

Thakeham Homes Limited

Land East of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Planning Issue: Friday, 25 September 2026

CLIENT NAME: Thakeham Homes Limited

SITE NAME: Land East of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint

REPORT TITLE: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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REPORT REVISIONS

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P1	15/07/2026	Planning Issue	GR	PG
P2	20/07/2026	Amended following Client comments	GR	GR
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1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Competency

- 1.1 David Jarvis Associates Limited (DJA) has been commissioned by Thakeham Homes Limited (the Applicant) to prepare this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to inform and assess proposals on Land east of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint (the Site). The Site location is shown on **Drawing LV-0001**.
- 1.2 This report has been prepared by George Richardson, MA BSc (Hons) Dip.Hort (RHS) CMLI, a Chartered Landscape Architect experienced in landscape and visual assessment.
- 1.3 DJA is an environmental, planning and design consultancy experienced in the design and assessment of development across the planning spectrum. DJA is a Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute.

Site Context

- 1.4 The Site extends to approximately 5.4 hectares on the eastern edge of Hurstpierpoint, between College Lane to the west and the wooded corridor of Belmont Lane to the east. Existing housing adjoins the Site to the south and west, while small paddocks and a well-treed rural edge lie to the north. The South Downs National Park boundary is approximately 200 metres to the south. Vehicular access is proposed from College Lane.

Scope

- 1.5 A typical LVIA considers landscape and visual matters as separate issues. Visual impacts relate to changes in views and visual amenity, whereas landscape impacts relate to physical changes to the defining characteristics of the landscape within an identified Study Area.
- 1.6 This LVIA concerns the predicted landscape and visual effects arising from the erection of 90 dwellings, with associated access, car parking, refuse and recycling storage, landscaping, infrastructure and works (collectively, the Proposed Development or Proposals).

Methodology

- 1.7 This report has been prepared with regard to a bespoke methodology that adheres to best practice guidelines, which includes the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment¹ (also referred to as 'GLVIA3'). The full methodology used for this assessment is provided at Appendix 2 of this report. Considerations that are specific to this assessment are recorded below.
- 1.8 For LVIA, the impacts arising from the Proposed Development are conveyed as effects (refer to the Methodology para. 1.2). Typically, the assessment is undertaken for the construction stage, then the operation/occupation phase, being 'Year 1', which occurs following completion of construction; and assessment at the long-term stage, being 'Year 15'. Assessment at Year 15 typically assumes that this accounts for mitigation and therefore records this as residual effects, unless stated otherwise. This is because landscape proposals are typically embedded into the Proposed Development from the outset.
- 1.9 Where it is relevant, assessment of stages may be combined; for example, where the effects are predicted to remain the same for construction and operation.

¹ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and the Landscape Institute (April 2013) 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment'; Third Edition

Assessment Limitations

- 1.10 Specific limitations pertinent to the assessment are described below.
- 1.11 The field survey was undertaken in winter, when deciduous vegetation was out of leaf. This provides a suitably cautious basis for assessing visibility. Viewpoints were limited to publicly accessible locations; no access was available to private gardens or dwellings.

Study Area

- 1.12 The Study Area has been defined by the B2116 (Hassocks Road/Wickham Hill/Hurst Road) to the south, the A273 London Road at Hassocks to the east, and a broadly north–south line passing along Highfield Drive to the west. It extends northwards to encompass the built-up extents of Hurst Wickham and Hassocks.
- 1.13 These boundaries reflect the principal contextual and enclosing features of the Site and adjoining countryside. Beyond this area, no significant landscape or visual effects are anticipated due to the combined separation provided by intervening built form, established vegetation and local topography.

2. PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 2.1 A full review of the Site in relation to national and local planning policy is contained within the planning statement accompanying the application. This section provides a proportionate review of policy and guidance pertinent to landscape character and visual amenity.
- 2.2 The following documents are relevant to this assessment:
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; August 2026);
 - Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (adopted March 2018);
 - Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031 (made March 2015);
 - Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan (made July 2020);
 - Emerging Mid Sussex District Plan review and evidence.

Landscape Designations and Considerations

- 2.3 Designations are an indication of landscape value and may be associated with relevant policies.
- 2.4 **Drawing LV-0003** shows that the Site is not within a statutory landscape designation, conservation area, ancient woodland or nationally designated ecological site.
- 2.5 The South Downs National Park lies approximately 200 metres to the south, and its setting is therefore considered.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 2.6 The National Planning Policy Framework was revised in August 2026. Policy S3 establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development for decision-making.
- 2.7 Policy DP3 requires development proposals to respond to the history, character and features of their site and setting so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings. Relevant design principles include the provision of high-quality, multifunctional green infrastructure, maintaining and enhancing tree cover, and creating visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development.
- 2.8 Policy N2 requires development proposals to consider the environmental qualities of land proposed for development, including landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside, and to identify opportunities for those qualities to be conserved or enhanced. It also seeks the conservation and enhancement of existing natural features of visual, historic or nature conservation value where possible, with appropriate landscaping used to help create a well-designed place and integrate development into its surroundings.
- 2.9 Policy N4 concerns Protected Landscapes. For development within Protected Landscapes, substantial weight should be placed on conserving and enhancing their natural beauty. Of particular relevance to this assessment, Policy N4(4) requires development proposals within the setting of Protected Landscapes to be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the Protected Landscape.
- 2.10 The Site is located approximately 200m north of the South Downs National Park and therefore the setting of the national park is considered below.

South Downs National Park Setting

- 2.11 ZTV modelling indicates that there is no meaningful intervisibility between the Site and the South Downs National Park. This was confirmed through field survey, which demonstrated that intervening topography, established vegetation and existing built form prevent views between the Site and the designated landscape: as indicated in **Figure 2.1** below. Visual effects upon the setting of the South Downs National Park are therefore not anticipated and are discounted from further assessment.

Figure 2.1 View south towards the South Downs National Park (not visible) from the northern boundary of the Site



- 2.12 Hurstpierpoint, Hurst Wickham and Hassocks are connected by a largely continuous pattern of development along the B2116 (Hassocks Road/Wickham Hill/Hurst Road), with built form extending northwards beyond the Site. As a result, the Site is experienced within a settled, urban-fringe context rather than as part of an open countryside setting to the National Park. The Proposed Development would not materially alter the perceived relationship between the existing settlement edge and the South Downs National Park. Perceptual effects upon the setting of the National Park are therefore not anticipated and are discounted from further assessment.

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031

- 2.13 The Mid Sussex District Plan was adopted in March 2018. The following policies are particularly relevant to landscape and visual matters:
- Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside: Seeks to protect and enhance the character, appearance and environmental quality of the countryside.
 - Policy DP13: Preventing Coalescence: Seeks to maintain the separate identity and character of settlements by preventing their physical or visual coalescence.
 - Policy DP18: Setting of the South Downs National Park: Requires development to conserve and enhance the setting, visual qualities, tranquillity and dark skies of the South Downs National Park.
 - Policy DP26: Character and Design: Requires high-quality, locally responsive design, including appropriate layout, landscaping and integration with the surrounding context.
 - Policy DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows: Seeks to protect, retain and enhance important trees, woodland and hedgerows and to incorporate them positively within development.
 - Policy DP38: Biodiversity: Requires the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, green infrastructure and habitat connectivity.

Emerging Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039

- 2.14 The Mid Sussex District Plan 2021–2039 was submitted for examination in July 2024 and remains under examination. At the date of this assessment, consultation on proposed Main Modifications was commenced on 27th July 2026. The wording of emerging policies and the proposed site allocations may therefore be subject to further modification before the Plan is adopted. The weight to be afforded to the emerging Plan is a matter for the decision-maker; this LVIA identifies the landscape and visual matters addressed by the relevant emerging policies.

2.15 The emerging policies of principal relevance to landscape and visual matters are:

- Policy DPC1: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside;
- Policy DPC2: Preventing Coalescence;
- Policy DPC5: Setting of the South Downs National Park;
- Policy DPB1: Character and Design;
- Policy DPN1: Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Recovery;
- Policy DPN2: Biodiversity Net Gain;
- Policy DPN3: Green Infrastructure;
- Policy DPN4: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows; and
- Policy DPN8: Light Impacts and Dark Skies.

2.16 Collectively, these policies concern the protection of countryside and landscape character; the maintenance of settlement identity and separation; the setting of the South Downs National Park; locally responsive design; biodiversity and nature recovery; connected green and blue infrastructure; the retention and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows; and the control of lighting effects.

2.17 Following the examination hearings and further site-selection work, Mid Sussex District Council published its Schedule of Main Modifications for consultation in July 2026. Main Modification MM72 proposes the allocation of Land east of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint (SHELAA Site 19). This represents a material advancement from the Site's previous identification for further testing. However, the Main Modifications remain subject to consultation and consideration through the examination.

2.18 The proposed allocation includes natural, semi-natural and amenity green space and a play area. Landscape-related requirements include pedestrian and cycle routes within landscaped green corridors, consideration of the watercourse to the north and nearby ponds within the drainage strategy, and retention of the landscape buffer along the eastern boundary. The allocation boundary is stated to include both built development and required mitigation, including landscape buffers and open space.

Other Planning Policy, Guidance and Considerations

2.19 The following studies have also been reviewed as they are considered relevant to informing the assessment and landscape strategy.

Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan

2.20 The following policies of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan are relevant to landscape and visual matters:

- Policy Hurst C1 – Conserving and Enhancing Character
- Policy Hurst C2 – South Downs National Park
- Policy Hurst C3 – Countryside Gaps
- Policy Hurst H5 – New Housing Development
- Policy Hurst H6 – Housing Layout and Design

Planning Considerations and Key Findings

2.21 The Site is not subject to any national or local landscape designation.

2.22 Although the Site lies within the wider setting of the South Downs National Park, effects on its setting are discounted from further assessment because ZTV modelling and field survey confirm no

meaningful intervisibility, with intervening topography, vegetation and built form providing separation.

- 2.23 Relevant policy considerations arise from the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031 (adopted March 2018), the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan 2014–2031 (made March 2015), and the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan 2014–2031 (made July 2020). These principally relate to countryside character, settlement separation, local character and the retention of trees, woodland and hedgerows.
- 2.24 The Site is not allocated in the adopted development plan.
- 2.25 The July 2026 Schedule of Main Modifications to the emerging local plan proposes the Site's allocation through Main Modification MM72 for an indicative 75 dwellings. The Main Modifications remains subject to consultation and the outcome of the District Plan examination.

3. LANDSCAPE BASELINE

- 3.1 In order to determine what will be affected by the Proposed Development, it is necessary to establish the landscape baseline conditions and receptors. The following section presents a review and understanding of the representation of adopted landscape character assessments. This in turn informs an assessment of the sensitivity of the identified landscape receptors, having regard to factors relating to value and susceptibility.

General

Site Description

- 3.2 The Site is principally a single, gently undulating pasture field used for grazing. Its short, species-poor sward gives the interior a simple and managed appearance. The Site's character is defined less by the grassland itself than by the robust peripheral vegetation: mature oaks and treelines associated with a seasonally wet ditch and pond to the north; dense scrub, young plantation woodland and mature trees adjoining Belmont Lane to the east; and trees, scrub and garden vegetation along the southern and western settlement edges. Existing dwellings on College Lane and Wickham Hill are visible around parts of the perimeter and give the Site a clear settlement-edge context.



Site Context

- 3.3 Hurstpierpoint occupies a low ridge at the foot of the South Downs. The Site forms a contained area of countryside to the existing village edge, with housing immediately to the west and south. College Lane is suburban in character beside the Site, while Belmont Lane is a narrow, wooded route whose enclosed character changes little in response to the open field behind it. To the north are small paddocks and mature trees; to the east, vegetation and intervening fields separate the Site from Hassocks. The wider landscape rises markedly to the South Downs scarp, but the Site itself is not prominent on a skyline and is screened from the scarp by settlement and vegetation.

Published Landscape Character

- 3.4 The boundaries of published landscape character assessments are shown on **Drawing LV-0004**, and their key characteristics are described below and then evaluated to determine the extent to which they are representative of the Site and its setting / local context.
- 3.5 The landscape of Great Britain has been classified into a series of character areas at varying scales. These reflect broad recognisable characteristics such as geology, soils, vegetation, land use and settlement pattern. The following character assessments exist within the Study Area:
- National Character Area 121: Low Weald;
 - West Sussex County Council (2003), Landscape Character Assessment of West Sussex – Low Weald Landscape Character Area LW11: Eastern Scarp Footslopes.
 - Mid Sussex District Council (November 2005), A Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex – Landscape Character Area 3: Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes
- 3.6 The district-scale assessment is the most useful basis for evaluating effects, while the national and county assessments provide broader context.

- 3.7 The Site lies within the Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes, close to the transition between the expanded village and the more rural, wooded footslopes.
- 3.8 Relevant characteristics include gently undulating low ridges and clay vales; a pastoral and arable field pattern defined by hedgerows, shaws and hedgerow trees; woodland, ponds and stream valleys of ecological value; views influenced by the steep South Downs scarp; narrow rural lanes; and significant suburban expansion around Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.
- 3.9 The Site represents some of these characteristics through its pasture, mature oaks, pond, ditch and wooded edges. Its representativeness is reduced by the poor-condition modified grassland, the immediate influence of housing on two sides, and the relatively recent origin of much of the eastern plantation woodland.

National Character Area 121: Low Weald

- 3.10 National Character Area 121: Low Weald is characterised by a gently undulating landscape of pasture and arable farmland, woodland, hedgerows, ponds and dispersed settlement.
- 3.11 The designation covers an extensive area and provides strategic context only. Consequently, the detailed assessment of landscape effects is informed principally by the county and district-level landscape evidence.

Local Character Assessment

West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment: LW11: Eastern Scarp Footslopes.

- 3.12 The Site is identified as lying within the Built-up Area, reflecting its location adjacent to the existing settlement edge. The surrounding countryside to the north and east falls within LW11: Eastern Scarp Footslopes, which provides the wider county landscape context. The character area is described in **Appendix 3**.
- 3.13 Key characteristics of the character area are as follows, with those relevant to the Site underlined:

Key Characteristics

- *Undulating Lower Greensand sandstone ridges and gentle Gault Clay vales drained by the River Adur, most of which lie within the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).*
- *Concentration of ancient woodland lying on the Gault Clay.*
- *Views dominated by the steep downland scarp.*
- *Arable and pastoral rural landscape, secluded in places, a mosaic of small and larger fields, woodlands, shaws and hedgerows with hedgerow trees.*
- *Includes the extensive designed landscape of Danny Estate.*
- *Small historic commons and orchards around Henfield in the north of the area.*
- *Modest network of country lanes and underhill lanes beneath the scarp.*
- *Pockets of biodiversity limited to woodland, ponds and stream valleys.*
- *Characteristic spring-line villages and dispersed farmsteads, some historic.*
- *Township of Henfield and expanded ridge line villages with suburban development at Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.*
- *Criss-crossed by roads, many of them busy, including the A23 Trunk Road.*

- *London to Brighton Railway Line crosses the area.*
- *Varied traditional rural buildings built with diverse materials including flint, timber-framing, Horsham Stone roofing and varieties of local brick and tile-hanging.*
- *Dominance of painted render and a wide range of modern styles and materials from the Victorian period onwards.*
- *Few visitor and recreational attractions.*

Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment: LW11 Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes

- 3.14 The Site falls within Area 3 Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes character area. The character area is described in **Appendix 4**.
- 3.15 Key characteristics of the character area are as follows, with those relevant to the Site underlined:

Summary and key characteristics

Undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault Clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp.

- *Undulating Lower Greensand low sandstone ridges and gentle and Gault Clay vales drained by the River Adur.*
- *Concentration of ancient woodland lying on the heavier soils of the Gault Clay.*
- *Views dominated by the steep downland scarp.*
- *Arable and pastoral rural landscape, secluded in places, a mosaic of small and larger fields, woodlands, shaws and hedgerows with hedgerow trees.*
- *Includes the extensive designed landscape of Danny Estate.*
- *Modest network of country lanes and underhill lanes beneath the scarp.*
- *Biodiversity in woodland, ponds and stream valleys.*
- *Characteristic spring-line villages and dispersed farmsteads, some historic.*
- *Expanded ridge line villages with suburban development at Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.*
- *Criss-crossed by roads, many of them busy, including the A23 Trunk Road.*
- *London to Brighton Railway Line crosses the area.*
- *Varied traditional rural buildings built with diverse materials including flint, timberframing, Horsham Stone roofing and varieties of local brick and tile-hanging.*
- *Dominance of painted render and a wide range of modern styles and materials from the Victorian period onwards.*
- *Few visitor and recreational attractions.*

Mid Sussex District Council (2014) Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development

- 3.16 The Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development was prepared by LUC for Mid Sussex District Council in 2014. It updates and extends the earlier 2007 Landscape Capacity Study and assesses broad landscape character areas by combining judgements on landscape sensitivity and landscape value. The study is strategic in scale, and its capacity ratings are not site-specific assessments.

- 3.17 The Site lies within the assessment's Landscape Character Area 66: Hurstpierpoint Low Weald, which is assessed as having Low landscape capacity. The character area is attributed Substantial landscape sensitivity and Substantial landscape value. The Council's later assessment of the application Site, undertaken as part of its South Downs National Park setting evidence, also records the Site within Character Area 66 and notes the presence of a stream, ponds and mature boundary trees.
- 3.18 The capacity rating applies to the wider Character Area rather than solely to the Site. It therefore provides strategic context for the Site-specific sensitivity assessment undertaken in this LVIA. In particular, it indicates that the wider landscape has limited capacity to accommodate development without significant effects on its character, although local variations in settlement influence, containment, vegetation, land use and visibility must be considered at the finer Site scale.
- 3.19 The Council reviewed its landscape evidence in November 2024 and concluded that the 2005 Landscape Character Assessment, the 2014 Capacity Study and the 2015 review of SHLAA sites remain up to date and relevant to the current District Plan Review. The Council confirms that the 2014 study continues to inform Criterion 1 - Landscape within its Site Selection Methodology for sites outside nationally designated landscapes.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 3.20 Landscape sensitivity is derived from combining the judgements on landscape value and landscape susceptibility together.

Landscape Susceptibility

- 3.21 Landscape susceptibility is the ability of an identified landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences on its baseline conditions or character. Consideration includes the overall character and individual contributors, especially key characteristics, and the extent of their representation. Judgements in relation to susceptibility are provided with reference to the assessment methodology and supporting figures.
- 3.22 The Study Area has some ability to accommodate a contained extension adjoining the existing built-up edge, but remain susceptible to development that weakens wooded boundaries, appears on the skyline, erodes the gap between settlements or affects views from the South Downs. Its susceptibility to the specific form of development proposed is judged **Medium**.

The Site is more contained than the wider Study Area. Its central grazed field is of limited condition and distinctiveness, is influenced by existing housing to the south and west and is visually separated from the wider countryside by the eastern woodland corridor and established boundary vegetation. The mature oaks, pond, ditch, treelines, plantation woodland and dense scrub are more susceptible to change and form the principal landscape constraints. With these features treated as the defining landscape framework, the susceptibility of the Site to the type of development proposed is judged **Medium/ Low**.

Landscape Value

- 3.23 Landscape value relates to the value, or importance society attaches to a landscape or view, which expresses national or local consensus and because of various factors that are an influence on value. This may be assigned through a relevant designation. Where no designation exists, then LI guidance identifies a number of reasons why a landscape may be valued, which is determined with regard to the Methodology.
- 3.24 Where the Site is in a landscape designation, the following over-arching values are given:
- High: International or nationally designated landscapes;

- High-Medium: Regional or locally designated landscapes.

3.25 **Drawing LV-0003** illustrates that the Site and Study Area are not in a designated landscape.

3.26 As the Study Area and Site are not in a designated landscape, then their value is determined with regard to the criteria listed in tables 3.1 and 3.2 below. The assessment methodology provides additional information to inform this consideration.

Table 3.1: Landscape Value for Non-Designated Landscapes: Study Area

Factor	Study Area – Evaluation	Contribution
Natural Heritage	The Study Area contains an established network of woodland, shaws, hedgerows, mature trees, ponds, ditches and watercourses. These features provide ecological structure and connectivity through the otherwise settled and intensively managed landscape.	Medium
Cultural Heritage	The historic settlement pattern, rural lanes, surviving field boundaries and relationship between Hurstpierpoint, Hurst Wickham and the surrounding countryside contribute some cultural interest. This has been diluted locally by twentieth- and twenty-first-century settlement expansion.	Medium/Low
Landscape Condition	Condition varies across the Study Area. Mature woodland, hedgerows, trees and rural lanes provide a generally established landscape framework, although this is interrupted by settlement expansion, roads, fragmented land uses and areas of urban fringe influence.	Medium
Associations	No particular artistic, literary, historic or cultural associations of landscape value have been identified within the Study Area.	None
Distinctiveness	The Study Area displays recognisable characteristics of the scarp-foot and Low Weald landscape, including gently undulating landform, wooded field boundaries, mature trees, ponds, watercourses and rural lanes. Its identity is moderated by the substantial influence of the adjoining settlements.	Medium
Recreational Value	The Study Area contains a network of public footpaths and bridleways connecting the settlements with the surrounding countryside. These routes provide opportunities to experience the local landscape, although much of the Study Area is privately owned and settlement influence is frequently apparent.	Medium
Perceptual (Scenic)	The Study Area includes attractive enclosed pasture, wooded lanes, mature trees and occasional broader rural views, with the South Downs providing wider contextual influence. Scenic quality is reduced in places by housing, roads and other urbanising features.	Medium
Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)	Areas of woodland, enclosed farmland and rural lanes provide some local quietness and separation from built development. However, the proximity and extent of Hurstpierpoint, Hurst Wickham and Hassocks, together with the local road network, limit wildness and tranquillity across much of the Study Area.	Low/Medium
Functional	The Study Area performs valuable landscape functions through its green and blue infrastructure, ecological connectivity, drainage corridors and its role in maintaining the setting, identity and physical separation of the adjoining settlements.	Medium

Table 3.2: Landscape Value for Non-Designated Landscapes: Site

Factor	Site – Evaluation	Contribution
Natural Heritage	The central field comprises poor-condition modified grassland. Greater value is associated with the mature rural trees, treelines, plantation woodland, scrub, pond and ditch around its margins, which form connected habitat and green infrastructure.	Medium/Low
Cultural Heritage	No designated heritage assets lie within the Site. Its pasture and mature boundary trees provide some continuity with the former agricultural landscape, although its character is strongly influenced by adjoining modern housing.	Low
Landscape Condition	The grazed field is simple and species poor. The boundary vegetation is more established and includes high-quality mature oaks, while the eastern plantation woodland is comparatively recent but developing as a coherent landscape feature.	Medium
Associations	No particular artistic, literary, historic or cultural associations have been identified for the Site.	None
Distinctiveness	The central pasture is commonplace, but the mature oaks, wooded Belmont Lane edge, pond, ditch and enclosed character provide a locally recognisable landscape structure.	Medium/Low
Recreational Value	There is no public right of way or public access within the Site. Belmont Lane is a public bridleway, and a public footpath lies farther east, but the Site makes only a limited contribution to the experience of these routes.	Low
Perceptual (Scenic)	The Site has some pleasant, enclosed pasture and woodland-edge qualities but does not form a notable scenic composition. Its perceptual character is influenced by adjoining housing and College Lane.	Medium/Low
Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)	The eastern woodland and northern boundary vegetation provide some enclosure and local quietness. Wildness and tranquillity are limited by adjoining housing, College Lane and the managed character of the pasture.	Low/Medium
Functional	The Site contributes to local green and blue infrastructure, habitat connectivity, drainage and the undeveloped break between adjoining areas of built form. These functions are principally associated with its mature trees, woodland, scrub, pond, ditch and boundary vegetation.	Medium

- 3.27 On balance, the Study Area is judged to be of **Medium** landscape value. It contains established landscape structure, recreational routes, rural lanes and connected green and blue infrastructure and contributes to the setting and separation of the adjoining settlements. Its value is moderated by the extensive influence of built development, roads and fragmented urban-fringe land uses.
- 3.28 The Site is judged to be of **Medium/ Low** landscape value. Its central pasture is commonplace, in poor ecological condition and influenced by adjoining housing, and there is no public access. Its value is concentrated principally in the mature oaks, treelines, woodland, scrub, pond and ditch, together with the functional contribution these features make to local landscape structure and connectivity.

Overall Landscape Sensitivity

- 3.29 Having developed an understanding of landscape value and susceptibility, the overall sensitivity judgements are provided in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Overall Sensitivity

	Susceptibility	Value	Overall Sensitivity
Wider Study Area	Medium	Medium	Medium
Site	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low

4. VISUAL BASELINE

General

- 4.1 In order to assess the impact, the Proposed Development may have on visual amenity, it is necessary to understand who will be subject to a change in visual circumstances and the extent to which those persons – the visual receptor - will be affected. The starting point is thus to establish the sensitivity of the viewing public to visual change.
- 4.2 The visual baseline provides a record of the views available to visual receptors and their visual amenity, in order to determine, through the process of design and mitigation, how their views are changed by the Proposed Development. The degree by which a visual receptor is judged to be sensitive, however, also depends on the actual quality of the existing view at the point at which it is considered representative of the 'worse case', this being typically where the greatest intervisibility occurs. Accordingly, when the sensitivity to the change being proposed is assessed, matters such as the context and extent of the existing view as well as the proximity of the receptor to the Proposed Development need to be considered.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 4.3 **Drawing LV-0002** presents a Zone of Theoretical Visibility for the proposals. The model was generated using the Environment Agency 2022 Composite LiDAR dataset, comprising a First Return Digital Surface Model and Digital Terrain Model at 2 m resolution. Observer points were modelled at 1.6 m above the Digital Surface Model.
- 4.4 Target points were arranged on a 15 m square grid across the proposed building blocks, with heights assigned according to the proposed building heights (measured above the Digital Terrain Model):
- one storey: 4.500 m;
 - two storeys: 8.755 m;
 - two-and-a-half storeys: 10.065 m; and
 - three storeys: 10.890m.
- 4.5 Atmospheric refraction and the curvature of the Earth were included within the calculation.
- 4.6 As the Digital Surface Model records the first returned surface, the model incorporates the probable screening effects of existing buildings and vegetation represented within the LiDAR data. It therefore provides an indication of likely visibility rather than a bare-earth theoretical maximum. However, the model cannot fully represent the density, permeability or seasonal condition of vegetation, smaller boundary features, localised variations in landform or changes occurring since the LiDAR data was captured. The ZTV is therefore treated as a probable scenario used to inform and direct the field survey, rather than as a definitive record of visibility.

Visual Receptors and Viewpoint Selection

- 4.7 The ZTV was reviewed alongside Ordnance Survey mapping, aerial photography, topography, public rights of way, roads, settlement edges, publicly accessible open space, vegetation and published landscape information. Field survey was then used to establish the practical extent and nature of visibility and to define the Zone of Visual Significance.
- 4.8 Viewpoint locations were selected to provide a representative record of:
- the principal publicly accessible receptor routes and locations around the Site;
 - views from different directions and at varying distances;

- locations where the ZTV indicated potential visibility;
- locations where intervening vegetation, built form or landform was expected to restrict visibility;
- the transition between locations with potential views of the Site and those from which it is screened.

- 4.9 A Site visit was undertaken on 7th February 2026. The survey was carried out in winter, when deciduous vegetation was substantially out of leaf, providing a cautious representation of potential visibility through and beyond existing vegetation. The survey included travel along publicly accessible roads, rights of way and other accessible locations within the surrounding landscape.
- 4.10 Eight representative viewpoints were recorded and are shown on **Drawing LV-0007**. These viewpoints provide representative records of the wider field survey and are not intended to form a complete record of every location traversed or every observation made. Collectively, they illustrate the principal receptor types and the range of visual experiences identified during the survey where visibility of the proposals is expected or might be expected. Locations with clearly no potential for views of the proposals are excluded.
- 4.11 The photographic field survey record is provided separately at **Appendix 2**. The viewpoint descriptions below follow the conditions recorded during the survey and do not imply visibility beyond that demonstrated by the photographs and accompanying field observations.

Public Rights of Way

VP4-VP7: Users of Belmont Lane / Bridleway HAS/8C/3

- 4.12 VP4 is at the disused south-eastern entrance from Belmont Lane; VP5 lies beside the middle of the eastern boundary; VP6 is near the north-eastern corner; and VP7 is farther north near Little Court.
- 4.13 Belmont lane is a narrow-surfaced lane strongly enclosed by dense scrub, young woodland, ivy-clad trees and understorey vegetation. At VP4 the entrance is visible through fencing and vegetation, but the Site interior is not a prominent component of the view. At VP5-VP7, vegetation forms a near-continuous screen and the pasture is not visible.
- 4.14 The wooded route has local recreational and perceptual value and users are likely to notice changes to its enclosure. The existing metalled surface and occasional access features reduce scenic quality, while the dense boundary vegetation provides strong capacity to absorb change. Value and susceptibility are both judged Medium, resulting in **Medium** sensitivity.

VP8: Users of Public Footpath HAS/10C/1 near Five Oaks Way

- 4.15 The viewpoint is approximately 495 metres east of the Site on a muddy public footpath through rank grassland. The photographs show an open foreground field bounded by post-and-wire fencing, with mature hedges, trees and woodland forming the middle-distance horizon. The approximate Site extent lies behind this vegetation and is not readily discernible. Recent development and occasional abandoned vehicles are present in the wider view.
- 4.16 The route provides a local recreational connection, and users have some interest in the surrounding landscape, but the view is not designated or especially scenic and the Site is screened. Value and susceptibility are judged Medium/ Low, resulting in **Medium/ Low** sensitivity.

Roads

VP1-VP3: Users of College Lane

- 4.17 VP1 is immediately outside the existing Site entrance, VP2 is at the Wickham Drive junction and VP3 is farther north on College Lane. The views are experienced from a suburban road with nearby houses, driveways, parked or moving vehicles, hedges and mature trees.
- 4.18 At VP1 the entrance provides a direct, short-range view into the pasture; at VP2 and VP3, views are more oblique and filtered by roadside vegetation and intervening built form. The Site is seen as a contained field at the village edge rather than as part of an extensive open panorama.
- 4.19 Road users have a transient experience and landscape appreciation is not their primary purpose. The views are ordinary settlement-edge views and have Low value and Low susceptibility, resulting in **Low** sensitivity.

Zone of Significant Visibility

- 4.20 The actual Zone of Significant Visibility is confined principally to the Site, immediately adjoining properties, short sections of College Lane and the fields to the north. Existing woodland, scrub, hedgerows, garden vegetation and built form prevent the Site from being read as a prominent feature over the wider landscape. The Site does not form a distinctive skyline and no material view of it was identified from the South Downs National Park during the survey.

Visual Receptors

- 4.21 Four categories of visual receptor have been identified within the ZSV:
1. Occupiers of residential properties adjoining the Site;
 2. Users of Belmont Lane / Bridleway HAS/8C/3;
 3. Users of Public Footpath HAS/10C/1;
 4. Users of College Lane.
- 4.22 People at work are less likely to be affected and have not been included. Private residential views were not photographed; their assessment is based on publicly observable relationships, boundary conditions and the proposed layout.
- 4.23 Receptor sensitivity is summarised in Table 4.1. It varies according to the value attached to the view and the susceptibility of the person experiencing it to the specific change proposed.

Table 4.1: Selected Representative Visual Receptors

Reference	Receptor description and location	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Residential Receptors				
-	Residents adjoining the Site on College Lane and Wickham Hill	High	Medium	Medium/High
Users of Public Rights of Way				
VP4-VP7	Users of Belmont Lane / Bridleway HAS/8C/3	Medium	Medium	Medium
VP8	Users of Public Footpath HAS/10C/1 near Five Oaks Way	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Medium/Low
Users of Local Roads				
VP1-VP3	Users of College Lane	Low	Low	Low

5. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES

General

- 5.1 The Proposed Development is a full planning application for *100 dwellings, with associated access, car parking, refuse/recycling storage, landscaping, infrastructure and associated works*. Full details are provided in the application drawings and Planning Statement.
- 5.2 The principal components relevant to landscape and visual assessment are:
- Residential development arranged within the existing tree and woodland framework;
 - A central, informal and multifunctional public open space incorporating a LEAP;
 - Retention and protection of the principal mature trees, eastern woodland/scrub belt, northern pond, ditch, treelines and boundary vegetation;
 - New tree, native hedge, scrub, species-rich grassland wetland and aquatic planting.

Landscape Strategy

- 5.3 The landscape strategy has been informed by the landscape and visual baseline described in Sections 3 and 4. The baseline identifies the central grazed field as being of limited condition and distinctiveness, while the mature oaks, treelines, pond, ditch, eastern plantation woodland, scrub and other boundary vegetation provide the principal landscape structure, ecological connectivity, enclosure and visual containment of the Site.
- 5.4 The visual assessment identifies a geographically limited Zone of Significant Visibility. The most open views occur from short sections of College Lane and from adjoining residential properties. In contrast, the eastern woodland and scrub adjoining Belmont Lane form a substantial visual barrier, while intervening vegetation and built form restrict views from the wider countryside and the South Downs National Park.
- 5.5 The published landscape character assessments support the conservation and reinforcement of wooded field boundaries, shaws, hedgerows, mature trees, ponds and stream corridors; the strengthening of tree cover around settlement edges; and the avoidance of prominent or abrupt development within the wider scarp-foot landscape. These considerations, together with the Site-specific baseline, establish the following principal objectives for the landscape strategy:
- retain the landscape features that make the greatest contribution to the character, value and containment of the Site;
 - arrange development within, rather than in place of, the established landscape framework;
 - create a coherent and well-vegetated extension to the existing settlement edge;
 - maintain the enclosed and predominantly wooded character of Belmont Lane;
 - retain a clear landscape transition and visual interval between Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks;
 - reinforce green and blue infrastructure and habitat connectivity;
 - provide an attractive, multifunctional network of open spaces within the development; and
 - limit lighting effects upon retained vegetated corridors and the wider landscape.
- 5.6 The retained trees, woodland, scrub, pond, ditch and boundary vegetation are therefore treated as permanent components of the development structure rather than solely as visual screening. New planting would reinforce these features, provide long-term succession and connect the retained peripheral vegetation with the public open space, streets and other planted areas within the development.

- 5.7 Particular importance is placed upon the eastern edge of the Site. The woodland and scrub adjoining Belmont Lane would be retained and reinforced to maintain a substantial wooded boundary between the proposed built form and the countryside farther east. Development and associated parking would remain to the west of this landscape framework, with additional planting used to soften built form, parking and the transition toward the retained woodland. Undeveloped land would remain between the Site and Hassocks, maintaining a legible physical and visual interval between the settlements.
- 5.8 The strategy also responds to the proximity of the South Downs National Park by retaining the Site's principal vegetated framework, avoiding prominent skyline development and limiting unnecessary light spill.
- 5.9 These principles provide the basis for the primary mitigation, secondary mitigation and enhancement measures set out in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Landscape Strategy and Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measure	Purpose
Primary Mitigation (Embedded within the Proposed Development)	
Retain and protect the principal mature trees, including Category A and B trees, the northern pond, ditch and treeline corridor, the eastern plantation woodland and scrub, and other established boundary vegetation.	To conserve the features that make the greatest contribution to the Site's landscape character, ecological connectivity, enclosure and visual containment, and to provide an established green and blue infrastructure framework from the outset.
Contain development and associated parking within the retained landscape framework, principally to the west of the eastern woodland and scrub corridor adjoining Belmont Lane.	To maintain a legible wooded settlement edge, avoid encroachment into the principal landscape constraints and retain a clear physical and visual interval between Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.
Arrange development around a central, informal and multifunctional area of public open space incorporating a LEAP.	To provide a coherent green focus within the development, reduce the concentration of built form, maintain openness through the centre of the scheme and support informal recreation and play.
Incorporate a consistent framework of street trees, parkland trees, parking-area trees, native and ornamental hedges and other soft landscape throughout the development.	To break up the scale and massing of built form and parking, create a well-vegetated residential setting and connect internal streets and spaces with the retained peripheral landscape framework.
Secondary Mitigation (Foreseeable Measures)	
Reinforce the eastern woodland and scrub corridor with native tree and scrub planting, including additional planting adjoining parking areas and the eastern side of the central open space.	To maintain the enclosed wooded character of Belmont Lane, provide long-term succession, soften views of built form and parking and strengthen the vegetated transition toward the countryside to the east.
Create species-rich grassland, mown paths and areas of native tree, shrub, scrub and hedgerow planting within suitable open spaces and boundaries.	To improve landscape condition, reinforce characteristics of the local scarp-foot landscape and strengthen habitat diversity and connectivity through the Site.
Provide wetland and aquatic planting associated with drainage and open-space features.	To integrate drainage infrastructure positively within the landscape and contribute to a connected and multifunctional green and blue infrastructure network.
Use a sensitive lighting strategy and maintain dark vegetated corridors along retained woodland, scrub, pond and ditch features.	To limit unnecessary light spill into the surrounding countryside, protect ecological corridors and avoid adverse effects upon the perceptual setting and dark skies associated with the South Downs National Park.
Implement long-term landscape and habitat management, including establishment maintenance, replacement of failed planting and management of retained and proposed vegetation.	To ensure that the landscape framework establishes successfully, provides effective long-term mitigation and continues to perform its landscape, visual and ecological functions.

Mitigation measure	Purpose
Enhancement Measures	
Incorporate wildlife-friendly planting and appropriate bird, bat and invertebrate features, together with reptile refugia or hibernacula where required by the ecological strategy.	To provide additional opportunities for wildlife and contribute to the biodiversity and ecological resilience of the completed development.

6. PREDICTED EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE RECEPTORS

- 6.1 Timescales for assessment apply for the period of construction; and then following completion at Year 1 and for the residual stage at 15 years post-completion. The longer term assessment allows for consideration of maturation of landscape features and integration with the wider landscape.

Effects on the Character of the Study Area

Construction Effects

- 6.2 Construction would introduce machinery, temporary compounds, earthworks, access works, building operations and localised vegetation removal into a pasture field. These activities would be clearly apparent within and immediately beside the Site, but the retained wooded boundaries would contain their influence and the principal mature landscape structure would remain. For the Medium-sensitivity character area, the magnitude is Low and the effect is **Minor** Adverse and Not Significant.

Assessment of Effects (Year 1)

- 6.3 At completion, housing, roads, parking, lighting and managed open space would replace pasture over much of the Site. The change would be permanent but would adjoin the existing village and remain enclosed by mature vegetation. New planting would initially be immature. The magnitude on the wider character area would be Low, resulting in a **Minor** Adverse effect that is Not Significant.

Assessment of Effects (Year 15)

- 6.4 By Year 15, new trees, scrub, hedges, species-rich grassland and wetland planting would reinforce the retained structure and soften built form. The development would read as a contained extension to Hurstpierpoint rather than a prominent incursion into the wider scarp-foot landscape. Magnitude would reduce to Negligible, producing a **Minor/Negligible** Adverse residual effect that is Not Significant.

Effects on the Character of the Site

Construction

- 6.5 The Site's agricultural character would be substantially altered by clearance of the developable area, earthworks and building activity. Although the mature oaks, pond, ditch, eastern woodland and most boundary vegetation would be protected, the interior pasture would cease to define the Site. For a Medium/Low-sensitivity receptor, the magnitude is High and the effect is **Moderate** Adverse and Significant at the Site scale.

Assessment of Effects (Year 1)

- 6.6 The completed scheme would establish a new residential and managed open-space character. Retained vegetation would provide immediate maturity, while new planting would still be young. The loss of the open pasture is permanent and magnitude remains High, resulting in a **Moderate** Adverse effect that is Significant at the Site scale.

Assessment of Effects (Year 15)

- 6.7 Mature planting, species-rich grassland, reinforced scrub, wetland features and the informal central open space would create a coherent and greener residential environment. These measures improve condition and biodiversity but do not reverse the fundamental conversion from pasture to housing. Magnitude remains High and the residual Site-scale effect is **Moderate** Adverse and Significant.

Table 6.1: Summary of Predicted Effects – Character of Study Area

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Level of Effect	Nature	EIA Threshold
Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes / LW11 Eastern Scarp Footslopes					
Construction	Medium	Low	Minor	Adverse	Not Significant
Year 1	Medium	Low	Minor	Adverse	Not Significant
Year 15	Medium	Negligible	Minor/ Negligible	Adverse	Not Significant

Table 6.2: Summary of Predicted Effects - Site Character

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Level of Effect	Nature	EIA Threshold
Construction	Medium/ Low	High	Moderate	Adverse	Significant
Year 1	Medium/ Low	High	Moderate	Adverse	Significant
Year 15	Medium/ Low	High	Moderate	Adverse	Significant

7. PREDICTED EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

- 7.1 A detailed assessment of predicted visual change is set out below and summarised in Table 7.1. Viewpoints are grouped by receptor type and route, consistent with the photographic field survey record.

Residential Receptors

Residents adjoining the Site on College Lane and Wickham Hill

Construction Effects

- 7.2 Rear and side-facing residents closest to the Site would experience direct or filtered views of construction activity, machinery and emerging buildings, depending on boundary vegetation and the orientation of each property. The existing pasture outlook would be materially changed, although retained trees, scrub and garden vegetation would provide varying degrees of screening. For Medium/High-sensitivity receptors, the magnitude is Medium and the effect is **Moderate** Adverse and Significant.

Assessment of Effects (Year 1)

- 7.3 At completion, nearby residents would see housing, streets and managed open space in place of pasture. The closest views would remain direct or filtered and new planting would not yet provide its intended maturity. Magnitude is Medium, resulting in a **Moderate** Adverse effect that is Significant.

Assessment of Effects (Year 15)

- 7.4 By Year 15, retained vegetation and established trees, hedges, scrub and parkland planting would soften rooflines, parking and elevations and create a more settled green outlook. The change would remain perceptible, but magnitude would reduce to Low, resulting in a **Minor** Adverse residual effect that is Not Significant.

Users of Public Rights of Way

VP4-VP7: Users of Belmont Lane / Bridleway HAS/8C/3

Construction Effects

- 7.5 Construction would be visible principally at the existing south-eastern entrance and through occasional small gaps in winter vegetation. Along most of the route, the dense retained scrub and woodland would continue to dominate the view and screen the Site interior. For Medium-sensitivity receptors, magnitude is Low and the effect is **Minor** Adverse and Not Significant.

Assessment of Effects (Year 1)

- 7.6 At completion, the development may be glimpsed at the entrance or through localised gaps, but the route would retain its enclosed wooded character. The eastern woodland/scrub belt and supplementary planting would limit the scale of change. Magnitude is Low and the effect is **Minor Adverse** and Not Significant.

Assessment of Effects (Year 15)

- 7.7 By Year 15, reinforcement planting and continued growth of the retained woodland would further filter views. The route would continue to be experienced as a narrow wooded lane, with only

incidental awareness of development behind it. Magnitude is Negligible and the residual effect is **Minor/ Negligible** Adverse and Not Significant.

VP8: Users of Public Footpath HAS/10C/1 near Five Oaks Way

Construction Effects

- 7.8 The approximate Site lies behind a mature middle-distance vegetation belt and is not readily discernible in the baseline view. Construction cranes or upper elements could be intermittently visible above vegetation, but the majority of activity would remain screened. For Medium/Low-sensitivity receptors, magnitude is Negligible and the effect is **Negligible** Adverse and Not Significant.

Assessment of Effects (Year 1)

- 7.9 The completed development would remain largely screened by intervening hedges, trees and woodland. Any upper roofline glimpses would be minor components of a view already influenced by recent development. Magnitude is Negligible and the effect is **Negligible** Adverse and Not Significant.

Assessment of Effects (Year 15)

- 7.10 Maturing Site planting and the retained vegetation would maintain screening. No material change to the composition or appreciation of the footpath view is predicted. Magnitude is Negligible and the residual effect is **Negligible** Adverse and Not Significant.

Users of Local Roads

VP1-VP3: Users of College Lane

Construction Effects

- 7.11 The clearest construction view would occur at the Site entrance (VP1). Views from VP2 and VP3 would be more oblique and filtered. Road users would experience the change briefly and in a suburban context. For Low-sensitivity receptors, magnitude is Medium and the effect is **Minor** Adverse and Not Significant.

Assessment of Effects (Year 1)

- 7.12 The new access and nearby built form would be apparent at VP1 and partly visible from VP2-VP3. Retained roadside trees and hedges, together with proposed street and boundary planting, would limit the extent of change. Magnitude is Medium and the effect is **Minor** Adverse and Not Significant.

Assessment of Effects (Year 15)

- 7.13 Established planting would soften the access and built form and reinforce the vegetated street edge. The development would read as part of the existing village rather than a visually isolated feature. Magnitude is Low and the residual effect is **Minor/ Negligible** Adverse and Not Significant.

Table 7.1: Summary of Predicted Effects on Visual Amenity

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Level of Effect	Nature	EIA Threshold
Residential Receptors					
<i>Residents adjoining the Site on College Lane and Wickham Hill</i>					
Construction	Medium/High	Medium	Moderate	Adverse	Significant
Year 1	Medium/High	Medium	Moderate	Adverse	Significant

Year 15	Medium/High	Low	Minor	Adverse	Not Significant
Users of Public Rights of Way					
<i>VP4-VP7: Belmont Lane / Bridleway HAS/8C/3</i>					
Construction	Medium	Low	Minor	Adverse	Not Significant
Year 1	Medium	Low	Minor	Adverse	Not Significant
Year 15	Medium	Negligible	Minor/ Negligible	Adverse	Not Significant
<i>VP8: Public Footpath HAS/10C/1</i>					
Construction	Medium/Low	Negligible	Negligible	Adverse	Not Significant
Year 1	Medium/Low	Negligible	Negligible	Adverse	Not Significant
Year 15	Medium/Low	Negligible	Negligible	Adverse	Not Significant
Users of Local Roads					
<i>VP1-VP3: College Lane</i>					
Construction	Low	Medium	Minor	Adverse	Not Significant
Year 1	Low	Medium	Minor	Adverse	Not Significant
Year 15	Low	Low	Minor/ Negligible	Adverse	Not Significant

8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 David Jarvis Associates has been commissioned to inform the design process for the Proposed Development. Recommendations arising from the detailed evaluation of landscape character and visual amenity have been directly addressed, in order to minimise, limit and avoid harm to identified receptors.
- 8.2 Having gained an understanding of the range of effects that are predicted to occur for the Proposed Development, the relevant policy tests have been examined and the findings used to inform decision making.

Landscape Baseline

- 8.3 The Site lies within the Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes at the eastern edge of the village. Its core is poor-condition grazed modified grassland, while its defining assets are the mature oaks, treelines, pond, ditch, eastern plantation woodland and scrub. Housing adjoins to the south and west and existing vegetation provides strong enclosure to the north and east. Wider landscape sensitivity is Medium and Site sensitivity is Medium/ Low.

Visual Amenity Baseline

- 8.4 The actual ZSV is local and is substantially smaller than the theoretical ZTV. Visual receptors comprise adjoining residents, users of Belmont Lane / Bridleway HAS/8C/3, users of Public Footpath HAS/10C/1 and users of College Lane. The Site is not prominent from the wider countryside or the South Downs National Park.

Development Mitigation

- 8.5 The scheme retains and protects the important tree and woodland framework and reinforces it with native scrub, tree and hedge planting. A central informal and multifunctional open space, species-rich grassland, parkland and street trees, and wetland planting create a coherent green and blue infrastructure.

Effects on Landscape Receptors

- 8.6 The greatest landscape change is the permanent conversion of pasture to residential development. Effects on the Site are Moderate Adverse and Significant at construction, Year 1 and Year 15. These are geographically confined Site-scale effects. Effects on the wider Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes are Minor Adverse at construction and Year 1, reducing to Minor/Negligible Adverse at Year 15; all are Not Significant.
- 8.7 Retention of the mature perimeter framework avoids fragmentation of the principal landscape structure and enables the development to read as a contained extension to Hurstpierpoint rather than a prominent expansion into the wider scarp-foot landscape.

Effects on Visual Amenity

- 8.8 The greatest visual changes would be experienced by immediately adjoining residents, for whom construction and Year 1 effects are Moderate Adverse and Significant. By Year 15 these reduce to Minor Adverse and Not Significant as retained and new vegetation matures.
- 8.9 Effects for users of Belmont Lane, Public Footpath HAS/10C/1 and College Lane are Not Significant at all stages. The dense eastern woodland and scrub remain the dominant visual feature along

Belmont Lane, while intervening vegetation largely screens the Site from VP8. College Lane views are short, transient and experienced in an established suburban context.

- 8.10 No significant residual visual effects are predicted at Year 15. This reflects the localised ZSV, the Site's relationship to the existing built edge and the retention and reinforcement of its wooded boundaries.

Policy Discussion

- 8.11 The adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031 and the made Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan 2014–2031 form the principal development plan context. The emerging Mid Sussex District Plan 2021–2040 remains under examination; however, the July 2026 Schedule of Main Modifications proposes the allocation of the Site for residential development under Main Modification MM72. This represents a material advancement in the Site's emerging planning status, but the Main Modifications remain subject to consultation and the outcome of the examination. Policy DM4 of the NPPF states that relevant policies in emerging development plans may be given weight according to the stage of preparation, the extent of unresolved objections and their degree of compliance with the Framework's plan-making policies.

Landscape Character and Design

- 8.12 The Proposed Development would alter the Site from pasture to residential use, but its layout has been informed by the existing mature trees, treelines, woodland, scrub, pond, ditch and boundary vegetation. These features would be retained as the principal landscape framework and reinforced through new trees, hedges, scrub, species-rich grassland and wetland planting.
- 8.13 This responds to adopted District Plan Policies DP12, DP26, DP37, and DP38; together with Neighbourhood Plan Policies Hurst C1, Hurst H5 and Hurst H6. It also accords with the corresponding objectives of emerging Policies DPC1, DPB1 and DPN1 - DPN4.

Settlement Separation

- 8.14 Adopted District Plan Policy DP13, Neighbourhood Plan Policy Hurst C3 and emerging Policy DPC2 seek to maintain the separate identity of Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks and prevent physical or visual coalescence.
- 8.15 The proposals would extend the existing edge of Hurstpierpoint but would remain contiguous with development to the west and south. Built form and parking would remain west of the retained woodland and scrub adjoining Belmont Lane. This wooded corridor would be reinforced and would continue to form a substantial and legible eastern settlement edge. Undeveloped land would remain between the Site and Hassocks, and the visual assessment did not identify a public viewpoint from which the settlements would appear as a continuous urban area. The proposals would therefore reduce the extent of the gap locally without removing its principal separation function.

South Downs National Park

- 8.16 Adopted District Plan Policy DP18, Neighbourhood Plan Policy Hurst C2 and emerging Policies DPC5 and DPN8 are relevant to the setting and dark skies of the South Downs National Park.
- 8.17 The ZTV and field survey demonstrate no meaningful intervisibility between the Site and the National Park due to intervening settlement, vegetation and landform. Retention of the Site's vegetated framework and a sensitive lighting strategy would further limit perceptual and lighting effects. The proposals would therefore avoid material harm to the landscape or visual setting of the National Park.

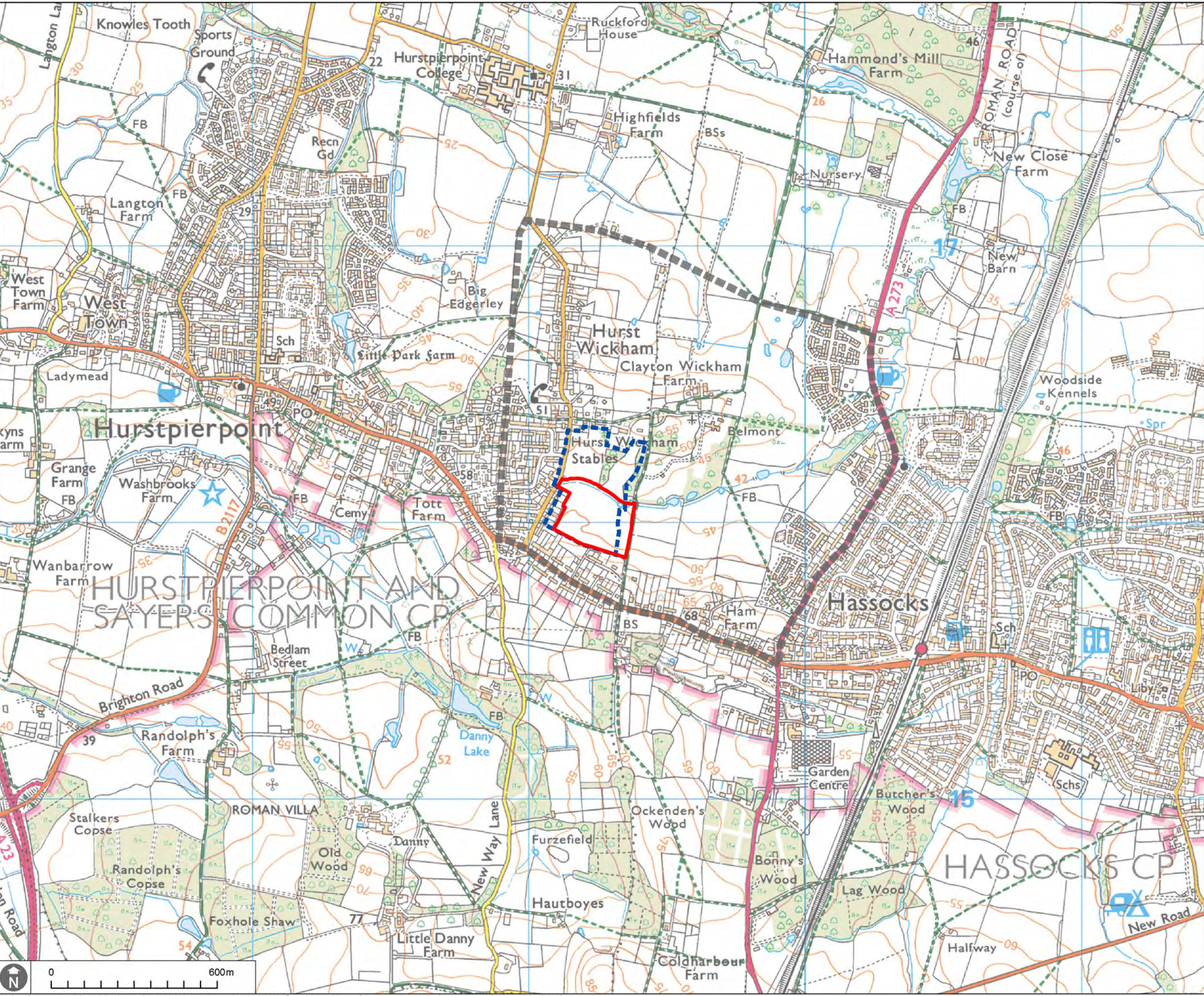
Conclusions

- 8.18 The Proposed Development has been designed to minimise landscape and visual harm through a best-practice, landscape-led approach. It retains the mature oaks, woodland, scrub, pond and ditch that give the Site structure; provides a soft and ecologically connected settlement edge; and limits wider visual effects. Although the unavoidable conversion of the Site gives rise to significant Site-scale landscape effects, no significant effects are predicted on the wider landscape character, the setting of the South Downs National Park, the separation of existing settlements, or public visual receptors at the residual stage.

ASSESSMENT DRAWINGS

3481-4-4-4-LV-0001-0007-S4-P2 LVIA Drawings

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KEY

Application Boundary

Study Area

ZSV

Status

PLANNING

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THAKEHAM

Project

COLLEGE LANE, HURSTPIERPPOINT

Drawing Title

SITE LOCATION

Scale

1:12,500

Sheet Size

A3

Date

SEP 2026

Client Ref.

-

Drawing Ref.

3481-4-4-4

Drawing No.

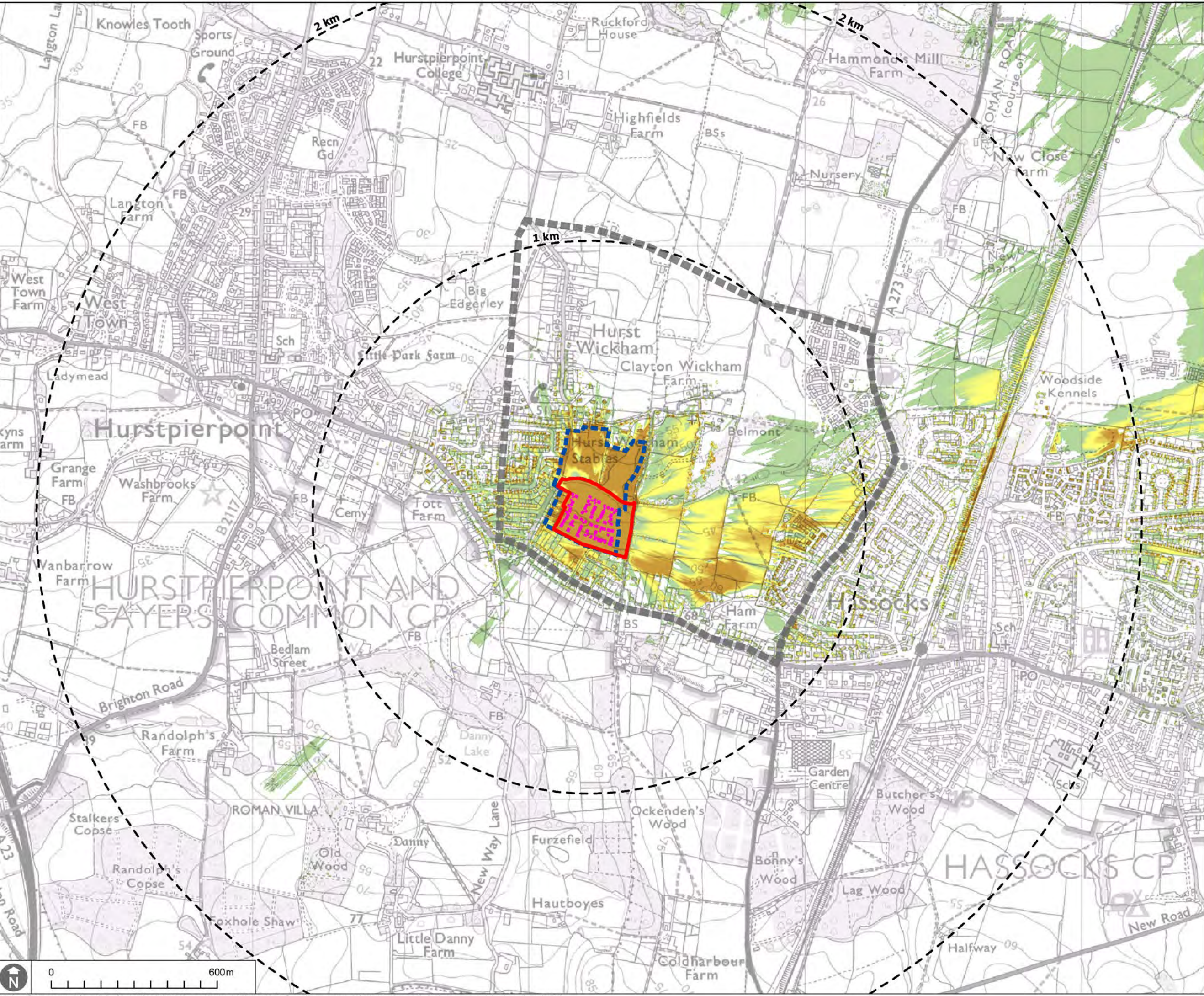
LV-0001

Version

S4-P2

3481-4-4-4-LV-0001-0007-S4-P2 LVIA Drawings

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KEY

Application Boundary

Study Area**Zones of Theoretical Visibility**

The zones of theoretical visibility (ZTV) are shown for the proposed test with the following parameters:

- Digital Elevation Model (DEM): Environment Agency 2022
- Composite LIDAR First Return Digital Surface Model (DSM) and Digital Terrain Model (DTM), 2m resolution
- Observers: 1.6m above DSM, horizontal resolution as per DEM
- Targets: 15m square grid of target points within the developable area, 1 Storey – 4.5m, 2 Storey – 8.775m, 2.5 Storey – 10.065m, 3 Storey – 10.89m above the DTM
- Adjustments: Atmospheric refraction and Earth's curvature

The model considers the screening effect of vegetation and built form as provided by the DEM. This gives an indication of probable screening effects. The Zone of Visual Significance is defined during field survey and takes into account those aspects missing from the ZTV and may therefore differ from the ZTV. The ZTV is therefore considered to represent a probable scenario to inform field surveys only.

Status

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COLLEGE LANE, HURSTPIERPOINT

Drawing Title

ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY (ZTV): PROPOSED AT VARIED HEIGHTS

Scale

1:12,500

Sheet Size

A3

Date

SEP 2026

Client Ref.

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Drawing Ref.

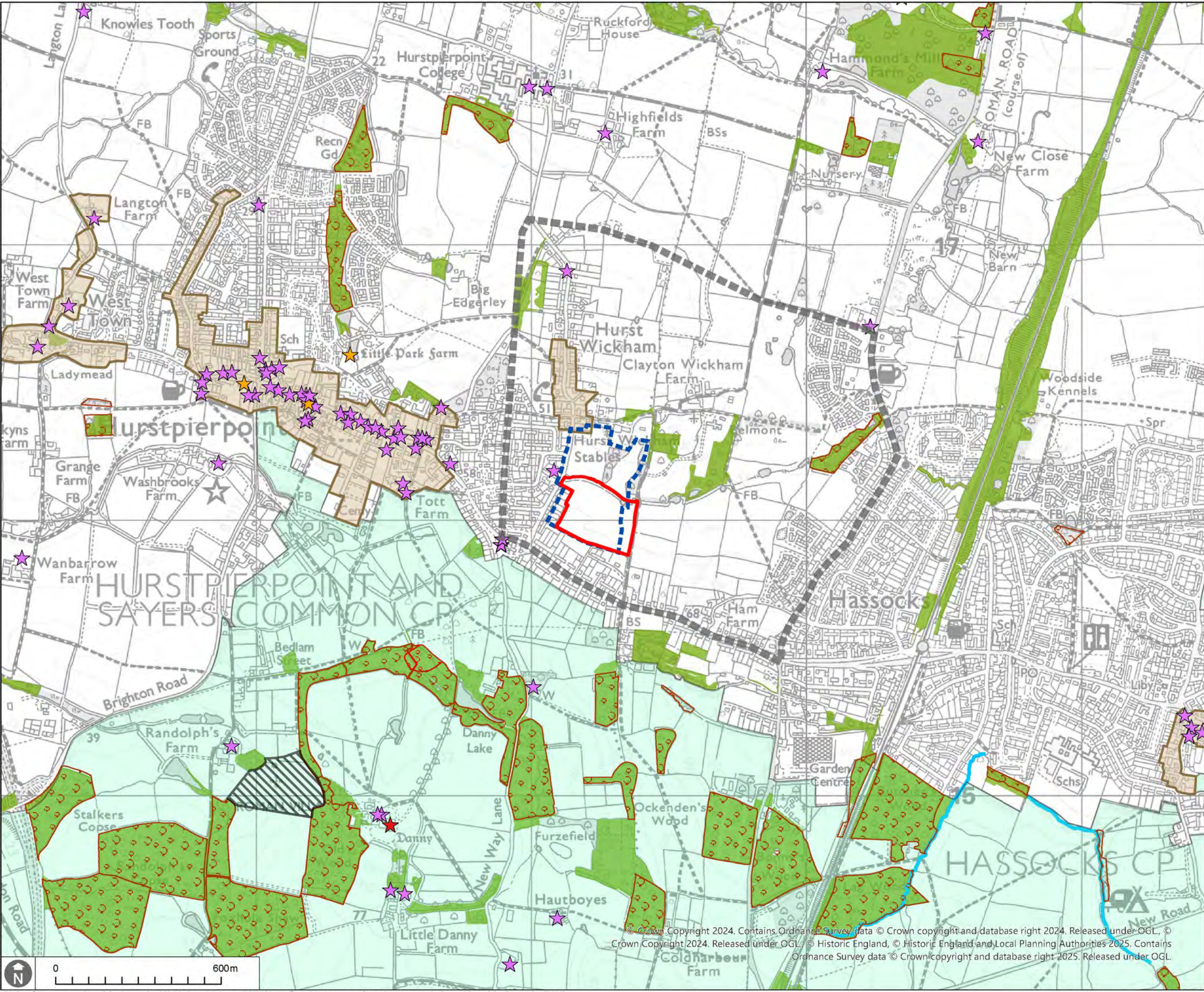
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Drawing No.

LV-0002

Version

S4-P2



KEY

- Application Boundary
- Study Area
- ZSV
- National Heritage List for England**
- Listed Building
 - I
 - II
 - II*
- Scheduled Monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Natural England**
- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
- Ancient Replanted Woodland
- South Downs
- Priority Habitat Inventory**
- Rivers
- Deciduous Woodland

Status

PLANNING

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Project

COLLEGE LANE, HURSTPIERPOINT

Drawing Title

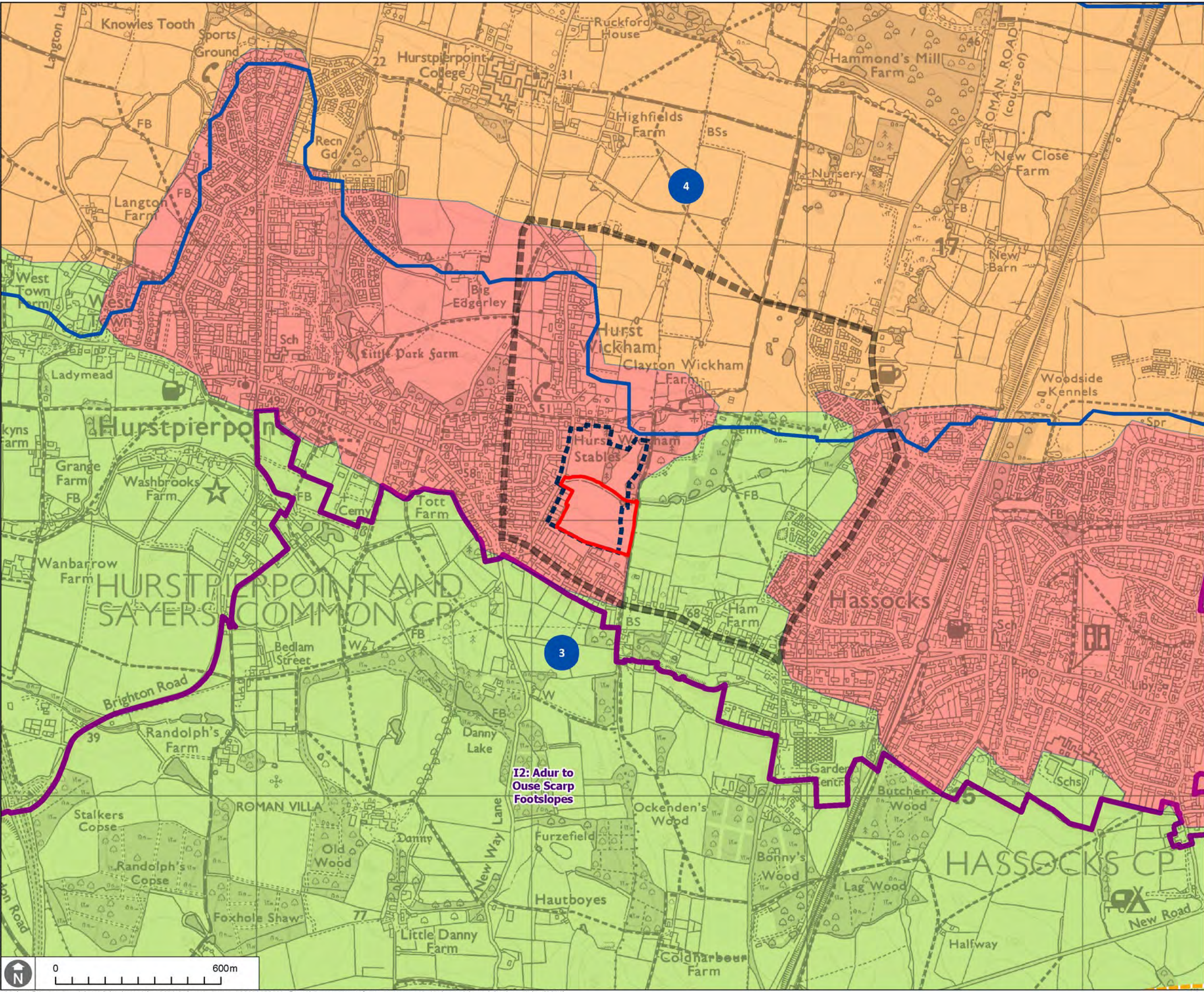
LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

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KEY

- Application Boundary
- Study Area
- ZSV

National Character Areas

- 121: Low Weald (NE450)

Mid Sussex LCA (2005)

- Area 3: Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes
- Area 4: Hickstead Low Weald

West Sussex LCA (2003)

- Built Up Area
- LW10: Eastern Low Weald
- LW11: Eastern Scarp Footslopes

South Downs LCA (2020)

- I2: Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes

Status

PLANNING

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THAKEHAM

Project

COLLEGE LANE, HURSTPIERPPOINT

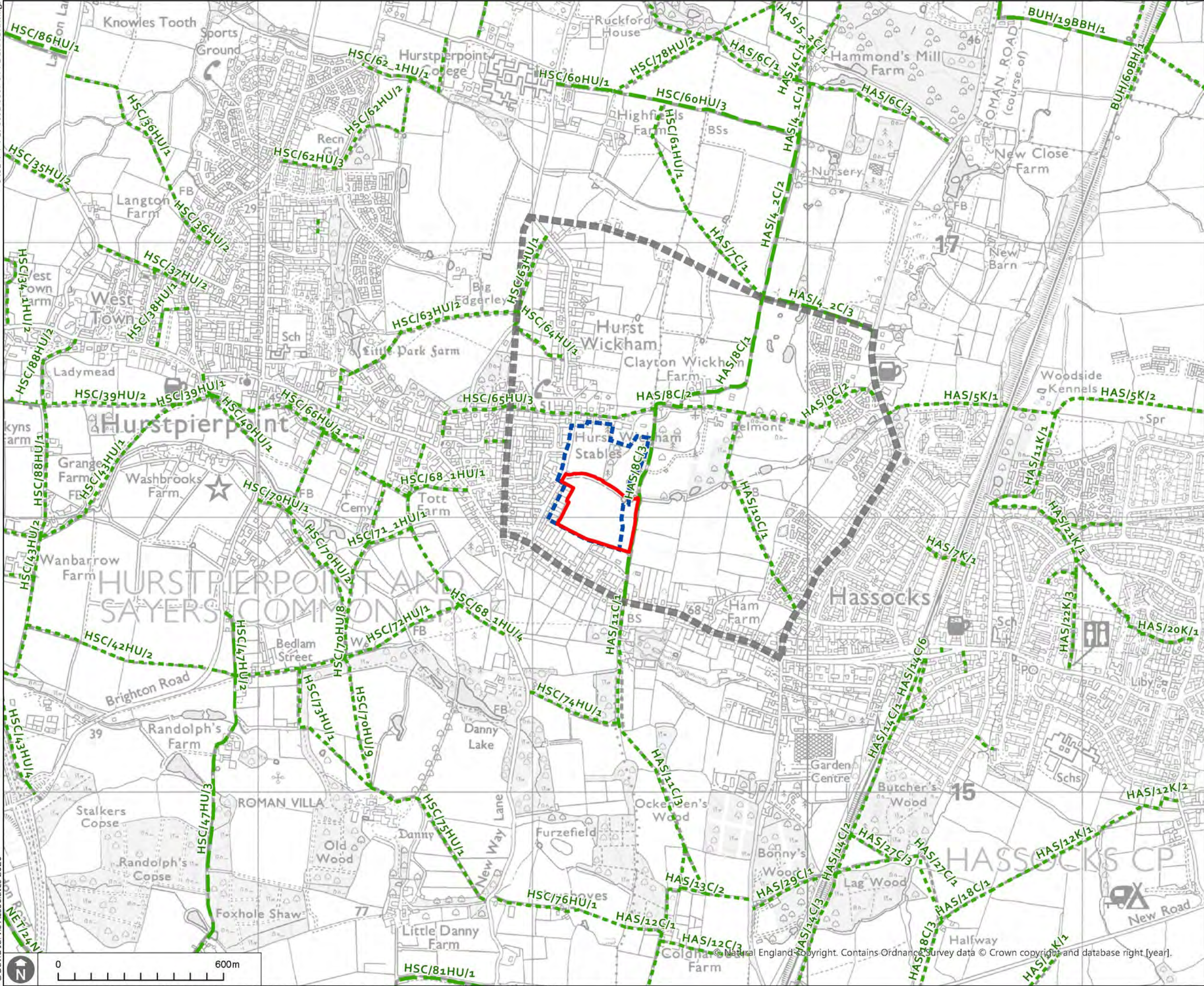
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3481-4-4-4-LV-0001-0007-S4-P2 LVIA Drawings

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KEY

Application Boundary

Study Area

ZSV

West Sussex PRoW

Bridleway

Footpath

Restricted Byway

Status

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COLLEGE LANE, HURSTPIERPOINT

Drawing Title

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Scale

1:12,500

Sheet Size

A3

Date

SEP 2026

Client Ref.

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Drawing Ref.

3481-4-4-4

Drawing No.

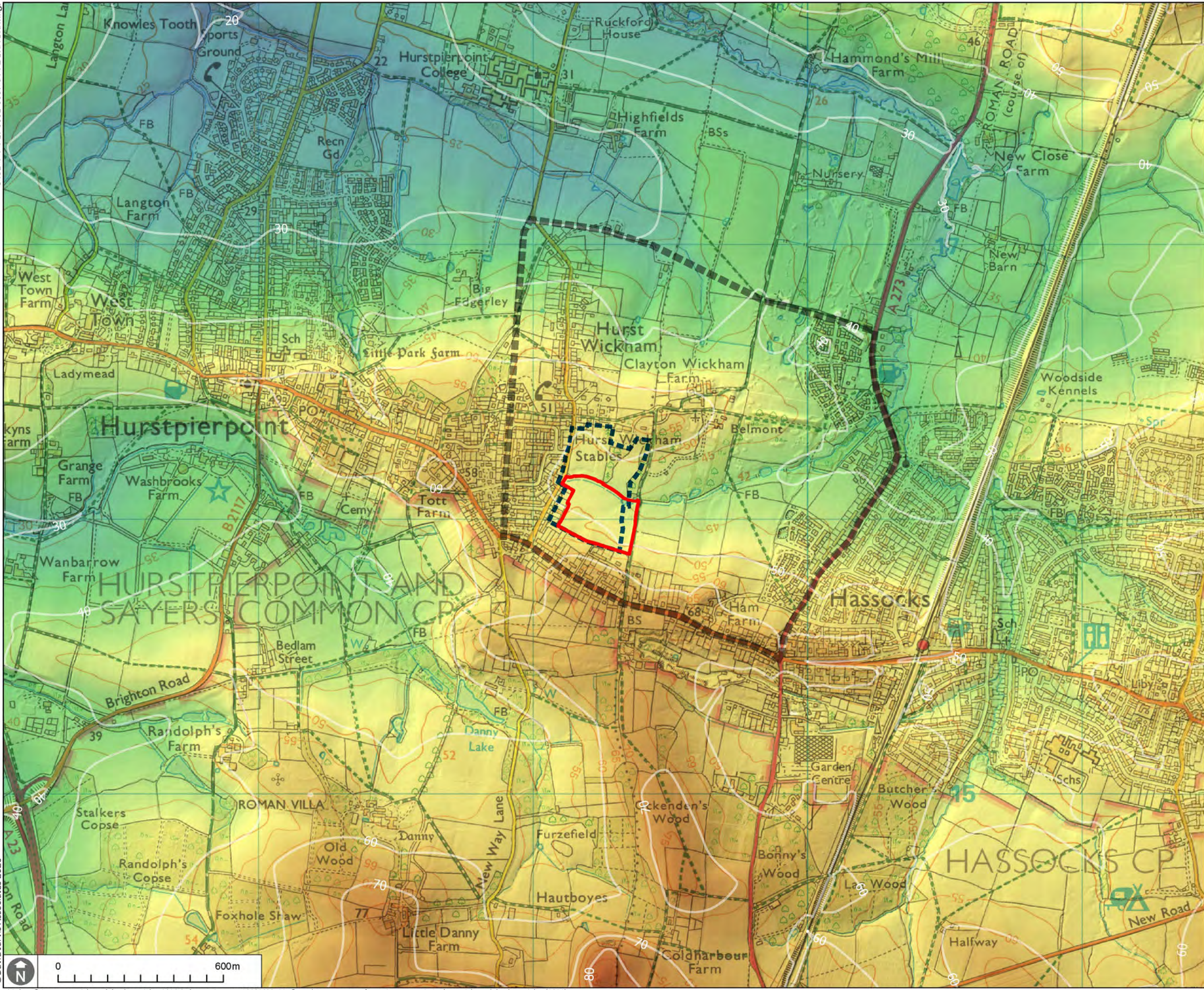
LV-0005

Version

S4-P2

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KEY

Application Boundary

Study Area

ZSV

Topography Height Banding (mAOD)

87.067

17.910

Status

PLANNING

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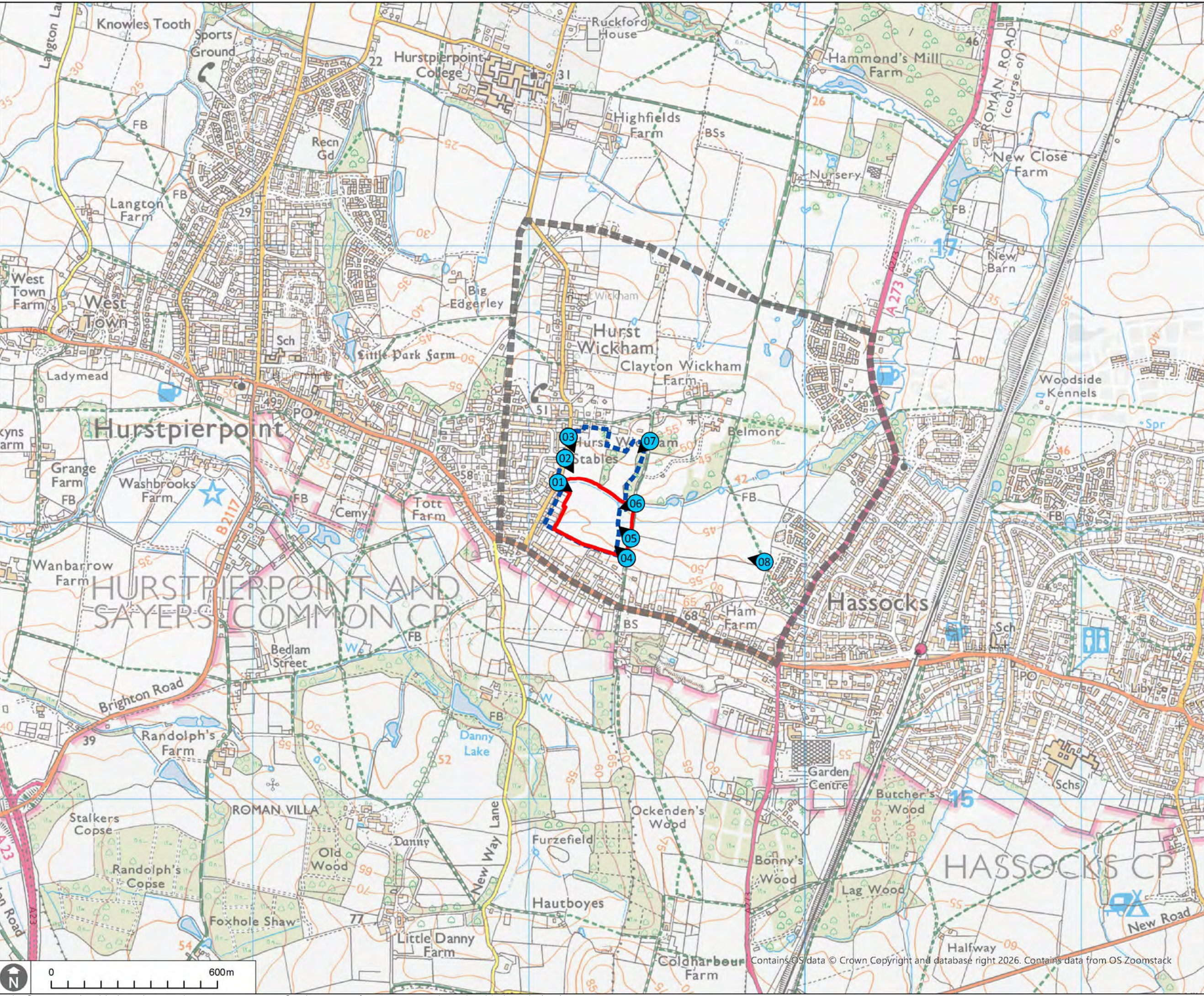
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-	3481-4-4-4	LV-0006
		Version
		S4-P2

3481-4-4-4-LV-0001-0007-S4-P2 LVIA Drawings

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KEY

- Application Boundary
- Study Area
- ZSV
- Viewpoint Locations

Status

PLANNING

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COLLEGE LANE, HURSTPIERPPOINT

Drawing Title

VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS

Scale	Sheet Size	Date	
1:12,500	A3	SEP 2026	
Client Ref.	Drawing Ref.	Drawing No.	Version
-	3481-4-4-4	LV-0007	S4-P2

APPENDIX 1

LVIA ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

- 1.1 The following section provides a description of the field survey and assessment methods.

Assessment Terminology

- 1.2 Whilst the process of assessment is referred to as landscape and visual impact it is important to note the difference between ‘impact’ and ‘effect’. The impact is what will happen i.e. the permanent loss of trees and hedgerows. The effect is the result of the impact i.e. opening of new views or a change in the perception of the local landscape character. A full glossary of the terms used in this assessment is appended or provided on request.

Guidance and Approach

- 1.3 Guidance emphasises the responsibility of the landscape professional carrying out the assessment to ensure that the approach and methodology adopted is appropriate for the particular development to be assessed. This assessment has been prepared with regard to the following:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) ²;
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (October 2014, Natural England);
 - An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management (June 2019, Natural England)
- 1.4 Other technical guidance notes (TGN) published by the Landscape Institute (LI) including:
- TGN 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals (17 September 2019);
 - TGN 01/20: Reviewing Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs) and Landscape and Visual Appraisals (LVAs) (10 January 2020);
 - TGN 02/21: Assessing landscape value outside national designations (26 May 2021).

Overview of the Assessment Process

- 1.5 Professional judgement is a very important part of the LVIA process at every stage of assessment. That said, it is also important that professional judgement is exercised within an overall assessment framework which transparently sets out the steps in the assessment process which have resulted in the final assessment of the level of effects.
- 1.6 In accordance with the above guidance, the preparation of this assessment involved the following key stages:
- **Establishment of the landscape baseline** - through identification and understanding of the representation of the defining landscape characteristics within the site and surrounding Study Area (in the form of landscape character assessment), and the relative value that is attached to

² Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and the Landscape Institute – ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ Third Edition 2013.

the landscape by way of detailed desk-based study (including to identify relevant landscape designations and related planning policy) and site field work.

- **Establishment of the visual baseline** – through identification and analysis of the existing visual resource that may be affected, including the extent and nature of principle views to the proposed development from visual receptors in the Study Area.
- **Identification of Potential effects** - The broad design parameters of the project that have been established and fixed at the time of commission in terms of the nature of the proposed development, having been informed by the LVIA findings and other recommendations. This provides sufficient information to identify the likely scale and nature of the changes to landscape characteristics as well as changes affecting visual amenity.
- **Identification of landscape and visual receptors** – These are assessed and assigned their sensitivity to change. The sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors is determined by a combination of their value, and their susceptibility to change. (i.e. their ability to accommodate the proposed change without resulting in overly negative effects).
- **Identification of mitigating measures** – Iterative development of the Proposed Development and/ or mitigation measures to avoid, reduce or offset identified adverse effects. Mitigation measures have been considered in relation to ‘Primary’ measures (inherent) which form part of the design process and ‘Secondary’ measures (foreseeable) designed to address any residual adverse effects of development.
- **Assessment of the final scheme design** – Assessment of the magnitude of change to determine the level of effect, and where relevant, to identify effects that are Significant or Not Significant, in EIA terms during the construction stage, during operations and completion (restoration).
- Depending on the nature of the development, the stages may be assessed individually or in combination, and may include an assessment of cumulative effects. Where relevant, the assessment will also account for the mitigation at various stage e.g. the maturation of new planting which may differ between the point of completion (Year 1) and at the residual stage of post-completion (Year 15), unless otherwise stated.

Extent of Study Area

- 1.7 The term ‘Study Area’ relates to the area of land that has been described and assessed as part of this assessment. The definition of a Study Area is an important part of a landscape and visual impact assessment as it describes the predicted maximum geographical extents within which potential Significant environmental effects may occur.
- 1.8 The Study Area is determined by a two-stage process: a desk study to identify any relevant landscape designations and sensitive receptors in the landscape surrounding the Application Site and a field survey to assess the limits of potential significant visibility. The latter is informed by a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) study.

Consultation

- 1.9 Where appropriate, consultation is undertaken with the local planning authority to agree viewpoints and other matters relating to the assessment. The outcome of the consultation will be detailed in the assessment.

Assumptions and Limitations

1.10 The assessment is subject to the following limitations and assumptions:

- The prominence of the Proposed Development in the landscape and views will vary according to prevailing weather conditions. Professional judgement will take into consideration circumstances where the weather does not conform with 'worst case scenario', being a clear, bright day in winter, when vegetation foliage is at lowest and visibility is at its clearest;
- The assessment of operational effects assumes that all other aspects of the Proposed Development outside of the scope of the assessment, have been implemented;
- ZTV studies are only used to inform the selection of viewpoints. The limitations and technical specifications are provided in supporting text to these studies;
- Field assessment of visual effects is taken from publicly accessible routes and locations. For residential receptors, assumptions are made about the types of rooms in buildings and importance of views from these rooms and outdoor areas within the domestic curtilage. Domestic curtilage is determined by identifiable boundaries such as hedgerows or fencing.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

Landscape Baseline

- 1.11 The landscape baseline is the description of the existing environmental qualities of the landscape receptors and the landscape as a whole against which any future changes can be measured or landscape effects predicted and assessed.
- 1.12 The landscape baseline is established by considering both a desk study of existing sources and field work to identify and record the character of the landscape and the existing elements and features as well as the perceptual and aesthetic factors which contribute to it.
- 1.13 Landscape character and value are separately identified. This is done in order to distinguish between the ability of a landscape to physically accommodate a development in terms of landform, landcover and land use, as opposed to consideration of effects on valued aspects of the landscape which are more subjective in nature.

Landscape Character

- 1.14 Existing Landscape Character Assessments are critically reviewed to identify the key or defining characteristics that are represented in the Application Site and Study Area. Fieldwork will also determine local and/or site-specific variations.
- 1.15 Typically, the landscape baseline will identify and describe the elements that make up the landscape in the Study Area, namely:
- **Physical Influences:** Geology, Landform/ Topography, Soils, Drainage;
 - **Land Cover:** Vegetation, Tree Cover, Built Form;
 - **Human Influences:** Land use and Management, Field Pattern, Method of Enclosure, Settlement Character, Building Character; Access.
- 1.16 The outcome of the review and fieldwork will present the extent to which the site and Study Area conform or differ from the wider landscape character assessments and to identify other specific characteristics that are relevant.

Landscape Susceptibility

- 1.17 Landscape susceptibility is the ability of an identified landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences on its baseline conditions or character. Susceptibility of a landscape receptor to change is specific to the type of development being proposed in Study Area to ensure relevancy to the assessment. Where noted, the definition for the grades of susceptibility is described in Table APP 1.1 below.

Table APP 1.1 Landscape Receptor Susceptibility

Grade	Description
High	• Little or no ability to accommodate the proposed development without adverse consequences on the retention of the existing landscape baseline; • No or few references or influences within the landscape to the type of development proposed.
Medium	• Some ability to accommodate the proposed development without adverse consequences on the retention of the existing landscape baseline; • Landscapes with some noticeable existing influence or context associated with the type of development proposed.
Low	• An ability to accommodate the proposed development without adverse consequences on the retention of the existing landscape baseline; • Landscapes with a strong reference or influence to the type of development proposed.

- 1.18 The relationship between susceptibility to change and value can be complex and is not linear. For example, a highly valued landscape (such as a National Landscape) may have a low susceptibility to change due to both the characteristics of the landscape and/or the nature of the proposed change.

Landscape Value

- 1.19 As part of describing the landscape baseline the value of the potentially affected landscape is established. Value can apply to an area such as a relevant designation or an individual element such as a landscape feature or building which contributes to the character of the landscape. Where the Application Site is covered by a designation, the following over-arching values are given:
- High: International or Nationally designated landscapes;
 - High-Medium: Regional or locally designated landscapes.
- 1.20 In cases where the Application Site is not designated, it does not follow that it is not valued. In these instances, the Application Site and Study Area are considered with regard to the extent of the factors listed in TGN 02/21, this being an evolution in the process previously set by GLVIA3 Box 5.1.
- 1.21 These factors are not fixed, but instead considered on a case-by-case basis and evaluated with regard to Table APP1.2 below. They are evaluated as High (notable contribution/influence), Medium (some contribution/influence) or Low (limited or no contribution/influence). Contributions may also be stated as positive or negative. Split grades may be possible where resulting value falls between two grade levels, such as where circumstances vary across an Application Site or Study Area.

Table APP 1.2 Factors for determining value for non-designated landscapes

Natural heritage	Definition: Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological, physiographic interest which contribute positively.
Cultural heritage	Definition: Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest which contribute positively to the landscape.
Landscape Condition	Definition: Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure and intactness.
Associations	Definition: Landscape which is connected with notable people, events, the arts.
Distinctiveness	Definition: Landscape that has a strong sense of identity.
Recreational	Definition: Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important.
Perceptual (Scenic)	Definition: Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense.
Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Definition: Landscape with a strong perceptual value; notably wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies; distance from settlement, major infrastructure and other urbanising influences.
Functional	Definition: Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, in the healthy functioning of the landscape, such as green/blue infrastructure connectivity within and beyond the site

Landscape Sensitivity

- 1.22 Landscape sensitivity is determined by drawing together the judgements on landscape value and landscape susceptibility. It is itself then carried forward to determine the significance of effect. The assessment provides a clear rationale for both the landscape receptor's existing value and its susceptibility to change arising from the type of development proposed. The rationale is the record of why a receptor's sensitivity has been graded in a particular way.
- 1.23 The determination of sensitivity is based on professional judgement, however, high value/ high susceptibility receptors are likely to be highly sensitive to change, with lower value and/or low susceptibility receptors being likely to be of low sensitivity to change. Split grades are used when resulting sensitivity falls between two grades where variability in susceptibility and/or value has been a consideration. To allow easier inspection and review of the assessment process Table APP 1.3 below is used to aid consistency in the definition of sensitivity.

Table APP 1.3 Sensitivity Matrix

Category		Susceptibility				
		High	Medium/High	Medium	Medium/Low	Low
Value	High	High	High	Medium/High	Medium	Medium
	Medium/High	High	Medium/High	Medium	Medium	Medium/Low
	Medium	Medium/High	Medium	Medium	Medium/Low	Medium/Low
	Medium/Low	Medium	Medium	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Low
	Low	Medium	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Low	Low

Magnitude of Landscape Effects

- 1.24 The effect on landscape receptors is assessed in terms of the following factors:
- **Size and scale of the change** – considering the loss or addition of features;
 - **Geographical extent of the effect** – being Wide/Medium/Local/Site e.g. within the Application Site; immediate setting (local); a larger proportion of the landscape type or character area (wider);
 - **Duration of effects** - short term; medium term; long term as defined within the assessment;
 - **Reversibility** - Reversible; partially reversible; permanent.
- 1.25 The above factors are considered together to derive an overall magnitude of effect for each identified receptor or group of receptors, which is determined by the use of professional judgement. The magnitude of effect is presented on a three-point scale of High, Medium and Low. Split grades may be possible where resulting magnitude falls between two grade levels.

Table APP 1.4 Magnitude of Effect for Landscape Receptors

Grade	Description
High	The development would result in a substantial alteration to the key landscape character or characteristics of the receptors.
Medium	The development would result in a partial alteration of or alteration to key landscape character or characteristics of the receptor
Low	The development would result in a small alteration to landscape character or characteristics of the receptor.
Negligible	The development would result in a slight alteration to landscape character or characteristics of the receptor.
None	The development would not result in an alternation to landscape character or characteristics of the receptor.

Assessment of Visual Effects

Visual Baseline

- 1.26 The visual baseline is the description of the existing qualities of views and visual amenity for the individual visual receptors against which any future changes can be assessed or visual effects predicted and assessed.
- 1.27 The visual baseline is established by considering both a desk study of existing sources such as landscape character assessments and OS mapping to identify prominent or promoted views and field work to identify and record the character and extent of the views and the features and aesthetic and perceptual factors which contribute to the general visual amenity.

Viewpoint Selection

- 1.28 Viewpoints are selected to illustrate the views and visual amenity experienced by the different visual receptors. This may be informed by the ZTV. In selecting the viewpoints, the following factors are taken into account:
- Viewing distance and direction – short, medium, long distance or oblique;
 - The nature of the viewing experience – static views, views along a route;
 - The type of view - glimpsed, panorama, screened, partial; and

- The potential for cumulative views in conjunction or in close sequence with other existing and proposed development of a similar nature (typically agreed with the LPA).

Visual Presentation Methods

- 1.29 Presentation methods for the visual impact assessment comprise panoramic photography consisting of a series of stitched single shot photographs. Field survey photographic records are prepared and presented in accordance with the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/2019, 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' (17th September 2019).

Value attached to views and visual amenity

- 1.30 The assessment considers the interest or reason a receptor has in experiencing a view and the value that they can reasonably attach to it.
- 1.31 The value attached to views is described as either High, Medium, or Low. Split grades may be possible where resulting value falls between two grade levels. Table APP 1.5 below gives an indication of the value assigned to views and visual amenity.

Table APP 1.5 Visual Receptor Value

Grade	Description
High	Views from and/or visual amenity associated with viewpoints of international or national importance, popular well-known visitor attractions / routes where views and visual amenity form an identified part of the attraction or route. Inclusion within widely publicised guidebooks or cultural references; residential receptors
Medium	Views from and/or the visual amenity associated with viewpoints of identified district or local importance; local well-known visitor attractions or public open spaces and routes where views and visual amenity form an integral part of the attraction; local public rights of way.
Low	Views from and/or visual amenity associated with every day locations or routes that do not benefit from any designation or cultural associations. Locations where the view of the landscape is not the primary reason for being in attendance, such as places of employment.

Susceptibility of visual receptor to change

- 1.32 Susceptibility of visual receptors to change in views and visual amenity is derived from the consideration of:
1. The occupation or reason why one is experiencing the view or area; and
 2. The amount of interest or attention one may have in the view and appearance of the area.
- 1.33 Judgements on visual susceptibility are presented on a three-step scale of Low, Medium or High. Split grades may be possible where resulting value falls between two grade levels. A description and indication of typical receptors associated with the grades of visual susceptibility are described in Table APP 1.6 overleaf.

Table APP 1.6 Visual Receptor Susceptibility

Scale	Description of susceptibility
High	Little or no ability to accommodate change caused by the proposed development without adverse consequences for the visual receptor group experiencing the view/ and or general visual amenity.
Medium	Some ability to accommodate change caused by the proposed development without adverse consequences for the visual receptor group experiencing the view/ and or general visual amenity.
Low	An ability to accommodate change caused by the proposed development without adverse consequences for the visual receptor group experiencing the view/ and or general visual amenity

Visual Sensitivity

- 1.34 Visual Sensitivity is derived from the judgements of value of a view or visual amenity and susceptibility of the visual receptor.
- 1.35 The assessment provides a clear rationale for both the existing value of the view or visual amenity and its susceptibility to change arising from the type of development proposed. The rationale is the record of why a visual receptor's sensitivity has been graded in a particular way.
- 1.36 Determination of sensitivity is based on professional judgement, however, high value/high susceptibility receptors are likely to be highly sensitive to change, with lower value and/or low susceptibility receptors being likely to be of low sensitivity to change. A three-point scale is used to define visual receptor sensitivity. Split grades are used when resulting sensitivity falls between two grades. As with the determination of landscape sensitivity, to allow easier inspection and review of the assessment process, the sensitivity matrix is used to aid consistency in the definition of visual sensitivity.

Table APP 1.7 Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Category		Susceptibility				
		High	Medium / High	Medium	Medium / Low	Low
Value	High	High	High	Medium/High	Medium	Medium
	Medium/ High	High	Medium/High	Medium	Medium	Medium/Low
	Medium	Medium/High	Medium	Medium	Medium/Low	Medium/Low
	Medium/ Low	Medium	Medium	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Low
	Low	Medium	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Low	Low

Magnitude of Visual Effects

- 1.37 The level of effect on a visual receptor is derived from an assessment of the magnitude of effect and the sensitivity of the receptor. This is informed by various factors, such as:
- **Size and scale of the change in view** – considering the loss or addition of features, changes in composition and consideration of the proportion of view occupied by the proposed development
 - **Geographical extent of the effect**- angle of view, distance of the receptor to the development and the extent over which the changes would be visible.

- **Contrast or integration with the existing visual character** – possible areas of consideration include form, scale and mass, skyline effects, height, colour and texture.
- **Duration of visual effects** - short term; medium term; long term as defined within the assessment;
- **Reversibility** - Reversible; partially reversible; permanent.

1.38 The above factors are considered together to derive an overall magnitude of effect for each receptor, which is determined by the use of professional judgement. The magnitude of visual effect is categorised as either High, Medium or Low. Split grades between these categories can be used where the magnitude fits neither category. A description of the visual magnitude categories is shown in Table APP 1.8.

Table APP 1.8 Magnitude of Effect for Visual Receptors

Grade	Description
High	The proposed development would result in a substantial change to the identified view or visual amenity
Medium	The proposed development would result in a partial alteration to the identified view or visual amenity
Low	The proposed development would result in a small alteration to the identified view or visual amenity
Negligible	The proposed development would result in a barely discernible alteration to the identified view or visual amenity
None	The proposed development would not alter the identified view or visual amenity

Significance and Nature of Effect on Landscape and Visual Receptors

1.39 The assessment of the significance of effect is derived by combining the judgements of sensitivity and magnitude of effect for each landscape and visual receptor along with a clear narrative of the reasoning behind the assessment. The significance of an effect can be beneficial, adverse or neutral, permanent or temporary:

- **Adverse effects** are those that would be damaging to the key characteristics arising from either their loss, reduction or introduction of uncharacteristic elements so as to degrade the quality and integrity of the landscape and or visual resource.
- **Beneficial effects** are those that would result in an improvement in the key characteristics arising from improvement or introduction of new positive elements or removal of existing incongruous elements so as to improve the quality and integrity of the landscape and/or visual resource.
- **Neutral effects** are those effects that would maintain, on balance, the key characteristics and existing levels of the quality and integrity of the landscape and/or visual resource.

1.40 To aid consistency and allow easier inspection and review of results checklists, tables and matrices are used as a guide, alongside professional judgement. These include the use of matrices for the determination of significance thresholds, whereby the predicted magnitude of an effect is assessed against the sensitivity of a given receptor. This provides an indication of the level or significance of an effect (see Table APP 1.9 below). For the purposes of the assessment and unless stated otherwise in the EIA methodology or report, the threshold for significant effects is moderate or greater, shaded blue in Table 1.9 below.

Table APP 1.9 Significance of Effects Matrix

Category		Receptor Sensitivity		
		High	Medium	Low
Magnitude of Effect	High	Major	Major/Moderate	Moderate
	Medium	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	Low	Moderate	Minor	Minor/Negligible
	Negligible	Minor	Minor/Negligible	Negligible
	None	None	None	None

- 1.41 Definitions are provided below. Where necessary, the intermediary categories between Major, Moderate and Low will be explained within the main body of the assessment.

Table APP 1.10 Significance of Effect Definitions

Significance of effect	Landscape	Visual
Major	The proposals will result in a substantial change in the key characteristics of the receptor or alterations to the quality and integrity of the landscape receptor such that the proposals are one of the principal elements altering the baseline landscape context.	The proposals will result in a substantial in view or introduce/ alter elements, features or characteristics where the baseline visual context alters with the proposals being one of the principal visual elements.
Moderate	The proposals will result in a partial change in the key characteristics of the receptor or partial alterations to the quality and integrity of the landscape receptor but where the baseline landscape context remains.	The proposals will result in a partial change in view or introduce/ alter elements, features or characteristics but where the baseline visual context remains.
Minor	The proposals will result in a small change in character of the receptor that is discernible but does not alter its key characteristics or will alter the quality and integrity of the landscape receptor in a small way.	The proposals will result in a small change in view/ areas of visual amenity or introduce/ alter elements, features or characteristics but where the change is not prominent.
Negligible	Slight change in the key characteristics of the landscape or alterations to the legibility of the landscape receptor.	The proposals will result in a barely discernible change in view/ areas visual amenity.
None	No change to the key characteristics of the landscape or alterations to the legibility of the landscape receptor.	No change to the view / visual amenity.

Glossary of Terms

(Derived from current IEMA/LI Guidelines with additional glossary)

Access land	Land where the public have access either by legal right or by informal agreement.
Baseline studies	Work done to determine and describe the environmental conditions against which any future changes can be measured or predicted and assessed.
Characterisation	The process of identifying areas of similar landscape character, classifying and mapping them and describing their character.
Characteristics	Elements, or combinations of elements, which make a contribution to distinctive landscape character.
Compensation	Measures devised to offset or compensate for residual adverse effects which cannot be prevented/avoided or further reduced.
Competent authority	The authority which determines the application for consent, permission, licence or other authorisation to proceed with a proposal. It is the authority that must consider the environmental information before granting any kind of authorisation.
Consultation bodies	Any body specified in the relevant EIA Regulations which the competent authority must consult in respect of an EIA, and which also has a duty to provide a scoping opinion and information.
Designated landscape	Areas of landscape identified as being of importance at international, national or local levels, either defined by statute or identified in development plans or other documents.
Development	Any proposal that results in a change to the landscape and/or visual environment.
Direct effect	An effect that is directly attributable to the proposed development.
‘Do nothing’ situation	Continued change or evolution in the landscape in the absence of the proposed development.
Ecosystem services	The benefits provided by ecosystems that contribute to making human life both possible and worth living. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (www.unep.org/maweb/en/index.aspx) grouped ecosystem services into four broad categories: 1. supporting services, such as nutrient cycling, oxygen production and soil formation – these underpin the provision of the other ‘service’ categories; 2. provisioning services, such as food, fibre, fuel and water; 3. regulating services, such as climate regulation, water purification and flood protection; 4. cultural services, such as education, recreation and aesthetic value.
Elements	Individual parts which make up the landscape, such as, for example, trees, hedges and buildings.
Enhancement	Proposals that seek to improve the landscape resource and the visual amenity of the proposed development site and its wider setting, over and above its baseline condition.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	The process of gathering environmental information; describing a development; identifying and describing the likely significant environmental effects of the project; defining ways of preventing/avoiding, reducing, or offsetting or compensating for any adverse effects; consulting the general public and specific bodies with responsibilities for the environment; and presenting the results to the competent authority to inform the decision on whether the project should proceed.
Environmental Statement	A statement that includes the information that is reasonably required to assess the environmental effects of the development and which the applicant can, having regard in particular to current knowledge and methods of assessment, reasonably be required to compile, but that includes at least the information referred to in the EIA Regulations.
Feature	Particularly prominent or eye-catching elements in the landscape, such as tree clumps, church

towers or wooded skylines OR a particular aspect of the project proposals.

Geographical Information System (GIS)

A system that captures, stores, analyses, manages and presents data linked to location. It links spatial information to a digital database.

Green Infrastructure (GI)

Networks of green spaces and watercourses and water bodies that connect rural areas, villages, towns and cities.

Heritage

The historic environment and especially valued assets and qualities such as historic buildings and cultural traditions.

Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC and Historic Land-use Assessment (HLA)

Historic characterisation is the identification and interpretation of the historic dimension of the present-day landscape or townscape within a given area. HLC is the term used in England and Wales, HLA is the term used in Scotland.

Indirect effects

Effects that result indirectly from the proposed project as a consequence of the direct effects, often occurring away from the site, or as a result of a sequence of interrelationships or a complex pathway. They may be separated by distance or in time from the source of the effects.

Iterative design process

The process by which project design is amended and improved by successive stages of refinement which respond to growing understanding of environmental issues.

Key characteristics

Those combinations of elements which are particularly important to the current character of the landscape and help to give an area its particularly distinctive sense of place.

Land cover

The surface cover of the land, usually expressed in terms of vegetation cover or lack of it. Related to but not the same as land use.

Land use

What land is used for, based on broad categories of functional land cover, such as urban and industrial use and the different types of agriculture and forestry.

Landform

The shape and form of the land surface which has resulted from combinations of geology, geomorphology, slope, elevation and physical processes.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

A tool used to identify and assess the likely significance of the effects of change resulting from development both on the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.

Landscape capacity

The degree to which a particular landscape character type or area is able to accommodate change without unacceptable adverse effects on its character. Capacity is likely to vary according to the type and nature of change being proposed.

Landscape character

A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)

These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape type.

Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)

The process of identifying and describing variation of the character of the landscape and using this information to assist in managing change in the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive. The process results in the production of a Landscape Character Assessment.

Landscape Character Types (LCTs)

These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation and historical land use and settlement pattern, and perceptual and aesthetic

	attributes.
Landscape classification	A process of sorting the landscape into different types using selected criteria but without attaching relative values to different sorts of landscape.
Landscape effects	Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.
Landscape features	A prominent eye-catching element, e.g. wooded hill top and church spire.
Landscape quality (condition)	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.
Landscape receptors	Defined aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by a proposal.
Landscape strategy	The overall vision and objectives for what the landscape should be like in the future, and what is thought to be desirable for a particular landscape type or area as a whole, usually expressed in formally adopted plans and programmes or related documents.
Landscape value	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.
Magnitude (of effect)	A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration.
Parameters	A limit or boundary which defines the scope of a particular process or activity.
Perception	Combines the sensory (that we receive through our senses) with the cognitive (our knowledge and understanding gained from many sources and experiences).
Photomontage	A visualisation which superimposes an image of a proposed development upon a photograph or series of photographs.
Receptors	See Landscape receptors and Visual receptors.
Scoping	The process of identifying the issues to be addressed by an EIA. It is a method of ensuring that an EIA focuses on the important issues and avoids those that are considered to be less significant.
Seascape	Landscapes with views of the coast or seas, and coasts and adjacent marine environments with cultural, historical and archaeological links with each other.
Sensitivity	A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor.
Significance	A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect, defined by significance criteria specific to the environmental topic.
Stakeholders	The whole constituency of individuals and groups who have an interest in a subject or place.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	The process of considering the environmental effects of certain public plans, programmes or strategies at a strategic level.
Susceptibility	The ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences.
Time depth	Historical layering – the idea of landscape as a ‘palimpsest’, a much written-over manuscript.
Townscape	The character and composition of the built environment including the buildings and the relationships between them, the different types of urban open space, including green spaces, and the relationship between buildings and open spaces.
Tranquillity	A state of calm and quietude associated with peace, considered to be a significant asset of

landscape.

Visual amenity	The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area.
Visual effects	Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.
Visual receptors	Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a proposal.
Visualisation	A computer simulation, photomontage or other technique illustrating the predicted appearance of the development.
Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)	A map, usually digitally produced, showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible.
Zone of Significant Visibility (ZSV)	Area within a ZTV from which a proposed development is likely to draw the eye of a casual observer, based on field observations.