

# **Kent Downs - North Street Dip Slope**

**Statement of Significance**



## Statement of Significance: North Street dip slope

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Extent of area:</b>  | The LLD comprises a small area south of the M2. It is surrounded to the east, south and west by the Kent Downs AONB, and bounded by the M2 which runs to the north.                            |
| <b>Landscape character context</b>  | Part of 20: Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt. This is a relatively large character area that extends into the AONB and north of the AONB containing an area of diverse character and quality. |
| <p>The area is part of the gently sloping chalk dip slope and forms a distinct rural landscape south of the M2 on the edge and approach to the AONB. It is a large scale landscape of open arable fields, with occasional orchards and long views to the wooded edge of the AONB to the south and out across the Thames Estuary to the north.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Qualities</b></p>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A gently sloping chalk dip slope with a locally undulating rolling landform, with views to the Swale/Thames Estuary.</li> <li>• Distinct rural character providing a sense of separation from the urban area of Faversham/M2 and the AONB. Forming the visual setting of the AONB.</li> <li>• Large scale open arable character – parts thought to have never been subject to enclosure. Truncated poplar shelterbelts mark the edge of former orchards.</li> <li>• Some more enclosed areas such as the dwarf fruit trees/orchards, which characterise the area around Porters Lane and Brogdale.</li> <li>• A distinctive scenic parkland landscape at Copton with its walnut avenue.</li> <li>• Brogdale, the centre for the National Fruit Collection - one of the largest fruit collections in the world and important local attraction.</li> </ul> |  |

| Criteria  | Summary  |
|---|--|
| <b>Local distinctiveness and sense of place</b>         | A gently sloping dip slope dropping away from the AONB in the south, comprising mainly arable crops and occasional orchards, as well top fruit under polytunnels. The landscape is relatively open and contains some large fields that have never been enclosed, plus occasional remnant poplar shelterbelts and hedgerows. The openness allows long views, including to the church and wooded backdrop at Sheldwich in the south which marks the boundary of the AONB and to the Thames Estuary in the north/east.  |
| <b>Landscape quality (condition and intactness)</b>     | Historically, this landscape was never fully enclosed and therefore retains an open character. The field boundary network includes low/gappy hedgerows or open boundaries with occasional remnant standard trees and truncated lines of poplar around former fruit growing areas. Woodland is largely absent, apart from occasional tree groups around larger houses, although woodland within the AONB to the south forms a backdrop. There are few orchards and areas of fruit growing are now mainly within polytunnels, although dwarf fruit trees/orchards are a characteristic feature in the area around Porters Lane and Brogdale creating a more enclosed landscape in this area. |
| <b>Scenic qualities</b>                                 | <p>The general absence of trees, woodland and hedgerows create a relatively open landscape with long views to the AONB and north to the Estuary. These open views are occasionally punctuated by short lines of poplar.</p> <p>The area immediately south of the M2 has particularly distinctive scenic quality with views over the parkland (unregistered) at Copton distinguishing this from the area north of the M2 which is characterised by development along the Ashford Road into Faversham. The landscape as a whole is important in providing separation and an area of strong rural character between Faversham and the AONB.</p>   |
| <b>Landscape values</b>                                 | <p>The area is valued for its wildlife habitats, built heritage, cultural associations, scenic qualities and outdoor recreation. Brogdale is the home of the National Fruit collection and a countryside recreation attraction. Copton manor house and barn with its area of traditional grazed parkland and walnut avenue is valued for its scenic qualities, built heritage and wildlife.</p> <p>This area is unique in that it is encapsulated by the AONB on three sides. Special qualities identified in the Kent Down AONB Management Plan relevant are the views including those across the estuary from the plateau, the farmed landscape.</p>                                     |
| <b>Natural and cultural attributes and associations</b> | <p>There is one Roadside Nature Reserve on Plumford Road (boundary of AONB and LLD).</p> <p>There are clusters of Grade II listed farmhouses and cottages at North Street; Oast, farmhouse and dovecot at Gosmere; Copton windmill; Brogdale farmhouse. Copton Manor is Grade I Listed and is associated with an attractive area of parkland landscape. Historically, this area is considered to be unique because parts have never been enclosed.</p> <p>The National Fruit Collection at Brogdale is one of the largest fruit collections in the world and includes over 3,500 named apple, pear, plum, cherry, bush fruit, vine and cob nut.</p>  |
| <b>Requirements</b>                                     | The area provides part of its visual setting and the rural context for the AONB. It is encapsulated on three sides by the AONB boundary and as such forms an identifiable geographical area. It is a rural landscape and distinct  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>from the more developed area north of the M2.</p> <p>The key requirement is to conserve and enhance landscape quality and condition and role as the rural setting to the AONB.</p> |
|--|---|

# North Street dip slope

