

Seclusion & Tranquillity:

This is generally a small-scale, enclosed landscape with a great variety and contrast. The numerous woodlands limit views and hedgerows, particularly giving it a secluded character in the Mixed Farmland and Woodland (Enclosed) areas, although the chalklands are visible from areas of higher ground. Many areas also remain remote from busy through-routes, and are valued for their tranquillity.

Key Issues:**Landscape:**

- Inappropriate materials in relation to new built development – along roads and around settlements
- The erosion of the 'patchwork' character of the landscape due to the loss of woodlands & hedgerows

Woodland:

- Lack of appropriate management of ancient semi-natural woodlands including hazel coppice woods
- Non-indigenous and coniferous woodland planting, especially in semi-natural ancient woodlands and on alkaline soils
- Fragmentation of woodlands, resulting in the reduced overall 'connectivity' value of the woodland/hedgerow network for wildlife.
- Poor management of over mature, mainly coniferous shelter belts
- Loss of broadleaf woodlands
- Locations and tree species of new woodlands

Hedgerow:

- Loss of hedgerows
- Fragmented, isolated and remnant hedgerows and the loss of unity of the hedgerow network
- Lack of hedgerow management, especially resulting in loss of hedgerow oaks and failure to retain tree saplings in hedgerows
- Over-management of hedgerows and damage from spray drift
- Identification and management of hedgerows of significant historical importance

Agriculture:

- Low biodiversity levels due to intensive farming
- Lack of permanent grass field margins, including uncultivated buffer strips next to rivers and other sensitive wildlife habitats
- Insufficient use of conservation headlands
- Decline of winter stubble and spring sown crops
- Neglected farm ponds

Grassland:

- Lack of appropriate management of unimproved neutral grassland
- Lack of appropriate cutting of road verges and hedge banks, and damage from scrub encroachment, road improvements and agrochemicals from adjacent farmland