Appendix H
Landscape Character Type H: Wealden River Floodplains

The Wealden River Floodplains landscape type covers the floodplains of the rivers that flow through the Wealden geology of the South Downs – the River Rother and part of the River Arun.

Description

Key Characteristics

- Flat and expansive valley floors underlain mostly by river alluvium, giving rise to periodically waterlogged silty soils supporting permanent pasture.
- The floodplain is etched by narrow channels (‘wet fences’) which divide pastures, as well as the meandering courses of rivers, sometimes flowing between artificial flood banks.
- Groups of willows and alders occur sporadically alongside the river and drainage channels providing important visual and ecological features. Wooded islets, wet woodlands, reedbeds, fen, marsh and swamps are also features of visual and ecological interest.
- Ditch systems and seasonally flooded water meadows ('brooks innings') have a particularly rich flora and are of high biodiversity interest, as well as supporting large numbers of birds.
- General absence of settlement, with the exception of the occasional farm.
- Historic stone bridges cross the rivers, sometimes with stone cottages at the bridgehead. Other historic features such as mills and weirs are associated with the rivers.
- The low incidence of woodland and settlement results in a large scale, open landscape with extensive views across the floodplain.
- Away from transport corridors the valleys retain an unspoilt and tranquil pastoral character.

Physical Landscape

H.1 The *Wealden River Floodplains* are underlain by a variety of bedrock – from Weald Clay in the north of the Arun, to Sandstones and Mudstones of the Hythe, Folkestone and Gault Formations that underlie the Rother and the middle section of the Arun. These, combined with the alluvial drift geology, give rise to loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater.

H.2 Despite the generally fertile nature of alluvial soils, the fluctuations in water table and waterlogging mean the valley floors are relatively poor in terms of their agricultural land capability and are therefore retained as permanent pasture.

H.3 The main rivers meander across the floodplains. The floodplains are also criss-crossed by regular man-made drainage ditches and winding tributaries, which subdivide the valley floors into small to medium sized irregular fields, often bordered by post and wire fences, reeds, scrub, or willow/alder trees.

H.4 Seasonally flooded water meadows ('brooks innings') have a particularly rich flora and are of high biodiversity interest, as well as supporting large numbers of birds. Wooded islets, wet woodlands and swamps are also features of visual and ecological interest.

Perceptual/Experiential Landscape

H.5 The low incidence of woodland and settlement results in a large scale, open landscape with extensive views across the floodplain. It is a simple and uniform landscape type as a result of the consistency in pasture land use.

H.6 There are typically few roads within the floodplain, although many cross the floodplain on bridges. The floodplains tend to have a strong sense of tranquillity as a result of the lack of settlement (and roads) leading to low noise levels and dark skies.

H.7 There are some recreational opportunities provided by short sections of riverside footpaths and public access to nature reserves.

H.8 John Ireland's music (1879-1962) was inspired by the landscapes of the South Downs including Amberley Wild Brooks which inspired a composition of the same name.

Biodiversity

H.9 The floodplains of these rivers support a rich and varied range of wetland habitats including riverine habitat, permanent pasture, water meadows, ditch systems and wet woodland. The river channels themselves also often support willows and alders.

H.10 Of particular note are the extensive areas of floodplain grazing marsh (a BAP Priority Habitat), which together with the ecologically rich ditch systems are of international value. Important sites include Amberley Wild Brooks SSSI, Pulborough Brooks SSSI, both part of the Arun Valley Ramsar. As a whole these grazing marshes and associated wetland habitats, provide a key habitat for a range of wildfowl and over-wintering birds, including nationally important numbers of Bewick's swan and ruff, as well as large numbers of teal, shoveler, wigeon, pintail, lapwing, and mute swan. Other BAP Priority Habitats include good quality semi-improved grassland and deciduous woodland which are commonly found across the landscape, as well as areas of lowland fens and lowland meadows.

H.11 Aside from their ornithological importance, these floodplain grasslands and marshes also support a number of notable plant species, for example cut grass Leersia oryzoides, a plant that is restricted to ten UK locations, and the nationally vulnerable true fox sedge Carex vulpina. The ditches also support an important aquatic flora and are rich in invertebrate species.

H.12 The River Rother is of significant ecological interest and is designated as a LWS for its aquatic flora and associated faunal interest. In addition, the narrow floodplain supports occasional linear areas of wet woodland, marsh and wet meadow, many of which are designated as LWS and provide an important green corridor through the character type.

Key Biodiversity Features	Importance
Extensive floodplain grazing marsh ('brooks innings') (a BAP Priority Habitat).	Supports internationally important breeding waders, wildfowl and over-wintering birds and a number of notable plant species.
Lowland fens and meadows, good quality semi-improved grassland and scattered deciduous woodland, (BAP Priority Habitats).	Lowland fens and lowland meadows are of high conservation value due to their species-rich character. Lowland meadows are important habitats for farmland birds.
River corridors and riverside trees (willow and alder)	Rivers provide aquatic flora and associated faunal interest; trees support the banks and provide habitats for wildlife.

H.13 The majority of BAP Priority Habitats across the floodplains are identified as being suitable for restoration in Natural England's National Habitat Networks Mapping Project. Some of the areas in the floodplains also form part of a Network Enhancement Zone, where green infrastructure provision can help to improve connections between habitats.

Historic Character

H.14 The rivers would have once flowed in much larger channels and the alluvial floodplains, although very fertile, were also narrow and vulnerable to flooding, rendering them unsuitable for prehistoric and later settlement and arable agriculture.

H.15 By the medieval period, the floodplains formed an integral part of a medieval agrarian landscape based on the villages located along the lower slopes of the valleys, and utilising a wide range of resources, including the rich meadowlands on the floodplains.

H.16 The floodplains are now mostly occupied by a series of enclosed fields, including extensive areas of grazing marsh in the Arun floodplain (referred to as 'brooks innings' in the Sussex HLC[1]). The brooks innings are the drainage and enclosure of fresh water marshland in river valley floodplains from the late post-medieval period, onward resulting in

[1] West Sussex County Council, East Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove Unitary Authority and Historic England. 2010 *Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation*

meadows bounded by 'wet fences' or ditches. Culverts and bridges provided access to the meadows for carts to allow harvest.

H.17 Bridges, weirs and mills are also features associated with the river floodplains.

Key Features of the Historic Environment	Importance
Absence of settlement	Evidence of unsuitability of the floodplain for settlement.
Remnant features relating to water management and agricultural/industrial use of the river including brooks innings, bridges, weirs, and mills	Evidence of the importance of the river and its margins to the local economy throughout history.

Settlement Form and Built Character

H.18 The river floodplains are notable for their absence of settlement. Built structures are typically small scale and comprise individual farmsteads or cottages located at bridge crossing points, and other structures such as bridges and weirs. Building materials are typically local sandstone, flint and red and yellow brick, with clay tiles and thatch used for roofing.

Evaluation

Ecosystem Services in the Wealden River Floodplains

H.19 Ecosystem services are the benefits people and society get from the natural environment. The *Wealden River Floodplains* provides:

Provisioning	■ Food provision– grazing and fisheries. ■ Water availability – water supply from rivers; sandstone aquifer maintains springs and base flows into rivers.
Regulating	■ Regulating water flows – the floodplains provide flood protection; the way the area is managed affects water quality (water quality can be adversely affected by pollution from agricultural activity, urban and road run-off and sewage leakage). ■ Regulating soil quality – permanent vegetation cover such as permanent pasture found in the floodplains can result in better soil quality than areas that are intensively cultivated or over grazed. ■ Regulating soil erosion – areas not cultivated, such as permanent pasture in the floodplain, are protected from erosion. ■ Climate regulation - carbon sequestration and storage benefits in soils and woodland along river corridors. Fen peat soils are of particular importance to carbon storage, and although not found extensively in the National Park, can be found at Amberley Wild Brooks in the Arun valley. ■ Air quality regulation – woodland along river corridors regulate local air quality. ■ Pollination – unimproved and semi-improved grasslands are important nectar sources for pollinating insects.
Cultural	■ Sense of place – river floodplains have a distinct sense of place. ■ Tranquillity – high levels within the intimate rural landscape. ■ Recreation – a network of public rights of way and remnant areas of common land provide some public access.
Supporting	■ Biodiversity - the Arun valley is internationally designated as a Ramsar site and also as a SPA; the River Rother and associated floodplain habitats support an extensive range of species and ecosystem services.

Sensitivities

H.20 This landscape type has many sensitive physical and aesthetic/perceptual features that are vulnerable to change, as set out in the table below:

Key Landscape Sensitivities
1. The flat, open and undeveloped character of the valley floors are particularly vulnerable to the introduction of built elements, particularly large scale linear/vertical developments.
2. Inter-visibility with adjacent valley sides enhances the visual sensitivity (representative viewpoints overlooking the floodplains are identified in the South Downs National Park View Characterisation and Analysis report[2]).
3. The naturalistic, meandering channels of the rivers and the dendritic tributary streams provide a sense of naturalness and are vulnerable to straightening.
4. The unified pastoral character of the floodplain is vulnerable to changes in land use and management including conversion to arable cropping and the introduction of horse paddocks.
5. Riverside willows and alders mark the courses of the rivers and contribute to the biodiversity and visual interest of the floodplain landscapes.

[2] LUC. 2015 South Downs National Park: View Characterisation and Analysis

Key Landscape Sensitivities	
6.	Semi-natural floodplain habitats such as ponds, reedbeds, meadows, and grazing marsh contribute to the naturalistic character of the floodplains and provide a rich biodiversity.
7.	The flooded water meadows ('brooks innings') have a particularly rich flora and support large numbers of birds.
8.	The sense of tranquillity, and even 'remoteness' in parts, is vulnerable to noise, roads, settlement and artificial lighting.
9.	The dark skies associated with the South Downs International Dark Skies Reserve which are vulnerable to light sources, particularly in the 'Dark Sky Core'.

Change – Key Issues and Trends

Past Change

H.21 Past change includes:

Past Change	
1.	Draining of the floodplains through artificial drainage channels and canalisation of sections of the river courses has reduced the naturalistic course of the rivers.
2.	Introduction of artificial drainage channels to enable agriculture on the floodplain and lowering of water tables has resulted in loss of wet pastures.
3.	Invasive, non-native species such as Himalayan balsam and giant hogweed have expanded along river valleys, displacing native plants and habitats.
4.	Erosion, diffuse pollution and silting of the rivers as a result of intensive farming techniques have affected their natural courses.

Future Landscape Change

H.22 The likely future changes are set out in the table below.

Future Change	
1.	Reduction in wet woodland, watermeadows, and grazing marsh as a result of drier, warmer summers reducing damp conditions needed for the survival of these habitats.
2.	Drying of the floodplains in summer could result in replacement of pasture with dry grassland species (e.g. drying of fen peat soils found at Amberley Wild Brooks in the Arun valley could lead to a loss of peat stock and carbon stores) and pressure for building of more reservoirs for irrigation.
3.	Sea level rises, and increases in winter precipitation, may result in further breaching of river floodbanks and increased flooding events, leading to an increased pressure on flood defences and changes to flood management that could affect the character of the floodplains.
4.	Increased water temperatures may also result in more prolific vegetation growth within rivers and on banks, including invasive non-native species, as well as increase in pests and diseases resulting in loss of native habitats. Changes to seasonal water flows and an increase in flash flows as a result of climate change may also result in changes to the species composition of habitats.
5.	Increased rainfall could result in soil erosion in adjacent farmland areas, and this could have knock-on effects on water quality within the rivers.
6.	In response to climate change, the pursuit of renewable energy may result in demand for growth of biomass crops which could alter the open character of, and wetland habitats associated with the floodplains.

Future Change	
7.	Increased storm and flooding events could result in changes to flood management of the river floodplain, including an increased pressure for tree planting to attenuate floods, that could affect the character of the floodplains.
8.	Agricultural management will be driven by the changes in the world market and agricultural policy. In this floodplain landscape, where soils are seasonally waterlogged, it is possible that marginal farms may cease grazing, diversifying into other uses such as vineyards, hobby-farms, camping farms, petting zoos and other tourism uses. There may also be pressure to intensify, resulting in loss of semi-natural habitats, increase in soil erosion and increase in barns or shelters.
9.	Further pressure for introduction of horse paddocks and associated stables, mirrors and lights, which may affect the open rural character of the floodplains.
10.	Recreational pressure may have an impact on the floodplain landscape, causing erosion and altering the sense of tranquillity.
11.	The floodplains are characterised by the absence of development – however, pressure for development in this and adjacent areas can affect the undeveloped character and associated dark skies characteristic of the floodplain, as well as putting further pressure on water resources.

Broad Management Objective and Landscape Guidelines

H.23 The overall management objective should be to conserve the tranquil, pastoral, undeveloped character of the floodplains and to support opportunities to increase semi-natural floodplain habitats such as grassland, reedbeds, watermeadows, and grazing marsh.

Guidance for Landscape Management

A. Employ natural flood management solutions that are compatible with the character of the floodplains e.g. restoring bends in rivers, provision of flood storage, naturalisation and habitat restoration in the floodplain and creating saltmarshes on the coast to absorb wave energy near the coast. Increased channel maintenance and flood relief channels are preferable to building up of flood embankments and walls in these open landscapes. Ensure flood management is planned at catchment level to manage the flow of water along the whole length of the river.

B. Encourage seasonal grazing to maintain the pastoral character of the floodplains and extend grasslands and wildflower meadows that support pollinators.

C. Be alert to potential new pests and diseases and plan for their management.

D. Continue to monitor native species to assess changes in numbers and distribution. Monitor and control the spread of invasive species which are a cause of decline in native habitats, such as Giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum* and Floating pennywort *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides* in the rivers and grazing marsh. Refer to the SDNP INNS Strategy. Freshwater ecosystems seem particularly susceptible to invasions from problem species and climate change may exacerbate this (Clarke 2009).

E. Conserve the dendritic tributary streams which provide a sense of naturalness to an otherwise regimented pattern of artificial drainage channels. Continue to manage all drainage ditches and allow buffer zones alongside the ditches to enhance biodiversity and reduce pollution of water courses.

F. Conserve and extend characteristic floodplain habitats such as riverside willows and alders, reedbeds, unimproved meadows, and grazing marsh, which contribute to the naturalistic character of the floodplain. Re-creating and extending areas of flood meadows can form part of flood relief schemes as well as reduce diffuse pollution and run-off.

G. Adopt soil, habitat and land management practices to ensure continued and enhanced carbon storage, for example by promoting areas of permanent grassland (including flood meadows), woodland and marsh/fen and avoiding excess fertilising, ploughing or compaction of soil by overgrazing.

H. Conserve remnant historic water meadow systems which are of historic and archaeological interest as well as ecological value.

I. Monitor the impact of climate change on riverside trees, wetland scrub, flood meadows, and grazing marsh. Consider planting riverside woodlands to help climate regulation and prevent riverbank erosion.

J. Avoid over-abstraction which could result in loss of water quality and wetland habitat.

K. Seek to minimise water pollution from agriculture through sensitive land management practices, including restoration of buffer strips along watercourses to minimise run-off.

L. Ensure future pressures for biomass crops (such as Miscanthus and willow plantations) do not alter the fundamentally open and pastoral character of the floodplains

M. Maintain and develop the rights of way network, to enhance enjoyment of the landscape.

Guidance for Integrating Development into the Landscape

A. Conserve the tranquil, pastoral and undeveloped character of the floodplains and associated dark skies, taking account of the technical guidance note dark skies technical advice note: https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/TLL-10-SDNPA-Dark-Skies-Technical-Advice-Note-2018.pdf.

B. Conserve historic built structures associated with the river – mills, weirs, bridges etc., as well as historic farmsteads and cottages at bridge crossing points.

C. The floodplains are generally unsuitable for any built development. Any development in the floodplains could both increase flood risk and itself be at risk of flooding, and roads can produce run off into the rivers affecting water quality.

D. Consider views across the floodplain, and to and from the adjacent valley sides or adjacent high ground, in relation to any change. Refer to guidance in the View Characterisation and Analysis report.

Woodland strategy and suitable species

H.24 The LCT contains limited woodland cover – just under 2km^2, covering approximately 10% of the LCT. Wetland trees occur sporadically along the river and drainage channels as groups of willows and alders or wooded islets. Small areas of wetland trees or wet woodland maybe appropriate as part of the complex of floodplain habitats, where they do not conflict with wetland conservation and enhancement.

H.25 Avoid the introduction of non-native species. Appropriate plant species may be informed by the National Biodiversity Network Gateway, relevant Biodiversity Action Plans and biological records from the relevant Biological Records Centre.

H.26 Ensure any purchased plant stock is through reputable nurseries, operating the Plant Health Assurance Scheme (once it has been trialled) to protect against the risk of *Xylella fastidiosa* and other plant health risks.

Character Areas There are two areas of *Wealden River Floodplain* located within the National Park.	
H1:	Rother Floodplain
H2:	Arun (Wealden) Floodplain

H1: Rother Floodplain

Location and Boundaries

The Rother Floodplain is located within the broad Rother Valley which lies between the Greensand Hills of the Weald to the north and the Chalk Downs to the south. The extent of the floodplain is consistent with the flood zone.

Key Characteristics

- A relatively narrow floodplain containing the River Rother which has a gently meandering course.
- A floodplain underlain mostly by river alluvium, giving rise to periodically waterlogged silty soils supporting permanent pasture.
- Areas of wet woodland (often linear), groups of willow and alders along the river, marsh and wet meadow provide ecological and visual interest.
- General absence of settlement, with the exception of historic stone bridges, sometimes with stone cottages at the bridgehead. Other historic features such as mills and weirs are associated with the river.
- The floodplain provides an important setting to Cowdray Castle and Cowdray House (the avenue approach to the house crosses the floodplain).
- The low incidence of woodland and settlement results in an open character with views across the river and floodplain.
- Away from transport corridors the valley retains an unspoilt and tranquil pastoral character.
- The floodplain forms part of the views from the Greensand Hills to the north and from the Chalk downs to the south.

Specific Characteristics Unique to the Rother Floodplain

H.27 The *Rother Floodplain* is relatively narrow compared to the Arun and does not have the large areas of 'wild brooks' associated with it. Nevertheless, the floodplain supports some important woodland, grassland and wetland habitats. These areas are designated as a LWS for these habitats as well as the river's aquatic flora and associated faunal interest.

H.28 The *Rother Floodplain* contains a number of historic bridges, and many of these crossing points have associated hamlets, many of which are conservation areas. This area is also influenced by Cowdray House and its associated parkland (which is listed on the Historic England Register) and which extends into the floodplain. The floodplain landscape provides an important setting to Cowdray Castle and Cowdray House (the avenue approach to the house crosses the floodplain). Easebourne, on the banks of the Rother, is a Cowdray Estate village constructed mostly of sandstone with the familiar Cowdray deep yellow paint a feature of the buildings.

H.29 Parts of the floodplain and river are accessible via a network of public rights of way.

Sensitivities Specific to the Rother Floodplain

H.30 Most of the landscape and visual sensitivities listed in the landscape type evaluation apply to this character area. Specific to this character area are:

Key Landscape Sensitivities	
1.	The gently meandering course of the River Rother with its fields of pasture and ecologically rich habitats of wet woodland, marsh and wet meadow.
2.	The many historic stone bridges and associated listed buildings, and the role the river and floodplain play in the setting of these historic features.
3.	The role of the floodplain as an important setting to Cowdray Castle and Cowdray House (the avenue approach to the house crosses the floodplain).
4.	The role of the Rother floodplain in views from the Greensand Hills to the north and the Chalk downs to the south.

Change Specific to the Rother Floodplain

H.31 In addition to the changes listed in the landscape type evaluation, specific changes to this area are set out in the table below:

Forces for Change	
1.	Pressures for additional built development close to Easebourne and Midhurst.
2.	Further erosion of soil and run-off from intensively farmed land polluting the River Rother.
3.	Increased water temperatures may result in changes to the species composition of habitats associated with the River Rother LWS.
4.	Increased demand for leisure land uses such as fishing in the Rother.

Landscape Management / Development Considerations Specific to the Rother Floodplain

H.32 In addition to the generic landscape management and development considerations for this landscape type, the following landscape management considerations are specific to this character area:

a. Enhance biodiversity interest of riverside pastures and retain/extend rich wet woodland, marsh and wet meadow habitats.

b. Control invasive species such as Japanese knotweed and Himalayan Balsam along the river, as well as monitoring further changes to species.

c. Consider opportunities to re-create waterside grassland along the Rother and tributary streams to increase landscape diversity and enhance biodiversity and extend habitat networks.

d. Monitor water quality and seek to minimise water pollution from agriculture and support for the production of Nutrient, Manure and Crop Protection Management Plans.

H.33 The following development considerations are specific to this character area:

a. Take account of the sensitivity of views from the Greensand Hills to the north and from the Chalk Downs to the south in relation to any change within the valley. Refer to guidance in the View Characterisation and Analysis report.[3]

b. Consider opportunities for undergrounding the electricity pylons that cross the Rother Floodplain.

c. Avoid built development on the floodplain and conserve the rural landscape settings to the bridgehead hamlets, Eastbourne, Midhurst and Cowdray.

[3] LUC. 2015 *South Downs National Park: View Characterisation and Analysis*

H2: Arun (Wealden) Floodplain

Location and Boundaries

The Arun (Wealden) Floodplain is located on the flat valley floor of the Arun Valley where it flows through the Wealden geology between Pallingham Manor in the north and Amberley in the south. The extent of the floodplain is consistent with the extent of the flood zone. The floodplain continues northwards beyond the boundary of the National Park into the Low Weald, and southwards into the chalk downs where the valley sides steepen.

Key Characteristics

- Flat and expansive valley floor of the Arun valley underlain mostly by river alluvium, but with some peat deposits and older fluvial deposits along the edges.
- Contains the meandering course of the River Arun, which flows between artificial flood banks.
- Periodically waterlogged silty soils mostly support permanent pasture, within fields reclaimed from the floodplain, giving the floodplain a lush, pastoral character and supporting an important ecological flora.
- The floodplain is etched by a geometric grid of narrow channels ('wet fences') which divide pastures.
- Some areas of arable are present on areas of peat where there are higher grade agricultural soils e.g.at Hardham Park Farm.
- Groups of willows and alders occur sporadically alongside the river and drainage channels providing important visual and ecological features.
- Amberley Wild Brooks is an especially distinctive area where the ditch systems and wet grasslands have a particularly rich flora and attract nationally important populations of winter birds.
- General absence of settlement, with the exception of occasional farms.
- Historic stone bridges across the River e.g. Stopham Bridge.
- The low incidence of woodland and trees results in a large scale, open landscape with extensive views across the floodplain.

Specific Characteristics Unique to the Arun (Wealden) Floodplain

H.34 The *Arun (Wealden) Floodplain* is an area of particularly extensive floodplain, especially between Pulborough and Amberley where the river has carved into the Upper Greensand exposing a steep, minor cliff at Amberley. It is in this wide floodplain that the 'wild brooks' have developed - extensive areas of flood meadows and wet woodland divided by ditch systems that have a particularly rich flora and attract nationally and internationally important populations of wildfowl and overwintering birds. These extensive areas of wetland habitat are of particularly high ecological value, recognised through the Arun Valley Ramsar, which comprises a number of SSSIs, including Pulborough Brooks, Waltham Brooks and Amberley Wild Brooks.

H.35 This character area is also notable for its historic bridges – a fine example is Stopham Bridge which was built in 1423 to replace a ferry. In 1822, when the Wey and Arun Canal was constructed further upriver the central arch was raised. The canal, however, was never successful and is now disused. It is now protected as a Grade I listed building and Scheduled Monument.

H.36 There are some deeply tranquil parts in this character area, particularly in the extensive wetland areas of Amberley Wild Brooks.

H.37 The *Arun (Wealden) Floodplain* is typical of the major river floodplains in that settlement is largely absent. The only built development is the occasional farmstead, and cottages at bridge crossing points.

H.38 John Ireland's music (1879-1962) was inspired by the landscapes of the South Downs including Amberley Wild Brooks which inspired a composition of the same name.

Sensitivities Specific to the Arun (Wealden) Floodplain

H.39 All of the landscape and visual sensitivities listed in the landscape type evaluation apply to this character area. Specific sensitivities to this character area are included in the table below:

Key Landscape Sensitivities
1. The 'brooks' (Waltham Brooks, Pulborough Brooks and Amberley Wild Brooks) whose ditch systems, wet grasslands and peaty soils have a particularly rich flora and attract nationally important populations of winter birds, as well as supporting pollinators.
2. Riverside woodland that provides habitats, helps to regulate the climate and protect soils from erosion.
3. Historic bridges along the Arun River including Stopham Bridge, a fine medieval bridge.
4. Sense of tranquillity/ dark skies, and even remoteness, in parts of the floodplain, particularly in the wild brooks.
5. Views from adjacent high ground in which the floodplain forms a component (refer to representative views identified in the View Characterisation and Analysis report) [4].

Change Specific to the Arun (Wealden) Floodplain

H.40 In addition to the changes listed in the landscape type evaluation, specific changes to this area are set out in the table below:

Forces for Change
1. Drier, warmer summers may affect the wet woodland, watermeadows, swamp, and grazing marsh habitats of the Wild Brooks.
2. Historic bridges may be threatened by increases in traffic and road widening schemes.
3. Changes in land use could affect the sense of 'remoteness' associated with the floodplain and affect views from adjacent high ground.

Landscape Management / Development Considerations Specific to the Arun (Wealden) Floodplain

H.41 In addition to the generic landscape management and development considerations for this landscape type, the following landscape management considerations are specific to this character area:

a. Conserve the tranquil character and wetland habitats of Amberley, Waltham and Pulborough Wild Brooks, where ditch systems and wet grasslands which have a particularly rich flora and attract nationally important populations of winter birds. Ensure remnant marshy habitats such as Amberley Swamp are not at risk from drying, drainage or erosion.

b. Ensure changes in land use do not adversely affect the sense of 'remoteness' associated with this part of the floodplain.

H.42 The following development considerations are specific to this character area:

a. Conserve the historic bridges and ensure any road improvements or bridge re-building respects the fabric and setting of these bridges.

b. Consider views across the floodplain when planning any change taking note of representative views identified in the View Characterisation and Analysis report.

[4] https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Viewshed-Study-Report.pdf - Views 32 & 60