



Land at LVS Hassocks, London Road, Sayers Common, West Sussex

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity

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- Appendix A: Criteria and definitions used in assessing landscape and visual effects
- Appendix B: Methodology for Preparing Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)
- Appendix C: Methodology for Preparing Photomontages
- Appendix D: Assessment of potential landscape effects
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- SC1 - Landscape Related Designations and Policy Context
- SC2 – Landscape Character
- SC3 – Landscape Capacity
- SC4 – Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)
- SC5 – Viewpoint Locations
- SC6 – SC73 – Photosheets and Photomontages
- SC74 – Illustrative Landscape Masterplan



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 SLR Consulting Ltd (SLR) was instructed by Wates Developments Limited and the Licence Trade Charity to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) to accompany a:

1.1.2 *“Hybrid application for separate and severable elements comprising:*

Demolition of all existing buildings bar the chapel, to retained for use within Use Class F and:

- a. *Full planning permission for the development of the north western part of the Land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate a new SEN School with associated access from London Road, car parking, landscaping and drainage works; and*
- b. *Outline planning permission (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale Reserved) for the development of the rest of the land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate up to 210 dwellinghouses (including affordable housing) with associated access, car parking, landscaping, play areas, informal outdoor space and drainage works”.*

1.1.3 The findings of this appraisal have been based upon the parameter plans (24125–SK102D to 24125–SK106E), site layout produced by OSP Architecture (24125–SK101N), and illustrative landscape masterplan produced by SLR Consulting (SC74).

1.1.4 In accordance with best practice, SLR has worked with the wider design team to help shape the proposed masterplan for the development to reduce landscape and visual effects, provide mitigation which is appropriate in the local context, enhance the landscape, encompass public open space opportunities for existing and new residents, and provide open spaces at the school which would aid and enhance learning. This has included providing an initial opinion on the potential for the site to accommodate residential development, advising on suitable mitigation measures, having regular input into the design processes, and leading on the design of the outdoor spaces (both within the residential and school sites).

1.1.5 The main objectives of this report are to identify potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development on both the site itself and the site’s wider context. This report is not seeking to identify significant effects, however, the appraisal follows the same format as an LVIA and important planning considerations are identified (in lieu of significant effects).

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 This appraisal has been carried out by an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect in accordance with the recommendations of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition, 2013, also known as GLVIA3, produced by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment) and TGN 02/21. The full methodology is provided in Appendix A.

1.2.2 All judgements have been discussed, agreed and reviewed by another Chartered Landscape Architect in accordance with best practice.



- 1.2.3 The appraisal is based upon a desk top assessment of relevant plans, guidance and character assessments, as well as various site assessments carried out between May 2024 and December 2025.
- 1.2.4 Landscape, as defined in the European Landscape Convention, is *“an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”*, (Council of Europe, 2000). Landscape does not apply only to special or designated places, nor is it limited to countryside. Visual effects are the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. Visual receptors are the people whose views may be affected by the proposed development.
- 1.2.5 It is important to note that it is best practice in landscape and visual appraisal to conclude that the introduction of built form to a green field site will result in negative landscape and visual effects. However, notwithstanding this, it is possible that good design of the proposed building and landscaping could still create successful places with attractive scenic qualities. It is therefore important to consider the proposed design and vision alongside the conclusions of the LVA. Landscape details are addressed within Section 3.0, and further details are provided within the Design and Access Statement.

1.3 Study Area

- 1.3.1 The study area is illustrated on **drawing SC1 to SC5**. In line with paragraph 5.2 of GLVIA3, the study area includes “the site itself and the full extent of the wider landscape around it which the proposed development may influence in a significant manner”. To determine the study area for this proposal a combination of desk top analysis of plans, aerial photographs and the nature of the proposed development was carried out, followed by a site assessment and review of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV).
- 1.3.2 The study area is larger than the potential area of visibility for the purposes of including the wider landscape context.



2.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

2.1 Relevant Planning Law

2.1.1 The site is approximately 2.5km to the north of the South Downs National Park, and 3.3km to the south of the High Weald National Landscape. In this context it is relevant to consider the laws which protect these valued landscapes:

National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

2.1.2 This legislation states that the two main purposes of National Parks are:

- *“To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area,” and*
- *“To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.”*

2.1.3 The **Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) (CROW Act)** states that the statutory purposes of National Landscapes are to conserve and enhance natural beauty of the designation and to increase the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the National Landscape.

2.1.4 **Section 245 (Protected Landscapes) of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA)** amends the duty on relevant authorities in respect of their functions which affect land in National Landscapes. Relevant authorities must now *seek to further* the statutory purposes of protected landscapes.

2.1.5 In December 2024 the Government released Guidance for the Duty which sets out how it is intended to operate. It provides broad principles to guide relevant authorities in complying with it. The Duty applies for LPA functions outside of a Protected Landscape which may have an effect on land in a Protected Landscape.

2.2 National Policy: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024 and Revised in February 2025)

2.2.1 Paragraph 11 sets out the fundamental principle of this document: that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. All development that is in accordance with the development plan should be approved *“without delay”* and that *“where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date”* permission should be granted for development *“unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.”*

2.2.2 In relation to landscape, the NPPF defines sustainability as including the protection and enhancement of the *“natural, built and historic environment”* (paragraph 8).

2.2.3 Paragraph 96 states that “planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings which (inter alia) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might



- not otherwise come into contact with ...” Paragraph 96 also advocates the creation of “well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space”, as well as “safe and accessible green infrastructure” and “layouts that encourage walking and cycling”.
- 2.2.4 Paragraph 105 relates to rights of way and access, stating that these should be “*protected and enhanced*”. It is noted that better facilities should be provided for users of rights of way, for example by “*adding links to existing rights of way including National Trails*”.
- 2.2.5 Paragraph 131 also states that “the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve”.
- 2.2.6 Paragraph 135 states that developments should (at point b) be “visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping” and at (c), be “sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting”, whilst also at (d) “establish or maintain a strong sense of place”.
- 2.2.7 Paragraph 136 states that “Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments” and notes that “Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible”.
- 2.2.8 Paragraph 187 (a) of the NPPF states that the planning system, “should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [inter alia] ...protecting and enhancing valued landscapes” and (b) by “recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside”.
- 2.2.9 Paragraph 188 states that the planning system should “distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites” and “allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value.”
- 2.2.10 Paragraph 189 states that “great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues”. Paragraph 189 goes on to state that “the scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while the development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas”.

2.3 Designations

2.3.1 Relevant planning designations are shown on the Landscape Related Designations and Policy Context plan (**SC1**). The site is not located within a landscape or landscape related (particularly heritage or ecology) designations. The closest are as follows:

- The South Downs National Park is located approximately 2.5km to the south-east of the site at its closest point;



- The High Weald National Landscape is located approximately 3.3km to the north of the site at its closest point;
- Public bridleway 9Hu extends through the site, east to west, along the existing access track. Public footpath 10Hu is located immediately north of the site. Both of these public rights of way (PRoW) extend into a wider network that connect the surrounding settlements with the countryside;
- There are numerous Grade II Listed Buildings within the study area. The closest, Kingscot, is located approximately 60m to the south of the site along London Road. Others are also located at New House Farm to the west of the site and along Mill Lane and Langton Lane to the east of the site; and
- There are various Ancient Woodlands across the study area, the closest is located approximately 430m to the south-west of the site.

2.4 The Development Plan

2.4.1 The site is located within Mid Sussex District Council. The Development Plan for this site comprises the following documents;

- Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (March 2018);
- Small Scale Housing Development Plan Document (April 2008);
- Saved policies from the Mid Sussex Local Plan (May 2004);
- Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan (March 2015); and
- Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022).

2.4.2 Mid Sussex District Council are currently in the process of reviewing and updating the District Plan. In October 2024, the Stage 1 Hearing for the Regulation 19 Draft District Plan was carried out. A response to this hearing was provided by the Inspector in April 2025 which concluded that the draft was not sound and recommended that the plan was withdrawn. Since then, the progression of the Local Plan Review has been put on hold whilst a way forward is determined between the parties. Therefore, the prospects of this draft Local Plan is unknown and the weight attributed to this document is addressed in the Planning Statement for this application. For completeness, it has been referred to within the following section.

2.4.3 The following section identifies policies of relevance to the proposed development, some of which are also shown on the Landscape Related Designations and Policy Context plan (SC1).

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (March 2018).

2.4.4 The District Plan covers the period up to 2031 and replaces the majority of the Mid Sussex Local Plan adopted in 2004. The site is not allocated for development within this plan.

2.4.5 Those policies relevant to both the site and landscape have been set out below;

2.4.6 **Policy DP6 Settlement Hierarchy:** The site is located outside of the Built up Area boundary for Sayers Common which extends along part of the site's southern and



eastern boundary, as illustrated on drawing SC1. The policy states *“Outside defined built-up area boundaries, the expansion of settlements will be supported where:*

- 1. The site is allocated in the District Plan, a Neighbourhood Plan or subsequent Development Plan Document or where the proposed development is for fewer than 10 dwellings*
- 2. The site is contiguous with an existing built up area of the settlement; and*
- 3. The development is demonstrated to be sustainable, including by reference to the settlement Hierarchy”.*

2.4.7 Policy DP12 Protection and Enhancement of Countryside: The site is located within an area designated for the Protection and Enhancement of Countryside. The Mid Sussex proposals maps, as illustrated on drawing **SC1**, show a set area for this policy whereas the wording for this policy refers to the general countryside; *“The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside... 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.*

2.4.8 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”.

2.4.9 Policy DP18 Setting of the South Down National Park: The site is located approximately 2.5km north of the South Downs. The policy states that *“Development within land that contributes to the setting of the South Downs National Park will only be permitted where it does not detract from, or cause detriment to, the visual and special qualities (including dark skies), tranquillity and essential characteristics of the National Park, and in particular should not adversely affect transitional open green spaces between the site and the boundary of the South Downs National Park, and the views, outlook and aspect, into and out of the National Park by virtue of its location, scale, form or design. Development should be consistent with National Park purposes and must not significantly harm the National Park or its setting. Assessment of such development proposals will also have regard to the South Downs Partnership Management Plan and emerging National Park Local Plan and other adopted planning documents and strategies”.*

2.4.10 Policy DP22 Rights of Way and other Recreational Routes: Bridleway 9Hu extends through the site and footpath 10Hu is immediately north. This policy states that *“Rights of way, Sustrans national cycle routes and recreational routes will be protected by ensuring development does not result in the loss of or does not adversely affect a right of way or other recreational routes unless a new route is provided which is of at least an equivalent value and which does not sever important routes. Access to the countryside will be encouraged by:*

- Ensuring that (where appropriate) development provides safe and convenient links to rights of way and other recreational routes;*



- *Supporting the provision of additional routes within and between settlements that contribute to providing a joined up network of routes where possible; and*
- *Where appropriate, encouraging making new or existing rights of way multi-functional to allow for benefits for a range of users. (Note: ‘multi-functional will generally mean able to be used by walkers, cyclists and horse-riders’).*

2.4.11 **Policy DP26 Character and Design** states that “All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:

- *is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;*
- *contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;*
- *creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
- *protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
- *protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- *does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29);*
- *creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- *incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- *positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- *take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element; and*
- *optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development”.*

2.4.12 **Policy DP37 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows** states that “The District Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting.

2.4.13 Development that will damage or lead to the loss of trees, woodland or hedgerows that contribute, either individually or as part of a group, to the visual amenity value or character of an area, and/ or that have landscape, historic or wildlife importance, will not normally be permitted.



- 2.4.14 Proposals for new trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of suitable species, usually native, and where required for visual, noise or light screening purposes, trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of a size and species that will achieve this purpose.
- 2.4.15 Trees, woodland and hedgerows will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:
- *incorporates existing important trees, woodland and hedgerows into the design of new development and its landscape scheme;*
 - *prevents damage to root systems and takes account of expected future growth;*
 - *where possible, incorporates retained trees, woodland and hedgerows within public open space rather than private space to safeguard their long-term management;*
 - *has appropriate protection measures throughout the development process;*
 - *takes opportunities to plant new trees, woodland and hedgerows within the new development to enhance on-site green infrastructure and increase resilience to the effects of climate change;*
 - *does not sever ecological corridors created by these assets”.*

Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan (March 2015).

- 2.4.16 This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council to sets out the development principles and allocation of areas for future building and land use from 2014 to 2031. The plan includes both a vision and policies to help steer and determine future planning applications and thus development.
- 2.4.17 Those policies relevant to both the site and landscape have been set out below;
- 2.4.18 **Policy C1 Conserving and Enhancing Character:** The site is located within the Area of Countryside Restraint. The parish proposals maps show a set area for this policy, as illustrated on drawing **SC1**, whereas the wording for this policy refers to the general countryside. The policy states that *“Development, including formal sports and recreation areas, will be permitted in the countryside, where:*
- *It comprises an appropriate countryside use;*
 - *It maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the Parish area; and*
 - *In the South Downs National Park, policy HurstC2 will take precedent”.*
- 2.4.19 **Policy H1 Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common new housing development:** “To meet the future needs in the Neighbourhood Plan Area new housing development will be supported in areas which:
- Enhance the existing settlement pattern of the village;*
 - In Hurstpierpoint, can also provide significant areas of parkland adjacent to the built zones, to be owned and managed by the local community;*



e. In Sayers Common, can enhance the flood and drainage management in the village”.

2.4.20 **Policy H3 Sayers Common housing sites:** “Subject to existing water drainage issues being resolved, to remove the incidence of localised flooding, new housing will be permitted at Sayers Common. It is anticipated that the village will accommodate around 30-40 dwellings during the Plan period. A review and appraisal of deliverable housing sites will be undertaken at an early stage in the Plan period”.

2.4.21 **Policy H5 Development Principles:** “House designs and the layouts and densities shall respond to the village character of the area and shall follow the Village Design Statement (May 2004)”.

2.4.22 **Policy H6 Housing sites infrastructure and environmental impact assessment:** “New housing developments which meet the policies of this plan and meet the criteria below will be supported:

f. the retention and protection of significant landscape features within the site and along the site’s boundaries;

g. the provision of, or financial contributions towards, community facilities and the provision of public open space;

h. the provision of parkland areas, to be owned and managed by the local community”.

2.4.23 **Policy E2 Employment, White Oaks Farm and Valley Farm:** This employment area is located approximately 450m to the south of the site, as illustrated on drawing **SC1**.

2.4.24 The site is outside of this **Existing Built Up Area Boundary** which extends along part of the site’s eastern boundary.

Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022)

2.4.25 The Site Allocations DPD identifies sufficient housing sites to provide a five year housing land supply to 2031 and also makes sure that enough land is allocated to meet identified employment needs. Within this document the following allocations are within Sayers Common and illustrated on the drawing **SC1**:

- **Housing Allocation SA30** is located approximately 200m to the south of the site, immediately west of Sayers Common; and
- **Existing Employment Site SA34** is located approximately 300m to the south of the site.

Draft Mid Sussex District Plan (Reg 19. 2023).

2.4.26 The District Plan is the main planning document used by the Council when considering planning applications. It includes the strategy, proposed level of development and planning policies.

2.4.27 Within the Emerging Local Plan the site is proposed as a housing allocation pursuant to **Policy DPSC7 Land at LVS Hassocks, London Road, Sayers**



- Common.** It is proposed for 200 dwellings. The draft policy states amongst other things that any proposed development would have to:
- *“Demonstrate a coordinated approach and collaboration with other housing allocations in the Plan within Sayers Common to deliver high-quality placemaking which supports the 20-minute neighbourhood principles, with direct enhanced active/ sustainable travel connections, and includes enabling the viability of new public transport services; and*
 - *Prioritise pedestrian and cycle access throughout the development and integrate and enhance the existing PRow which crosses the site”.*
- 2.4.28 There are a number of other housing allocations within Sayers Common, all illustrated on drawing **SC1**:
- **DPSC3: Land to the south of Reeds Lane** for up to 1,850 dwellings, extra care housing provision, primary/secondary school, play space, library, leisure facilities, healthcare provision, community facilities, open space.
 - **DPSC4: Land at Chesapeake and Meadow View, Reeds Lane** for 33 dwellings.
 - **DPSC5: Land at Coombe Farm, London Road** for 210 dwellings.
 - **DPSC6: Land to the west of Kings Business Centre, Reeds Lane** for 100 dwellings.
- 2.4.29 The **proposed built up area boundary** for Sayers Common now encompasses most of these allocations, including the majority of the site.
- 2.4.30 Other policies within this document that are of relevance to the site and landscape are:
- 2.4.31 **Policy DPN3 Green and Blue Infrastructure** states that “The protection of existing and provision of new green and blue infrastructure will be supported because it delivers a range of environmental, social and economic benefits including resilience to the effects of climate change, positive health and wellbeing effects, active travel opportunities, nature-based solutions and supporting nature recovery.
- 2.4.32 Green and blue infrastructure assets, links and the overall multi-functional network will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:
- *Responds to and incorporates existing on-site and off-site green and blue infrastructure into the development design and layout;*
 - *Provides new green and blue infrastructure integrated into the development design;*
 - *Contributes to the wider green and blue infrastructure network by taking opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore green and blue infrastructure, and providing and reinforcing links to existing green and blue infrastructure including outside the development’s boundaries to develop a connected network of multi-functional greenspace, including incorporating opportunities to contribute to strategic green and blue infrastructure;*
 - *Support health and wellbeing by providing access to green space, nature and rights of way; and*



- *Foster and improve understanding of green and blue infrastructure including natural greenspace and nature conservation features”.*
- 2.4.33 **Policy DPN4 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows** states that “Trees, woodland and hedgerows will be protected because they are valuable natural capital assets including for biodiversity, nature recovery, green infrastructure, health and wellbeing, and increasing resilience to the effects of climate change.
- 2.4.34 The District Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting.
- 2.4.35 Development that will damage or lead to the loss of trees, woodland or hedgerows that contribute, either individually or as part of a group, to the visual amenity value or character of an area, and/or that have landscape, historic or wildlife importance, will not normally be permitted.
- 2.4.36 The value of trees, woodland and hedgerows individually and cumulatively in providing connectivity and continuity across the landscape and a network for nature recovery will be taken into account so that habitat fragmentation, particularly of large and extensive woodland areas, is minimised.
- 2.4.37 Proposals for new trees, woodland and hedgerows must be of suitable species, usually native and from local or UK sourced stock, and where required for visual, noise or light screening purposes, trees, woodland and hedgerows must be of a size and species that will achieve this purpose.
- 2.4.38 Trees, woodland and hedgerows will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:
- *Retains and incorporates existing trees, woodland and hedgerows, including along the boundaries, into the design of new development and its landscape scheme.*
 - *Is orientated to have a positive edge to these features and the wider countryside.*
 - *Is designed to avoid the overshadowing of residential gardens which can lead to pressure for the removal of trees.*
 - *Prevents damage to root systems and takes account of expected future growth through respecting the root protection area.*
 - *Has appropriate protection measures throughout the development and construction process.*
 - *Secures appropriate long-term management and stewardship arrangements.*
 - *Where possible, incorporates retained trees, woodland and hedgerows within public open space rather than private space to safeguard their long-term management and stewardship.*
 - *Takes opportunities to plant new trees, woodland and hedgerows within the new development to enhance on-site green infrastructure and increase resilience to the effects of climate change.*
- 2.4.39 Does not sever ecological corridors created by these assets and makes a positive contribution to the local nature recovery network and green infrastructure network.



- 2.4.40 Developments should integrate street trees and other urban greening measures into new streets and open spaces, and tree-lined streets will be encouraged. Appropriate species must be selected ensuring tree roots have sufficient space to support healthy, long-lived trees. Appropriate long-term management and stewardship arrangements will need to be in place and secured by planning conditions and/or planning obligations”.
- 2.4.41 **Policy DPB1 Character and Design** states that “All new development must be of high quality and must respond appropriately to its context, be inclusive and prioritise sustainability. This includes the design and layout of new buildings and streets, alterations to existing buildings and the design of surrounding spaces.
- 2.4.42 All development proposals will be required to demonstrate all of the following, to ensure that development:
1. *Reflects the distinctive character of the towns and villages and protects their separate identity, heritage assets and valued townscapes.*
 10. *Creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape through the consideration of the scheme’s design, layout, size, scale, height, massing, spacing, orientation, views, materials and relationship with the public realm”.*

2.5 Defining the Setting of the South Downs National Park

- 2.5.1 As previously noted, the site is located approximately 2.5km north of the South Downs National Park. This section determines whether the site is within the setting of the South Downs National Park.
- 2.5.2 Firstly, it is worth noting that there is no Setting Position Paper for the South Downs National Park and neither the Partnership Management Plan, nor the South Downs Local Plan, provide a definition of its setting.
- 2.5.3 In 2022, as part of the review process of SHELAA sites and the preparation of the Draft Local Plan, the SHELAA sites that were considered to potentially be within the setting of the South Downs National Park underwent a review to determine whether or not they were within the setting of the National Park. This site was not included within the assessment, indicating that the council disregarded it being within the setting of the South Downs from the outset. However, for completeness, the following assessment has been carried out to be certain that the site does not form part of the South Downs setting.
- 2.5.4 Allocation DSCP3 (SHELAA ID: 799) (the larger of the strategic allocations in Sayers Common) was assessed as part of the review process and it was concluded that the site did not form part of this setting of the South Downs “*since the site and the National Park are separated by open countryside. However, as a large site in a currently rural area, this site may be visible from long views within the National Park and so should this site be developed, it should be carefully designed to avoid any adverse impacts. Regard should be had to the purposes for which the National Park was designated. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is recommended to inform the site’s design and any mitigation”.*
- 2.5.5 The approach used for this review is set out in the Mid Sussex District Council ‘*Setting of the South Downs National Park Assessment of SHELAA Sites*’ 2022. However, this approach has not been applied in the following setting assessment



as within the document it states that the approach was high-level and that “*should any of these sites progress further more detailed work on landscape character and visual impact will need to be undertaken.*” Therefore, the following approach applies a more detailed assessment which includes consideration of both potential visual and landscape connections with the designation.

2.5.6 In order to define what the setting is it is important to review relevant planning law, policy, guidance and precedents:

1. **The National Park and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, as amended by the Environment Act 1995**, sets out the dual purpose of National Parks “*to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park,*” and also “*to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public*”.

In response, the site is located over 2.5km from the South Downs and is only visible from over 5km away upon the higher ground (refer to drawing SC4 – ZTV). Intervisibility is therefore highly limited given the intervening distance and is further limited due to the treed nature of the site. The intervening landscape also already comprises existing settlements and therefore no new elements or features would be introduced into this landscape if the proposed development were to be built out. The proposed development would be located on the far side of Sayers Common and not cause the settlement to extend closer to the National Park. Therefore, when taking into consideration these various aspects, it is logical to conclude that the site would have a negligible contribution to conserving or enhancing “*the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park*” nor would it remove or harm “*opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park*”.

2. The **Special Qualities of the South Downs National Park**, set out within the Partnership Management Plan 2020-2025 (2019) have been reviewed and considered when assessing the proposed development. Those that are of most relevance as the site may currently contribute to the key attributes are; 1: “*Diverse, inspirational landscapes and breathtaking views*” and 3: “*Tranquil and unspoilt places*”.
3. As noted above, intervisibility between the site and the South Downs is very limited and therefore, the site forms a very small part of the panoramic views from the South Downs, as would the proposed development. These views also already include existing settlements and therefore no new element would be introduced into this landscape. The proposed development would also be located on the far side of Sayers Common and not cause the settlement to extend closer to the National Park. Therefore, the proposed development would have a negligible impact on the breathtaking views from the South Downs and its tranquillity.
4. There is no specific definition of the setting of AONBs and National Parks in the NPPF. However, **paragraph 189 within the NPPF** does state that “*great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise*



adverse impacts on the designated areas". In summary, the setting is defined by built form outside the designation that has potential to have impacts on the designation itself.

5. The latest LI Guidance on how to address setting of designated landscapes is within **Notes and Clarifications on GLVIA3 (LITGN-2024-01)**. This states at paragraph 5(13) that the setting of a national landscape designation "*is not a designation (or a receptor) in its own right*", and that the extent of the setting "*will vary with the nature of the development proposed*". The guidance goes on to state that "*in LVIA, the question would remain whether changes in the setting (i.e. the landscape nearby but outside the designated area) would affect the designated landscape in terms of effects on its special qualities and, if so, to what degree*".

Both paragraph 189 of the NPPF and paragraph 5(13) within the GLVIA3 Notes and Clarifications indicate that the extent of the setting of the National Park is largely defined by the scale and nature of the proposed development. For instance, a larger or more anomalous development close to the National Park may have more potential to affect the special qualities of the National Park compared to a smaller development that is already characteristic of the landscape.

The proposed residential development would be located on the existing settlement edge of Sayers Common, comprise built form of similar heights and densities to the existing settlement and would be viewed as a modest extension to the settlement. Built form is also already present within the site and other settlements are visible from within the National Park so the proposed development would not be uncharacteristic. The proposed development would also be partially contained by the well-established trees within the site and its context. Therefore, when taking into consideration these various factors, it is logical to conclude that the proposed development would not have any notable, adverse impacts on the National Park.

6. **The South Downs Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) (2020)** classifies the area of the National Park closest to the site (shown within drawings SC1-5) as a combination of LCT A2: "*Adur to Ouse Open Downs*", LCT I2: "*Adur to Ouse Downs Scarp*" and LCT J2: "*Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes*". LCT A2 comprises the top of the downs and states "*extensive views from the top of the downs out across the scarp footslopes and Low Weald to the north beyond the National Park boundary and south across the rolling dip-slope to the coast*". Later the LCA states the need to "*Consider the effect of any change on the setting of the National Park particularly where there are extensive views over the surrounding landscape*". It also goes on to state that "*in addition to being visible in views from the South Downs, secondary effects such as light spill, noise and increased traffic will all have an impact on the special qualities of remoteness and tranquillity associated with the Open Downland*".

This appraisal indicates that the visible landscape that surrounds the National Park forms part of the setting of the SDNP, and that secondary effects also need to be considered.

As the site is over 5km away from the National Park when visible (refer to drawing SC4 – ZTV), and difficult to perceive, it is fair to assume that the site wouldn't form part of this visible landscape. The distance from the National Park, the well-established trees enclosing the site and the proposed development being within the context of existing built form of a similar nature,



also means that secondary impacts such as light spill, noise and traffic associated with the proposed development would also not impact the National Park. Therefore, in this context, it is logical to conclude that the site does not form part of the setting of the National Park.

7. **Policy DP18 Setting of the South Down National Park** of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (March 2018) states that “Development within land that contributes to the setting of the South Downs National Park will only be permitted where it does not detract from, or cause detriment to, the visual and special qualities (including dark skies), tranquillity and essential characteristics of the National Park, and in particular should not adversely affect transitional open green spaces between the site and the boundary of the South Downs National Park, and the views, outlook and aspect, into and out of the National Park by virtue of its location, scale, form or design.....”.

This policy indicates that the setting of the South Downs comprises land that has the ability to detract or cause detriment to the South Downs views, special qualities (including dark skies), tranquillity and character.

As set out above, the proposed development would not cause detriment to the views from the South Downs as where visible it would be viewed from over 5km away (refer to drawing SC4 – ZTV) and largely contained by the existing vegetation and therefore form a very small element within the view. Detriment on the South Downs character and Special Qualities such as dark skies and tranquillity is also highly unlikely given that the site is over 2.5km away for the South Downs, enclosed by the existing vegetation, and proposed development would be within the context of other built form of a similar nature. Therefore, in this context, it is logical to conclude that the site does not form part of the setting of the National Park.

8. Additional considerations, which could identify a parcel of land as part of the setting of a national designation include, the importance of that parcel in providing access towards and from the designation. For example, in the Inspector’s decision for the ‘*Land East of Station Road, Oakley*’ appeal, (PINS Ref: APP/H1705/W/21/3269526) it was determined that because footpaths led past the site from Oakley to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape the site did indeed form part of the setting of this designation, even though it was over half a kilometre from the National Landscape.

To determine whether the site forms an important part in providing access to and from the National Park, routes that connect the site with the National Park with Sayers Common have been accessed, along with their nature and the role the site plays within these routes.

Within Sayers Common there are various PRowS that connect into a wider network of PRowS which, along with the road network, can provide routes that connect the National Park with Sayers Common. However, these routes are indirect, at least 2.6km in length, and all comprise numerous PRowS and roads. The majority of these routes are not associated with the site. The exception would be if walkers or riders left Sayers Common along bridleway 9Hu and then later travelled south towards the National Park, however, this would be the most indirect option and least likely to occur. Therefore, the site isn’t deemed as playing an important role in providing access to or from the National Park.

- 2.5.7 Therefore, when reviewing these laws, policies and guidance as a whole, it has been determined that **the proposals would not have any notable, adverse**



impact on the dual purposes of the National Park nor its Special Qualities. The proposed development would also be barely perceptible from the National Park and secondary impacts of the proposed development would not impact the National Park. Therefore, on these grounds it has been concluded that the **site does not form part of the setting of the South Downs National Park.**

2.5.8 Effects on the National Park have been assessed within both the landscape and visual appraisals of this report to help determine whether the site was within the setting of the National Park and for completeness.

2.6 Defining the Setting of the High Weald National Landscape

2.6.1 To determine whether the site is within the setting of the High Weald National Landscape (formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) various legal, planning policy and guidance has been reviewed, some of which overlaps with that reviewed in section 2.5 above:

1. **Paragraph 189 within the 2025 NPPF** (see section 2.5 above for quotation)
2. Paragraph 5(13) within the Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2021-01 (see section 2.5 above for quotation)

As with the setting of the National Park set out above, the proposed residential development would be located on the existing settlement edge of Sayers Common and comprise of similar heights and densities to the existing settlement. Built form is also already present within the site and other settlements are located between the site and the National Landscape and therefore the proposed development would not be uncharacteristic of this landscape. The proposed development would also be largely contained by the well-established trees within the site and its context, over 3.3km away from the High Weald, and would be viewed as a modest extension to Sayers Common. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that the proposed development would not have any notable, adverse impacts on the National Landscape.

3. Within the **Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** states that “the setting of the High Weald AONB is also important as landscapes connect ecologically, economically and socially. In particular, the views into and out of the AONB may be affected by activities outside of the designated area”. Whilst this doesn’t provide clear guidance on how to determine the setting on the National Landscape it does indicate that visibility is a key consideration.

The site survey and ZTV (refer to drawing SC4) found that there was no intervisibility between the National Landscape and the site due to the intervening vegetation and landform. Given that the site is over 3.3km away from the National Landscape and, it has been found that they also do not “connect ecologically, economically and socially”.

The **High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024 - 2029** provides guidance on defining the setting of the National Landscape. The paragraph titled ‘AONB setting’ states that “*The term ‘setting’ is used to refer to areas outside the National Landscape where development and other activities may affect land within a National Landscape. Its extent will vary depending upon the issues considered, however, due to the high synergy in character between the National Landscape boundary and the wider High Weald National Character Area (NCA), land within the NCA should be considered as falling within the setting of the National Landscape.*”



In response to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, the site is not located within the NCA 122: High Weald.

2.6.2 When considering all these factors it has been determined that the site is not within the setting of the High Weald National Landscape.

2.7 Relevant Planning History

2.7.1 In 1975 the site was subject to a planning application relating to a new Monastery Centre. Then between 10-15 years ago the site was subject to various planning applications associated with the LVS Hassocks Independent SEN School for Autism. Since these, no further planning applications have been proposed within the site. Refer to Planning Statement for a more detailed planning history of the site.

2.7.2 Over recent years Sayers Common has been subject to various planning applications:

- In 2012 outline planning permission was granted for 120 dwellings, community facility, office space, care home and retail units at Kingsland Laines, Reeds Lane which is located immediately south of the site (Ref: 12/01540/OUT). These have since been built out.
- To the south-west of the site, approximately 200m away, a further 36 dwellings received planning permission (Ref: DM/22/0640) in 2022 at The North Of Lyndon, Reeds Lane and are currently being built out.
- A replacement retail development (Porsche Centre) along London Road at Hickstead Park, approximately 200m east of the site, has also recently received planning permission (Ref: DM/23/2039) and is assumed to be built out in the coming years.

2.7.3 These permissions form part of the baseline of this appraisal.

2.7.4 In recent months the following applications have also been submitted and are pending consideration (refer to drawing **SC1** for draft allocation locations):

- In June 2025 a detailed planning application for 27 dwellings at Land Rear Of Chesapeake, Reeds Lane (Ref: DM/25/1434) was submitted. This site forms Sustainable Communities Site DPSC4 within the draft Local Plan.
- In October 2025 an outline planning application at Land at Coombe Farm, London Road (Ref: DM/25/2661) was submitted for 210 dwellings. This site forms Sustainable Communities Site DPSC5 within the draft Local Plan.
- In December 2025 a planning application for 80 dwellings at Land to the West of King Business Centre, Reeds Lane (Ref: DM/25/3067) was submitted. This site forms Sustainable Communities Site DPSC6 within the draft Local Plan.

2.7.5 As no decision has yet been determined for these applications, they do not form part of the baseline of this appraisal.

2.7.6 This section, along with the remaining draft allocation within Sayers Common (DPSC3 for 1,850 dwellings and community facilities), demonstrates that Sayers Common is experiencing substantial growth and development and this is anticipated to continue and potentially accelerate in the coming years.



2.8 Summary of Planning Context

- 2.8.1 The site is not located within or nearby to any landscape or landscape-related designations. However, a public bridleway does extend through the site, east to west, and a public footpath is located immediately north of the site.
- 2.8.2 The South Downs National Park is located approximately 2.5km to the south of the site at its closest point and it has been determined that the site does not form part of the setting of the South Downs National Park.
- 2.8.3 The High Weald National Landscape is located approximately 3.3km to the north of the site at its closest point and it has been determined that the site does not form part of the setting of the High Weald National Landscape.
- 2.8.4 Within the Mid Sussex District Plan (2018) the site is outside of the Built up area boundary. However, within the draft District Plan (Reg 19) the site was allocated as a Sustainable Communities Site (DPSC7) for up to 200 dwellings and SEN school, and primarily within the Proposed Built Up Area Boundary.
- 2.8.5 Whilst the site itself hasn't been subject to any planning applications for over 10 years the settlement of Sayers Common has experienced notable growth with 156 dwellings and community facilities being built out to the south of the site. A further 317 dwellings to the south of the site are currently pending consideration and the draft Local Plan also comprised another large draft allocation to the south along Reeds Lane (DPSC3 for 1,850 dwellings and community facilities).



3.0 ASPECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT WHICH HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CAUSE LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

3.1.1 SLR's landscape architects have worked closely with OSP architecture and other consultants on the layout, advising for example on the overall placing, height and density of the development, the form and character of green spaces, and the treatment of the site's boundaries.

3.1.2 The following sections identify the main aspects of the development which have potential to cause landscape and visual effects.

3.2 Location

3.2.1 The site is approximately 14.41 hectares (ha) in size.

3.2.2 The centre of the site comprises school buildings, access track, car parking and open space including a levelled pitch in the centre. On the eastern edge (F6) are two residential dwellings, to the south (F3 – F5) are grassland fields, including the remaining portion to the south of the levelled pitch, and to the north is a pastoral field (F0 + F1) and a grassland field (F2).

3.2.3 The landform of the site is gently sloping; the highest elevation is in the north-western corner, approximately 25m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). Then the landform gradually falls away to the south with the lowest elevation being approximately 15m AOD along the southern boundary.

3.2.4 To the south of the site is the settlement of Sayers Common with two-storey residential buildings located immediately south along Nuthatch Lane. To the east of the site is London Road, a relatively busy road which is a key connection between settlements such as Hurstpierpoint and Hassock and the A23. Beyond London Road are a number of residential dwellings and Christ Church, and beyond these is the A23 corridor; a key road which connects Brighton with the M23. To the north-east of the site is Hickstead Park which comprises various commercial facilities and a static caravan park. To the north of the site are pastoral fields with Hickstead equestrian grounds beyond. To the west of the site are pastoral fields, and to the south-west is Furze Field Woodland with pastoral fields and Valley Farm business park beyond. The pastoral fields located around Sayers Common are often bound by well-established hedgerows and treebelts and occasional woodland copses.

3.2.5 Beyond Sayers Common and its immediate context is a primarily rural landscape dominated by agricultural land uses but with small to medium sized settlements connected by a complex network of mostly rural lanes. The exceptions are the A23 which severs the landscape north to south, and Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath; two towns which are located 2.5km and 6.5km to the east and north-east of the site.

3.2.6 The High Weald National Landscape (formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) is located approximately 3.3km to the north of the site, and the South Downs National Park is located approximately 2.5km to the south of the site, located on notably higher ground.



3.2.7 Within the vicinity of the site the landform comprises small-scale, shallow undulations, and is often within between 10 and 30m AOD. To the north, within the High Weald National Landscape, the landscape remains small-scale and undulating however the elevation increases to around 70 – 120m AOD. To the south, the Sound Downs National Park is distinct because of the notable increase in elevation; often between 100 and 200m AOD.

3.3 Height and Density

3.3.1 As illustrated on the Building Heights Parameter Plan (24125–SK103D), the majority of the residential dwellings would be 2-storey (up to 9m) with some apartment blocks being a maximum of 2.5-storey (up to 11.5m).

3.3.2 As illustrated on the Density Parameter Plan (24125–SK106E), the higher density would be focused on the centre of the site and reducing towards the peripheries of the site, particularly to the north and east. The net density would be 41.30dph and the gross density would be 17.83dph.

3.3.3 For the SEN school the proposed building would be a maximum height of 12m.

3.4 Access

3.4.1 As illustrated on the Access and Movement Parameter Plan (24125–SK104C) the vehicular access would be from London Road, comprising a 5.5m wide, two-way road and pavements on either side.

3.4.2 There would be further access to the site for walkers, cyclists and horse riders from along bridleway 9Hu which extends through the site east to west and connects into London Road, north of the vehicular access, and the western boundary, south of the proposed SEN school. A proposed footpath would also connect bridleway 9Hu with footpath 10Hu immediately north-east of the site, providing another pedestrian access.



Figure 1: Access and Movement Parameter Plan

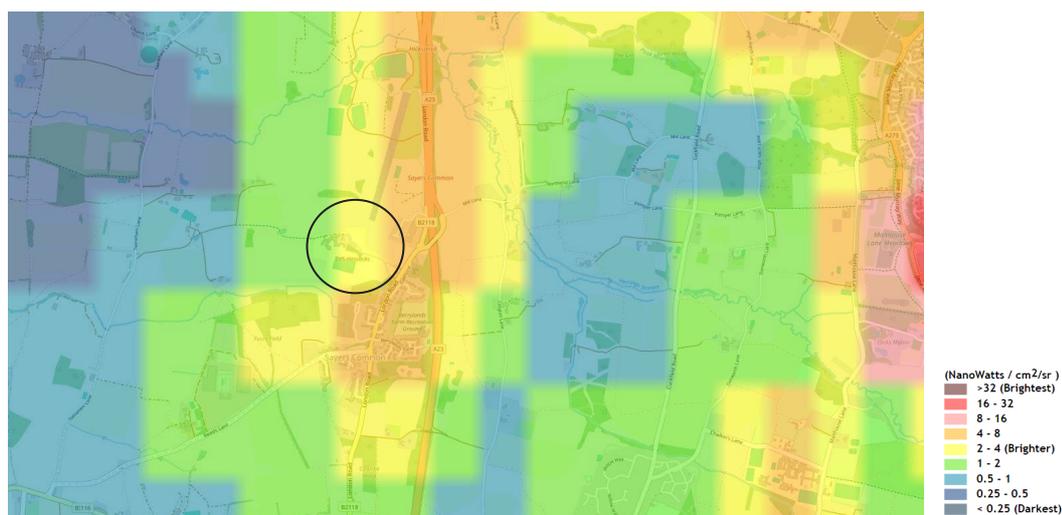


3.5 Lighting

3.5.1 The proposed development would require the introduction of street lighting which would introduce new light emissions. However, the proposed lighting would be sensitively designed to limit lighting levels and light spill.

3.5.2 As shown by the extract from the CPRE's Dark Skies map below (**Figure 2**), the southern and eastern extents of the site are influenced by higher levels of lighting (4-8 NanoWatts/cm²/sr) as they are adjacent to the existing settlement edge. These levels then slightly reduce to the west where the site is more detached from the existing settlement (2-4 NanoWatts/cm²/sr). To the south and east of the site these levels remain moderate along the A23 and at the centre of Sayers Common (4-8 NanoWatts/cm²/sr), whereas to the west of the site lighting levels reduce where the landscape becomes more rural and development is dispersed (0.25-1 NanoWatts/cm²/sr).

3.5.3 It is also worth noting that this map does not consider the recent developments to the south of the site and therefore current lighting levels within Sayers Common will be greater than shown. Although influences on the site itself would likely be limited by the well-established vegetation along the site's boundaries.



3.5.4

Figure 2: CPRE's Dark Skies map

3.5.5 These interactive maps were produced with satellite images captured at 1.30 am throughout September 2015. The detailed map illustrates the level of lighting across 9 colour bands: <0.25 NanoWatts/cm²/sr identifying the darkest skies, and >32 NanoWatts/cm²/sr identifying the brightest level of lighting. The darkest areas grade from dark blue through to green, whereas the brightest areas grade from yellow through to dark red.

3.6 Loss of Landscape Elements

3.6.1 The development of the site for new homes and a SEN school would require the loss of all of the school buildings, two bungalows in the east of the site (F6), four small to medium scale school fields (F2 – F5) and a pastoral field in the north (F0 + F1).



- 3.6.2 The existing chapel would be retained and repurposed.
- 3.6.3 Wherever possible the existing vegetation has been retained and reinforced where necessary. However, incorporating the proposed dwellings and circulation routes throughout the site has required 82 individual trees, 3 tree groups, 6 portions of tree groups and 260m hedgerow to be removed.
- 3.6.4 To supplement this loss, new, native planting would be introduced across the site to further help integrate the proposed development into the area and mitigate landscape and visual effects.
- 3.6.5 Ornamental planting would also be proposed throughout the development parcel to further soften visual effects, provide seasonal interest and stepping-stone habitats within the development parcels and between larger habitats, and help define public-private boundaries.

3.7 Proposed Mitigation

- 3.7.1 Landscape mitigation would be incorporated as shown on the illustrative landscape masterplan (**SC74**). These aim to reflect the nearby landscape character, integrate the development into the landscape and reduce potential landscape and visual effects:
- The proposed development parcels have mostly been shaped to reflect the existing Green Infrastructure Network; ensuring that existing well-established hedgerows and trees within the site would be retained where possible and reinforced where necessary;
 - Further native trees, hedgerows and shrubs have been proposed around the periphery of the site and within the open spaces throughout; building on the existing Green Infrastructure Network which helps to further contain landscape and visual effects to within the site, enhances the site's ecological value and reinforces the enclosed, treed character of the site;
 - Built form has been set back from the northern edge of the site; reducing visual effects for walkers along the footpath from the outset and also allowing for proposed trees and shrubs along this edge, in addition to existing vegetation, which together would reduce visual effects to the north in the long-term and form a transition into the countryside to the north;
 - Similarly, built form has been limited along the western edge of the site; allowing for proposed trees and shrubs along this edge, in addition to existing vegetation, which together would reduce visual effects to the west and form a transition into the countryside to the west;
 - Built form has also been set back from the eastern boundary along London Road, reducing visual impacts for those along London Road and providing a green entranceway to the development;
 - Further north along the eastern boundary, built form has again been set back from the edge of the site, allowing space for native tree and shrub planting, in addition to existing vegetation, which together would reduce visual effects to the east in the long-term. This offset also allows space for a connecting footpath between the public footpath and bridleway which improves movement around Sayers Common;



- For the majority of the bridleway within the site native hedgerows and trees have been proposed either side, softening visual impacts for users of this bridleway;
- In addition to the native planting within the open spaces, ornamental street trees, hedgerows and shrubs have been proposed throughout the development parcels. This helps to break up the mass of hard materials, provides year round visual interest and provides alternative foraging and nesting opportunities for wildlife which also acts as stepping stone habitats between the larger areas of planting;
- The abundance of existing and proposed planting throughout the site also helps to progressively break up the mass and filter views of the proposed development from the elevated ground within the South Downs; and
- Open space furniture would be primarily timber, as would the play and fitness equipment which would also comprise some natural features such as logs, boulders and earth mounds. These have been proposed as they reflect the sites countryside edge location and retain a natural and rural aesthetic.

3.8 Further Landscape Design Features

3.8.1 In addition to those landscape features set out above that have been incorporated to help mitigate landscape and visual harm associated with the proposed development, the following design features have been incorporated within the scheme to provide an enjoyable and logical development that is appropriate within the site's context:

- Numerous play areas have been distributed throughout the residential development ensuring that all dwellings are within a short walking distance from a play area;
- A larger play area has been proposed beside the existing chapel, along with the community growing area, orchards and ponds to deliver a central hub for the development which would provide opportunities for community events and activities, and generally help to foster a sense of community;
- Footpaths, both surfaced and mown grass, are proposed throughout the site, improving connectivity into the PRoW network and encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle;
- Teenage provision has been provided in the form of timber social seating, fitness trail, basketball hoop and adult swings. These facilities have been incorporated rather than alternatives such as a MUGA, skate park or basketball court as they were deemed more appropriate given the site's settlement edge location and the want to avoid large urban features within open spaces which would require lighting. It is also worth noting that whilst the SEN School does incorporate a MUGA, it is not feasible for this to be a public asset due to security and safety measures. The combination of the social seating, which is inspired by Make Space for Girls, fitness trail, basketball hoop and swings would also ensure that facilities are provided for both boys and girls; and
- The SEN school has been carefully designed to facilitate the transition to open countryside on the edge of the site and provide a green edge to the new settlement. The brighter colours, diverse textures and range of equipment that is favourable for SEN schools has been focused around the school building,



and then gradually to the north and west facilities become increasingly naturalistic with space for native tree and shrub planting.



4.0 Potential Landscape Effects

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The following landscape appraisal is based upon both a desk top assessment of existing character assessments and plans as well as site visits carried out between May 2024 and December 2025.

4.1.2 In accordance with GLVIA3 the main landscape receptors, (individual landscape elements, aesthetic characteristics, overall character), which have the potential to be affected by the proposed development have been identified and their sensitivity to the proposed development has been assessed by considering their value and susceptibility. The magnitude of change which would be experienced by each of these receptors has then been assessed by determining the size and scale of change, the geographical extent of that change, and the duration and reversibility of that change.

4.1.3 By combining the sensitivity of receptors and the magnitude of effect the potential for landscape effects which are important planning considerations has been assessed.

4.1.4 Detailed aspects of the landscape impact appraisal are included in **Appendix D**, but the key themes and overall results are explained within this section of the report.

4.2 Existing Landscape Character Assessments

4.2.1 There is a nested series of existing character assessments which provide a useful context to the character of the site. Drawing **SC2** illustrates the classification provided by these assessments, but further details of each are set out below.

National Landscape Character

Natural England National Character Areas (2014)

4.2.2 At a national scale the site is located within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 121: Low Weald. The key characteristics of NCA 121, of relevance to the application site, include the following:

- *“Broad, low-lying, gently undulating clay vales with outcrops of limestone or sandstone providing local variation;*
- *A generally pastoral landscape Land use is predominantly agricultural but with urban influences;*
- *Field boundaries of hedgerows and shaws (remnant strips of cleared woodland) enclosing small, irregular fields and linking into small and scattered linear settlements along roadsides or centred on greens or commons;*
- *Small towns and villages are scattered among areas of woodland, permanent grassland and hedgerows on the heavy clay soils where larger 20th-century villages have grown around major transport routes;*
- *Frequent north–south routeways and lanes;*
- *The Low Weald boasts an intricate mix of woodlands, much of it ancient, including extensive broadleaved oak over hazel and hornbeam coppice,*



shaws, small field copses and tree groups, and lines of riparian trees along watercourses. Veteran trees are a feature of hedgerows and in fields; and

- *Many small rivers, streams and watercourses with associated watermeadows and wet woodland”.*

County Landscape Character

A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape (October 2005)

4.2.3 At a county scale the site is identified within the Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape (October 2005). The assessment classifies the site into landscape character area LW10: “*Eastern Low Weald*”. The key characteristics of landscape character area LW10: “*Eastern Low Weald*” that are of relevance to the site and its immediate context are as follows:

- *“Gently undulating low ridges and clay vales;*
- *Views dominated by the steep downland scarp to the south and the High Weald fringes to the north;*
- *Arable and pastoral rural landscape, a mosaic of small and larger fields, scattered woodlands, shaws and hedgerows with hedgerow trees;*
- *Quieter and more secluded, confined rural landscape to the west, much more development to the east, centred on Burgess Hill;*
- *Biodiversity in woodland, meadowland, ponds and wetland;*
- *Historic village of Cowfold and suburban village development at Partridge Green, Shermanbury and Sayers Common;*
- *Crossed by north-south roads with a rectilinear network of narrow rural lanes; and*
- *Principal visitor attraction is the Hickstead All England Equestrian Showground”.*

4.2.4 The assessment also contains “*Landscape and Visual Sensitivities*”. The following are relevant to this assessment:

- *“High level of perceived naturalness and a rural quality in the quieter, rural landscape to the west of the A23 Trunk Road;*
- *Woodland cover and the mosaic of shaws and hedgerows contribute strongly to the essence of the landscape; and*
- *Parts of the area are visually exposed to views from the downs with a consequently high sensitivity to the impact of new development and the cumulative visual impact of buildings and other structures”.*

4.2.5 The assessment also contains “*Land Management Guidelines*”. The following are relevant to this assessment:

- *“Plan for long-term woodland regeneration, the planting of new small and medium-sized broad-leaved farm woodlands, and appropriate management of existing woodlands;*



- *Avoid skyline development and ensure that any new development has a minimum impact on views from the downs and is integrated within the landscape;*
- *Where appropriate, increase tree cover in and around villages, agricultural and other development and on the rural urban fringe of suburban areas and Burgess Hill, including along the approach roads to settlements and along busy urban routes including the A23 Trunk Road;*
- *Conserve and replant single oaks in hedgerows to maintain succession, and replant parkland trees;*
- *Conserve, strengthen and manage existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees, especially around irregular fields, and re-plant hedgerows where they have been lost; and*
- *Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness”.*

District Landscape Character

A Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex (November 2005)

4.2.6 At a local scale the site is identified within the Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex (November 2005). This assessment very closely aligns with the Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape (October 2005). Within the Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex the site is classified as landscape character area 4: “*Hickstead Low Weald*”. The key characteristics of landscape character area 4: “*Hickstead Low Weald*” that are of relevance to the site and its immediate context are as follows:

- *Alternating west-east trending low ridges;*
- *Views dominated by the steep downland scarp to the south and the High Weald fringes to the north;*
- *Arable and pastoral rural landscape, a mosaic of small and larger fields, scattered woodlands, shaws and hedgerows with hedgerow trees;*
- *Quieter and more secluded, confined rural landscape to the west, much more development to the east, centred on Burgess Hill;*
- *Biodiversity in woodland, meadowland, ponds and wetland;*
- *A modest spread of designed landscapes and major landmark of Hurstpierpoint College;*
- *Crossed by north-south roads including the A23 Trunk Road, with a rectilinear network of narrow rural lanes; and*
- *Principal visitor attraction is the Hickstead All England Equestrian Showground”.*

4.2.7 The assessment also contains the same “*Landscape and Visual Sensitivities*” and “*Land Management Guidelines*” as the Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape (October 2005).



Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Studies

Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study (July 2007)

- 4.2.8 This study aims to assess the capacity of landscapes around settlements to accommodate residential development. The concept of assessing the capacity of a landscape to accommodate development is now somewhat dated, having been replaced by the Natural England Guidance on Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019). Nevertheless, this document makes judgements about landscape sensitivity and landscape value which are of relevance to this LVA.
- 4.2.9 Within this assessment the site is classified as Landscape Capacity Area 62: Hickstead – Sayers Common Low Weald. The landscape sensitivity of parcel 62 within which the site is located is assessed as being “*substantial*”, the fourth of five categories, due to the landscape comprising intact hedgerows and woodland and the landscape contributing to the setting of settlements, rurality of the surrounding landscape, and the separation between settlements.
- 4.2.10 Landscape value is assessed as being “*slight*”, the second of five categories, as it comprises few designations (including landscape), does not contribute to the setting of outstanding assets and is described as an “*average rural landscape*”.
- 4.2.11 Overall capacity for development is thus assessed as being “*medium/ low*”, which is the fourth of nine categories. Of the 75 assessment parcels considered, 58 have a capacity lower than the site, and 5 sites have the same capacity as the site. Only 12 sites have a higher capacity than the site. Paragraph 5.2.2 states that “*a low or negligible rating for landscape capacity indicates that development would have a significant effect on the character of the landscape as a whole and/or on the setting to the existing settlement or outstanding assets within the District*”, whereas as “*Medium identifies a landscape character area with the capacity for limited development, in some parts of the character areas, having regard for the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas*”.

Capacity of Mid Sussex District to accommodate development (June 2014)

- 4.2.12 This study aimed to update the assessment of the capacity of landscapes around settlements to accommodate development but also included additional areas and used slightly different criteria. The assessment scale for capacity judgements is also simplified, with only a five point scale (compared with the nine point scale in the 2007 assessment). Drawing **SC3** summarises the classifications provided by this assessment but further details are set out below.
- 4.2.13 The application site remains part of assessment parcel 62: Hickstead – Sayers Common Low Weald. This assessment also assesses the landscape sensitivity of the parcel as “*substantial*” and landscape value as “*slight*”. However, due to the changes in the assessment scale the capacity of this assessment parcel is assessed as being “*Medium*”. Of the 80 parcels assessed, 63 have a lower capacity than the site, and 15 have the same capacity as the site. Only 2 sites have a higher capacity than the site.
- 4.2.14 Paragraph 3.15 of the study states that “*it is important to note that these scores are only indicative of potential capacity and would need to be tested through more*



detailed assessment at the site-specific level when proposals for specific development locations are known”.

District Plan 2021-2039 Site Allocations Evidence Library

- 4.2.15 Within the **Mid Sussex District Plan (Reg 18) Sustainability Appraisal** (Oct 2022), it is recognised that DPH22: Land at LVS Hassocks, London Road, Sayers Common is located within ‘Hickstead – Sayers Common Low Weald’ which has ‘low/ medium’ capacity. It goes on to state that the site is relatively well enclosed by the existing vegetation and housing to the south, and there is existing development on site. *“However, it is likely that there would be a change in the landscape character to some extent due to the proposed development of 200 homes.... a minor negative impact on the character of the landscape (SA Objective 8) cannot be ruled out”.* The proposed allocation states that the proposal should *“Retain, protect and enhance mature trees and hedgerows across the site and ensure development provides a positive edge to these features and the wider countryside”.*
- 4.2.16 Within the **Site Selection Conclusions Paper (Ref 19)** Appendix 3 – Site Assessment Proformas (Nov 2023), landscape change relating to this site (referred to as ID1003: Land to South of LVS Hassocks within this document) is considered to be of a negative nature stating that *“Development is likely to have an adverse effect on most of the character area and while smaller development may be possible in a very few locations within the character area, it will not be suitable for strategic scale development”.*
- 4.2.17 Within the **Mid Sussex District Plan (Reg 19) Sustainability Appraisal** (Nov 2023), the appraisal for DPSC7: Land at LVS Hassocks, London Road, Sayers Common recognises that the updated policy sets out an additional range of site-specific requirements which would be expected to result in improvements. The policy now seeks to demonstrate a coordinated approach with other housing allocations within Sayers Common and *“avoid developing areas of existing and future flood risk and mitigate impacts through integration of SUDS to delivery biodiversity/environmental improvements and flood resilience”.* Both of these factors have resulted in landscape impact becoming minor positive.

4.3 The Landscape of the Site and its Context

- 4.3.1 GLVIA3 recommends that a landscape character assessment should be carried out as part of the baseline study (paragraph 5.4). This should consider:
- The elements that make up the landscape (physical, land cover and the influence of human activity)
 - Aesthetic and perceptual aspects
 - The overall character of the area.

- 4.3.2 An assessment of the landscape baseline is set out in the following paragraphs.

Individual Elements and Features

- 4.3.3 At the centre of the site are school buildings, access track, car parking and open space including a levelled pitch in the centre. On the eastern edge are two residential dwellings (F6), to the south are grassland fields (F3 – F5), including the



- remaining portion to the south of the levelled pitch, and to the north is a pastoral field (F0 + F1) and a grassland field (F2).
- 4.3.4 The boundaries of the site are predominately formed by well-established hedgerows and hedgerow trees. However, exceptions are a small section of the east boundary, adjacent to London Road, which comprises a timber post and rail fence and trees, and the majority of the northern boundary which is formed by the edge of a woodland copse. The various field boundaries within the site are also primarily bound by well-established hedgerows and hedgerow trees, with the exceptions being the palisade fencing to the south of the school buildings and the post and wire fencing extending further south.
- 4.3.5 Within the wider landscape well-established vegetation remains a key feature in the form of hedgerows, treebelts, copses and woodland.
- 4.3.6 The site is located on the northern settlement edge of Sayers Common. The settlement of Sayers Common is nucleated and comprises residential development and care home, shops, preschool, public house, various public open spaces and business parks.
- 4.3.7 The landform within the site is gently sloping; the highest elevation is in the north-western corner, approximately 25m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). Then the landform gradually falls away to the south with the lowest elevation being approximately 15m AOD along the southern boundary. Beyond the site the landform comprises shallow undulations between 10 and 30m AOD. Further north, within the High Weald National Landscape, these undulations become greater and more elevated; often around 70 – 120m AOD. To the south the landform also rises, forming a ridge between 100 - 200m AOD within the South Downs National Park.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Aspects

- 4.3.8 The site is of small and medium scale and of educational and pastoral land use.
- 4.3.9 Due to the well-established vegetation along the field boundaries, both within and on the periphery of the site, the site is enclosed. Occasional gaps or lower level vegetation allow for some views out of the site, such as across London Road to the east or towards the adjacent dwellings to the south. However, these are mostly restricted to short-distance views and therefore the enclosed character is retained. The one exception is long distance views towards the South Downs National Park; however these are again restricted to only isolated locations within the site and therefore the enclosed character is retained.
- 4.3.10 This enclosure also means that influences from the surrounding landscape are limited. Influences of the adjacent residential dwellings to the south are limited to within the southern two fields, and views and movement associated with London Road is limited to the eastern edge of the site. Although, background noise associated with both London Road and the A23 can be experienced across most of the site; although more notable within the eastern extent. The existing school buildings and associated infrastructure within the site also introduces some colours, noise, movement and lighting within the site. However, as the majority of the site is undeveloped and well-treed, this influence is again limited.
- 4.3.11 As demonstrated by the interactive “England’s Light Pollution and Dark Skies” map in section 3.3 (**Figure 2**), this pattern is similar for lighting with levels being greater



in the eastern and southern extent of the site, adjacent to the existing settlement, and then gradually reducing across to the site. Whilst it is worth noting that this map does not take into account the recent developments to the south of the site and therefore current lighting levels within Sayers Common will be greater than shown, it is assumed that lighting levels within the site would not increase substantially as the well-established vegetation around the site would also limit the influence of lighting within the site.

Overall Character

- 4.3.12 Within the Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex (November 2005) the site is located within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 4: *"Hickstead Low Weald"*.
- 4.3.13 The site and its immediate context strongly align with the character areas key characteristics such as *"west-east trending low ridges"*, *"a mosaic of small and larger fields, scattered woodlands, shaws and hedgerows with hedgerow trees"* and *"Crossed by north-south roads including the A23 Trunk Road"*. The site and its immediate context also align with *"Quieter and more secluded, confined rural landscape to the west, much more development to the east, centred on Burgess Hill"* as given its central location within the LCA, it partially aligns with both a *"secluded, confined rural landscape"* but with some influence from built form.

The Changing Landscape

- 4.3.14 GLVIA3 recommends that consideration should be given to the site not only as it is, but also as it would become.
- 4.3.15 Currently the residential development for 36 dwellings to The North Of Lyndon Reeds Lane (Ref: DM/22/0640) is being built out. A replacement retail development (Porsche Centre) along London Road (Ref: DM/23/2039) has also recently received planning permission and therefore will form part of the baseline of this appraisal.
- 4.3.16 As noted in section 2.7, in recent months various other planning applications have also been submitted. However, as no planning permissions have been granted, these do not form part of the baseline of this appraisal.

4.4 Landscape Receptors

- 4.4.1 The main landscape receptors which are likely to be affected by the development include the following individual elements and features:
- School buildings, access track, car parking and associated open spaces;
 - Gently sloping fields on the settlement edge of Sayers Common; and
 - Network of hedgerows and trees along field boundaries.
- 4.4.2 As well as the following aesthetic and perceptual aspects:
- Small and medium scale and enclosed;
 - Predominately simple, still and quiet but with some diversity from the school buildings, settlement edge and nearby roads.
- 4.4.3 The character areas to be assessed would be:



- The Site.
- Local Part of “*Hickstead Low Weald*”.

4.4.4 The extent of this LCA that has been assessed lies between the A23 and London Road to the east, Reeds Lane to the south, Twineham Lane to the west and Hickstead Lane to the north. This area has been chosen as its size is more appropriate for accessing effects of the proposed development compared to the entire LCA and the area captures all the key characteristics of the LCA that are found within the context of the site.

- Local Part of the South Downs National Park.

4.4.5 The area of the South Downs National Park that has been assessed lies to the north of Clayton and Wolstonbury Hill (shown on drawings SC1-SC5). This area has been chosen as it is closest to the site and therefore most likely to experience adverse landscape effects. It also holds homogeneous attributes and its size is more appropriate for accessing effects of the proposed development compared to the entire National Park.

4.5 Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

4.5.1 In accordance with GLVIA3 the sensitivity of landscape receptors is determined by combining their value with their susceptibility to the type of development proposed.

Value of the Landscape

4.5.2 In determining the value of landscapes, it is helpful to start with landscape and landscape-related designations. In this context it is important to note that the site itself is not within any designations for valued landscapes, such as National Landscapes or National Parks, nor the setting of (refer to sections 2.5 and 2.6 for further details).

4.5.3 For sites that are not within National designations, Table 1 of Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2/21 (which supersedes Box 5.1 of GLVIA3) recommends that additional criteria should be considered when determining value. A full assessment against these criteria is included in **Table D1, Appendix D**.

4.5.4 Using these criteria (see **Table D1 in Appendix D**) it has been concluded that the value of the site and its immediate context would be **Community**; the site comprises school buildings, infrastructure and open spaces, two residential dwellings, and grassland fields. The site is primarily bound by hedgerows and trees which are well-established, but vary in condition, and provide scenic qualities within the site and also contribute to the nearby GI network and biodiversity. Although the existing built form within the site, along with the influence of the settlement edge and nearby roads means that scenic quality and tranquillity is limited, the site and its immediate context is highly representative of LCA4 and there is recreational access within and adjacent to the site.

4.5.5 The site also has no demonstrable physical attributes that elevate this landscape above an ordinary landscape, and therefore the site is not considered to be a “*valued landscape*” for the purposes of NPPF paragraph 187 (a).



- 4.5.6 The value of the landscape within the site's context, in the Hickstead Low Weald, is also assessed as being of **Community** value. This area contains some listed buildings and small areas of ancient woodland, as well as a network of footpaths.
- 4.5.7 The landscapes of the High Weald National Landscape and the South Downs National Park are of **National** value.

Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors to the Proposed Development

- 4.5.8 The susceptibility of the landscape receptors is assessed within **Table D2, Appendix D**.
- 4.5.9 In overview, the school buildings and associated infrastructure would have a **medium/ low** susceptibility as whilst the proposed development would require the majority of the school buildings and infrastructure to be removed, urban elements generally have a low susceptibility to other urban elements.
- 4.5.10 The sloping fields on the settlement edge would have a **high/ medium** susceptibility to the proposed development as whilst undeveloped land has a high susceptibility to residential development, this is reduced by the influence of the school buildings, Sayers Common and nearby roads.
- 4.5.11 The network of hedgerows and trees along field boundaries would have a **medium/ low** susceptibility to the proposed development. Whilst vegetation would be retained wherever possible and only a small proportion would be removed, the well-vegetated nature of the site does mean that 82 individual trees, 3 tree groups, 6 portions of tree groups and 260m hedgerow would have to be removed, increasingly susceptibility from low to medium/ low.
- 4.5.12 The small and medium scale and enclosed site would have a **medium/ low** susceptibility to the proposed development; the site would be divided into areas of built form and open space which would reduce its scale and increase its sense of enclosure. However, as the site is already enclosed and of small to medium scale, the susceptibility is reduced.
- 4.5.13 The predominantly simple, still and quiet site but with some diversity would have a **high/ medium** susceptibility to the proposed development as it would introduce many new colours and textures across the site and generate additional movement, noise and lighting.
- 4.5.14 In terms of character, the site would have a **medium** susceptibility to the proposed development. Whilst undeveloped fields have an inherently high susceptibility, within the site this is partially reduced by the existing influences. The other parts of the site have a lower susceptibility as they already comprise built form.
- 4.5.15 The local part of "*Hickstead Low Weald*" would have a **medium** susceptibility to the proposed development since whilst this is a predominantly rural landscape, there are influences of built form, movement, lighting and noise from the existing settlement of Sayers Common and the nearby road network.
- 4.5.16 The South Downs National Park would have a **low** susceptibility to the proposals as the site is located over 2.5km from the National Park, and the National Park is already influenced by settlements within its vicinity.



Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

- 4.5.17 The overall sensitivity of landscape receptors is assessed in **Table D2 of Appendix D**.
- 4.5.18 In summary, existing buildings and infrastructure have a **medium/ low** sensitivity due to their community value and medium/ low susceptibility.
- 4.5.19 The sloping fields would have a **medium** sensitivity due to their community value and high/ medium susceptibility.
- 4.5.20 The existing vegetation is of **medium/ low** sensitivity due to its community value and medium/ low susceptibility.
- 4.5.21 The small and medium scale, and enclosed site is of **medium/ low** sensitivity due to its community value and medium/ low susceptibility.
- 4.5.22 The predominately simple, still and quiet site but with some diversity is of **medium** sensitivity due to its community value and high/medium susceptibility.
- 4.5.23 The character of the site is of **medium** sensitivity due to its community value and medium susceptibility.
- 4.5.24 The local part of “*Hickstead Low Weald*” would have a **medium** sensitivity to the proposed development due to its community value and medium susceptibility.
- 4.5.25 The South Downs National Park would have a **medium** sensitivity to the proposed development due to its national value and low susceptibility.

4.6 Magnitude of Landscape Change

- 4.6.1 In accordance with GLVIA3 potential changes to the individual landscape receptors have been assessed in relation to:
- The Size and Scale of Change;
 - The Geographical Extent of Change; and
 - The Duration and Reversibility of Change.
- 4.6.2 Below provides a summary of the magnitude of landscape change, refer to **Table D3 in Appendix D** for full details.
- 4.6.3 The proposed development would be permanent.
- 4.6.4 The majority of the existing school buildings would be removed and replaced by a greater extent of built form. Therefore, built form would become a more dominant feature within the landscape, resulting in a large/ medium size and scale of change. The proposed development would only effect built form within the site, resulting in a small geographical extent. Together the magnitude of change would be **medium**.
- 4.6.5 The proposed development would result in a large size and scale of change for the sloping grassland fields on the settlement edge. The proposed development would introduce new built form into the undeveloped fields and therefore the existing land uses would not remain and the balance of the landscape would change. The sloping



- landform would also become less apparent. However, landscape effects would be focused on the site itself, resulting in a small geographical extent. Together the magnitude of change would be **substantial/ medium**.
- 4.6.6 There would be a small size and scale of change for the network of hedgerows and trees along field boundaries. The proposed development would result in some trees and hedgerows being removed. However, all existing hedgerows would be reinforced where necessary, and new native trees and hedgerows would be proposed throughout the site. This would retain a strong landscape structure and canopy cover within the site and also adhere to the relevant landscape management guidelines for LCA 4; *“Where appropriate, increase tree cover in and around villages”*, *“Conserve and replant single oaks in hedgerows”* and *“Conserve, strengthen and manage existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees”*. The proposed development would only effect vegetation within the site, resulting in a small geographical extent. Together the magnitude of change would be **slight**.
- 4.6.7 The proposed built form would increase the site’s enclosure and reduce its scale. However, as the site is already enclosed and of a small or medium scale, the extent of change is limited. Resulting in a medium size and scale of change. Effects would also be focused on the site itself, resulting in a small geographical extent. Together resulting in a **medium/ slight** magnitude of change.
- 4.6.8 The size and scale of change upon the predominately simple, still and quiet site but with some diversity would be large/ medium. The proposed development would introduce new colours and textures into the site and generate lighting, noise and movement. As the site is mostly simple, still and quiet, the proposed development would become more prominent and partially alter the landscapes composition. Landscape effects would be experienced within the site and to the north and west where the landscape becomes increasingly simple, quiet and still, resulting in a Small/ Medium geographical extent. Together this would result in a **medium** magnitude of change.
- 4.6.9 The size and scale of change for the character of the site would be large/ medium. Despite the existing vegetation being mostly retained and the site already comprising some built form, the proposed development would result in built form being more dominant and notably altering the character of the site. Landscape effects would be experienced within the site and to the north and west where the landscape is less influenced by built form, resulting in a medium/ small geographical extent. Together this would result in a **medium** magnitude of change.
- 4.6.10 The proposed development would result in a small size and scale of change for the local part of *“Hickstead Low Weald”*. This landscape is already influenced by existing built form, including within the site itself, and therefore the proposed development would not introduce any new features or significantly alter the balance of the landscape. In addition, the proposed development would adhere to the relevant landscape management guidelines for LCA 4; *“ensure that any new development has a minimum impact on views from the downs and is integrated within the landscape”* and *“Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape”* by retaining and enhancing the existing landscape structure within the site. Landscape effects would be experienced within the site and to the north and west where the landscape is less influenced by built form, resulting in a medium/ small geographical extent. Together this would result in a **slight** magnitude of change.



- 4.6.11 The South Downs National Park would experience **no landscape effects** as a result of the proposed development. This is due to the site being over 2.5km from the South Downs and the South Downs already being influenced by existing settlements, some of which in far closer proximity and/ or larger. The proposed development would be on the far edge of Sayers Common when viewed from the Downs and therefore would not result in the settlement extending closer to the designation.

Appraisal of Landscape Effects

- 4.6.12 **Table D4 in Appendix D** summarises the potential effects on each of the landscape receptors.
- 4.6.13 In overview, the landscape effects resulting from the proposed development would be highly localised as the landscape is already influenced by existing built form and surrounding infrastructure, and the site is enclosed.
- 4.6.14 **Effects on the school buildings and infrastructure would be Moderate and Neutral.** Whilst the proposed development would result in the majority of the existing built form being removed, it would be replaced by new built form of a similar nature. This is not an important planning consideration as built form is already present within the site.
- 4.6.15 The **effects on the sloping fields would be major/ moderate and negative** since these open fields would become dominated by built form which would alter their land use and the composition of the landscape. This is marginally reduced though as they are influenced by existing built form and effects would be localised. **This is an important planning consideration.**
- 4.6.16 **The effects on the existing vegetation would be moderate/ minor and neutral** as whilst 82 individual trees, 3 tree groups, 6 portions of tree groups and 260m hedgerow would have to be removed, the majority of existing vegetation would be retained, existing hedgerows would be reinforced and an abundance of new native hedgerows, trees and shrubs would be proposed throughout the site. In doing so, this adheres to the relevant landscape management guidelines for LCA 4, along with retaining a strong landscape structure. In the short-term the planting also recovers a portion of the lost canopy cover (905m² of 7,000m² lost) and in the long-term this would equate to 21,200m² which would substantially exceed the lost canopy cover.
- 4.6.17 The proposed development would have a **moderate/ minor and negative effect on the small and medium scale and enclosed site.** The proposed built form would result in the landscape's sense of enclosure increasing and scale of the site reducing. However, as the site is already enclosed and of small or medium scale, landscape effects are limited.
- 4.6.18 The proposed development would have a **moderate and negative effect on the simple, still and quiet site but with some diversity.** Whilst the site is already influenced by the existing school buildings, settlement edge and nearby roads, the proposed development would result in additional colours, textures, noise, movement and lighting being introduced into the site and the landscape to the north and west. This is not an important planning consideration as some diversity is already present within the site.



- 4.6.19 **Landscape effects upon the character of the site would be Moderate and Negative.** The proposed development would result in built form becoming a dominant feature within the site. However, as the site already comprises some built form and is further influenced by the adjacent settlement edge and nearby road network, landscape effects are reduced. This is not an important planning consideration as built form, and its associated characteristics, are already present within the site.
- 4.6.20 **Landscape effects upon the local part of “Hickstead Low Weald” would be Moderate/ Minor and Negative.** Whilst this is a largely rural character area, the local part including the site itself, is already influenced by existing built form. The enclosed nature of the site would also limit landscape effects upon the area, and the proposed development would adhere to the relevant landscape management guidelines for LCA 4.
- 4.6.21 There would be **no landscape effects on the South Downs National Park.** As the proposed development is located outside of the South Downs there would be no direct landscape effects. There would also be no indirect effects as the South Downs is over 2.5km away, the site is enclosed, the South Downs are already influenced by the settlements, some of which larger and/ or closer, and the proposed development would be located on the far side of Sayers Common.

4.7 Summary of Landscape Effects

- 4.7.1 The landscape appraisal has been based upon a desk top assessment and a number of site visits carried out between May 2024 and December 2025.
- 4.7.2 In the Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex (November 2005) the site is located within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 4: “Hickstead Low Weald”. The site and its immediate context strongly align with the character area’s key characteristics with the landscape being mostly agricultural and comprising woodlands, shaws, hedgerows and hedgerow trees which together form a predominantly rural landscape. Although with influences of built form, particularly to the east of the LCA, and the A23 trunk road being a key feature too.
- 4.7.3 Within the Mid Sussex Capacity Assessment (June 2014) the site has been classified as being part of Landscape Capacity Area 62: Hickstead – Sayers Common Low Weald and assessed as having Medium capacity to accommodate development. However, the study does state that *“it is important to note that these scores are only indicative of potential capacity and would need to be tested through more detailed assessment at the site-specific level when proposals for specific development locations are known”*.
- 4.7.4 Within the Local Plan evidence base, Reg 18 Sustainability Appraisal (Oct 2022) states that the site is relatively enclosed and there is existing development on site *“however... a minor negative impact on the character of the landscape (SA Objective 8) cannot be ruled out”*. Whereas, within the Reg 19 Site Selection Conclusions Paper, Appendix 3 – Site Assessment Proformas (Nov 2023), it is anticipated that if the site were to be developed landscape change would be of a negative nature. And in the Mid Sussex District Plan (Reg 19) Sustainability Appraisal (Nov 2023) it is recognised that the additional site-specific requirements within the updated policy would result in further improvements and landscape impacts are now anticipated to be minor positive.



- 4.7.5 The site is not considered to form part of the setting of the South Downs National Park or the High Weald National Landscape, and therefore is not a valued landscape in the sense of paragraph 187(a) of the NPPF. An assessment of landscape value concluded that the application site is of **community value**.
- 4.7.6 As noted in section 1.0 of this report, the introduction of built form to a green field site will always result in negative landscape effects. This appraisal has concluded that the landscape effects resulting from the proposed development would be highly localised as the proposed built form would be located within a site that is already directly and indirectly influenced by existing built form of the same nature, and is enclosed by well-established vegetation.
- 4.7.7 There would be **major/ moderate and negative effects** on the fields which form part of the application site which equates to an **important planning consideration**. There would also be **moderate and negative effects** on the predominantly simple, still and quiet site but with some diversity and the character of the site itself although these would not be important planning considerations given that the site is already partially influenced by built form. All other landscape receptors would be **moderate/ minor at most or of a neutral nature**. In particular, it is worth noting that the South Downs landscape receptor would experience no landscape effects.
- 4.7.8 It is important to note that this appraisal assumes that the baseline for the site remains the site in its existing condition; the fact that the site is a draft allocation for residential development in the emerging Local Plan has not been factored into either the sensitivity of landscape receptors or the magnitude of landscape effects. This appraisal therefore represents a worst-case assessment.



5.0 Potential Visual Effects

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The following visual appraisal is based upon a desk top review and several site assessments carried out between May 2024 and December 2025. Both summer and winter conditions were sought for the site assessment, but winter conditions have been focused upon for the following visual appraisal to assess a worst case scenario.
- 5.1.2 Initially, visibility over the full study area was considered. Ordnance Survey mapping, aerial photography and a preliminary ZTV were studied to determine where the proposed development may be visible.
- 5.1.3 This analysis was then applied during the first site visit; visiting all areas where the proposed development may be visible, narrowing down the study area based on the findings, and capturing representative views.
- 5.1.4 To be proportionate to the proposed development, representative views were reduced to fifteen viewpoint locations. The objective in selecting these locations was to represent the range of views of the proposed development which would be available and capturing the worst-case scenario of visibility. Sensitive locations which are not publicly accessible but may also be affected by the proposed development have also been assessed, however there are no representative viewpoints for these due to practical constraints such as not having access to private dwellings.
- 5.1.5 The location of all viewpoints is illustrated on drawing **SC5**, along with the location of the photomontages. For each of the viewpoints, photographs of the existing views in both summer and winter have been included (see drawings **SC65 to SC73**). Year 1 and year 15 photomontages have also been prepared for four viewpoints; along bridleway 9Hu at the centre of the site (viewpoint 1), along bridleway 9Hu to the west of the site (viewpoint 3), along footpath 3Hu immediately north of the site (viewpoint 7) and at the vehicular site entrance along London Road (viewpoint 10).
- 5.1.6 These focused, viewpoint assessments form part of a systematic identification of likely effects on the various visual receptor groups, (as required by GLVIA3 paragraph 6.26). An over-arching appraisal is set out within this section of the LVA, however further detail is set out in **Appendix E**.
- 5.1.7 By combining the sensitivity of receptors and the magnitude of effect the potential level of visual effects has been assessed. Effects which are assessed as being major or major/moderate are to be important planning considerations. Moderate effects are not generally important planning considerations, although the assessor may conclude that some moderate effects could constitute significant effects in certain circumstances.
- 5.1.8 The appraisal is based on the site layout (24125-SK101N), and illustrative landscape masterplan (**SC74**).



5.2 Overall Visibility

- 5.2.1 The visibility of the proposed development has been determined with the aid of specialist software and then checked by site assessment. **Drawing SC4** illustrates the ZTV for the proposed development. As stated in section 3.3, the majority of the proposed development would be 2-storey (9m) with some apartment blocks towards the centre of the development being up to 2.5-storey (11.5m). These plots have been modelled onto a detailed terrain model of the site and wider site context. The vegetation within the site adheres to the heights specified within the SJA Tree Schedule (Nov 2025). Some key areas of vegetation outside of the site, as well as existing buildings, has been taken from Vector Mapping. For other key areas of vegetation not picked up on the vector mapping and within the vicinity of the site, this has been manually modelled using conservative estimates determined from the site assessment. This model does not include many smaller areas of vegetation such as various hedgerows within the vicinity of the site, nor proposed planting. **Therefore, the ZTV provides a worst-case assessment of the potential visibility of the proposed development.**
- 5.2.2 The ZTV not only illustrates the potential extent of visibility, but also defines the potential vertical angle of visibility, subtended at the eye, at each location: darker orange shading indicates areas with a potential for obtaining views with a vertical angle greater than 3 degrees, pale orange shading denotes areas that could obtain angles between 1 and 3 degrees, and yellow shading indicates areas that could potentially obtain angles of view between 0.25 and 1 degree. The methodology for the production of the ZTV is included at **Appendix B**.
- 5.2.3 Despite the worst-case basis, drawing **SC4** illustrates that the potential visibility of the proposed development is largely localised with only views between 0.25 and 1 degree (yellow shading) being available beyond the site's immediate vicinity.
- 5.2.4 On the ZTV this lower degree of visibility extends to the north towards Hickstead, although the various site assessments did not identify any potential for views of the site from beyond footpath 10Hu (viewpoint 7) immediately north of the site.
- 5.2.5 Similarly, this lower degree of visibility extends to the west of the site, although the various site assessments did not identify any potential for views of the site from beyond bridleway 9Hu approximately 0.4km west of the site.
- 5.2.6 To the south the ZTV also identifies some lower degrees of visibility. The various site visits identified that the existing settlement of Sayers Common and well-established vegetation would largely contain views. Therefore, despite the ZTV showing visibility, there would be no views from most of these locations such as at Lanehurst and Albourne Green (viewpoint 14). However, given that the ground does substantially elevate within the South Downs (viewpoint 15) there is potential for distant views from these locations.
- 5.2.7 To the east of the site views would be highly localised and visibility would be contained by the existing settlement of Sayers Common and well-established vegetation along the A23. Further details are set out in section 5.5 below.



5.3 Visual Receptors

5.3.1 Within the visual envelope identified by the ZTV (**SC4**), the following types of visual receptors have the potential to experience changes in their views:

- Users of public rights of way, in particular bridleway 9Hu within the site, footpath 10Hu and bridleway 3Hu to the north, footpath 82Hu to the east upon higher ground, footpath 11Al to the south upon higher ground, footpaths to the west such as 5Hu, 6Hu and 8Hu, and footpaths and bridleways upon Wolstonbury Hill within the South Downs National Park;
- Pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and vehicle users on London Road, the A23, Nuthatch Lane and Twineham Lane;
- Residential receptors at Sayers Common (south and east of the site) and farmsteads to the north-west such as Stuccles Farm and New House Farm, and Albourne Green to the south; and
- Visitors to Hickstead Showground

5.4 Assessment of Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

5.4.1 **Tables E1 in Appendix E** sets out in detail the sensitivity of the receptors at each of the viewpoints. The criteria used for this analysis are taken from GLVIA3 paragraph 6.31 to 6.41.

5.4.2 A summary of the sensitivity for each receptor is set out below.

Recreational Walkers, Pedestrians, Cyclists and Horse Riders

5.4.3 These receptors have been grouped together as they have a **High** susceptibility to the proposed development since they are likely to be focused on views of the countryside.

5.4.4 Some of the viewpoints are of **Medium** (Local Authority) value as they are located along public rights of way. As a consequence, the receptors in these locations are assessed as being of **High/ Medium** sensitivity.

5.4.5 For those viewpoints along a standard, non-designated road of **Low** value, the receptors have been given a **Medium** sensitivity.

5.4.6 For the viewpoint within the South Downs National Park, it is of **High** (National) value. When combined with a High susceptibility, these receptors have been given a **High** sensitivity.

Vehicle users

5.4.7 Vehicle Users are more likely to experience transitional views and are often less focused on views of the countryside. As a consequence, they are less susceptible to visual change and would have a **Medium** susceptibility.

5.4.8 Some of the viewpoints are of **Medium** (Local Authority) value as they are associated with a public right of way. When combined with a Medium susceptibility, these receptors have been given a **Medium** sensitivity.



- 5.4.9 For those viewpoints located along standard, non-designated roads, they would be of **Low** value. When combined with a Medium susceptibility, these receptors have been given a **Medium/ Low** sensitivity.

Residential Receptors

- 5.4.10 Residents have a **High** susceptibility to the proposed development since they are likely to experience visual changes regularly.
- 5.4.11 Some of the viewpoints are of **Medium** (Local Authority) value as they are associated with a public right of way. When combined with a High susceptibility, these receptors have been given a **High/ Medium** sensitivity.
- 5.4.12 For those viewpoints located along standard, non-designated roads, they would be of **Low** value. When combined with a High susceptibility, these receptors have been given a **Medium** sensitivity.

Visitors to Hickstead Showground

- 5.4.13 Visitors to Hickstead Showground have a **High** susceptibility to the proposed development since they are likely to be intermittently focused on views of the countryside.
- 5.4.14 The showground is not designation and therefore of **Low** value. When combined with a High susceptibility, these receptors have been given a **Medium** sensitivity.

5.5 Assessment of the Magnitude of Change of Visual Receptors

- 5.5.1 **Tables E2 in Appendix E** sets out in detail the magnitude of potential visual effects for each of the viewpoints. The criteria used for this analysis are taken from GLVIA 3 paragraphs 6.31 to 6.41. A summary of these effects for each receptor group is set out below.

5.6 Assessment of Potential Visual Effects for Visual Receptors

Recreational Walkers, Pedestrians, Cyclists and Horse Riders

- 5.6.1 The proposed development would be **Permanent**.
- 5.6.2 **From along bridleway 9Hu** views of the proposed development would vary:
- **To the east of the site** (similar to viewpoint 10) clear views of the site frontage would be available. The proposed access and dwellings would form a large element within the view and dwellings would be visible beyond. The loss of mature trees would also be noticeable. However, as this view already comprises existing dwellings and a vehicular access, no new elements would be introduced and the size and scale of change at year 1 would be **medium**. Over time the proposed hedgerow and tree planting at the entranceway would filter and partially screen views of the proposed built form, reducing the size and scale of change to **medium/ slight** at year 15.
 - To the west and **within the site** (viewpoint 1) clear views of the proposed development would again be available. However, on this occasion the proposed development would be replacing a currently open view. The



proposed development would form a large element within the view and substantially alter its composition. Together resulting in a **large** size and scale of change. Over time the proposed native hedgerow and trees in the foreground of this view would partially screen and filter views of the proposed built form, reducing the size and scale of change to **large/ medium** by year 15.

- Further west again, **adjacent to the existing SEN school** (viewpoint 2), users of the bridleway would be surrounded by the proposed development with some clear views available. As this viewpoint is located adjacent to the existing SEN school built form is already characteristic of the view. The existing hedgerows which would be retained would also limit views to the north and west. For these reasons, visual effects would be noticeably but only moderately alter the composition of the view, resulting in a **medium** size and scale of change at year 1. Over time the proposed planting within the street scenes would break up the mass of built form, although the proposed dwellings would remain noticeable and therefore the size and scale of change would remain **medium** at year 15.
- **To the west of the site** (viewpoint 3), heavily filtered views of the proposed development would be available during winter months. The proposed development would be seen in place of the existing SEN school and the proposed development would be set back from the western boundary. Together resulting in a **small** size and scale of change at year 1. Over time the proposed planting along the western boundary would further filter and screen views of the proposed development, however at year 15 the proposed development would remain perceptible and therefore a **small** size and scale of change would remain.
- **Further west** (shortly beyond viewpoint 3) views of the proposed development would become entirely **screened by the intervening vegetation**.
- The proposed development would be visible from the eastern half of bridleway 9Hu, resulting in a medium geographical extent.
- **Overall, when on bridleway 9Hu on the western boundary of the site, recreational walkers, cyclists and horse riders would experience clear views of the proposed frontage in place of the existing frontage, resulting in moderate and negative visual effects at year 1 and 15, although, these visual effects would reduce in the long term as the proposed planting establishes. Within the site, major/ moderate and negative visual effects would be experienced when adjacent to the open fields, reducing to moderate and negative by year 15 as the proposed planting establishes. Adjacent to the existing school, moderate and negative visual effects would be experienced at year 1 and 15. To the west of the site visual effects would be moderate/ minor and negative at year 1 and 15, although reducing further in the long term as the proposed planting establishes. Further west of the site, views of the proposed development would be screened resulting in no visual effects.**
- **This major/ moderate visual effect (viewpoint 1) is an important planning consideration in the short-term due to the extent of visual change and built form being a notably more dominant feature. Whereas the moderate visual effects (viewpoint 2 and 10) is not an important planning consideration as built form already forms key elements within the existing views.**



5.6.3 To the west of the site:

- Apart from along bridleway 9Hu which is noted above, **no views** of the proposed development would be available from publicly accessible locations. This includes from the footpaths in the vicinity of the site (viewpoint 4 and 5) and Twineham Lane (viewpoint 6) as on all occasions the intervening vegetation would screen all views with the exception being the roof of the existing chapel.
- **Overall, apart from bridleway 9Hu, no visual effects associated with the proposed development would be experienced to the west of the site.**

5.6.4 To the north of the site:

- Clear views into the site would be available from **footpath 10Hu** when located on the site's north-eastern boundary (viewpoint 7). The proposed development would form a large element within the view, however, as built form would be set back by 20m and the existing school already forms part of the existing view, the size and scale of change is reduced marginally to a **large/ medium** at year 1. Over time, the proposed planting along the northern boundary and within the landscape buffer would progressively filter views and by year 15 views would be almost entirely screened reducing the size and scale of change to **small**. The proposed development would be seen from only this short length of footpath, resulting in a small geographical extent.
- **Further north** (viewpoint 8 and 9) views of the proposed development would be **screened by the intervening vegetation and landform**.
- **Overall, when along footpath 10Hu immediately north-east of the site, clear views of the proposed development would result in moderate and negative effects at year 1 which would reduce to moderate/ minor and negative by year 15 as the proposed planting would have primarily screened views. Elsewhere along footpath 10Hu and further north, all views would be screened by intervening vegetation or the undulating landform, resulting in no visual effects.**
- **This moderate visual effect (viewpoint 7) is not an important planning consideration as built form already forms a key element within the existing view.**

5.6.5 To the east of the site:

- As noted above, clear views of the proposed development would be available at the **vehicular entrance along London Road** (viewpoint 10). The proposed access and fronting dwellings would form a large element within the view, with further dwellings beyond and the loss of mature trees also being apparent. However, as this frontage already comprises existing dwellings and vehicular access, no new elements would be introduced. Reducing the size and scale of change to **medium** at year 1. Over time the proposed hedgerow and tree planting along the frontage would filter and partially screen views of the proposed built form and replicate the existing tree avenue along the access road. Reducing the size and scale of change to **medium/ slight** at year 15.
- **Further north along London Road** (viewpoint 11), filtered views of the proposed development would be seen approximately 250m away. The proposed development would be seen in place of the existing school buildings and in the context of London Road, together resulting in a **small** size and scale



of change at year 1. Over time the proposed planting along the eastern boundary would progressively filter and eventually screen views. However, at year 15 it is assumed that the proposed development would still be perceptible and therefore a **small** size and scale of change would remain.

- **Elsewhere along London Road** views would be **screened by intervening vegetation** and built form. Therefore, the proposed development would be seen from a small portion of London Road resulting in a small geographical extent.
- **Beyond London Road to the east** views would be **screened by intervening vegetation** (viewpoint 12).
- **Overall, along London Road at the site entrance, pedestrians would experience moderate and negative visual effects at year 1 and 15, with these reducing further in the long-term as the proposed planting establishes. Further north along London Road, moderate/ minor and negative visual effects would be experienced at year 1 and 15, with again visual effects reducing further in the long-term as the proposed planting establishes. Elsewhere along London Road, and further east, views would be screened by the intervening vegetation and/ or built form, resulting in no visual effects.**
- **This moderate visual effect (viewpoint 10) is not an important planning consideration as built form already forms a key element within the existing view.**

5.6.6 To the south of the site:

- No views of the proposed development would be available from **Nuthatch Lane** (viewpoint 13) as the housing along Nuthatch Lane and vegetation along the sites southern boundary would screen all views.
- From the **elevated ground to the north of Albourne Green** (viewpoint 14) views would also be **screened by the intervening vegetation**.
- The site visits found that the exception to the south of the site would be from the elevated ground within the **South Downs National Park** (viewpoint 15). The proposed development would be seen at 5km away and largely screened by the existing vegetation within the site, and therefore the proposed development would form a very small element within the view. The proposed development would also be seen alongside existing settlements, some of which are larger and/ or closer to the South Downs. Therefore, the proposed development would be barely perceptible and wouldn't alter the composition of the view, resulting in a **negligible** size and scale of change. Over time the proposed planting would further filter and screen views, however at year 15 it is assumed that the proposed development would remain perceptible and therefore a **negligible** size and scale of change would remain. The proposed development would be seen from a very small number of locations within the South Downs, resulting in a negligible geographical extent.
- **Overall, to the south of the site views of the proposed development would be almost entirely screened. The exception would be from elevated locations within the South Downs where at most moderate/ minor visual effects would be experienced at year 1 and 15. Although it is assumed that the proposed development would eventually be imperceptible once the proposed planting has established.**



Vehicle Users

5.6.7 The proposed development would be **Permanent**.

5.6.8 To the north of the site:

- From Hickstead Lane vehicle users would experience no views of the proposed development as it would be screened by intervening vegetation, built form and the undulating landform. **Resulting in no visual effects to the north.**

5.6.9 To the east of the site:

- Vehicle users would experience clear views of the proposed development at the **vehicular entrance along London Road** (viewpoint 10). The proposed access and fronting dwellings would form a large element with additional dwellings beyond and the loss of mature trees also being apparent. However, as this frontage already comprises existing dwellings and vehicular access no new elements would be introduced, reducing the size and scale of change to **medium** at year 1. Over time the proposed hedgerow and tree planting along the frontage would filter and partially screen views of the proposed built form and replicate the existing tree avenue along the access road. Reducing the size and scale of change to **medium/ slight** at year 15.
- **Further north along London Road** (viewpoint 11), filtered, distant views of the proposed development would be available. The proposed development would also be seen in place of the existing school buildings and in the context of London Road, together resulting in a **small** size and scale of change at year 1. Over time the proposed planting along the eastern boundary would progressively filter and eventually screen views, however, at year 15 it is assumed that the proposed development would still be perceptible and therefore a **small** size and scale of change would remain.
- **Elsewhere along London Road** views would be **screened by intervening vegetation** and built form. Therefore, the proposed development would be seen from a small portion of London Road resulting in a small geographical extent.
- **Beyond London Road** such as along the A23 or Cuckfield Road (viewpoint 12) views would be **screened by the intervening vegetation**.
- **Overall, along London Road at the site entrance, vehicle users would experience moderate and negative visual effects at year 1 with these reducing to moderate/ minor and negative at year 15 due to the proposed vegetation establishing. Further north along London Road, minor and negative visual effects would be experienced at year 1 and 15, with visual effects reducing further in the long-term as the proposed planting establishes. Elsewhere along London Road, and further east, views would be screened by the intervening vegetation and/ or built form, resulting in no visual effects.**
- **This moderate visual effect (viewpoint 10) is not an important planning consideration as built form already forms a key element within the existing view.**

5.6.10 To the south of the site:



- **From Nuthatch Lane** vehicle users would experience no views of the proposed development as it would be **screened by housing along Nuthatch Lane and vegetation** along the site's southern boundary.
- The same can be said from **all other roads to the south** such as Reed's Lane and Henfield Road.
- **Overall, vehicle users to the south of the site would experience no visual effects.**

5.6.11 To the west of the site:

- From Twineham Lane vehicle users would experience no views of the proposed development as it would be screened by intervening vegetation. **Resulting in no visual effects to the west.**

Residents

5.6.12 The proposed development would be **Permanent**.

5.6.13 To the north of the site:

- From Hickstead, residents would experience no views of the proposed development as it would be screened by intervening vegetation, built form and the undulating landform. **Resulting in no visual effects to the north.**

5.6.14 To the east of the site:

- **From Hickstead Park** filtered views of the proposed development would be available through the intervening vegetation. The proposed development would be seen from over 150m away and would be seen in place of the existing school buildings. Although, given that the proposed development would be larger and in closer proximity than the existing school buildings, it would cause a noticeable change in view, resulting in a **medium/ small** size and scale of change at year 1. Over time the proposed planting along the eastern boundary would progressively filter and eventually screen views, reducing the size and scale of change to **small** at year 15. Views would be available from approximately half of the dwellings at Hickstead Park resulting in a medium geographical extent.
- From along **London Road** most views of the proposed development would be screened by intervening vegetation. The exception would be to the north of the vehicular access where distant, filtered views would be available from upper-storey, front elevation windows at a single residential dwelling (similar to viewpoint 11). The proposed development would be seen from approximately 300m away, filtered by intervening vegetation, in place of the existing school buildings and in the context of London Road. Together this would result in a **small** size and scale of change at year 1. Over time the proposed planting along the eastern boundary would progressively filter and eventually screen views, however, at year 15 it is assumed that the proposed development would still be perceptible and therefore a **small** size and scale of change would remain. The proposed development would be seen from only a single dwelling resulting in a negligible geographical extent.
- **Beyond London Road** to the east views would be **screened by the intervening** vegetation (such as viewpoint 12).



- **Overall, from Hickstead Park residents would experience moderate and negative visual effects at year 1, reducing to moderate/ minor and negative at year 15 as the proposed planting would further filter views. From London Road, a single dwelling to the north of the vehicular access would experience moderate/ minor and negative visual effects at year 1 and 15 and would reduce further in the long term as the proposed planting establishes. Elsewhere along London Road and to the east of London Road, views would be screened by intervening built form and vegetation resulting in no visual effects.**
- **This moderate visual effect for residents at Hickstead Park is not an important planning consideration as the proposed development would only partially alter the composition of the view and built form is already characteristic of the view.**

5.6.15 To the south of the site:

- For residents to the north side of **Nuthatch Lane** immediately south of the site, heavily filtered views would be available from upper-storey, rear elevation windows. The proposed development would be set back by over 80m, and as the school buildings would be a component within the existing view, no new elements would be introduced. Although the proposed development would be more noticeable given its closer proximity, causing a **medium** size and scale of change at year 1. Over time the proposed native trees and shrubs along the southern boundary would increase filter and eventually screen views, reducing the size and scale of change to **medium/ slight** by year 15. These views would be experienced by residents in the 15 dwellings along the northern edge of this development which is a small proportion of this development, resulting in a small geographical extent.
- **Beyond Nuthatch Lane to the south views would be screened by the intervening built form and vegetation.**
- **Overall, immediately south of the site residents would experience moderate/ minor and negative visual effects at year 1 and 15, and these would reduce further as the proposed planting establishes. Elsewhere, views would be screened by intervening built form and vegetation resulting in no visual effects.**

5.6.16 To the west of the site:

- No views of the proposed development would be available from the various **scattered farmsteads and dwellings** such as Stuccles Farm or New House Farm (viewpoint 5) due to the **intervening vegetation screening all views** of the proposed development with the exception being the roof of the existing chapel. **Resulting in no visual effects.**

Visitors to Hickstead Showground

- 5.6.17 For **visitors to Hickstead Showground**, views would be entirely **screened by the intervening vegetation and undulating landform** (viewpoint 8 and 9) resulting in no visual effects.



5.7 Summary of Visual Effects

- 5.7.1 The visual appraisal of the proposed development has been based upon a desk top review and site-based assessments carried out between May 2024 and December 2025, but winter conditions have been focused upon for the visual appraisal to assess the worst case scenario.
- 5.7.2 The potential visibility of the proposals has been assessed with the aid of a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV).
- 5.7.3 The appraisal considers all of the visual receptor groups that have potential to obtain views of the proposed development, including those that are not publicly accessible. However, for these views no representative photography was obtained. Fifteen viewpoint locations were visited and photographed to represent the range of views and receptors likely to be affected by the proposed development.
- 5.7.4 Four verifiable photomontages have been prepared to represent the potential effects of the proposals on some of the nearest and most sensitive viewpoints; along bridleway 9Hu at the centre of the site (viewpoint 1), along bridleway 9Hu to the east of the site (viewpoint 3), along footpath 3Hu immediately north of the site (viewpoint 7) and at the vehicular site entrance along London Road (viewpoint 10).
- 5.7.5 As noted in section 1.0 of this report, the introduction of built form in a green field is always likely to result in negative visual effects. However, this appraisal found that visual effects of the proposed development would be highly localised with all but one receptor being within the immediate vicinity of the site. The exception is for receptors within the South Downs National Park who would experience very distant views of the proposed development. Visual effects would also always be experienced within views that are already influenced by the existing built form at Sayers Common, reducing the extent of these visual effects.
- 5.7.6 The highest level of visual effect would be **major/ moderate and negative**. These would be experienced by walkers, cyclists and horse riders along bridleway 9Hu within the site and would reduce to Moderate at year 15 due to the proposed planting partially screening and filtering views. These Major/ Moderate and Negative effects are regarded as **important planning considerations**. However, they are highly localised, would not affect any valued or designated landscapes and would be temporary.
- 5.7.7 Elsewhere within the site or the immediate vicinity, visual effects would at most be **moderate and negative**. These moderate and negative visual effects are not important planning considerations as built form already forms a key component within the views. For all views, the proposed development would be seen in the context of or in place of the existing built form at Sayers Common and would reduce in the long term as the proposed planting establishes and progressively filters or screens views of the proposed dwellings.
- 5.7.8 The site visits found that from further afield views would be mostly screened with the exception being from the elevated ground within the South Downs National Park. Here, views would be at most a **negligible magnitude of change** at Year 1 and 15 and there would eventually be no visual effects once the proposed planting has established. Given the high sensitivity of walkers, cyclist or horse riders within the South Downs, this equates to **moderate/ minor and negative visual effects**.



- 5.7.9 It is also worth noting that this appraisal assesses visual effects in winter conditions. On various occasions (for example representative viewpoints 3 and 11) views of the proposed development would be largely screened by intervening vegetation, resulting in lower or no visual effects at times of the year when trees and shrubs are in leaf (May to October).
- 5.7.10 Finally, it is important to note that this appraisal assumes that the baseline for the site remains the site in its existing condition; the fact that the site is a draft allocation for residential development in the emerging Local Plan has not been factored into the magnitude of potential visual effects. This appraisal therefore represents a worst-case assessment.



6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 SLR Consulting Ltd (SLR) was instructed by Wates Developments Limited and the Licence Trade Charity to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) to accompany a:

6.1.2 *“Hybrid application for separate and severable elements comprising:*

Demolition of all existing buildings bar the chapel, to retained for use within Use Class F and:

- a. *Full planning permission for the development of the north western part of the Land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate a new SEN School with associated access from London Road, car parking, landscaping and drainage works; and*
- b. *Outline planning permission (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale Reserved) for the development of the rest of the land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate up to 210 dwellinghouses (including affordable housing) with associated access, car parking, landscaping, play areas, informal outdoor space and drainage works”.*

6.1.3 The appraisal was carried out by an experienced, Chartered, Landscape Architect using a method which follows the guidance of GLVIA3. The appraisal has then been discussed and reviewed by another experienced, Chartered, Landscape Architect.

6.1.4 The appraisal is based upon a desk top assessment of all relevant character assessments, maps and policies, and several site assessments carried out in both the winter and summer months between May 2024 and December 2025. The potential landscape and visual effects have also been assessed with the aid of a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV).

6.1.5 The proposed masterplan, prepared by architects at OSP architects, has been prepared with regular guidance and input from SLR on landscape and visual matters.

6.1.6 It is important to note that this appraisal assumes that the baseline for the site remains the site in its existing condition and the fact that the site is a draft allocation for residential development has not been factored in. Therefore, this appraisal represents a worst-case scenario.

6.2 Planning Context

6.2.1 The site is not located within or nearby to any landscape or landscape-related designations. However, a public bridleway does extend through the site, east to west, and a public footpath is located immediately north of the site.

6.2.2 The South Downs National Park is located approximately 2.5km to the south of the site and the High Weald National Landscape 3.3km to the north. However, it has been determined in sections 2.5 and 2.6 of this appraisal that the site does not form part of the setting of either National designation.



6.2.3 In the current Local Plan the site is not allocated for development. However, in the emerging, Regulation 19 Local Plan, the site is proposed as an allocation for 200 homes and SEN school under draft Policy DPSC7.

6.2.4 Whilst the site itself hasn't been subject to any planning applications for over 10 years, the settlement of Sayers Common has experienced notable growth with 156 dwellings and community facilities being built out to the south of the site. A further 317 dwellings to the south of the site are currently pending consideration and the draft Local Plan also comprises another large draft allocation for 1,850 homes (DPSC3).

6.3 Landscape Effects

6.3.1 In the Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex (November 2005) the site is located within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 4: "*Hickstead Low Weald*". The site and its immediate context strongly align with the character area's key characteristics with the landscape being mostly agricultural and comprising woodlands, shaws, hedgerows and hedgerow trees which together form a predominantly rural landscape, but also with some influences of built form and the A23 being a key feature too.

6.3.2 Within the Mid Sussex Capacity Assessment (June 2014), the site has been classified as being part of Landscape Capacity Area 62: Hickstead – Sayers Common Low Weald, and assessed as having Medium capacity to accommodate development. It is worth noting that only two sites within the assessment have a higher capacity at High/ Medium. The study does also state that "*it is important to note that these scores are only indicative of potential capacity and would need to be tested through more detailed assessment at the site-specific level when proposals for specific development locations are known*".

6.3.3 Within the Mid Sussex District Plan (Reg 19) Sustainability Appraisal (Nov 2023), landscape matters are also anticipated to be minor positive if the proposed development fulfils the site allocation's policy requirements.

6.3.4 As noted in section 1.0 of this report, the introduction of built form to a green field site will always result in negative landscape effects. This appraisal has concluded that the landscape effects resulting from the proposed development would be highly localised as the proposed built form would be located within a site that is already directly and indirectly influenced by existing built form of the same nature, and is enclosed by well-established vegetation.

6.3.5 There would be **major/ moderate and negative effects** on the fields which form part of the application site which is an **important planning consideration**. There would also be **moderate and negative effects** on the predominantly simple, still and quiet site but with some diversity and the character of the site itself although these would not be important planning considerations given that the site is already partially influenced by built form. All other landscape receptors would be **moderate/ minor at most or of a Neutral nature**. In particular, it is worth noting that the **South Downs would experience no landscape effects**.



6.4 Visual Effects

- 6.4.1 Fifteen viewpoint locations were visited and photographed to represent the range of publicly accessible views and receptors likely to be affected by the proposed development. However, sensitive locations which are not publicly accessible but may also be affected by the proposed development have also been accessed.
- 6.4.2 Four of the nearest and most sensitive views have also been developed into verifiable photomontages to represent the potential visual effects from these views.
- 6.4.3 The highest level of visual effect would be **major/ moderate and negative**. These would be experienced by walkers, cyclists and horse riders along bridleway 9Hu within the site and would reduce to moderate at year 15 due to the proposed planting partially screening and filtering views. These major/ moderate and negative effects are regarded as **important planning considerations**. However, they are highly localised, would not affect any valued or designated landscapes and would be temporary.
- 6.4.4 Elsewhere within the site or the immediate vicinity, visual effects would be at most **moderate and negative**. For all views, the proposed development would be seen in the context of or in place of the existing built form at Sayers Common and would reduce in the long term as the proposed planting establishes and progressively filters or screens views of the proposed dwellings.
- 6.4.5 From the South Downs National Park, visual effects would be at most a **negligible magnitude of change** at Year 1 and 15 and there would eventually be no visual effects once the proposed planting has established. Given the high sensitivity of walkers, cyclist or horse riders within the South Downs, this equates to **moderate/ minor and negative visual effects**.

6.5 Overall Conclusion

- 6.5.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been carried out by an experienced, chartered landscape architect and in accordance with the latest landscape guidance including GLVIA3. Alongside this assessment, the landscape architects have been actively involved in the design process. This has ensured that negative landscape and visual effects are highly localised as the proposed development would retain the majority of existing vegetation and built form has been set back from sensitive edges, together allowing for open spaces to be distributed throughout the development. Proposed building heights and densities would also be in keeping with existing development at Sayers Common. The landscape and visual appraisal process has also informed finer aspects of the illustrative masterplan, including the rural nature of the proposed open spaces throughout the site which would provide new public facilities including a range of play facilities for children and teenagers, community orchard and allotments, and a new footpath connection. Together these would cater to a wide range of residents, both existing and new.
- 6.5.2 In regard to landscape and visual harm associated with the proposed development, in the short-term a small number of **major/ moderate and negative** effects would be experienced by landscape and visual receptors which equate to important planning considerations. However, given the incorporation of existing vegetation and landscape buffers, these would be contained to within the site and would not affect any valued or designated landscapes and would be temporary. **Moderate**



and negative effects would also be limited to within the site so the greatest level of landscape or visual harm outside of the site would be **moderate/ minor and negative**. This includes visual harm from the South Downs where negligible effects would be experienced at isolated, elevated locations.



APPENDIX A

Method used in Assessing Landscape and Visual Effects



7.1 Introduction

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify the effects of development on “*landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity*” (GLVIA3, paragraph 1.1). GLVIA3¹ (paragraph 2.22) states that these two elements, although inter-related, should be assessed separately. GLVIA3 is the main source of guidance on LVIA.

Landscape is a definable set of characteristics resulting from the interaction of natural, physical and human factors: it is a resource in its own right. Its assessment is distinct from visual assessment, which considers effects on the views and visual amenity of different groups of people at particular locations. Clear separation of these two topics is recommended in GLVIA3.

As GLVIA3 (paragraph 2.23) states, professional judgement is an important part of the LVIA process: whilst there is scope for objective measurement of landscape and visual changes, much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements. It is critical that these judgements are based upon a clear and transparent method so that the reasoning can be followed and examined by others.

Impacts can be defined as the action being taken, whereas effects are the changes result from that action. This method of assessment assesses landscape and visual effects.

Landscape and visual effects can be positive, negative or neutral in nature. Positive effects are those which enhance and/or reinforce the characteristics which are valued. Negative effects are those which remove and/or undermine the characteristics which are valued. Neutral effects are changes which are consistent with the characteristics of the landscape or view.

Landscape and visual effects can result directly from the development itself (direct effects), or may be indirect changes (which are not a direct result of the development but occur as a result of a more complex pathway, such as changes to drainage patterns or perceptual changes further from the proposed development). Landscape and visual effects can also be cumulative, which are the additional changes caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other developments, particularly those which are recently consented or which have been applied for.

In LVIAs which form part of an EIA, it is necessary for identify significant and non-significant effects. In non-EIA LVIAs, also known as appraisals, the same principles and process as LVIA may be applied but, in so doing, it is not required to establish whether the effects arising are or are not significant given that the exercise is not being undertaken for EIA purposes (see GLVIA3 statement of clarification 1/13 10-06-13, Landscape Institute).

7.2 Landscape Effects

Landscape, as defined in the European Landscape Convention, is defined as “*an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*”, (Council of Europe, 2000). Landscape does not apply only to special or designated places, nor is it limited to countryside.

GLVIA3 (paragraph 5.34) recommends that the effect of the development on landscape receptors is assessed. Landscape receptors are the components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the proposed development, and can include individual elements (such as hedges or buildings), aesthetic and

¹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (Third Edition, April 2013)



perceptual characteristics (for example sense of naturalness, tranquillity or openness), or, at a larger scale, the character of a defined character area or landscape type. Designated areas (such as National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are also landscape receptors.

This assessment is being undertaken because the proposed development has the potential to remove or add elements to the landscape, to alter aesthetic or perceptual aspects, and to add or remove characteristics and thus potentially change overall character.

Judging landscape effects requires a methodical assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape receptors to the proposed development and the magnitude of effect which would be experienced by each receptor.

7.2.1 Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity of landscape receptors is assessed by combining an assessment of the susceptibility of landscape receptors to the type of change which is proposed with the value attached to the landscape. (GLVIA3, paragraph 5.39).

7.2.2 Value Attached to Landscape Receptors

Landscape receptors may be valued at low, community, local, national or international level. Existing landscape designations provide the starting point for this assessment, as set out in Table A1 below.

The table sets out the interpretation of landscape designations in terms of the value attached to different landscape receptors. As GLVIA3 (paragraph 5.24) notes, at the local scale of an LVIA study area it may be found that the landscape value of a specific area may be different to that suggested by the formal designation.

Table A1: Interpretation of Landscape Designations

Designation	Description	Value
World Heritage Sites	Unique sites, features or areas identified as being of international importance according to UNESCO criteria. Consideration should be given to their settings especially where these contribute to the special qualities for which the landscape is valued.	International
National Parks, National Landscapes, National Scenic Areas	Areas of landscape identified as being of national importance for their natural beauty (and in the case of National Parks the opportunities they offer for outdoor recreation). Consideration should be given to their settings especially where these contribute to the special qualities for which the landscape is valued.	National
Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest	Gardens and designed landscapes included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest as Grade I, II* or II.	National
Local Landscape Designations (such as Special Landscape Areas, Areas of Great Landscape Value and similar) included in local planning documents	Areas of landscape identified as having importance at the local authority level.	Local Authority
Undesignated landscapes of community value	Landscapes which do not have any formal designation but which are assessed as having value to local communities, perhaps on the basis of demonstrable physical attributes which elevate it above ordinary countryside.	Local Authority/Community
Landscapes of low value	Landscapes in poor condition or fundamentally altered by presence of intrusive man-made structures.	Low

Where landscapes are not designated and where no other local authority guidance on value is available, an assessment is made by reference to criteria in the Table A2 below. This is based on Table 1 of



Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2/21. These factors are not fixed, and should be reviewed on a case by case basis. When assessing landscape value of a site it is important to consider not only the site itself but also its context.

Landscapes may be judged to be of local authority or community value on the basis of one or more of these factors. There may also be occasional circumstances where an undesignated landscape may be judged to be of national value, for example where it has a clear connection with a nationally designated landscape, or is otherwise considered to be of equivalent value to a national designation. Similarly, on occasions there may be areas within designated landscapes that do not meet the designation criteria, or demonstrate the key characteristics/special qualities in a way that is consistent with the rest of the designated area.

An overall assessment is made for each landscape receptor, based on an overview of the above criteria, to determine its value - whether for example it is comparable to a local authority landscape designation or similar, or whether it is of value to local people and communities. For example, an intact landscape in good condition, where scenic quality, tranquillity, and/or conservation interests make a particular contribution to the landscape, or where there are important cultural or historical associations, might be of equivalent value to a local landscape designation. Conversely, a degraded landscape in poor condition, with no particular scenic qualities or natural or cultural heritage interest is likely to be considered of limited landscape value.

Table A2: Factors Considered in Assessing the Value of Non-Designated Landscapes

Factor	Criteria
Natural Heritage	Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest. Presence of wildlife and habitats that contribute to the sense of place. Landscape which contains valued natural capital assets that contribute to ecosystem services.
Cultural Heritage	Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest. Landscape which contributes to the significance of heritage assets. Landscape which offers a dimension of time depth.
Landscape Condition	Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure. Absence of detracting/incongruous features.
Associations	Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts.
Distinctiveness	Landscape that has a strong sense of identity or place. Presence of distinctive features that are characteristic of a place, or presence of rare/unusual features that confer a strong sense of place. Includes landscape that makes an important contribution to the character or identity of a settlement.
Recreational	Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important. Includes open access areas, common land and rights of way where appreciation of the landscape is an important element of the experience. Landscape that forms part of a view that that is important to the enjoyment of a recreational activity.
Perceptual (Scenic)	Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense. Distinctive features, or distinctive combinations of features. Strong aesthetic qualities. Visual diversity or contrasts. Memorable/distinctive views or landmarks, or landscape that contributes to these.
Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)	Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably remoteness, wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies.
Functional	Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape. Natural hydrological systems, important parts of the green infrastructure network, pollinator rich habitats. Landscapes that have strong physical or functional links with an adjacent national landscape designation, or are important to the appreciation of the designated landscape and its special qualities.

7.2.3 Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors to Change

As set out in GLVIA3, susceptibility refers to the ability of the landscape receptor to “*accommodate the proposed development without undue adverse consequences for the baseline situation and/or the*



achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies". Judgement of susceptibility is particular to the specific characteristics of the proposed development and the ability of a particular landscape or feature to accommodate the type of change proposed, and makes reference to the criteria set out in Table A3 below. Aspects of the character of the landscape that may be affected by a particular type of development include landform, skylines, land cover, enclosure, human influences including settlement pattern and aesthetic and perceptual aspects such as the scale of the landscape, its form, line, texture, pattern and grain, complexity, and its sense of movement, remoteness, wildness or tranquillity.

For example, an urban landscape which contains a number of industrial buildings may have a low susceptibility to buildings of a similar scale and character. Conversely a rural landscape containing only remote farmsteads is likely to have a high susceptibility to large scale built development.

Table A3: Landscape Receptor Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	The landscape receptor is highly susceptible to the proposed development because the key characteristics of the landscape have no or very limited ability to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.
Medium	The landscape receptor is moderately susceptible to the proposed development because the relevant characteristics of the landscape have some ability to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.
Low	The landscape receptor has low susceptibility to the proposed development because the relevant characteristics of the landscape are generally able to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.

7.2.4 Defining Sensitivity

As has been noted above, the sensitivity of landscape receptors is defined in terms of the relationship between value and susceptibility to change as indicated in Figure A1 below. This summarises the general nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic and only indicates general categories of sensitivity. Professional judgement is applied on a case by case basis in determining sensitivity of individual receptors with the diagram only serving as a guide.

Table A4 below summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic and only indicates general categories of sensitivity. Judgements are made about each landscape receptor, with the table serving as a guide.

Where, taking into account the component judgements about the value and susceptibility of the landscape receptor, sensitivity is judged to lie between levels, an intermediate assessment of high/medium or medium/low is adopted. In a few limited cases a category of less than low (very low) may be used where the landscape is of low value and susceptibility is particularly low.



Figure A1: Example Levels of Sensitivity defined by Value and Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors

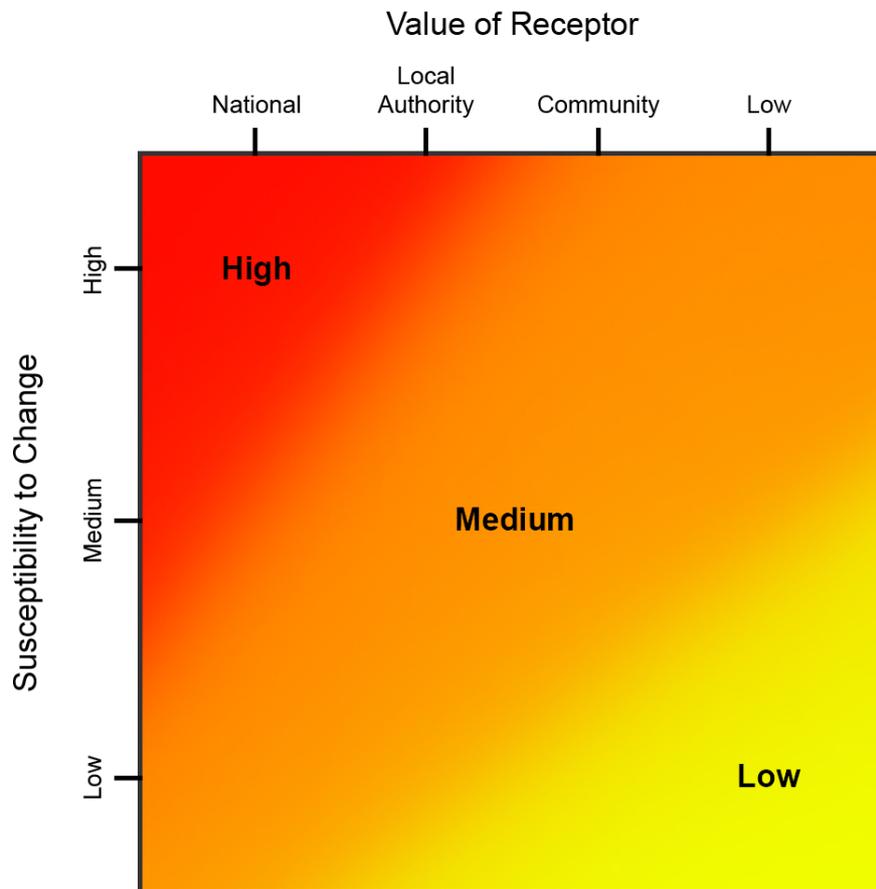


Table A4: Example Levels of Sensitivity defined by Value and Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	The landscape receptor is of international or national value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development OR The landscape receptor is of national value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development.
Medium	The landscape receptor is of international or national value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development OR The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development OR The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development. OR The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development
Low	The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development OR The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development OR The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development.

7.2.5 Magnitude of Landscape Change

The magnitude of landscape change is established by assessing the size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration and potential reversibility of the change.

7.2.6 Size and Scale of Change

The size and/or scale of change in the landscape takes into consideration the following factors:

- the extent/proportion of landscape elements lost or added; and/or
- the degree to which aesthetic/perceptual aspects are altered; and
- whether this is likely to change the key characteristics of the landscape.

The criteria used to assess the size and scale of landscape change are based upon the amount of change that will occur as a result of the proposed development, as described in Table A5 below.

Table A5: Magnitude of Landscape Change: Size/Scale of Change

Category	Description
Large level of landscape change	There would be a large level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example, the proposed development: becomes a dominant feature in the landscape, changing the balance of landscape characteristics; and/or would dominate important visual connections with other landscape types, where this is a key characteristic of the area.



Category	Description
Medium level of landscape change	There would be a medium level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example: the proposed development would be more prominent but would not change the overall balance or composition of the landscape; and/or key views to other landscape types may be interrupted intermittently by the proposed development, but these views would not be dominated by them.
Small level of landscape change	There would be a small level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example: there would be no introduction of new elements into the landscape and the proposed development would not significantly change the composition/balance of the landscape.
Negligible/no level of landscape change	There would be a negligible or no level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example, the proposed development would be a small element and/or would be a considerable distance from the receptor.

7.2.7 Geographical Extent of Change

The geographical extent of landscape change is assessed by determining the area over which the changes will influence the landscape, as set out in Table A6. For example this could be at the site level, in the immediate setting of the site, or over some or all of the landscape character types or areas affected.

Table A6: Magnitude of Landscape Change: Geographical Extent

Category	Description
Large extent of landscape change	Affects a wider area, far from the site itself.
Medium extent of landscape change	Landscape change extends beyond the site boundaries.
Small extent of landscape change	Change affecting a localised area, often focused on the site itself.
Negligible extent of landscape change	The change will affect only a negligible extent of the landscape receptor under consideration.

7.2.8 Duration and Reversibility of Change

The duration of the landscape change is categorised in Table A7 below, which considers whether the change will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

Table A7: Magnitude of Landscape Change: Duration and Reversibility

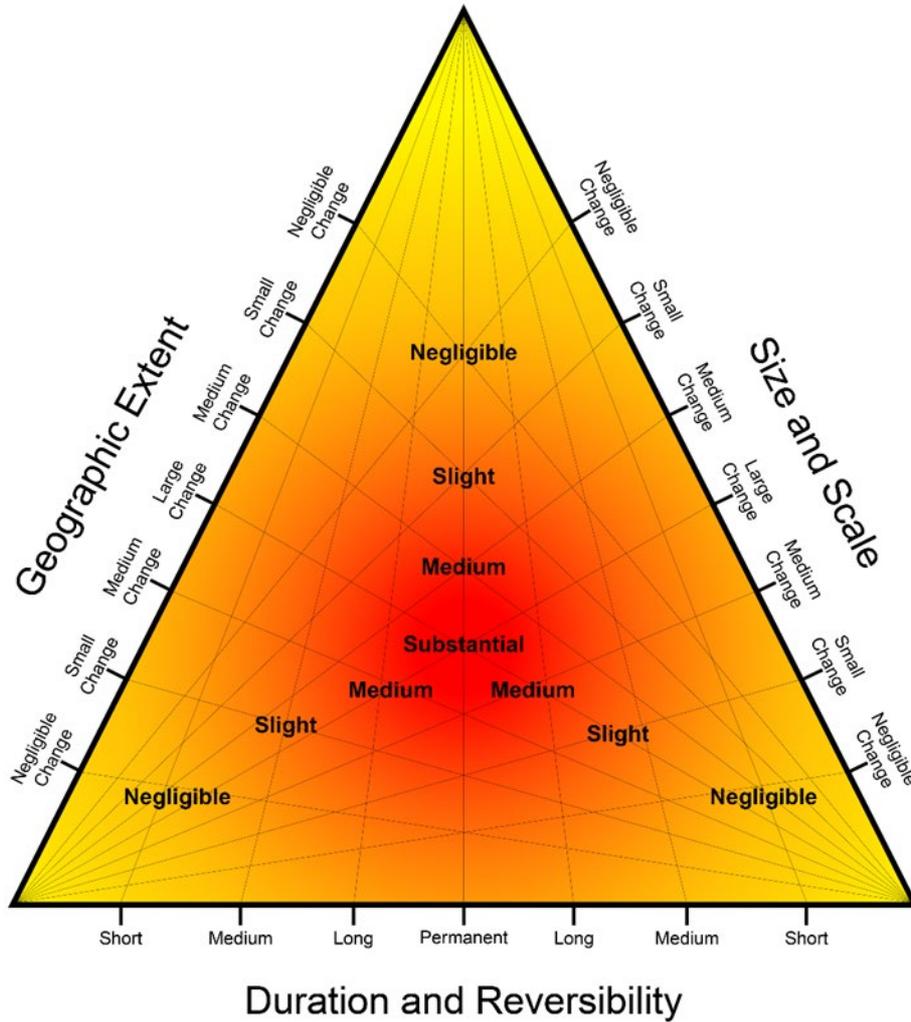
Category	Description
Permanent/Irreversible	Effects that will last for over 25 years and is deemed irreversible.
Long term reversible	Effects that last for over 10 years and are theoretically reversible.
Medium term reversible	Effects that will last up to 10 years and is wholly or partially reversible.
Temporary/Short term reversible	Effects that will last from 0 to 5 years - includes construction effects.

7.2.9 Deciding on Overall Magnitude of Landscape Change

The relationships between the three factors that contribute to assessment of the magnitude of landscape effects are illustrated graphically, as a guide, in Diagram A2 below. Various combinations are possible and the overall magnitude of each effect is judged on merit rather than by formulaic application of the relationships in the diagram.



Figure A2: Determining the Magnitude of Landscape Change



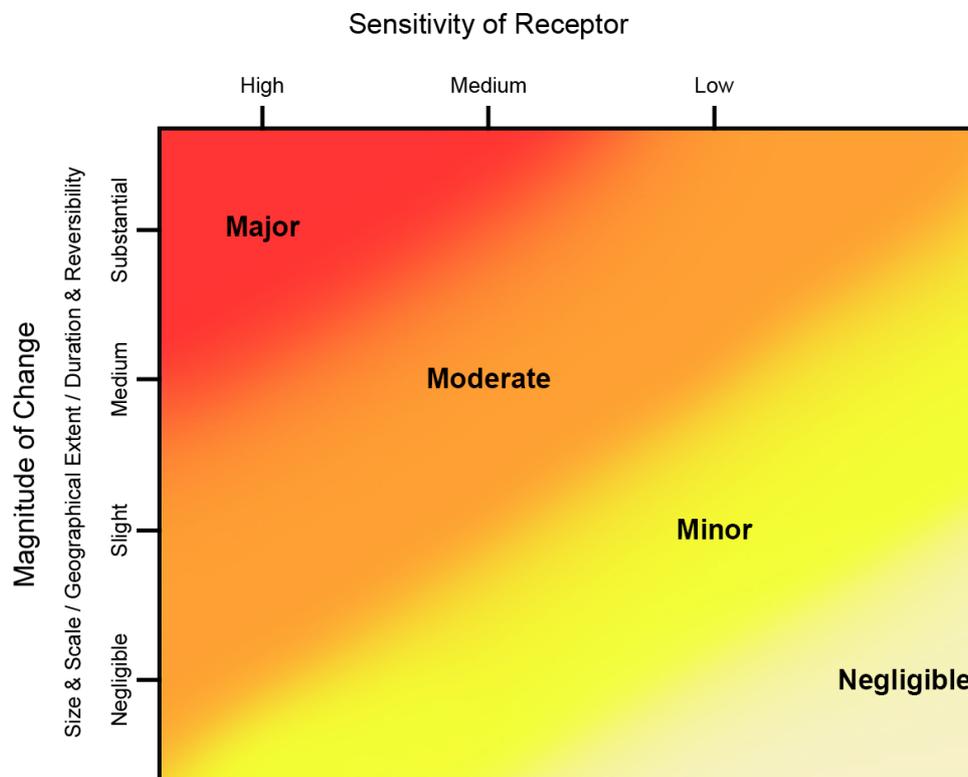
7.2.10 Assessment of Landscape Effects and Significance

The assessment of overall landscape effects is defined in terms of the relationship between the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of the change. The diagram below (Figure A3) summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic. Judgements are made about each landscape effect using this diagram as a guide.

Major and Major/Moderate effects are regarded as important planning considerations in landscape and visual appraisals (or significant effects in landscape and visual impact assessments). Moderate effects are not generally considered to be important planning considerations/significant effects, although the assessor may conclude that some moderate effects could constitute significant effects in certain circumstances: for example, there may be a concentration of several moderate effects in one location, or a moderate effect may occur for a particularly sensitive receptor or be of a particularly high magnitude.



Figure A3: Assessment of Landscape Effects



7.3 Visual Effects

Visual effects are the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. Visual receptors are the people whose views may be affected by the proposed development. They generally include users of public rights of way or other recreational facilities or attractions; travellers who may pass through the study area because they are visiting, living or working there; residents living in the study area, either as individuals or, more often, as a community; and people at their place of work.

- Communities within settlements (i.e. towns, villages and hamlets);
- Residents of individual properties and clusters of properties;
- People using nationally designated or regionally promoted footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways and others using areas of Open Access Land agreed under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- Users of the local public rights of way (PRoW) network;
- Visitors at publicly accessible sites including, for example, gardens and designed landscapes, historic sites, and other visitor attractions or outdoor recreational facilities where the landscape or seascape is an important part of the experience;
- Users of outdoor sport and recreation facilities;
- Visitors staying at caravan parks or camp sites;
- Road users on recognised scenic or promoted tourist routes;
- Users of other roads;
- Rail passengers;



- People at their place of work.

Judging visual effects requires a methodical assessment of the sensitivity of the visual receptors to the proposed development and the magnitude of effect which would be experienced by each receptor.

Viewpoints are chosen, in discussion with the competent authority and other stakeholders and interested parties, for a variety of reasons but most commonly because they represent views experienced by relevant groups of people.

7.3.1 Visual Sensitivity

Sensitivity of visual receptors is assessed by combining an assessment of the susceptibility of visual receptors to the type of change which is proposed with the value attached to the views. (GLVIA3, paragraph 6.30).

7.3.2 Value Attached to Views

Different levels of value are attached to the views experienced by particular groups of people at particular viewpoints. Assessment of value takes account of a number of factors, including:

- Recognition of the view through some form of planning designation or by its association with particular heritage assets; and
- The popularity of the viewpoint, in part denoted by its appearance in guidebooks, literature or art, or on tourist maps, by information from stakeholders and by the evidence of use including facilities provided for its enjoyment (seating, signage, parking places, etc.); and
- Other evidence of the value attached to views by people including consultation with local planning authorities and professional assessment of the quality of views.

The assessment of the value of views is summarised in Table A8 below. These criteria are provided for guidance only.

Table A8: Factors Considered in assessing the Value Attached to Views

Value	Criteria
High	Views from nationally (and in some cases internationally) known viewpoints, which: have some form of planning designation; or are associated with internationally or nationally designated landscapes or important heritage assets; or are promoted in sources such as maps and tourist literature; or are linked with important and popular visitor attractions where the view forms a recognised part of the visitor experience; or have important cultural associations. Also may include views judged by assessors to be of high value.
Medium	Views from viewpoints of some importance at regional or local levels, which: have some form of local planning designation associated with locally designated landscapes or areas of equivalent landscape quality; or are promoted in local sources; or are linked with locally important and popular visitor attractions where the view forms a recognised part of the visitor experience; or have important local cultural associations. Also may include views judged by the assessors to be of medium value.
Low	Views from viewpoints which, although they may have value to local people: have no formal planning status; or are not associated with designated or otherwise high quality landscapes; or



Value	Criteria
	are not linked with popular visitor attractions; or have no known cultural associations. Also may include views judged by the assessors to be of low value.

7.3.3 Susceptibility of Visual Receptors to Change

The susceptibility of different types of people to changes in views is mainly a function of:

- The occupation or activity of the viewer at a given viewpoint; and
- The extent to which the viewer's attention or interest be focussed on a particular view and the visual amenity experienced at a given view.

The susceptibility of different groups of viewers is assessed with reference to the guidance in Table A9 below. However, as noted in GLVIA3 *“this division is not black and white and in reality there will be a gradation in susceptibility to change”*. Therefore the susceptibility of each group of people affected is considered for each project and assessments are included in the relevant text in the report.

Table A9: Visual Receptor Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	Residents; People engaged in outdoor recreation where their attention is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views; Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions where views of the surroundings are an important part of the experience; Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by the residents.
Medium	Travellers on scenic routes where the attention of drivers and passengers is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views. People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which may involve appreciation of views e.g. users of golf courses.
Low	People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which does not involve appreciation of views; People at their place of work whose attention is focused on their work Travellers, where the view is incidental to the journey.

7.3.4 Defining Sensitivity

The sensitivity of visual receptors is defined in terms of the relationship between the value of views and the susceptibility of the different receptors to the proposed change. Figure A4 below summarises the nature of the relationship; it is not formulaic and only indicates general categories of sensitivity. Judgements are made on merit about each visual receptor, with the table below only serving as a guide. Table A10 sets down the main categories that may occur but again it is not comprehensive and other combinations may occur.

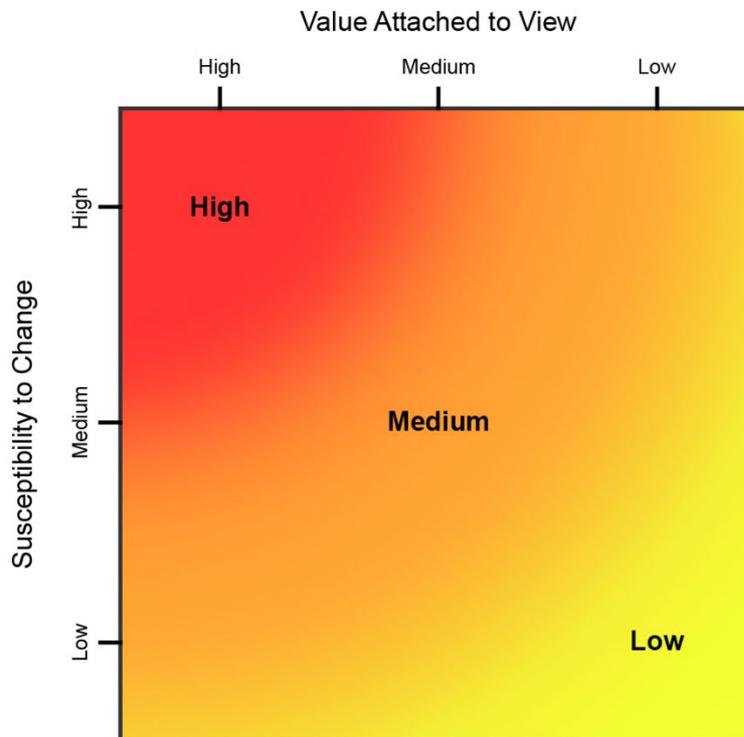
Table A10: Example Levels of Sensitivity defined by Value and Susceptibility of Visual Receptors

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of high value OR The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of high value OR The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the medium level.



Sensitivity	Criteria
Medium	The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the low level OR The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the medium level OR The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the high level.
Low	The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the low level OR The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the medium level OR The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the low level.

Figure A4: Levels of Sensitivity Defined by Value attached to View and Susceptibility of Visual Receptor Groups



7.3.5 Magnitude of Visual Change

The magnitude of visual change is established by assessing the size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration and potential reversibility of the change.



7.3.6 Size and Scale of Change

The criteria used to assess the size and scale of visual change at each viewpoint are as follows:

- the scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view, changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development and distance of view;
- the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of factors such as form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture; and
- the nature of the view of the proposed development, for example whether views will be full, partial or glimpses or sequential views while passing through the landscape.

The above criteria are summarised in the Table A11 below.

Table A11: Magnitude of Visual Change: Size/Scale of Change

Category	Criteria
Large visual change	The proposed development will cause a complete or large change in the view, resulting from the loss of important features in or the addition of significant new ones, to the extent that this will substantially alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers.
Medium visual change	The proposed development will cause a clearly noticeable change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will alter to a moderate degree the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be partial/intermittent.
Small visual change	The proposed development will cause a perceptible change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will partially alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be partial only.
Negligible visual change	The proposed development will cause a barely perceptible change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will barely alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be glimpsed only.
No change	The proposed development will cause no change to the view.

7.3.7 Geographical Extent of Change

The geographical extent of the visual change identified at representative viewpoints is assessed by reference to a combination of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), where this has been prepared, and field work, and consideration of the criteria in Table A12 below. Representative viewpoints are used as 'sample' points to assess the typical change experienced by different groups of visual receptors at different distances and directions from the proposed development. The geographical extent of the visual change is judged for each group of receptors: for example, people using a particular route or public amenity, drawing on the viewpoint assessments, plus information about the distribution of that particular group of people in the Study Area.

The following factors are considered for each representative viewpoint:

- the angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
- the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development; and
- the extent of the area over which changes would be visible.

Thus, low levels of change identified at representative viewpoints may be extensive or limited in terms of the geographical area they are apparent from: for example, a view of the proposed development from elevated Access Land may be widely visible from much or all of the accessible area, or may be confined to a small proportion of the area. Similarly, a view from a public footpath may be visible from a single isolated viewpoint, or over a prolonged stretch of the route. Community views may be experienced from a small number of dwellings, or affect numerous residential properties.



Table A12: Magnitude of Visual Change: Geographical Extent of Change

Category	Description
Large extent of visual change	The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors in many locations across the Study Area or from the majority of a linear route and/or by large numbers of viewers; or the effect on the specific view(s) is extensive.
Medium extent of visual change	The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors from a medium number of locations across the Study Area or from a medium part of a linear route and/or by a medium number of viewers; or the effect on the specific view is moderately extensive.
Small extent of visual change	The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors at a small number of locations across the Study Area or from only limited sections of a linear route and/or by a small number of viewers; or the effect on a specific view is small.
Negligible extent of visual change	The proposed development is either not visible in the Study Area or is seen by the receptor group at only one or two locations or from a very limited section of a linear route and/or by only a very small number of receptors; or the effect on the specific view is barely discernible.

7.3.8 Duration and Reversibility of Change

The duration of the visual change at viewpoints is categorised in Table A13 below, which considers whether views will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

Table A13: Duration and Reversibility

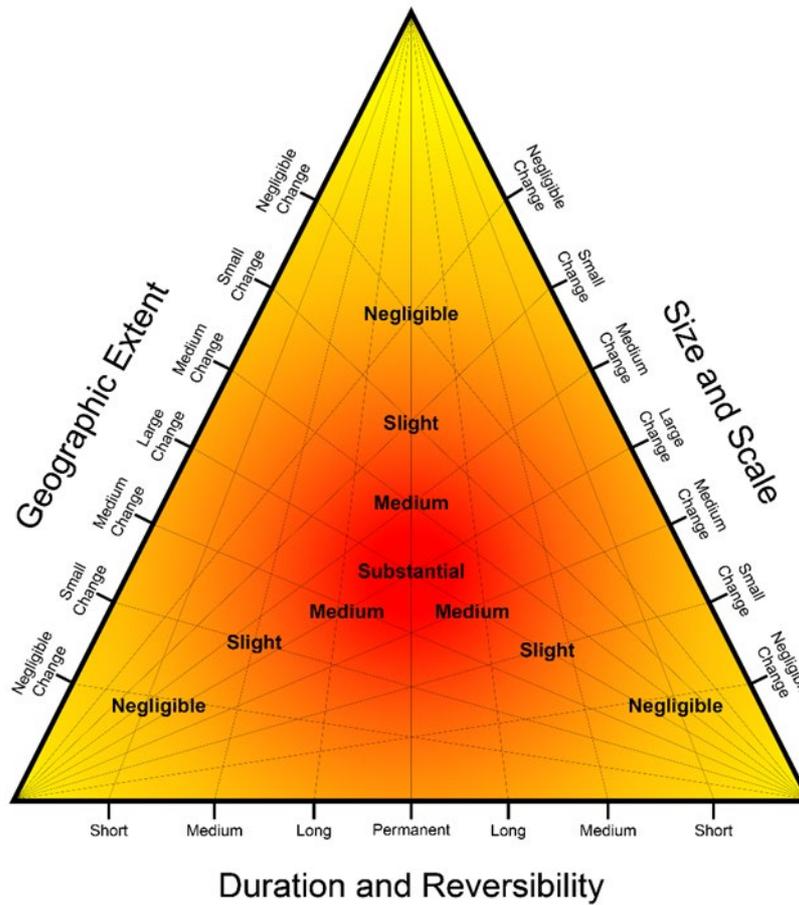
Category	Description
Permanent/ Irreversible	Effects that will last for over 25 years and is deemed irreversible.
Long term reversible	Effects that last for over 10 years and are theoretically reversible.
Medium term reversible	Effects that will last up to 10 years and is wholly or partially reversible.
Temporary/Short term reversible	Effects that will last from 0 to 5 years - includes construction effects.

7.3.9 Deciding on Overall Magnitude of Visual Change

The relationships between the three factors that contribute to assessment of the magnitude of visual effects are illustrated graphically, as a guide, in Figure A5, below. Various combinations are possible and the overall magnitude of each effect is judged on merit rather than by formulaic application of the relationships in the diagram.



Figure A5: Determining the Magnitude of Visual Change



7.3.10 Assessment of Visual Effects and Significance

The assessment of visual effects is defined in terms of the relationship between the sensitivity of the visual receptors (value and susceptibility) and the magnitude of the change. The diagram below (Figure A6) summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic and only indicates broad levels of effect. Judgements are made about each visual effect using this diagram as a guide.

Major and Major/Moderate effects are regarded as important planning considerations in landscape and visual appraisals (or significant effects in landscape and visual impact assessments). Moderate effects are not generally considered to be important planning considerations/significant effects, although the assessor may conclude that some moderate effects could constitute significant effects in certain circumstances: for example, there may be a concentration of several moderate effects in one location, or a moderate effect may occur for a particularly sensitive receptor or be of a particularly high magnitude.



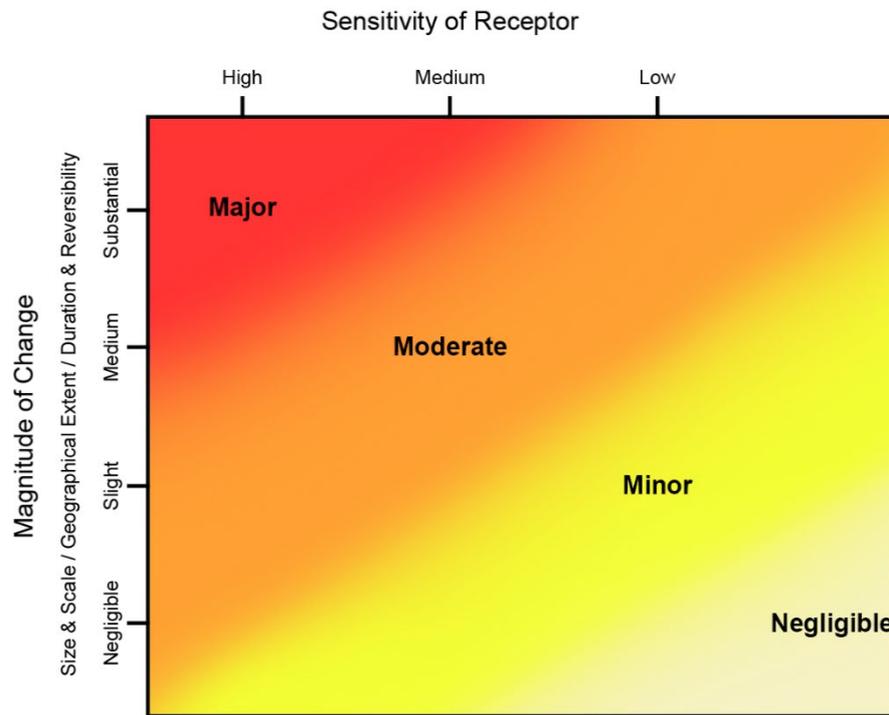


Figure A6: Assessment of Visual Effects



APPENDIX B

Methodology for Preparing Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)



7.1 Introduction

A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has been produced (refer to drawing SC4) to provide an objective assessment of the potential theoretical visibility of the proposed development. A site layout of the proposed development has been supplied by OSP Architects (24125-SK101N). The proposed dwellings have then been computer modelled and placed in a detailed terrain model along with;

- An arboricultural model of existing on-site vegetation (information taken from SJA Trees, Tree Survey Schedule and Tree Removal Plan (November 2025));
- Proposed platform levels appended to OS Terrain 5 data;
- Existing buildings and significant areas of vegetation outside of the site taken from Vector Map Local Mapping; and
- Additional vegetation shown at a conservative estimate of 2m to 10m respectively within 2km of the site which has been recognised through desk top and on site assessment.

The ZTV **does not include any proposed trees**. Therefore, the extent of visibility is defined by topography, existing/proposed buildings and existing vegetation.

Existing Features

Topographic data for the landform is derived from OS Terrain 5 data. For barriers offsite, vegetation and building heights are given arbitrary heights providing an approximation of existing land features.

Proposed Development

The ZTVs have been based on the site layout provided by OSP Architecture.

To generate the ZTV the receptor point grid interval was set to a 10m grid with an eye height of 1.5m. This means that LSS was able to calculate, for every point at 10 metre intervals in the surrounding landscape, whether the proposed development would be visible. In addition to the grid intervals representative target points (up to 40) were selected across the target area.

The ZTV output file from LSS calculates, for every receptor point, not just whether the development can be seen, but also what vertical angle of the development can be seen. This provides a useful guide as to what the likely magnitude of visual impact will be at any point around the site. For comparison, a two-storey house, at an average height of 8m, would subtend a vertical angle of 4.58° at 100m, 2.29° at 200m, 0.92° at 500m and 0.46° at 1km.

This ZTV assessment includes all visible angles over 0.25 degrees. Field survey identified that visibility was only likely to be possible for angles over 0.25 degrees.



APPENDIX C

Methodology for Preparing Photomontages



7.2 Introduction

Winter photographs have been taken for all representative viewpoints, and photomontages have been prepared to illustrate the potential visual effects of the proposals at years 1 and 15 for four of the representative viewpoints.

7.2.1 Viewpoint Photographs

Photography was obtained using a full frame digital Single Lens Reflex (DSLR) camera mounted with a 50 mm 'fixed' lens (Nikon D750). The camera was mounted on a tripod with a panoramic head in order to obtain a stable platform and the single frame and panoramic views. The position of the tripod was recorded with a handheld GPS device. In addition to recording the location of the viewpoint, observations relating to time of day, weather, cloud cover, and visibility were recorded.

Following completion of the fieldwork, the photography was reviewed and the clearest images selected for the production of panoramic images. In some cases, small adjustments were made to the images through the use of Adobe Photoshop software in order to improve clarity. The panoramas were then prepared through the joining of individual frames in Photoshop to generate 360 degree panoramas.

Viewpoint photographs are presented as a cylindrical panoramic image at A1 width. Presented field of view is 39.6° x 27° (Horizontal x Vertical). Viewing distance is 50cm.

Photomontages

Type 4 Photomontages have been prepared for the following viewpoints (year 1 and year 15). Viewpoint locations are shown on an extract from the Viewpoint Location Plan on **figure C1** below:

Viewpoint 1: Looking south across the site from bridgeway 9hu and existing access road.

Viewpoint 3: Looking east towards the site from bridgeway 9hu.

Viewpoint 7: Looking south-west across the site from footpath 10hu.

Viewpoint 10: Looking west into the site at the vehicular entrance from London Road.

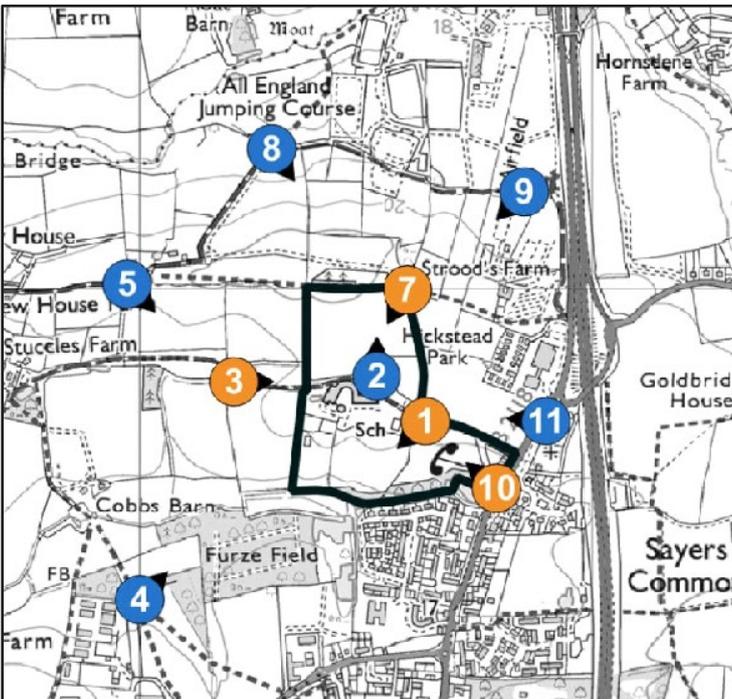


Figure C1: Viewpoint Locations used in the SLR LVA. Viewpoints 1, 3, 7 and 10 have been used for Photomontages.



7.2.2 The Proposed Buildings

The residential proposals are in outline and there are therefore no details of the proposed building design. However, the site layout prepared by OSP Architecture, drawing reference 24125 - SK101N, indicates potential building positions. For building heights, all proposed dwellings are shown at two-storey, a maximum of 9m. Apartment blocks are shown as a combination of 2 and 2.5-storey buildings, a maximum of 11.5m.

Indicative materials are shown and are taken from imagery in the Design and Access Statement prepared by OSP Architecture (see “Appearance” section of the DAS).

The proposed SEN school is a detailed application and therefore details of the proposed building are available. The school design would be as shown on drawing 323_3_201 produced by ECA Architects, and a maximum height of 12m. Further details such as materials, roofline etc are found within the Design and Access Statement prepared by ECA Architects.

7.2.3 Proposed Planting Heights

Views at year 1 show woodland and hedgerow planting in 60cm tubes, whereas street trees are shown as light standards 2.5 to 3m tall. Views at year 15 show woodland planting at 7.5 to 8m tall, street trees at 8 to 10m tall, and hedgerows between 2.5m and 3m high, depending upon the character and position of the hedgerow.

Examples on growth rates for photomontages prepared by IEMA states that the growth rate for a 30-45cm transplant is typically 30cm per year in the first three years, increasing to 50cm per year for subsequent years. On this basis trees planted as young stock would achieve a height of 7.5 metres in 15 years.

7.2.4 Detailed Methodology

This Technical Methodology is produced as part of the requirements of the Landscape Institute Visual Representation of Development Proposals (VRDP) Technical Guidance Note 06/19 (17 September 2019), which states:

*‘2.3 Visualisations should: be accompanied by appropriate information, including a Technical Methodology and **required data within page title blocks** (Appendix 7.2 and 10);’*

In Table 2 – Visualisation Types 1-4 (VRDP) indications are given in terms of the detail of reporting required in the Technical Appendix, under ‘Reporting Methodology and Data Sources’. This indicates that an outline description of sources is recommended and a methodology for Visualisations Type 1 and 2, with increasing detail through Visualisation Type 3 to Visualisation Type 4.

Appendix 7 paragraph 7.2.2 of the VRDP states;

‘A Technical Methodology should be provided as an Appendix to Type 3 and 4 visualisations. This will assist recipients with understanding the level of technical approach and also explain reasoning for any departures from standards. This should be proportionate to the requirements of the assessment and the required images. See Appendix 10.’

The VRPD (paragraph 3.5.2) identifies 4 types of visualisations as follows, with Type 1 being the least technically sophisticated and Type 4 the most sophisticated:

Type 1 annotated viewpoint photographs;

Type 2 3D wireline / model;

Type 3 photomontage / wireline; and

Type 4 photomontage / wire (survey / scale verifiable).



Table 1 - Relationships between Purpose, User and Visualisation Types (VRDP) indicates the relationship between the types of visualisation and the purpose and intended users of the various visualisations. It is noted in 3.5.6 of the VRDP that categories of user and purpose (i.e. A-D) illustrate four convenient levels along a scale and provide a broad indication as to the appropriate visualisation types for the different levels of users and purposes not a definitive relationship.

Paragraph 3.7.1 of the VRDP guidance states:

‘For any given project for which visual representation may be required, the proposed approach to visualisation should be set out in a brief description, explaining:

- the anticipated Purpose / Users;
- the indicative assessment of Sensitivity and Magnitude and resulting likely indicative overall Degree or Level of Effect; and
- other factors influencing the selection of the Visualisation Type.’

Table C1: Visualisation Type

Factor	Proposed Approach
Purpose / Users	Planning Application for Non-EIA development. Users: Planning Authority, Council’s landscape consultant, public and consultees.
Indicative overall Assessment levels	Sensitive receptors close to the site, who may experience a high magnitude of effect as proposed development would be close in several views.
Other factors influencing visualisation type	Concerns regarding landscape and visual effects were expressed in pre-app consultations.

Appendix 10 of the VRDP identifies an ‘Indicative Listing’ of information for each project that should be provided within the overall Technical Methodology. The required information is contained in this document (Appendix 2A) in Table 2: Overall Technical Details.

In addition, Appendix 10 of the VRDP also identifies the technical information required **Per Viewpoint** and to be provided on each page of the photograph / visualisation in a series of figure notes. This information is recorded on the visualisation drawings prepared for this assessment.



APPENDIX D

Assessment of potential landscape effects



The following tables set out the sensitivity of the landscape receptors to the proposed development, and the magnitude of landscape effects that those receptors would experience as a result of the proposed development. A commentary on the significance of landscape effects is also included in this section.

These tables should be read in conjunction with section 4.0 of the report, which provides an overview of the potential landscape effects of the development.

Table D1: EVALUATION OF THE VALUE OF THE SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT IN ACCORDANCE WITH TABLE 1 OF ‘ASSESSING LANDSCAPE VALUE – A TECHNICAL GUIDANCE NOTE’

Factor	Assessment	Notes
Natural Heritage	Community	<p>The site comprises school buildings, access track, car parking and open space including a levelled pitch at the centre. Two residential dwellings on the eastern edge, grassland fields to the south and a pastoral field and grassland field to the north.</p> <p>It is located on the northern settlement edge of Sayers Common.</p> <p>The majority of the site boundaries are formed by well-established hedgerows and hedgerow trees. The hedgerows that bind the fields are all of category C, low quality. The trees are primarily category B, moderate quality, or C, with the occasional category A tree, good quality, and category U tree, <i>‘Trees in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years’</i>. For further details please refer to the SJA Tree Survey Schedule (Nov 2025).</p> <p>There are no ecological designations within the site or its immediate vicinity.</p>
Cultural Heritage	Community	<p>There are no designated heritage assets located within the Site. The nearest designated heritage asset is the Grade II Listed Kingscot located c.50m south of the Site.</p> <p>The 1970s Priory buildings within the site have, however, been identified by Mid Sussex District Council as non-designated heritage assets within the terms of the NPPF.</p>
Landscape condition	Community	<p>As stated above, the hedgerows are of low quality (cat. C) and the trees vary between good quality (cat. A) and very low quality (cat. U).</p> <p>The ecological surveys found that the grassland fields are in poor condition and the grassland around the school and dwellings is moderate condition.</p> <p>The site does comprise existing school buildings infrastructure, and is also influenced by the settlement edge, London Road and the A23; all of which are detracting features. However, influences of these features is limited by the well-established vegetation around the site.</p>
Associations	Low	No associations in literature, art or other media.
Distinctiveness	Community	<p>The site and its immediate context strongly align with the key characteristics of LCA 4. For instance, <i>“a mosaic of small and larger fields, scattered woodlands, shaws and hedgerows with hedgerow trees”</i> and <i>“Crossed by north-south roads including the A23 Trunk Road”</i>. The site and its immediate context also align with <i>“Quieter and more secluded, confined rural landscape to the west, much more development to the east, centred on</i></p>



		<i>Burgess Hill</i> ” as given the sites central location within the LCA, it partially aligns with both a “ <i>secluded, confined rural landscape</i> ” but with some influence from built form.
Recreational	Community	Public bridleway 9Hu extends through the site, east to west, and public footpath 10Hu is located immediately north of the site.
Perceptual (Scenic)	Community/ Low	The grassland fields and well-established vegetation that form part of the site provide scenic qualities, as does the chapel and distant views of the South Downs. However, the scenic quality is reduced by the other school buildings within the site and the influence of the settlement edge and road network.
Perceptual (Wilderness and tranquillity)	Community/ Low	Despite the grassland fields within the site, well-established vegetation and distance views of the South Downs, the sense of wilderness and tranquillity within the site is limited due to the site comprising existing school buildings and infrastructure, and being influenced by the settlement edge and road network.
Functional	Community	The well-established vegetation within the site does contribute to biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Network. However, otherwise, the landscape within the site does not contribute to the healthy functioning of the landscape or have a strong physical or functional link to either the South Downs or High Weald.

The site comprises school buildings, infrastructure and open spaces, two residential dwellings, grassland fields and pastoral field. It is primarily bound by hedgerows and trees which are well-established but vary in condition. The grassland across the site is primarily of poor condition. The existing built form within the site, along with the influence of the settlement edge and nearby roads, means that scenic quality and tranquillity is limited, although the well-established vegetation and distant views of the South Downs do provide some scenic qualities. The site and it’s immediate context is highly representative of LCA4, there is recreational access within and adjacent to the site, and the well-established vegetation within the site also contributes to the nearby GI network and biodiversity. When considering all of these factors the overall value of the site is assessed as **Community**.



Table D2: Assessment of Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

Landscape Receptors	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Notes
Individual Elements and Features				
School buildings, access track, car parking and associated open spaces	Community	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low	Urban elements generally have a low susceptibility to other urban elements as the landscape often has the ability to accommodate the proposed development without causing transformational adverse effects. However, as the proposed development would result in the majority of the school buildings and infrastructure being removed, with the exception being the Chapel and the majority of the access track, susceptibility is slightly increased.
Gently sloping fields on the settlement edge of Sayers Common	Community	High/ Medium	Medium	The grassland fields have an inherently high susceptibility to residential development, although this susceptibility is slightly reduced by the influence of the school buildings, settlement edge and nearby roads.
Network of hedgerows and trees along field boundaries	Community	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low	Wherever possible the existing vegetation would be retained and so only a small proportion of the existing vegetation would be lost, lowering the susceptibility. However, due to the well-vegetated nature of the site, the loss does equate to 82 individual trees, 3 tree groups, 6 portions of tree groups and 260m hedgerow, and therefore the overall susceptibility is marginally increased to medium/ low.
Aesthetic and Perceptual Aspects				
Small and medium scale and enclosed	Community	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Low	The introduction of residential dwellings and additional planting would increase the site's sense of enclosure. However, as the site is already enclosed by the well-established vegetation the site has the ability to accommodate the proposals without causing transformational adverse effects. Therefore, susceptibility is low for enclosure. For scale, the site's sense of scale would reduce as it would be divided into areas of built form and public open space. However, as built form is already present within the site and the site is already of small or medium scale, not large, the site does have some ability to accommodate the proposal, reducing in a medium susceptibility for scale. Overall, susceptibility is medium/ low.

Predominately simple, still and quiet but with some diversity from the school buildings, settlement edge and nearby roads	Community	High/ Medium	Medium	Despite the site comprising the existing school and being adjacent to the settlement edge and road network, the site remains primarily simple, still and quiet due to the enclosure of the site and the majority of the site comprising grassland fields. Therefore, the site has limited ability to accommodate the additional colours, noise, movement and lighting generated by the proposed development without causing transformational adverse effects. Resulting in a high/ medium susceptibility.
Overall Character				
The Site	Community	Medium	Medium	As noted above, grassland fields have an inherently high susceptibility to residential development. Although within this site susceptibility is partly reduced by the influence of the school buildings, settlement edge and nearby road. Other parts of the site already comprise built form and infrastructure and therefore have the ability to accommodate the proposed development without causing transformational adverse effects. Therefore, when taking into consideration these factors, susceptibility would be medium.
Local part of " <i>Hickstead Low Weald</i> "	Community	Medium	Medium	This landscape is predominantly rural comprising undulating agricultural fields and well-established vegetation but with localised influences from existing built form at Sayers Common and London Road, and influences of noise and lighting from the A23 which reduces the susceptibility to medium.
Local part of the South Downs National Park	National	Low	Medium	The South Downs comprises largely rural characteristics which increases its susceptibility to change. However, within its immediate context are settlements of varying sizes which directly influence the National Park. This partially reduces its susceptibility as residential development is already characteristic of the landscape. As the site is over 2.5km from the South Downs, the proposed development would also have very limited effect on the National Park. Therefore, the National Park has a low susceptibility to the change.

Table D3: Assessment of Magnitude of Landscape Change

Landscape Receptors	Size and Scale	Geographical Extent	Duration/ Reversibility	Magnitude	Notes
Individual Elements and Features					
School buildings, access track, car parking and associated open spaces	Large/ Medium	Small	Permanent	Medium	<p>The existing school buildings and infrastructure would be removed and replaced by a greater extent of built form (SEN school, up to 210 dwellings, infrastructure etc). Therefore, built form would form a larger element within the site and become a more dominant feature. However, as these aspects already existed within the site, the size and scale of change is marginally reduced.</p> <p>The proposed development would only remove and propose built form within the site, resulting in a small geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed changes would be permanent.</p>
Gently sloping fields on the settlement edge of Sayers Common	Large	Small	Permanent	Substantial/ Medium	<p>The proposed development would introduce buildings into an area that is currently grassland. Therefore, the existing land uses would not remain and the proposed development would become a dominant feature within the landscape. The sloping landform would also become less apparent as the residential plots would be individually levelled. Together this would result in a large size and scale of change.</p> <p>The proposed development would only alter the land use and topography within the site resulting in a small geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed changes would be permanent.</p>
Network of hedgerows and trees along field boundaries	Small	Small	Permanent	Slight	<p>Wherever possible, existing trees and hedgerows would be retained. Although despite this, the proposed development would require 82 individual trees, 3 tree groups, 6 portions of tree groups and 260m hedgerow to be removed to incorporate the proposed development parcels and circulation routes. All remaining hedgerows would be reinforced where necessary.</p>

					<p>In addition to the existing vegetation retained and reinforced, an abundance of new native trees, shrubs and hedgerows would be proposed throughout the site. This would retain a strong landscape structure within the site, along with provide additional habitat and foraging opportunities, and retain a substantial canopy cover within the site. In the short-term the proposed tree planting would recover 5,406m² of the 7,000m² canopy area removed to accommodate the proposals, and in the long-term the proposed canopy cover of 34,845m² would exceed the existing cover of 33,400m². This would also adhere to the relevant landscape management guidelines for LCA 4; “Where appropriate, increase tree cover in and around villages”, “Conserve and replant single oaks in hedgerows” and “Conserve, strengthen and manage existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees”. When considering these various aspects the proposed development would result in a small size and scale of change and of a neutral nature.</p> <p>There would be no effect on the vegetation outside of the site resulting in a small geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed changes would be permanent.</p>
Aesthetic and Perceptual Aspects					
Small and medium scale and enclosed	Medium	Small	Permanent	Medium/ Slight	<p>The proposed development would introduce new aspects of enclosure (dwellings, trees, lighting columns etc) into the site which would reduce the sense of scale and increase its enclosure. However, as the site is already of a small or medium scale, and surrounded by aspects of enclosure, the extent of this change is limited and would not change the overall balance. Together resulting in a medium size and scale of change.</p> <p>As the proposed development is only located within the site and the surrounding landscape is already influenced by built form and tree planting, the sense of scale and enclosure within the surrounding landscape would remain largely unaffected. Therefore, landscape effects would be focused on the site, resulting in a Small geographical extent.</p> <p>The development would be Permanent in duration.</p>

<p>Predominately simple, still and quiet but with some diversity from the school buildings, settlement edge and nearby roads</p>	<p>Large/ Medium</p>	<p>Medium/ Small</p>	<p>Permanent</p>	<p>Medum</p>	<p>Whilst some colours, textures, movement, noise and lighting can already be experienced within the site, the proposed development would result in greater quantities. Therefore, these colours, texture, noise, movement and lighting would become more prominent and partially alter the sites composition, resulting in a large/ medium size and scale of change.</p> <p>Whilst landscape effects would be focused on the site itself due to the enclosed nature of the site, they would also be experienced to the north and west of the site where the landscape becomes increasingly simple, still and quiet. Resulting in a medium/ small geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed changes would be permanent.</p>
<p>Overall Character</p>					
<p>The Site</p>	<p>Large/ Medium</p>	<p>Medium/ Small</p>	<p>Permanent</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Whilst the existing vegetation within the site would be primarily retained and the site does currently comprise some built form, the proposed development would still result in a notably greater extent of built form and result in currently undeveloped fields becoming residential development or a SEN school. Therefore, built form would become a dominant feature within the site and notable alter its character. When considering these factors, the size and scale of change would be large/ medium.</p> <p>Whilst landscape effects would be focused on the site itself due to the enclosed nature of the site, they would also be experienced to the north and west of the site where the landscape is less influenced by built form. Resulting in a medium/ small geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed changes would be permanent.</p>
<p>Local part of "<i>Hickstead Low Weald</i>"</p>	<p>Small</p>	<p>Medium/ Small</p>	<p>Permanent</p>	<p>Slight</p>	<p>The proposed development would result in numerous open fields becoming residential development and a SEN school. However, this landscape is already influenced by existing built form, including within the site itself, and therefore the proposed development would not introduce any new features or significantly alter the balance of the landscape.</p>

					<p>In addition to the land management guidelines noted within the hedgerow and trees section above, the proposed development would also be adhering to “ensure that any new development has a minimum impact on views from the downs and is integrated within the landscape” and “Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape” by retaining and enhancing the existing landscape structure within the site. When considering both of these aspects, the size and scale of change on the area would be medium.</p> <p>Whilst landscape effects would be focused on the site itself due to the enclosed nature of the site, they would also be experienced to the north and west of the site where the landscape is less influenced by built form. Resulting in a medium/ small geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed changes would be permanent.</p>
Local part of the South Downs National Park	No effect	No effect	Permanent	No effect	<p>As the proposed development is located outside of the National Park there would be no direct landscape effects.</p> <p>Due to the combination of the enclosed nature of the site and the site being located over 2.5km from the South Downs, indirect landscape effects are also unlikely. The South Downs is also already being influenced by existing settlements, some of which in far closer proximity and/ or larger, and the proposed development would be on the far edge of Sayers Common and therefore would not result in the settlement becoming closer to the designation. When taking into consideration these factors, it has been concluded that the South Downs would experience no direct or indirect landscape effects.</p>

Table D4: Assessment of Landscape Effects

Landscape Receptors	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Landscape Effects (Bold type = important planning consideration)	Nature of Effect (Positive, Neutral or Negative)
Individual Elements and Features				
School buildings, access track, car parking and associated open spaces	Medium/ Low	Medium	Moderate	Neutral
Gently sloping fields on the settlement edge of Sayers Common	Medium	Substantial/ Medium	Major/ Moderate	Negative
Network of hedgerows and trees along field boundaries	Medium/ Low	Slight	Moderate/ Minor	Neutral
Aesthetic and Perceptual Aspects				
Small and medium scale and enclosed	Medium/ Low	Medium/ Slight	Moderate/ Minor	Negative
Predominately simple, still and quiet but with some diversity from the school buildings, settlement edge and nearby roads	Medium	Medum	Moderate	Negative
Overall Character				
The Site	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Negative
Local part of " <i>Hickstead Low Weald</i> "	Medium	Slight	Moderate/ Minor	Negative
Local part of the South Downs National Park	Medium	No effect	No effect	Neutral

APPENDIX E

Assessment of potential visual effects

The following tables set out the sensitivity of visual receptors to the proposed development and the magnitude of visual effects that those receptors would experience as a result of the proposed development. A commentary on the significance of visual effects is also included in this section.

In assessing the magnitude, the effects immediately following completion of construction have been assessed, as well as the effects approximately 15 years after construction once the proposed new mitigation planting has established and is semi-mature.

These tables should be read in conjunction with section 5.0 of this report, which provides a full explanation of the potential visual effects of the development.

Table E1: Analysis of Sensitivity of Viewpoints/Visual Receptors

Viewpoint	Value Attached to View	Potential Receptors	Susceptibility of Receptors	Sensitivity	Notes
1. Looking south across the site from bridleway 9Hu and existing access road.	Medium	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers	High	Medium/ High	Recreational walkers are likely to be focused on the countryside. Cyclists and Horse Riders are also likely to be focused on views but are transitional viewers.
2. Looking across the site from bridleway 9Hu, adjacent to the existing school buildings.	Medium	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers	High	Medium/ High	Recreational walkers are likely to be focused on the countryside. Cyclists and Horse Riders are also likely to be focused on views but are transitional viewers.
3. Looking east towards the site from bridleway 9Hu.	Medium	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers	High	Medium/ High	Recreational walkers are likely to be focused on the countryside. Cyclists and Horse Riders are also likely to be focused on views but are transitional viewers.
4. Looking north-east towards the site from footpath 1Al, on the edge of Valley Farm business park.	Medium	Walkers	High	High/Medium	Recreational walkers are likely to be focused on the countryside.
5. Looking south-east towards the site from where Bridleway 3HU intersects footpath 10Hu.	Medium	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers	High	Medium/ High	Recreational walkers are likely to be focused on the countryside. Cyclists and Horse Riders are also likely to be focused on views but are transitional viewers.
		Residents	High	Medium/ High	Residents are susceptible to changes in views.
6. Looking north-east towards the site from a field gate along Twineham Lane.	Low	Cyclists/ Pedestrians	High	Medium	Pedestrians are likely to be focused on views. Cyclists are likely to be focused on views but are transitional viewers.
		Vehicle Users	Medium	Medium/ Low	Vehicle users would be more focused on the journey ahead.

7. Looking south-west across the site from footpath 10Hu.	Medium	Walkers	High	High/Medium	Recreational walkers are likely to be focused on the countryside.
8. Looking south-east towards the site from where bridleway 3Hu.	Medium	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers	High	Medium/ High	Recreational walkers are likely to be focused on the countryside. Cyclists and Horse Riders are also likely to be focused on views but are transitional viewers.
9. Looking south-west towards the site from Bridleway 3Hu.	Medium	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers	High	Medium/ High	Recreational walkers are likely to be focused on the countryside. Cyclists and Horse Riders are also likely to be focused on views but are transitional viewers.
10. Looking west into the site at the vehicular entrance from London Road.	Low	Cyclists/ pedestrians Vehicle Users	High Medium	Medium Medium/ Low	Pedestrians are likely to be focused on views. Cyclists are likely to be focused on views but are transitional viewers. Vehicle users would be more focused on the journey ahead.
11. Looking west towards the site from London Road, north of the vehicular entrance.	Low	Cyclists/ pedestrians Vehicle Users Residents	High Medium High	Medium Medium/ Low Medium	Pedestrians are likely to be focused on views. Cyclists are likely to be focused on views but are transitional viewers. Vehicle users would be more focused on the journey ahead. Residents are susceptible to changes in views.
12. Looking west towards the site from where footpath 82Hu intersects Cuckfield Road.	Medium	Pedestrians/ Cyclists/ Walkers Vehicle Users	High Medium	High/Medium Medium	Pedestrians and walkers along footpaths are likely to be focused on views. Cyclists are likely to be focused on views but are transitional viewers. Vehicle users would be more focused on the journey ahead.
13. Looking north towards the site from Nuthatch Lane.	Low	Residents Pedestrians/ Cyclists	High High	Medium Medium	Residents are susceptible to changes in views. Pedestrians are likely to be focused on views. Cyclists are likely to be focused on views but are transitional viewers.

		Vehicle Users	Medium	Medium/ Low	Vehicle users would be more focused on the journey ahead.
14. Looking north towards the site from footpath 11AI at Albourne Green.	Medium	Walkers	High	High/Medium	Recreational walkers are likely to be focused on the countryside.
15. Looking north towards the site from footpath 22Py on Wolstonbury Hill within the South Downs National Park.	High	Walkers	High	High	Recreational walkers are likely to be focused on the countryside.

Table E2: Analysis of Magnitude of Visual Change

Viewpoint	Size and Scale of Change (after Construction)	Scale of Change (after 15 years)	Geographical Extent	Duration and Reversibility	Magnitude (Year 1 - after Construction)	Magnitude (after 15 years)	Notes
1. Looking south across the site from bridleway 9Hu and existing access road.	Large	Large/ Medium	Medium	Permanent	Substantial/ Medium	Medium	<p>Whilst the proposed development would be set back from this bridleway with hedgerows in between, it would still form a large element within this view and substantially alter its composition. Resulting in a large size and scale of change.</p> <p>Over time the proposed mixed native hedgerow and trees that extend alongside this bridleway would soften views and break up the mass of the proposed development built form. Therefore, the size and scale of change would reduce to large/ medium by year 15.</p> <p>The proposed development would be visible from the eastern half of bridleway 9Hu, resulting in a medium geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed development would be permanent.</p>
2. Looking across the site from bridleway 9Hu, adjacent to the existing school buildings.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Permanent	Medium	Medium	<p>The proposed development would surround this viewpoint and form a large element within the view. However, the existing school is already a large element within this view and the existing hedgerows to the west would be retained, screening views of the SEN school to the north-west and limiting views of the residential dwellings to the south-west. Therefore, the proposed development would cause a clearly noticeable change in view but would only change the composition to a moderate degree, resulting in a medium size and scale of change.</p>

							<p>The proposed planting within the streetscape would soften views of the built form over time. However, the proposed dwellings would remain noticeable and therefore a medium size and scale of change would remain.</p> <p>The proposed development would be visible from the eastern half of bridleway 9Hu, resulting in a medium geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed development would be permanent.</p>
3. Looking east towards the site from bridleway 9Hu.	Small	Small	Medium	Permanent	Slight	Slight	<p>During summer months views of the proposed development would be almost entirely screened with potentially for just glimpses of rooflines.</p> <p>During the winter months views of the proposed development would be available through the vegetation. As the existing school and chapel is already visible from the location during winter months no new elements would be introduced into the view. Built form would also be set back from this boundary. Therefore, the proposed development would only partially alter the composition of this view, resulting in a small size and scale of change.</p> <p>Over time the proposed native planting along the western boundary would further filter and screen views of the proposed development, reducing visual effects. However, at year 15 the proposed development would continue to cause a perceptible change in view during winter months and therefore a small size and scale of change would remain.</p> <p>The proposed development would be visible from the eastern half of bridleway 9Hu, resulting in a medium geographical extent.</p>

							The proposed development would be permanent.
4. Looking north-east towards the site from footpath 1A1, on the edge of Valley Farm business park.	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Due to the screening effect of the intervening vegetation, no views of the proposed development would be available from this location during both summer and winter months.
5. Looking south-east towards the site from where Bridleway 3HU intersects footpath 10Hu.	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Due to the screening effect of the intervening vegetation, no views of the proposed development would be available from this location during both summer and winter months. Only the roof of the existing chapel would remain visible.
6. Looking north-east towards the site from a field gate along Twineham Lane.	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Due to the screening effect of the intervening vegetation, no views of the proposed development would be available from this location during both summer and winter months. Only the roof of the existing chapel would remain visible.
7. Looking south-west across the site from footpath 10Hu.	Large/ Medium	Small	Small	Permanent	Medium	Slight	Clear views of the proposed development would be available from footpath 10Hu when immediately north of the site. The proposed development would form a substantial element within this view, however, as the proposed development would be set back by over 20m and built form is already a component of this view, visual effects are marginally reduced. Resulting in a large/ medium size and scale of change at year 1.

							<p>Over time, the proposed planting along the northern boundary and within the landscape buffer would progressively filter views and by Year 15 the proposed development would be almost entirely screened with just occasional glimpses of the roofline and possibly heavily filtered views through the vegetation during winter months. Therefore, the proposed development would only partially alter the composition of the view, resulting in a small the size and scale of change at Year 15.</p> <p>The proposed development would be seen from a short length of this footpath within the vicinity of this view, resulting in a small geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed development would be permanent.</p>
8. Looking south-east towards the site from where bridleway 3Hu.	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Due to the screening effect of the intervening vegetation and undulating landform, no views of the proposed development would be available from this location during both summer and winter months.
9. Looking south-west towards the site from Bridleway 3Hu.	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Due to the screening effect of the intervening vegetation, no views of the proposed development would be available from this location during both summer and winter months.
10. Looking west into the site at the vehicular entrance from London Road.	Medium	Medium/ Slight	Small	Permanent	Medium	Medium/ Slight	At year 1 clear views of the proposed access and dwellings would be available, with further dwellings in the background too. There would also be a noticeable loss in mature trees due to the new access route. However, as the existing entranceway already comprises dwellings and a vehicular access road, no new elements would be introduced and the degree of change to the composition of the view would be moderate. The proposed dwellings would also be further

							<p>stepped back from London Road than the existing bungalows. Together resulting in a medium size and scale of change.</p> <p>Over time the proposed hedgerow and trees along the site frontage would partially screen and filter views of the built form. The avenue trees along the new access road would also replicate existing conditions. Together reducing visual effects to medium/ slight by year 15.</p> <p>The proposed development would be seen from a small portion of London Road resulting in a small geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed development would be permanent.</p>
11. Looking west towards the site from London Road, north of the vehicular entrance.	Small	Small	Small	Permanent	Slight	Slight	<p>Filtered views of the proposed development would be available year round, although they would become more apparent during winter months when vegetation is not in leaf. The proposed development would be seen from over 250m, in the context of London Road and in place of existing school buildings. Although the proposed development would be more noticeable given its closer proximity and greater extents. Together this would result in a perceptible change in view and partially alter its composition, which equates to a small size and scale of change at year 1.</p> <p>Over time the proposed native planting along the eastern boundary and within the landscape buffer would progressively filter and eventually screen views. By year 15 it is assumed that the proposed development would remain perceptible during winter months though and therefore a small size and scale of change would remain.</p>

							<p>The proposed development would be seen from a small portion of London Road resulting in a small geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed development would be permanent.</p>
12. Looking west towards the site from where footpath 82Hu intersects Cuckfield Road.	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	<p>Due to the screening effect of the intervening vegetation, no views of the proposed development would be available from this location during both summer and winter months.</p>
13. Looking north towards the site from Nuthatch Lane.	<p>No effect</p> <p>(Residents – Medium)</p>	<p>No effect</p> <p>(Residents – Medium/ Small)</p>	<p>No effect</p> <p>(Residents – Small)</p>	<p>No effect</p> <p>(Residents – Permanent)</p>	<p>No effect</p> <p>(Residents – Medium/ Slight)</p>	<p>No effect</p> <p>(Residents – Medium/ Slight)</p>	<p>Due to the screening effect of the intervening vegetation and built form being set back from the southern boundary, those on ground level would experience no views of the proposed development during both summer and winter months.</p> <p>For residents on the upper-stories of their homes, heavily filtered views of the proposed development would be available during winter months. The proposed development would be set back by over 80m and as the school buildings would be a component within the existing view, no new elements would be introduced. Although the proposed development would be more noticeable given its greater extents and closer proximity and therefore would cause a moderate degree of change to the composition of the view. Resulting in a medium size and scale of change at year 1.</p> <p>Over time the proposed native trees and shrubs along the southern boundary would increasing filter and eventually screen views of the proposed development. By year 15, this additional planting will have made the development less noticeable and would only partially alter the composition of the view. Reducing visual effects to medium/ slight</p>

							Views of the proposed development would be experienced by residents in 15 dwellings along the northern edge of this development which is a small proportion of this development. Resulting a small geographical extent. The proposed development would be permanent.
14. Looking north towards the site from footpath 11Al at Albourne Green.	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Due to the screening effect of the intervening vegetation, no views of the proposed development would be available from this location during both summer and winter months. Only the roof of the existing chapel would remain visible.
15. Looking north towards the site from footpath 22Py on Wolstonbury Hill within the South Downs National Park.	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Permanent	Slight/ Negligible	Slight/ Negligible	The proposed development would be seen from approximately 5km away. The existing vegetation within the site would screen a large proportion of the proposed development, with only some rooves and the chapel being visible, so the proposed development would form a very small element within the view. The proposed development would also be seen alongside other built form a Sayers Common, and other settlements within the view, some of which larger and/ or in closer proximity. Therefore, when taking these various factors into consideration, the proposed development would barely be perceptible or change the composition of the view, resulting in a negligible size and scale of change at year 1. Over time the proposed planting within the site would further screen views of the proposed development and eventually no visual effects would be experienced from the South Downs. However, at year 15 it is assumed that the proposed development would remain barely perceptible and so a negligible size and scale of change would remain.

								<p>The proposed development would be seen from a very small selection of locations within the South Downs, resulting in a Negligible geographical extent.</p> <p>The proposed changes would be permanent.</p>
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Table E3: Assessment of Visual Effects

Viewpoint	Potential Receptors	Sensitivity	Magnitude (after Construction)	Magnitude (after 15 years)	Visual Effects (after Construction) (Bold type = Important Planning Consideration)	Visual Effects (after 15 years) (Bold type = Significant Effect)	Nature of Effect (Negative, Positive, Neutral)
1. Looking south across the site from bridleway 9Hu and existing access road.	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers	Medium/ High	Substantial/ Medium	Medium	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Negative
2. Looking across the site from bridleway 9Hu, adjacent to the existing school buildings.	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers	Medium/ High	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Moderate	Negative
3. Looking east towards the site from bridleway 9Hu.	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers	Medium/ High	Slight	Slight	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor	Negative
4. Looking north-east towards the site from footpath 1AI, on the edge of Valley Farm business park.	Walkers	High/Medium	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Neutral
5. Looking south-east towards the site from where Bridleway 3HU intersects footpath 10Hu.	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers Residents	Medium/ High Medium/ High	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Neutral

6. Looking north-east towards the site from a field gate along Twineham Lane.	Cyclists/ Pedestrians	Medium	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Neutral
	Vehicle Users	Medium/ Low					
7. Looking south-west across the site from footpath 10Hu.	Walkers	High/Medium	Medium	Slight	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Negative
8. Looking south-east towards the site from where bridleway 3Hu.	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers	Medium/ High	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Neutral
9. Looking south-west towards the site from Bridleway 3Hu.	Cyclists/ Horse riders/ Walkers	Medium/ High	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Neutral
10. Looking west into the site at the vehicular entrance from London Road.	Cyclists/ pedestrians	Medium	Medium	Medium/ Slight	Moderate	Moderate	Negative
	Vehicle Users	Medium/ Low			Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Negative
11. Looking west towards the site from London Road, north of the vehicular entrance.	Cyclists/ pedestrians	Medium			Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor	Negative
	Vehicle Users	Medium/ Low	Slight	Slight	Minor	Minor	Negative
	Residents	Medium			Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor	Negative
12. Looking west towards the site from where footpath 82Hu intersects Cuckfield Road.	Pedestrians/ Cyclists/ Walkers	High/Medium Medium	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Neutral

	Vehicle Users						
13. Looking north towards the site from Nuthatch Lane.	Pedestrians/ Cyclists	Medium	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Neutral
	Vehicle Users	Medium	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Neutral
	Residents	Medium/ Low	(Residents – Medium/ Slight	(Residents – Medium/ Slight	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor	Negative
14. Looking north towards the site from footpath 11AI at Albourne Green.	Walkers	High/Medium	No effect	No effect	No effect	No effect	Neutral
15. Looking north towards the site from footpath 22Py on Wolstonbury Hill within the South Downs National Park.	Walkers	High	Negligible	Negligible	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor	Negative

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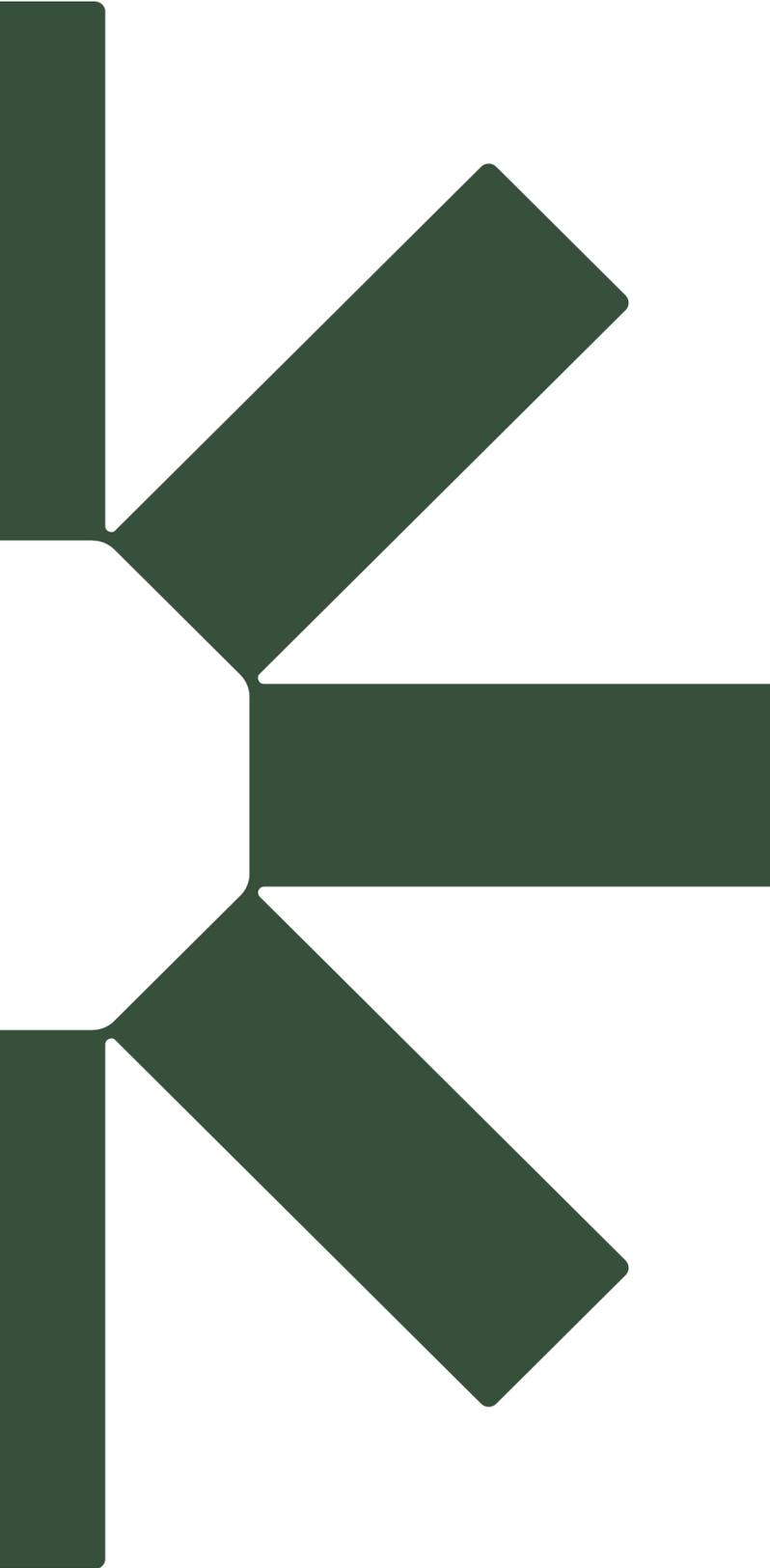
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