

Local Landscape Character Assessment

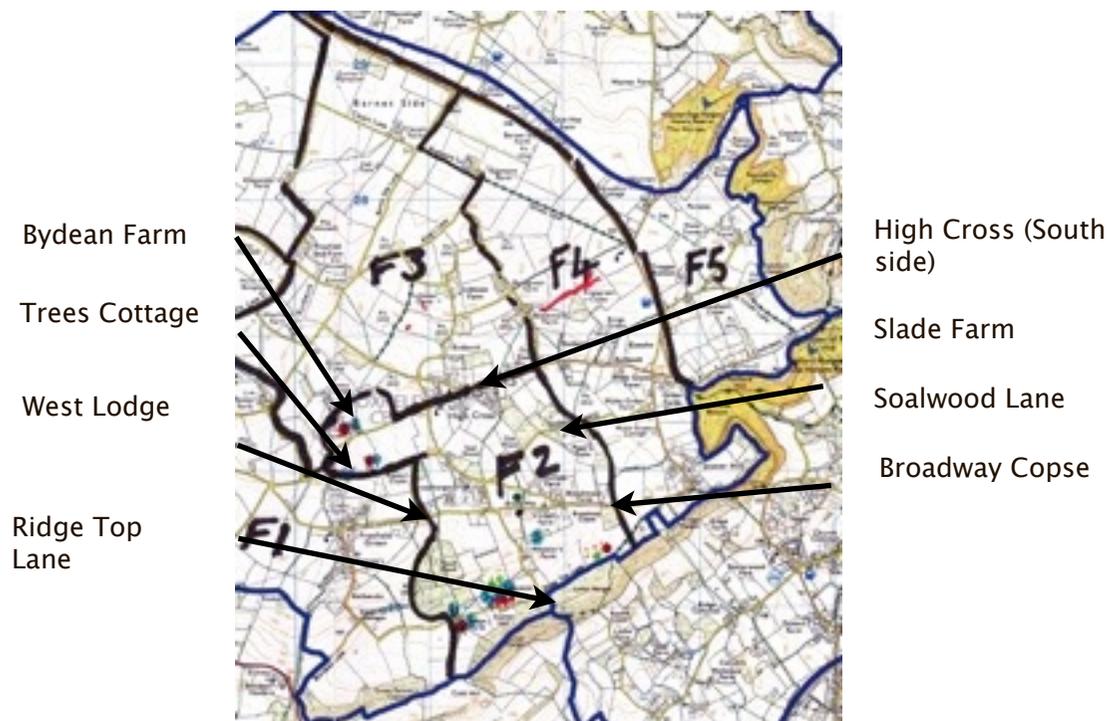
Froxfield Parish LLCA Zone F2

Prepared by Brenda King, Shirley Pitman, Jenna Samengo-Turner - May 2011



The information provided in this report was gathered using the matrix in the Local Landscape Character Assessment Toolkit provided by the South Downs National Park Authority.

This report covers the Froxfield area, F2, running from Ridge Common Lane in the South, to High Cross in the North stretching West to Bydean Farm and East to Bootmenders Cottage.



The report involved an in depth assessment of the area, the study of maps and historical data. Field analysis was achieved through walking the lanes and byways and information collected through consultation with local farmers, residents and businesses.



"Peace and tranquility"
"Traditional village Resisting Urbanisation"
"Blissful rural position yet close to amenities"
"Warm neighbours, not intrusive neighbours"
"Sprawling village with a strongly linked community"



Feature	Notes	Photo
Feelings & Associations	<p>The village remains sparsely populated and is typical of rural East Hampshire, described variously by the residents as rural, green, gentle and undulating.</p> <p>The peaceful location of the village ensures that it is tranquil(*), safe (**) and enjoys a rare spirit of tradition and community.</p> <p>There are many organised events and schemes which bring the community together: the Village Fete, Christmas Carols sung outdoor in moonlight, Harvest festival supper and Rogation Sunday. There are many clubs – The Over 60’s, Ladies Friendship Group, Horticultural Society, Froxfield Choir and Froxfield Bell Ringers, Froxfield’s Football, Darts & Cricket Clubs. A Market Fair has also been launched this year.</p> <p>The village is kept up to date with events, comments and general parish issues through the monthly Parish Magazine.</p> <p>The absence of street lighting, and the position of the village, described as being the highest in Hampshire provides spectacular sunsets and moonlit nights.</p> <p>* Noise levels can be described as low, though the A3, approximately 1.5 miles due south, can be heard with certain wind direction and during low pressure</p> <p>* * The village crime record can be described as exceptionally low . There is a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and a Safer Neighbourhood Team with responsibility for the Parish.</p>	  

Feature	Notes	Photo
<p>Historic features</p>	<p>Historical records show the existence of an Anglo-roman earthwork camp on Ridge Top Lane and the regular discovery of ancient flint-work indicates that the area would have been used for hunting and meat preparation. There is no evidence, however, that the Anglo-Roman camp was used for settlement.</p> <p>The Froxfield Entrenchments run from north of Bydean Farm, through Froxfield Green to the A272. At Bydean Farm, there is one large and several small Sarsen Stones which indicate possible glacial movement at the end of the ice age.</p> <p>The rich network of lanes formed by Broadway, Ridge Top Lane and Bell Lane indicate the original routes through the village providing carriageways for loads to be transported by horse and cart from Petersfield. These lanes are often marked by lines of beech acting as path markers. An excellent document has been produced recently on the history of the network of lanes.</p> <p>Neolithic pottery and axe flint work have been found in the area along some of the ancient byways of the area – Ridge Top Lane and Bell Lane.</p>	 <p>Anglo Roman Camp</p>  <p>Sarsen Stone/</p>  <p>Bronze age Axe head</p>  <p>Ancient highway from Petersfield to Ridge top Lane</p>

Feature	Notes	Photo
<p>Other man-made features</p>	<p>Piper's honey farm is a modern, light industrial unit in F2 concealed by brick and flint elevations. It is an excellent example of how a local business can thrive in a community without visually impinging upon it. The business currently employs five full time staff and produces honey based products.</p> <p>The electricity pylons which are visible from Bydean Farm and Trees Cottage have a dominant visual impact but can only be seen from certain properties on the north western boundary in the area. They are, nevertheless, an eyesore.</p>	 <p>Pipers Honey Farm</p>  <p>Pylons seen from High Cross Lane towards Bydean Farm</p>

Feature	Notes	Photo
<p>Characteristic features of houses and settlements</p>	<p>The older properties in the area have mostly been built by local landowners and clergy. The intricate carpentry in Trees Cottage indicates some links to royalty.</p> <p>There are several Grade II listed properties: Trees Cottage, formerly Westcroft, circa 1359, Bydean Farm, Ridge Farmhouse and King's Cottage c17th. Broadhanger has origins dating back to c13th but the current house, built in 1832, is not listed.</p> <p>There are some 75 houses in the area, ten of which are medieval and are constructed from flint, oak and thatch. Bydean Farm and the original house at Broadhanger, known as Fluddes' Farm, however, being some of the wealthier houses, are constructed of flint and oak and retain some c17th oak panelling and carpentry.</p> <p>Many modern buildings have been sympathetically constructed from local materials but many have not. Dellfield & Deans Dell- provide a hub for the village with public transport, shop, village hall, recreation ground, church and school.</p> <p>The remaining settlements are sporadic. Seven dwellings are informally grouped at the junction of Broadway and King Lane.</p>	 <p>Trees Cottage</p>  <p>Highcroft</p>  <p>Ridge Farmhouse</p>

Feature	Notes	Photo
<p>Characteristic features and patterns of agriculture and forestry</p>	<p>Historically, the area is known to have been extensive forest. However, the data indicates that dwellings in the area would have been self-sufficient and would, therefore, have had access to limited grazing land.</p> <p>Today, the land is widely cultivated with crops managed by both chemical and organic methods. Thanks to CAP incentives, the farms are well-tended and hedgerows well maintained. However, some hedges are maintained under the Stewardship Scheme which encourages hedge cutting every other year and this has had a negative impact on song bird nesting. The team noted a number of fields that seemed to be littered with 'landfill' and observed damage to roads and verges caused by the ever-increasing use of large agricultural machinery.</p> <p>In this area, the farming trend is to use the land for grazing livestock rather than growing arable crops. Because the land is not cultivated so intensively, there is an increase in flora and fauna; in agricultural employment and a reduction in tractor traffic.</p> <p>Although small and large farms have access to nutrient rich grass and hay for grazing, a significant proportion of this land has been changed from agricultural to equestrian use. Four dwellings in the F2 area alone are using former agricultural land for equestrian purposes. One small holding is registered at Wheelers Farm.</p>	   <p>Hedgrow & Verge in Spring</p>

Feature	Notes	Photo
Land cover	<p>The land cover is open farmland and woodland with small areas of original coppice woodland. Some ancient woodland still exists but is not significant in this area. The Coniferous plantation schemes visible on the south side of Ridge Common Lane are slowly being felled and we can now see an abundance of Bluebells/Foxgloves and Primroses.</p> <p>Wildlife habitats are provided by extensive and well-maintained hedges. There are frequent sightings of deer, foxes, badgers and rabbits as well as buzzards, owls, skylarks and many songbirds, both native and migratory. Our ponds are inhabited with toads, frogs and newts.</p>	 <p>Foxgloves emerging from recently felled Conifer plantation</p>
Soil	<p>The soil of the area is mostly flint and chalk with clay caps. The soil is shallow and poor with a neutral to slightly acidic ph value.</p>	

Feature	Notes	Photo
Land Form	<p>Generally, the landscape can be characterised as gently undulating, open downland used mainly for arable crops or grazing. The land provides for excellent game shooting.</p> <p>The remaining land is divided up amongst individual properties with grounds ranging from two to 15 acres. Outside the gardens, the land is used for equestrian purposes or rented for grazing to local farmers.</p>	 <p>View to Wheelers Farm across a field sown with Barley</p>
Climate & hydrology	<p>The local climate can be summarised as windy and cool with average temperatures slightly lower than Petersfield. Rainfall is average for East Hampshire and low fog is a frequent feature during winter.</p> <p>There are several dew ponds in F2. The pond at the main entrance to Broadhanger is in a state of disrepair. However, there is significant spawning activity each spring which indicates that this is a perfect environment for frogs, toads and newts.</p> <p>The dewpond pictured right is sited at Soalpond Cottage and has recently been dredged and re-established with wildlife and native plant species.</p>	 

Feature	Notes	Photo
<p>During the consultation with residents, the team received these views:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Residents value the peaceful traditional, rural way of life. The dark night skies, community involvement and the fact that the Parish is close to good rail, road facilities and shops. ● More local job incentives to employ Froxfield people should be made available together with accommodation, to prevent Froxfield families having to leave the area. ● In order to prevent Froxfield becoming a retirement or dormitory settlement, development which promotes local employment within the National Park planning parameters, should be given consideration ● Good farming methods are essential to maintain the landscape and wildlife must be protected and encouraged ● Street lighting, domestic security lighting, road signage, pavements and energy infrastructure present evidence of undesirable creeping urbanisation ● Footpaths, bridleways and ancient highways must be respected by users and any amendment to B.O.A.T. or Byeways should only be taken after close consultation with local residents ● Any additions or amendments that alter the landscape or population density must be carefully considered and only undertaken in close consultation with local residents 	  <p>Road signs which typify Urbanisation</p>  <p>Bell Lane has been amended to a B.O.A.T and consequently open to off-road vehicles</p>

Feature	Notes	Photo
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sustainable energy sources should be researched in order to reduce Froxfield's dependence on fossil fuels and to identify the viability of a community energy project ● In order to thrive, Froxfield needs improved broadband and telecommunication links ● There is a concern that weekenders and buy-to-let landlords contribute little to the community but are inevitable ● There are infrastructure concerns with the imminent threat to Froxfield's bus service and concerns for the future of the shop and Churches 	 <p>Bus service needing a more passenger loads to secure its future.</p>