

Bolney Park Farm, Broxmead Lane, Bolney

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) hla 690 R01

For Mr & Mrs D Rawlins of Jester Farm Services

By N Harper BA DipLA CMLI
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* See weblink in Bibliography

Introduction

This report has been commissioned by Mr and Mrs D Rawlins of Jester Farm Services and prepared by Nick Harper CMLI Nick Harper CMLI, Chartered Landscape Architect and Partner of Harper Landscape Architecture LLP.

The report comprises a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), prepared in support of proposals for a new agricultural manure store and slurry lagoon at Bolney Park Farm, Broxmead Lane, Bolney, West Sussex.

The purpose of the assessment is to identify, describe and evaluate the likely landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed development. The assessment considers the existing landscape and visual baseline; the value, susceptibility and sensitivity of the relevant landscape and visual receptors; and the magnitude and significance of the likely effects during construction, at completion and, where relevant, in the longer term.

The LVIA has been prepared with reference to:

The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, 2013, by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and the Landscape Institute (GLVIA 3); and Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note, Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations (TGN 02-21).

I.0 Executive Summary

- I.1 Harper Landscape Architecture LLP was commissioned by Mr and Mrs D Rawlins of Jester Farm Services to prepare this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in support of proposals for a new agricultural manure store and slurry lagoon at Bolney Park Farm, Broxmead Lane, Bolney, West Sussex. The assessment has been undertaken by Nick Harper CMLI, Chartered Landscape Architect, who has extensive experience of preparing Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments for agricultural development, particularly within nationally protected landscapes including the High Weald National Landscape.
- I.2 The proposed development comprises a purpose-built manure store and slurry lagoon together with associated earthworks, underground drainage infrastructure and stock fencing. The proposal represents agricultural infrastructure associated with an established working farm and does not introduce a new land use into the High Weald National Landscape. The proposal has been relocated from an earlier refused prior notification so that it is situated more than 400 metres from the nearest protected building and remains functionally related to the existing agricultural enterprise.
- I.3 The Site lies within the High Weald National Landscape and occupies part of an existing arable field at Bolney Park Farm. It is enclosed by mature hedgerows, ancient woodland and undulating landform which provide strong landscape structure and substantial visual containment.
- I.4 Landscape character has been assessed at five spatial scales comprising:
- Area of Local Landscape Character (ALLC);
 - National Character Area 122 – High Weald;
 - High Weald National Landscape;
 - West Sussex Landscape Character Area HW4 – High Weald Fringes; and
 - Mid Sussex Landscape Character Area 10 – High Weald Fringes.
- I.5 The proposal would introduce a localised area of engineered agricultural infrastructure within part of the existing arable field. Existing woodland, hedgerows, mature trees and the historic field pattern would be retained, and the proposal would remain characteristic of the existing agricultural enterprise and represent a congruous component of the wider High Weald agricultural landscape.
- I.6 The assessment concludes that the proposal would result in a Minor Adverse Landscape Effect upon the Area of Local Landscape Character. At the wider published landscape character scales, the proposal would not materially alter the defining characteristics or special qualities of the surrounding landscape and the resulting landscape effects are assessed as Negligible to Minor Adverse and not significant.
- I.7 Field survey established that opportunities for public views towards the Site are extremely limited. Only one representative public viewpoint was identified and, from this location, the proposed development would not be visible owing to intervening topography and vegetation. No other publicly accessible views of the Site were identified.
- I.8 Consequently, the assessment concludes that no visual effects have been identified.
- I.9 Overall, the proposed development represents a localised agricultural development that can be successfully accommodated within the receiving landscape without giving rise to significant landscape character or visual effects. The proposal would conserve the wider landscape character of the area and the natural beauty of the High Weald National Landscape.

2.0 Qualifications and experience

2.1 Qualifications

- 2.1.1 Nick Harper is a chartered landscape architect with a degree in landscape design, a postgraduate diploma in landscape architecture and he is a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI) since 1995.

2.2 Experience

- 2.2.1 Nick has extensive experience in the preparation of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs) for a wide variety of development proposals, including agricultural, residential, commercial, renewable energy and infrastructure schemes, many within nationally designated landscapes including the High Weald National Landscape.
- 2.2.2 Nick has been a team leader on a number of award (RIBA, LI, TCPI and ICE) winning projects and he has given expert landscape evidence at many Public Inquiries and Planning Hearings.
- 2.2.3 Nick has 37 years professional experience and prior to setting up hla had positions as, a principal at Hyder Consulting, an associate at Chris Blandford Associates and a senior landscape architect with Battle McCarthy and also the London Borough of Enfield. He was also a senior lecturer for the BA and MA Landscape Architecture courses at Greenwich University for 6 years.

3.0 Description of the Site and the Proposal

3.1 The existing site (see Figures 1, 2, 3a and b)

- 3.1.1 The Site is located within Bolney Park Farm, approximately 0.8km north-east of Bolney village, around 3km south-west of Cuckfield and approximately 6km west of Haywards Heath, within Mid Sussex District, West Sussex. The wider farm extends to approximately 49ha and lies immediately east of the A23, with access obtained from Broxmead Lane to the south. The proposed development occupies agricultural land within the northern part of the wider holding, approximately 358m east of the A23 and more than 400m from the nearest protected building.
- 3.1.2 The Site lies wholly within the High Weald National Landscape, one of England's nationally designated protected landscapes, recognised for its distinctive medieval landscape pattern, dispersed settlement, ancient woodland and small-scale agricultural mosaic. The wider landscape displays many of these defining characteristics, comprising an irregular pattern of medium to large agricultural fields enclosed by mature hedgerows, woodland and scattered trees. The historic landscape pattern, together with the dispersed settlement and numerous historic farmsteads within the surrounding countryside, contributes strongly to the area's distinctive sense of place.
- 3.1.3 The Site occupies a gently undulating north-facing slope, with ground levels falling from approximately 104m AOD along the southern part of the Site to around 90m AOD towards the northern boundary. Whilst the landform is generally consistent, the ground rises locally towards the east. The undulating topography creates a varied landform that contributes to visual containment and limits intervisibility across much of the surrounding landscape.
- 3.1.4 Land use is predominantly agricultural. The proposed development occupies part of a large arable field which, at the time of the Site visit, comprised harvested cereal stubble. Existing farm buildings and associated agricultural infrastructure are concentrated to the south of the Site and form part of the wider Bolney Park Farm complex. An agricultural access track extends along the northern edge of the proposed development area, whilst ancient woodland forms a robust and visually prominent northern boundary.
- 3.1.5 The surrounding landscape is characterised by a strong vegetated framework comprising ancient woodland, mature hedgerows, scattered mature trees and occasional woodland blocks which reinforce the historic field pattern, provide visual containment and contribute significantly to local landscape character and distinctiveness. The Site itself contains relatively little vegetation, increasing the importance of these surrounding landscape features.

The adjoining ancient woodland exhibits a varied native woodland structure, with a canopy dominated by Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*), Black Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and occasional Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*). The understorey comprises Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), Common Nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and locally abundant Buddleja (*Buddleja davidii*). Collectively, these woodland habitats provide visual containment, reinforce the rural character of the landscape and contribute positively to local landscape character, biodiversity and sense of place.

- 3.1.6 The Site is generally enclosed by a combination of landform, ancient woodland and mature hedgerows to the north, west and south, whilst the eastern aspect is relatively more open. From the higher southern parts of the Site, expansive long-distance views are available towards the South Downs scarp and across the wider High Weald landscape. Conversely, field survey confirmed that opportunities for public views towards the proposed development area are extremely limited. Although Public Rights of Way occur to the east of the Site, intervening landform, woodland and hedgerows prevent views towards the Site. Only one publicly accessible viewpoint was identified during the field survey and no views of the Site were available from this location. Consequently, the Site has a very limited visual envelope when experienced from the surrounding public realm.
- 3.1.7 There are no watercourses or notable water features within the Site or readily apparent within the immediate surrounding landscape. Likewise, there is little evidence of nearby settlement when viewed from the Site itself, reinforcing its rural character. Nevertheless, tranquillity is moderated by the continuous presence of traffic noise associated with the nearby A23 together with regular aircraft movements.
- 3.1.8 Whilst the wider landscape retains a strong rural character, several detracting features remain from the former recycling operation. These include some engineered earth bunding, untypical blocks of screening conifers and the former access track. Although localised, these elements contrast with the otherwise agricultural landscape and diminish landscape quality in places.
- 3.1.9 Notwithstanding these detracting features, the Site and its immediate surroundings possess numerous positive landscape attributes. These include the strong framework of ancient woodland, mature hedgerows and scattered trees, the gently rolling landform, the intact historic field pattern, the absence of visible settlement and expansive views towards both the South Downs and the wider High Weald. The ecological richness of the adjoining ancient woodland, together with birdsong and the predominantly agricultural character of the landscape, further reinforces the strong sense of place and contributes positively to the scenic quality of the High Weald National Landscape.

Figure 1 Location Plan and Aerial Photograph

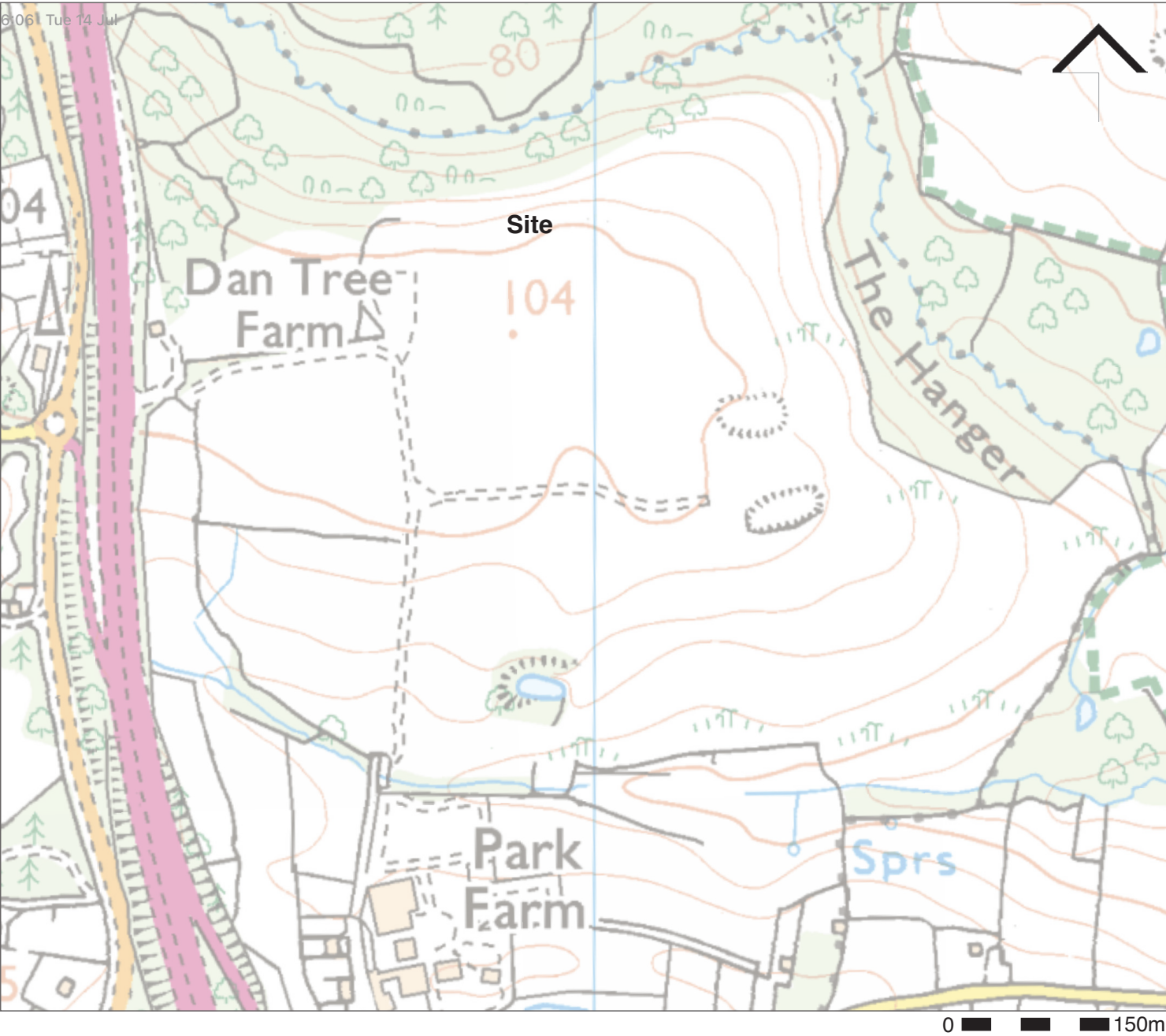


Figure 2 Existing Site plan and Site wide photographs a. to f.

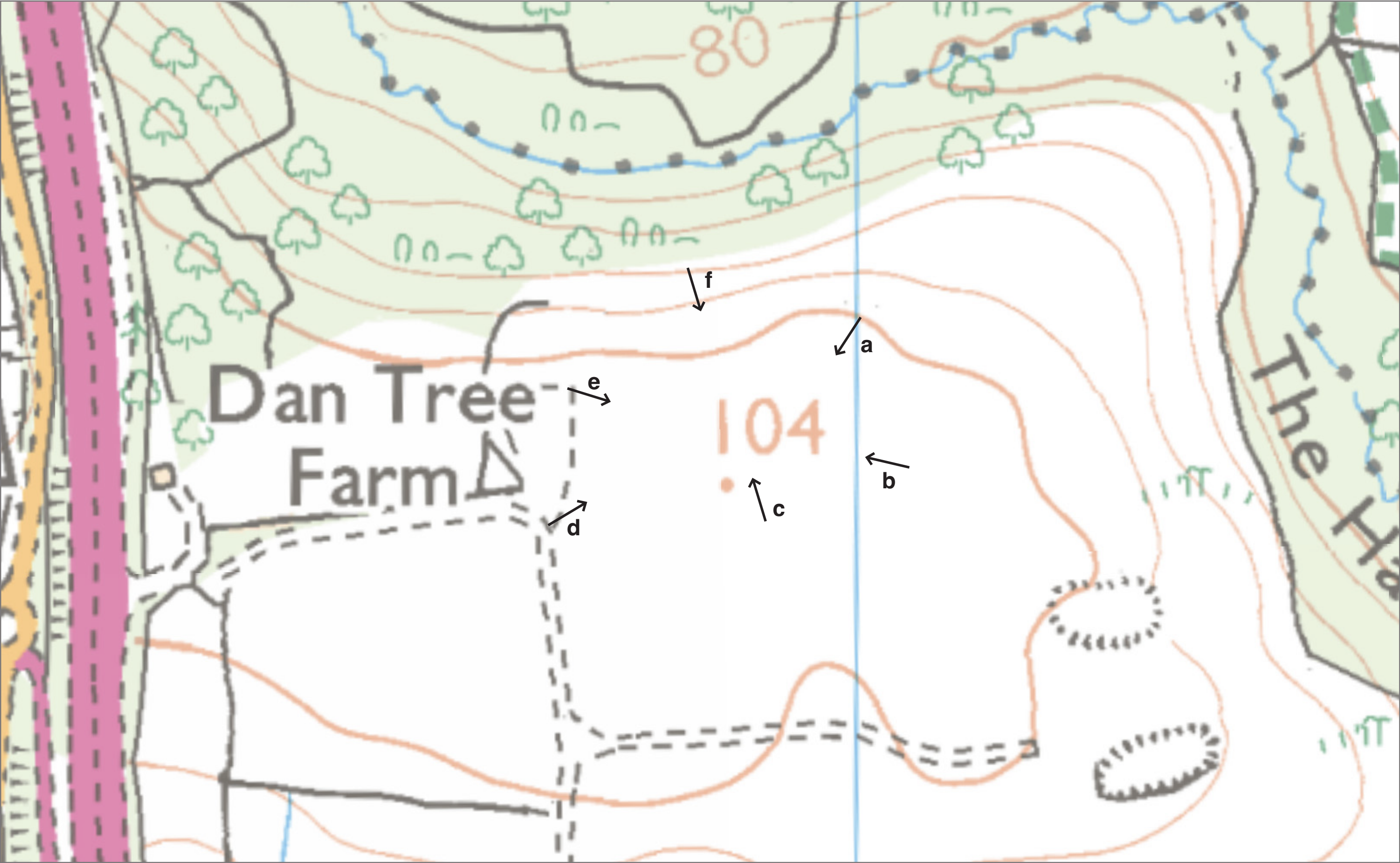


Figure 3a Existing Site plan and Site wide photographs a. to c.



Viewpoint a looking west from just north east of the development area



Viewpoint b looking north west from just south east of the development area



Viewpoint c looking north from just south of the development area

Figure 3b Existing Site plan and Site wide photographs d. to f.



Viewpoint d looking north east from just south west (on the track) of the development area



Viewpoint e looking east from just north west (from the bund of old recycling operation area) of the development area



Viewpoint f looking south from just north (on the track) of the development area

- 3.2 The proposal (see Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7)
- 3.2.1 The proposal comprises the construction of a purpose-built agricultural manure store and slurry lagoon to serve the existing farming enterprise at Bolney Park Farm. The development has been designed to provide modern manure and slurry storage facilities that comply with current DEFRA and Environment Agency requirements for agricultural waste management. For health and safety purposes, the development would be enclosed by a minimum 1.3m high post-and-wire stock fence with two strands of barbed wire, positioned around the perimeter of the manure store and slurry lagoon to prevent unauthorised access.
- 3.2.2 The proposed development comprises a 30m by 30m manure store constructed on an impermeable concrete base enclosed by engineered earth bunds. Leachate and surface water runoff generated within the manure store would be collected and conveyed via underground drainage to a new slurry lagoon measuring approximately 60m by 30m. The lagoon would provide a working storage capacity of approximately 2,673m³ together with the required freeboard necessary to satisfy current environmental regulations.
- 3.2.3 Construction works would comprise topsoil stripping, excavation and cut-and-fill operations to form the new storage facilities, installation of underground drainage infrastructure and the importation of limited quantities of suitable engineering material where necessary. Stored topsoil would subsequently be reinstated to create graded earthforms and restore the surrounding agricultural landscape. The engineered bunds and restored landform have been designed to integrate the development into the existing topography and minimise its visual prominence.
- 3.2.4 The proposal has been relocated from an earlier refused prior notification in order to ensure that the manure store and slurry lagoon are situated more than 400m from the nearest protected building, thereby addressing the previous reason for refusal. The revised location also places the facilities in a central position within the agricultural holding, allowing efficient management of manure and slurry associated with the existing mixed farming enterprise whilst maintaining a close functional relationship with the existing farmstead. The revised proposal therefore addresses the previous reason for refusal whilst remaining functionally related to the existing farmstead and reducing the potential for landscape and visual effects.
- 3.2.5 The proposed manure store and slurry lagoon comprise agricultural infrastructure that is both functionally and visually associated with the existing farming enterprise at Bolney Park Farm. Such facilities are a characteristic component of modern agricultural land management and, whilst engineered in form, represent development that is entirely consistent with the prevailing agricultural use of the Site and form a congruous component of the wider High Weald agricultural landscape.

Grass seed Mixes:

Applied to all areas within the red line.

Emorsgate Mixes:

Mix EG4 Meadow Grass Mixture for Clay Soils (100% grasses, restoration) - sow at 5g/m² or 20kg/acre; and

Emorsgate EM4 Meadow Mixture for Clay Soils (80% grasses, 20% wildflowers) - sow at 4g/m² or 16kg/acre, EM4 gives a more natural High Weald appearance.

Apply a reduced sowing rate of 20–25 kg/ha on the outer slopes to allow natural colonisation from the adjacent countryside.

Map Labels:

- Ancient Woodland
- Access track
- New earthworks (represented by red contours)
- Lagoon
- Manure Store
- Existing field
- Access from A23
- New contours to feather in to existing, to blend the new earthworks in to the landscape

Creative impression

0 100m

Figure 4 Sections Drawing No. MJF_240126_103, by MJ Fuller

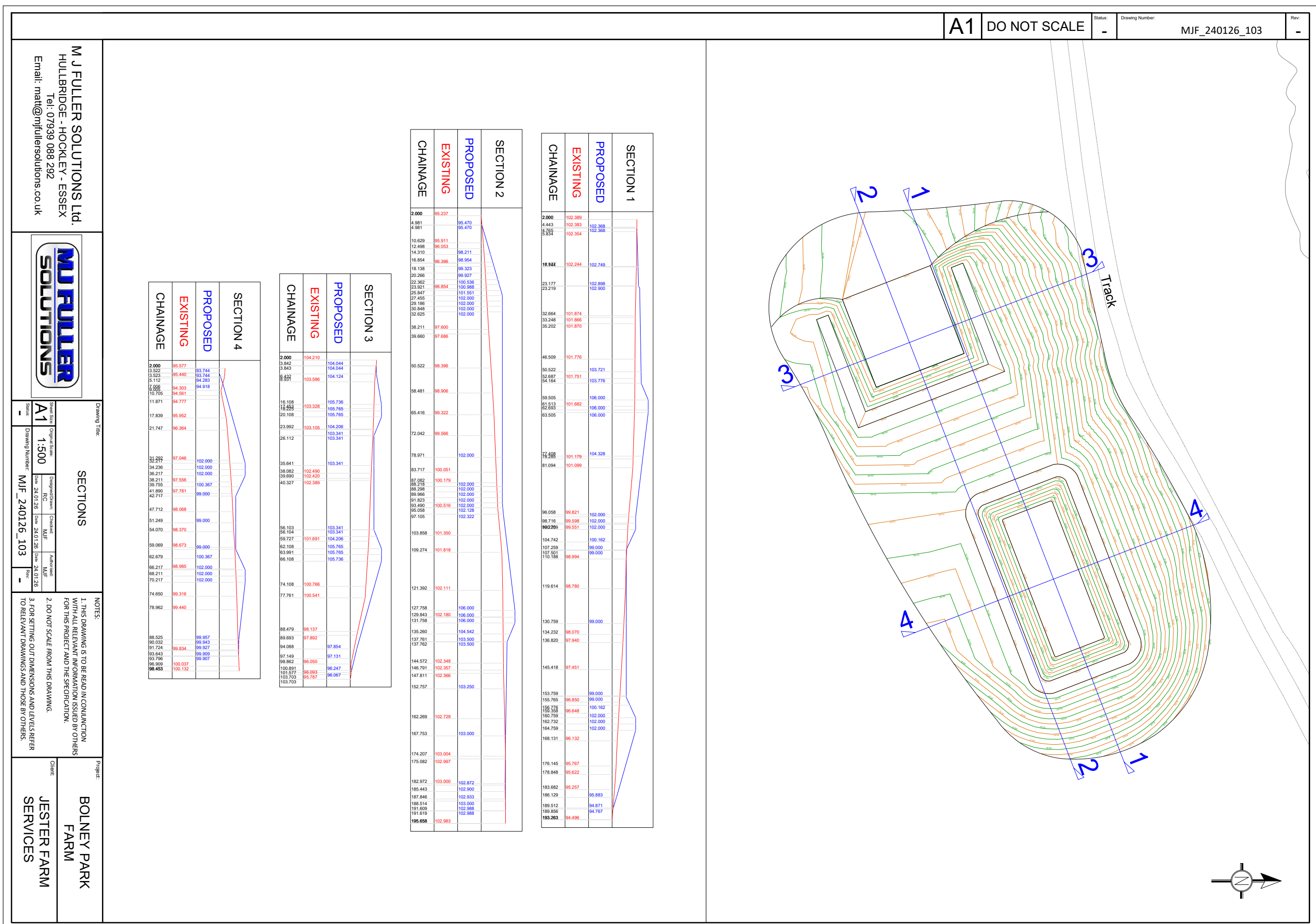


Figure 5 Location Plan Drawing No. MJF_240126_102, by MJ Fuller

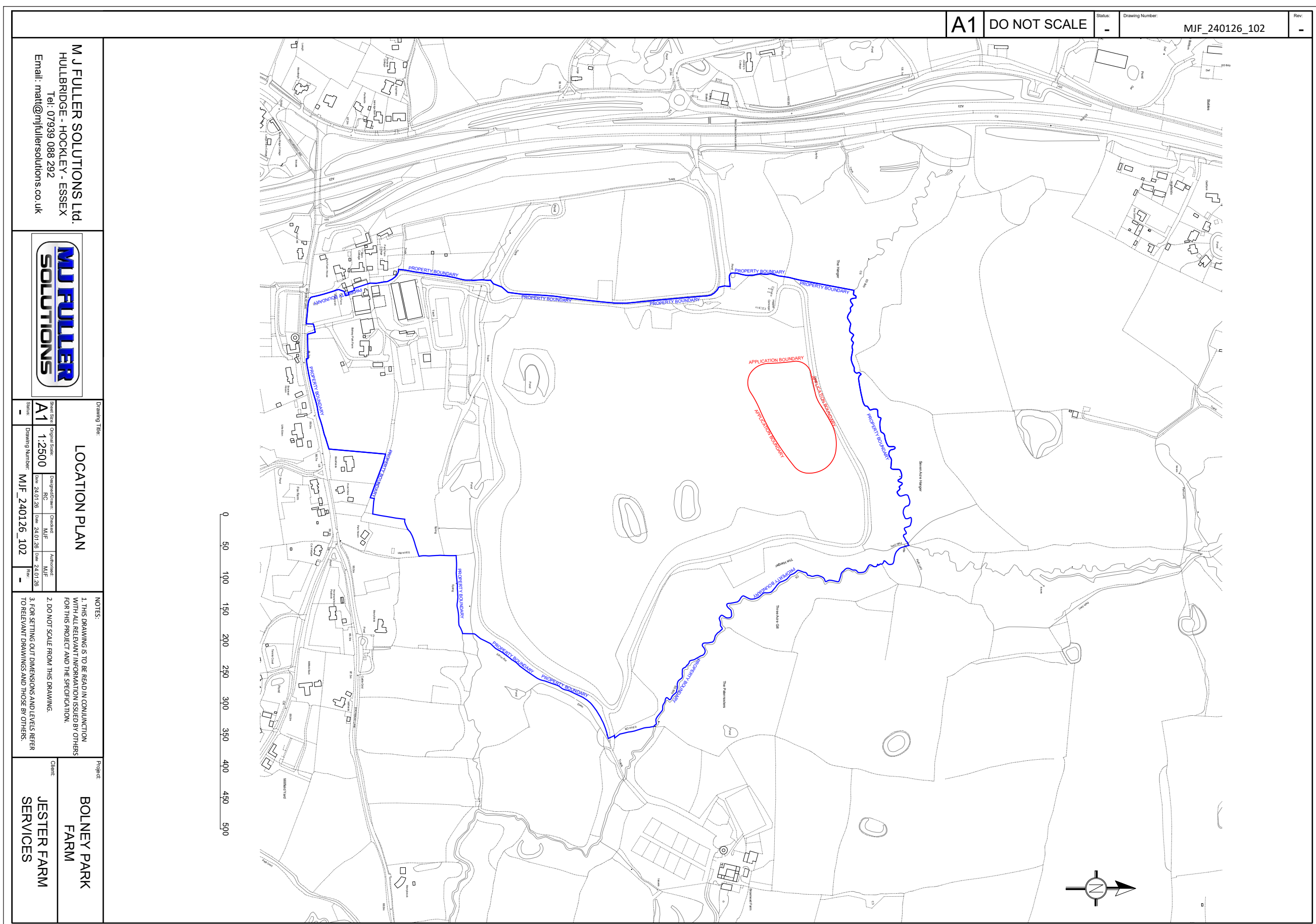
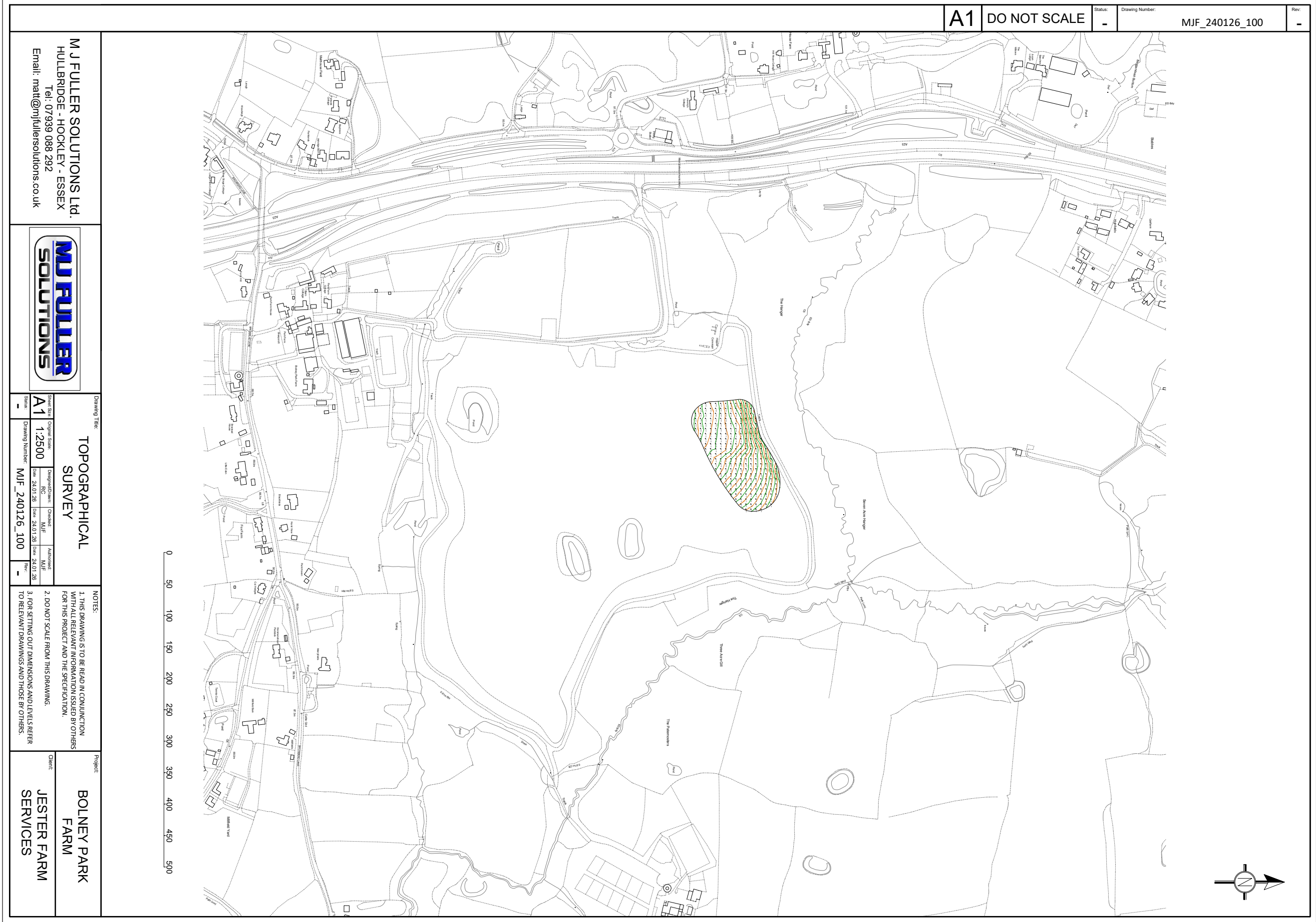


Figure 6 Proposed Layout, Drawing No. MJF_240126_101, by MJ Fuller



Figure 7 Topographical Survey, Drawing No. MJF_240126_100, by MJ Fuller



4.0 Scope and structure of report

4.1 Scope of the report

- 4.1.1 This report assesses the Landscape Character and Visual impacts and Effects that are likely to occur as a result of the proposed development enhancements.

4.2 Structure of the report

- 4.2.1 The upcoming sections of the report are structured as follows, Section 5.0 describes the landscape planning policy, Section 6.0 the Landscape and Visual baseline, Section 7.0 the Landscape Character and Visual Impacts and Effects, and Section 8.0 is the Conclusion.

5.0 Landscape Planning Policy

5.1 Planning History

5.1.1 The following Applications have been made at the Site.

- 01/01232/AGRDET

Agricultural determination application for the infilling of an existing bomb crater, levelling and re-seeding of land, easing of the field slope, and banking and planting of the lower slope. Approved on 17 July 2001.
- 01/01613/AGRDET

Construction of a new hardcore agricultural access track. Approved on 11 September 2001.
- DM/26/0536

Prior Notification for excavations and engineering operations associated with the construction of a new manure store and slurry lagoon. Refused on 15 April 2026. The proposal was not considered to constitute permitted development because the slurry storage facility was located within 400m of a protected building. Planning permission was therefore required.
- DM/26/1442 (Current Proposal)

Prior Notification for excavations and engineering operations associated with the construction of a new manure store and slurry lagoon at a revised location. The proposal was relocated to ensure the development was situated more than 400m from the nearest protected building. On 2 July 2026, Mid Sussex District Council determined that Prior Approval was Required, limited to consideration of the design and external appearance of the slurry lagoon in order to assess its effect on the character and appearance of the countryside.

Following the Prior Approval decision (Ref. DM/26/1442), the Local Planning Authority requested further information relating to the design and external appearance of the slurry lagoon and its effects on the character and appearance of the countryside. This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has therefore been prepared in support of the subsequent planning application.

5.2 Landscape planning policy

5.2.1 Introduction

5.2.2 This Chapter identifies the principal national, regional, district and neighbourhood planning policies and guidance relevant to landscape character, visual amenity, trees and woodland, biodiversity and the High Weald National Landscape.

5.1.2 The planning policy documents relevant to this assessment comprise:

- the National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024;
- the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024–2029;
- the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031; and
- the Bolney Neighbourhood Plan 2015–2031.

5.2 National Planning Policy, National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024

- 5.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2024, sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The NPPF should be read as a whole, with its policies applied according to the particular circumstances and scale of the proposed development.
- 5.2.2 Paragraph 8 identifies three overarching and mutually supportive objectives of sustainable development. The environmental objective seeks to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment, including by improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change.
- 5.2.3 Paragraphs 10 and 11 establish the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. Where the policies most important for determining an application are out of date, permission should generally be granted unless the application of policies within the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development, or the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole.
- 5.2.4 Paragraph 20 requires strategic policies to make sufficient provision for the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes, green infrastructure and the wider effects of climate change.
- 5.2.5 The NPPF supports a prosperous rural economy. Planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of businesses in rural areas and support the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. Development should, wherever possible, be sensitive to its surroundings and should not have an unacceptable impact upon local roads or the character of the countryside.
- 5.2.6 The NPPF seeks to protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including by taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users and adding links to existing rights of way networks where appropriate.

5.2.7 Paragraph 131 states that the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to the planning and development process. Good design is therefore an important aspect of sustainable development.

5.2.8 Paragraph 135 requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that development:

- functions well and adds to the overall quality of the area over its lifetime;
- is visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate landscaping;
- is sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting;
- establishes or maintains a strong sense of place;
- optimises the potential of the Site; and
- creates places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

5.2.9 Paragraph 136 recognises that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban and rural environments and can assist in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Existing trees should be retained wherever possible and opportunities should be taken to incorporate new trees within development.

5.2.10 Paragraph 139 states that development that is not well designed should be refused, particularly where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

5.2.11 Paragraph 187 requires planning policies and decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, biodiversity and geological sites and soils in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality;
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider benefits arising from natural capital and ecosystem services;
- maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast;
- minimising impacts upon and providing net gains for biodiversity;
- preventing development from contributing to unacceptable levels of pollution; and
- remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

5.2.12 Paragraph 189 states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these matters. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while development within their settings should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse effects on the designated landscape.

5.2.13 The High Weald National Landscape is therefore afforded the highest level of national planning protection in respect of its landscape and scenic beauty. The statutory purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance its natural beauty, and this purpose is directly relevant to the assessment of the proposed development.

5.2.14 The NPPF also affords protection to biodiversity assets. Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees, should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

5.2.15 In relation to pollution, planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking account of the likely effects of pollution upon health, living conditions and the natural environment. Consideration should be given to noise, light pollution and effects upon tranquillity, particularly within areas of relatively undisturbed countryside.

5.3 Regional Landscape planning policy (see Appendix 2), High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024–2029

5.3.1 The Site lies wholly within the High Weald National Landscape. The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024–2029 is the statutory management plan for the designated landscape. Although the nationally designated area is now referred to as the High Weald National Landscape, the adopted document retains the title of the High Weald AONB Management Plan.

5.3.2 The Management Plan is the principal strategic document for the conservation and enhancement of the High Weald. It defines the natural beauty of the designated landscape and provides a long-term strategy supported by management objectives and five-year priorities. It provides a framework against which public bodies may consider their statutory duty to seek to further the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the designated area.

5.3.3 The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024–2029 was approved by the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee in March 2024 and has subsequently been adopted by all local authorities whose administrative areas include land within the High Weald.

5.3.4 The natural beauty of the High Weald is defined through its five principal components of landscape character: geology, landform, water systems and climate; settlement; routeways; woodland; and field and heath.

These components interact to form the distinctive medieval landscape character and sense of place associated with the High Weald.

5.3.5 Geology, landform, water systems and climate

The Management Plan seeks to conserve and enhance the natural function and character of the High Weald's geology, landform, water systems and climate. Development should respond positively to the characteristic rolling and deeply incised landform and should avoid unnecessary alteration or standardisation of natural topography.

Earthworks, drainage systems and engineered landforms should be designed to integrate with the characteristic topography, avoid adverse effects upon water quality and drainage patterns, and contribute where possible to climate resilience and the restoration of natural processes. Settlement.

5.3.6 Routeways

Historic routeways, including narrow lanes, tracks, paths and hollow ways, are an important component of the High Weald's character. Their historic alignment, enclosed character, roadside vegetation, banks, verges and tranquillity should be conserved.

Development should avoid urbanising rural lanes or adversely affecting the character, condition or enjoyment of public rights of way and historic routeways.

5.3.7 Woodland

Woodland is a defining component of the High Weald. The Management Plan seeks to conserve and enhance the extent, ecological function, historic pattern and connectivity of woodland, particularly ancient woodland.

Ancient woodland, veteran trees, wooded gills, shaws, hedgerows and small woodland blocks should be protected from direct and indirect harm. Development should maintain appropriate buffers, protect woodland soils and root systems, and avoid adverse effects arising from drainage, lighting, pollution, noise or changes in land use.

New planting should reinforce the characteristic woodland pattern and use locally appropriate native species. Planting should not be relied upon as a substitute for appropriate siting and design, but may form part of a comprehensive strategy to integrate development into its landscape setting.

5.3.8 Field and heath

The Management Plan seeks to conserve and enhance the historic pattern and ecological function of fields, heaths and associated habitats. The High Weald is characterised by an irregular and generally small-scale field pattern, frequently enclosed by hedgerows, wooded boundaries and shaws.

Development should avoid the unnecessary loss or fragmentation of historic field boundaries and should retain and reinforce hedgerows, trees and woodland that contribute to the established field pattern.

5.3.9 Land-based economy

The Management Plan recognises that farming, forestry and other land-based activities have played an important role in creating and maintaining the High Weald landscape.

Sustainable agricultural development may assist the continued management of the landscape, provided that it is appropriately located, designed and operated and conserves or enhances the natural beauty and special qualities of the National Landscape.

5.3.10 Other qualities

The High Weald's other valued qualities include scenic beauty, relative tranquillity, dark skies, remoteness, historic associations and opportunities to experience the landscape through the public rights of way network.

Development should avoid unnecessary visual intrusion, lighting, noise, movement and other urbanising influences that could diminish these qualities. Particular attention should be paid to the appearance of development within longer-distance views, its relationship with the skyline and landform, and its effects upon the perceived rural character of the landscape.

The Site and proposal should therefore be assessed against the Management Plan's overarching objective of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the High Weald and its component characteristics, including its landform, woodland, historic field pattern, agricultural character, tranquillity and scenic qualities.

5.4 High Weald Design Guidance

5.4.1 The High Weald Design Guide provides guidance intended to ensure that development responds positively to the distinctive character and special qualities of the National Landscape.

5.4.2 Although the High Weald Housing Design Guide principally addresses residential development, the following general design principles are relevant to the proposal:

- DG1: Responding to Site and Landscape Context – development should be informed by an understanding of the Site's landscape, historic, ecological and visual context;
- DG3: Layout and Structuring the Site – development should respond to existing landform, vegetation, field boundaries and movement patterns;
- DG5: The Right Built Form – the scale, massing and form of development should be appropriate to its rural context;
- DG7: Building Appearance, Local Details and Sustainable Design – materials, finishes and detailing should respond to local character and minimise visual prominence; and
- DG10: Reinforcing Local Planting Character and Habitats – existing vegetation should be retained and new planting should reinforce local landscape character, habitat connectivity and biodiversity.

5.4.3 High Weald Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development, September 2017

The High Weald Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development promotes the selection of colours and materials that respond to the landscape context and reduce the visual prominence of development.

5.4.4 The guidance identifies a number of matters relevant to the design and assessment of development, including:

- the location and distance of key views;
- the character and colour of the surrounding landscape;
- the scale and articulation of the proposed form;
- the relationship between the textures of development and the surrounding landscape;
- the weathering and colourfastness of materials;
- the effect of distance upon perceived colour; and
- the use of very light, dark or strongly contrasting colours.

5.4.5 For the proposed development, the guidance is relevant principally to the appearance of engineered surfaces, liners, fencing, pipework and any other visible infrastructure. Materials and finishes should be recessive, non-reflective and compatible with the predominant colours and textures of the surrounding agricultural landscape.

5.5 County Planning Policy

5.5.1 There are no specific adopted county-level landscape planning policies that require separate consideration within this LVIA. Relevant county-level landscape character assessment and ecological evidence are considered within the landscape baseline where appropriate.

5.6 District Planning Policy, Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031

5.6.1 The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031 was adopted on 28 March 2018 and forms part of the statutory Development Plan for the Site. It replaced the Mid Sussex Local Plan 2004, other than those policies expressly retained as saved policies.

5.6.2 Mid Sussex District Council has submitted the emerging District Plan 2021–2039 for independent examination. At the time of writing, the emerging Plan remains under examination and has not been adopted. The adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031 therefore remains the principal district-level development plan document.

5.6.3 The policies of greatest relevance to landscape and visual matters are set out below.

- **Policy DPI: Sustainable Economic Development**

Policy DPI supports sustainable economic development throughout the District, including appropriate small-scale economic development within the countryside.

The policy is relevant insofar as the proposal comprises infrastructure required to support the continued operation and environmental management of an established agricultural business. Such support remains subject to compliance with other development plan policies, including those concerned with countryside character, the High Weald National Landscape, design, woodland and biodiversity.

- **Policy DPI2: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside**

Policy DPI2 recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and seeks to protect the rural and landscape character of the District.

Development outside defined built-up area boundaries should maintain and, where possible, enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the rural landscape. Proposals should be appropriately located and designed, minimise their effect upon landscape character and avoid unnecessary urbanisation or visual intrusion.

The proposal is located within the countryside and must therefore demonstrate that its agricultural function, siting, earthworks, appearance and landscaping are compatible with the character of the Site and surrounding rural landscape.

- **Policy DPI6: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

Policy DPI6 relates to development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, now known as the High Weald National Landscape.

Development within the designated landscape will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan. Proposals should conserve and enhance:

- the natural, historic and cultural character of the landscape;
- the distinctive settlement pattern and rural character;
- ancient woodland, trees, hedgerows and other characteristic vegetation;
- historic routeways and the public rights of way network;
- the characteristic pattern of fields and woodland;
- tranquillity, dark skies and remoteness; and
- scenic beauty and important views.

Development should be appropriate to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area and should be designed and located so that adverse impacts upon the natural beauty and special qualities of the designated landscape are avoided or minimised.

This is a principal policy for the assessment because the entire Site lies within the High Weald National Landscape.

- **Policy DP26: Character and Design**

Policy DP26 requires development to be of a high standard of design and to contribute positively to the character and appearance of its surroundings.

Development should:

- respond positively to the Site and its wider context;
- respect the scale, character and appearance of the surrounding area;
- retain and incorporate important existing landscape features;
- protect views, landmarks and landscape settings where appropriate;
- provide suitable landscaping and boundary treatment;
- avoid unacceptable effects arising from scale, massing, materials or layout; and
- create a high-quality, durable and locally distinctive development.

In relation to the proposal, the principal design considerations include the relationship of the manure store and slurry lagoon to the existing topography, the height and profile of engineered bunds, the appearance of exposed surfaces, and the retention and protection of surrounding woodland and vegetation.

- **Policy DP29: Noise, Air and Light Pollution**

Policy DP29 seeks to protect the environment, designated landscapes, wildlife habitats and people's living conditions from unacceptable levels of noise, air and light pollution.

Development should avoid adverse effects upon tranquillity, dark skies, biodiversity and environmental quality. Lighting should be limited to that which is operationally necessary and should be appropriately designed to avoid light spill and visual intrusion.

This policy is relevant to the potential operational effects of the development, including noise, odour, movement and any proposed external lighting.

- **Policy DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows**

Policy DP37 supports the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows and encourages appropriate new planting.

Ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees are afforded particular protection. Development should avoid the loss or deterioration of important woodland, trees and hedgerows and should provide adequate protection from direct and indirect effects during construction and operation.

Where new planting is required, it should use appropriate native species, respond to local landscape character and contribute to habitat connectivity and green infrastructure.

This policy is especially relevant because ancient woodland is located immediately north of the proposed development area.

- **Policy DP38: Biodiversity**

Policy DP38 seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, ecological networks and designated and priority habitats.

Development should avoid adverse effects upon biodiversity through appropriate siting and design, provide suitable mitigation where impacts cannot be avoided, and incorporate opportunities for ecological enhancement.

Existing habitat connections should be maintained and strengthened, particularly where these comprise woodland, hedgerows, watercourses or other linear habitats.

- **Policy DP39: Sustainable Design and Construction**

Policy DP39 requires development to incorporate sustainable design and construction measures where appropriate and feasible.

Proposals should demonstrate consideration of climate change, resource efficiency, pollution prevention, water management and long-term resilience. For the proposed agricultural infrastructure, this includes appropriate management of slurry, manure leachate and surface water and compliance with relevant environmental standards.

- **Policy DP41: Flood Risk and Drainage**

Policy DP41 requires development to avoid increasing flood risk and to incorporate appropriate drainage measures.

Sustainable drainage systems should, where practicable, be sensitively designed and located so that they contribute positively to biodiversity, landscape character and visual amenity.

The proposal should therefore ensure that the collection, storage and management of runoff and leachate avoid pollution and do not adversely affect surrounding land, woodland or water systems.

5.7 Neighbourhood Planning Policy, Bolney Neighbourhood Plan 2015–2031

5.7.1 The Site lies within the area covered by the Bolney Neighbourhood Plan 2015–2031, which was made in September 2016 and forms part of the statutory Development Plan. The two policies of greatest relevance to landscape and visual matters are Policies BOLE1 and BOLE2.

- **Policy BOLE1: Protect and Enhance Biodiversity**

Policy BOLE1 seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity throughout the Parish. Development proposals should:

- protect habitats, ecological networks and biodiversity assets;
- retain and protect trees, woodland, hedgerows and other important vegetation;
- avoid the fragmentation of habitats and wildlife corridors;
- incorporate appropriate native planting;
- provide opportunities for ecological enhancement; and
- ensure that development does not adversely affect designated sites, priority habitats or protected species.

The policy is relevant because the Site adjoins ancient woodland and forms part of a wider landscape containing established hedgerows, trees and woodland blocks.

- **Policy BOLE2: Protect and Enhance the Countryside**

Policy BOLE2 seeks to protect and enhance the countryside outside the defined built-up area boundary. Development within the countryside should:

- be appropriate to its rural location and function;
- avoid unacceptable effects upon landscape character and visual amenity;
- conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the High Weald National Landscape;
- protect the rural setting and separate identity of Bolney;
- retain important landscape features and historic field patterns;
- respect the scale, character and appearance of the surrounding countryside; and
- avoid unnecessary urbanisation, visual intrusion or harm to tranquillity.

Agricultural development may be acceptable where it is demonstrably necessary for the operation of a rural business and where its location, scale, form, materials and landscaping conserve the character and appearance of the countryside.

5.8 Summary of Landscape Planning Policy

5.8.1 The principal policy requirement is that the proposed development should conserve and enhance the natural beauty, landscape character and scenic qualities of the High Weald National Landscape.

5.8.2 Particular consideration should be given to:

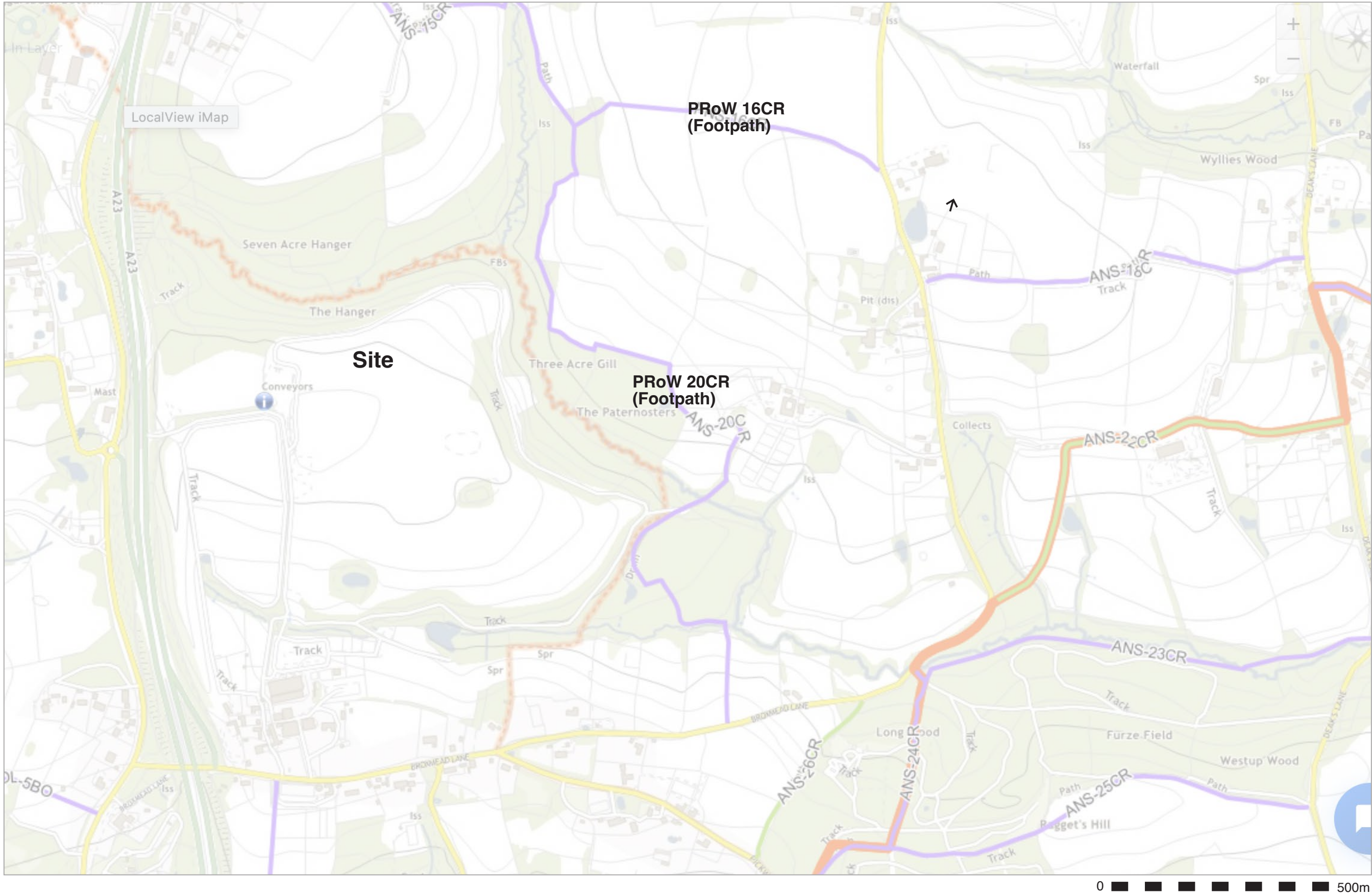
- the relationship of the proposal to the characteristic rolling landform;
- the scale and appearance of the manure store, slurry lagoon and associated earthworks;
- the protection of the adjoining ancient woodland;
- the retention of the existing hedgerow, tree and woodland framework;
- the effect upon the historic field pattern and agricultural character;
- the visibility of the proposal from public rights of way and the wider landscape;
- the protection of tranquillity and dark skies;
- the use of visually recessive materials and finishes; and
- opportunities for landscape and ecological enhancement.

5.8.3 The relevant policies do not preclude agricultural development within the National Landscape. However, they require development to be demonstrably necessary, appropriately located and designed, and capable of being accommodated without unacceptable harm to natural beauty, landscape character, visual amenity, biodiversity or the special qualities of the High Weald.

Figure 8 Extract from Magic Map



Figure 9 WSCC PRow Map



6.0 Landscape Character and Visual Baseline

6.1 Landscape Character (see Figures 10, 11, 12 and 13)

6.1.1 Landscape character is considered at a range of scales, comprising the Area of Local Landscape Character (ALLC) and the published Landscape Character Assessments at national, regional, county and district scales, as described below.

6.2 Area of Local Landscape Character (ALLC), or Study Area as defined by GLVIA3 (see Figure 10)

6.2.1 GLVIA3 states that a 'study area' may be defined for the purposes of assessing landscape character and effects (paragraph 5.2, page 70). For this LVIA, the study area is referred to as the Area of Local Landscape Character (ALLC). The ALLC comprises the area that influences, or may be influenced by, the Site and the proposed development; in other words, the Site and its immediate landscape context.

The extent of the ALLC has been informed by the field-surveyed Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), together with the surrounding area within which changes to landscape character or perceptual qualities could potentially occur. The ALLC is described in its own right and is also considered in terms of the extent to which it manifests the key characteristics and positive landscape attributes identified in the published Landscape Character Assessments. The ALLC is delineated on Figure 10 and described below.

6.2.2 The Area of Local Landscape Character (ALLC) comprises a gently undulating agricultural landscape characterised by medium to large arable fields enclosed by a framework of ancient woodland, mature hedgerows, scattered trees and small woodland blocks. The landscape displays a simple rural character with a strong agricultural influence, whilst the surrounding woodland creates a well-defined landscape structure and contributes to a sense of enclosure in places.

The Site occupies a north-facing slope, with ground levels falling from approximately 104m AOD in the south to around 90m AOD in the north. The landform is generally consistent across the Site, although the land rises locally to the east where an earth bund remains from the restoration of the former recycling operation. The undulating topography limits intervisibility across much of the surrounding landscape and provides varying degrees of visual containment.

Land use is predominantly agricultural, with the Site forming part of a large arable field currently supporting a harvested cereal crop. Ancient woodland defines the northern boundary, whilst an agricultural access track extends along the northern edge of the proposed development area. Public Rights of Way occur to the east of the Site within the wider landscape, although opportunities for views towards the Site are limited by the intervening landform and vegetation.

Vegetation within the Site is limited, with the principal landscape features comprising the adjoining ancient woodland, mature hedgerows, scattered trees and woodland blocks that reinforce the historic field pattern. These features provide a strong vegetated framework that contributes positively to landscape character and local distinctiveness.

The Site is generally enclosed by topography to the north, west and south, whilst the eastern aspect is more open. From the higher southern parts of the Site, long-distance views are available towards the South Downs scarp to the south and the High Weald to the north-east. Conversely, views towards the Site from the surrounding public realm are limited, with only a single public viewpoint identified during the field survey and no views of the Site available from this location due to intervening topography and vegetation.

There are no water features within the Site or readily discernible within the surrounding local landscape. Similarly, there is no settlement or road infrastructure visible from the Site itself, although the nearby A23 exerts a noticeable influence through continuous traffic noise. Regular aircraft movements also reduce the perceived tranquillity of the area.

The landscape contains a number of detracting features including earth bunding, incongruous blocks of screening conifers, infrastructure associated with the A23 and the associated access track. These features contrast with the otherwise agricultural landscape and locally diminish landscape quality.

Notwithstanding these detractors, the ALLC possesses a number of positive attributes, including the strong framework of ancient woodland, hedgerows and mature trees, the gently undulating landform, the historic field pattern, the absence of visible settlement, and high-quality views towards both the South Downs and the High Weald. These characteristics, together with birdsong and the generally rural appearance of the landscape, contribute positively to local landscape character despite the influence of road traffic and aircraft noise.

6.2.3 In summary, the Site is located within the High Weald National Landscape and forms part of a high-quality rural landscape, although the local area is influenced by the A23 and remnants of the former recycling operation. The principal landscape resources and receptors, positive landscape attributes and landscape detractors are described below.

6.2.5 Landscape Resources or Receptors

- Topography: Undulating landscape, with the Site sloping from approximately 104m AOD in the south to 90m AOD in the north.
- Landform: The Site comprises a consistent south-to-north slope. To the east, the land rises to a bund associated with the restored former recycling compound.
- Land use: The Site comprises an arable field with ancient woodland to the north. An agricultural access track runs westwards and along the northern side of the development area. Public Rights of Way are located to the east and within the wider surrounding landscape.
- Land cover: Harvested cereal crop, currently seen as stubble.
- Vegetation: Very little vegetation occurs within the Site. Ancient woodland forms the northern boundary.

- Water: No water features are present within the Site or readily discernible within the local landscape.
- Settlement/local roads: No roads are visible from the Site, although continuous traffic noise from the busy A23 can be heard to the west.
- Openness: The Site is visually contained by topography to the north, west and south, with more open views to the east and from the higher southern parts of the development area. Distant views extend towards the South Downs scarp to the south and the High Weald to the north-east. The Site itself has few physical boundary features, other than the ancient woodland to the north, resulting in an open character across the field.
- Lighting: There is no lighting within the Site. Limited residential lighting may be perceived to the east and north-east, together with occasional distant lighting associated with the A23.
- Tranquillity: Low to moderate, with continuous traffic noise from the A23 and regular aircraft movements reducing the sense of tranquillity.
- Remoteness: Moderate. Although the Site has a relatively rural appearance and limited visible development, the perception of remoteness is reduced by traffic noise from the A23 and regular aircraft movements.

6.2.6 Positive Landscape Receptors are discernible within the ALLC and these are listed as follows.

The following positive landscape attributes are discernible within the ALLC:

- High-quality, long-distance views towards the High Weald and the South Downs scarp;
- Ancient woodland to the north, providing a strong landscape feature and visual containment;
- Gently undulating topography that relates well to the surrounding vegetation and reinforces local landscape character;
- The absence of visible settlement, contributing to the rural character of the landscape;
- A historic field pattern defined by woodland, hedgerows, mature trees and small woodland blocks;
- A moderate sense of remoteness, despite the influence of the A23; and
- Birdsong and other natural sounds that contribute positively to perceived landscape quality. woodland.

6.2.7 Landscape Detractors within the ALLC, these are listed as follows.

The following landscape detractors occur within, or perceptually influence, the ALLC:

- The A23, which is a significant local detractor that divides the National Landscape to its east and west. It is a very busy, fast-moving and noisy six-lane road where it passes the Site access;
- Highway infrastructure associated with the A23, including concrete bridges, embankments, access roads, lighting and signage;
- Regular aircraft movements;
- Earth bunds associated with the landscape restoration of the former recycling operation;
- Incongruous blocks of screening conifers associated with the former recycling operation;
- The agricultural access track serving the Site and former recycling operation;
- Ash dieback affecting local ash trees; and
- Telegraph poles and overhead lines.

6.3 ALLC as manifest at national scale: National Character Area (NCA) Assessment, NCA 122 High Weald

6.3.1 At the national scale, the ALLC lies within National Character Area 122: High Weald. The ALLC manifests the following key characteristics identified on page 8 of the NCA profile:

- *“A faulted landform of clays, sand and soft sandstones with outcrops of fissured sandrock and ridges running east–west, deeply incised and intersected with numerous gill streams forming the headwaters of a number of the major rivers – the Rother, Brede, Ouse and Medway – which flow in broad valleys;*
- *A dispersed settlement pattern of hamlets and scattered farmsteads and medieval ridgetop villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries, with a dominance of timber- framed buildings with steep roofs often hipped or half-hipped, and an extremely high survival rate of farm buildings dating from the 17th century or earlier;*

- *Ancient routeways in the form of ridgetop roads and a dense system of radiating droveways, often narrow, deeply sunken and edged with trees and wild flower-rich verges and boundary banks. Church towers and spires on the ridges are an important local landmark. There is a dense network of small, narrow and winding lanes, often sunken and enclosed by high hedgerows or woodland strips. The area includes several large towns such as Tunbridge Wells, Crowborough, Battle and Heathfield and is closely bordered by others such as Crawley, East Grinstead, Hastings and Horsham.*
- *Strong feeling of remoteness due to very rural, wooded character. A great extent of interconnected ancient woods, steep-sided gill woodlands, wooded heaths and shaws in generally small holdings with extensive archaeology and evidence of long-term management.*
- *Extensive broadleaved woodland cover with a very high proportion of ancient woodland with high forest, small woods and shaws, plus steep valleys with gill woodland.*
- *Small and medium-sized irregularly shaped fields enclosed by a network of hedgerows and wooded shaws, predominantly of medieval origin and managed historically as a mosaic of small agricultural holdings typically used for livestock grazing.*
- *A predominantly grassland agricultural landscape grazed mainly with sheep and some cattle.*
- *An essentially medieval landscape reflected in the patterns of settlement, fields and woodland.”*

6.3.2 The characteristics most clearly manifested within the ALLC comprise:

- *the faulted and undulating landform;*
- *the strong feeling of rurality and partial remoteness;*
- *the extensive framework of ancient woodland, small woods, shaws and hedgerows;*
- *the historic agricultural field pattern;*
- *the generally dispersed pattern of development; and*
- *the essentially medieval pattern of fields and woodland.*

6.3.3 The ALLC differs from parts of the wider NCA in comprising a relatively large-scale arable field rather than the predominantly pastoral, small- to medium-scale field pattern described in the NCA profile. Its tranquillity and sense of remoteness are also reduced by the proximity and perceptual influence of the A23 and regular aircraft movements.

6.4 ALLC as manifest at regional scale: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (MP) 2024-2029

6.4.1 At the regional and designated-landscape scale, the Site lies within the High Weald National Landscape. The High Weald National Landscape Management Plan 2024–2029 describes the natural beauty, character components and perceptual qualities of the designated landscape.

The following character components are relevant to, and manifested to varying degrees within, the ALLC:

- natural systems;
- settlement;
- woodland;
- fieldscape and heath;
- dark skies;
- aesthetic and perceptual qualities;
- land-based economy and rural living; and
- glimpse views to countryside beyond.”

6.4.2 The relevant published key characteristics and qualities are quoted in the preceding baseline material. Those most clearly manifested within the ALLC comprise:

- the ridged, faulted and gently undulating landform;
- locally variable and seasonally wet clay soils;
- a structurally varied mosaic of ancient woodland, smaller woods, shaws, hedgerows and trees;
- the relationship between woodland and the farmed landscape;
- a rural agricultural character;
- limited artificial lighting;
- a sense of enclosure and partial remoteness arising from the heavily treed landscape;
- natural sounds, including birdsong;
- seasonal changes in vegetation; and

- a recognisable mosaic of open fields and wooded habitats.
- 6.4.3 The ALLC does not fully manifest the small-scale, predominantly pastoral and intricately enclosed fieldscape commonly associated with the High Weald. The Site forms part of a comparatively large arable field, and the perceptual qualities of tranquillity and remoteness are reduced by noise from the A23 and regular aircraft movements.
- 6.5 ALLC as manifest at county scale: West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 2005: HW4 High Weald Fringes**
- 6.5.1 At the county scale, the Site lies within Landscape Character Area HW4: High Weald Fringes, as defined by the West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 2005
- 6.5.2 The ALLC manifests the following published key characteristics:
- a wooded and locally enclosed rural landscape of intimacy and complexity, partly within the
 - High Weald National Landscape;
 - broad ridges and gently undulating landform;
 - long views over the Low Weald towards the South Downs;
 - significant woodland cover, including a substantial proportion of ancient woodland;
 - a dense network of hedgerows, shaws and hedgerow trees;
 - a network of lanes, tracks and Public Rights of Way; and
 - the influence of busy roads, including the A23 Trunk Road.
- 6.5.3 The county assessment identifies the overall character of the area as:
- “The densely-wooded southern flanks of the High Weald Forest Ridge within West Sussex, dissected by gentle gill streams draining west to the River Adur and east to the River Ouse.”*
- 6.5.4 Relevant land management guidelines include:
- conserving the rich mosaic of woodland and other habitats and the intimate nature of the agricultural landscape;
 - maintaining and restoring the historic pattern and fabric of the woodland and agricultural landscape;
 - protecting existing views and avoiding skyline development;

- extending existing woodland areas rather than creating unrelated new woodland features;
 - conserving woodland biodiversity;
 - conserving and replanting individual oaks in hedgerows; and
 - conserving, strengthening and managing existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- 6.6 ALLC as manifest at district scale: Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 2005: LCA 10 High Weald Fringes**
- 6.6.1 At the district scale, the Site lies within Landscape Character Area 10: High Weald Fringes, as defined by the Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 2005.
- 6.6.2 The assessment summarises the character of the area as:
- “Densely-wooded southern flanks of the High Weald Forest Ridge, dissected by gentle gill streams draining west to the River Adur and east to the River Ouse. Includes the settlements of Cuckfield, Haywards Heath and Lindfield.”*
- 6.6.3 The key characteristics and management guidance are substantially consistent with those identified by the county assessment. Those most relevant to the ALLC include:
- conserving the mosaic of woodland and agricultural habitats;
 - retaining the intimate and locally enclosed nature of the landscape;
 - maintaining and restoring the historic pattern of woodland, hedgerows and agricultural fields;
 - avoiding skyline development;
 - integrating new development into the landscape;
 - conserving and managing existing woodland, hedgerows and hedgerow trees; and
 - protecting the tranquillity and historic character of rural lanes.
- 6.6.4 The Site also lies within Zone 8: Bolney and Land between Bolney and Sayers Common, as identified by the Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study 2007. However, the study provides no more detailed information that is directly applicable to the Site. The Site lies outside, and to the north-east of, the more detailed assessment area identified as LCA 60: Bolney Sloping High Weald.

6.7 ALLC as manifest at parish scale:

6.7.1 Bolney Parish Council has not prepared a parish-level Landscape Character Assessment.

6.8 ALLC Landscape Value

6.8.1 The landscape value of the ALLC has been considered with reference to GLVIA3, Table 5.1, page 84, and Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21, Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations. The relevant factors are considered below.

- **Natural heritage:** Ancient woodland lies immediately to the north of the Site, with further woodland, hedgerows and mature trees forming a strong local ecological and landscape framework. The ALLC lies within the nationally designated High Weald National Landscape.
- **Cultural heritage:** The historic field pattern, woodland framework and longstanding agricultural use provide some cultural and historic landscape interest. However, the comparatively large arable field and features associated with the former recycling operation reduce the intactness of the historic landscape pattern locally.
- **Landscape condition:** The ALLC retains a strong rural structure formed by topography, ancient woodland, hedgerows and mature trees. Its condition is locally reduced by some engineered bunding, conifer screening and infrastructure associated with the A23 and access to this road.
- **Associations:** No specific artistic, literary or historic associations have been identified in relation to the Site or the immediate ALLC.
- **Distinctiveness:** The relationship between the undulating agricultural landform, ancient woodland, hedgerows and long-distance views is locally distinctive and representative of the High Weald fringes. However, larger arable fields, the A23 and scattered modern infrastructure are not rare features within the wider area.
- **Recreational value:** Public Rights of Way occur within the wider landscape, although recreational access within the immediate Site is absent and opportunities for views towards the Site from publicly accessible locations are extremely limited.
- **Perceptual qualities:** The ALLC has a rural appearance, an absence of visible settlement and a moderate sense of remoteness. These qualities are reduced by continuous traffic noise from the A23 and the regular aircraft movements.
- **Scenic quality:** The ALLC contains high-quality views towards the High Weald and the South Downs scarp, together with an attractive framework of woodland, hedgerows and mature trees. Scenic quality is locally diminished by the perceptual influence of the A23 and the former recycling operation.

- **Functional value:** The ancient woodland, hedgerows, trees and agricultural land contribute to habitat connectivity, landscape structure, food production and other ecosystem services.

6.8.2 Taking account of the Site's location within the High Weald National Landscape, its woodland and hedgerow framework, rural character and scenic views, balanced against the influence of the A23 and the former recycling operation, the ALLC is judged to be of **Medium to High Landscape Value**.

6.9 ALLC Landscape Susceptibility

6.9.1 Landscape susceptibility concerns the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the specific type and scale of development proposed without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation or achievement of relevant landscape planning policies and strategies.

6.9.2 The proposed manure store and slurry lagoon would constitute functional agricultural infrastructure within an actively farmed landscape. The facilities would be located on a north-facing slope and would involve excavation and cut-and-fill operations, allowing much of the development to be contained by the existing landform. The proposal would not introduce tall buildings, lighting or prominent vertical structures. The earth bunds and reinstated soils would be graded to relate to the surrounding topography.

6.9.3 The proposed development would result in some localised alteration to landform, land cover and agricultural character. However, it would retain the ancient woodland, existing hedgerows, mature trees and the wider vegetated framework. It would also have a close functional relationship with the existing agricultural enterprise and would be experienced within the context of existing agricultural activity.

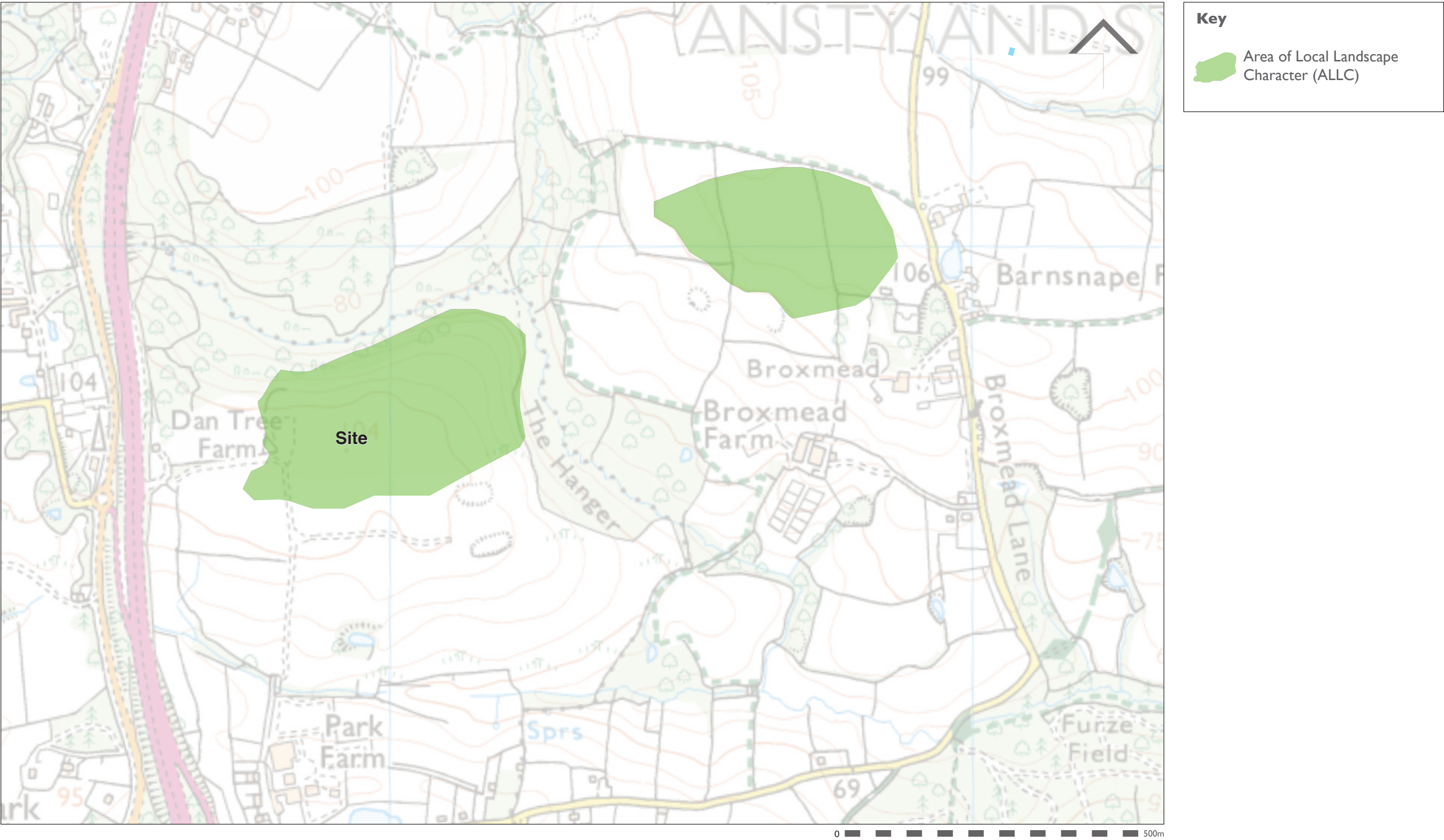
6.9.4 The principal valued characteristics of the ALLC, including the ancient woodland, wider historic field pattern, long-distance views and rural landscape framework, would remain intact. The ALLC is therefore considered capable of accommodating the type and scale of development proposed without unacceptable harm to its defining landscape characteristics.

6.9.5 The **Susceptibility** of the ALLC to the proposed development is therefore judged to be **Low**.

6.10 ALLC Landscape Sensitivity

6.10.1 By combining the Medium to High Landscape Value with the Low Landscape Susceptibility, the overall **Landscape Sensitivity** of the ALLC to the type and scale of development proposed is judged to be **Low to Medium**.

Figure 10 Local Landscape Character Area Plan



6.3 National Character Assessment, National Character Area Profile 122: High Weald (see Appendix 1)

6.3.1 Natural England's National Character Area Profile 122: High Weald provides a broad-scale description of the landscape within which the Site and the ALLC are located. The NCA extends across a substantial part of Kent, East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey. Approximately 78% of the NCA lies within the High Weald National Landscape.

6.3.2 The NCA profile summarises the character of the High Weald on page 3 as follows:

"The High Weald National Character Area (NCA) encompasses the ridged and faulted sandstone core of the Kent and Sussex Weald. It is an area of ancient countryside and one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in Northern Europe."

6.3.3 The NCA lists a number of Statements of Opportunity (SEO). SEO1 (page 17) and SEO3 (page 19) are specifically relevant to the site and the landscape and are quoted as follows,

- *"SEO 1: Maintain and enhance the existing woodland and pasture components of the landscape, including the historic field pattern bounded by shaws, hedgerows and farm woods, to improve ecological function at a landscape scale for the benefit of biodiversity, soils and water, sense of place and climate regulation, safeguard ancient woodlands and encourage sustainably produced timber to support local markets and contribute to biomass production, and*
- *SEO 3: Maintain and enhance the distinctive dispersed settlement pattern, parkland and historic pattern and features of the routeways of the High Weald, encouraging the use of locally characteristic materials and Wealden practices to ensure that any development recognises and retains the distinctiveness, biodiversity, geodiversity and heritage assets present, reaffirm sense of place and enhance the ecological function of routeways to improve the connectivity of habitats and provide wildlife corridors."*

6.3.4 It goes on to list a number of Landscape Opportunities (page 42 and 43) and those relevant to the Site and the landscape are listed as follows,

- *"Maintain and enhance the complex mosaic and pattern of High Weald habitats and the distinctive pastoral fields and areas of heath. Improve the condition and connectivity of fields and heaths and their associated and interrelated habitats, including hedgerows, woodlands, ditches, and ponds and plan for the extension and or linking of existing habitats in order to strengthen landscape character and increase climate change resilience,*
- *maintain and enhance the distinctive pattern of dispersed settlement of historic farmsteads, hamlets and villages, to promote sustainable development in rural locations and meet local needs for affordable and where possible land based workers, and enhance the design and quality of new development in the landscape meeting local distinctiveness and design guidance, and*
- *manage existing and future developments to ensure that sense of place is maintained by making reference to local vernacular building styles and materials, and settlement patterns and distributions. Ensure that proposed growth is sustainable and protects and enhances*

the character of the area with new building sympathetic to local styles. Where development is permitted, ensure good green infrastructure is included to bring about multiple benefits for people and the environment."

6.3.5 At the national scale, the ALLC manifests the undulating landform, ancient woodland, wooded field boundaries, rural agricultural character, limited visible settlement and the historic relationship between fields and woodland identified by NCA 122.

6.3.5 The ALLC does not strongly manifest all of the defining characteristics of the NCA. It includes a comparatively large arable field rather than the small- to medium-scale and predominantly pastoral field pattern commonly associated with the High Weald. The local sense of remoteness and tranquillity is also reduced by continuous traffic noise from the A23, regular aircraft movements and the remaining features associated with the former recycling operation.

6.3.6 Relevant Statements of Environmental Opportunity include SEO 1 and SEO 3, which seek to maintain and enhance the woodland, pasture, historic field pattern, dispersed settlement, routeways, biodiversity and distinctive sense of place of the High Weald.

6.3.7 NCA 122 Landscape Value

NCA 122 is judged to be of **High Landscape Value**. Its value derives from its ancient and substantially intact medieval landscape pattern, extensive ancient woodland, historic routeways, dispersed settlement, biodiversity, cultural heritage and strong sense of place. A substantial proportion of the NCA is also included within the nationally designated High Weald National Landscape.

6.3.8 NCA 122 Landscape Susceptibility

The susceptibility of NCA 122 concerns the ability of the landscape receptor, at the national scale, to accommodate the changes that would arise from the proposed development without undue consequences for its defining landscape characteristics.

The development would introduce a purpose-built manure store and slurry lagoon, earthworks, engineered bunding, drainage infrastructure and perimeter stock fencing into an agricultural part of the NCA. The principal changes would comprise localised alterations to landform and land cover and the introduction of functional agricultural infrastructure.

These changes would occur within an actively farmed landscape and would have a functional relationship with the existing agricultural enterprise. The development would not result in the loss of ancient woodland, hedgerows, shaws, historic routeways, dispersed settlement or the wider Medieval pattern of fields and woodland that characterises NCA 122. It would not introduce tall built development, operational lighting or skyline structures.

The development would therefore represent a localised change within the NCA rather than a change to the defining character of the national landscape receptor. The key characteristics and landscape pattern identified by NCA 122 would continue to prevail across the receptor.

NCA 122 is therefore judged to have **Low Landscape Susceptibility** to the changes that would arise from the type and scale of development proposed.

6.3.9 NCA 122 Landscape Sensitivity

By combining the High Landscape Value of NCA 122 with its Low Landscape Susceptibility to the changes that would arise from the proposed development, its **Landscape Sensitivity** is judged to be **Medium**.

6.3 Regional Character Assessment, High Weald National Landscape, High Weald National Landscape Management Plan 2024–2029 (see Appendix 2)

6.4.1 The ALLC lies within the High Weald National Landscape. The High Weald National Landscape Management Plan 2024–2029 provides a regional-scale description of the designated landscape and identifies the components of its natural beauty.

6.4.2 The Management Plan summarises the High Weald on page 12 as follows:

“The High Weald occupies the ridged and faulted sandstone core of an area known from Saxon times as the Weald. It is an area of ancient countryside and one of the best surviving Medieval landscapes in Northern Europe. The mosaic of small mixed farms and woodlands is considered to represent a quintessentially English landscape.”

6.4.3 The Management Plan identifies eight character components:

- Natural Systems;
- Settlement;
- Routeways;
- Woodland;
- Fieldscape and Heath;
- Dark Skies;
- Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities; and
- Land-based Economy and Rural Living.

6.4.4 The ALLC manifests a number of these components, including the undulating landform; ancient woodland, smaller woods, hedgerows and trees; the relationship between woodland and agricultural land; rural agricultural land use; limited artificial lighting; partial enclosure; birdsong; seasonal variation; and a mosaic of open fields and wooded habitats.

6.4.5 The ALLC does not fully manifest the small-scale, predominantly pastoral and intricately enclosed fieldscape characteristic of some parts of the designated landscape. The Site forms part of a comparatively large arable field, while the A23, regular aircraft movements and the former recycling operation reduce the local qualities of tranquillity, intimacy and remoteness.

6.4.6 High Weald National Landscape Value

The High Weald National Landscape is judged to be of **Very High Landscape Value** by virtue of its national designation and the importance of its natural beauty, medieval landscape pattern, ancient woodland, historic fieldscape, cultural heritage and perceptual qualities.

6.4.7 High Weald National Landscape Susceptibility

Susceptibility at this scale concerns the ability of the High Weald National Landscape to accommodate the changes that would arise from the proposed development without undue consequences for its natural beauty, character components or special qualities.

The development would introduce a manure store and slurry lagoon, engineered earthworks, drainage infrastructure and agricultural stock fencing. The changes would include localised excavation and remodelling of the existing slope, the replacement of part of the arable land cover with agricultural storage infrastructure and the introduction of a more engineered character within the immediate development area.

The proposed infrastructure would nevertheless remain agricultural in function and would be associated with an established farming enterprise. The earthworks would be designed to relate to the existing north-facing slope, and the development would not introduce tall buildings, operational lighting, prominent skyline structures or extensive urbanising elements.

The proposal would retain the ancient woodland, existing hedgerows, mature trees and wider wooded framework. It would not alter the dispersed settlement pattern, historic routeways, broader fieldscape or the recognisable mosaic of agricultural land and woodland that contributes to the natural beauty of the High Weald.

The changes would consequently be experienced as a localised alteration to an agricultural part of the designated landscape and would not alter the prevailing character components or natural beauty of the High Weald National Landscape at the regional scale.

The High Weald National Landscape is therefore judged to have **Low Landscape Susceptibility** to the changes that would arise from the type and scale of development proposed.

6.4.8 High Weald National Landscape Sensitivity

By combining the Very High Landscape Value of the High Weald National Landscape with its Low Landscape Susceptibility to the changes that would arise from the proposed development, its **Landscape Sensitivity** is judged to be **Medium**.



6.5 County Landscape Character Areas (LCA), Landscape Character Area HW4: High Weald Fringes (see Appendix 3 and Figure 11)

6.5.1 At the county scale, the ALLC lies within Landscape Character Area HW4: High Weald Fringes, as defined by the West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 2005.

6.5.2 The assessment describes the overall character of HW4 as follows:

“The densely-wooded southern flanks of the High Weald Forest Ridge within West Sussex, dissected by gentle gill streams draining west to the River Adur and east to the River Ouse.”

6.5.3 The ALLC manifests several of the published key characteristics of LCA HW4, including: a wooded and locally enclosed rural landscape;

- broad ridges and gently undulating landform;
- long views towards the South Downs;
- significant woodland cover, including ancient woodland;
- a framework of hedgerows and mature trees;
- a network of tracks and Public Rights of Way; and
- the perceptual influence of the A23.

6.5.4 The ALLC is less intimate and enclosed than some parts of the county LCA because it includes a comparatively large arable field. Its rural and tranquil qualities are also reduced by the A23, aircraft movements and remaining features associated with the former recycling operation.

6.5.6 LCA HW4 Landscape Value

LCA HW4 is judged to be of **High Landscape Value**. Much of the LCA lies within the High Weald National Landscape and it contains extensive ancient woodland, a strong historic landscape frame work, scenic views and valued rural and perceptual qualities.

6.5.7 LCA HW4 Landscape Susceptibility

The susceptibility of LCA HW4 concerns the ability of the county-scale landscape receptor to accommodate the changes that would arise from the proposed development without undue consequences for its defining characteristics.

The development would locally alter the existing agricultural landform and land cover through excavation, cut-and-fill operations, engineered bunding and the construction of the manure store and slurry lagoon. It would also introduce drainage infrastructure and perimeter stock fencing.

The development would, however, remain characteristic of an agricultural use and would not result in the loss of the ancient woodland, hedgerows, shaws, mature trees, rural lanes or long-distance views that contribute to the character of HW4. It would not introduce prominent buildings, skyline development or operational lighting.

6.5.9 The changes would be contained within a small and locally enclosed part of the LCA and would not alter the prevailing wooded agricultural character of HW4. Its broader pattern of woodland, fields, hedgerows, routeways and long views would remain intact.

6.5.10 LCA HW4 is therefore judged to have **Low Landscape Susceptibility** to the changes that would arise from the type and scale of development proposed.

6.5.11 LCA HW4 Landscape Sensitivity

By combining the High Landscape Value of LCA HW4 with its **Low Landscape Susceptibility** to the changes arising from the proposed development, its landscape sensitivity is judged to be **Medium**.

6.6 District Landscape Character Assessment, Landscape Character Area 10: High Weald Fringes (see Appendix 4)

6.6.1 At the district scale, the ALLC lies within Landscape Character Area 10: High Weald Fringes, as defined by the Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 2005.

6.6.2 The assessment summarises the character of LCA 10 as follows:

“Densely-wooded southern flanks of the High Weald Forest Ridge, dissected by gentle gill streams draining west to the River Adur and east to the River Ouse. Includes the settlements of Cuckfield, Haywards Heath and Lindfield.”

6.6.3 The ALLC manifests several of the key characteristics identified at the district scale, including the ancient woodland and hedgerow framework, undulating agricultural landform, distant views towards the South Downs and the perceptual influence of the A23.

6.6.4 The Site also lies within Zone 8: Bolney and Land between Bolney and Sayers Common, as identified by the Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study 2007. However, that study provides no additional detailed assessment directly applicable to the Site or the ALLC.

6.6.5 LCA 10 Landscape Value

LCA 10 is judged to be of **High Landscape Value**. It lies substantially within the High Weald National Landscape and contains ancient woodland, historic field patterns, valued rural characteristics and long-distance scenic views.

6.6.6 LCA 10 Landscape Susceptibility

LCA 10 is therefore judged to have **Low Landscape Susceptibility** to the changes that would arise from the type and scale of development proposed.

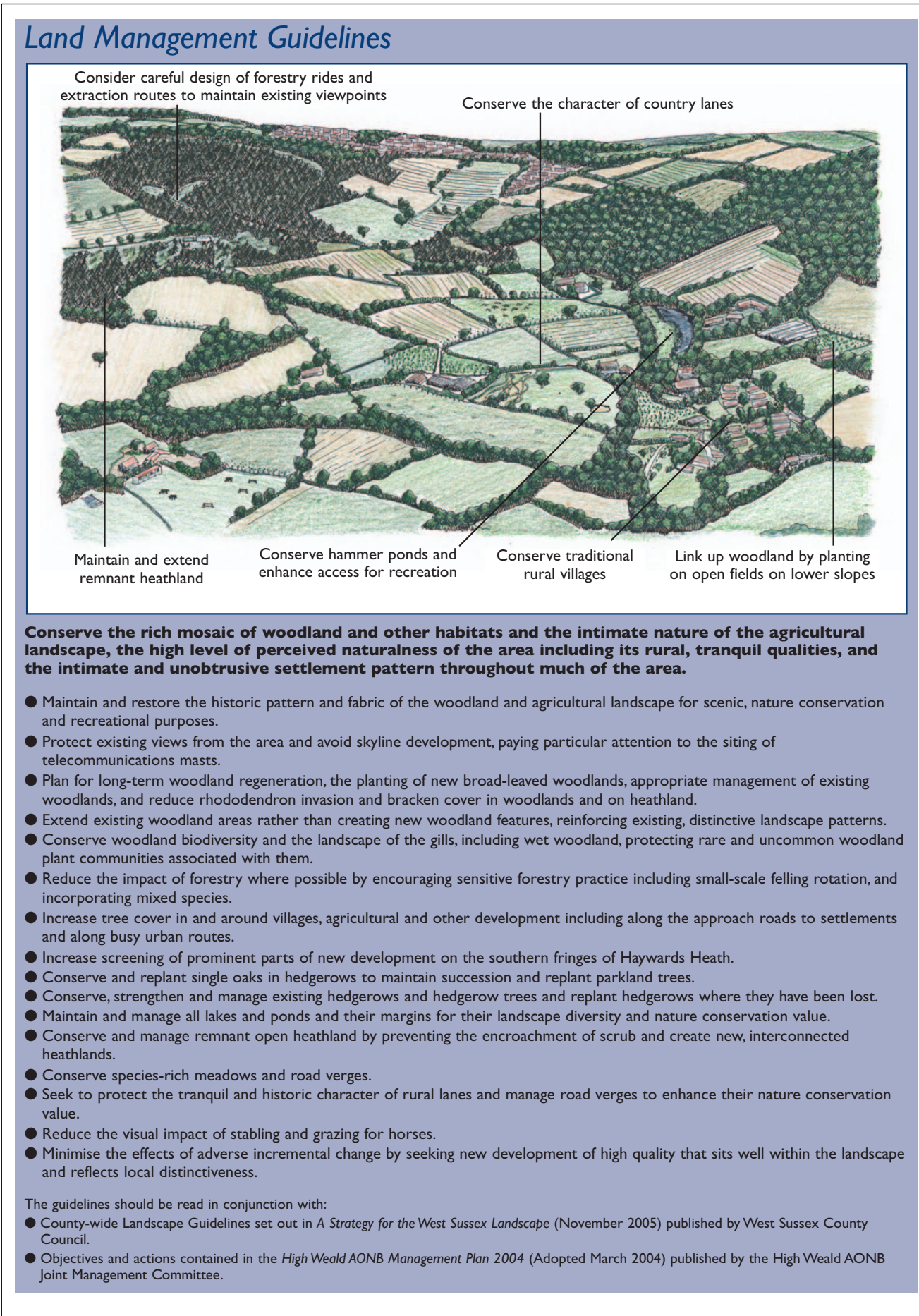
6.6.7 LCA 10 Landscape Sensitivity

By combining the High Landscape Value of LCA 10 with its Low Landscape Susceptibility to the changes arising from the proposed development, its **Landscape Sensitivity** is judged to be **Medium**.

6.7 Parish Council Character Assessment

6.7.1 Bolney Parish Council have not produced a Landscape Character Assessment.

Figure 11 Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape October 2005, LCA HW4, High Weald Fringes



6.8 Views (see Figures 12 and 13)

- 6.8.1 The Site and its surroundings were visited on 15 July 2026. The field-surveyed Zone of Theoretical Visibility is limited and fragmented, reflecting the influence of the undulating landform, ancient woodland, hedgerows and smaller woodland blocks surrounding the Site.
- 6.8.2 The principal area from which theoretical visibility may occur extends across parts of the open agricultural land immediately adjoining the Site, with a more limited area extending eastwards towards the higher ground around Broxmead Farm. However, these areas are substantially contained by intervening vegetation and local variations in topography. Theoretical visibility does not therefore necessarily equate to actual visibility of the proposed development.
- 6.8.3 The field survey confirmed that opportunities for views from the surrounding public realm are extremely limited. No views of the Site were available from the identified potential public viewpoint to the east. The actual visual envelope is therefore considerably more restricted than the broad area suggested by landform alone and is largely confined to private agricultural land within the wider farm holding.
- 6.8.4 Viewpoint 1 is the only publicly accessible location identified during the field survey that provides an appreciation of the Site's wider landscape setting. It represents the most likely public location from which there could theoretically be a view towards the proposed development. However, the Site is screened by intervening landform and vegetation, and this screening is expected to remain effective during winter.
- 6.8.5 The view extends across a large arable field, which supported a mature cereal crop at the time of the survey, enclosed by a framework of hedgerows, mature trees and woodland. The landscape has a simple agricultural character and a gently undulating landform. The distant skyline is defined by woodland and rising ground associated with the South Downs scarp, with no built development readily apparent.
- 6.8.6 The Site is not discernible because of intervening landform and vegetation. There are consequently no views of the proposed development area from this location. Receptors experience the wider rural landscape only, with the Site screened from view.
- 6.8.7 The viewpoint is also a short, one-off view through an opening in the hedgerow, extending for approximately 10m of the Public Right of Way. It is not representative of views from the remainder of the route, which are screened by intervening vegetation.

6.8.8 Other Potential Visual Issues

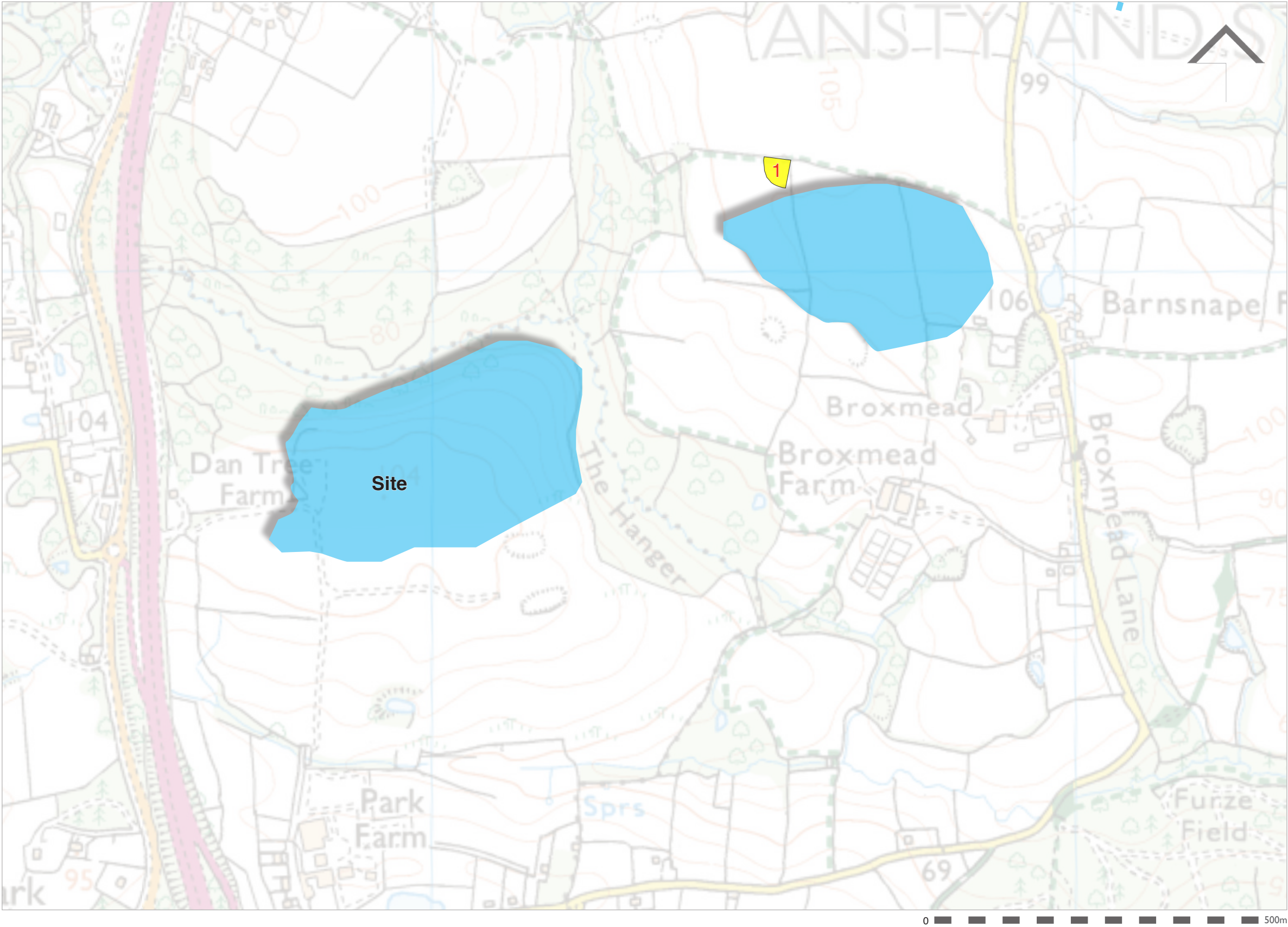
- 6.8.9 No residential properties have been identified that are likely to experience views of, or material visual effects arising from, the proposed development.
- 6.8.10 Existing vegetation to the west and north of the Site is dense, while the surrounding topography provides visual containment to the south. The proposed development is therefore likely to remain screened from the surrounding public realm during all seasons.

- 6.8.11 No operational lighting is proposed. The development would not introduce extensive glazed or highly reflective surfaces. There would therefore be no material night-time lighting effects or potential for glint and glare.

6.9 Cumulative Development

- 6.9.1 No planning applications, permitted developments or consented schemes have been identified that would be likely to give rise to material cumulative landscape or visual effects in combination with the proposed development.

Figure 12 Zone of Theoretcal Visibility (ZTV) Plan



KEY

-  Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) judged 15-7-26
-  Public Viewpoint



Figure 13 Viewpoint 1

6.10 Viewpoint 1

6.10.1 Location: From PRoW 16CR (Footpath) 900m located in the High Weald National Landscape, north west of the Site through a rare gap in the screening hedge planting located on the north side of the footpath.

GPS ref: Lat 51.11063, Long -0.181377.

6.10.2 Photographic Height: 103m AOD (plus 1.5m photographers view).

6.10.3 Existing Views Description: The view is across a large arable field currently supporting a mature cereal crop, enclosed by a framework of hedgerows, mature trees and woodland. The landscape exhibits a simple agricultural character with a gently undulating landform. The distant skyline is defined by woodland and rising land (South Downs scarp slope), with no built development readily apparent. The Site itself is not discernible owing to the intervening landform and vegetation, resulting in no views of the proposed development area. Consequently, receptors at this location experience the wider rural landscape only, with the proposed development screened from view. It is further noted that this is a one-off view through an opening in the hedgerow, representing up to 10m of the PRoW and it does not represent views from the rest of the length of this PRoW which are screened.

6.10.4 Visual Value: **High** (This is a high quality High Weald rural view).

6.10.5 Visual Susceptibility: **Low** (The development would be screened and as such the view has the capacity to accept the scale and type of change proposed).

6.10.6 Visual Sensitivity of Receptors: **Medium**.

6.10.7 During Construction Magnitude of Impact: **No change**.

6.10.8 On Completion, Magnitude of Impact: **No change**.

6.10.9 On Completion Visual Effect: **No change**.

6.10.10 Mitigation: No further mitigation is considered necessary.

6.10.11 After establishment of planting (15 years): **No change**.

Conclusion: This viewpoint represents the most likely publicly accessible location from which there could theoretically be a view towards the proposed development. However, the Site is screened by intervening landform and vegetation. This screening is expected to remain effective during winter, and the proposed development would not be visible.

7.0 Landscape Character and Visual Impacts/Effects

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 This chapter assesses the changes arising from the proposed development together with the resulting landscape character and visual effects. In accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3), a distinction is made between the physical changes introduced by the proposal (landscape and visual impacts) and the resulting effects on landscape character and visual amenity.
- 7.1.2 The assessment draws upon the Landscape Character and Visual Baseline presented in Chapter 5. The established judgements relating to landscape value, susceptibility and sensitivity are combined with the magnitude of the changes arising from the proposal to determine the significance of landscape character and visual effects.
- 7.1.3 As the proposal comprises permanent agricultural infrastructure and does not include structural landscape planting that would materially alter the appearance of the Site over time, the completed development represents the long-term condition of the Site. Accordingly, a separate Year 15 assessment has not been undertaken.

7.2 Overview of Change

- 7.2.1 The proposed development would introduce a manure store, slurry lagoon, associated earthworks, underground drainage infrastructure and agricultural stock fencing within part of an existing arable field.
- 7.2.2 Construction would involve excavation, cut-and-fill operations, formation of engineered embankments, installation of drainage infrastructure and reinstatement of agricultural soils. Upon completion, the Site would continue to form part of the existing agricultural holding and remain in agricultural use.
- 7.2.3 The principal changes would comprise a localised alteration to the existing landform and land cover together with the introduction of functional agricultural infrastructure. Whilst these changes would create a more engineered character within the immediate development area, they would remain consistent with the agricultural function of Bolney Park Farm.
- 7.2.4 Importantly, whilst the proposal would introduce new engineered features, these comprise agricultural infrastructure associated with an established working farm. Consequently, the proposal would reinforce the existing agricultural land use rather than introduce an unfamiliar or non-reflective element into the landscape.
- 7.2.5 Existing landscape structure, including ancient woodland, mature hedgerows, trees and the wider historic field pattern, would be retained. The proposal has been designed to integrate with the existing topography and would remain visually contained by the surrounding landform and vegetation.

- 7.2.6 No changes would occur to the wider landscape framework, settlement pattern, woodland cover, historic routeways or long-distance views that define the character of the surrounding landscape. Consequently, the degree of landscape change reduces rapidly beyond the Site and becomes increasingly limited at the wider published landscape character scales.

7.3 Landscape Character Effects

7.3.1 Area of Local Landscape Character (ALLC)

- 7.3.1 Having regard to the changes described in Section 6.2, the proposal would introduce a localised area of engineered agricultural infrastructure within part of the ALLC. Whilst the immediate development area would experience a change in landform and land cover, the wider landscape framework would remain unchanged.
 - 7.3.2 Existing woodland, mature hedgerows, trees and the historic field pattern would be retained. The proposal would remain closely associated with the existing farmstead and agricultural enterprise and would not extend onto skylines or interrupt the established pattern of enclosure that characterises the ALLC.
 - 7.3.3 Although the proposal would introduce a localised change to landform and ground cover, the resulting development would remain characteristic of a working agricultural landscape. The proposal would therefore be experienced as a logical component of the existing farmstead rather than as an isolated or urbanising feature.
 - 7.3.4 Whilst the proposal would introduce engineered agricultural infrastructure, such features are characteristic of a working farm and would therefore be experienced as a logical extension of the existing agricultural enterprise rather than an incongruous or urbanising influence.
 - 7.3.5 The **Magnitude of Landscape Impact** on the ALLC is assessed as **Low**.
 - 7.3.6 Combining this with the Low to Medium Landscape Sensitivity established in Chapter 5 results in a **Negligible to Minor Adverse Landscape Effect**, which is **Not Significant**.
- ### 7.4 National Character Area 122 – High Weald
- 7.4.1 The proposal would affect only a very small component of the National Character Area and would not alter its defining characteristics, including the dispersed settlement pattern, extensive woodland cover, historic field pattern or broad landscape framework.
 - 7.4.2 The proposal would not conflict with the defining agricultural character of the published landscape character area and would remain consistent with the established pattern of agricultural land management that underpins the area's landscape character.
 - 7.4.3 The **Magnitude of Landscape Impact** is assessed as **Low**.
 - 7.4.4 Combined with the Medium Landscape Sensitivity established in Chapter 5, the resulting **Landscape Effect** is **Minor** and **Not Significant**.

7.5 High Weald National Landscape

- 7.5.1 Particular regard has been given to the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the High Weald National Landscape.
- 7.5.2 The proposal would not result in the loss of ancient woodland, mature hedgerows, historic routeways or the wider agricultural framework that contributes to the special qualities of the designated landscape. Existing landscape structure would be retained and the proposal would remain visually contained within an established agricultural setting.
- 7.5.3 The proposal would not conflict with the defining agricultural character of the published landscape character area and would remain consistent with the established pattern of agricultural land management that underpins the area’s landscape character.
- 7.5.4 The **Magnitude of Landscape Impact** is assessed as **Low**.
- 7.5.5 Combined with the Medium Landscape Sensitivity established in Chapter 5, the resulting **Landscape Effect** is **Minor Adverse**, which is **Not Significant**.

7.6 West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 2005 Area, Landscape Character Area HW4: High Weald Fringes

- 7.6.1 The proposal would not materially alter the defining characteristics of the County Landscape Character Area. The wooded framework, undulating landform, historic field pattern and wider agricultural character would remain unchanged.
- 7.6.2 The proposal would not conflict with the defining agricultural character of the published landscape character area and would remain consistent with the established pattern of agricultural land management that underpins the area’s landscape character.
- 7.6.3 The **Magnitude of Landscape Impact** is assessed as **Low**.
- 7.6.4 Combined with the Medium Landscape Sensitivity established in Chapter 5, the resulting **Landscape Effect** is **Minor** and **Not Significant**.

7.7 Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 2005 Landscape Character Area I0: High Weald Fringes, as defined by the

- 7.7.1 The proposal would not materially alter the defining characteristics or management objectives of the District Landscape Character Area. The development would remain a localised agricultural intervention within an established farm holding.

- 7.7.2 The proposal would not conflict with the defining agricultural character of the published landscape character area and would remain consistent with the established pattern of agricultural land management that underpins the area’s landscape character.

7.6 Visual Effects

- 7.6.1 A field survey was undertaken to identify publicly accessible locations from which the proposed development may be visible. Existing topography, mature hedgerows and ancient woodland provide substantial visual containment of the Site, such that opportunities for public views are extremely limited.
- 7.6.2 Only one representative public viewpoint (Viewpoint 1) was identified during the field survey. This viewpoint represents a short opening within the field boundary where there is an opportunity to look towards the Site over a limited distance.
- 7.6.3 Notwithstanding this limited opportunity, the proposed development is not visible from Viewpoint 1 owing to intervening landform, mature hedgerows and woodland vegetation. Consequently, no discernible change to the existing view would occur.
- 7.6.4 Elsewhere within the surrounding Public Rights of Way network and local highway network, existing vegetation and topography prevent views towards the Site. No additional representative viewpoints were identified because no public views of the proposed development are available.
- 7.6.5 As the proposed development would not be visible from publicly accessible viewpoints, no change to public views would occur. Consequently, no visual effects have been identified.

7.7 Summary of Landscape Character and Visual Effects

- 7.7.1 The proposed development would result in a localised change to part of an existing arable field through the construction of a manure store, slurry lagoon, associated earthworks, drainage infrastructure and agricultural stock fencing. Whilst these works would introduce a more engineered character within the immediate development footprint, the proposal would remain consistent with the existing agricultural use of Bolney Park Farm and would not introduce a new land use into the landscape.
- 7.7.2 Existing woodland, mature hedgerows, trees and the historic field pattern would be retained. The proposal has been designed to integrate with the existing landform and would remain well contained by the surrounding topography and vegetation. Consequently, the greatest degree of landscape change would be confined to the Site itself, with the scale of change reducing rapidly beyond the Site boundaries.
- 7.7.3 The proposal would give rise to a Negligible to Minor Adverse Landscape Effect upon the Area of Local Landscape Character (ALLC). At the wider published landscape character scales, the proposal would not materially alter the defining characteristics of the surrounding landscape, resulting in Minor Adverse Landscape Effects, none of which are considered significant.

- 7.7.4 The visual assessment established that opportunities for public views towards the Site are extremely limited. Only one representative public viewpoint was identified during the field survey, representing a short section of a wider route. However, owing to the combination of intervening landform, mature hedgerows and woodland vegetation, the proposed development is not visible from this location. No other publicly accessible viewpoints were identified from which the Site could be seen.
- 7.7.5 As the proposed development would not be visible from publicly accessible viewpoints, no change to public views would occur. Consequently, no visual effects have been identified.
- 7.7.6 Overall, the proposed development would give rise to localised and limited landscape character effects that are not significant. No visual effects have been identified. The proposal would therefore conserve the wider landscape character of the area and the natural beauty of the High Weald National Landscape.

7.8 Landscape Strategy

- 7.8.1 The Landscape Strategy has been developed to minimise landscape and visual effects by working with the existing landscape framework and agricultural character of the Site.
- 7.8.2 The proposal comprises infrastructure that is inherently agricultural in function and appearance and, as such, represents a congruous and characteristic component of the existing High Weald farmed landscape, reflecting the long-established relationship between agricultural land management and the evolution of the area's distinctive landscape character.
- 7.8.3 The following landscape principles have been incorporated into the design where practicable:
- An integrated landscape-led design process has informed the siting and layout of the proposed manure store and slurry lagoon.
 - The proposal has been located within a visually contained part of the existing agricultural holding, utilising the surrounding landform, ancient woodland and mature hedgerows to provide landscape integration and visual containment.
 - Existing landscape features, including mature hedgerows, ancient woodland, scattered trees and the historic field pattern, would be retained and protected throughout construction and operation.
 - The engineered earthworks have been designed to integrate with the existing topography through sympathetic grading and the reinstatement of retained site-won topsoil, enabling the completed landform to blend with the surrounding agricultural landscape.
 - Surface water would be managed through the proposed drainage and attenuation measures to minimise runoff and integrate with the operational requirements of the agricultural holding.
 - No additional structural tree or hedgerow planting is proposed. Existing vegetation provides effective landscape integration and visual containment, whilst unnecessary planting could interrupt the established historic field pattern and alter the open agricultural character of this part of the High Weald National Landscape.
 - Following completion of the earthworks, disturbed areas outside the operational surfaces would be restored using retained site-won topsoil and seeded with Emorsgate EM2 Standard General Purpose Meadow Mixture, or an equivalent approved native meadow mix, to provide rapid ground stabilisation, integrate the restored landform with the surrounding landscape and provide a modest biodiversity enhancement.
 - The proposal has been designed to conserve the character of the surrounding countryside and the natural beauty of the High Weald National Landscape, having regard to the relevant published landscape character assessments, the High Weald National Landscape Management Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) and the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031.

Table 6a, Landscape Character and Visual Summary Table - Landscape Character

	Landscape Value	Landscape Susceptibility	Landscape Sensitivity	During construction: Magnitude	At completion: Magnitude of Landscape Impact	At completion: Landscape Character Effect/Significance	Mitigation	After planting establishment (15 years): Landscape Impact/Landscape Effect/Significance/Duration/Reversibility
Landscape Character Impacts/Effects								
Landscape Character Area Descriptions								
Area of Local Landscape Character (ALLC)	Medium to High	Low	Low to Medium	Low Adverse	Low Adverse	Negligible to Minor Adverse Landscape Effect/Not Significant	Mitigation is not required, see LVIA paragraph 7.8 for Landscape Strategy	Low Adverse Magnitude of Impact/Negligible to Minor Adverse Landscape Effect/Not Significant
National: National Character Area (NCA) 122 High Weald	High	Low	Medium	Low Adverse	Low Adverse	Minor Adverse Landscape Effect/Not Significant	Mitigation is not required, see LVIA paragraph 7.8 for Landscape Strategy	Low Adverse Magnitude of Impact/Minor Adverse Landscape Effect/Not Significant
Regional: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (MP) 2024-2029	Very High	Low	Medium	Low Adverse	Low Adverse	Minor Adverse Landscape Effect/Not Significant	Mitigation is not required, see LVIA paragraph 7.8 for Landscape Strategy	Low Adverse Magnitude of Impact/Minor Adverse Landscape Effect/Not Significant
County: West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 2005: HW4 High Weald Fringes	High	Low	Medium	Low Adverse	Low Adverse	Minor Adverse Landscape Effect/Not Significant	Mitigation is not required, see LVIA paragraph 7.8 for Landscape Strategy	Low Adverse Magnitude of Impact/Minor Adverse Landscape Effect/Not Significant
District: Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment 2005: LCA 10 High Weald Fringes	High	Low	Medium	Low Adverse	Low Adverse	Minor Adverse Landscape Effect/Not Significant	Mitigation is not required, see LVIA paragraph 7.8 for Landscape Strategy	Low Adverse Magnitude of Impact/Minor Adverse Landscape Effect/Not Significant
Visual Impacts/Effects								
	Visual Value	Visual Susceptibility	Visual Sensitivity	During construction: Magnitude of Visual Impact	At completion: Magnitude of Visual Impact	At completion: Visual Effect/Significance	Mitigation	After planting establishment (15 years): Visual Impact/Visual Effect/Significance/Duration/Reversibility
Viewpoint 1 From PRoW 16CR (Footpath) 900m located in the High Weald National Landscape, north west of the Site through a rare gap in the screening hedge planting located on the north side of the footpath. GPS ref: Lat 51.11063, Long -0.181377.	High (This is a high quality High Weald rural view)	Low (The development would be screened and as such the view has the capacity to accept the scale and type of change proposed)	Medium	No Change	No Change	No Change	No further mitigation is considered necessary	No Change

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has considered the likely effects of the proposed agricultural manure store and slurry lagoon at Bolney Park Farm upon landscape character, visual amenity and the High Weald National Landscape.
- 8.2

The assessment has identified that the proposal would introduce a localised area of agricultural infrastructure that is entirely consistent with the existing use of Bolney Park Farm and characteristic of the wider High Weald agricultural landscape. Whilst the development would alter part of an existing arable field, it would not introduce an unfamiliar or uncharacteristic land use and would remain wholly compatible with the prevailing agricultural landscape character.
- 8.3

The existing landscape framework, comprising ancient woodland, mature hedgerows, scattered trees and the historic field pattern, would be retained. The proposal has been designed to integrate with the existing landform and would remain visually contained by surrounding topography and vegetation. Consequently, the degree of landscape change would reduce rapidly beyond the Site and would not materially influence the wider landscape structure.
- 8.4

The assessment concludes that the Area of Local Landscape Character would experience a Negligible to Minor Adverse Landscape Effect, reflecting the localised change to part of an agricultural field. At the wider landscape scales, including the National Character Area, High Weald National Landscape, West Sussex Landscape Character Area and Mid Sussex Landscape Character Area, the proposal would not materially alter the defining characteristics or special qualities of those landscape receptors. Landscape effects are therefore assessed as Minor Adverse and not significant.
- 8.5

Field survey established that opportunities for public views towards the Site are extremely limited. Only one representative publicly accessible viewpoint was identified and, from this location, the proposed development would not be visible owing to intervening landform, mature hedgerows and woodland vegetation. No other publicly accessible views of the Site were identified. Consequently, no visual effects have been identified.
- 8.6

Overall, the proposal does not introduce a new land use into the High Weald National Landscape but provides essential infrastructure associated with an existing agricultural enterprise. It would remain functionally and visually associated with Bolney Park Farm and would be experienced as a characteristic component of the existing agricultural landscape. Consequently, the assessment concludes that the proposal can be successfully accommodated within the receiving landscape without giving rise to significant landscape character or visual effects.

9.0 Final Statement

- 9.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) together with current Landscape Institute guidance and reflects both a detailed desktop review and comprehensive field survey.**
- 9.2 The assessment demonstrates that the proposed manure store and slurry lagoon would remain closely related to the existing agricultural enterprise at Bolney Park Farm and would not materially alter the character of the surrounding countryside or the defining characteristics of the High Weald National Landscape.**
- 9.3 The landscape change would be experienced at the Site and its context, where the proposal would result in a Negligible to Minor Adverse Landscape Effect upon the Area of Local Landscape Character. Beyond the Site, landscape effects reduce rapidly in scale and are assessed as Negligible to Minor Adverse, and Not Significant. The change to the landscape as described in the published Landscape Assessments (national, regional, county and district scales) would result in Minor Effects and Not Significant.**
- 9.4 The Site is visually well contained by existing topography, mature hedgerows and ancient woodland. The field survey confirmed that there are no publicly accessible views of the proposed development. Consequently, the proposal would not give rise to visual effects upon the surrounding public realm.**
- 9.5 Importantly, the proposal should be viewed in the context of a long-established working farm within a nationally protected agricultural landscape, where appropriately designed agricultural development forms an integral and expected component of landscape character.**
- 9.6 Having regard to the findings of this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, it is my professional opinion that the proposed manure store and slurry lagoon can be accommodated within the receiving landscape without giving rise to significant landscape character or visual effects. The proposal would conserve the character of the surrounding countryside and the natural beauty of the High Weald National Landscape and is therefore considered consistent with the statutory duty under Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, together with the relevant national and local landscape planning policies. In landscape and visual terms, there are no overriding reasons why planning permission should not be granted.**

I.0 INTRODUCTION

I.0.1 This section addresses Landscape Character and Visual impacts. It explains how baseline conditions relating to Landscape Character and Visual matters are assessed and judged to be affected by development.

I.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology, general

I.1.1 The Landscape and Visual impact judgements presented in this report are based upon professional experience and the principles set out in *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), 3rd Edition, 2013*, published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, and with reference to the *Technical Guidance Note Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations (TGN 02-21)*

I.1.2 Landscape Character Impacts relate to the Effects of the proposals on the physical resources and other characteristics of the landscape, and the resulting character and quality. Landscape resources and character are considered to be of importance in their own right and valued for their intrinsic qualities, regardless of visibility. Landscape receptors are defined as aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by a proposal.

I.1.3 There is no single standard methodology for quantifying the scale or magnitude of relative Effects on Landscape Character, although guidance exists in *GLVIA 3* and *TGN 02-20*. The following definitions are therefore proposed to support judgement of Landscape Character Effects. Landscape Character is assessed by considering the Effects of the development at a range of scales. The term “*Local*” is used to define the area within, or influenced by, the Appeal Site and is likely to approximate to the extent of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) (referenced in the Visual section) as well as other perceptual changes such as noise and smell. *Local* is defined as the *Local Landscape Character Area (ALLC)*

I.1.4 The methodology sets out how to make Landscape Character impact judgements. Sensitivity is determined by cross-referencing Value with Susceptibility (see Tables 1 and 3). The Magnitude of Impact is then judged at scales ranging from the ALLC to those defined in the cascading scales of published Landscape Assessments. The Significance of Landscape Effect is determined by cross-referencing the Sensitivity of the Landscape Receptor with the Magnitude of Change (see Tables 2 and 5).

2.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

2.1 Landscape Value

2.1.1 Landscape Value refers to the relative value or importance that society attaches to different landscapes on account of their landscape qualities. It is inherent and independent of the proposed development. Landscape qualities are characteristics or features of a landscape that are valued, sometimes referred to as “*special qualities*” in relation to nationally designated landscapes. Landscape characteristics are elements that make a particular contribution to landscape character. Landscape Value is assessed using the following range of factors (adapted from *GLVIA 3*, paragraph 5.28, Box 5.1, with minor revisions following the introduction of *TGN 02-21*):

- *Landscape condition (revision from quality TGN 2/21).*

“A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.”
- *Scenic quality.*

“The term is used to describe landscapes that appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly the visual senses).”
- *Distinctiveness (combines Rarity and Representativeness).*

“Rarity is the presence of rare elements or features in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type.”

“Representativeness is whether the landscape contains a particular character and/or features or elements which are considered particularly important examples.”
- *Conservation (natural heritage factors (TGN 2/21) interests.*

“The presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of the landscape as well as having value in their own right.”
- *Recreation value.*

“Evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important.”
- *Perceptual aspects.*

“A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities, notably wildness, remoteness and/or tranquillity.”
- *Associations.*

“Some landscapes are associated with particular people, such as artists or writers, or events in history that contribute to perceptions of the natural beauty of the area.”
- *Function (TGN 2/221).*

“The value attached to landscapes which perform a clearly identifiable and valuable function.”

2.1.2 Landscape Value judgements are made using the following (linked to the GLVIA 3 categorisations on page 39 and Appendix 6).

- Very Low**

Typically characterised by a landscape significantly influenced by a dominant landscape detractor.
- Low**

A landscape which may be considered of Local Community value, is not designated or protected, does not make a positive contribution, is in poor condition, and/or has been substantially altered by detrimental man-made activity, possibly at a small scale.
- Medium**

A landscape which may be considered Regional or Local Authority (GLVIA 3), or an undesignated landscape judged to have a higher value than Low following assessment undertaken in accordance with TGN 02-21; or a landscape that may form part of a local designation or other recognised value, makes a moderately positive contribution, is in moderate condition, and/or may exhibit some detrimental activity resulting from man-made intrusion. These may include Local Plan landscape designations or other undesignated landscapes that have some degree of medium landscape value.
- High**

A landscape which may be classed as regional, international, or national: it is covered by an international or national designation or, occasionally, is of regional interest or other important value, making an important and positive contribution to its wider context. These may include World Heritage Sites, National Parks, AONBs, Heritage Coasts, and Registered Parks and Gardens (including their settings).
- Very High**

A landscape which is covered by an international or national designation and makes a highly important and significantly positive contribution to its wider context. These may include World Heritage Sites, National Parks, AONBs, or Heritage Coasts.

2.1.3 In respect of a test for judging a “valued landscape” (outside national designations), as referred to in NPPF Paragraph 187(a), the following definition is given on page 42 of LI TGN 02/21, Appendix 7, titled “The valued landscape policy test in England,” item A4.2.11:

“A ‘valued landscape’ is an area identified as having sufficient landscape qualities to elevate it above other more everyday landscapes.”

The TGN (also page 42) notes that “everyday” landscapes may nevertheless have value to people. GLVIA 3, item 5.28, Box 5.1, TGN 02/21 is also relevant, as noted for Photographic Methodology below.

2.2 Landscape Susceptibility

2.2.1 Landscape Susceptibility judgements are based on the physical state of the landscape and influential elements (Landscape Receptors) within it. It is development-specific. It relates to the intactness of the landscape from visual, functional, and ecological perspectives. It also reflects the condition of individual features and elements that contribute to landscape character in any given location.

Judgements are made to assess the ability of Landscape Receptors to accommodate change resulting from the proposed development relative to the baseline. Landscape Receptors may include overall character, key characteristics, individual elements or features, and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects.

Landscape Susceptibility judgements are made using the following:

Low

A landscape where receptors are likely to make a minimal positive contribution and could therefore accommodate the type of development proposed without causing a detrimental change to the base line condition.

Medium

A landscape where receptors are likely to make a moderately positive contribution and could therefore accommodate partial development, or where there is potential for effective mitigation to offset detrimental change to the baseline condition.

High

A landscape where receptors are likely to make a highly positive contribution such that it is unlikely to accommodate the type of development proposed (even with mitigation), and development would cause a detrimental and residual change to the baseline condition.

2.3 Landscape Sensitivity (See Table 1)

2.3.1 Landscape Sensitivity is the degree to which the landscape can accommodate change without adverse impact on its character. It is judged by cross-referencing landscape value with susceptibility.

Table 1 Determining Landscape Sensitivity

Susceptibility	Value	Value				
		Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
	Low	Very Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
	Medium	Low	Low	Medium	High	High
Susceptibility	High	Medium	Medium	High	High	Very High

2.3.2 Landscape Sensitivity is described as follows.

- **Very Low**

Defined as a landscape that has very low value (likely to be significantly influenced by a dominant landscape detractor) with low susceptibility, such that it would be tolerant of the type of change envisaged.

- **Low**

Defined as a landscape that is unlikely to include Local Plan landscape designations and is likely to have poor or damaged landscape characteristics. It is likely to be tolerant of the type of change envisaged.

- **Medium**

Defined as a landscape that is likely to include Local Plan landscape designations or other undesignated landscape characteristics and to be of local or district (borough) scale or capacity to accommodate a degree (potentially with mitigation) of the type of change envisaged.

- **High**

Defined as a landscape likely to be protected by a regional, national, or international designation and/or widely acknowledged for its medium to very high value and/or its medium to high susceptibility. It is a landscape with distinctive character that would be residually altered by the type of change envisaged, irrespective of mitigation.

- **Very High**

Defined as a landscape protected by a national or international designation and/or widely acknowledged for its very high value and high susceptibility. It is a landscape with significantly distinctive character that would be residually altered by the type of change envisaged, irrespective of mitigation.

2.4 Magnitude of Landscape Character Impact

2.4.1 Magnitude of Landscape Character Impact refers to the extent to which proposed development would alter the existing characteristics of a landscape and combines judgements on; size or scale of effect, geographical extent influenced; the duration; and the reversibility.

2.4.2 Magnitude of Landscape Impact is described using the following terms.

- **Low**

Defined as just-perceptible, long-term change in components of a landscape, or more noticeable temporary and reversible changes.

- **Medium**

Defined as clearly perceptible, long-term changes or loss of important features in a Character Area, but which result in only relatively subtle changes in character; or changes in a small part of a Character Area that will have a clear effect on the immediate locality. Also includes clearly perceptible change in the setting of a neighbouring Character Area that is sufficient to influence its own character.

- **High**

Defined as clearly perceptible changes, for example the loss of features that make an essential contribution to a Character Area, the introduction of new large-scale features into a Character Area where these are not typical, or change exerted by an overriding influence on a neighbouring Character Area.

2.5 Significance of Landscape Effect (see Table 2)

2.5.1 The Significance of Landscape Effect determines how important the changes might be for the landscape in terms of mitigation and the long term residual effects. It is judged using Table 2.

2.5.2 The Duration of Landscape Character Change

Duration judgements are made using the following criteria.

- **Short term or reversible**

Effects that have no lasting influence and where the existing baseline landscape would be restored.

- **Medium term or partially reversible**

Effects that would last until planting establishment becomes effective (approximately 10–25 years).

- **Long term or not reversible**

Permanent effects (perceived as over 25 years).

Table 2 Determining Significance of Landscape Effects				
Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of change			
	Very Low	Low	Medium	High
		Negligible Landscape Effect	Negligible Landscape Effect	Minor/Landscape Effect
		Negligible Landscape Effect	Minor Landscape Effect	Minor/Landscape Effect
		Minor Landscape Effect	Moderate Landscape Effect	ModerateLandscape Effect
		Minor Landscape Effect	Moderate Landscape Effect	Major Landscape Effect
	High	Minor Landscape Effect	Moderate Landscape Effect	Major Landscape Effect
	Very High	Minor Landscape Effect	Moderate Landscape Effect	Major Landscape Effect

Key to Table 2

Negligible Not significant

Minor Mitigation should be explored but the effect would be a consideration of only limited Significance in the judgement

Moderate Every effort should be made to mitigate the impact and if moderate residual effects remain these would be Significant

Major Every effort should be made to mitigate the impacts/effects and if residual major effects remain these would be Significant

3.0 VIEWS

3.1 Visual Impact and Effects Methodology

- 3.1.1 Visual impacts relate to the effects on existing visual amenity and on Visual Receptors. Visual Receptors are people with views that may be altered by new development. Effects on visual amenity, as perceived by Landscape Receptors, are therefore clearly distinguished from, although linked to, effects on Landscape Character.
- 3.1.2 Viewpoint 1 is described in this LVIA. Near-distance views are defined as within 200 m of the site; medium-distance views as between 200m and 1 km; and long-distance views as beyond 1 km

3.2 Photographic Methodology (see Appendix 5)

- 3.2.1 In demonstrating photographic evidence to support viewpoint descriptions and impact judgements, it is important to adopt a photographic methodology that can be replicated by any other party. Accordingly, this LVIA follows the *Landscape Institute Advice Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals* (17-09-19) as the basis for viewpoint photography.
- 3.2.2 Photographic viewpoints are selected to give typical or representative views from a variety of locations and from near, middle and long distance locations. All Viewpoints are publicly accessible locations in the landscape.
- 3.2.3 Each photograph is taken from a height approximately 1.5m (eye level) above ground level.
- 3.2.4 The camera used for the viewpoints was a Canon EOS R7 digital mirrorless camera with a 50mm lens. Suppliers of cameras of this type prescribe this as the set-up which most closely resembles the image as seen by the human eye.
- 3.2.5 All photographs were taken at a time when views were clear and during the day. These photographs can be used for photomontage presentations although this is not the case with this LVIA.

3.3 Visual Baseline

- 3.3.1 Views to the Site were selected through desktop review and on-Site assessment as the most likely public locations from which the proposed development might be visible. As such, they demonstrate highest-impact or worst-case-scenario views, as recorded on 15th July 2026.
- 3.3.2 Visual Impact Assessment structure
- 3.3.3 The methodology sets out how to make visual impact judgements. Sensitivity is determined by assessing, and then cross-referencing, Visual Value with Visual Susceptibility using Table 3. The Magnitude of Impact for each viewpoint is determined using Table 4. The Significance of Visual Effect arising from the development is determined using Table 5, which cross-references the judgements for Visual Sensitivity and Magnitude of Change. The judgements also consider seasonal variations (e.g. when trees are in or out of leaf) and night-time conditions.



3.4 Visual Value

3.4.1 Visual Value judgements relate to the value attached to the view (not the visual receptor). The value judgements are made using the following criteria.

- Very Low**

Views that are undocumented, not protected by any designation, and dominated by a significant landscape-detracting element or substantial detrimental man-made intrusion.
- Low**

Views that are not documented or protected by any designation and do not have notable cultural, historic, or ecological associations, or that exhibit some detrimental man-made intrusion.
- Medium**

Views that have a moderate level of visual interest and where the elements within the view are relatively intact, for example, local open spaces and local footpaths. These may also include views protected by County, District (or Borough), or Parish designations, or where there is a moderate level of cultural, historic, ecological, or other moderately important influences.
- High**

High-quality views where attention or interest is prolonged and focused on the visual surroundings, where there is a high level of scenic visual interest, or where the composition includes significant cultural, historic, ecological, or other important influences, and where man-made intervention is limited or positive (unless of cultural value).
- Very High:** Proprietary views where the attention or interest is prolonged and focused on the visual surroundings at an: international (World Heritage Sites); national (National Parks, AONBs and Heritage Coasts); county; regional or district scale, where there is a high level of scenic visual interest or the composition includes significant cultural, historic, ecological or other important influences and which is likely to have extremely limited or positive man-made intervention (unless of cultural value).

3.5 Visual Susceptibility

3.5.1 Visual Susceptibility is the ability of a view to accommodate the type of development being proposed without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation. Judgements are made using the following criteria.

- Low**

Views where the Visual Receptor’s attention is not focused on their surroundings and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life. Receptors may include drivers, people engaged in work tasks, or people participating in sports where the view is not an integral part of the experience.

- Medium**

Views where Visual Receptors may have a moderate level of interest, for example, local open-space users, local people walking in community areas, or those engaged in activities where the view is not an integral part of the experience (e.g. cycling, walking, jogging), as well as passengers in vehicles.
- High**

Views where Visual Receptors have a high level of interest, or where views are recorded in management plans or guidebooks, or are associated with nationally designated landscapes. This may include notable views from a National Trail or promoted route, or designed views (vistas) recorded in citations for historic parks and gardens or scheduled monuments. It may also include local residents who experience high-quality views, particularly where they have limited access to the wider countryside.

3.6 Visual Sensitivity

3.6.1 Visual Sensitivity is the degree to which the landscape can accommodate change without adverse impact on its composition and the ability to enjoy the view. It is determined by cross-referencing Visual Value with Visual Susceptibility.

Table 3 Determining Visual Sensitivity						
Susceptibility	Value	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
		Very Low	Low	Low	Medium	High
		Low	Low	Medium	High	High
		Medium	Medium	High	High	Very High

3.7 Magnitude of Visual Impact (see Table 4)

3.7.1 Magnitude of Visual Impact refers to the extent to which the proposed development would alter the existing characteristics of a visual composition and the ability to enjoy the view. Judgements combine the size or scale of change, the geographical extent, and the duration and reversibility.

Consideration is given to the loss, gain, deterioration, or enhancement of existing landscape and visual elements, as well as the scale, materiality, and design style of the development; the completeness of a view (e.g., open, enclosed, framed, partial, momentary, zoetropic, etc.); and the extent (see also the Zone of Theoretical Visibility), including the area affected and the number and types of Visual Receptors.

Table 4 Determining Magnitude of Visual Impact	
Visual impact magnitude	Description
Major visual impact or benefit	The proposals would cause a dominant or complete change to change to the landscape character and the visual composition
Moderate visual impact or benefit	The proposals would cause a clearly noticeable change to the landscape character and the visual composition
Slight visual impact or benefit	The proposals would cause a perceptible change to the landscape character and the visual composition
Negligible visual impact or benefit	The proposals would cause a barely perceptible change to the landscape character and the visual composition
No change	The proposals would cause no change to the view
Neutral	There would be a change to the view but it is not possible to judge whether this change is an adverse or beneficial impact

3.8 Visual Effect and Significance (see Table 5)

3.8.1 Views and the appreciation of the view are considered in terms of the requirements for mitigation and the long-term residual effects. These are judged using Table 5.

3.9 Duration of Visual Change

Duration judgements are made using the following criteria.

- Short term or reversible
Impacts have no influence and the visual baseline would be returned.
- Medium term or partially reversible
Effects that would last until planting establishment is becomes effective (10 to 25 years).
- Long term or not reversible:
Permanent effects (perceived as over 25 years).

Table 5 Determining Significance of Visual Effect

				Magnitude of Impact		
		Major impact or benefit	Moderate impact or benefit	Slight impact or benefit	Negligible impact or benefit	Neutral impact
	Very High	Major Visual Effect	Major Visual Effect	Moderate Visual Effect	Minor Visual Effect	Minor Visual Effect
	High	Major Visual Effect	Moderate Visual Effect	Moderate Visual Effect	Minor Visual Effect	Negligible Visual Effect
Sensitivity of receptor	Medium	Moderate Visual Effect	Moderate Visual Effect	Minor Visual Effect	Negligible Visual Effect	Negligible Visual Effect
	Low	Moderate Visual Effect	Minor Visual Effect	Negligible Visual Effect	Negligible Visual Effect	Negligible Visual Effect
	Very Low	Minor Visual Effect	Negligible Visual Effect	Negligible Visual Effect	Negligible Visual Effect	Negligible Visual Effect

Key to Table 5

Visual effect (VE)

- Negligible** The proposals would result in a change to the view that may be barely discernible and/or it would not be possible to make a beneficial or adverse judgement irrespective of the Sensitivity. The Effects are likely to be short-term or reversible and/or would be very small and lead to a Not Significant judgement.
- Minor** The proposals would result in a change to the view that would be barely discernible to clearly noticeable and would be dependent on the scale of judgement for Sensitivity. The Effects may be short-term or reversible and/or would be minimal and lead to a Not Significant judgement.
- Moderate** The proposals would result in a change to the view that would be perceptible to clearly noticeable and would be dependent on the scale of judgement for Sensitivity. The Effects may be long-term and irreversible and/or would be Significant in all cases.
- Major** he proposals would result in a change to the view that would be dominant or amount to a complete change where the impact is major and the sensitivity is high. The Effects would be long-term, irreversible, and Significant in all cases.

Significance

- Not Significant** Mitigation should be explored but the judgement should be a consideration of only limited weight
- Significant** Every effort should be made to mitigate the Effect and if residual Effects remain these should feature in the balance of considerations.

Bibliography

- Appendix 2 Natural England National Character Area (NCA) 122, High Weald
<https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4706903212949504>
- Appendix 3 High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (MP) 2024-2029
<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/landscape/landscape>
- Appendix 3 A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape October 2005, Landscape Character Area (LCA) HW4 High Weald Fringes
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/1771/landscape_strategy.pdf
- Appendix 4 A Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex November 2005, Landscape Character Area (LCA) 10 High Weald Fringes
<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/1769/lca-part-three-landscape-character-areas-high-weald-fringes.pdf>