

An aerial photograph of a rural area, likely a satellite or drone shot. The image shows a mix of agricultural fields in various stages of cultivation, some in green crops and others in brown fallow. There are clusters of trees and hedgerows that define the boundaries of the fields. A small, developed area with houses and roads is visible in the center-right. The terrain is uneven, with some hills and valleys. The overall color palette is dominated by shades of green and brown.

fabrik

# LAND AT THE OLD VICARAGE FIELD AND THE OLD ESTATE YARD, CHURCH ROAD, TURNERS HILL

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL WITH IMPACT OVERVIEW  
MAY 2025

# ISSUE SHEET

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ESTATE YARD, CHURCH ROAD, TURNERS HILL

JOB NUMBER: D3162

CLIENT: ELIVIA HOMES

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| 04       | 23.05.2025 | AMENDED PER CLIENT TEAM COMMENTS  | JB          | LS         | LS          |

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction

fabrik Chartered Landscape Architects have been appointed by Elivia Homes to carry out a Landscape and Visual Appraisal with Impact Overview (LVAIO) of Land at the Old Vicarage Field and The Old Estate Yard, Church Road, Turners Hill (the Site) and its surrounding area, in order to consider the likely physical and visual impacts arising as a result of the proposed development. The desktop survey carried out as part of the LVAIO included the review of Ordnance Survey maps, interactive maps, aerial photography, published landscape character assessment documents, planning policy and the emerging development proposals. The field work was carried out on 25th April 2025 and recorded the existing landscape elements within the Site; the contextual landscape elements; and identified a series of key visual receptors.

## Landscape/Visual Baseline Summary

Church Road is situated within the administrative boundary of Mid Sussex District Council. The Site lies within the Ashdown Forest 7km zone of influence and is in part located within Turners Hill Conservation Area (south/southeast of the Site) and Butcher's Wood Ancient Woodland (within the northern tip of the Site). In addition, the Site lies outside, but immediately north of High Weald National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - AONB), with the National Landscape (NL) boundary lying directly beyond Turners Hill Road to the south. Whilst the Site lies within close proximity to the NL, its location on the northern edge of Turners Hill means that its visual connectivity with the NL is limited. However, the Site's contribution to the setting of the NL is an important consideration. The High Weald NL encompasses the southern section of the study area, with the NL boundary following Turners Hill Road, the B2110 and Turners Hill settlement boundary. The Site is also located within the Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside (Policy DP12 in the Mid Sussex District plan) and is located to the east of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The SSSI is located within a redundant small quarry area, previously a farm, next to Ryders on Church Road.

The Site lies to the northwest of the settlement of Turners Hill and comprises a combination of predominantly grassland with a combination of woodland, hedgerow, shrub, individual trees/tree belts within the field parcel sections of the Site (central and northern area), with an area to the east comprising gravelled parking areas and disused built form in the form of Barns and Garages. To the South of the Site, the Site comprises the Old Vicarage's garden, single story outbuilding and a gravel/tarmaced driveway located to the east of the dwelling. The driveway follows down to the entrance of the Site by Church Road. Surrounding the Site boundary, mature tree belts and hedgerows enclose the Site, with an exception to part of the southern boundary located within the existing garden of the old vicarage, and the eastern/south eastern boundary, which is bound by brick wall or open to the adjacent properties. In addition, the eastern Site boundary of the thin section to the north is open to pastureland. The Site is partially open in character, with existing built form, urbanising features and mature trees and vegetation combine, providing a degree of visual containment. The key characteristics of the Site include:

- Generally the Site lies on a sloping undulating plateau, following the valley down from Turners Hill Ridgeline, ranging from approximately 177m AOD within the southern section of the Site to 145m AOD within the far northern area of the Site;
- The Site comprises a diverse range of vegetation, including mowed lawn, woodland, hedgerow, shrub, herbaceous perennials, grasses individual trees/tree belts and grassland field parcels.

- Mature hedgerow/tree lines frame field parcels and boundaries of the Site, creating a sense of enclosure and restricting views of the Site from immediate/local receptors.
- A combination of built form associated with the western edge of Turners Hill and well treed, woodland/ treebelts make up the skyline.
- Long distance views of the wider landscape to the east are experienced beyond Turners Hill, from the western section of the central grassland field.

A series of key representative viewpoints have been considered in this LVAIO to demonstrate a range of receptors at various distances from the Site. The baseline visual assessment reveals that the Site is predominantly well-screened and that public views of the Site (its boundary vegetation, built form and internal vegetation, namely grassland) are only possible from the immediate environment along the B2110 (south and southeast of the Site), North Street and Lion Lane (east of the Site), Public Footpath 68W (north, northwest and northeast of the Site) and undesignated path (north, northeast and northwest of the Site). Views of the Site begin to diminish and become difficult to distinguish further away from the local environment due to a combination of intervening vegetation, built form and undulating topography. There are occasional partial views of the southern boundary vegetation, which rises above the verdant/ built form skyline, located on Turners's Hill ridgeline. Remaining views of the Site from both local and distant environment are truncated.

## Summary Description of Proposals

The development proposes 40 dwellings (including affordable housing) with open space, access, parking, drainage, landscaping and other associated works as well as the creation of a new community car park and replacement parking for Lion Lane residents set within areas of retained boundary vegetation. The main vehicular access will be taken from Church Road on the southern boundary. The removal of Site boundary vegetation and some localised regrading is required to facilitate this access. New terraces with planting are proposed to integrate this feature into the street scene. The proposed new homes are focused on land currently occupied by field parcels comprising grassland, parking areas and built form, which are well related to the settlement edge of the village and within the Turners Hill Neighbourhood plan development Site allocation. Open space is proposed to the northwest of the Site (allocated LAP area) and the western/ north western section of the Site, which includes wildflower meadow with mown path, following the swale and drainage basins in the north finger of the Site. The development also proposes car parking for residents of Lion Road and Turners Hill Village to the east of the Site. The proposals have been prepared considering the retention of the key landscape features of the Site (namely the inherent topographic profile and the vegetated boundaries); and informed by the tiers of landscape policy and landscape character guidance, alongside the visual constraints associated with the local landscape. Refer to figure 1.1 for the Landscape Masterplan of the development parcel.

## Predicted Landscape Effects Summary

The effects of the proposed development will commence at the enabling and construction stage. The land use and character of the Site will change from that of an open area of grassland within a series of field parcels, and open space adjacent to the rear boundaries of dwellings along Lion lane, disused built form on the edge of Turners Hill Conservation Area, two car parks and private garden associated with the Old Vicarage, to that of a construction site with an emerging domestic scale-built form, set within the retained vegetated boundaries; to ultimately that of a new, high quality

residential scheme, set within areas of retained green infrastructure, retained and bolstered boundary vegetation and new SuDs.

During the construction stage there will be a minor effect upon the topography of the Site, to accommodate development platforms, the formation of the road corridors and SuDs. Considering the removal of existing boundary vegetation to create the new Site entrances, and existing internal vegetation to accommodate the development parcel and proposed SuDS there will be temporary moderate adverse effects arising as a result of the loss of some of the existing vegetation and tree stock of the Site itself (within the red line), with effects compensated by the introduction of new tree and hedge planting at the operational stage. In the long term, effects on the existing tree and shrub / hedgerow stock, will be moderate beneficial on balance with compensatory planting within the streetscape, open space and southern frontage to Church Road, where native planting is proposed to continue the existing street vernacular. On completion and during the operational stage, the proposals will retain key components of character at the Site level, which includes the inherent sloping topography from the southern edge of the Site to the northern boundary; Site boundary vegetation and the field boundary; the sense of enclosure to the south of the Site; and a relationship with the existing domestic scale built form to the east and south of the Site.

Despite measures to retain certain key components of character, as with any development on a part brownfield and greenfield site, with the introduction of dwellings across the southern and middle section of the Site, will effectively wholly replace the existing built form, car parks and garden, grassland/grassland field parcel character with a domestic scale built form set within areas of retained green infrastructure. The built form will result initially in a temporary minor adverse effect during the construction period to beneficial during completion and the operational stage on both the land use and landscape character of the Site, by replacing low quality/disused built form, within the southwestern area of the Site, with a high quality residential scheme. Effects on the replacement of grassland for open space will result in a temporary moderate adverse effects to the landscape character and land use arising as a result of the loss of some of the existing vegetation and tree stock of the Site, with effects compensated by the introduction of new tree, hedge and planting at the operational stage. In the long term, effects on the existing tree and shrub / hedgerow stock, will be moderate beneficial on balance with compensatory planting higher than the number lost, located within the streetscape, open space and southern frontage to Church Road, where native planting is proposed to continue the existing street vernacular. This assessment does not rely on the proposed trees within the rear gardens, as their longevity cannot be guaranteed.

Effects on the District and County level character areas will be minor adverse, as the proposals will result in a small discrete change, extending built form into this character area. No change is proposed to the contextual landscape elements beyond the Site and therefore effects on the landscape resource beyond the Site is predicted to be negligible. Overall, there will be minor adverse effects on the landscape of the Site itself, with effects moderated by high quality design.

Effects on the open space network are considered to be minor beneficial at the local level, where play in the form of informal recreation and natural play (LAP) are to be introduced to the open space in the north west corner of the Site.

At the enabling, construction and operational stages, the proposed development would be apparent in the views from residential receptors, receptors using the

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

adjacent public open spaces (Allotments) and those transient receptors immediately adjacent to the Site along Church Road (B2110) (south and southeast of the Site), North Street and Lion Lane (east of the Site), Public Footpath 68W (north, northwest and northeast of the Site) and undesigned path (north, northeast and northwest of the Site). The character and amenity of these views will change from that of an open area of grassland with associated mature boundary vegetation (which is well connected to the wider landscape), private dwelling with ornamental garden and mature boundary planting, low quality/disused built form and parking areas associated with the edge of Turners Hill Conservation Area, to that of a construction site with an emerging domestic scale-built form, set within the retained vegetated boundaries and retained private dwelling (Old Vicarage). This ultimately will change to a high quality residential scheme with associated open space, including areas of swales and drainage basins, and new parking areas to the east of the Site, set within the retained and supplemented vegetated framework. Effects on these receptors are therefore judged to range from temporary moderate to minor adverse during the construction period (considering close proximity and local views) to minor beneficial at completion, by replacing low quality visual detractors with a high quality residential scheme. This judgement has been reached considering bullet point two, para 5.37 of GLVIA.

In particular, and assuming that Footpath 68W which crosses the Site will remain in part open during the construction phase, with temporary closure during culvert installation of proposed SuDs, there will be views of the SuDs and proposed planting construction and operations. The character and amenity would change from a grassland field parcel and field boundary with minor depression following the western boundary, to that of a construction site and emerging SuDs built form, set beyond the retained and enhanced mature hedgerows, tree belt and supplementary planting. Effects on these receptors are considered to range from moderate to major adverse (considering close proximity, internal and local views). Visual effects will diminish over time as the landscape proposals mature.

Views of the current Site from receptors within the High Weald National Landscape (NL) are currently very limited due to the combination of the wooded contextual landscape and the steep ridgelines, with a combination of built form and woodland informing the skyline. It is therefore predicted that the construction and operational stages of the proposed development would similarly remain limited and predominately obscured due to the intervening layers of vegetation, coupled with the fact that the proposed development would be below the tree line and set back from the southern and western vegetated edge by the proposed and enhanced native buffer planting. Overall effects on the character and amenity of the views from the NL are predicted to be negligible. Where views are currently limited and filtered by intervening vegetation, topography or built form, it is predicted that the character and amenity of these views will not significantly alter with the proposed development in place.

As with the development of any part brownfield and greenfield Site, adverse effects will occur. However, views of the new development will be apparent in the immediate local area only, creating a new, high quality, residential element, set in the context of the existing retained boundary trees and hedgerow in views from the north, south, east and west where the character and amenity of the view is a mixture of built form, grassland and woodland. The high quality nature of the proposed development, the landscape proposals and the maturation of the proposed development over time will moderate these adverse effects.



FIGURE 6.1 – PLAN ILLUSTRATING LANDSCAPE STRATEGY - PAGE 1 (FABRIK, 2025)

## 2.0

# INTRODUCTION

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

fabrik Chartered Landscape Architects have been appointed by Elivia Homes to carry out a Landscape and Visual Appraisal with Impact Overview (LVAIO) of Land at the Old Vicarage Field and The Old Estate Yard, Church Road, Turners Hill (the Site) and its surrounding area, in order to consider the likely physical and visual impacts arising as a result of the proposed development.

This LVAIO sets out landscape policy (together with any related policy on ecological and heritage assets) and any supporting SPG's/SPD's and then goes on to describe the constituent baseline landscape elements (the existing topography, drainage, land cover, vegetation pattern, public rights of way, landscape features, detracting landscape elements, the history of the landscape and the way that landscape is experienced) which together inform landscape character, landscape condition and value. The LVAIO then describes the baseline character and amenity of the identified visual receptors (considering the visual envelope, the different groups of people, places affected, the nature of the view and the visual amenity). Any mitigation measures and assumptions which have informed the assessment of effects are set out after the description of the proposed development. The effects of the proposed development are then considered against each of the landscape and visual receptors relative to the particular stages of the project. The penultimate section of this LVAIO sets out an assessment against policy. The location of the Site is shown on figure 2.1.

The methodology for the LVAIO is based on the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA) (third edition) by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (Routledge, 2013). A full methodology is set out at Appendix 1. In addition, the assessment on predicted visual effects for the LVAIO has been reached considering bullet point two, para 5.37 of GLVIA.

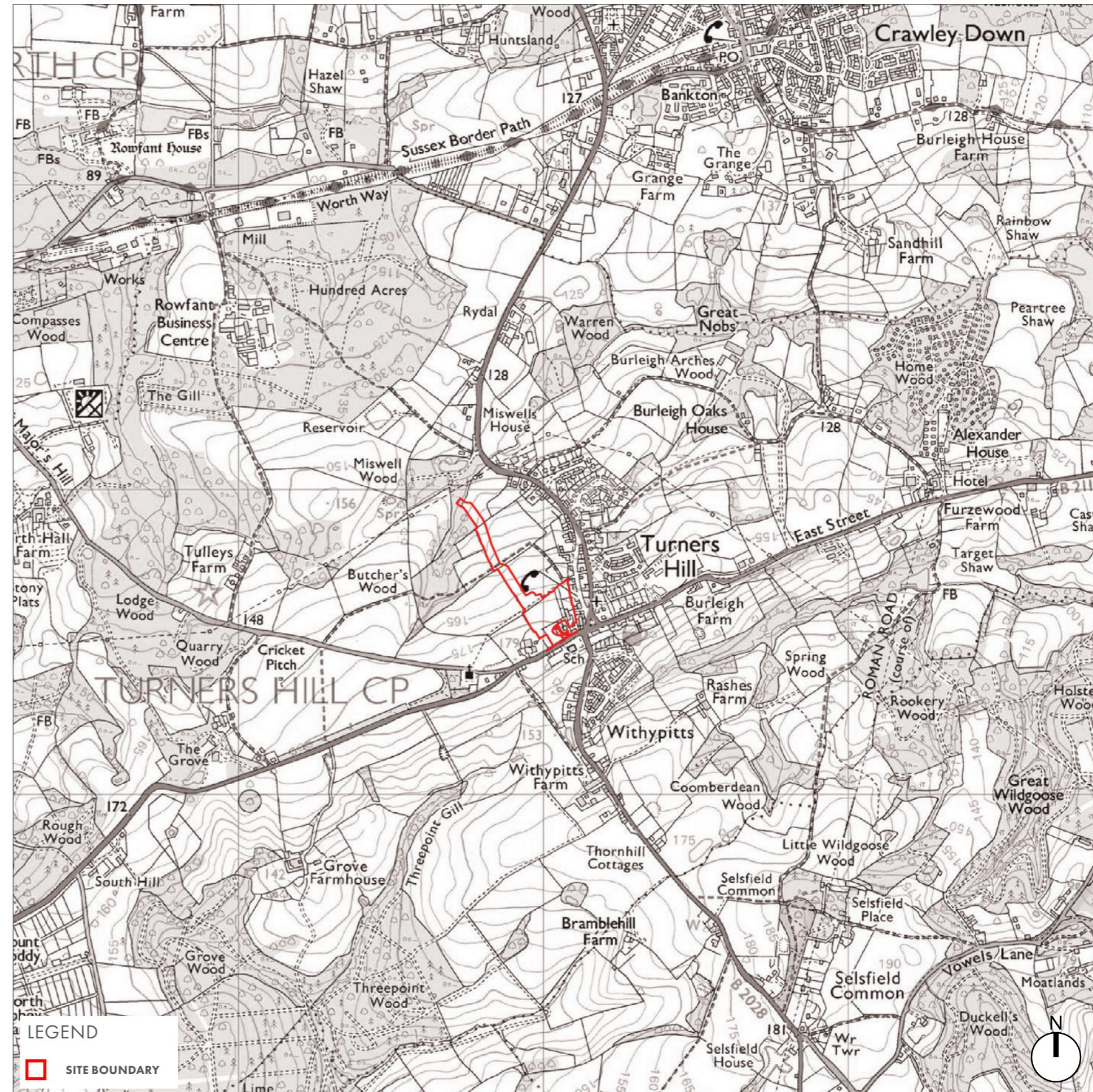
## 2.2 DESKTOP RESEARCH

The desktop survey carried out as part of the LVAIO included the review of Ordnance Survey maps, interactive maps, aerial photography, published landscape character assessment documents, planning policy and the emerging development proposals. The extent of the baseline and therefore the impact appraisal is broadly defined by the Zone of Theoretical Visual Visibility (ZTV) as determined by the initial desk study and verified in the field and therefore extends to 1 km from the Site.

The desk top assessment also identifies any likely changes to the current baseline situation which are likely to be in place prior to the proposed development proceeding.

## 2.3 FIELD WORK

The field work was carried out on 25th April 2025 and recorded the existing landscape elements within the Site; the contextual landscape elements; and identified a series of key visual receptors. The visual assessment element includes a photographic survey of the Site taken from a series of representative key views, chosen to represent a range of locations including both public and private views, distances and directions around the Site. The weather conditions and camera lens were also recorded.



## 3.0

# LANDSCAPE PLANNING CONTEXT

## 3.1 LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGICAL AND HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS AND POLICY

### 3.1.1 LOCAL DESIGNATIONS

#### Designations

Church Road is situated within the administrative boundary of Mid Sussex District Council. The Site lies within the Ashdown Forest 7km zone of influence and is in part located within Turners Hill Conservation Area (south/southeast of the Site) and Butcher's Wood Ancient Woodland (within the northern tip of the Site). In addition, the Site lies outside, but immediately north of High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), with the AONB boundary lying directly beyond Turners Hill Road to the south. The High Weald AONB encompasses the southern section of the study area, with the AONB boundary following Turners Hill Road, the B2110 and Turners Hill settlement boundary.

The Site is also located within the Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside (Policy DP12 in the Mid Sussex District plan) and is located to the east of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The SSSI is located within a redundant small quarry area, previously a farm, next to Ryders on Church Road.

Ancient and Semi Natural Woodlands are a frequent feature across the study area, with a combination of small copses to large areas of woodland, mainly populating the High Weald AONB and areas to the east of the Study area. Ancient and Semi Natural Woodland within close proximity to the Site include; Miswell Wood, Butcher's Wood, Hundred Acres, Warren Wood, Burleigh Arches Wood, Spring Wood, Coomberdean Wood, Quarry Wood and Lodge Wood.

Figure 3.1 illustrates the landscape, ecological and heritage designations in the immediate vicinity of Church Road and in the wider study area.

#### Historic and Cultural Landscape:

The historic core of Turners Hill is a designated Conservation Area and includes a cluster of Listed buildings, which follows the main transport corridors through the settlement. Other Listed Buildings within the study area are frequently associated with a range of associated farmsteads, large country dwellings, buildings, structures and features (Grade II and Grade II\*).

To the southeast of the study area lies Gravetye Manor Park and Gardens (listed Grade II\*) which includes formal and informal gardens, set within a landscape of woodlands and lakes. Those of which were laid out between 1885 and 1935 by the horticultural writer and gardener William Robinson.

There are no Scheduled Monuments within the study area.

#### Public Rights of Way Context

The study area benefits from a dense, well used, Public Rights of Way (PROW) Network. Numerous footpaths, bridleways, cycleways and various a National Trail routes including Sussex Boarder Path, Worth Way and The Weald Landscape Trail and cycleway traverse the local landscape.

Three areas of Common Land are located within the study area, two of which are land in-between road corridors within Turners Hill Conservation Area. The third designated Common Land is Selsfield Common, located to the south of the study area within a wooded environment.

Within the immediate area to the Site lies a number of public footpaths, including footpaths 61W, 62W to the northeast of the Site, Footpath 67W to the south and Footpath 68W, which passes through a small part of the northern section of the Site. There is an additional undesignated footpath which passes through the centre of the Site on a east to southwest orientation. Figure 3.2 illustrates the PROW network in the immediate vicinity of Church Road and in the wider study area.

### 3.1.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

The December 2024 NPPF seeks the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The following issues and policies of the NPPF are pertinent to the proposed development and this assessment.

**Section 2** - achieving sustainable development, para 8, subsection c relating to an environmental objective, states: *"to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change..."*

**Section 8** - promoting healthy and safe communities, para 103 under the open space and recreation sub-heading states: *"Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change..."*

Para 105 states: *"Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails."*

Para 106 on Local Green Space states: *"The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them..."*

Para 108 goes on to state: *"Policies and decisions for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with national policy for Green Belts set out in chapter 13 of this Framework."* Delete as not relevant here based on designations plan?

**Section 12** - achieving well-designed places. Para 131: *"The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities..."*

Para 132: *"... Design policies should be developed with local communities so that they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each*

*area's defining characteristics..."*

Para 135: *"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*

- a. will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b. are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c. are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d. establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e. optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f. create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."*

Para 136 relates to trees and states: *"Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. 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. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users."*

Para 137: *"Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals..."*

Para 139: *"Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents which use visual tools such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:*

- a. development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents which use visual tools such as design guides and codes; and/or*
- b. outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings."*

**Section 14** - meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change. The elements relevant to landscape matters include para 164 states: *"New development should be planned for in ways that:*

### 3.0

## LANDSCAPE PLANNING CONTEXT

a. avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through incorporating green infrastructure and sustainable urban drainage systems;...

Under the sub section on planning and flood risk, Para 172, subsection c goes on to state with regard to 'all plans' that: "c. using opportunities provided by new development and improvements in green and other infrastructure to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding, (making as much use as possible of natural flood management techniques as part of an integrated approach to flood risk management.)"

**Section 15** - conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Para 187: "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a. protecting and enhancing valued landscapes... (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- b. recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.
- c. maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it..."

Para 189: "Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes 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."

Para 190: "When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a. the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- b. the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- c. any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated."

**Section 16** - conserving and enhancing the historic environment, para 202 states: "Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be

enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations"

Under the subsection on considering potential impacts, para 213: "Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a. grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks and gardens, should be exceptional;
- b. assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and grade II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional."

### 3.1.3 PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

The NPPF is supported by the on-line resource Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). There are a number of sections of relevance, as set out below.

Climate change is considered in para 001 (ID 6-001-20140306) states: "... local planning authorities should ensure that protecting the local environment is properly considered alongside the broader issues of protecting the global environment. Planning can also help increase resilience to climate change impact through the location, mix and design of development.

Addressing climate change is one of the core land use planning principles which the National Planning Policy Framework expects to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking..."

Planning for well-designed places and the sub-section on 'How are well-designed places achieved through the planning system?' are set out at para 001 (ID: 26-001-20191001) which states: "Well-designed places can be achieved by taking a proactive and collaborative approach at all stages of the planning process, from policy and plan formulation through to the determination of planning applications and the post approval stage... To be read alongside this guidance, the National Design Guide sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice.

... significant weight should be given to: a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Good design is set out in the National Design Guide under the following 10 characteristics:

- context
- identity
- built form

- movement
- nature
- public spaces
- uses
- homes and buildings
- resources
- lifespan

The National Design Guide can be used by all those involved in shaping places including in plan-making and decision making."

The setting to a heritage asset is described at para 013 (ID: 18a-013-20190723) as follows: "All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The setting of a heritage asset and the asset's curtilage may not have the same extent.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting. The contribution may vary over time.

When assessing any application which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation."

Green infrastructure is the topic of para 004 (ID: 8-004-20190721) and states: "Green infrastructure can embrace a range of spaces and assets that provide environmental and wider benefits. It can, for example, include parks, playing fields, other areas of open space, woodland, allotments, private gardens, sustainable drainage features, green roofs and walls, street trees and 'blue infrastructure' such as streams, ponds, canals and other water bodies. References to green infrastructure in this guidance also apply to different types of blue infrastructure where appropriate."

Para 006 (ID: 8-006-20190721) then sets out that green infrastructure can help in:

- "Building a strong, competitive economy: Green infrastructure can drive economic growth and regeneration, helping to create high quality environments which are attractive to businesses and investors.
- Achieving well-designed places: The built environment can be enhanced by features such as green roofs, street trees, proximity to woodland, public gardens and recreational and open spaces. More broadly, green infrastructure exists

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within a wider landscape context and can reinforce and enhance local landscape character, contributing to a sense of place and natural beauty.

- *Promoting healthy and safe communities: Green infrastructure can improve the wellbeing of a neighbourhood with opportunities for recreation, exercise, social interaction, experiencing and caring for nature, community food-growing and gardening, all of which can bring mental and physical health benefits. Outdoor Recreation Value (ORVal) is a useful online tool that can be used to quantify the recreational values provided by greenspace. Green infrastructure can help to reduce health inequalities in areas of socio-economic deprivation and meet the needs of families and an ageing population. It can also help to reduce air pollution and noise.*
- *Mitigating climate change, flooding and coastal change: Green infrastructure can contribute to carbon storage, cooling and shading, opportunities for species migration to more suitable habitats and the protection of water quality and other natural resources. It can also be an integral part of multifunctional sustainable drainage and natural flood risk management.*
- *Conserving and enhancing the natural environment: High-quality networks of multifunctional green infrastructure contribute a range of benefits, including ecological connectivity, facilitating biodiversity net gain and nature recovery networks and opportunities for communities to undertake conservation work.'*

Guidance on trees and woodland is set out under the natural environment is set out within para 029 (ID 8-20190721) and states: 'Well-placed and well-chosen trees on streets and in urban spaces can provide a range of benefits: encouraging walking and enhanced physical and mental health; contributing to local environmental character and distinctiveness; providing habitats for wildlife; reducing noise and excessive heat; and supporting sustainable drainage. Changing climate, in particular hotter summers and more frequent periods of dry weather, and unknown pests and diseases, will place new pressures on green infrastructure in the long-term, so trees of the right species and age profile are essential'.

Para 036 (ID: 8-036-20190721) considers landscape and sets out that: 'The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally designated landscapes but also the wider countryside. Where landscapes have a particular local value, it is important for policies to identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence... The cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully.'

Open space, sports and recreation facilities are considered under para 001 (ID: 37-001-20140306) which states: 'Open space should be taken into account in planning for new development and considering proposals that may affect existing open space (see National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 96). Open space, which includes all open space of public value, can take many forms, from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development, linear corridors and country parks. It can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby; have an ecological value and contribute to green infrastructure (see National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 171, as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development, and an important component in the achievement of sustainable development (see National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 7-9).'

## 3.1.4 NATIONAL DESIGN GUIDE

The National Design Guide (30 January 2021) illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. Paragraph 20 sets out the components of good design, including layout, form and scale, appearance, landscape, materials and detailing. The 10 characteristics of a well designed place are described in paragraph 36 as follows:

- 'Context - enhances the surroundings.
- Identity - attractive and distinctive.
- Built form - a coherent pattern of development.
- Movement - accessible and easy to move around.
- Nature - enhanced and optimised.
- Public spaces - safe, social and inclusive.
- Uses - mixed and integrated.
- Homes and buildings - functional, healthy and sustainable.
- Resources - efficient and resilient.
- Lifespan - made to last'.

## 3.1.5 NATIONAL MODEL DESIGN CODE

The National Model Design Code forms part of the Planning Practice Guidance expanding on the characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide.

## 3.1.6 LOCAL

The Mid Sussex District Council's relevant development plan policy is set out within the following documents:

- Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (adopted March 2018)
- Turners Hill Neighbourhood Plan (March 2016)

Mid Sussex District is in the process of reviewing of the District Plan. The Submission District Plan 2021-2039 was published for Regulation 19 consultation between the 12th January and the 23rd February 2024, and then submitted for Examination on 8th July 2024. The Site will therefore consider policies within the Regulation 19 District Plan 2021-2039 (December 2023). The weight attributed to the emerging local plan is set out within the Gillings Planning Planning Statement.

## Adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 - 2031

The Mid Sussex District Plan replaced the Mid Sussex Local Plan on May 27th 2004, however, some policies in the Mid Sussex Local Plan 2004 have been saved on adoption of the district plan. The pertinent policies for the Mid Sussex District Plan are set out below:

### DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside

*The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of*

*built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:*

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

*"The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character. Built-up area boundaries are subject to review by Neighbourhood Plans or through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, produced by the District Council."*

### DP13: Preventing Coalescence

*"The individual towns and villages in the District each have their own unique characteristics. It is important that their separate identity is maintained. When travelling between settlements people should have a sense that they have left one before arriving at the next.*

*Provided it is not in conflict with Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside, development will be permitted if it does not result in the coalescence of settlements which harms the separate identity and amenity of settlements, and would not have an unacceptably urbanising effect on the area between settlements.*

*Local Gaps can be identified in Neighbourhood Plans or a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, produced by the District Council, where there is robust evidence that development within the Gap would individually or cumulatively result in coalescence and the loss of the separate identity and amenity of nearby settlements. Evidence must demonstrate that existing local and national policies cannot provide the necessary protection."*

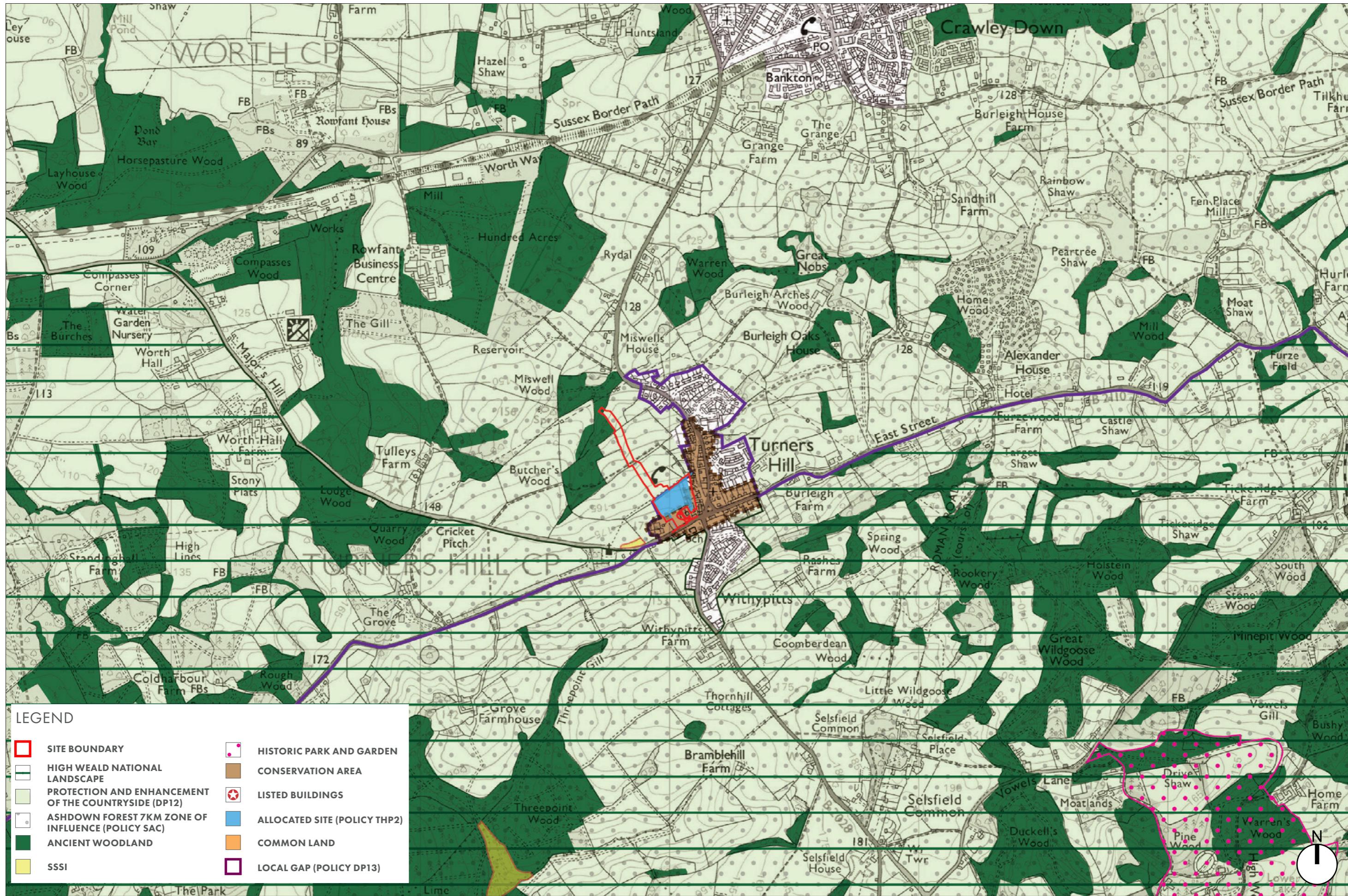
### DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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

### DP17: Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

*"In order to prevent adverse effects on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC, new development likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination with other development, will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects.*

*Within a 7km zone of influence around the Ashdown Forest SPA, residential development leading to a net increase in dwellings will be required to contribute to mitigation through:*



### FIGURE 3.1 – LOCAL DESIGNATIONS (FABRIK, 2025)

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1. The provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to the minimum level of 8 Ha per 1,000 net increase in population; or a financial contribution to SANGs elsewhere; or the provision of bespoke mitigation; and
2. A financial contribution to the Ashdown Forest Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) Strategy.

Large schemes proposed adjacent or close to the boundary of the 7km zone of influence may require mitigation for the SPA. Such proposals for development will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Where bespoke mitigation is provided, these measures will need to be in place before occupation of development and must be managed and maintained in perpetuity. The effectiveness of such mitigation will need to be demonstrated prior to approval of the development. Bespoke mitigation will need to be discussed and agreed by the District Council as the competent authority following advice from Natural England."

#### DP22: Rights of Way and other Recreational Routes

"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;
- 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)."

#### DP24: Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Activities

"Development that provides new and/or enhanced leisure and cultural activities and facilities, including allotments, in accordance with the strategic aims of the Leisure and Cultural Strategy for Mid Sussex will be supported.

The on-site provision of new leisure and cultural facilities, including the provision of play areas and equipment will be required for all new residential developments, where appropriate in scale and impact, including making land available for this purpose. Planning conditions and/or planning obligations will be used to secure such facilities. Details about the provision, including standards, of new leisure and cultural facilities will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document."

#### DP26: Character and Design

"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;
- optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development."

#### DP29: Noise, Air and Light Pollution

"The environment, including nationally designated environmental sites, nationally protected landscapes, areas of nature conservation or geological interest, wildlife habitats, and the quality of people's life will be protected from unacceptable levels of noise, light and air pollution by only permitting development where:

... Light pollution:

- The impact on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature Conservation Area s of artificial lighting proposals (including floodlighting) is minimised, in terms of intensity and number of fittings;
- The applicant can demonstrate good design including fittings to restrict emissions from proposed lighting schemes"

#### DP34: Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

"Development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- A thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal;
- Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric. Proposals for the conversion or change of use of a listed building retain its significance and character whilst ensuring that the building remains in a viable use;
- Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable;

- Satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy installations are not sited in a prominent location, and where possible within the curtilage rather than on the building itself;
- Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;
- Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric."

#### DP35: Conservation Areas

Development in a Conservation Area will be required to conserve or enhance its special character, appearance and the range of activities which contribute to it. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- New buildings and extensions are sensitively designed to reflect the special characteristics of the area in terms of their scale, density, design and through the use of complementary materials;
- Open spaces, gardens, landscaping and boundary features that contribute to the special character of the area are protected. Any new landscaping or boundary features are designed to reflect that character;
- Traditional shop fronts that are a key feature of the Conservation Area are protected. Any alterations to shopfronts in a Conservation Area will only be permitted where they do not result in the loss of a traditional shopfront and the new design is sympathetic to the character of the existing building and street scene in which it is located;
- Existing buildings that contribute to the character of the Conservation Area are protected. Where demolition is permitted, the replacement buildings are of a design that reflects the special characteristics of the area;
- Activities such as markets, crafts or other activities which contribute to the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area are supported;
- New pavements, roads and other surfaces reflect the materials and scale of the existing streets and surfaces in the Conservation Area ."

#### DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

"The District Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting. In particular, ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees will be protected.

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.

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.

Trees, woodland and hedgerows will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development: