planting on the rising ground at the margins of The Swale as to provide contrast to the treeless marshland landscape. There are unlikely to be further opportunities for provision for water recreation between Warden Bay and The Swale marshes, other than immediately offshore of Leysdown, between The Swale and Warden Point SSSIs, without comprising conservation objectives. The ornithological interest relating to the intertidal area here is essentially confined to the winter months. Provision at Leysdown Bombing Range would deflect recreational pressure from The Swale, which is particularly sensitive as regards wildlife. Provision for water recreation will therefore be promoted to the extent that conflict with conservation interests can be avoided, in line with Policy CC 15. There is a small block of Grade 2 farmland between Eastchurch and Minster where Policy CC 2 applies.

Lower Stour Valley

4.74 The Stour Valley between Shalmsford Street and Sandwich, including Chislet Marshes and the Little Stour, has

considerable wildlife interest relating to its wetland habitats. There is a degree of interest throughout this area (and extending into the North Kent Horticultural Belt and North East Kent ASSAs at Ash Levels and Minster Marshes) but the major interest is concentrated in a few quite widely spaced locations. The National Nature Reserve and SSSI at Stodmarsh is the most important site (Graded 1 in the NCR) but Preston Marshes are also notified as an SSSI and the NCC has recently identified considerable interest in the Goss Hall Valley, to the north west of Sandwich. The wildlife interest in the Lower Stour Valley relates closely to that at the Sandwich Bay/Pegwell Bay AHNCV.

4.75 The Stour Valley has been subject to extensive mineral working in the past although it appears that there are few deposits now remaining which it would be viable to work. Past workings have in some instances left a legacy of despoiled sites but the areas of open water left following the workings have wildlife interest and/or potential for water recreation. The valley as a whole also has potential for informal recreation.

Local Plan

4.76 A local plan is currently being prepared for the Stour Valley and this will identify the balance which is to be sought between agriculture, landscape, nature conservation and recreation as well as pressures for mineral extraction and waste disposal. Structure Plan Policy CC 35 gives priority to, inter alia, the Stour Valley for restoration of despoiled land.

5 The Metropolitan Green Belt: delineation of outer boundary

5.1 The main function of the Metropolitan Green Belt is to preserve a belt of open country beyond the edge of Greater London and to restrain the outward growth of settlements in West Kent within the influence of London. It also provides an area within which to meet the recreation needs of the metropolitan population and those living in the built up areas of West Kent, but avoiding farmland of importance to agriculture. The approved Structure Plan sets out Policy MGB 1 which describes the general extent of the Green Belt (para. 2.4).

5.2 For development control and other planning purposes it is necessary to define the extent of the Green Belt precisely. It is intended to define the outer (eastern) boundary of the Green Belt in Kent through this Plan. In certain areas this outer boundary is already defined in detail in approved Town Maps, but there are several areas for which there are no such documents. Where possible the boundary shown here reflects those defined in approved Town Maps, and in all cases the line of this Plan supersedes previous lines.

5.3 The extent of the MGB does not relate to areas of special significance for countryside conservation or the factors which contribute to their definition. Its effect is to provide additional protection against development where such areas abut settlements and to maintain open country not subject to such policies. Because the definition of the MGB should be related to its functions and because it is an administrative instrument defining an area of development restraint, extensive use can be made of administrative boundaries in defining the outer boundary of the MGB.

KCP 7

THE OUTER BOUNDARY OF THE METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT IN KENT SHALL BE AS DEFINED IN THIS PLAN.

5.4 The boundaries of the Green Belt around settlements within it have been defined in approved Town Maps in some cases. Elsewhere no detailed boundaries have been statutorily defined. The definition of these 'inner' boundaries is most appropriately dealt with through district plans, prepared by the District Councils concerned.

6 Finance, monitoring and review

Financial Implications

6.1 It is important that local plans take account of the financial implications of their proposals, so that the extent to which the proposals can realistically be implemented may be assessed. None of the proposals contained in this Plan commit either the planning authorities, other government bodies or the private sector to financial expenditure.

Monitoring & Review

6.2 Many of the issues that have been examined in the course of preparing this Plan, and the basis upon which its proposals have been prepared, will be subject to change. It is therefore essential that the Plan's proposals are periodically reviewed if it is to remain relevant. The key factors which it will be necessary to monitor, and in the light of which it may be found necessary to amend the Plan, are as follows:

- . the Structure Plan First Alteration and subsequent alterations;
- . detailed local studies and proposals contained in other local plans, either district plans or countryside subject plans;
- . research or further studies by bodies or organisations concerned with agriculture, landscape and nature conservation into the extent and value of countryside resources.

6.3 It is intended to review the Plan at intervals of five years so that changes in the factors taken into account in its preparation can be reflected. That is not to say that the validity of the policies and proposals in the Plan will only have a five year currency. It is anticipated that they will generally exhibit a long term validity and boundary stability, and that such changes as may become necessary will be minor.

Appendix 1

STRUCTURE PLAN OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES FOR COUNTRYSIDE
CONSERVATION AND RECREATION, THE GREEN BELT AND RURAL SETTLEMENT

Agriculture

Objectives:
(SPWS 10.4)

- . to continue to safeguard agriculture as a major industry in Kent;
- . to seek to minimise the loss of productive or potentially productive agricultural land to other uses;
- . to restrict development which, by its effect on adjoining land, would reduce the viability of farm holdings;
- . to protect ASSAs (see Policy CC 3 below) against development indefinitely in order that farmers and landowners may be encouraged to make appropriate capital investment, confident of an assured future.

Policies

- CC 1: Development which will cause a loss of productive or potentially productive agricultural land, or reduce the viability of farm holdings will not be permitted, unless it can be demonstrated that the need for the development overrides agricultural considerations and no alternative site on non-agricultural land is available.
- CC 2: Policy CC 1 will be applied with particular force in respect of land classified as Grade 1 and 2 (as defined by the MAFF land classification system) or on the better Grade 3 land, where there will be presumption against development, other than for the purposes of agriculture.
- CC 3: Seven Areas of Special Significance for Agriculture are defined:

North West Kent Market Garden Belt
Hoo Peninsula
North Kent Horticultural Belt
North East Kent
Ightham to Pluckley
North East of Ashford
Romney Marsh

The local planning authorities will give long term protection to these areas⁽²⁾ and will give priority to the needs of agriculture over other planning considerations.

- CC 4: Development related to the agricultural industry, but not part of a farm business, which will be intrusive in the countryside by reason of scale and character, or which will create disturbance or a high level of traffic generation, will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the site chosen is the best available (including those in towns and villages) and the design and landscape treatment are of a high standard. It is the policy not to allow such development in special landscape areas (see Policy CC 7).

Forestry

Objective:
(SPWS 10.8)

- To conserve, enhance and renew the broad-leaf trees and woodlands which give character and identity to parts of Kent, whilst recognising both the value of woodlands as a commercial and recreational resource, and the needs of modern agriculture.

Policy

- CC 5: (i) In considering proposals for development or for tree felling, to require, wherever practicable, existing trees and woodlands to be conserved when they contribute significantly to the landscape or the appearance of a site and its locality.
- (ii) The County Council will plant trees or grant aid tree planting in the countryside, where this will significantly improve the landscape, with preference given to areas seriously affected by Dutch Elm Disease.
- (iii) Tree Preservation Orders will be made to protect trees and woodlands as necessary if their loss would seriously impair the landscape.

Note: The 1981 Alterations to the Structure Plan propose to modify CC 5(i) as follows:-

'In considering proposals for development or for tree felling in the countryside existing trees and woodlands will wherever practicable be conserved when they contribute significantly to the wildlife, the landscape or the appearance of a site or its locality.'

Landscape

Objective:
(SPWS 10.10)

- To conserve and enhance the County's diverse and attractive landscape heritage.

Policies:

- CC 6: Development will normally not be permitted if it is likely to cause a loss of, or material damage to, landscape areas and features which are:
- (i) representative of the Kent countryside by reason of their physiographic character or vegetation cover, with particular regard being paid to those areas of rare or possibly unique scenic quality; or

(ii) of historic interest; or

(iii) of an unspoilt quality free from urban intrusion.

CC 7: Special Landscape Areas are defined as follows:

North Downs: including the scarp and crest
Greensand Ridge: from Westerham to Ightham
: south of Maidstone

High Weald
Old Romney Shoreline
North Kent Marshes
Sandwich Bay/Pegwell Bay
Dungeness, and
Blean Woods

The local planning authorities will give long term protection to these areas, which incorporate the Kent Downs and proposed High Weald AONBs, and will normally give priority to their landscape over other planning considerations.

Nature Conservation

Objective
(SPWS 10.16)

To conserve and enhance the habitat diversity and rarity of the Kent countryside and coast.

Policies

CC 8: Development will not be permitted at or near nature reserves or Sites of Special Scientific Interest, unless it can be shown that the proposals will not materially harm the maintenance of the wildlife interest.

CC 9: In the following areas of high nature conservation value, the policy is not to permit development harmful to the maintenance of scarce and potentially vulnerable wildlife habitats:

North Kent Marshes
North Downs Scarp and Crest
Dungeness
Sandwich Bay/Pegwell Bay

Note: The 1981 Alterations to the Structure Plan propose a new policy as follows (approved CC 10 will be renumbered CC 11):

CC 10: 'In areas to which Policies CC 8 and CC 9 do not apply development will not be permitted if it is likely to cause a loss of habitats or features which have importance for nature conservation, unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the local planning authorities that the need for the development overrides the nature conservation interest and no appropriate alternative site is available.'

Undeveloped Coast

Objective:
(SPWS 10.19)

- . To conserve and where appropriate enhance the scenic value of the undeveloped coast.

Policy:

CC 10: Development, particularly urban or industrial development, will not be permitted if it materially detracts from the unspoilt scenic quality or scientific value of the undeveloped coastline, whether such development is on the coast or in the adjoining countryside.

Informal Recreation

Objective:
(SPWS 10.25)

- . To improve informal recreation provision particularly by:
 - (a) the establishment of country parks and picnic sites;
 - (b) the opening of existing parks and gardens to public access;
 - (c) entering into access agreements to allow public access and recreation in areas of open countryside which are in private ownership;
 - (d) re-appraising the use and management of areas of open countryside already in public ownership or control; and
 - (e) the maintenance and improvement of existing rights of way used for informal recreation, and where desirable, having regard to agricultural interests, the creation of new rights of way, including bridleways and recreation paths.

Policy:

CC 11: Suitable facilities for informal recreation will be provided or permitted at appropriate locations in the countryside or at the coast.

Water Recreation

Objective:
(SPWS 10.39)

- . To encourage public bodies, clubs and individuals to increase the number, range and standard of water recreation facilities, in appropriate locations and where this does not conflict with countryside conservation policies.

Policy:

CC 15: Water recreation facilities of an appropriate range or standard will be permitted or provided at suitable sites, with priority for areas of regional significance for such recreation, provided there is no material conflict with the conservation of significant countryside resources and the built environment.

NOTE: Other Structure Plan policies for recreation (CC 12, 14 and 16) are not set out here as they do not raise any relevant issues.

Metropolitan Green Belt

Objectives:

- (i) support regional policy aiming to contain further development of the metropolis;
- (ii) restrain housing and employment growth in those parts of Kent closest to London;
- (iii) maintain and enhance an area of mainly open country around London and between London and the Mid Kent growth point; and
- (iv) promote recreation facilities, to the benefit of both Londoners and those living in the built-up areas of West Kent, particularly at the urban fringe, but avoiding farmland of importance to agriculture.

Policies:

MGB 1: The Metropolitan Green Belt will generally extend for a depth of about 15 miles from the edge of the built-up area of Greater London, that is, to the east of Gravesend, to the west of Rochester, to the west of West Malling, and to the east of Watlingbury and Nettlestead, but, exceptionally, extending to the west of Paddock Wood and east of Tunbridge Wells.

MGB 2: Within the Green Belt, there will be a strong presumption against permitting new development outside the presently defined extent of urban areas and the present built-up extent of any village, unless it conforms with the open recreation functions of the Green Belt or is directly related to agriculture or other uses appropriate to a rural area. Any development approved within the Metropolitan Green Belt will be required to be sited and designed so as to maintain the open character of the area.

Rural Settlement

Objective:

- To reduce the rate and amount of development in the rural areas of Kent and to relate any new development more closely with the inherent needs of the rural areas; in the interests of conserving the environment, making the most efficient use of financial resources, and promoting concentration of development in selected urban locations.

Policies:

BE 5: Unless there are particular local circumstances (a) provision for residential development shall not be made adjacent to villages and (b) within the confines of the built-up area of any village, residential development shall be restricted to redevelopment or to minor development such as infilling (which is the completion of an otherwise substantially built-up frontage by the filling of a narrow gap capable usually of taking one or two dwellings only) in a suitable location.

BE 6: In considering applications for renewals of permissions for residential development, regard will be had to the rural settlement policies set out in this section of the Written

Statement and to the effect of the development upon Areas of Special Significance for Countryside Conservation, upon the Metropolitan Green Belt and upon Conservation Areas.

BE 8: In and adjoining villages, industrial or office development will not be permitted save in the following circumstances:

- (i) if the development is directly related to agriculture, forestry, a local service function, or other land use essentially demanding a village location;
- (ii) small-scale industries, appropriate to the location and not detrimental to the village's amenity or character, on condition that expansion beyond a reasonable and defined limit will not be permitted; and
- (iii) in the case of both (i) and (ii) above, where the traffic generated can be accommodated.

BE 9: There will be a strong presumption against development in rural Kent (excluding the eleven small rural towns and the villages) unless:

- (i) that development is demonstrated to be necessary to agriculture, forestry, the winning of materials or other land use which essentially demands a rural location;
- (ii) it relates to an acceptable change of use of oast houses, agricultural barns or other buildings which are of architectural, or historic interest, and which lend to the character of the Kentish countryside;
- (iii) it relates to the rebuilding or modest extension of an existing dwelling, currently in residential use and in an appropriate location; or
- (iv) it is the provision of educational or recreational facilities, institutional uses such as hospitals, cemeteries or development to improve the social functioning of the settlement to which it relates.

Any such development will be permitted only if it does not detract from the visual amenities of the surrounding countryside and is, in itself, intrinsically well designed.

NATIONAL & LOCAL NATURE RESERVES, SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

(reproduced and updated from Appendix 2 of Report of Survey)

- Notes:
- (1) The SSSIs in Kent have recently been reviewed; the following list incorporates the result of that review.
 - (2) The Report of Survey map for Nature Conservation illustrates this schedule and the reference numbers here correlate with those on the map.
 - (3) Private nature reserves are not identified in this schedule or on the map.
 - (4) 'A Nature Conservation Review' (NCR):
For a description of the NCR see para. 5.4 of ROS.
The Review identifies particularly important sites, classified as follows (after Circular 108/77):

Grade 1* International importance

Grade 1 National importance

- the protection of these sites would ensure the continuance of a balanced national representation of ecosystems together with the most important examples of particular types of habitat.

Grade 2 Generally of equivalent scientific importance to Grade 1 and complement the essential features of Grade 1 site.

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
1	Alderden Wood	An area of ancient woodland with a variety of features of interest. SSSI.	-	800293
2	Alkham Valley Woods	Mosaic of grassland, scrub and woodland mostly on steep chalk slopes. Also entomological and ornithological interest. SSSI.	1 (part)	270434
3	Bakers Hole	Geological interest with rich fossil fauna. SSSI.	-	613743

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
4	Bayham Woods	Woodlands of botanical and ecological importance including several Wealden gills and a rich flora of ferns, mosses and lichens. SSSI.	-	645375
5	Bishopstone Cliffs	An important geological sequence of rocks is exposed in the cliffs, while the cliff top and glen has biological value. SSSI.	-	210690
6	Blean Woods	The most extensive area of nearly continuous woodland on the London Clay in south eastern England. Of the greatest importance entomologically. NNR, SSSI.	1	110600
7	Botany Bay	Algal flora communities on the chalk cliffs. Only known example in Britain. SSSI.	-	395710
8	Brookland Wood	An area of ancient woodland with a variety of stand-types and features of interest. SSSI.	-	660388
9	Buttons Bourne Alder Carr	One of the best examples of a base rich alder carr on ragstone in West Kent. SSSI.	-	608550
10	Charing Beech Hangers	A very fine example of a chalk escarpment. Beech wood with additional entomological interest. SSSI.	-	980485
11	Charing Heath Alder Carr and Chilston Park	A series of alder/willow carrs in the shallow valley of the River Stour. Rich ground flora including rare species. Entomological interest. SSSI.	-	900500
12	Chattenden Wood	Good example of standard with coppice on London Clay in Mid Kent. Previously considerable entomological interest. SSSI.	-	750735

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
13	Chequers Wood and Old Park	Heathland together with a fine base-rich alder carr on Thanet Sand. SSSI.	-	175590
14	Cobham Woods	An area of wood and old parkland on Upper Chalk and Thanet Sands. Entomological interest. SSSI.	-	700685
15	Combwell Wood	An example of High Weald woodland on Tunbridge Wells Sand with deep stream valleys and peat deposits. Coppice, beech woodland, alder carrs. Rides and open areas extremely rich. Ornithological interest. SSSI.	-	705344
16	Cowden Meadow	Alluvial meadow on Wadhurst Clay, surrounded by pasture and woodland. Poorly drained, very marshy in places. Unploughed for many years, if ever. SSSI.	-	481414
17	Darenth Wood	Variety of woodland types on two soil types. Considerable entomological interest. SSSI.	Considered to be of Grade 1 status.	580723
18	Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs	A coastal strip of chalk cliffs. Geologically, with 23 (below) the most important chalk section in the country. Botanical interest, particularly chalk grassland, and ornithological interest. SSSI.	-	365435
19	Dungeness	An area of the greatest scientific importance, physiographically the structure and development of the shingle ridges is unique whilst botanically, entomologically and ornithologically the area is also of outstanding value. SSSI.	1*	070190

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
20	East Blean Wood	Among the best remaining areas of primary deciduous woodland in The Blean Woods complex. Great entomological importance, also ornithological interest. SSSI.	-	190645
21	Ellenden Wood	Part of the ancient Blean Woods. Includes several woodland types. Extremely rich flora with a wide ecological range. Close to and comparable with Blean Woods (6 above). SSSI.	2	105625
22	Farningham Wood	An oakwood, much of it old coppice with a rich ground flora. Entomological interest. SSSI.	-	540685
23	Folkestone to Etchinghill Escarpment and Asholt Wood	Variety of communities including ash woodland, scrub, rough and short grassland. Fine example of Kentish chalk downland rich in orchids. Entomological interest. SSSI.	Escarpment 2 Woodland 1	200382
24	Folkestone Warren	A stretch of coastal cliff of value for its rock structure, physiography, plants and insects. Wide variety of habitats. SSSI.	1	250380
25	Gibbins Brook	One of very few examples of acid valley fen in East Kent including swamp and heath scrub. Includes entomological interest. SSSI.	-	117387
26	Great Crabbles Wood	Varied woodland including rich flora and entomological interest. SSSI.	-	703704
27	Greatness Brickworks	An important inlaid section of Gault Clay showing significant differences from the standard section at Folkestone. The clay is richly fossiliferous and a large fauna has been recorded. SSSI.	-	535578

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
28	Great Shuttlesfield Down	Chalk grassland. Small but with great variety of plant species. SSSI.	-	175414
29	Halling to Trottiscliffe Downs including Crookhorn Wood	A large area of chalk grassland and mixed woodland on the North Downs, exceptionally rich in all forms of wildlife. SSSI.	1	680640
30	Ham Street Woods	Coppice with standard woodland on Weald Clay, of value entomologically and botanically. NNR and SSSI.	1	010340
31	Hatch Park	Parkland of high scientific value, particularly for lichen flora, entomology, and the old unploughed grassland. SSSI.	-	065405
32	Higham Marshes	A rich area of marshland and dykes of botanical, entomological and ornithological interest. West Court pit contains a wide range of chalk flora and is developing fen-like conditions. SSSI.	-	700750
33	High Halstow (Dalham Farm)	One of few known areas of active inland mass movement on London Clay. SSSI.	-	778753
34	High Halstow Marshes	An area of flats and reclaimed salt marsh. Plant life interest relating to dykes. Major ornithological interest. SSSI.	2 (part) N.B.: proposed revision to 1 (part)	750780
35	High Halstow (Northward Hill)	An area of mainly damp oakwood and old hawthorn scrub. Important for its large heronry, and an attractive breeding area for warblers. NNR.	2	780765
36	Hoads Wood	Damp woodland on Weald Clay. Interesting ground flora and rich variety of insects, also avifauna. SSSI.	-	953425

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
37	Holborough to Burham Marshes	An interesting area of reed-swamp and alluvial meadows. Marsh plant life, invertebrates related to the dykes, ornithological interest. SSSI.	-	715620
38	Hollingbourne Downs	Section of North Downs escarpment including woodland, scrub and open grassland. Also entomological interest. SSSI.	-	846560
39	Hosey Common	Woodland with disused mines used as bat-haunts. SSSI.	-	455527
40	Hothfield Common	An area of wet heathland and bog which is being extensively studied and is the best example of its kind in Kent. LNR.	-	969459
41	Ileden and Oxenden Woods	A fine example of an E. Kent plateau woodland. Includes entomological interest. SSSI.	-	220530
42	Knole Park	An ancient Deer Park of great importance for its insects and fungi. The lichen flora is the richest of any one site in England. Good woodland avifauna. SSSI.	-	540530
43	Larkey Valley Wood	Includes a variety of high forest, coppice with standards and scrub communities. Beech on chalk and ash/oak on deeper soils. SSSI.	-	125550
44	Lenham Quarry	Nationally important section in fossiliferous Lenham Beds. SSSI.	-	915526
45	Limekiln Wood Chalk Pit	Of geological interest particularly illustrating a rare occurrence of a concentration of the earlier stages of growth of the sea urchin Echinocorys. Also important stratigraphically. SSSI.	-	287432

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
46	Lower Upnor Quarry and Cockham Wood	The Quarry is of geological importance showing an important section in the Lower Tertiary Beds. Cockham Wood is of much botanical interest. SSSI.	-	765715
47	Lullingstone Park	Particular importance relates to the epiphytic lichen flora of the old parkland trees. SSSI.	-	515640
48	Lydden to Swingfield Downs	Mosaic of woodland and grassland on chalk. Rich flora. SSSI.	-	250440
49	Lydden & Temple Ewell Downs	Fine example of rich chalk grassland including herbs, orchids and butterflies. SSSI and LNR.	-	275455
50	Lympne Park and West Hythe Downs	Includes an impressive section of Cliffs, with a good lichen and bryophyte flora, grassland and woodland. SSSI.	-	120345
51	Lynsore Bottom	Fine example of mixed woodland on chalk; oak/ash and coppice on deeper soils, beech/ash on shallower soil. SSSI.	-	160480
52	Magpie Bottom	An area of chalk grassland and woodland of botanical interest. SSSI.	-	544610
53	Marden Meadows	Best example in Kent of an old, species-rich hay meadow. SSSI.	-	762445
54	Medway Marshes	Complex of mudflats, salt marsh non-saline grazing marsh with small areas of shingle beach and sand dune. Major ornithological interest, also botanical interest. SSSI.	1 and Part 2 Enlarged Grade 1 site proposed	850740
55	North Cliff, Broadstairs	Internationally important section of Quarternary, Devensian deposits including an Allerød Soil Horizon. SSSI.	-	400685

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
56	Oldbury and Seal Chart	Fine sessile oak woodland with birch, scots pine and other species. SSSI.	-	580560
57	One Tree Hill and Bitchet Common	Ancient woodland on the Ragstone escarpment, with oak-beech woodland on the plateau and alder carr. SSSI.	-	570530
58	Otford to Shoreham Downs	Good examples of escarpment chalk grassland, scrub and woodland along with woodland associated with non-calcareous plateau drift. SSSI.	-	530620
59	Park Gate Down	Small chalk grassland site rich in orchids. SSSI.	-	169460
60	Park Wood, Chilham	Mixed woodland on chalk. Includes entomological interest. SSSI.	-	043527
61	Parsonage Wood, Benenden	Of interest for its deep gills and associated ferns and bryophytes. Proposed SSSI.	-	797330
62	Pembury Cutting and Pit	Fine exposures of the Lower Tunbridge Wells Sand displaying sedimentary features of interest. SSSI.	-	613414
63	Plumpudding Island	A short stretch of coast of considerable interest botanically and also of value for birds and insects. SSSI.	-	260690
64	Polebrook Farm	One of the best neutral meadow sites in Kent, with very rich flora. Series of meadows each with slightly different interest, divided by woodland shaws, also of interest. SSSI.	-	508477
65	Preston Marshes	Includes extensive reed bed, of ornithological interest. Floristically rich dykes. SSSI.	-	233600

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
66	Purple Hill	Includes chalk grassland scrub and woodland. Grassland is rich in herbs and orchids. SSSI.	2	810623
67	Quarryhill Brickworks	Geological interest. Fault contact exposed between Wadhurst Clay and Lower Tunbridge Wells Sand. SSSI.	-	586450
68	Queendown Warren	An area of chalk grassland of value for its extensive flora particularly Orchidaceae. LNR.	2	830630
69	Robins Wood	Wealden gill woodland, oak with coppice and alder carr. Extremely rich ground flora. SSSI.	-	770338
70	Romney Marsh	Extensive area of rich grazing meadows with some arable. Botanical diversity of the dyke system has particular interest. SSSI.	2	990230
71	Romney Warren	An area of old sand dunes formed when the Rother entered the sea at this point, largely of botanical interest. SSSI.	-	085260
72	Sandwich to Pegwell Bay	Contains biological and geological interest. Includes mudflats, salt marsh, sand dune, freshwater marsh and meadowland. Botanically among the richest sites in the country while both entomological and ornithological interest is outstanding. Cliffs at Pegwell Bay include a section of a rare geological unconformity. SSSI.	1 (part)	350600
73	Sayers Woodyard Ramsgate	This site illustrates a complete section of the Uintacrinus zone of the Upper Chalk in the standard area. SSSI.	-	385659

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
74	Scords Wood and Brockhoul Mount	An important area of heath and woodland, illustrating a remarkable range of soil and vegetation types. SSSI.	1	475520
75	Scotney Castle	Includes woodland, parkland pasture and gardens. Lichen communities on old parkland oak trees, and composition of lawns are of particular interest. SSSI.	-	690350
76	Sevenoaks Gravel Pits	Flooded gravel pits of ornithological value particularly from a research point of view. SSSI.	-	520570
77	Shorne and Ashenbank Woods	Includes a variety of woodland types associated with Tertiary gravels, clays and sands. Entomological importance. SSSI.	-	680700
78	Sissinghurst Park Wood	A woodland in which the rides are remarkable for a number of rare plant species. SSSI.	-	803390
79	Stodmarsh	An area of water and marsh vegetation of very considerable ornithological interest. SSSI and NNR.	1	200610
80	Swanscombe Skull Site	Famous site in the Thames Gravels which has yielded amongst others a fossil remnant of Paleolithic Man. SSSI and NNR.	-	598743
81	The Swale	Extensive site with a mosaic of habitats including mudflats, saltmarsh and freshwater grazing marsh with fleets and dykes. Considerable ornithological importance, particularly for overwintering and also for breeding. Saltmarshes and freshwater dykes have botanical and entomological interest. SSSI, NNR & LNR.	1 (part)	000670

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
82	Warden Point	Primarily of geological interest with wide range of fossil remains (flora, vertebrates and invertebrates). Also botanical interest including relict areas of saltmarsh and freshwater marsh. SSSI.	-	025720
83	Westerham Wood	Coppice-with-standards woodland with interesting ground flora. SSSI.	-	440550
84	Wouldham to Detling Escarpment	Biological and geological interest. Chalk escarpment with wide range of botanical interest, also entomological and ornithological interest. Includes a group of large chalk pits providing one of the best inland sections of the Lower and Middle Chalk in the Medway area. SSSI.	1	750611
85	Wye and Crundale Downs	Chalk escarpment including a mosaic of woodland, scrub and open grassland, with orchids and herbs. Also entomological interests. SSSI and NNR.	1	080458
86	Yockletts Bank	Mixed woodland and open areas of scrub and grassland well known for its orchid species, also of entomological and ornithological interest. SSSI.	-	126475

RESERVES AND OTHER SITES MANAGED BY THE KENT TRUST FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (KTNC)

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
87	Bough Beech Reservoir	Part of the reservoir, of ornithological value for breeding and overwintering.	-	495489
88	Brenchley Wood, Matfield	Woodland and bogland rich in mosses and woodland flora.	-	648418

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
89	Burham Down	Part of the Wouldham to Detling escarpment SSSI. Interesting chalk flora and associated insect fauna. See 84 above.	1	740620/ 725635
90	Burham Marsh	Part of the Holborough to Burham Marshes SSSI. One of the few remaining relatively undisturbed wetland areas in the Medway Valley. See 37 above.	-	712624
91	Burnt Oak Wood	Part of the Ham Street Woods SSSI. Relict broad-leaved woodland. See 30 above.	1	990348
92	Chiddingstone	Former brick-pits comprising a variety of habitats and associated flora and fauna.	-	511471
93	Collingwood, Hawkhurst	Woodland on sand overlying clay with a good variety of native and exotic tree species. Watercourses and lake support aquatic flora and fauna.	-	761292
94	Denton Bank	Undisturbed chalk grassland and associated flora, plus broad-leaved woodland.	-	209452
95	East Blean Wood	Part of the East Blean Wood SSSI. Mixed coppice with oak standards, with several primary woodland indicators. See 20 above.	-	183645
96	Ellenden Wood, Blean	Co-extensive with the Ellenden Wood SSSI. See 21 above.	2	105625
97	Gazen Salts	Educational reserve. Recent tree planting with pasture and open water.	-	326587
98	Ham Fen, Eastry	Forms part of the Sandwich to Pegwell Bay SSSI. Comprises old fenland with associated vegetation, and woodland of ornithological interest. See 72 above.	-	334550

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
99	Hawkenbury Bog, Tunbridge Wells	An acid moss flush supporting a range of bog plants.	-	599379
100	Hothfield Common	LNR Important for its bog flora. See 40 above.	-	969459
101	Hunstead Wood, Chartham	Includes swamp with vegetation typical of acid springs on sands. Also woodland, partly very wet and partly on more steeply sloping sandy soil, the latter having ornithological interest.	-	095569
102	Ivy Hatch, Igham	A wet wood on the Greensand Ridge, providing a valuable wildlife sanctuary.	-	588548
103	Kemsing Down	Mixed woodland with chalk grassland on the North Downs escarpment. Interesting for its rich herb flora and butterflies.	-	550594
104	Kiln Wood, Lenham	Woodland on Gault Clay with stream and pond. Interesting for its woodland and wetland plant life and its bird life.	-	888515
105	Lydden Down, Temple Ewell	LNR, part of the Lydden and Temple Ewell Downs SSSI. Rich and varied chalk flora. See 49 above.	-	275455
106	Oare Marsh	Part of The Swale SSSI. Unimproved fresh water grazing marsh. See 81 above.	1	010648
107	Oare Meadow	Part of The Swale SSSI. Supports a wide variety of plants. See 81 above.	-	007627
108	Orlestone Forest	Remnant of the original broad-leaved woodland. One of the finest localities for woodland butterflies and moths in Britain.	-	983354
109	Park Gate Down, Elham	Co-extensive with the Park Gate Down SSSI. Undisturbed chalk grassland rich in flora and insect fauna. Also woodland with bird life. See 59 above.	-	169460

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
110	Parsonage Wood, Benenden	Co-extensive with the Parsonage Wood SSSI. Mixture of broad-leaved tree species on Wadhurst Clay. Ponds and gills provide particular interest. See 61 above.	-	797330
111	Queendown Warren, Hartlip	LNR. Undisturbed chalk grassland with associated flora and insect life. See 68 above.	2	830630
112	Red Wood, Luddesdown	Part of the Halling to Trottscliffe Downs SSSI. Used for experiments in woodland conservation. See 29 above.	1	683666
113	Shellness, Sandwich	Part of the Sandwich to Pegwell Bay SSSI. Beach and foreshore with old dunes and saltmarsh. See 72 above.	1	350620
114	Smallmans Wood, Hamstreet	Relict woodland on clay. Generally noted for its Lepidoptera. Part of the formerly more extensive Orlestone Forest.	-	990336
115	South Swale	LNR, within The Swale SSSI. Major ornithological interest, especially during winter. See 81 above.	1	035648
116	Stockbury Hill Wood	Woodland on chalk escarpment, with associated chalk flora and insect life.	-	835608
117	Westerham Mines	Part of the Hosey Common SSSI. Of interest for hibernating bats of several species. See 39 above.	-	455528
118	Westerham Wood	Co-extensive with the Westerham Wood SSSI. A fine example of coppice with oak standards on the gault clay. See 83 above.	-	440550
119	Westfield Wood	Part of the Wouldham to Detling Escarpment SSSI. Mixed deciduous woodland with, in parts, a dense under-storey of yew on the North Downs escarpment. See 84 above.	1	754607

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
120	Yockletts Bank, Waltham	Co-extensive with the Yockletts Bank SSSI. See 86 above.	-	126475

RESERVES MANAGED BY THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS (RSPB)

Ref.	Name of Site	Description	NCR Grade	Grid Ref.
121	Church Wood, Blean	Includes part of the Blean Woods SSSI and extends beyond that site. In addition to its entomological and botanical interest, this section of the Blean Woods supports a rich diversity of woodland birds. See 6 above.	1 (part)	105595
122	Dungeness	Part of Dungeness SSSI. See 19 above.	1*	070180
123	Elmley	Part of The Swale SSSI. See 81 above.	1	945680
124	Northward Hill	NNR. Outstanding ornithological interest as the largest heronry in Britain. Also important breeding ground for North Kent Marshes woodland bird populations. See 35 above.	2	780765

GLOSSARY

Abbreviations used in the text

ADAS	Agricultural Development and Advisory Service
AGLV	Area of Great Landscape Value (Kent Development Plan 1967)
AHNCV	Area of High Nature Conservation Value
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
ASSA	Area of Special Significance for Agriculture
CLA	Country Landowners' Association
CPRE	Council for the Protection of Rural England
DOE	Department of the Environment
GDO	General Development Order
KTNC	Kent Trust for Nature Conservation
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food
MGB	Metropolitan Green Belt
NCC	Nature Conservancy Council
NCR	A Nature Conservation Review
NFU	National Farmers' Union
NNR	National Nature Reserve
OS	Ordnance Survey
ROS	Report of Survey
SLA	Special Landscape Area
SP	Structure Plan
SP.PAWS	Structure Plan Proposed Alteration to Written Statement
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WS	Written Statement