

Land to the rear of The Bulrushes, Coombe
Hill Road, East Grinstead, RH19 4LZ

Landscape and Visual Appraisal
Revision A

Land Management Services Ltd
October 2026

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Contents

1.	Introduction and Scope	1
2.	Landscape Policy Context	2
3.	Published Landscape Character Assessments	3
4.	Baseline Landscape Character Appraisal	3
5.	Baseline Visual Appraisal	5
6.	The Proposals	11
7.	Landscape Impact Assessment	12
8.	Visual Impact Assessment	13
9.	Discussion Landscape Policy Context	15
10.	Conclusions	16

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Location and Viewpoint Plan

Figure 3: Proposed Block Plan

Figure 4: Proposed Elevations

Appendices

Appendix 1: Landscape and Visual Appraisal Methodology

Appendix 2: Landscape Policy Context

1. Introduction and Scope

This revised Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) (Revision A) has been prepared in relation to proposals for the construction of a single dwelling on land to the rear of Bulrushes, Coombe Road, East Grinstead (See Location Plan, Figure 1).

This revision to the LVA dated August 2026 submitted as part of Application Reference DM/26/2103, has been prepared in order to respond to the planning consultation response issued by Place Services dated 29th September 2026. The concluding paragraph to the planning consultation response states:

Whilst we recognise that the application is for a single dwelling on the edge of East Grinstead, we consider that its location within the High Weald National Landscape increases the sensitivity of this site to development. The level of detail included within the submitted LVA is therefore not a proportionate approach. An LVA is a suitable assessment approach, however we expect the LVA to be updated to include at the minimum:

- *Details of the Methodological approach and relevant guidance, with reference to GLVIA3*
- *Judgements of sensitivity (combined judgements of value and susceptibility) for both landscape and visual receptors*
- *Judgements of magnitude of change and overall sensitivity for both landscape and visual receptors*

The approach adopted in the original LVA comprises a more descriptive, narrative document informed by our full LVIA methodology and current best practice and guidance for the preparation of LVIA's and LVAs. For such a small site with very limited characteristics reflecting the value and scenic qualities of the National Landscape this was considered a proportionate approach. The document was prepared on the assumption that the reviewer would visit the Site in order to understand the site context and the conclusions drawn.

This Revision A has been prepared in accordance with our full LVIA/LVA Methodology (attached as Appendix 1) in order to address the comments in the response from Place Services. For the purposes of this LVA the following stages described in the LVIA/LVA Methodology have been scoped out:

- Impacts during Demolition, Construction and Refurbishment;
- Night time impacts and effects. It is anticipated that a full Lighting Strategy would be developed as part of a full planning application or conditioned;
- A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Plan has not been prepared. The desk top study identified a very localised anticipated ZTV which was tested in the field;
- There would be no phased occupation;
- There are no identified Cumulative Impacts;
- The LVA does not draw conclusions as to the significance of impacts and effects as this document does not form part of a full Environmental Assessment.

The whole of the site is located in the High Weald National Landscape (formerly AONB).

The Site was visited on 22nd May 2026.

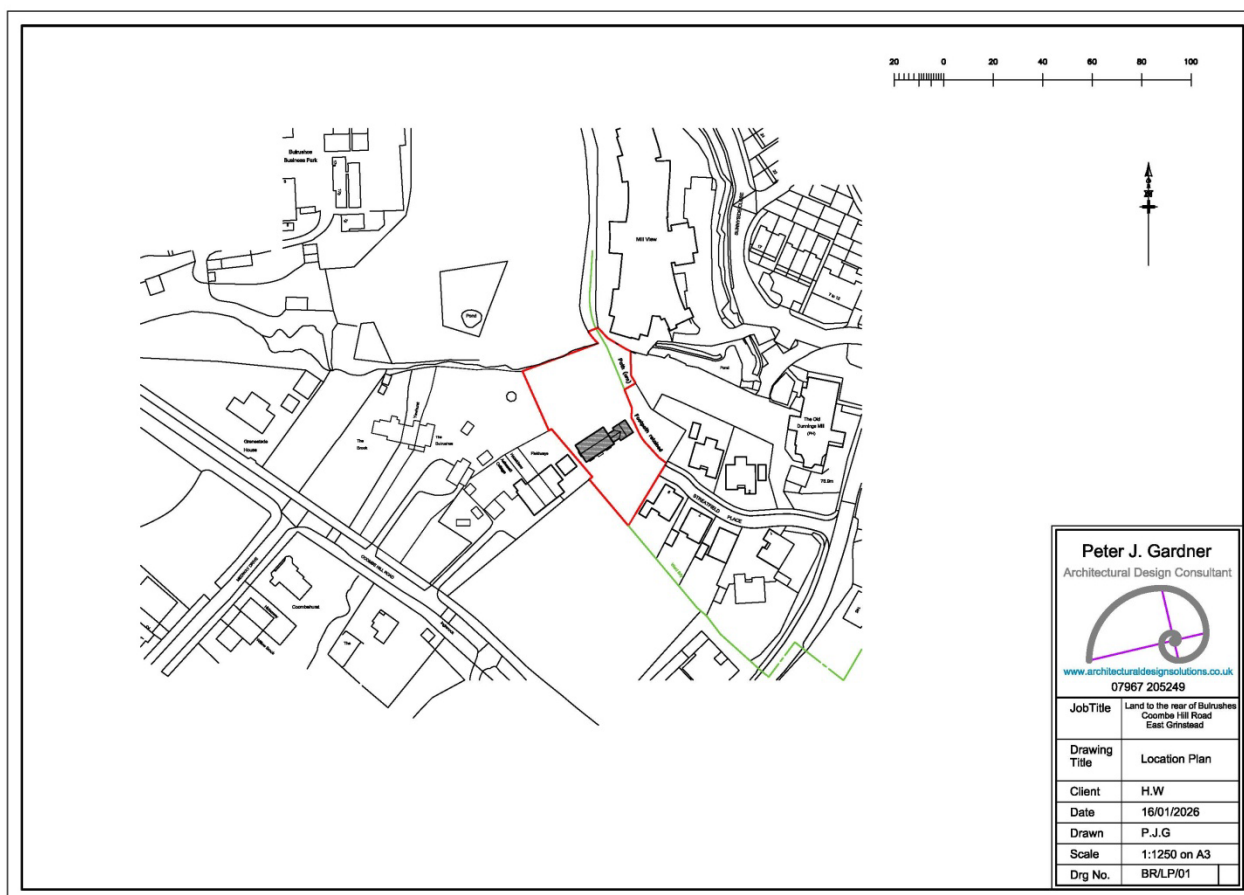


Figure 1: Location Plan

2 Landscape Policy Context

Local landscape policy is described in the Mid Sussex District Plan (2014 to 2031) and the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan (2016). The whole of the site lies within the High Weald National Landscape (HWNL) and Countryside but is bordered on two sides by the settlement boundary to East Grinstead. The HWNL is a national landscape designation which affords the highest protection in order to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the National Landscape. Key policy extracts are included in Appendix 2 to this LVA.

Policy DP16 of the Mid Sussex District Plan (MSDP) sets out the key criteria to be met in any application affecting land within the HWNL:

Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular;

- *the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;*
- *the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;*
- *character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and*

- *the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.*

The local plans also adopt the strategy, ambitions and objectives as described in the High Weald AONB Management Plan (2024-2029).

3 Published Landscape Character Assessments

The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessments are somewhat out of date. The original assessment dates from 2005 with a more recent Landscape Capacity Study dating from 2007. The Site lies within the Rockwood High Weald Character Area as described in the 2007 Landscape Capacity Study. Policy set out in the MSDP references the character assessments as the evidence base against which proposals affecting the countryside will be assessed.

The 2007 Landscape Capacity Study (LCS) notes that the character area is of medium sensitivity. The LCS does not include a full character area description but a table summarising key characteristics and contributions to landscape functions or purposes. The table notes that the character area makes a *slight* contribution to the *wider setting of south west East Grinstead* and that there is *significant low density development* within the Character Area. With regard to contribution to *rurality of surrounding landscape* the LCS notes that it is *semi-rural but significant intervisibility with adjacent settlement*.

Since 2007 there have been changes to the built environment in the immediate locality of the site with the construction of Streatfield Place, a residential cul de sac and the care home at Sunnyside Court/Mill View, which influence local character and site context.

4 Baseline Landscape Character Appraisal

The site lies to the rear (north east) of a property known as Bulrushes located towards the eastern end of Coombe Hill Road. A number of views across the site and from the surrounding area are included in the visual appraisal below (see principally Viewpoints 4 and 5). The site comprises a small rectangular land parcel mostly comprising rough grassland and scrub. The land falls gently from south to north towards a shallow stream on the northern boundary. There are a number of larger mature trees on this northern boundary bordering the stream. The western and southern boundaries are defined by fences to gardens on Coombe Road and Streatfield Place respectively (see Viewpoints 6 and 7). A public footpath (Public Right of Way) (PRoW 26aEG) runs along the eastern boundary. Beyond this path there is fencing mostly bordering the car park to the Old Dunnings Mill Public House Car Park.

Public Footpath 26aEG runs north west from Streatfield Place along the site boundary and then north bordering Mill View Care Home, before emerging into open countryside to the north (see Viewpoints 1 and 2).

The site is enclosed by the settlement edge to the south and east. In effect this boundary with residential properties also extends to the western boundary which borders rear gardens

on Coombe Hill Road, including Bulrushes. There is open countryside to the north beyond the belt of trees and stream comprising mostly pasture with woodland. This wooded stream forms a natural boundary to the garden curtilages further west along Coombe Hill Road. There is a large group of commercial buildings (Bulrushes Business Park) set within the nearby fields to the north. The Business Park is enclosed by conifer hedging.

The recent residential development at Streatfield Place also lies within the HWNL.

The land to the rear of Bulrushes (the site) comprises an area of rough grassland and scrub, with a small area of mature trees bordering the stream on the northern boundary which forms a continuation of the semi natural natural boundary to the garden curtilages on Coombe Hill Road. The site is enclosed to the west, east and south by domestic gardens and the car park to the public house. These uses and the condition and appearance of the land give the site a strong settlement edge character. It is only beyond the northern boundary that the landscape changes to more open countryside with pasture and woodland. Even here the Bulrushes Business Park influences the character of the land.

The site reflects many of the issues and contributions identified in the 2007 LCS with regard to the wider Rockwood High Weald Character Area. It is a settlement edge location and as a consequence there is *significant intervisibility with* (the) *adjacent settlement*. The Site does not reflect important characteristics or qualities of the wider countryside and National Landscape, with the exception of the narrow belt of riparian woodland following the northern boundary which provides a buffer between the site and the wider countryside to the north.

The overall LCS assessment of landscape sensitivity is medium. This LVA concludes that this assessment would be appropriate for the land to the north of the site which reflects key characteristics of a rolling landscape of pasture enclosed by woodland and hedge. The fact that the site is located within the HWNL would contribute to an assessment that the site should be considered of highest landscape sensitivity. The site does not, however, reflect key characteristics or qualities identified in Policy DP16 which contribute to the natural beauty and scenic qualities of the National Landscape. The features of the site which contribute to the natural beauty of the HWNL are the stream and belt of riparian woodland on the northern boundary. The proximity of existing residential development and the influence this has on the character of the site combined with the fact that the site does not strongly reflect wider rural landscape character lead to a conclusion that the site itself is of lower landscape value, of low landscape susceptibility to the proposed change of use and of lower landscape sensitivity, but this judgement is caveated by the fact that the land lies within the HWNL.

5 Baseline Visual Appraisal

It was not considered necessary to prepare a Zone of Theoretical Visibility Plan for a development of this scale. Potential publicly accessible viewpoints were identified from a desk top review and then assessed on site. Photographs were taken on 22nd May 2026 and are included below. Viewpoint locations are shown on Figure 2. These images were taken with a 50mm DSLR digital lens. In a number of cases single frames have been combined to provide panoramas to illustrate the site in the wider context.

There are two PRoW in relatively close proximity to the site from which views could potentially be obtained.

Footpath 26aEG runs north west from Streatfield Place following the southern edge of the settlement of East Grinstead.

Footpath 27EG follows Coombe Hill Road and then runs south along Medway Drive.

Eight representative views towards the Site from the local area were identified.

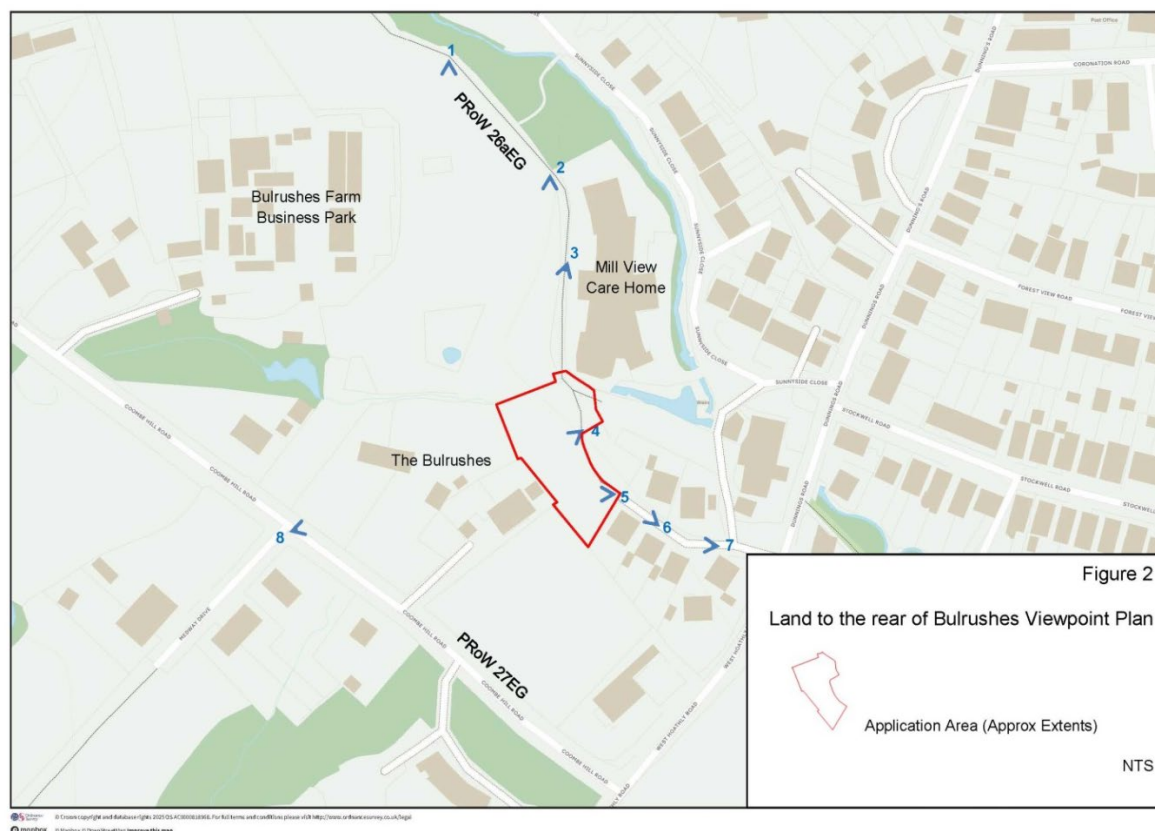


Figure 2: Location and Viewpoint Plan



Viewpoint 1: View south from Footpath 26aEG. The wooded boundary screens views to the site from the countryside to the north. Roofscape to properties on Streatfield Place and Bulrushes on Coombe Hill Road is visible in this view. The hedge to the Business Park is also visible in this view. This is a local view enjoyed by users of the PRoW.

Visual Receptor: Users of PRoW in open countryside within a National Landscape

View value: Medium Susceptibility to change: Medium

Visual Receptor Sensitivity: High



Viewpoint 2: View south from Footpath 26aEG at the point the path emerges into open countryside. The wooded boundary to the site largely screens views of the site itself. Properties on Coombe Hill Road can be glimpsed through the tree cover. This is a local view enjoyed by users of the PRoW.

Visual Receptor: Users of PRoW in open countryside within a National Landscape

View Value: Medium Susceptibility to change: Medium

Visual Receptor Sensitivity: High



Viewpoint 3: View south from Footpath 26aEG at the point the path runs through a narrow corridor with Mill View Care Home to the east and a dense hedgerow to the west. This is a highly constrained local view.

Visual Receptor: Users of PRow in an enclosed location within a National Landscape
View value: Low Susceptibility to change: Low
Visual Receptor Sensitivity: Medium



Viewpoint 4: View south west from Footpath 26aEG through the site boundary vegetation at the point where the path runs close to the eastern boundary. This is a partial view which currently includes rear fences and glimpses of other properties on Coombe Hill Road.

Visual Receptor: Users of PRow on the settlement edge within a National Landscape
View value: Low Susceptibility to change: Low
Visual Receptor Sensitivity: Medium



Viewpoint 5: View north west across the site from Footpath 26aEG at the point where the path leaves Streatfield Place. Houses and the garden fences to properties on Coombe Hill Road are prominent in this local view.

Visual Receptor: Users of PRow on the settlement edge within a National Landscape
View value: Low Susceptibility to change: Low
Visual Receptor Sensitivity: Medium



Viewpoint 6: View north west from Streatfield Place close to the site southern boundary. The trees on the site northern boundary can be glimpsed beyond the hedgeline on the southern boundary. This is a limited, local view from within the residential area

Visual Receptor: Road users and pedestrians within a residential area

View value: Low Susceptibility to change: Low

Visual Receptor Sensitivity: Low



Viewpoint 7: View west from Streatfield Place. From this location views to the site are screened by the existing properties. This is a limited, local view from within the residential area.

Visual Receptor: Road users and pedestrians within a residential area

View value: Low Susceptibility to change: Low

Visual Receptor Sensitivity: Low



Viewpoint 8: View east from Coombe Hill Road and Footpath 27EG. There are glimpsed views towards the site through the gardens on Coombe Hill Road, but the site itself is screened by the intervening vegetation. This is a semi rural view from a quiet lane but strongly influenced by domestic curtilages.

Visual Receptor: Road users and pedestrians within a semi residential area
View value; Low/medium Susceptibility to change: Low/Medium
Visual Receptor Sensitivity: Medium

The baseline visual appraisal demonstrates that the site benefits from a high level of visual enclosure. There are near views from Footpath 26aEG where it borders the site (Viewpoints 4 and 5) but in these views the land is always seen in the context of neighbouring residential development. There are more open views back towards Coombe Hill Road from Footpath 26aEG to the north (Viewpoints 1 and 2) but the visual appraisal demonstrates that the dense vegetation on the northern boundary provides effective screening in summer. In winter the views would be slightly more open, but at best these would be glimpsed views through tree cover. Existing dwellings on Coombe Hill Road and Streatfield Place are visible in these views.

The site is only perceived in limited glimpsed views from PRoW 26aEG. In all of these views existing vegetation limits views to partial or glimpsed views and the site is always seen in a residential context. This reflects the description of the Rockwood High Weald Character Area in the 2007 Landscape Capacity Study of *semi-rural but significant intervisibility with adjacent settlement*.

Views towards the settlement edge from the open countryside (principally Viewpoints 1 and 2) are assessed as of medium value, whilst the near views of the site from locations on the settlement edge (principally Viewpoints 4, 5, 6 and 8) are assessed as of low value. This assessment is reflected in the assessment of susceptibility to change with a higher (medium) susceptibility to change concluded for the Viewpoints 1 and 2 towards the settlement edge. A high overall visual receptor sensitivity is concluded for Viewpoints 1 and 2 as these are located on public rights of way, in open countryside within a Nationally designated landscape. Lower (medium) visual receptor sensitivity is concluded in relation to the viewpoints on the settlement edge (Viewpoints 3, 4, 5 and 8) and a low sensitivity for viewpoints from within the residential development at Streatfield Place.

6 The Proposals

The proposals comprise the construction of a single detached dwelling in the central southern parts of the site (see Block Plan and Elevations in Figures 3 and 4). The proposed dwelling is of a traditional style with brick and tile finishes.

All mature trees on the site, including the belt of riparian woodland on the northern boundary would be retained. A hedge and fence would be constructed along the western side of Footpath 26aEG.



Figure 3: Proposed Block Plan



Figure 4: Proposed Elevations

7 Landscape Impact Assessment

The proposed development comprises a single dwelling of a character and appearance which reflects that of other residential development on the adjacent plots. The land lies within the HWNL and should therefore be considered of the highest landscape sensitivity but this LVA concludes that the contribution of the site to the wider natural beauty and scenic qualities of the HWNL is compromised by the proximity of neighbouring development which includes the recent development at Streatfield Place, also within the HWNL, and the fact that the site does not strongly reflect key characteristics of the HWNL. The proposals would retain the strip of riparian woodland on the northern boundary which does reflect wider rural character and also provides an important landscape buffer with the open countryside to the north.

The Rockwood High Weald LCA, within which the site is located, is assessed as of medium landscape sensitivity in the LCS. The site itself forms a very small part of this LCA and does not strongly reflect the wider semi rural characteristics of the LCA and is enclosed by characteristic lower density development on the settlement edge. For these reasons the magnitude of change to the LCS as a consequence of the proposed development is assessed as very low in accordance with Table 2 of the LVA Methodology. The assessment of landscape effects is therefore assessed as negligible in the context of wider local landscape character as described in the LCS.

The site itself is assessed as of lower landscape sensitivity as it does not reflect key characteristics of the wider LCA and character is strongly influenced by the neighbouring residential development. There would be a change of use on the site from open rough grassland to residential and domestic garden but as noted this does reflect the character and land use to the west, south and east of the site. All important landscape features, principally the wooded river corridor on the northern boundary would be retained. This LVA therefore concludes that the magnitude of change affecting the site itself would be low and the overall landscape effects are therefore assessed as minor adverse at completion potentially reducing to negligible as the landscape setting to the development matures.

The above judgements should be read in the context of the higher landscape sensitivity attributed to land within a National Landscape. This assessment and the conclusions reached reflect the fact that neighbouring development within the HWNL has compromised the character and appearance of the immediate surrounding area and the fact that the site does not reflect key characteristics associated with the natural beauty and scenic qualities of the HWNL.

8 Visual Impact Assessment

Table 1 provides an assessment of the visual effects of the proposed development from the representative viewpoints described in the baseline visual assessment.

Viewpoint	Location	Value Sensitivity	Description and Magnitude of Change	Visual Effects Year 1	Visual Effects Year 10
1	View south from Footpath 26aEG at the point the path emerges into open countryside.	Medium High	The wooded boundary to the site largely screens views of the site itself. Properties on Coombe Hill Road can be glimpsed through the tree cover. The roofscape to the proposed development may be glimpsed in this view, with the potential for partial views to the dwelling in winter. Residential development on the edge of the settlement is a feature of the existing view so the change to the character and appearance of this view would be very limited. Magnitude of Change: Very Low	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
2	View south from Footpath 26aEG at the point the path emerges into open countryside.	Medium High	The wooded boundary to the site largely screens views of the site itself. Properties on Coombe Hill Road can be glimpsed through the tree cover. Similar to viewpoint 1. The roofscape to the proposed development may be glimpsed in this view, with the potential for partial views to the dwelling in winter. Residential development on the edge of the settlement is a feature of the existing view so the change to the character and appearance of this view would be very limited. Magnitude of Change: Very Low	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
3	View south from Footpath 26aEG at the point the path runs through a narrow corridor with Mill View Care Home to the east and a dense hedgerow to the east.	Low Medium	The proposed development would not be visible from this location. Magnitude of change: Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
4	View south west from Footpath 26aEG through the site boundary vegetation at the point where the path runs close to the eastern boundary.	Low Medium	This is a partial view which currently includes rear fences and glimpses of other properties on Coombe Hill Road. The proposed development would occupy the central part of the view. Views from Footpath 26aEG in this location are influenced by neighbouring residential development and as a consequence the proposed change of use would not be strongly out of character, but would bring residential development closer to the viewer. Over time planting on the boundary would soften the impact and effect on users of the PRoW. Magnitude of change: Low	Minor adverse	Negligible

Viewpoint	Location	Value Sensitivity	Description and Magnitude of Change	Visual Effects Year 1	Visual Effects Year 10
5	View north west across the site from Footpath 26aEG at the point where the path leaves Streatfield Place.	Low Medium	Houses and the garden fences to properties on Coombe Hill Road are prominent in this view. Similar to viewpoint 4. The proposed development would occupy the central part of the view. Views from Footpath 26aEG in this location are influenced by neighbouring residential development and as a consequence the proposed change of use would not be strongly out of character, but would bring residential development closer to the viewer. Over time planting on the boundary would soften the impact and effect on users of the PRoW. Magnitude of change: Low	Minor adverse	Negligible
6	View north west from Streatfield Place close to the site southern boundary.	Low Low	The trees on the site northern boundary can be glimpsed beyond the hedgeline on the southern boundary. The proposed development would be glimpsed beyond the existing residential development in this view. The proposed development would be of a very similar character and appearance to the existing built form on Streatfield Place. Magnitude of change: Very Low	Negligible	Negligible
7	View west from Streatfield Place.	Low Low	From this location views to the site are screened by the existing properties. Magnitude of change: Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
8	View east from Coombe Hill Road and Footpath 27EG.	Low/Medium Medium	There are glimpsed views towards the site through the gardens on Coombe Hill Road, but the site itself is largely screened by the intervening vegetation. The roofscape and upper elevations may be glimpsed beyond the existing dwellings on Coombe Hill Road, but would be of a similar scale and character to the existing built form. Magnitude of change: Very Low	Negligible	Negligible

The site can be viewed from short sections of local PRoW and neighbouring residential areas. These are very localised near views and the site is always seen in the context of other development on the settlement edge and on Coombe Hill Road. It is anticipated that the dwelling would be glimpsed from the short sections of Footpath 26aEG to the north (Viewpoints 1 and 2) but these would only be partial or glimpsed views, limited mainly to the winter months, and the dwelling would always be perceived in the context of existing residential development in a wooded setting.

The development would be prominent in near views from the short section of Footpath 26aEG running along the eastern boundary but again would be seen in the context of the influence of existing neighbouring residential development on the character and appearance of these existing views.

Minor adverse effects are assessed from these viewpoints as new built form will be introduced albeit seen in the context of existing residential development on the wooded settlement edge.

9 Discussion Local Landscape Policy Context

The local landscape policy context as described in the MSDC Local Plan and the East Grinstead Neighbourhood is set out in Appendix 2. The discussion below considers the proposed development against this policy context, informed by the findings of this LVA.

N4 Protected Landscapes

The proposed development is considered to comply with Part 1 of Policy N4 being *limited in scale and extent* and *sensitively located and designed* set into the settlement edge on a site which does not strongly reflect the *special qualities* of the HWNL.

DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside

The land to the rear of Bulrushes is located within a National Landscape. This Appraisal concludes that the site has a strong settlement edge character and does not reflect key characteristics of the wider countryside. This appraisal also concludes that the proposed development would only be glimpsed from very limited areas of countryside to the north and would always be seen in a residential context. It would not extend or alter the influence of built form on neighbouring land. It would therefore protect the visual qualities of the HWNL. The proposal would not extend residential development into countryside and would not impact on the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

DP15: New Homes in the Countryside

This policy draws on the same principles as DP12 with regard to the protection of valued landscapes and the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Regarding the specific bullet points of the policy this proposal does not constitute an *isolated home in the countryside* as it is enclosed by residential development on three sides and has a strong settlement edge character. The siting, scale and design of the house is considered to be *sensitive to the character of the area* benefitting from the mature landscape setting on the northern boundary which limits views to the proposed house from the wider countryside.

DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

This appraisal concludes that the site does not strongly reflect the natural beauty and scenic qualities of the National Landscape. The proposal would not affect:

- *the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;*
- *the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;*
- *character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and*
- *the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.*

The proposed house would be set within the existing patterns of settlement and residential development beyond the settlement boundary and would always be perceived in the context of the surrounding residential development. The proposals are considered to be sensitive to the local residential context, landscape character and local distinctiveness in terms of location, siting, scale and design. The land benefits from a mature wooded setting on the northern boundary which would be retained.

Policy EG1 (untitled) in the Neighbourhood Plan is concerned primarily with 'major developments' in the National Landscape. The second part of the policy deals more generally with development in the National Landscape and requires:

- *The highest standards of Design are achieved;*
- *The natural and scenic beauty of the landscape is conserved or enhanced;*
- *The proposals do not result in an obtrusive feature in the landscape.*

The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that the scheme would not negatively impact on the existing quality of the protected landscape and its setting taking account of locally important features. Proposals that have not fully considered and addressed the impact on the AONB will normally be refused.

This LVA concludes that the site does not strongly reflect the natural character and scenic beauty of the HWNL and as such landscape effects would be limited to negligible landscape effects associated with the site itself and would have a highly localised minor adverse to negligible effect from nearby semi-rural visual receptors.

Policy EG2 concerns areas of development constraint. The proposals would not influence coalescence as set out in Policy EG2a.

Planning Appeal Decision (Appeal Ref: 6003631)

A recent Appeal Decision (4th June 2026) relating to neighbouring land at the Bulrushes is relevant to this LVA. The Appeal for construction of a single dwelling in the rear garden to Bulrushes was dismissed in part because of harm to the character and appearance of the HWNL. The decision does not identify specific harm to the landscape character and natural beauty of the HWNL, but draws in particular on the conclusion that the location was not *contiguous* to the settlement and did not *respect the existing pattern of development for detached dwellings within the surrounding area, which are set on larger plots with larger gaps between buildings*.

10 Conclusions

The proposals are for a single traditional style dwelling located to the south west of Bulrushes. The site borders the settlement edge on two sides and is enclosed by dwellings and settlement edge on three sides. Only the northern boundary borders countryside and this boundary is defined by mature trees and a stream which create a strong degree of visual separation between the site and the wider countryside and forms a continuation of the semi natural boundary to rear gardens on Coombe Hill Road. The site mainly comprises rough grassland and scrub and character is influenced by neighbouring development and as such does not reflect the natural beauty and scenic qualities of the HWNL. This appraisal demonstrates that the proposed house would be perceived as part of the existing pattern of residential development on the settlement edge and on Coombe Hill Road. It would be contiguous with the nearest areas of built development, principally on Streatfield Place.

The house would only be potentially viewed from short sections of Footpath 26aEG to the north and in all these views would be perceived in the context of existing built form set in a

mature wooded setting and not in isolation in the countryside. As a consequence visual effects are assessed as minor adverse/negligible from the short sections of PRoW 26aEG in the immediate vicinity of the site.

The site does not strongly reflect landscape or scenic qualities characteristic of the wider HWNL or positive characteristics associated with the Rockwood High Weald LCA and is influenced by neighbouring residential development, some of which lies within the HWNL. The site does reflect the description of the LCA as *semi-rural but significant intervisibility with adjacent settlement*. The proposed house would be located and designed such that it would be set into the local landscape without a need for substantial mitigation. As such the proposal is considered to be sensitive to this location within the HWNL, would not harm locally important landscape features, would not be out of character with existing settlement pattern and would conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape.

Land Management Services Ltd
October 2026

Appendix 1: Methodology

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Methodology

Introduction

The LVIA Methodology used is based on revised guidance set out in 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA)' published by the Landscape Institute and Institute for Environmental Assessment (Third edition, 2013) and related Technical Guidance Papers prepared by the Landscape Institute. Additional guidance in relation to the assessment of landscape character is provided in 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (October 2014) and supporting Topic Papers prepared by Natural England together with Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland published by The Countryside Agency (2002).

This Methodology Statement addresses the preparation of both Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA) and Landscape and Visual Appraisals (LVA). An LVA would follow the same process as an LVIA, but may not draw conclusions as to the level of effects and would not address the significance of effects (as required when an LVIA is prepared as part of a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)¹.

This Methodology Statement sets out the approach which has been followed in the preparation of the LVIA or LVA.

The Assessment Process

GLVIA clearly distinguishes between the assessment of landscape effects and visual effects as two separate components of LVIA:

Assessment of landscape effects: *assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.*

Assessment of visual effects: *assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.*

This LVIA methodology adopts this approach.

For the purpose of this assessment the definition of the distinction between 'impact' and 'effect', is taken from GLVIA. This guidance defines 'impact' as 'the action being taken' and 'effect' as the 'change resulting from that action'.

This first section of the LVIA Methodology provides an overview of the overall assessment process. The LVIA will present findings in the form of written text, tables, figures, plans and photographs, as required and agreed with the client and decision making authority.

The first stage of the assessment process involves establishing the landscape and visual baselines for the study through desktop studies and field surveys. The desktop study includes the following:

- Identification of the study area and landscape and other environmental designations relevant to the location of the proposed development (the Site) and surrounding area and collation of relevant national and local planning policies;
- Collation and review of published national, regional and local landscape character assessments and other surveys or assessments relevant to the study area such as tree and

¹ Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3)
Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 Published August 2024

ecology surveys, historic landscape character assessments and the CPRE Dark Skies Interactive Map² (where lighting impacts are to be assessed); and

- Identification of the anticipated Zone of Visual Influence or Zone of Theoretical Visibility associated with the proposed development.

This information informs the identification of sensitive landscape and visual receptors, i.e. those landscape elements and features and visual receptors that are likely to be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed development. This LVIA assesses the impacts and effects of the proposed development primarily from publicly accessible landscape and visual receptors and local residents.

The second stage of the baseline assessment is based on field survey and involves the following:

- Identification and evaluation of the condition, quality and value of the landscape components or features of the site itself and the surrounding area; and
- Visits to all public rights of way and other publicly accessible land within the identified Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), in order to confirm the extent of the actual visual envelope and to identify representative viewpoints to be taken forward as part of the assessment.

The combined desk top and site assessments inform judgements on value, susceptibility to change and sensitivity for landscape and visual receptors, as described later in this Methodology.

The next stage of the assessment involves a description of the proposed development and, where relevant, design and layout options to be considered and assessed. Where appropriate this includes assessment of the impacts and effects of lighting on nocturnal landscapes. This may also include proposed landscape infrastructure, which is integral to the development proposals and also measures to protect existing features to be retained. The assessment may consider the impacts and assessment of effects in two principal stages:

- Demolition, Construction and Refurbishment Phase
- Operational Phase (once the development is complete and occupied)

Impacts associated with the Demolition, Construction and Refurbishment Phase are likely to be temporary and of variable duration. The assessment of impacts and effects will take account of the anticipated duration of the Demolition, Construction and Refurbishment Phase. Impacts associated with the Operational Phase are, in most cases, permanent.

Where there is to be phased occupation of a proposed development the LVIA clearly distinguishes between different phases.

The final stage of the assessment process involves analysis of the anticipated impacts and effects on the landscape resource and visual amenity. This stage of the assessment will inform the design process and may identify requirements for change to the original proposals and the need for further mitigation. Where this is the case the assessment distinguishes between effects without mitigation and what are termed residual effects which relate to the proposed development with the additional mitigation.

The definition of the range and significance of effects for both landscape and visual impact assessments is informed by sensitivity and the nature of the impact. Impacts and consequent effects can be direct, indirect, cumulative, positive or negative and permanent or temporary. The latter is of particular relevance during the Demolition, Construction and Refurbishment phase. The identification of impacts and consequent effects also clearly distinguishes between those which affect the physical landscape resource and those associated with visual amenity and views across the Site. Impacts and effects are also considered in terms of their duration and scale. This stage of the assessment will consider the contribution of proposed landscape mitigation over time (for instance at completion and after 10 years).

² <https://nightblight.cpre.org.uk/>

The assessment may also consider the cumulative effects of the proposed development in conjunction with other developments in the locality. Where this is the case, the assessment clearly distinguishes between effects associated with the proposed development and cumulative effects.

In order to inform the decision making process, the LVIA reports on those effects that are considered to be significant. The two principal criteria determining significance are the sensitivity of the landscape or visual receptor and the magnitude of the change or impact. This assessment therefore combines the sensitivity of the various receptors with the assessment of the magnitude of the effect in order to predict the significance of the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development.

Effects can be beneficial (positive) or adverse (negative) as well as neutral, where there is either no effect or where beneficial or adverse impacts balance. For the purpose of this assessment, effects that have been assessed as being either moderate or large adverse or beneficial or above are considered to be significant. Although minor adverse or beneficial and neutral effects are not considered significant, they remain worthy of consideration throughout the decision making process.

The remainder of this Methodology Statement sets out the detailed methodology and assessment criteria for the assessment of landscape effects and the assessment of visual effects.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

Landscape Baseline

The first stage of the landscape baseline involves the collation and review of published national, regional and local Landscape Character Assessments of relevance to the Site and the study area.

The assessment of landscape effects involves identifying the key landscape elements or components which define the Site and immediate surrounding area. These elements or components and the overall Site character are described with reference to:

- Pattern: the relationship between topography, elevation, the degree of visual enclosure and the physical scale of landscape features;
- Tranquillity: remoteness and sense of isolation;
- Cultural and historical associations/features and their settings; and
- Land cover, land use and management.

This stage of the assessment also takes into account the influence of local geology, soils and topography on the character, condition and quality of the landscape. The area of study in relation to landscape character is determined principally by the scale of the landscape typology, element or feature to be assessed. For instance, assessment of the proposed development in the context of regional or local Landscape Character Assessments considers the Site in the context of the area covered by the assessment. Assessment of individual landscape features or elements such as landscape pattern or tree cover focuses on the significance of the feature or element in the context of the Site itself, and may take into context adjoining areas, where the influence of the feature extends beyond the site boundary.

The assessment and mapping of tranquillity has been the subject of a number of studies, primarily undertaken by the CPRE³. In surveys CPRE have identified the following positive and negative factors contributing to the perception of tranquillity:

Positive Factors:

- Seeing a natural landscape;

³ www.cpre.org.uk/resources/countryside/item/download/369

- Hearing birdsong;
- Hearing peace and quiet;
- Seeing natural looking woodland;
- Seeing the stars at night;
- Seeing streams;
- Seeing the sea;
- Hearing natural sounds;
- Hearing wildlife; and
- Hearing running water.

Negative Factors:

- Hearing constant noise from cars, lorries and/or motorbikes;
- Seeing lots of people;
- Seeing urban development;
- Seeing overhead light pollution;
- Hearing lots of people;
- Seeing low flying aircraft;
- Hearing low flying aircraft;
- Seeing power lines;
- Seeing towns and cities and roads.

Further guidance on the context and assessment of tranquillity is set out in the Landscape Institute Technical Information Note (01/2017) 'Tranquillity – An Overview'.

Accessibility will also influence how the landscape is valued and used by local communities. This stage of the assessment identifies public rights of way and other areas of accessible land such as Common Land, Parks and Open Spaces and Access Land as well as more functional locations such as transport corridors, residential areas, places of work and retail centres.

Having drawn together the baseline information from the desktop study and the field survey, this information is used to describe the landscape character and appearance of the Site and the local area covered by the assessment. Reference is made to existing baseline assessments and descriptions in defining terms such as 'scenic' or 'natural beauty'.

Landscape Receptor Sensitivity

The assessment of landscape sensitivity seeks to establish the degree to which the landscape can accommodate change without affecting the fundamental characteristics which contribute to aspects such as local distinctiveness, sense of place, appearance and landscape quality.

The assessment of landscape receptor sensitivity is informed by the published Landscape Character Assessments (LCAs), for instance in assessing whether features or characteristics are strongly representative of local landscape character.

Landscape Value

The assessment of landscape value draws on the evidence from the baseline assessment with regard to the value of the various landscape character types and the value of individual features or elements.

GLVIA Box 5.1 provides a range of factors or criteria which can be used to assess landscape value. The criteria in Box 5.1 are also often used to assess whether a site or land contributes to a Valued Landscape as described in the revised NPPF (July 2021) Paragraph 174(a). Recent guidance published by the Landscape Institute (Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21 'Assessing landscape value outside national designations') sets out a series of updated factors or criteria which will be used to inform an assessment of landscape value.

The assessment of landscape value also considers the geographical extents of the landscape receptor which will range from national character areas; regional character areas or features; local character areas or features; site specific features or characteristics. With regard to site specific features the assessment considers the degree to which these are representative of wider regional or national character areas.

National and Local Landscape Character Areas will cover larger areas often extending well beyond the boundaries of the Site being assessed. In assessing landscape value consideration is given to the degree to which the Site represents typical or key characteristics of each character area and the geographical extents of the Site in the context of the character area.

Landscape Susceptibility to Change

GLVIA Paragraph 5.40 describes Susceptibility to Change as the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape policies and strategies.

The assessment of Susceptibility to Change draws together evidence from the baseline landscape assessment, the assessment of landscape value and landscape sensitivity. In assessing landscape susceptibility to change, consideration is given to the extent to which the Site represents typical or key characteristics of each character area and the geographical extents of both the landscape receptor and the proposals.

The principal criteria used in the assessment of landscape receptor sensitivity are summarised in Table 1. As described in GLVIA3 the overall assessment of landscape sensitivity is informed primarily by the baseline landscape but also takes account of the susceptibility of that landscape to the change or development proposed.

Table 1: Landscape Receptor Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	Landscape which would not accommodate change without significant impact on character and scenic beauty. Key considerations: • National Landscape Designation (AONB or National Park) Landscape with many characteristic features or attributes significant at national, regional and local character assessments • Strong cultural and historic associations of national importance • Features and attributes which could not easily be replaced
Medium	Landscape which could accommodate some change without significant impact on character and scenic beauty. Key considerations: • Local Landscape Designation • Landscape with some characteristic features or attributes significant at regional and local character assessments • Strong cultural and historic associations of regional or local importance • Features and attributes which could be replaced within a reasonable timescale
Low	Landscape which could accommodate a high degree of change without significant impact on character and scenic beauty. Key considerations: • No specific Landscape Designation • Landscape with few characteristic features or attributes significant at regional and local character assessments • Limited cultural and historic associations • Features and attributes which could easily be replaced within a reasonable timescale
Very Low/ Neutral	Landscape which is assessed as degraded or derelict. • No specific Landscape Designation • Landscape with no characteristic features or attributes significant at regional and local character assessments • No cultural and historic associations • No features and attributes considered worthy of retention or replacement

Landscape Assessment of Magnitude

The first stage of the assessment of magnitude involves a description of the development and the anticipated impacts on the landscape resource.

In assessing the magnitude of landscape impacts due regard is given to the scale, nature and duration of the impact. The assessment considers impacts at a national, regional, local and site specific scale. In assessing national, regional and local landscapes, close reference is made to published Landscape Character Assessments. With regard to published Landscape Character Assessments the process considers geographical extents, the scale of impacts and the degree to which features representative of local landscape character are affected.

The assessment of the magnitude of the identified landscape change takes into account the following:

- Sensitivity of the landscape receptor (Table 1);
- The age and condition of the feature or component;
- Rarity and ease of replacement; and
- Degree to which the feature contributes to, or is representative of, local landscape character.

These considerations inform the Landscape Impacts Magnitude Evaluation Criteria (Table 2).

Table 2: Landscape Impacts Magnitude Evaluation Criteria

Magnitude	Evaluation Criteria
High	Proposal results in major changes or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics which define local landscape character and scenic quality and natural beauty.
Medium	Proposal results in medium scale changes or partial loss or alteration to key elements, features or characteristics which contribute to local landscape character and scenic quality and natural beauty.
Low	Proposal results in limited changes or partial loss or alteration to elements, features or characteristics which are of limited importance to local landscape character and scenic quality and natural beauty.
Very Low	Proposals are in keeping with local landscape character and would result in negligible or minor changes to elements, features or characteristics which are of limited importance to local landscape character and scenic quality and natural beauty.
Neutral	There is no change to landscape elements, features or characteristics

Landscape Effects Significance Criteria

Having assessed the baseline landscape receptor sensitivity (Table 1) and the magnitude of the anticipated landscape impacts (Table 2), the significance of effect is assessed in accordance with the determinant thresholds set out in Table 3 below. For the purposes of this assessment a 5-point scale ranging from negligible through to major has been adopted in order to assess the significance of landscape and visual effects.

Table 3: Determinants of Significance of Landscape Effect

Landscape Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change / Impact				
	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	Neutral
High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor	Neutral
Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Neutral
Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Neutral
Very Low	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Neutral
Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Judgements informing the assessment of the significance of landscape effects have due regard to the following:

- Sensitivity of the receptor;
- Geographical Extent and magnitude of the effect;
- Effect duration (whether temporary (short-term) or permanent (medium or long-term));
- Effect nature (whether direct or indirect, reversible or irreversible, beneficial or adverse);
- Whether the effect occurs in isolation, is cumulative or interactive;

Assessment of Visual Effects

Visual Baseline

The establishment of the visual baseline involves a combination of desk top and site assessment. In the first instance a study area and Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) are defined. The ZTV identifies land from which the proposed development may theoretically be visible. The ZTV does not take account of the potential screening effects of buildings or vegetation.

The next stage of the assessment involves a site assessment in order to verify the ZTV and identify a series of representative viewpoints which will be used to support and inform the assessment of the visual effects. Representative views are included in the LVIA to demonstrate the range of visual receptors from which the development may be visible. Viewpoints may also be included to demonstrate that the development is not visible from a particular location.

Visual receptors are predominantly in publicly accessible locations within the defined Zone of Theoretical Visibility. This assessment also assesses the residential visual amenity of local residents and takes account of the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note (2/19) 'Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA)'. Unless otherwise stated the RVAA will have been undertaken without gaining access to individual properties. For the purpose of this assessment representative viewpoints are subdivided by distance:

- Near distance 0 to 0.5 kilometre (km) from visual receptor;
- Middle Distance 0.5 to 1.5 km from visual receptor; and
- Long Distance Greater than 1.5 km from visual receptor.

Where it is agreed that visualisations or photomontages are to be prepared the approach to preparation will be in accordance with the guiding principles set out in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals'.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

The assessment of visual receptor sensitivity takes account of the landscape receptor sensitivity, viewer circumstances and susceptibility to change. Essentially the aim is to identify both the importance of the view to the viewer and the scenic qualities associated with the view.

Value of views

Levels of value attached to views will vary according to the type of visual receptor and the nature of the view. Assessment of value takes account of a number of factors, including:

- Recognition of the value attached to the view eg in relation to heritage assets or through some form of planning designation
- Indicators of the value attached to views by visitors eg through appearances in guidebooks, literature or art, or on tourist maps, and by the evidence of use including facilities provided for its enjoyment (seating, signage, parking, etc.)
- Professional assessment of the quality of the view.

The assessment of value may inform assessment and identification of 'Specific' Viewpoints as described in GLVIA 3. Levels of value attributed to views are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4 Value assessment of Views

Value of view	Evaluation criteria
High	Nationally or internationally known viewpoints, which: • have some form of planning designation; or • are associated with nationally or internationally designated landscapes or heritage assets; or • appear in guidebooks, literary or cultural contexts or on tourist maps; or • are a recognised part of the visitor experience to eg popular attractions or • are judged by assessors to be of high value.
Medium	Regionally or locally known viewpoints, which: • have some form of local planning designation associated with locally designated landscapes or areas of equivalent landscape quality; or • appear in local guides or maps or have local cultural associations; or • are a recognised part of the visitor experience to eg popular local attractions; or • are judged by the assessors to be of medium value.
Low	Local views, which: • have no planning designation or association with high quality landscapes; • are not linked with popular visitor attractions; or • have no known cultural associations; or • are judged by the assessors to be of low value. These views may nevertheless have value to a local community.

Visual Susceptibility to Change

The assessment of susceptibility of visual receptors to change (as described in GLVIA) takes account of:

- *The occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations*
- *The extent to which their attention or interest may be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations*

Locations where viewers are likely to be static, such as recognised viewpoints or visitor sites (often within protected landscapes), will generally be afforded a high susceptibility to change and therefore higher sensitivity. Residents at home are also assessed as being of predominantly higher sensitivity. Visual receptors on public rights of way where views of the landscape are likely to be important contributors to experience and enjoyment are also likely to be of higher sensitivity. Visual receptors in locations where appreciation of views of the landscape is not an important contributor to experience or enjoyment, such as places of work or places where people are engaged in sport and recreation, are likely to be of lower susceptibility to change and lower sensitivity.

The principal criteria used to define visual receptor sensitivity are set out in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	Receptor in a location where the focus of the receptor is on experience of a view and appreciation of the landscape. This may include recognised viewpoints and visitor sites, locations on a public right of way or other publicly accessible land either within or within the immediate setting to a nationally important landscape related asset or designation and National Trails. Resident at home.
Medium	Receptor located on a public right of way or other publicly accessible land located within a public open space or park or other locally designated landscape, including townscape designations, such as a Conservation Area, or forming the setting to a nationally designated landscape (including historic landscapes)
Low	Receptor located within a rural or urban area with no landscape or townscape related designations; or Receptor located on a road or railway where viewer is likely to be transient; or Receptor located in a semi private facility such as a sports club or golf course, or place of work with restricted public access
Very Low/ Neutral	Receptor within a degraded or derelict landscape with restricted public access.

Visual Assessment of Magnitude

Having identified the sensitivity of visual receptors, the anticipated magnitude of the visual impacts associated with the proposed development is assessed by reference to the representative viewpoints associated with each visual receptor. The criteria used in this assessment are set out in Table 6 using five levels or categories ranging from high, through medium, low, very low to neutral where no change is anticipated. Table 6 does not distinguish between positive (beneficial) and negative (adverse), which will be informed by judgements as to the scale and nature of the change in the view and the integration of the proposed development within the view.

Table 6: Visual Impacts Magnitude Evaluation Criteria

Magnitude	Evaluation Criteria
High	The scale of the change in the view is large with respect to the loss or change to features in view. The nature of the impacts is generally permanent. The number of affected views or visual receptors is high. The full extent of the view would be occupied by the Proposed Development. The introduction of new elements is considered to be in total contrast to the character of the existing landscape.
Medium	The scale of the change in the view is moderate with respect to the loss or change to features in view. The nature of the impacts is either permanent or temporary. A partial extent of the view would be occupied by the Proposed Development. The introduction of new elements is considered to be/not to be substantially in contrast to the character of the existing landscape.

Magnitude	Evaluation Criteria
Low	The scale of the change in the view is low with respect to the loss or change to features in view. The nature of the impacts is either permanent or temporary. The number of affected views or visual receptors is low. A small or limited extent of the view would be occupied by the Proposed Development. The introduction of new elements may not be considered to be unduly in contrast to the existing landscape characteristics.
Very Low	The scale of the change in the view is very low with respect to the loss or change to features in view. The nature of the impacts is either temporary and short term The number of affected views or visual receptors is very low. A very small or limited extent of the view would be occupied by the Proposed Development. The introduction of new elements may not be considered to be unduly in contrast to the existing landscape characteristics.
Neutral	There is no change to the view.

Visual Effects Significance Criteria

Having assessed the baseline visual receptor sensitivity (Table 5) and magnitude of the anticipated visual impacts (Table 6), the significance of effect is assessed in accordance with the determinant thresholds set out in Table 7 (overleaf). For the purposes of this assessment a 5-point scale ranging from negligible through to major has been adopted in order to assess the significance of landscape and visual effects.

Table 7: Determinants of Significance of Visual Effect

Visual Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change / Impact				
	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	Neutral
High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor	Neutral
Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Neutral
Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Neutral
Very Low	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Neutral
Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Judgements informing the assessment of the significance of visual effects have due regard to the following:

- Sensitivity of the receptor;
- Scale and magnitude of the effect;
- Effect duration (whether temporary (short-term) or permanent (medium or long-term));
- Effect nature (whether direct or indirect, reversible or irreversible, beneficial or adverse);
- Whether the effect occurs in isolation, is cumulative or interactive;

Effects can be beneficial (positive) or adverse (negative) as well as neutral, where there is either no effect or where beneficial or adverse impacts balance. Where the assessment is required to identify 'significant' effects in accordance with the requirements of Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2017 the following approach shall be applied. Effects that have been assessed as being either moderate or major adverse or beneficial or above are considered to be significant. Although minor adverse or beneficial and neutral effects are not considered significant, they remain worthy of consideration throughout the decision making process.

Design Process

The LVIA will inform the design process. The LVIA will clearly set out changes to the Proposed Development as a consequence of the findings of the assessment. This may include fundamental changes to design and layout or additional mitigation such as screen planting and/or earthworks.

Where this is the case the assessment distinguishes between effects without mitigation and residual effects with mitigation.

Cumulative Impacts and Effects

Where cumulative impacts and effects are to be assessed, the development(s) to be included in the Cumulative Assessment will be described in the LVIA. The assessment of cumulative effects will assess the combined effects of the developments on the landscape resource and the combined effects of the developments on visual amenity. With regard to visual amenity this will take account of combined views ie locations from which one or more developments are visible and sequential views, where different developments maybe visible from different locations, for instance when travelling along a long distance footpath.

Field Work

Field work was completed on 22nd May 2026.

Appendix 2: Landscape Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (August 2026)

Policy DP3 of the recently updated NPPF sets out the principles for well-designed places sympathetic to landscape setting. Points of particular relevance within the context of this LVIA include:

DP3: Key principles for well-designed places

1. Development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; [...]

With particular reference to landscape bullet point 2 requires development to:

c. Nature: incorporate and/or connect to a network of high quality, accessible, multi-functional green infrastructure to provide opportunities for recreation and healthy living, strengthen habitats, improve climate change resilience and improve air and water quality. This should include maintaining and enhancing tree cover and incorporating sustainable drainage systems in accordance with policies N3 and F8;

e. enhance views into and out of the scheme;

Development proposals are also required to:

N2: Improving the natural environment

1. To contribute positively to the natural environment, and support nature's recovery, development proposals should:

a. Consider the environmental qualities of land proposed for development, including habitats, landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside, and identify opportunities for those qualities to be conserved or enhanced (including through requirements for biodiversity net gain where these apply);

c. Take suitable opportunities to connect to and strengthen ecological networks that extend beyond the site, drawing on the measures proposed by Local Nature Recovery Strategies, National Forest Strategies and Community Forest Plans, where present, and other relevant assessments;

d. Conserve and enhance existing natural features of visual, historic or nature conservation value (such as established trees and hedgerows) where possible; and use appropriate landscaping to help create a well-designed place and integrate the development into its surroundings;

e. Use green infrastructure provided as part of the scheme and nature-based solutions to secure multiple benefits: such as for biodiversity; surface water and pollution management (including maintaining flow rates and water quality); climate change mitigation and adaptation, and recreation;

f. Minimise any adverse impacts on biodiversity and include features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs. Development proposals should incorporate integrated nest boxes (commonly known as swift bricks) into their construction unless there are compelling technical reasons which prevent their use, or would make them ineffective; and

g. Ensure that green infrastructure and other features to support nature are located and designed to minimise risk of future failure, and that appropriate measures are in place for any necessary long-term management.

The NPPF includes policy relating to nationally protected landscapes:

N4: Protected Landscapes

1. Development proposals within Protected Landscapes should be limited in scale and extent and sensitively located and designed to avoid harm to the statutory purposes and special qualities of the Protected Landscape. Substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural

beauty of these areas, and to conserving and enhancing wildlife and cultural heritage in National Parks and the Broads.

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 to 2031

DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside

Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; 11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination; and 15) To create places that encourage a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle by the provision of first class cultural and sporting facilities, informal leisure space and the opportunity to walk, cycle or ride to common destinations.

Evidence Base: A Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex, A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study.

The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or
- it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

Agricultural land of Grade 3a and above will be protected from non-agricultural development proposals. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, detailed field surveys should be undertaken and proposals should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality.

The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character.

Built-up area boundaries are subject to review by Neighbourhood Plans or through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, produced by the District Council.

Economically viable mineral reserves within the district will be safeguarded.

P15: New Homes in the Countryside

Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; and 13) To provide the amount and type of housing that meets the needs of all sectors of the community.

Evidence Base: A Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex; Town and Parish Council submissions.

Provided that they would not be in conflict with Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside, new homes in the countryside will be permitted where special justification exists.

Special justification is defined as:

- Where accommodation is essential to enable agricultural, forestry and certain other full time rural workers to live at, or in the immediate vicinity of, their place of work; or

- In the case of new isolated homes in the countryside, where the design of the dwelling is of exceptional quality and it enhances its immediate setting and is sensitive to the character of the area; or

- Affordable housing in accordance with Policy DP32: Rural Exception Sites; or

- The proposed development meets the requirements of Policy DP6: Settlement Hierarchy.

Replacement dwellings in the countryside

Replacement dwellings in the countryside will be permitted where:

- The residential use has not been abandoned;

- Highway, access and parking requirements can be met; and

- The replacement dwelling maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the natural and/or built landscape particularly in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, especially if a significant change in scale from the existing dwelling is proposed.

DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; and 11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination.

Evidence Base: The High Weald AONB Management Plan.

Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular;

- the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;
- the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;
- character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the

AONB; and

- the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.

Small scale proposals which support the economy and social well-being of the AONB that are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty will be supported.

Development on land that contributes to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where it does not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB, and in particular should not adversely affect the views into and out of the AONB by virtue of its location and design.

East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan (2016)

Policy EG1 Protection of the High Weald AONB

Within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty planning permission will be refused for major development proposals unless the development is demonstrably required in the public interest and meets the exceptional circumstances criteria outlined in the NPPF.

Planning permission for other forms of development will be granted where the proposals are for the:

- (i) Conversion of redundant buildings;
- (ii) Replacement, on a like for like basis, of existing buildings; or
- (iii) Extension of an existing dwelling house, relate to agricultural development or some other minor recreational use;

Provided that for each of the above (i, ii and iii) all of the following criteria are met:

- The highest standards of Design are achieved;
- The natural and scenic beauty of the landscape is conserved or enhanced;
- The proposals do not result in an obtrusive feature in the landscape.

The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that the scheme would not negatively impact on the existing quality of the protected landscape and its setting taking account of locally important features. Proposals that have not fully considered and addressed the impact on the AONB will normally be refused.

Policy EG2 – Areas of Development Constraint

Planning permission will normally be granted for the sympathetic conversion of redundant rural buildings, limited small-scale new development and extensions to existing buildings within the Countryside Areas of Development Constraint provided they comply with the following criteria:

- (1) In the case of replacement dwellings, the proposal is no more obtrusive than the dwelling it replaces and is of an appropriate design for its location and setting;
- (2) In the case of extensions, the proposal is subservient in scale and form to the original dwelling along with the coherent use of materials;
- (3) In the case of converted buildings, the new use has minimal impact on the openness of the countryside, in terms of the new curtilage, and parking; in the case of outdoor sport, recreation and community uses of land, the proposals support the objective of keeping land open;
- (4) The proposal comprises essential small-scale proposals for agricultural or sport and recreation such as pavilions and changing rooms; or
- (5) It is essential to meet specific necessary utility infrastructure needs and no alternative feasible site is available.

Policy EG2a – Preventing Coalescence

Planning permission will not normally be granted for development which:

- (1) Results in the coalescence of East Grinstead with Crawley Down or Ashurst Wood;
- (2) Results in the perception of openness being unacceptably eroded within this area; or
- (3) Contributes towards the ad hoc or isolated development of dwellings outside the built up area, including infilling of built up frontages or linear development along roads.

Land to the rear of Bulrushes, Coombe Hill Road, East Grinstead
Landscape and Visual Appraisal

October 2026

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