

# **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment**

**Land to the rear of Chesapeake, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common.**

On behalf of Antler Homes Ltd.

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## Document Management.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Pegasus Group have been commissioned by Antler Ltd to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to accompany a full planning application for the proposed residential development of land to the rear of Chesapeake, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common, which consists of ***the construction of a residential scheme with access from Reeds Lane, with associated landscaping, parking, open space, and all other associated development works.*** From here on this will be referred to as the 'Proposed Development'.
- 1.2. The application Site comprises an approximately 1.67ha parcel of land at 'Chesapeake', an existing residential property to the south of Reeds Lane, and west of the B2118 within the civil parish of Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common, referred to hereafter as the 'Site' as shown on 'the Site' Location Plan at **Figure 1**.
- 1.3. The proposed development is for ***27 residential dwellings with associated with a new vehicular access, associated landscaping, parking, open space, and all other associated development works.*** From here on this will be referred to as the 'Proposed Development'.
- 1.4. A desk study was carried out to review published information relevant to the Site and its context, including planning policy and guidance, environmental designations, and landscape character assessment.
- 1.5. Field assessment was undertaken on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to review the findings of the desk study, to determine site visibility from its context (with context shown at **Figure 2 – Aerial Photography**), and to assess the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the existing landscape character and views to determine to what extent they are consistent with the findings of the desk-based assessment. It was undertaken on a dry day with good visibility, during late leaf fall season which provides the worst-case scenario. However professional judgements have also been made in alignment with recommended guidance for visual assessment as set out in GLVIA3.
- 1.6. The main objectives of the LVIA are as follows:
  - To describe the landscape character of the Site and its surroundings, evaluate its sensitivity to change and, considering the magnitude of change, assess the effect that the proposal would have on the landscape character,
  - To identify potential visual receptors (i.e. people who would be able to see the development), evaluate their sensitivity to change and, considering the magnitude of change, assess the effect that the proposal would have on visual amenity. A residential visual amenity study is excluded from this LVIA, noting that appropriate privacy distances between existing properties and new built development would be maintained, and
  - To identify landscape elements associated with the Site, evaluate their sensitivity to change and, considering the magnitude of change, assess the effect the proposals would have on landscape elements.
- 1.7. The LVIA assesses the operational stage of the Proposed Development only, as the construction stages would be of short and temporary duration. Any potential effects brought about by the construction stages are likely to be lower or similar to those assessed post-construction. The effects are therefore assessed at Year 1, immediately post-completion, and at Year 15 to consider



proposed mitigation and enhancement measures. The assumed vegetative growth is taken as 0.5m per year.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. The LVIA has been undertaken with regard to the following best practice:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd edition) – Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013);
- GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13, 2/13, 1/14, and 2/14 – Landscape Institute (2013 and 2014);
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment – Natural England (2014);
- An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management – Natural England (2019);
- Visual Representation of Development Proposals, Technical Guidance Note 06/19 – Landscape Institute (2019); and
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024).

2.2. In accordance with published guidance, landscape and visual effects are assessed separately.

2.3. The detailed LVIA Methodology is provided in **Appendix A**.

### Scope

2.4. The physical scope of this LVIA has been informed by desk study and field assessment and an understanding of the landscape and visual sensitivities at the Site and in the wider area.

2.5. A preliminary 3km radius search area was initially identified to review the baseline condition and planning policies that may be relevant to the proposed development. and detailed assessment has encompassed a refined study area that is restricted to the immediate vicinity of the Site, due to the highly enclosed nature of the Site, resulting from adjacent built form and/or mature tree belts as illustrated on the Screened ZTV (**Figure 6**).

2.6. Following field assessment, representative viewpoints were selected within the 3km study area to show typical views towards the Site experienced by people in the LVIA study area and to show baseline landscape character at the Site and in the surrounding area.

2.7. A description of site visibility and assessment viewpoints is provided in section 4 below, with reference to assessment viewpoints shown on **Figure 7**. Photography from each assessment viewpoint is shown at **Figure 8** and is presented in accordance with LI technical guidance.

### Nature of Effect

2.8. The degree of landscape or visual effect is identified by means of a descriptive scale as per the GLVIA 3rd Edition guidance. However, it is also necessary to consider the nature of the landscape and visual effects. GLVIA 3 assists on this point noting paragraph 5.37 concerning landscape effects which states that:



*"One of the more challenging issues is deciding whether the landscape effects should be categorised as positive or negative. It is also possible for effects to be neutral in their consequences for the landscape. An informed professional judgement should be made about this and the criteria used in reaching the judgement should be clearly stated. They might include, but should not be restricted to:*

- *The degree to which the proposal fits with existing character.*
- *The contribution to the landscape that the development may make its own right, usually by virtue of good design, even if it is in contrast to existing character.*
- *The importance of perceptions of landscape is emphasised by the European Landscape Convention, and others may of course hold different opinions on whether the effects are positive or negative, but this is not a reason to avoid making this judgement, which will ultimately be weighed against the opinions of others in the decision-making process."*

2.9. A precautionary approach is applied to this LVIA that assumes all landscape and visual effects are considered to be negative or adverse unless otherwise stated.

### 3. LANDSCAPE PLANNING POLICY

3.1. This section sets out a review of national and local policy relevant to landscape and visual matters pertaining to the proposed development.

#### National Planning Policy Framework

3.2. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>1</sup> published in December 2024 is a material consideration in planning decisions and any development would need to accord with the following planning provisions. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out at Paragraph 11. The NPPF sets out overarching objectives to achieve sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. For decision-taking, a development that accords with a current development plan should be approved without delay; and, where the development plan is absent, silent, or relevant policies are out of date, permission should be granted unless:

*"i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

*"ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this 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."*

3.3. The Site and its immediate setting do not lie within any area designated for its landscape value. At Paragraph 8, criterion 'c' describes the 'environmental objective' 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, including moving to a low carbon economy"*.

3.4. Paragraph 20 refers to strategic policies that should make sufficient provision for the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes, and green infrastructure and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation. Paragraph 135 relates to achieving well-designed places, criterion 'b' requires developments to be *"visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping"*. Criterion 'c' also sets out to ensure that developments *"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)"*.

3.5. Para. 136 describes how trees make an *"important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change."* It states how *"new streets [should be] tree-lined"*, and *"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"*. In respect to this matter, it is important to note

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<sup>1</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, NPPF (December 2024)

that this is a recent addition to the NPPF and the requirements for tree-lined streets have been considered and seek to ensure that this can be provided within the scheme parameters, with significant tree planting throughout the area of open space which includes scattered native tree planting.

- 3.6. Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment specifies how planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Paragraph 187a states that protection and enhancement of "**valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils**" should be "*in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan*". Criterion 'b' also notes that the "***intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services***" should be recognised. As set out in the baseline section of this report it is not considered that the Site is located within a valued landscape.
- 3.7. Paragraph 188 makes it clear that there is a hierarchy to the importance and value attributed to landscapes, and that the development plan should identify and allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, while taking a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing existing habitat and green infrastructure networks. Para. 189 describes how 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***". The proposed development is not in a designated area.
- 3.8. Within Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, Paragraph 203 criterion 'f' states how local authorities should take into account amongst other things, "***the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness***". The Landscape Strategy (Appendix B) that accompanies the application illustrate the potential for the proposed development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

### **3.9. Local Planning Guidance**

- 3.10. The following section sets out the local planning policy background relevant to the Site. The Site is located within the administrative area of Mid Sussex District Council.

#### **Adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (2018)**

- 3.11. The **Mid Sussex District Plan (2014-2031)**<sup>2</sup> was adopted in March 2018, however in accordance with National Policy, legislation, and a commitment in the adopted District Plan, the District Council have commenced a review of the District Plan, including updates where necessary. The new **Mid Sussex District Plan (2021-2039)** was submitted for Examination on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024, and will replace the current Plan, once it has been formally adopted by Mid Sussex District Council.
- 3.12. The current adopted Mid Sussex District Plan Policies relevant to the Site and its immediate context in respect to landscape and visual matters are summarised below in the following table.

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<sup>2</sup> Mid Sussex District Council, Adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (March 2018)

**Table 1: Summary of Adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 policies relevant to landscape and visual matters**

Policy Ref.	Summary of Policy
DP22: Rights of Way and other Recreational Routes	<p>Rights of way, Sustrans national cycle routes, and recreational routes will be protected by ensuring development does not result in their loss or adverse effects unless a new route of equivalent value is provided. Access to the countryside will be encouraged by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing safe and convenient links to rights of way and recreational routes.</li> <li>• Encouraging new or existing rights of way to be multi-functional for walkers, cyclists, and horse-riders.</li> </ul>
DP26: Character and Design	<p>Development and surrounding spaces will be well-designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. Development will need to demonstrate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Is of high-quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;</i></li> <li>• <i>creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;</i></li> <li>• <i>protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;</i></li> <li>• <i>protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;</i></li> <li>• <i>optimises the potential of the Site to accommodate development".</i></li> </ul>
DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows	<p>The District Council aims to protect and enhance trees, woodland, and hedgerows, and encourages new planting. Development that harms or leads to the loss of these elements, which contribute to the visual amenity, character, landscape, historic, or wildlife importance of an area, will generally not be permitted. New vegetation should be of suitable species, preferably native.</p> <p>To protect and enhance trees, woodland, and hedgerows, development must:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Incorporate existing important trees, woodland, and hedgerows into the design and landscape scheme.</i></li> <li>• <i>Prevent damage to root systems and consider future growth.</i></li> <li>• <i>Implement appropriate protection measures throughout the development process.</i></li> <li>• <i>Plant new trees, woodland, and hedgerows to enhance green infrastructure and increase resilience to climate change.</i></li> <li>• <i>Avoid severing ecological corridors created by these assets".</i></li> </ul> <p>If a protected tree or group of trees is felled, replacement on a minimum 1:1 basis with appropriate size and type is required, and replanting should occur as close to the original location as possible, considering nearby properties.</p>
DP38: Biodiversity	<p>Development must ensure a net gain in biodiversity by protecting existing biodiversity, enhancing green infrastructure, minimising habitat fragmentation, and safeguarding designated sites and valued soils.</p> <p>Development will ensure biodiversity is protected and enhanced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributing to a net gain in biodiversity through new sites and habitats;</li> <li>• Protecting existing biodiversity and offsetting unavoidable damage;</li> <li>• Minimising habitat fragmentation and enhancing ecological corridors.</li> </ul>
DP39: Sustainable Design and Construction	<p>Development proposals will seek to improve the sustainability of the development (where appropriate) and:</p> <p><i>"Demonstrate how the risks associated with future climate change have been planned for as part of the layout of the scheme and design of its buildings to ensure its longer-term resilience".</i></p>

DP41: Flood Risk and Drainage	<b><i>"SuDS should be sensitively designed and located to promote improved biodiversity, an enhanced landscape and good quality spaces that improve public amenities in the area, where possible".</i></b>
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**Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council: Parish 2031 Neighbourhood Plan (Referendum Version) – February 2015**

3.13. The Site lies within Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish. 'Parish 31 Neighbourhood Plan'<sup>3</sup> was made on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015 by the Mid Sussex District Council, forming the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan for the whole Parish area from 2014-2031, setting out development principles and allocation of areas for future building and land use.

3.14. The parish proposals map illustrates the land south of Sayers Common, including the southern extent of the Site, as being located within an area subject to Policy C3 – 'Local Gaps and Preventing Coalescence'. The policy states:

***"Development will be permitted in the countryside provided that it does not individually or cumulatively result in coalescence and loss of separate identity of neighbouring settlements, and provided that it does not conflict with other Countryside policies in this Plan. Local Gaps between the following settlements define those areas covered by this policy:***

- ***Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks;***
- ***Sayers Common and Albourne;***
- ***Hurstpierpoint and Albourne;***
- ***Hurstpierpoint and Burgess Hill."***

3.15. Policy H1 – 'Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common new housing development' states:

***"To meet the future needs in the Neighbourhood Plan Area new housing development will be supported in areas which:***

- (a) Enhance the existing settlement pattern of the village...***
- (c) In Sayers Common, can enhance the flood and drainage management in the village."***

3.16. Policy H6 'Housing sites infrastructure and environmental impact' includes the following:

***"New housing developments which meet the policies of this plan and meet the criteria below will be supported..."***

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<sup>3</sup> Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council, Parish 2031 Neighbourhood Plan (18 March 2015)

- d) the retention and protection of significant landscape features within the site and along the site's boundaries;*
- e) an ecological survey to be carried out and appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures to be undertaken;*
- f) the provision of adequate surface water and foul water drainage capacity;*
- g) the provision of, or financial contributions towards, community facilities and the provision of public open space..."*

#### Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD (2020)

- 3.17. The Mid Sussex Design Guide<sup>4</sup> provides design principles to deliver high quality new development within Mid Sussex, to create safe, sustainable and attractive places.
- 3.18. In regard to landscape and visual matters, the following principles are considered relevant:

**Table 2: Summary of Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD principles relevant to landscape and visual matters**

Policy ref.	Summary
Principle DG3: Work with the site's natural features and resources	New developments should preserve natural landscapes to enhance their setting and minimise broader impact. Incorporate natural features to create a green infrastructure network, promoting sustainability and a sense of place.
Principle DG4: Establish a landscape and green infrastructure network	Open space should be integrated into new developments, ensuring safety and accessibility. It should connect to existing landscapes to form networks, highlighting current features. Maximise chances to include elements like mature trees and water courses and ponds while meeting drainage needs.
Principle DG6: Design to enhance biodiversity	New developments should create resilient ecological networks. Retain and incorporate landscape features with high biodiversity value and consider creating new habitats. Use native species to enhance biodiversity.

<sup>4</sup> Mid Sussex District Council, Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document SPD (November 2020)



Principle DG7: Respond to topography and strategic views	New buildings should not obstruct existing views or harm the skyline. Developments should blend into the landscape by minimising visual impact, integrating with the landform, and carefully siting buildings. Identify key views into and out of the site.
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## 4. BASELINE LANDSCAPE

4.1. This section considers the relevant environmental designations in the Site and surrounding area, summarises characteristics of the landscape described in published character assessments and provides a description of the Site and its context. This section also considers and concludes with a judgement on landscape value.

### Site and Surrounding Landscape

4.2. The Site comprises a 1.67ha parcel of land to the rear of the residential property 'Chesapeake', south of Reeds Lane within Sayers Common, Mid Sussex. There are several buildings currently located within the Site, including a large residential dwelling with two large barns, as well as a series of derelict stable buildings, wooden outbuildings and an overgrown small outdoor menage. There are several parcels of rough grassland, formerly used as grazing paddocks, divided by derelict timber post and rail fencing, scrubby overgrown vegetation and belts of mature trees.

4.3. The dwelling Chesapeake is enclosed by mature trees and overgrown hedgerows along its boundary and through the Site. There is existing residential built form to the north, east and west of the Site including: Reeds Lane and Osborn Close to the north; to the east along Wintergreen Way and Furzeland Way; and to the west along Meadow View. In contrast, mature trees mark the southern boundary and section of the Site, which link externally to other tree belts along field borders and woodland to the south. To the southeast, the southern extents of the village border the Site, comprising residential properties and an animal rescue centre west of the B2118 London Road. To the south and southwest, further agricultural land lies immediately beyond the respective boundaries.

4.4. The Site lies approximately 1.5km northwest of Hurstpierpoint and 5km southwest of Burgess Hill. There are mature trees within the Site, along the boundary and expanses of woodland, along surrounding property boundaries and across the surrounding landscape context to the south.

### Topography

4.5. The Site itself has low-lying terrain, gently sloping from the highest point of the Site at approximately 20.17m located in the east, to the lowest point of the Site at approximately 17.12m AOD located to the northwest and southwest (refer to **Figure 3 – Topography Plan**).

4.6. The general topography of the Site reflects westerly fall with the Site and wider landform influenced by the River Adur Valley. The nearest watercourse Herring Stream, a tributary of the River Adur, is located approximately 1.6km northwest of the Site where topography falls between 10-15m AOD.

4.7. To the south of the Site, the surrounding topography rises approximately 1.5km to the south and southeast towards Hurstpierpoint, with elevations between 40-60m AOD, influenced by the topography of the South Downs National Park.

### Trees and Hedgerows

4.8. The Site has existing tree cover including large trees and tree groups mostly lining the Site boundary. An arboriculture survey was carried out in March 2025 by Aspect Arboriculture which outlines that species are mostly native dominated by Oak and some Willow, Ash, Hazel, Elder, Cypress, Hawthorn, Field Maple, Holly and Blackthorn amongst others. There are also two

hedgerows consisting of privet and Monterey Cypress respectively along the northeastern boundary, as well as another hedgerow of Blackthorn, Hawthorn and Oak classified as Category 'C'. Trees and groups are varying in size and quality, with 1 Category 'A' 'English Oak'; as well as twenty-five trees and one group of Category 'B' specimens; fourteen trees and nine groups of Category 'C' specimens; and seven trees and one group of poor physiological condition or already dead at the time of survey and therefore have been afforded Category 'U' Unsuitable, requiring removal.

4.9. Further details regarding trees can be found within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Schedule that accompanies the application.

#### **Public Rights of Way and Published Walking Routes**

4.10. Public Right of Way (PRoW) Footpath ref: 11Hu traverses the southern aspect of the Site. The route connects with B2118 London Road, approximately 145m east of the Site boundary and crosses the well-treed agricultural fields southeast of the Site, where the route continues east-west through the Site. Here, the footpath connects with Footpath ref: '1\_1Al' towards the southwestern corner of the Site, and continues parallel to the Site's western boundary, beyond the residential properties. From the footpath traverses across Reeds Lane to the northwest of the Site, where the PRoW network continues northwest across the agricultural fields connecting to Footpath refs: '1Al' and '3Al'.

4.11. There is no other public access permitted into the Site. Surrounding the Site, there are pavements partially along the B2118 London Road east of the Site, and Reeds Lane, north of the Site, beyond the residential properties which connect Sayers Common to Albourne.

4.12. There are several other PRoW routes within the vicinity of the Site (refer to **Figure 4 – Environmental Designations Plan**). To the east of Footpath ref: '11Hu' where the route joins the B2118, the Footpath connects with Bridleway ref: '86Hu', approximately 119m south of the road and continues further east. Approximately 93m east on the Bridleway ref: '86Hu', Footpath ref: '34Hu' traverse's southwards, immediately east of Coombe Wood and connects with Footpath ref: '33Hu' north of Chloe Wood.

#### **Environmental Designations**

4.13. The Site is not subject to any statutory or local/non-statutory designations specific to landscape, as shown in Figure 4. However, several policies are relevant to landscape and visual matters more generally.

4.14. Within the vicinity of the Site, there are a several other environmental designations which have some relevance to landscape and visual matters. These comprise:

4.15. Designated landscapes- South Downs National Park (SDNP) and the High Weald National Landscape (formerly AONB), lie approximately 3.11km to the south and 4.1km north of the Site respectively. However, these are considered physically and visually separated from the site and are at such a distance that the effect of the development of the proposed type is considered negligible. Further, the Site is surrounded by existing residential built form, and is well contained by established vegetation, limiting intervisibility. The proposed planting to the boundary would further restrict intervisibility with the Site once established.

4.16. Wolstonbury Hill SSSI is located approximately 4.1km southeast of the Site, with the site situated within the SSSI Impact of Risk Zone. However, it is not considered that the proposals are deemed

to impact the aspirations of the SSSI. Further, Wolstonbury Hill is considered physically and visually separated from the site and are at such a distance. Further as the site contains existing residential development and buildings, the effect of the development of the proposed type is considered negligible.

- 4.17. Albourne Conservation Area lies approximately 1.3km to the south of the Site and contains several Listed Buildings. There are several listed buildings lining the central street 'The Street' in Albourne. However, intervening field boundary vegetation to the south of the Site, and existing residential built form north of Albourne along the B2118 and Oakwell Close impedes intervisibility between the Conservation Area and the Site.
- 4.18. Outside of the Conservation area, there are several Listed Buildings within proximity to the Site, the closest of which is Grade II Listed Building 'Aymers Sayers' approximately 246m northeast of the boundary. The Grade II Listed Building 'Kingscot' is also located approximately 435m to the northeast of the Site. Located to the southeast of the Site, there is a cluster of Grade II Listed Dwellings at Coombe Farm, situated approximately 395 to 440m from the Site boundary. There is limited intervisibility between the Site and the Listed Buildings mentioned above, due to the existing built form surrounding the Site to the north and east, and the intervening woodland and field boundary vegetation to the east and south. The Site is generally well contained by established vegetation, limiting intervisibility. The proposed planting to the boundary would further restrict intervisibility with the Site once established.
- 4.19. There are several blocks of deciduous Ancient Woodland notably within close proximity to the Site including Sayers Common Wood, approximately 118m east of the boundary and Coombe Wood approximately 223m southeast of the boundary. There are also blocks of Priority Habitat Inventory (PHI): Deciduous Woodland surrounding the vicinity of the Site, including the woodland located approximately 223m northwest of the Site at Furze Field. The woodland blocks help reduce visibility of the Site and distant landscape elements, further afield, and aid in visually and physically containing the Site.
- 4.20. The Site does not contain any Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).
- 4.21. Where relevant, these matters are considered in the analysis of constraints and opportunities and the subsequent appraisal.

#### **Published Landscape Character Assessment**

- 4.22. The following paragraphs identify the key characteristics of the landscape described in published landscape character assessments.

National Landscape Character Areas

- 4.23. National Character Areas (NCAs) prepared by Natural England, form the broadest scale of landscape character assessment in England.
- 4.24. The Site and the surrounding areas within the district are located in NCA 121: 'Low Weald'<sup>5</sup>. A Summary Description for the NCA includes:

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<sup>5</sup> Natural England, NE400: NCA Profile: 121 Low Weald (17 September 2013)

*“...a broad, low-lying clay vale which largely wraps around the northern, western and southern edges of the High Weald. It is predominantly agricultural, supporting mainly pastoral farming owing to heavy clay soils, with horticulture and some arable on lighter soils in the east, and has many densely wooded areas with a high proportion of ancient woodland. Around 9 per cent of it falls within the adjacent designated landscapes of the Surrey Hills, Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the South Downs National Park. Around 23 per cent of the area is identified as greenbelt land....”*

4.25. Due to the small size and enclosed nature of the Site, this national level assessment is considered too geographically extensive to provide detailed information that would be relevant to the Site and Proposed Development. For this reason, the description, and characteristics of the NCA in which the Site is located, have been reviewed to inform this LVIA but they have not been assessed as a specific landscape receptor.

#### Local Landscape Character Areas

4.26. Both county and district levels identify the Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) which form areas of broadly similar geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern.

4.27. At county level, the ‘West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment’ (2005)<sup>6</sup> identifies the Site as being within the Landscape Character Area (LCA) ‘LW10: Eastern Low Weald’. Whilst, at district level the ‘Mid Sussex District Council Landscape Character Assessment’ (2005)<sup>7</sup>, identifies the Site as being within the Landscape Character Area (LCA) 4 ‘Hickstead Low Weald’. The varying Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) of the Site and the surrounding area, are shown on **Figure 5 – Landscape Character Plan**.

4.28. The Mid Sussex District Council Landscape Character Assessment draws upon and incorporates the ‘West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment’ (2005) by West Sussex County Council, and the assessments are somewhat the same, therefore the document is not considered further in this assessment for this reason.

4.29. Key Characteristics of LCA ‘4 Hickstead Low Weald’ of relevance to the Site and surrounding landscape include:

- ***“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.***
- ***...suburban village development at Partridge Green, Shermanbury and Sayers Common.***
- ***Varied traditional rural buildings built with diverse materials including timber-framing, weatherboarding, Horsham Stone roofing and varieties of local brick and tile-hanging.”***

<sup>6</sup> West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment: Area LW10: Eastern Low Weald (2005).

<sup>7</sup> Mid Sussex District Council Landscape Character Assessment: Area 4: Hickstead Low Weald (2005).

4.30. Relevant 'Key Issues' include the following:

- *... severe hedgerow loss, and the ageing and loss of hedgerow and field trees.*
- *...busy use of some rural lanes*
- *Gradual loss of locally distinctive building styles and materials.*
- *Gradual suburbanisation of the landscape including the widespread use of exotic tree and shrub species."*
- Relevant 'Landscape and Visual Sensitivities' include the following:
  - *"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.*
  - *Pockets of rich biodiversity..."*

4.31. The 'Landscape Strategy' guidance includes:

*"Conserve and enhance the quiet, rural qualities of the western part of the area, encourage landscape restoration and woodland management, and ensure that new development is well-integrated within the landscape."*

4.32. 'Landscape Management Guidelines' relevant to the Proposed Development include:

- *Maintain and restore the historic pattern of the ... landscape including irregular patterns of smaller fields.*
- *Where appropriate, increase tree cover in and around villages, agricultural and other development and on the rural urban fringe of suburban areas ... 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 replant hedgerows where they have been lost."*

4.33. The boundary with the adjacent LCA 'LW9 Upper Adur Valley' is within proximity to the Site. Due to the small and enclosed nature of the Site in combination with the wooded character of the surrounded landscape, there would be no potential effects on the adjacent LCA, and it has not been considered further in this assessment.

### Summary

4.34. Considering the existing built form within the Site and its location within surrounding residential and industrial built form and adjacent busy B-road, along with the enclosed character of the Site



and surrounding landscape, this would reduce its susceptibility to the type of development proposed. It is considered that the Site would have a **medium** sensitivity to the type of development proposed, overall.

## 5. BASELINE VIEWS

5.1. This section describes Site visibility in the 3km study area and identifies visual receptors (i.e. people that experience views of the Site and who are likely to experience views of the Proposed Development). Assessment viewpoints also are identified below, and a summary of existing receptor views is provided.

### Representative Viewpoints

5.2. For the purposes of this assessment, a series of representative publicly accessible views from the area surrounding the Site have been identified through desktop and field studies. These viewpoints are not intended to cover every possible view, but rather they are representative of a range of receptor types at varying distances and orientations to the Site.

5.3. The representative viewpoints demonstrate the relative visibility of the Site (and existing features on it) and its relationship with the surrounding landscape and built form.

5.4. While private views are relevant, public viewpoints (from roads, public footpaths, and other areas of public open space) are selected since they tend to have a higher incidence of receptors affected.

### Site Visibility

5.5. A Site appraisal was carried out on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2025. This included a preliminary survey, with photographs taken to record the condition of the Site, the character of the views and the existing visibility of the Site. Deciduous vegetation was not in leaf at the time of survey (winter assessment) and so represent worst-case potential effects. The photographs have also been used to inform the assessment of effects upon the landscape character, presented in Section 7 of this LVIA.

5.6. Digital mapping (see **Figure 6 – Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility/SZTV**) has informed the scope of the LVIA by identifying theoretically visible areas across the study area. A series of provisional visual receptors were chosen from this analysis that were representative of varying distances and directions of view. This LVIA will focus on these selected viewpoints to inform the baseline description and assessment of effects. The viewpoint locations are shown at **Figure 7 – Viewpoint Location Plan**. Baseline context photographs (Viewpoints 1-13) representing identified views are included at **Figure 8**, with the associated single frame photographs for the viewpoints included at **Appendix C**.

5.7. To the north, the Site is well visually contained by the existing residential built form along Reeds Lane and Osborn Close, with mature belts of trees along the Site's northeastern and northwestern boundary.

5.8. To the east, the Site is enclosed by existing residential properties along Reeds Lane with belts of mature trees along the eastern boundary, and by existing residential built form along Wintergreen Way and Furzeland Way backing onto the eastern boundary.

5.9. To the south, the Site is well enclosed by mature trees within the southern section of the Site, along the watercourse and along the southern boundary, and by blocks of woodland and belts of mature trees along field boundaries with built form along the B2118 London Road.

5.10. To the west, an existing barn and stable buildings within the Site are located adjacent to the western boundary, with residential properties along Meadow View further enclosing the northern section of the Site. Belts of mature trees along the Site's western boundary include tall evergreen hedgerows which further limit the view into the Site.

5.11. The Site is very well visually enclosed due to the existing residential built form to the north, east and west, and by mature trees along the Site boundary, and throughout the southern section of the Site and along field boundaries. Views towards the Site are highly screened from most vantage points with the exception of points immediately adjacent to the boundary, where some partial views into the Site are possible from some locations – where there are gaps in adjacent built form or boundary vegetation.

### Assessment Viewpoints

5.12. This visual assessment is informed by 13 viewpoints discussed in the table below and shown on **Figure 7**. The viewpoints are fixed points in the LVIA study area and provide information that informs the description of the visual (and landscape) baseline and the assessment of effects.

5.13. **Figure 8** provides the baseline context viewpoint photography that shows the existing views towards the Site from each viewpoint, and **Appendix C** shows the single frame photography related to each viewpoint. Viewpoint photography also assists in understanding the baseline landscape and visual environment at the Site and in its context.

**Table 3: Assessment Viewpoints**

Viewpoint Reference	Viewpoint Location	Approximate Distance from the Site and the Direction of the View towards the Site	Visual Receptors
1	PRoW Footpath ref 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu' adjacent to eastern boundary.	0m Looking west	Public Right of Way users
2	PRoW Footpath ref 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu' within The Site.	0m Looking north	Public Right of Way users
3	Reeds Lane adjacent to	5m Looking south	Road users and residents of Sayers Common

Viewpoint Reference	Viewpoint Location	Approximate Distance from the Site and the Direction of the View towards the Site	Visual Receptors
	the northern boundary.		
4	Osborn Close.	50m Looking southwest	Residents of Sayers Common
5	Reeds Lane Recreation Ground.	160m Looking southwest	Visitors to Reeds Lane Recreation Ground and Residents of Sayers Common
6	View south from Goldcrest Drive.	175m Looking southwest	Residents of Sayers Common
7	PRoW Footpath ref 'West Sussex ALB 1_1AI'.	115m Looking southeast	Public Right of Way users
8	PRoW Footpath ref 'West Sussex HSC 1AI'.	265m Looking southeast	Public Right of Way users
9	Reeds Lane.	235m Looking east	Road users
10	London Road at junction of PRoW Footpath ref 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu'.	155m Looking northwest	Road users and Public Right of Way users
11	PRoW Bridleway ref 'West Sussex HSC 86Hu'.	280m Looking northwest	Public Right of Way users

Viewpoint Reference	Viewpoint Location	Approximate Distance from the Site and the Direction of the View towards the Site	Visual Receptors
12	PRoW Footpath ref 'West Sussex ALB 3_1AI'.	295m Looking northeast	Public Right of Way users
13	PRoW Footpath ref 'ref 'West Sussex ALB 3_1AI'.	520m Looking north	Public Right of Way users

## 6. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1. The Proposed Development seeks permission for:
- 6.2. ***The proposed development is for 27 residential dwellings with associated gardens and public open space comprising SuDs, play and informal recreation. Access to the site is provided from the existing access on Reeds Lane.***
- 6.3. The development proposals shown on the **Site Layout Plan (Appendix D)** show the general extent of the built footprint, the points of access and the areas of open space. The primary land uses across the Site are defined as:
  - 27 residential dwelling units with 54 associated parking spaces;
  - Approximately over half of the developable Site area for accessible open space or green infrastructure including retained vegetation, strategic planting, communal open spaces, and private gardens; and
  - Vehicular access to the north of the Site from Reed's Lane.
- 6.4. The proposed buildings would comprise a mixture of 1.5 and 2 storey, with some buildings containing rooms in the roof, and with building heights to circa 9m above existing ground levels.
- 6.5. The landscape proposals are shown on the **Landscape Strategy (Appendix B)** submitted with the application, which has considered the findings of the Site assessment undertaken as part of the LVIA. The proposals aim to support local landscape character in accordance with the landscape guidelines identified in the Mid Sussex District Council Landscape Character Assessment (2005) for the Hickstead Low Weald LCA, while considering visual amenity and functionality, particularly through the retention of most existing trees around the Site boundary where possible and new structural shrub and tree planting comprising species of local provenance.
- 6.6. At a macro level, the proposed green infrastructure would ensure that the Proposed Development would be an attractive place to live and would facilitate improved opportunities for local wildlife. The landscape proposals include:
  - Retained existing green infrastructure assets, namely many mature trees and hedgerows around the perimeter of the Site and throughout the development where possible.
  - Additional native shrub, hedgerow, and tree planting around the Site boundary, bolstering the existing boundary trees to aid in screening of proposed new built form in close-range views and to aid in softening views for (and of) the adjacent residential properties.
  - Ornamental and native species will be used to provide opportunities for wildlife and create an attractive streetscape within the proposed development.
  - Proposed attenuation basin within the south of the Site; to be sown with seasonally wet meadow mix, as well as new native shrub and tree planting to provide additional habitats and foraging opportunities for wildlife.
  - Existing Public Right of Way (PRoW) Footpath ref 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu' to be retained and to follow the correct alignment through the Site.



- New scattered tree planting within meadow grassland to the south of the Site, will enhance the existing vegetation with suitable species to suit the existing wet site ground conditions.
- New feature trees, ornamental shrubs and bulb planting to mark the entrance to the site and create an attraction gateway into the Site.
- New tree planting throughout the development includes ornamental trees around the communal areas of open space, and native trees reflective of existing tree species on Site and to the boundary where space allows.
- Areas of amenity grassland will provide space for informal use. An informal play space will provide opportunities for children to explore nature close to home with a trim trail and natural play features.

## 7. EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

7.1. The following section assesses the effects on the landscape elements that currently characterise the Site. It considers the introduction of the new elements that make up the proposals and how these will physically affect the existing features present within the Site.

### Land Cover

7.2. The Site currently comprises a large domestic dwelling adjacent to the northern boundary off Reed's Lane and large barns adjacent to the southwestern boundary with stables and timber out-buildings, sheds and a former outdoor riding menage. There are parcels of rough grassland paddocks bound mostly by belts of mature trees with some large evergreen hedgerows to the western boundary. The southern section of the Site contains a large expanse of scrubby vegetation and is well enclosed by mature trees. PRoW Footpath ref 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu' passes through the southern section of the Site with post and rail fencing along both sides of the route. The individual residential property with large gardens and high tree cover is typical of the locality and is assessed to be of medium susceptibility and value, which results in a medium sensitivity.

7.3. The existing domestic dwelling is proposed to be removed and replaced by the Proposed Development. This would include 27 new residential properties with vehicular access off Reeds Lane. The properties include private garages, private garden spaces and communal outdoor areas for both recreation, socialisation, and a play space within the southern section of the Site. The proposed play space would be accessible to both the existing and proposed community, accessible from the proposed new vehicular access route and by PRoW Footpath ref 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu' which passes through the area of proposed Public Open Space within the southern section of the Site.

7.4. The proposed green infrastructure would include native hedgerows to the Site boundary, with native tree planting to the periphery of the Site. Central areas of communal open space would include formal single-species hedgerows, and colourful ornamental planting to include shrubs, herbaceous perennials, grasses and bulb planting. Amenity grassland areas would generally be short-mown and formal in character, with some swathes or bulb planting for seasonal interest. Planting areas would primarily enhance visual amenity, however, would have dual benefits for biodiversity.

7.5. It is assessed that despite the high percentage of proposed green infrastructure, the proportion of the Site area to comprise new built infrastructure would be greater than the existing, resulting in an overall adverse effect upon land cover relative to the baseline. The magnitude of change is assessed as **medium**, which when combined with the **medium** sensitivity results in a **moderate adverse** effect upon land cover.

### Topography

7.6. There is a relatively limited topographical variation within the Site currently, and only limited earthworks would be necessary to accommodate much of the Proposed Development parcels. The susceptibility of the topography to changes as a result of the Proposed Development is **low**, which combined with a **low** value, would result in an overall **low** sensitivity.

7.7. The changes to the topographic profile would be localised and minor changes will be required to construct the access road, areas of car parking, the attenuation basin and the foundations of new buildings and paths.

7.8. Once the Proposed Development is constructed, the existing topographic profile would remain to a large degree across the Site. The overall magnitude of change to the ground profile of the Site would be **low**. With a **low** sensitivity and a **low** magnitude of change, the overall effect on the topography would be **minor adverse**.

### **Trees and Hedgerows**

7.9. The Tree Survey by Aspect Arboriculture was carried out in March 2025, and sets out a detailed assessment of the condition of the trees and hedgerows within and adjoining the Site. The survey identified trees, tree groups and hedgerows, including:

- 1 x Category A 'High' Oak tree;
- 25 x trees and 1 x tree group in Category B 'Moderate' value, including Oak;
- 14 x trees, 9 tree groups and 3 hedgerows in Category C 'Low' value including Goat Willow, Monterey Cypress, Hazel, Oak, Ash, Elder, Crack Willow, Leyland Cypress, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Holly, Laurel, Field Maple and Privet species; and
- 7 x trees and 1 tree group were identified as category U 'Unsuitable for retention', including Oak and Crack Willow species.

7.10. The majority of the trees along the boundary of the Site are proposed to be retained as part of the development proposals, including all High value trees and most Moderate value trees and tree groups. Boundary vegetation removal required includes some sections of the Low value (Category C) trees in the northeastern, northwestern, eastern and western boundaries, due to questionable structural conditions and to facilitate construction of the access road and pedestrian connection from the Public Right of Way (PRoW).

7.11. Internal trees to be removed with the Proposed Development are mostly Low value, with three moderate quality (Category B) trees to be removed. Whilst their removal will be visible from the PRoW Footpath, intervening retained tree species will limit the effect on amenity (see Arboricultural Impact Assessment for further details).

7.12. The existing trees and hedgerows susceptibility to change arising from the development proposed would be **high** due to their size and maturity, and the time this landscape element takes to mature. With a high value and high susceptibility, the overall sensitivity of the tree and hedgerow resource is **high**.

7.13. The key areas of new planting are shown on the **Landscape Strategy** in **Appendix C**, including:

- Native hedgerows, trees and shrub planting around the perimeter of the Site;
- Tree planting within rear gardens to provide screening from existing properties;
- Scattered tree planting within meadow grassland to provide additional habitats and enhance existing vegetation within the Site, located to the south;

- Amenity grassland areas for informal use, to the south;
- Feature trees, ornamental shrubs and hedgerows within communal amenity areas and the entrance;
- Marginal planting to enhance the existing watercourse, and lined with native trees and shrubs to provide additional habitats and foraging opportunities;
- Seasonally wet meadow mixes to sow the attenuation basin.

7.14. It is assessed that the magnitude of change upon the tree resource as a result of the loss of trees and new tree planting would be **high** during the construction phase. This would translate to a **major adverse** effect in the short term. Following the growth of the new tree planting the magnitude of change relative to the baseline would be reduced to **low** over time. This would result in a **Moderate** long-term effect upon the tree resource of the Site.

7.15. Similarly, mixed native hedgerows along the Site boundary and ornamental hedgerows are proposed to increase the diversity of vegetation whilst also defining the curtilages of private garden areas, bolstering green infrastructure, whilst also providing valuable habitat connectivity. On balance, the magnitude of change is likely to be **low** and this would translate to **minor beneficial** effects upon the hedgerow resource within the Site, improving as time passes.

#### **Public Rights of Way (PRoW)**

7.16. There is one PRoW Footpath (ref: West Sussex HSC 11Hu), which runs east-west through the southern part of the Site; dividing the Site into two. However, the route is currently extremely waterlogged and is fragmented in places due to broken wooden post and rail fencing and overgrown vegetation.

7.17. The proposed development plans to retain the Footpath, whilst restoring the current route to its correct alignment. The northern part of the Site will have private residential dwellings, while the southern part will feature an informal play space south of the Footpath, offering enhanced recreational opportunities and increased pedestrian connectivity for the route.

7.18. The sensitivity is considered **high**, whilst the magnitude of change upon the PRoW Footpath, is anticipated as **medium** during the construction phase, primarily due to the route's reinstatement works. In the short term, this change will result in a **major adverse** effect within the site whilst construction works are undertaken to the footpath and informal play space. The proposals for the informal play space incorporate natural play features and opportunities to engage with nature, thereby enhancing recreational features of the site. The proposals will also provide outdoor space for the enjoyment of private residents and visitors. In the longer term, on balance the proposed changes would result in a **minor beneficial** effect, due to a **low** magnitude of change.

7.19. Effects upon the visual amenity of people using the existing PRoW in the wider landscape are assessed in Section 8 of this report.

**Table 4: Summary of Effects on Landscape Elements**

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
Land Cover	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse
Topography	Low	Low	Minor adverse
Trees and Hedgerows	High	Low	Minor beneficial (upon maturity)
Public Rights of Way	High	Low	Minor beneficial*

\*Professional judgement has been applied, refer to introduction paragraph 1.5 and 2.8.

## 8. EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

8.1. The assessment of landscape effects considers the sensitivity of the landscape and the magnitude of change to come to an overall judgement in accordance with the **LVIA Methodology** at **Appendix A**.

### Landscape Sensitivity

8.2. Landscape sensitivity combines judgements of the landscape's susceptibility to change to the type of development proposed and the value attached to the landscape as defined in the landscape baseline.

### Landscape Value

8.3. The Site is not located within any statutory or non-statutory landscape designations. The South Downs National Park (SDNP) and the High Weald National Landscape (formerly AONB), lie approximately 3.11km to the south and 4.1km north of the Site respectively. However, these landscapes are considered physically and visually separate to the site.

8.4. Within close proximity, Sayers Common Wood and Coombe Wood to the east and southeast include areas of ancient woodland. Even though there are some designations for elevated landscape value adjacent to the Site, there is nothing within the Site (landscape, ecological or heritage designations) that would suggest an elevated value. There is, however, inherent value of the existing trees (ranging between high, moderate, and low Arboricultural value) and their contribution to the enclosed character of the surrounding landscape.

8.5. The **Tranquillity Plan** shown on **Figure 9** identifies the Site and surrounding village of Sayers Common as being closer to the 'Least Tranquil' end of the spectrum, which is typical of the urban setting. The level of tranquillity across the Site and surrounding landscape is influenced by the residential development existing on the Site and surrounding residential areas, and the busy B2118 London Road and A23. The Site is therefore considered to be of **medium** value from a landscape and visual perspective.

### Landscape Susceptibility to Change

8.6. The susceptibility of a landscape to change is dependent on the characteristics of the receiving landscape and the nature of the development proposed.

8.7. The location of the Site encompassing an existing residential property along a busy B-road, surrounded by residential development has an influence on the overall level of tranquillity experienced, particularly within the northern and eastern parts of the Site, closest to the existing residential built form and road. The Site is well visually enclosed by existing mature vegetation along the Site boundary and within the surrounding landscape, which also reduces its susceptibility to change.

8.8. The Proposed Development would increase the density of residential development on the Site. The proposed built form and massing would be of similar scale, given the dwellings are residential. However, the development would not be out of character given the adjacent residential land use along Reeds Lane, Meadow View, The Nook and B2118 London Road. It is therefore considered that the Site has a **low/ medium** susceptibility to change.

## Landscape Sensitivity

8.9. The sensitivity of the landscape character to the private residential development proposed, is assessed as **medium** owing to a medium value and medium susceptibility to change.

### Effect on the Landscape Character of the Site

8.10. Policy DP26 'Character and Design' in the Adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 states "***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...***" and it is required to demonstrate that development is: "***of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;... creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;...***" and "***protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area...***"

8.11. The effects on landscape character consider how the introduction of new elements may change the attributes of the landscape such as its scale, sense of enclosure and landscape pattern. Also, the perceptual attributes or visibility of the proposals changes the way in which landscape character is perceived.

8.12. The Site is not considered to be open in character due to the existing residential properties and buildings within the Site, the visual enclosure from the surrounding tree cover, and influences from the adjacent road and residential built form visible from some points within the Site. Although much of the Site includes amenity grassland with trees, and the density of built form across the Site is low.

8.13. The Site comprises a 1.67ha parcel of land to the rear of the residential property 'Chesapeake', south of Reeds Lane within Sayers Common, Mid Sussex. There are several buildings currently located within the Site, including a large residential dwelling with two large barns, as well as a series of derelict stable buildings, wooden outbuildings and an overgrown small outdoor menage. There are several parcels of rough grassland, formerly used as grazing paddocks, divided by derelict timber post and rail fencing, scrubby overgrown vegetation and belts of mature trees.

8.14. The dwelling Chesapeake is enclosed by mature trees and overgrown hedgerows along its boundary and through the Site. There is existing residential built form to the north, east and west of the Site including: Reeds Lane and Osborn Close to the north; to the east along Wintergreen Way and Furzeland Way; and to the west along Meadow View. In contrast, mature trees mark the southern boundary and section of the Site, which link externally to other tree belts along field borders and woodland to the south. To the southeast, the southern extents of the village border the Site, comprising residential properties and an animal rescue centre west of the B2118 London Road. To its south, there are a patchwork of agricultural fields.

8.15. The character and appearance of the Site would inevitably change from the existing single large residential dwelling, two large barns, series of derelict stable outbuildings and overgrown small outdoor menage, surrounded by areas of amenity grass with mature trees, to accommodate the 27 private residential dwellings with associated access road, parking areas, private gardens and informal play space. The proposals would lead to an increase of built form within the Site itself but would not be widely discernible from the wider landscape due to the well enclosed nature of the Site and surrounding areas, and the retention of the majority of the boundary trees.

- 8.16. The effects on character and appearance would be mitigated through the provision of high quality, attractive architectural design of the proposed new buildings, by retaining most boundary trees, implementing appropriate native planting to strengthen the Site boundary, and with attractive open space with new tree planting throughout the development. The proposed vehicular access into the Site utilises the existing driveway. While the proposed access would require removal of some sections of low value tree groups, this would be mitigated with the establishment of the replacement hedgerow and tree planting along the northern boundary, minimising any changes in the character of the view from along the road once established. The proposed informal play space in the southern area of the Site, adjacent to the PRoW Footpath, is set back from the proposed residential dwellings and is separated by the intervening watercourse and the retained block of internal trees adjacent to the PRoW, and implementing new native and ornamental hedgerow and tree planting around the informal play space and to the southern boundary, it aids in filtering views from proposed and existing residential development.
- 8.17. Whilst change to the character of the Site itself would occur as an inevitable consequence of introducing the Proposed Development, it would be in keeping with the context and general character of the landscape, albeit at a larger scale and a higher percentage of the Site comprising of built form. With the majority of the existing boundary vegetation retained and supplemented with additional native planting, it would retain and enhance a green edge to the Proposed Development. This would, over time, soften the appearance of the new built form.
- 8.18. The magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is considered to be **medium**. With the potential for landscape effects to reduce following successful management of the existing trees and new mitigation planting, the overall effect on the Site itself would be **moderate adverse**.

#### Effects on Published Landscape Character Areas/Types

- 8.19. The Site currently comprises of the existing residential property 'Chesapeake' as well as a series of outbuildings including two large barns and derelict stable buildings within an irregular plot. The dwellings are surrounded by several parcels of rough grassland and enclosed by mature trees and overgrown hedgerows along its boundary and through the Site. Existing built form surrounds the Site to the north, east and west, with the busy B2118 running adjacent to the western boundary and fields bordering the southern boundary. A watercourse runs diagonally through the Site from the eastern to western boundary, which lies parallel to the PRoW Footpath 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu', and other routes traverse the vicinity. Within close proximity, Sayers Common Wood and Coombe Wood to the east and southeast include areas of ancient woodland. Further, there are several listed buildings within the study area, however there is limited intervisibility between them and the Site, due to the Site's visual containment from the established vegetation, well wooded character and existing built form from the village. The proposed planting to the boundary would further restrict intervisibility with the Site once established.
- 8.20. For these reasons, the Site falls at the middle spectrum of the landscape value continuum, representing an area of pleasant but private and enclosed residential character with settlement edge influences from the surrounding built form and busy road. The character of this landscape and the Site is not of such value that it has warranted a national or local landscape designation, and the landscape is therefore not of high value in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraph 180(a).
- 8.21. The Site is located within the civil parish boundary of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common and relates visually with the surrounding residential built form. The Site does not contain any

landscape features that would be considered rare or unique, and landscape features of value within the Site are limited to the existing mature belts of trees which are mostly located around its boundary. These trees have an inherent value for biodiversity, and as an important landscape feature reflective of the surrounding wooded character of the road, adjacent belts of trees and areas of ancient woodland within to the east and southeast. They also provide enclosure and intimacy to the landscape, screening the Site from views within the surrounding landscape and contributing to scenic value.

The characteristics of the Site and local landscape context are reflective of some of the key characteristics for the 'Hickstead Low Weald' LCA, including the *"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;...suburban village development at Partridge Green, Shermanbury and Sayers Common; varied traditional rural buildings built with diverse materials including timber-framing, weatherboarding, Horsham Stone roofing and varieties of local brick and tile-hanging."*

8.22. The Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for the Hickstead Low Weald LCA have informed the Site layout and associated landscape mitigation, including:

- *Maintain and restore the historic pattern of the ... landscape including irregular patterns of smaller fields.*
- *Where appropriate, increase tree cover in and around villages, agricultural and other development and on the rural urban fringe of suburban areas ... 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 replant hedgerows where they have been lost."*

8.23. The Proposed Development is situated on the Site of an existing residential property and several outbuildings. The proposals have been designed to retain a majority of the boundary trees, which will retain the wooded character to limit potential views of new development from the surrounding landscape. Landscape proposals include the planting of native hedgerow, shrub and tree species, bolstering the existing boundary vegetation and further limiting views from points immediately adjacent to the Site. It is considered that there would be no material changes to any of the key characteristics of the LCA or LCT because of the proposed development, with a negligible magnitude of change and a **negligible** effect on the character of the wider landscape overall.

8.24. The existing tree belts around the boundary and large stature trees, particularly the single principal Oak internally located within the Site are important landscape features. Retaining the existing trees within the development proposals aids in place making, visually integrating the proposed new built form into the receiving landscape. As part of the proposals, the retained vegetation and proposed trees, hedgerows and ornamental planting would be actively managed to create a pleasant and welcoming environment for residents and visitors while providing additional opportunities for biodiversity by extending and enhancing habitat connectivity. The new green infrastructure, and in particular the existing mature trees and structural native planting

along the boundary, would aid in embedding the proposals in the wider landscape over time as well as further restricting visibility of new built development in views from the wider landscape. It is considered that there would be a negligible magnitude of change to and a **negligible** effect on the character area overall.

### Effects on the South Downs National Park and High Weald National Landscape

8.25. The Site is not located within any statutory or non-statutory landscape designations. The South Downs National Park (SDNP) and the High Weald National Landscape (formerly AONB), lie approximately 3.11km to the south and 4.1km north of the Site respectively. As both of these landscapes are of high value and are nationally recognised designated landscapes, the sensitivity is considered high; however, these landscapes are considered physically and visually separate to the Site. Therefore, the proposed development would represent a negligible magnitude of change on the wider designated landscapes, and therefore potential effects on their character, special qualities or setting are considered to be **negligible**.

### Summary of Effects on Landscape

8.26. The table below summarises the magnitude of change and overall effect on the landscape character assessed above.

**Table 5: Summary of Effects on Landscape Character**

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
The Site	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse
Landscape Character Area (LCA) 4: Hickstead Low Weald	Medium	Negligible	Negligible
High Weald National Landscape	High	Negligible	Negligible
South Downs National Park (SDNP)	High	Negligible	Negligible

## 9. EFFECTS ON GENERAL VISUAL AMENITY

9.1. This section assesses the sensitivity of the views potentially affected by the Proposed Development, the magnitude of the predicted change, and the overall effect on each view assessed.

### Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

9.2. The sensitivity of visual receptors depends on the susceptibility of each receptor to changes in views resulting from the development, coupled with the value of the view (as set out in the **LVIA Methodology** in **Appendix A**). This LVIA assesses the potential effect on both public and private views, however, in planning terms there is no private right to a view.

### Susceptibility to Change

9.3. Residential receptors and those recreational users of the PRoW network are susceptible to change as their activities involve experiencing the view in their chosen activity which means their susceptibility to change would be high.

9.4. For users traveling the road network and engaged in outdoor sporting activities, the susceptibility to change would be medium.

### Value of View

9.5. Views towards the Site from the surrounding area are generally considered to be of medium value, as it is an undesignated landscape on the sub-urban fringe, largely screened from view by the mature belts of trees along the Site boundary. Views for residents are considered to be of high value as they contribute to their everyday life.

### Receptor Sensitivity

9.6. In accordance with the LVIA Methodology, the sensitivity of each identified visual receptor is set out in the table below.

**Table 6: Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

Receptor	Viewpoints	Value	Susceptibility to Change	Sensitivity
Public Right of Way Users	1, 2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 & 13	Medium	High	High
Residents	3, 4, 5 & 6	Medium	High	High
Highways	3, 9 & 10	Medium	Medium	Medium

## Effects on Views during Operation

9.7. The effect on visual amenity considers the changes in views arising from the proposals in relation to visual receptors including the surrounding settlements, residential properties, highways, public footpaths together with the effects on representative viewpoints. Visual amenity is defined in GLVIA3 as the:

***"Overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area."***

## Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

9.8. Views from PRoW used by local residents and walkers are generally considered to be of high value, susceptibility and overall sensitivity.

9.9. PRoW Footpath ref: 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu' runs westwards through the Site, starting at B2118 London Road, traversing south of the residential edge in Sayers Common and through the site east to west. **Viewpoint 10** is representative of users commencing onto the Footpath route facing westwards from B2118 London Road. The visibility of the Site is restricted by mature trees along the field boundaries, which provide a screened view. In contrast, a range of open to filtered views are provided travelling westwards on the Footpath route. The low post and wire fence on the southeastern boundary offers views into the Site (**Viewpoint 1**). However, intervening mature trees within the Site and along the footpath, provide visual containment screening further views northwest. Views from the Footpath, located immediately within the Site, allow visibility through gaps in vegetation and built structures (**Viewpoint 2**). However, when vegetation is dense, it limits visibility, resulting in a more restricted filtered view. At the beginning of the Footpath, approaching the site at viewpoint 10, the direction and duration of view taking in dense vegetation results in negligible visual effects for both year 1 and 15, resulting from a negligible magnitude of change and high sensitivity. However overall, for the entire route, in the short term the effects on views for users of this route are considered to be **moderate adverse** for both year 1, resulting from a **medium** magnitude of change and **high** sensitivity.

9.10. Approaching the site from the west on the PRoW network, Footpath ref: 'ALB1\_1AI' travels diagonally southeast through an agricultural field (located approximately 154m west of the Site). Upon entering the field, views of the residential properties along Meadow View (located west of the Site) become visible as well as units at the Kings Business Centre (**Viewpoint 8**). From this location, it is considered that users of the Footpath route would not be able to discern the site due to intervening built form and field boundary vegetation. The site's western boundary is influential in adding to this vegetative layer of screening within the view. The Footpath continues towards Reeds Lane and crosses the highway, with the users' view facing southeast towards the site. The footpath continues into the field situated directly northwest of the site, aligning with the northern and eastern field boundaries (**Viewpoint 7**). Mature vegetation along the eastern field boundary limits potential views of the Site. Although the existing residential build form west of the Site along Meadow View, is discernible, the view is partially obscured by vegetation. Where potential views towards the Site would be discerned, the vegetation becomes denser with mature trees and tall evergreen hedgerows, potential opportunities for views towards the Site become limited. The proposed development will be viewed in conjunction with the existing residential built form blending with the current dwellings in view. Effects on views for users of this route are considered to be **minor adverse** for both year 1 and 15, resulting from a **low** magnitude of change and **high** sensitivity. PRoW Footpath ref: 'ALB1\_1AI/1' connects with Footpath ref: 'West Sussex HSC

11Hu' on the Site's southwestern boundary, however the extent of view remains similar to those described above.

9.11. To the southwest of the Site, PRoW Footpath reference 'West Sussex ALB 3\_1AI' marks several field boundaries, aligning with the vegetation structure of the fields. Intervening field boundary vegetation and, the Site's western belt of mature boundary vegetation is influential in largely obscuring the extent of views from the southwest of the Site (**Viewpoint 12**). The Site remains obscured from view due to the presence of intervening vegetation, even in areas where there is a break in the vegetation. Continuing further south along Footpath 'West Sussex ALB 3\_1AI', the views are increasingly obscured by the dense vegetation characterising the field boundaries. Even during winter when leaves have fallen, tree structures largely obscure the Site from view (**Viewpoint 13**). Although the visual sensitivity is considered high, the effect on views for users of this route are considered to be **negligible** at both year 1 and 15, with a negligible magnitude of change.

9.12. There are several PRoW routes across the open fields to the east and southeast of the Site including HSC\_86Hu, HSC\_33Hu/1 and HSC\_34Hu/2. PRoW Bridleway ref: HSC\_86Hu traverses immediately north of Coombe Wood, which has areas of ancient woodland. Layers of intervening vegetation and mature trees obscure the Site from view (**Viewpoint 11**) and the Site is not discernible. The effect on views for users of this route are considered to be **negligible** at both year 1 and 15, with a **negligible** magnitude of change.

### Residential Properties

9.13. Views from residential properties are generally considered to be of high value, susceptibility, and overall sensitivity. There is a long-held planning principle that no individual has a private right to a view. However, there does come a point by virtue of the proximity, size, and scale of any given development, that a property may become rendered such an unattractive place to live that it would become uninhabitable and planning permission should be refused in the public interest. This is a 'high-test' and not usually associated with residential planning applications that have been carefully designed.

9.14. Residents within dwellings nearest to the Site are likely to experience greatest effects. To the immediate north of the Site are properties at Osborn Close and The Nook, whilst to the immediate east of the Site is 'Homelands' and Furzeland Way, and to the immediate west are the dwellings along Meadow View. To the north of the Site, on the opposite side of Reeds Lane are Kingsland Cottages and housing recently built with some still undergoing construction along Dunnock Lane. Representative views for residents to the immediate east and west are not possible, however **Viewpoint 3** illustrates the filtered views possible for residents adjacent to the Site boundary, taken from the proposed Site access from Reeds Lane. Residents along Osbourne Close, to the north of the Site, include Hramsa, La Massana and Properties 1-9, as well as properties at the Nook are represented in **Viewpoint 4**, which illustrates the view from the publicly accessible road facing southwest towards the Site. There may be a slightly more open view from privately owned 'The Nook' as properties, such as Meadow View and Fir Trees are closer to the site; however, the intervening parcel between the Site and The Nook, inevitably limits the intervisibility between the two.

9.15. Residents of the properties adjacent to the Site currently experience some glimpsed views into the Site from some gaps in the boundary vegetation. Given the orientation of properties and the degree to which they are contained by boundary features, there are varying degrees to which the views from the properties have the potential to be affected. Properties with more open views into

the Site – due to gaps in the boundary vegetation – include those adjacent to the eastern corner, where views from ground floor rooms are possible. Other properties adjacent to the Site would experience glimpsed or partial filtered views mostly limited to upper floor 'secondary' rooms, such as bedrooms which are less sensitive to change.

- 9.16. There would be filtered views of new built form within the Site possible from a limited number of adjacent properties, mostly from upper floor windows, and some residents would experience glimpsed or partial views of cycle stores, parking areas or of open space areas. The magnitude of change would be **medium** as residential built form is already located within the Site and the surrounding context, typical of the sub-urban fringe location, for overall **moderate adverse** effects at year 1.
- 9.17. Visual effects would be mitigated for adjacent residents by additional planting along the boundary. By year 15, once planting has established, **moderate adverse** effects overall would be experienced for these residents. The nature of these effects is consistent with residential extensions on a settlement edge and the proposals would not appear oppressive, overwhelming, or unattractive and would not fail the public interest test in terms of residential visual amenity.
- 9.18. Adjacent to the Site to the northeast is also the Reed's Lane Recreation Ground, however the intervening built form at Reed's Lane and Osbourn Close largely obscures the Site in views southwest (**Viewpoint 5**). Views from Reeds Lane Recreation Ground are considered to afford a medium value, susceptibility and sensitivity as although adjacent to the Site, there are intervening views of traffic along Reeds Lane. There would be glimpsed views of the new built form within the Site possible from limited vantage points above existing intervening-built form and canopies. The resulting effects on views for users are considered to be **moderate adverse** at year 1, with a medium magnitude of change and medium sensitivity. With the growth of proposed vegetation, this would reduce to **minor adverse** effects on views for users at year 15, with a low magnitude of change and medium sensitivity.
- 9.19. Further north on the Goldcrest Drive residential development estate, the Site is also largely obscured due to the intervening residential built form and tall evergreen vegetation (**Viewpoint 6**). The Site is well visually enclosed from most of the surrounding landscape, with the mature trees around the perimeter of the Site and tall evergreen hedgerows to the northern boundary. Residents within properties to the north, such as Goldcrest Drive, inevitably experience a reduced magnitude of change due to the distance from the Site, intervening built form, evergreen vegetation and transient traffic movement.

### Public Highways

- 9.20. Representative views from the surrounding adjacent roads include **Viewpoints 3 and 9**, which are representative of Reeds Lane; and **Viewpoint 10** which is representative of B2118 London Road.
- 9.21. There are pavements alongside both sides of Reeds Lane, where the route passes the Site's northern boundary. Further westwards, just northwest of the Site where PRoW Footpath ref: 'ALB1\_1A1/1' crosses Reeds Lane, the footpaths terminate. Mature trees line the proposed access to the Site (**Viewpoint 3**) which visually contains the Site from the route. Also, the existing built form along Reeds Lane, as well as along Osbourn Close (to the east of the Site) and Meadow View (**Viewpoint 9 – located west of the Site**) aid in the visual containment of the Site from Reeds Lane. From points to the west, mature hedgerows along the field boundaries adjacent to the road limit views towards the Site, and distant views above the hedgerow are screened by the mature belts of trees along the Site boundary.

9.22. **Viewpoint 10** is representative of views from the B2118 London Road. Generally, views towards the Site are largely contained and screened by layers of intervening hedgerow and trees. Further, housing at Furzeland Way further limits views towards the Site. There is potential opportunity for proposed development to be viewed amongst breaks in vegetation and built form, however the proposed enhanced eastern boundary planting will aid in reducing potential views.

9.23. Views for pedestrians and motorists using minor public highways and rural lanes are generally considered to be of medium value, susceptibility, and overall sensitivity due to the oblique, transient nature of views during travel and the Site's location on an existing residential property within the settlement boundary, with built development visible in the surroundings. Only a minor part of the proposals would be visible from points along the Reeds Lane, directly adjacent to the Site's access, due to the retained mature trees and mitigation from planting adjacent to the boundary. The proposed vehicular access into the development would utilise the existing driveway, limiting the degree of change experienced from the road, resulting in a low magnitude of change and a **minor adverse** effect at Year 1. Mitigation planting along the edges of the Site would further soften and filter views of built form as it establishes at year 15, and effects would lessen to **negligible**.

**Table 7: Summary of Effects on Visual Amenity**

	Receptor	Sensitivity	Development Phase	Magnitude of Change	Overall Effect
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY (PROW)	Public Footpath '11Hu' users	High	Year 1	Medium	Moderate adverse
			Year 15	Medium	
	Public Footpath 'ALB1_1AI/1' users	High	Year 1	Low	Minor adverse
			Year 15	Low	
	Public Footpath 'ALB3_1AI' users	High	Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	
	Public Bridleway 'HSC 86_Hu' users	High	Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	
RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES	Residents overlooking the Site (including Reeds Lane, Osbourn Close, The Nook)	High	Year 1	Medium	Moderate adverse
			Year 15	Low	
	Users of Reeds Lane Recreation Ground	Medium	Year 1	Medium	Moderate adverse
			Year 15	Low	Minor adverse
	Residents at Goldcrest Drive	Medium	Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	
HIGHWAYS	Users of Highways (Reeds Lane / B2118 London Road)	Medium	Year 1	Low	Minor adverse
			Year 15	Low	Negligible

## 10. CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1. This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Antler Homes Ltd. It relates to a full planning application for the demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and construction of 27 residential units with access from Reeds Lane, ***with associated landscaping, parking, open space, and all other associated development works.***
- 10.2. The effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape and visual amenity have been assessed in accordance with the Guidelines for Visual and Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3). Effects have been assessed during the post-construction phase of the Proposed Development and have taken account of the establishment of proposed mitigation planting and of mitigation planting in the long-term (year 15).

### Baseline Conditions

- 10.3. The Site comprises a 1.67ha parcel of land to the rear of the residential property 'Chesapeake', south of Reeds Lane within Sayers Common, Mid Sussex. There are several buildings currently located within the Site, including a large residential dwelling with two large barns, as well as a series of derelict stable buildings, wooden outbuildings and an overgrown small outdoor menage. There are several parcels of rough grassland, formerly used as grazing paddocks, divided by derelict timber post and rail fencing, scrubby overgrown vegetation and belts of mature trees.
- 10.4. The dwelling Chesapeake is enclosed by mature trees and overgrown hedgerows along its boundary and through the Site. There is existing residential built form to the north, east and west of the Site including: Reeds Lane and Osborn Close to the north; to the east along Wintergreen Way and Furzeland Way; and to the west along Meadow View. In contrast, mature trees mark the southern boundary and section of the Site, which link externally to other tree belts along field borders and woodland to the south. To the southeast, the southern extents of the village border the Site, comprising residential properties and an animal rescue centre west of the B2118 London Road. To its south, there are a patchwork of agricultural fields.
- 10.5. The Site is located at the rear of the existing residential property 'Chesapeake', occupying several parcels of rough grassland measuring approximately 1.67ha, to the south of Reeds Lane within the civil parish of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common. The Site currently contains the large residential property 'Chesapeake' as well as two large barns, a series of derelict stable buildings, wooden outbuildings and an overgrown small outdoor menage. Grassland is divided by post and rail fencing, with some mature trees scattered internally throughout the Site, and belts of mature trees around the boundary. The Site is bounded by residential properties to the north (along Reeds Lane and Osbourn Close); to the east (along Furzeland Way) and Wintergreen Way); and to the west (Meadow View). Adjacent to the Site, to the north, a recent development at Goldcrest Drive has erected including several properties in the construction phase.
- 10.6. The Site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory landscape designations and is well visually enclosed leading to no intervisibility with the adjacent designated landscapes including the South Downs National Park, the High Weald National Landscape and Wolstonbury Hill SSSI.
- 10.7. There is approximately 3m variation in landform across the Site, with the height of the land sitting between 17-20m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

- 10.8. A single Public Right of Way (Footpath ref: 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu') runs through the south of the Site and is retained as part of the proposals. A small number of other PRoW routes pass within proximity to the Site, most of which have no or limited intervisibility with the Site due to the surrounding built form and wooded landscape character.
- 10.9. Surrounding land use is residential to the immediate north, east and west, with agricultural fields to the south and woodland to the southeast.

#### **Effect on the Landscape Character of the Site**

- 10.10. The baseline landscape character has been considered with reference to National Character Area: 121 'Low Weald', the West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment: LCA LW10 Eastern Low Weald' and the Mid Sussex District Council Landscape Character Assessment: LCA 4 'Hickstead Low Weald'.
- 10.11. The character and appearance of the Site would remain as residential development however would inevitably extend the density and extent of built form within the Site. The proposals would, however, be highly visually enclosed due to the existing mature belts of trees along its boundary and throughout the surrounding landscape. The effects on the wider countryside would be limited to points immediately adjacent to the Site and would be mitigated through additional structural native planting around the periphery of the Site, to further filter residual views once established.
- 10.12. Although some of the existing trees within the Site will be lost to facilitate the proposals, most trees along the boundary will be retained and enhanced with structural native planting to the boundary and the introduction of a diverse mix of planting throughout the scheme.
- 10.13. The magnitude of change within the Site would be medium which when coupled with a medium sensitivity would result in a **minor adverse** effect upon baseline landscape character at the sitewide level.
- 10.14. There would be no fundamental changes to any of the key characteristics listed in the Landscape Character Assessments beyond the immediate vicinity of the Site. The magnitude of change and overall effect would therefore be **negligible**.

#### **Effect on General Visual Amenity**

- 10.15. A computer-generated Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility (SZTV) has been used to inform the selection of representative public viewpoints from all directions and distances from the Site, with an emphasis on high sensitivity receptors including settlement edges and PRoW.
- 10.16. The proposed development would only be visible at very close proximity from the adjacent highways and local PRoW routes, with close-proximity views experienced from the private gardens and upper floor windows of the residential properties overlooking the Site, particularly to the immediate east and west. However, the nature of these visual effects will be similar to those in the locality and many other settlement edge locations. The proposals would not be perceptible from beyond the immediate periphery due to the Site's localised visual envelope, the mature boundary vegetation and well-treed character of the surrounding residential boundaries, and ancient woodland within Coombe Wood and Sayers Common Wood. This wooded character of the landscape reduces the number of visual receptors from medium and long-distance ranges.

- 10.17. The Proposed Development is designed with consideration to the wooded character of the local landscape. The landscape proposals aim to create both an attractive setting to the new development and mitigate views from the surrounding residential properties and publicly accessible location along the road and adjacent PRoW network.
- 10.18. Native structural planting around the periphery of the Site would establish to create new opportunities for biodiversity, bolstering the existing boundary trees and enhancing filtering effects to soften views of built form. Ornamental and native species will be used to provide opportunities for wildlife and create an attractive streetscape within the proposed development.
- 10.19. Views of new built form are not out of character with the existing residential built form located within the Site and would be seen within the context of the surrounding residential areas. Views would be limited to points immediately adjacent to the Site and filtered by existing trees along the boundary. Once the proposed green infrastructure is established, the proposals would be further screened from view. The Proposed Development would have some very localised visual effects, but these would not result in long term unacceptable visual harm given the context.

### **Summary**

- 10.20. Any change to the receiving landscape character or visual amenity would be highly localised, and the overarching wooded landscape character would be conserved. Existing and proposed tree cover along the boundaries would visually contain the Proposed Development in a strong landscape framework. The Site will be set within a robust landscape setting to provide new residents with attractive outdoor spaces for informal recreation, socialisation, and community, with enhanced ecological networks through locally appropriate native structural planting to the Site boundaries which would further filter close-range views of the new built form.
- 10.21. Any changes to the landscape character or visual amenity will be localised, and the wooded and well-treed landscape character will remain intact. Existing and new trees along the boundaries will visually contain the development within a strong landscape framework. The Site will offer attractive outdoor spaces for recreation, socialization, and community engagement, with enhanced ecological networks through native structural planting that filters close range views of the new built form.
- 10.22. It is assessed that the Proposed Development would not cause unacceptable harm to the receiving landscape in landscape and visual terms and is considered appropriate within the surrounding village context in which it is located.



# REFERENCES

## Best Practice Guidance

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Third Edition 2013) (GLVIA3).
- GLVIA3 Statements of Clarification, Landscape Institute, 2013 and 2014.
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England 2014.
- An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management – Natural England, 2019.
- Visual Representation of Development Proposals. Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Landscape Institute, 2019; and
- Assessing landscape value outside national designations. Technical Guidance Note 02/21. Landscape Institute, 2021.

## Data Sources

- Ordnance Survey maps (1:25,000 Explorer Series).
- Aerial images; and
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC Map) (<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>).

## Landscape Character Sources

- National Character Area (NCA) 121 Low Weald
- West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (2005)
- Mid Sussex District Council Landscape Character Assessment (2005)



## FIGURES

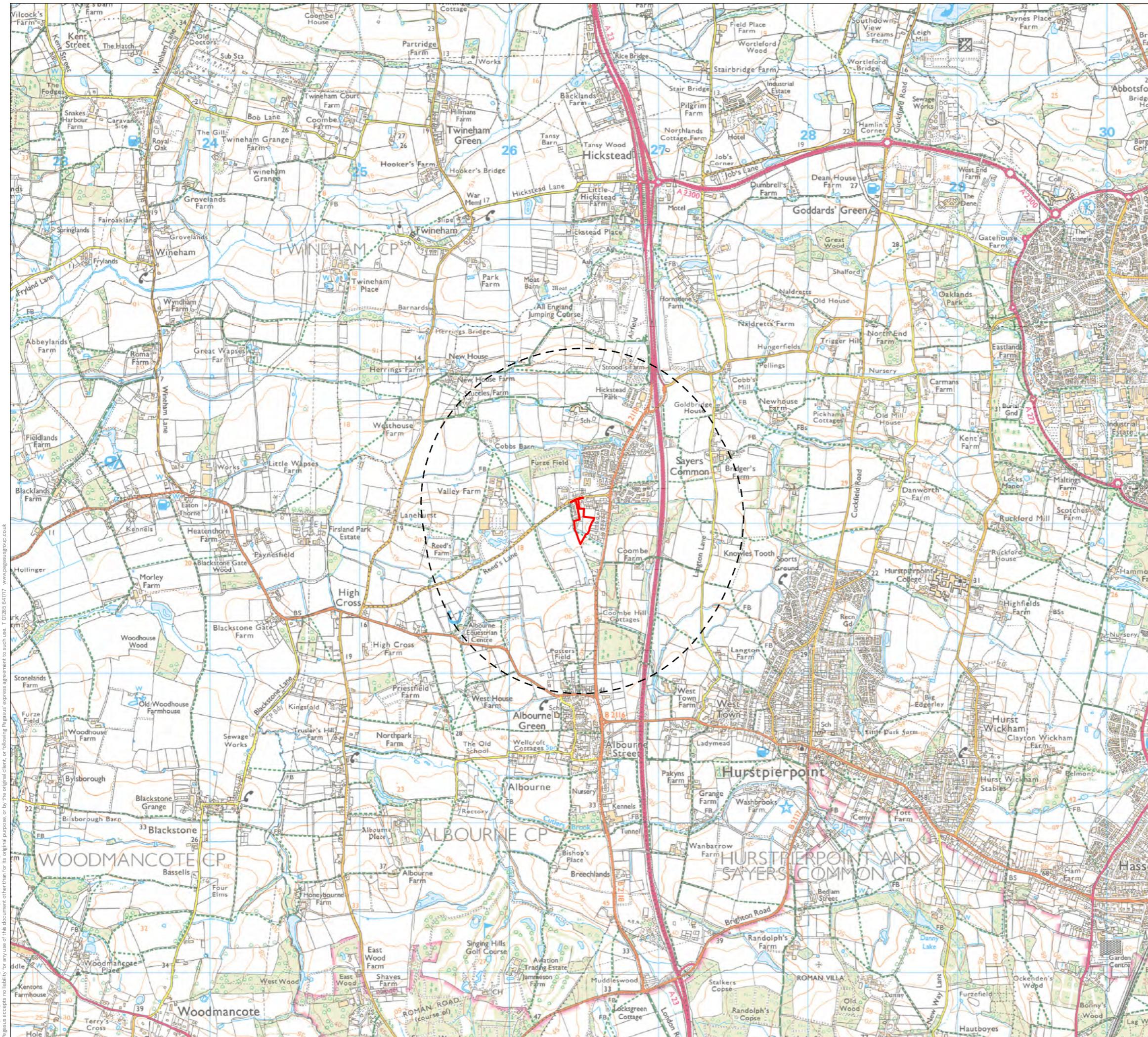
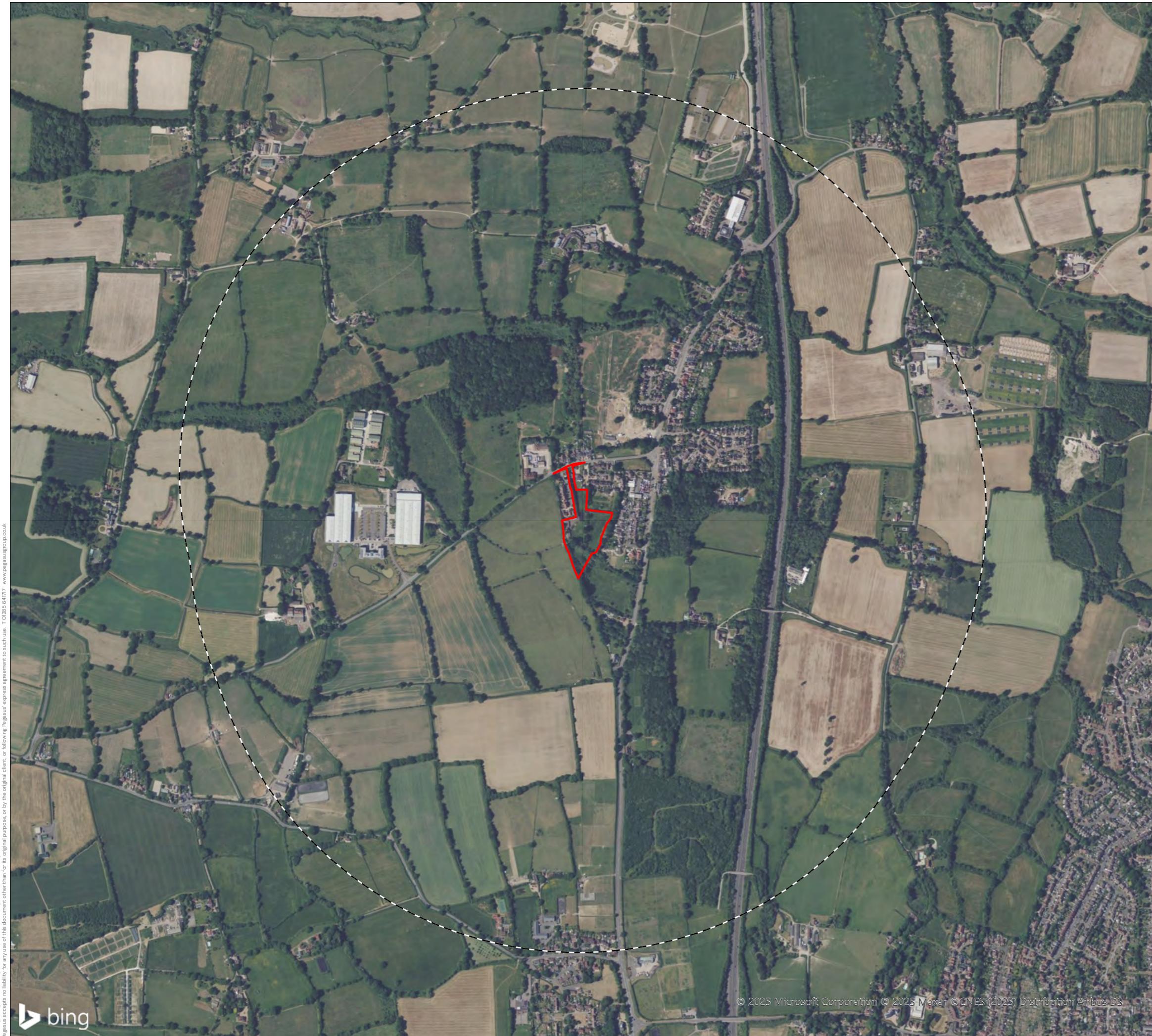


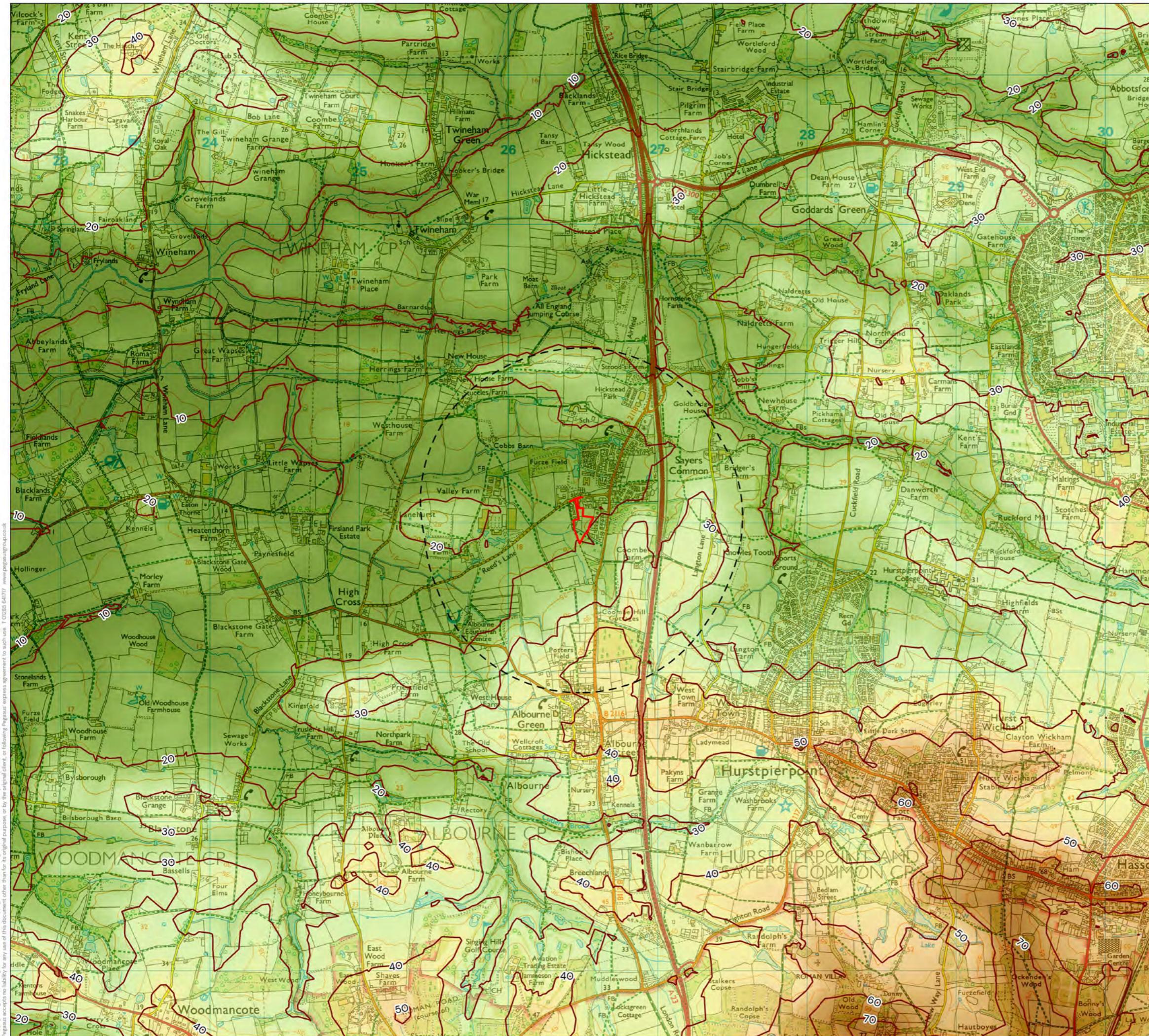
FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION PLAN  
LAND TO THE REAR OF CHESAPEAKE, REEDS LANE,  
SAYERS COMMON  
ANTLER HOMES



REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
-	-	-

**FIGURE 2: AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH**  
LAND TO THE REAR OF CHESAPEAKE, REEDS LANE,  
SAYERS COMMON  
ANTLER HOMES

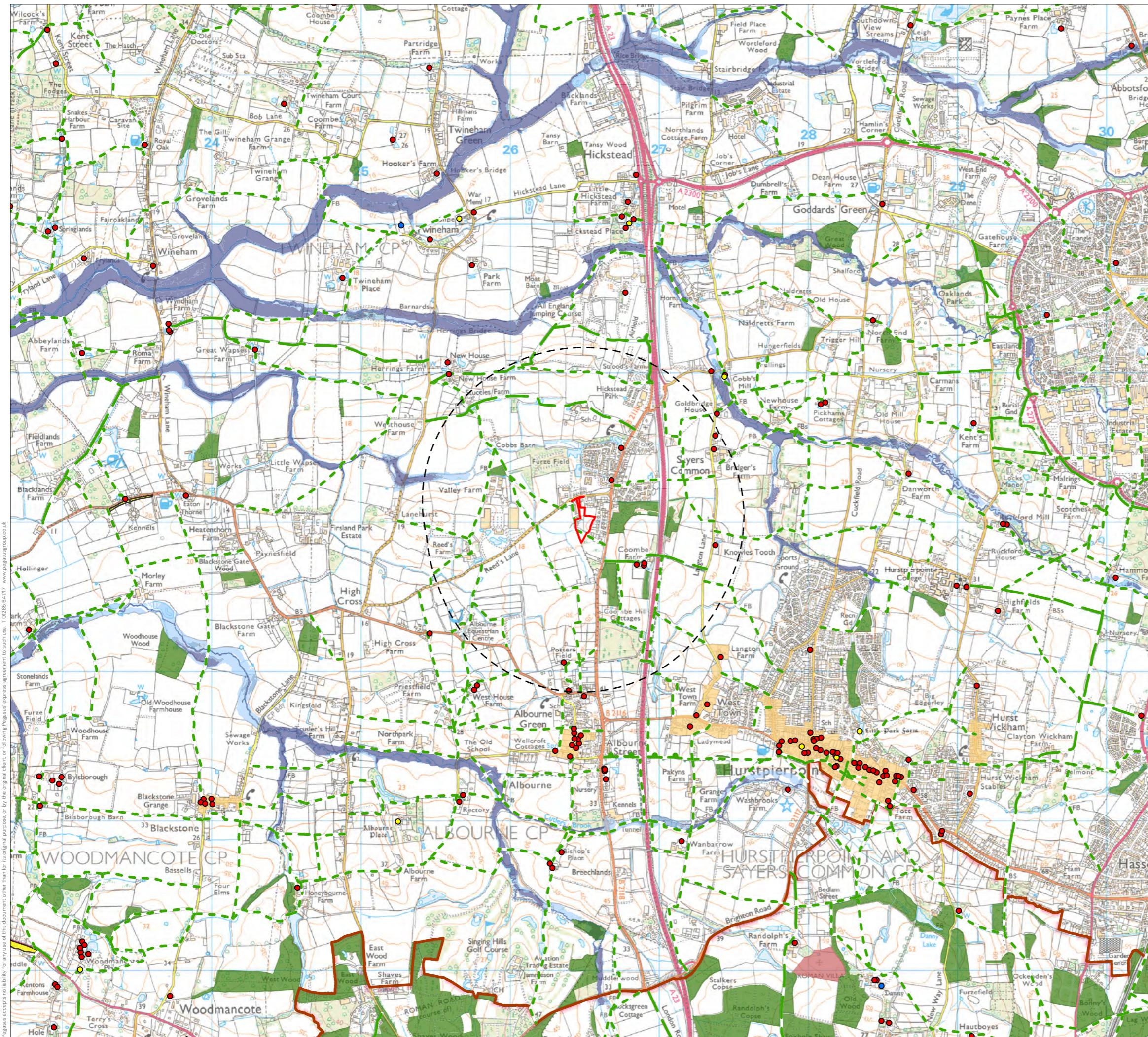
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SHEET	REV	N	O
-	A	0	0.2KM
DRAWING NUMBER			
P25-0331_EN_08			



REV DATE DESCRIPTION

**FIGURE 3: TOPOGRAPHY PLAN**  
LAND TO THE REAR OF CHESAPEAKE, REEDS LANE,  
SAYERS COMMON  
ANTLER HOMES

DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	APPROVED
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SHEET	REV	N	0.5 KM
-	A	0	
DRAWING NUMBER			
P25-0331_EN_03			



KEY

Site Boundary

1km Buffer

Grade I Listed Building

Grade II\* Listed Building

Grade II Listed Building

Public Footpaths

Public Bridleways

Restricted Byway

CROW Access Land

National Parks

Scheduled Monuments

Conservation Area

Ancient Woodland

Risk of Flooding from Rivers and Sea - Flood Likelihood Category:

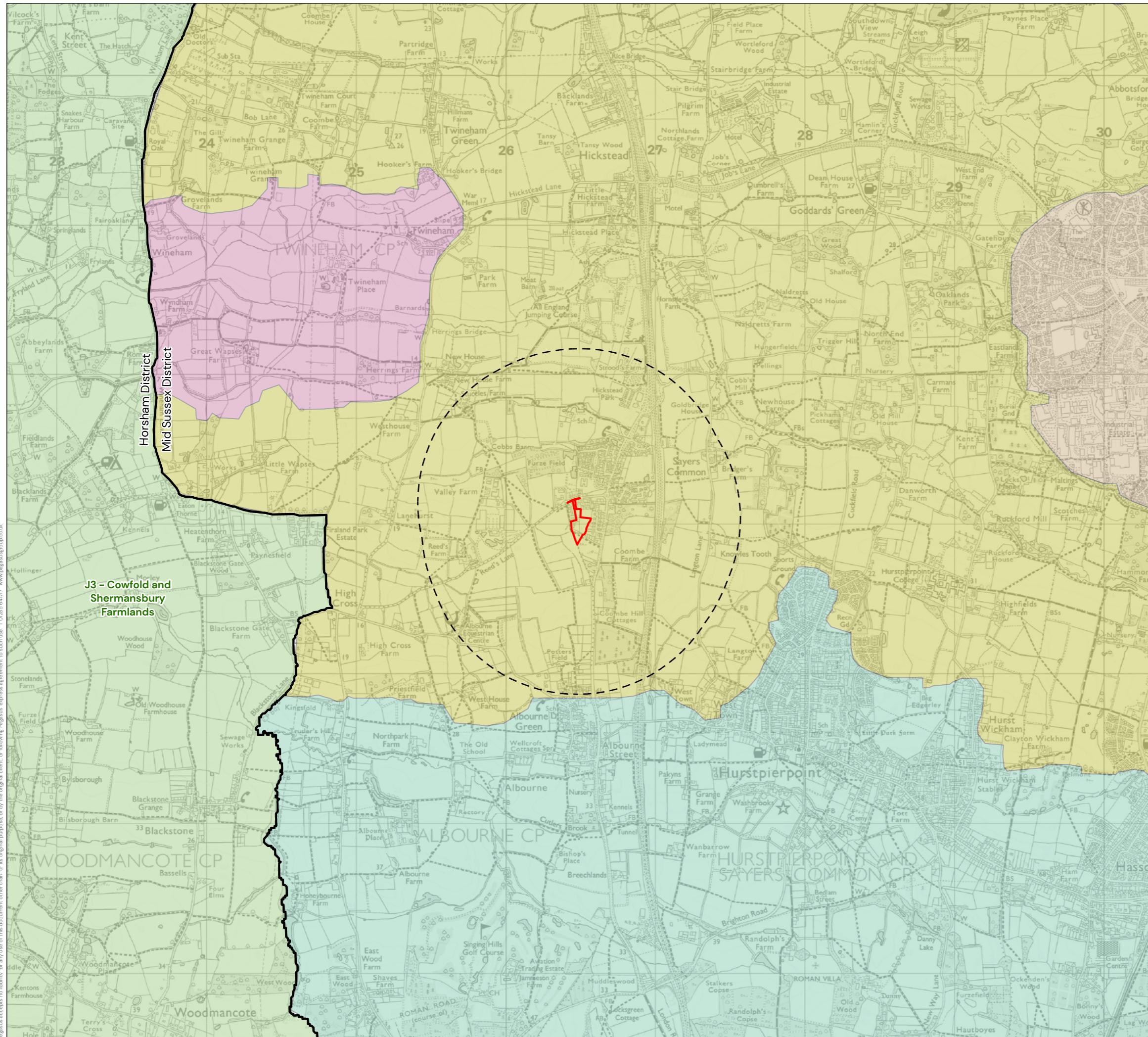
- High - greater than 1 in 30 (3.3%)
- Medium - between 1 in 30 (3.3%) and 1 in 100 (1%)
- Low - 1 in 100 (1%) and 1 in 1000 (0.1%)

**FIGURE 4: ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS PLAN**

LAND TO THE REAR OF CHESAPEAKE, REEDS LANE,  
SAYERS COMMON  
ANTLER HOMES

DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	APPROVED
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-	A	O	0.5KM

DRAWING NUMBER  
P25-0331\_EN\_02



The legend consists of three entries. The first entry shows a solid red rectangle followed by the text 'Site Boundary'. The second entry shows a dashed black rectangle followed by the text '1km Buffer'. The third entry shows a solid black rectangle followed by the text 'District Boundary'.

## Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (2005)

## Landscape Character Areas

- Burgess Hill BUA
- Hickstead Low Weald
- High Weald Fringes
- Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes
- Upper Adur Valley

## Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment (2003)

### Landscape Character Type

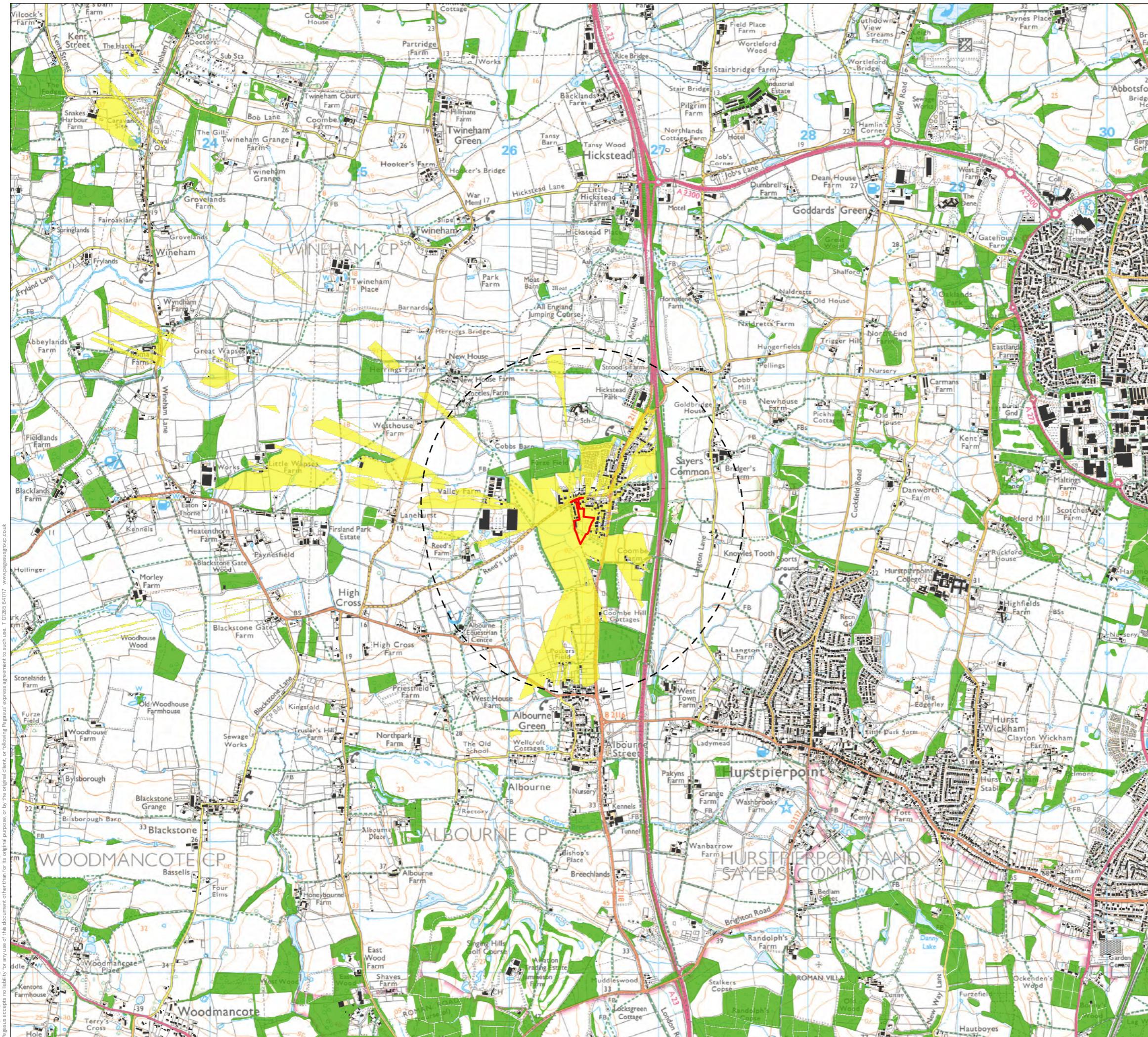
## **Broad Clay Vale Farmland**

NOTE: Site falls entirely within National Character Area 121: Low Weald

## FIGURE 5: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER PLAN

LAND TO THE REAR OF CHESAPEAKE, REEDS LANE,  
SAYERS COMMON  
ANTLER HOMES

DATE 02/04/2025	SCALE 1:25,000 @ A3	DRAWN EN/NC	APPROVED JSM
SHEET -	REV A	N ▲	O [ ] 0.5 KM
DRAWING NUMBER P25-Q331, EN, Q5		PEGASUS GROUP	



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<span style="background-color: green; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span>	OS Local Woodland
<span style="background-color: yellow; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></span>	Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility - 9m Development Height

#### Screened ZTV Production Information -

- DTM data used in calculations is OS Terrain 5 that has been combined with OS Open Map Local data for woodland and buildings to create a Digital Surface Model (DSM).

- Indicative woodland and building heights are modelled at 15m and 8m respectively.

- Viewer height set at 1.7m

(in accordance with para 6.11 of GLVIA Third Edition)

- Calculations include earth curvature and light refraction

N.B. This Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) image illustrates the theoretical extent of where the development may be visible from, assuming 100% atmospheric visibility, and includes the screening effect from vegetation and buildings, based on the assumptions stated above.

REV DATE DESCRIPTION

#### FIGURE 6: SCREENED ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY

LAND TO THE REAR OF CHESAPEAKE, REEDS LANE,  
SAYERS COMMON

ANTLER HOMES

DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	APPROVED
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-	A	0	0.5 KM

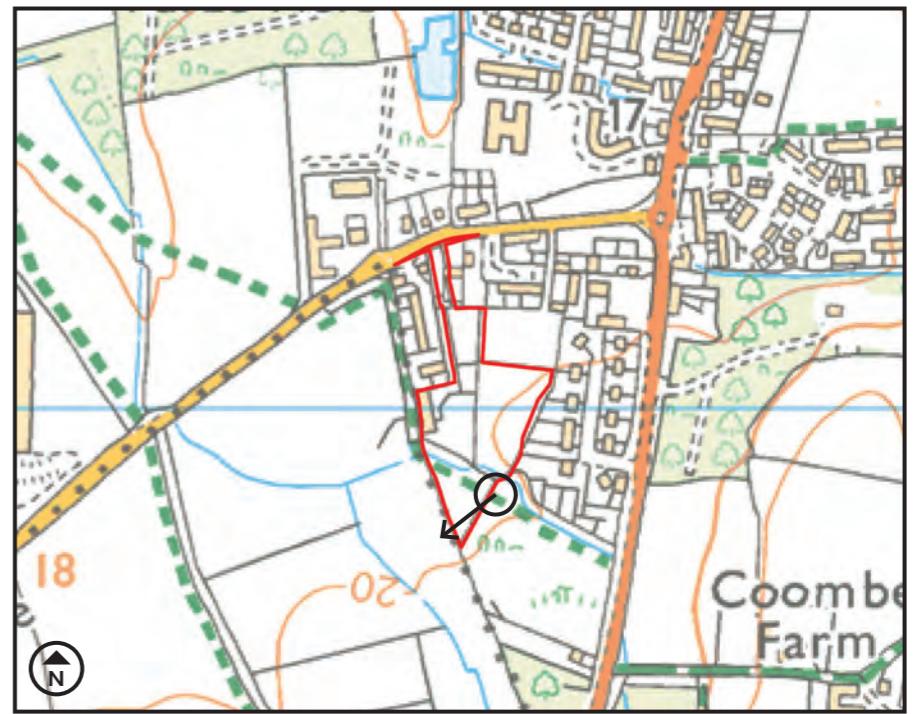
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P25-0331\_EN\_01





### CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 1A

View west from PRoW Footpath ref 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu' adjacent to eastern boundary.



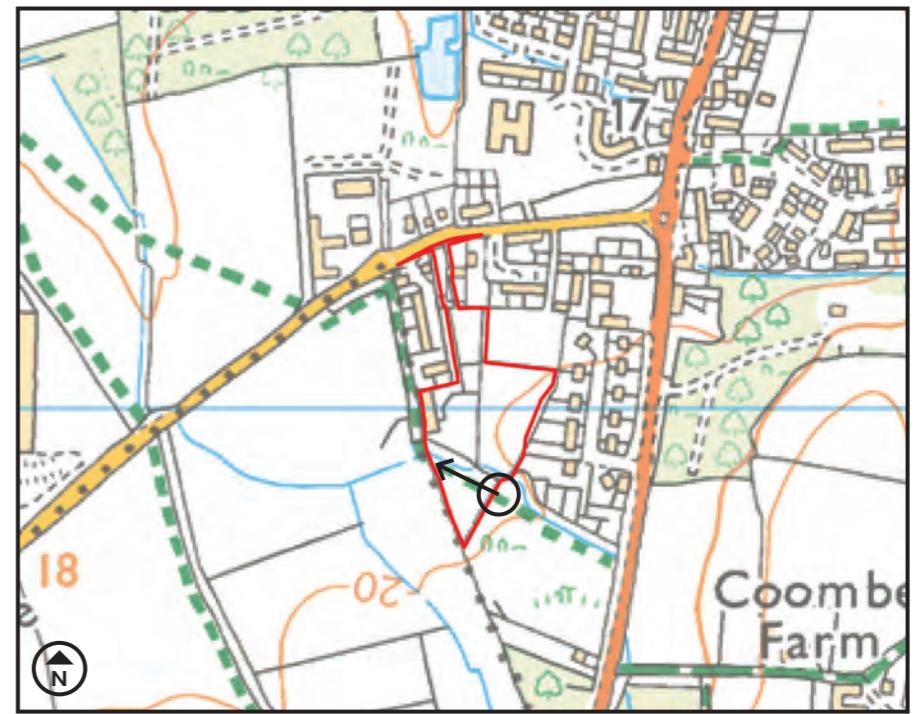
### FIGURE 8: VIEWPOINTS 1 TO 13 (CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINTS)

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GROUP



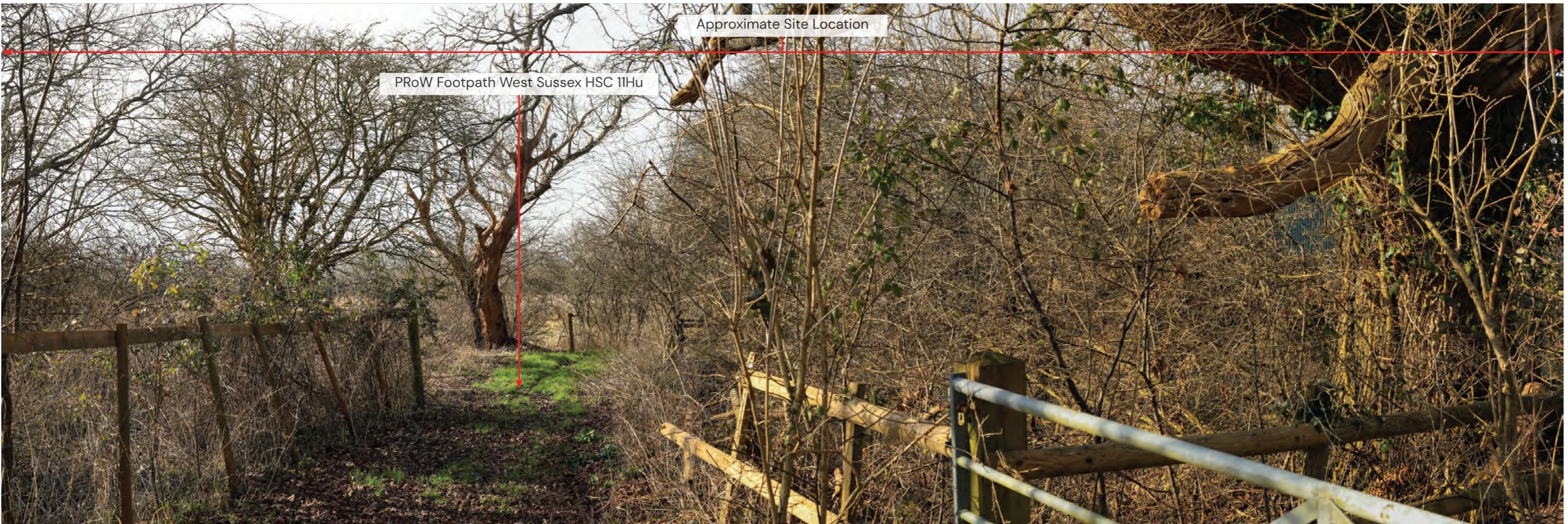
### CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 1B

View west from PRoW Footpath ref 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu' adjacent to eastern boundary.



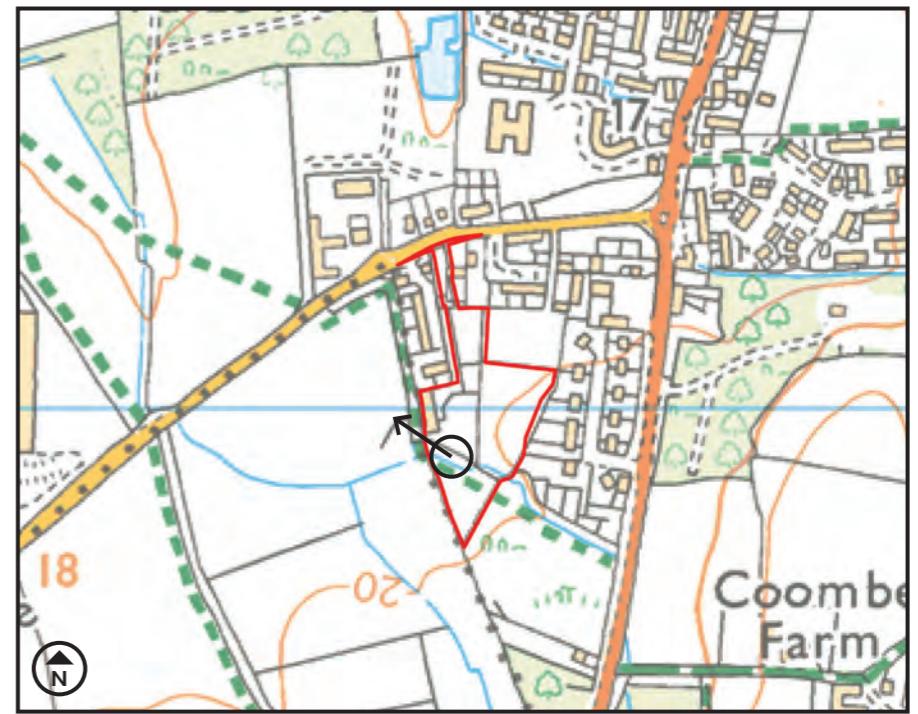
### FIGURE 8: VIEWPOINTS 1 TO 13 (CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINTS)

**PEGASUS**  
GROUP



### CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINT 2A

View north from PRoW Footpath ref 'West Sussex HSC 11Hu' within The Site.



### FIGURE 8: VIEWPOINTS 1 TO 13 (CONTEXT BASELINE VIEWPOINTS)

**PEGASUS**  
GROUP