

Appendix 1: Woodplace Farm Field and New Hill, Extract from Natural England’s landscape analysis table for the Happy Valley Extension

Boundary		
<u>Theme</u>	<u>Representation</u>	<u>Natural England Commentary</u>
<p>Include Woodplace Farm Fields to the west of Farthing Hill</p>	<p>ANON-VUXE-WMBH-P Reasons given include:</p> <p>Natural Beauty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area is grazed by cattle. • Designated public open space in 2006. • Forms part of the rolling hill landscape. • The lower field contains a chalkland meadow. <p>Boundary: The hedge between the upper and lower fields is proposed as an alternative boundary.</p>	<p><u>Commentary</u></p> <p>The Natural Beauty Assessment considered this area as part of EA8a (pages 111-114). Under Landscape Quality it notes <i>‘The open common of Farthing Downs continues along a shoulder of elevated land. However, development has encroached into the adjacent lower lying land during the first half of the 20th century, eroding the rural context of the northern part of the downs.’</i></p> <p>The fields west of Farthing Downs were reviewed. Here the land was considered to form a single uninterrupted sweep of landscape from Farthing Downs which dips into a shallow valley and rises again to the urban edge. Natural England therefore considers that this land is not influenced by the A23 corridor or adjacent urban areas which are set further back and screened by vegetation. The fields which form open downland and are under active grazing management form part of an uninterrupted sweep of landscape.</p> <p>On balance, and given the unity between this land and Farthing Downs, Natural England has concluded that the boundary should be drawn further west to include these fields of open chalk grassland. The boundary follows hedgerows and property boundaries which are clear boundary features. Fields further north, which are subdivided for equestrian use and are more influenced by the proximity of the urban edge, are excluded.</p> <p><u>Conclusion</u> Minor addition to include fields to the west of Farthing Downs.</p> <p>(Addition 8 – Refer to Figure 21a)</p>
<p>Include New Hill to the east of Farthing Downs</p>	<p>ANON-VUXE-WMBH-P, ANON-VUXE-WS1R-N, ANON-VUXE-WEGQ-V, ANON-VUXE-W5BW-D. Reasons given include:</p> <p>Natural Beauty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed through scrub clearance and sheep grazing. 	<p><u>Commentary</u></p> <p>The Natural Beauty Assessment considered this area as part of EA8a (pages 111-114). Under Landscape Quality it notes <i>‘The open common of Farthing Downs continues along a shoulder of elevated land. However, development has encroached into the adjacent lower lying land during the first half of the 20th century, eroding the rural context of the northern part of the downs.’</i></p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly visible from Farthing Downs. Forms part of the rolling landscape of Farthing Downs and Happy Valley. Rare wild flowers and pyramidal orchids. Single line of housing on either side of Chaldon Way between Farthing Downs and New Hill, is in the bottom of the valley and does not affect the landscape views from Farthing Downs Marks the entrance to Happy Valley. <p>Desirability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designation of this area would add additional protection and maintenance. The natural beauty of Happy Valley and Farthing Downs depends upon adjacent areas. Would add complication of administration and delay. <p>Boundary:</p> <p>ANON-VUXE-WMBH-P put forward an alternative boundary:</p> <p><i>‘Drive Road looks like a clear boundary so I can see why it was selected as the AONB boundary but on the ground it is just a footpath like many others.</i></p> <p><i>The AONB boundary can be clearly demarcated by a footpath and line of trees which separates the western half of New Hill from the eastern half. This</i></p>	<p>In particular the Natural Beauty Assessment noted on page 110 that ‘<i>Incongruous elements in this landscape include the A23 and railway to the west of the area as well as fingers of built development which extend into lower lying land e.g. Chaldon Way.....’</i></p> <p>It also notes on page 111 ‘<i>The narrow, rounded ridgeline of Farthing Downs forms the skyline in these views, and the built development within the northern part of the valley (along Chaldon Way) does not intrude.’</i></p> <p>In the Boundary Report on page 34 the assessment notes ‘<i>The strong topography and high levels of vegetation on the fringes of Happy Valley and along urban edges has enabled the boundary to be defined close to the built edge and as a result it often follows fence lines along the perimeter of properties.’</i></p> <p>The Boundary Report highlighted the transitional quality of the landscape where it lies adjacent to the urban areas. Natural England has reviewed the boundary to the east of Farthing Downs. It acknowledges that although development of Chaldon Way intrudes on the landscape it is nonetheless set down in the landscape and the rising slopes to the east of Farthing Downs remain physically connected to Happy Valley to the south. Furthermore, the rising slopes east of Farthing Downs are part of the scenic composition of Happy Valley when seen from Farthing Downs. Natural England also notes that the proposed boundary by respondent ANON-VUXE-WMBH-P enables the flatter land adjacent to the urban area to be excluded.</p> <p>For completeness, and to ensure consistency of approach, Natural England has also reviewed the definition of the boundary further to the southeast. Here it has concluded that flatter less distinctive landscape has been included south of Coulston Road and that a more robust boundary can be drawn closer to the break in slope to Happy Valley which aligns with the Site of Special Scientific Interest. The boundary follows the edge of woodland and tracks.</p> <p><u>Conclusion</u></p>

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	<p><i>line of trees hides from view the more open eastern half which borders the built area.'</i></p> <p>ANON-VUXE-WEGQ-V commented that:</p> <p><i>'There must be a natural not artificial boundary to the AONB.'</i></p>	<p>Minor addition to include fields to east of Farthing Downs and deletion to exclude fields on more elevated, flatter land, south of Coulsdon Road, to ensure a consistent approach to defining the boundary.</p> <p>(Addition 9 and Deletion 5: Refer to Figure 21a)</p>