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HURST FARM HAYWARDS HEATH DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

July 2025

placemaking for life.

Executive Summary

This Design and Access Statement supports the outline application for the Land at Hurst Farm, Hurstwood Lane, which is to the north of the Junction between Fox Hill and Hurstwood Lane in Haywards Heath, West Sussex.

It is issued on behalf of WSP (For Homes England)

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01 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This Design and Access Statement is part of the outline planning application for Land at Hurst Farm, Haywards Heath.

It supports the outline application for development of up to 375 new homes, a 2 form entry primary school with Early Years provision, a new burial ground, allotments, Country Park, with new non-vehicular and vehicular accesses and associated parking and landscaping.

It documents the project history, design development and the resultant proposals that form part of this application.

It is issued on behalf of [WSP \(For Homes England\)](#)

1.2 Project History

The proposals for the site is for new homes with a range of community facilities, public open space, landscaping and highway infrastructure.

The residential properties will offer a range of 1 - 4 bed apartments, houses and bungalows, including a mix of tenure blind market sale, rented, shared ownership, and accessible wheelchair properties.

1.3 Project Team

This application has been made on behalf of [WSP \(For Homes England\)](#)

The design team for Hurst Farm are:

Masterplanning & Urban Design:	IDP
Planning:	WSP
Landscape:	WSP
Heritage & Archaeology:	WSP
Ecology:	RSK
Transport:	WSP
Engineering:	WSP
Arboriculture:	SJA

Acting as consultants on behalf of [WSP \(For Homes England\)](#).



02 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

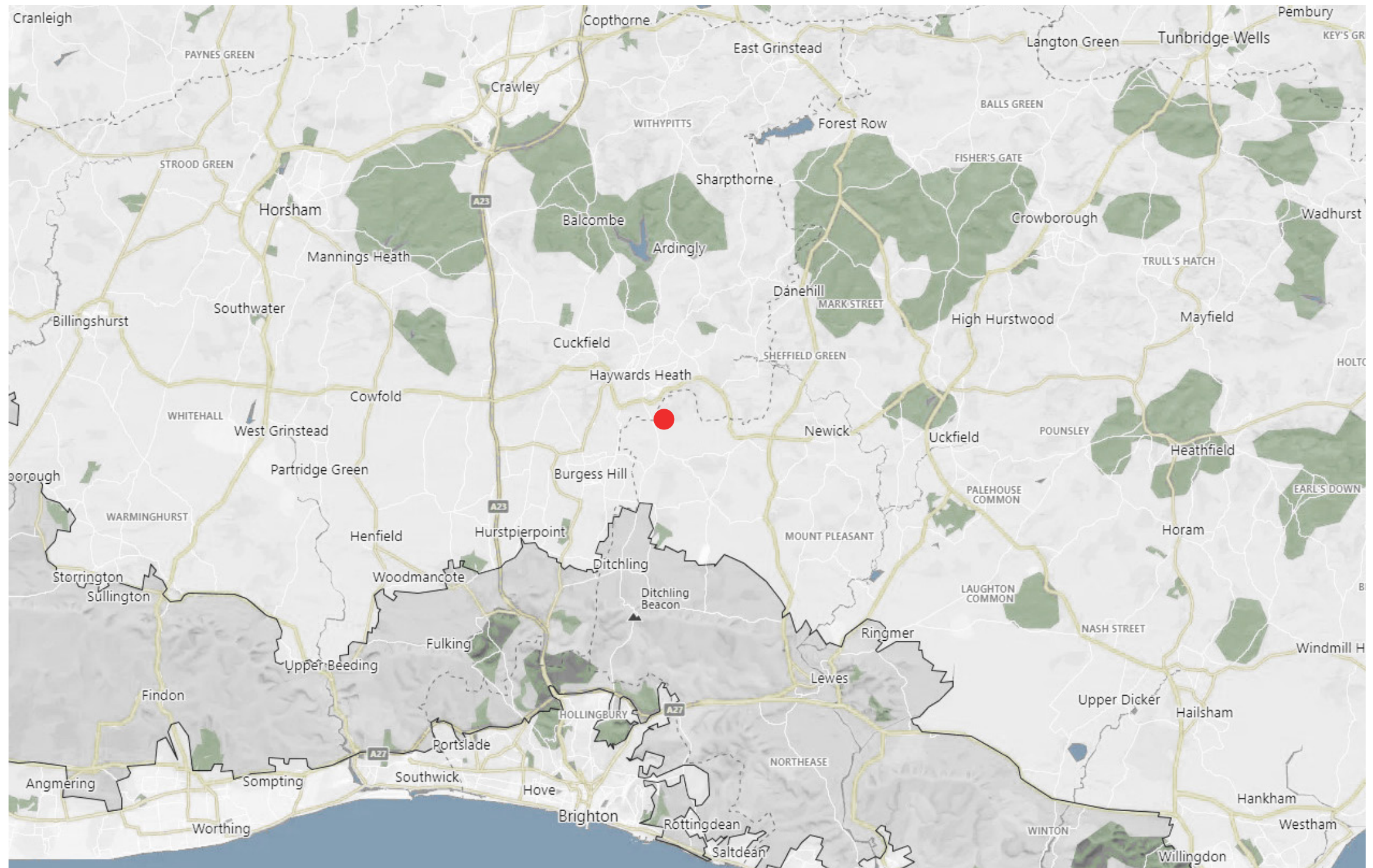
This chapter illustrates the site, its location and considers the surrounding context. It discusses the potential opportunities that the site offers and the potential constraints posed.

02 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

SITE

2.1 Site Location - Regional

Haywards Heath is situated approximately half way between Crawley and Brighton, and approximately 30km from the south coast. The application site benefits from being adjacent to the A272 which links to the A23 less than 7km to the west of the site. 15km to the west of the site the A272 runs into the A22 and A26.

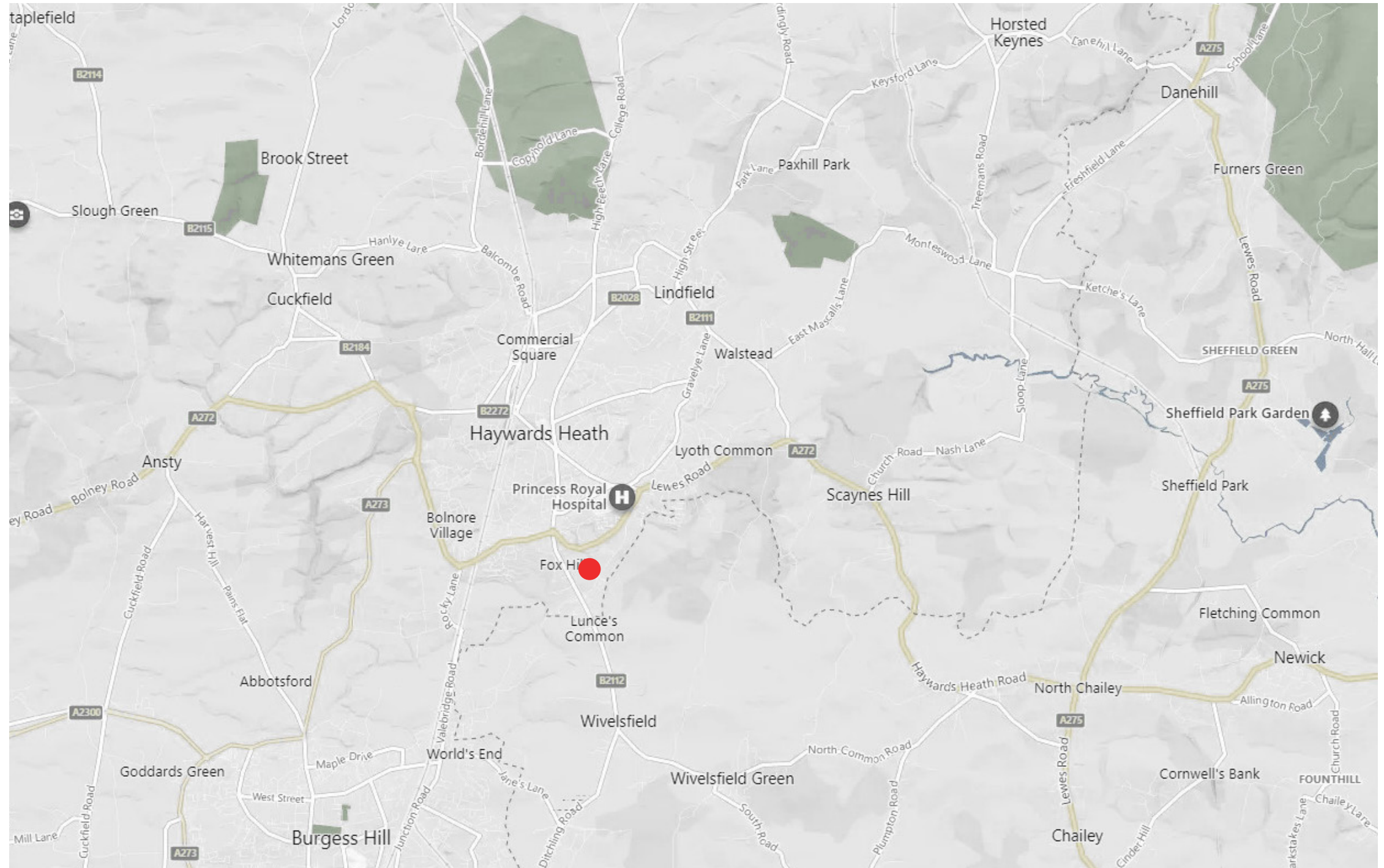


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2.2 Site Location - Local

The site is situated approximately 1.5km to the south east of Haywards Heath town centre, on the south side of the relief road.



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2.3 Existing Facilities and Amenities

Haywards Heath offers a good range of facilities and the main town centre and retail areas are within 2km of the centre of the site.

There are doctors and dentists around 1km away with additional surgeries with 2km. There are existing convenience stores or small shops available less than 1km away at the Lewes Road petrol station, The Coop on Franklyn Road and the Sainsburys Local on Wivelsfield Road.

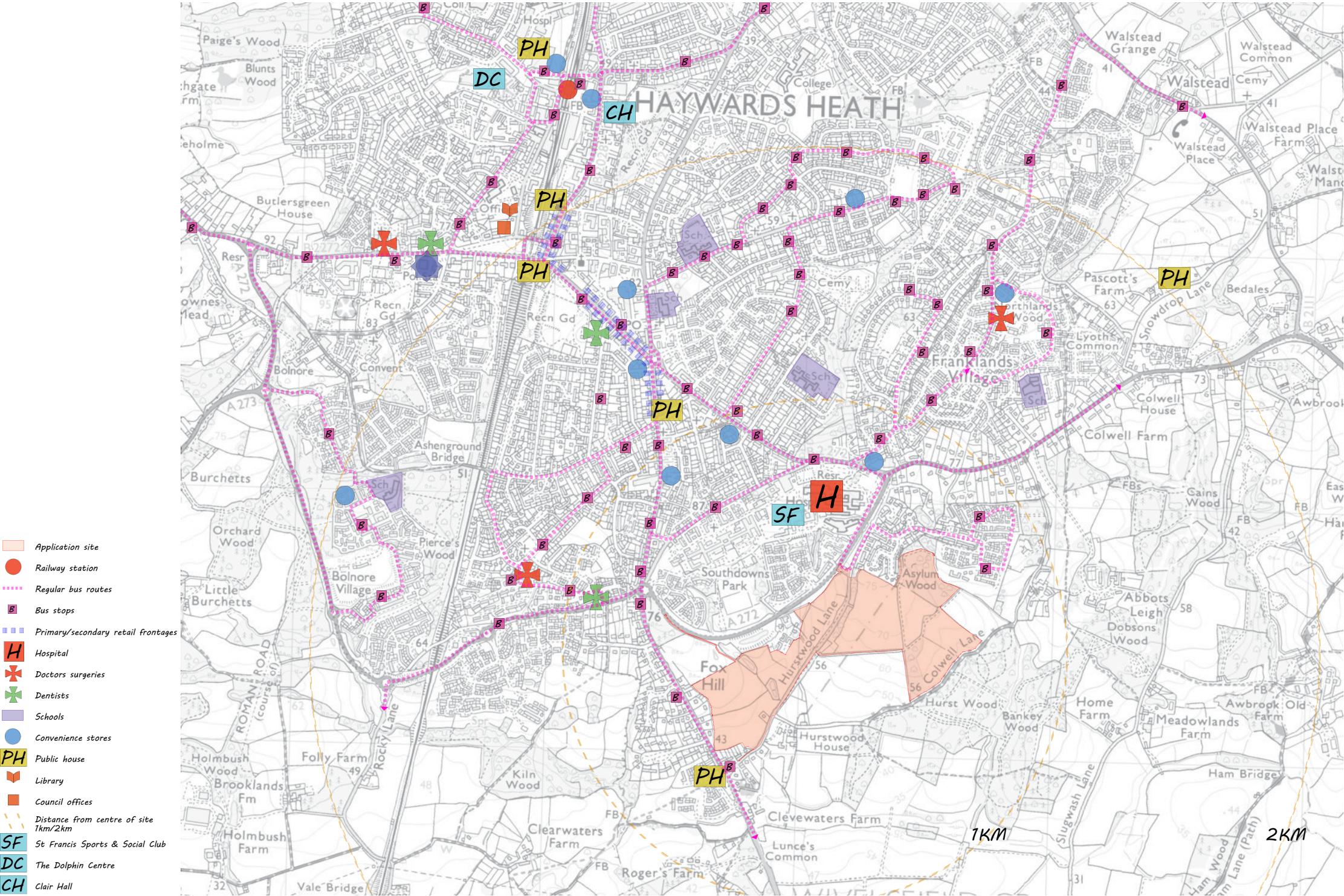
Haywards Heath has educational facilities for all age ranges, with five primary schools within 2km of the site making them within a reasonable walking distance. The local authority however has identified a need for a new primary school that will be on the site itself and form part of this outline application which will make the site exceptionally well served.

There are a number of small parks and nature reserves in the vicinity, however it is considered that there is a lack of open space for recreational use.

In addition to the new primary school on the site the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan has identified the requirement for new community facilities for the town. As a result as well as the mixed use development on this site the proposals include a burial ground, allotments and a new country park.

Within Haywards Heath there are a number of leisure facilities such as; the Dolphin Centre which is a swimming pool, sports centre and gym, Clair Hall which is a multifunctional community centre and event space, and the St. Francis Sports and Social Club within 1km, which has extensive playing fields, bowls, Swimming pool, bar and social club facilities.

Haywards Heath has a number of places to worship covering a range of religious groups and Christian denominations together with a wide range of commercial businesses. The centre and surrounding neighbourhoods offer a good range of employment across retail, educational, healthcare, and professional sectors.



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2.4 Site Application Area

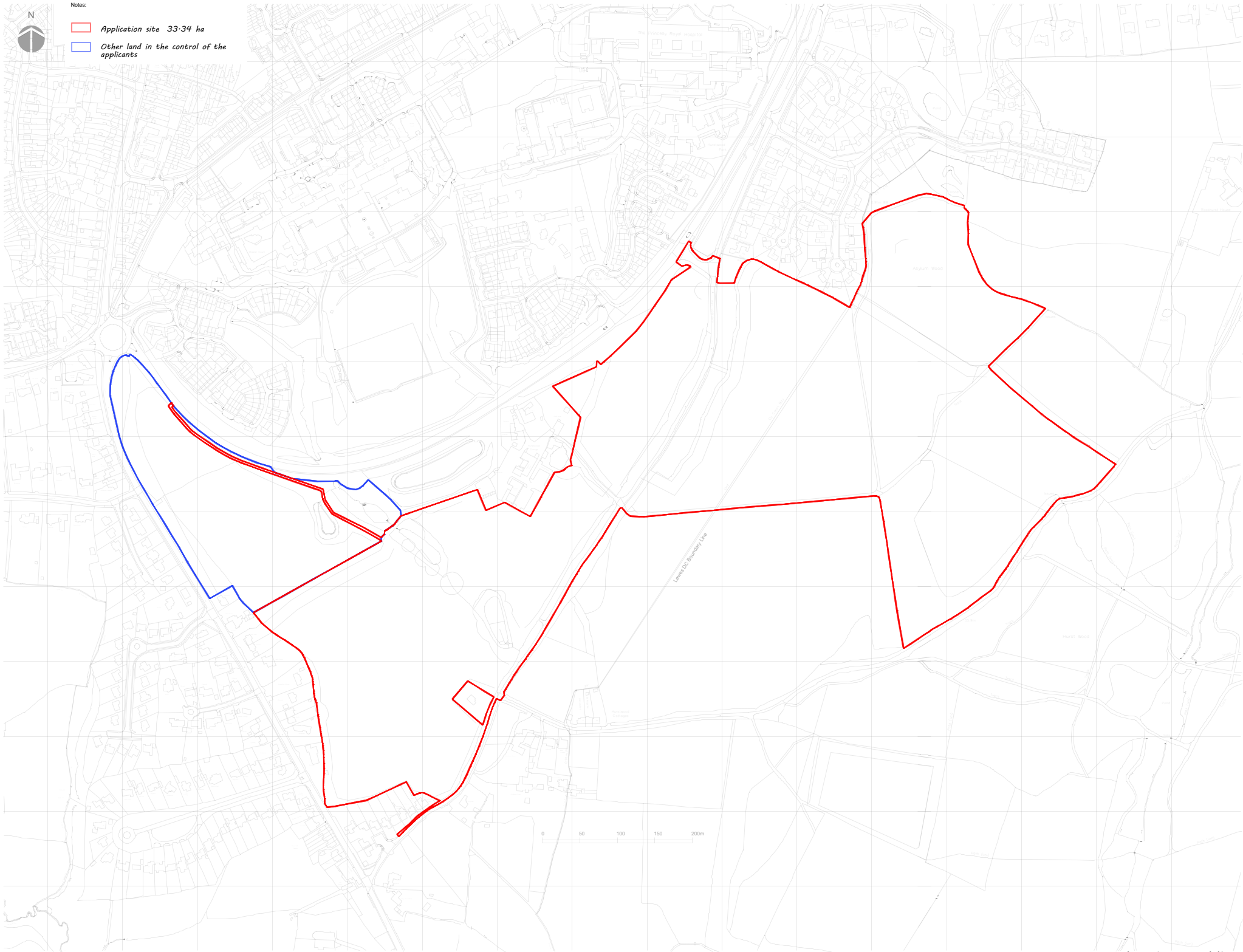
The red line site area is approximately 33 hectares, The site is partly in the Mid Sussex District and partly in the Lewes District, with the border to the east of Hurstwood Lane.

The site is bounded by Rocky lane to the north, which is the A272 and the Haywards Heath relief road. The relief road connects Fox Hill at the northwest of the site with Lewes Road to the north of the site. Half way up to the south of the relief road there are a group of commercial buildings comprised of Hurstwood Grange, the Grade II* listed Hurst House, a grade II listed barn conversion and a pair of semi detached cottages.

Hurstwood Lane runs approximately north-south bisecting the top half of the site and then forms the right hand side border to the southern part of the site.

The south eastern and south western boundary of the site is formed by the community around Fox Hill with eight or nine gardens backing on to the south-western boundary and around nine gardens from houses along Hurstwood Lane backing on to the south eastern boundary. A number of other properties bound the site on the east from the adjacent side of Hurstwood Lane.

The northern boundary of the site is adjacent to the community around Greenhill Way with around 10 properties directly adjoining the boundary.



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2.5 The Existing Site

The highpoint of the site is adjacent to the properties along Birch Way and Greenhill Park. It generally slopes from north east to south west in the northern half of the site , and from north west to south east in the southern half of the site and comprises mostly of pasture subdivided by hedgerows and fences.

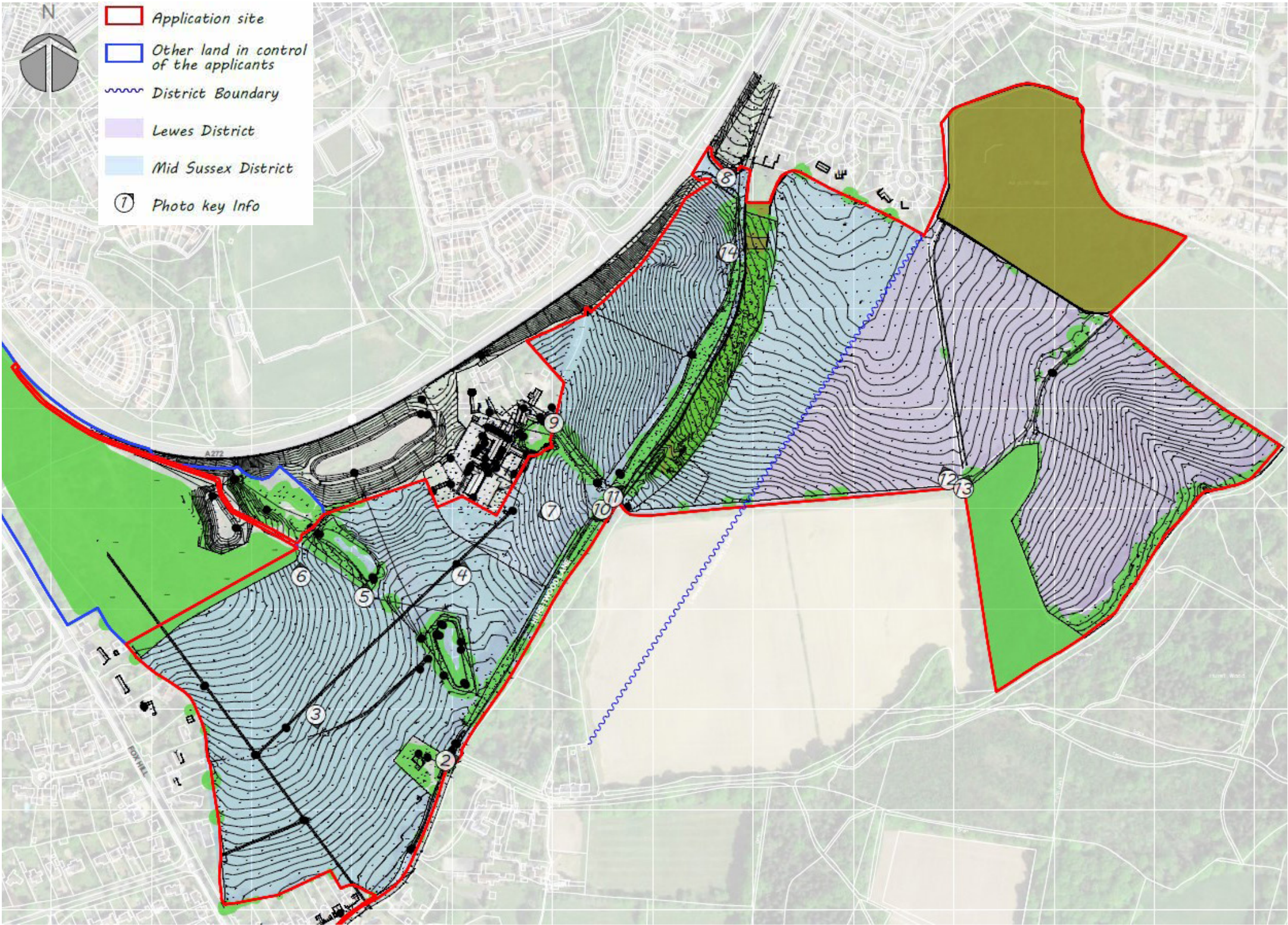
Through the middle of the site from north east to south west runs an existing tree lined road called Hurstwood Lane.

To the west of Hurstwood Lane there are small wooded areas around a couple of small ponds, while the land to the East of Hurstwood lane has a larger area of forest called Asylum Wood and fields containing informal and permissive pedestrian routes linking into the countryside to the east and south of the site.

To the north-west of the site there is an area of relocated ancient woodland that is currently beginning to regrow after the construction of the relief road.

Once out of the residential areas the southern part of Hurstwood Lane becomes pleasantly tree lined with some openness and light penetration from the surrounding fields. On the northern part of Hurstwood Lane the width of the tree belts increase significantly with dense undergrowth and many more large mature trees.

The Site straddles the Lewes and Mid Sussex District boundaries.



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2.5 The Existing Site Cont.

The main sources of noise and pollution air from the A272 relief road and B2112 Fox Hill. Following analysis taking into account the proposed development and these pollution sources the site is deemed to be suitable for the development proposed and while no issues have been raised in respect of air quality, some acoustic mitigation has been recommended.

We expect that the future Reserved Matters applications will require information to be submitted on the internal and external noise mitigation measures for properties exposed to the highest levels. Glazing and ventilators specifications will be required to create appropriate indoor environments and careful site planning and the use of acoustic barriers and fences may be needed to ensure residents have reasonably tranquil outdoor amenity areas.



Hurstwood Lane access from Fox Hill

Photo 1



Hurst Grange looking North from middle of site

Photo 4



Pond & right edge of trans-located ancient forest

Photo 6



Colwell Lane junction with Hurstwood Lane

Photo 2



Existing Pond

Photo 5



Looking south towards existing ponds

Photo 7



Looking towards the back on the houses on south end of Hurstwood Lane

Photo 3

02 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

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2.5 The Existing Site Cont.



Hurstwood Lane access from relief road Photo 8



Hurstwood Lane below Hurstwood Grange Photo 10



Looking north towards Asylum Wood Photo 13



Hurstwood Lane access from Fox Hill Photo 9



Looking north up Hurstwood Lane Photo 11



Looking north towards Greenhill Photo 12



Looking across the north-west of the site Photo 14

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2.6 Design Guidance

A detailed planning policy review is provided in WSPs Planning Statement which is included with the outline application. Elements which relate more directly to the design are summarised in this section.



Mid Sussex Design Guide

Supplementary Planning Document SPD

Consultation Draft
August 2019



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2.7 Planning Context

The Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an outline planning application seeking permission for the erection of up to 375 new homes, a new two form entry primary school, a burial ground, allotments, open space with associated infrastructure, landscaping and parking areas. All matters are reserved except for access meaning that much of the detail provided within the application is presented to demonstrate how, theoretically, the site has the capacity to deliver the quantum of development proposed.

Whilst the site is undeveloped greenfield land, it has been allocated for development within the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan. It is, therefore, a location where development is anticipated and supported as a matter of principle.

The proposed development will provide much needed private and affordable housing for the area, helping to meet its burgeoning housing needs and affordability challenges. The housing will be supported with a significant amount of community infrastructure including a new two-form entry primary school to meet existing needs (and not just that generated by the development), a new burial ground, new allotments and a country park.

This comprehensive submission demonstrates how the development can come forward without materially harming key ecological and landscape characteristics of the site and the surrounding area. Additionally, the findings of the Environmental Statement demonstrate that the scheme will have no significant negative impacts on the highway or the transport networks and that planning policy can support the scheme on transport grounds.

The statement also sets out how tree loss has been minimised as much as possible and restricted only to those trees with the least value or which cannot be avoided. In the case of trees which cannot be avoided, The planning case for removal (namely the provision of safe vehicular accesses) has sufficient justification. Additionally, the proposals include significant opportunity for compensation and mitigation measures which the applicants fully support.

The outline application is accompanied by a set of planning drawings which set the parameters for future reserved matters applications. These are supported by an illustrative masterplan which demonstrates how this quantum of development could come forward on the site with a layout that would provide high quality urban design and housing that meets the relevant local and national standards. The scheme would deliver exceptional new homes for a variety of local needs as well as a new two form entry new primary school.

Overall, the proposed development is in full accordance with the adopted and emerging Development Plan, particularly when taking into account key material considerations and should, therefore, be supported without delay.

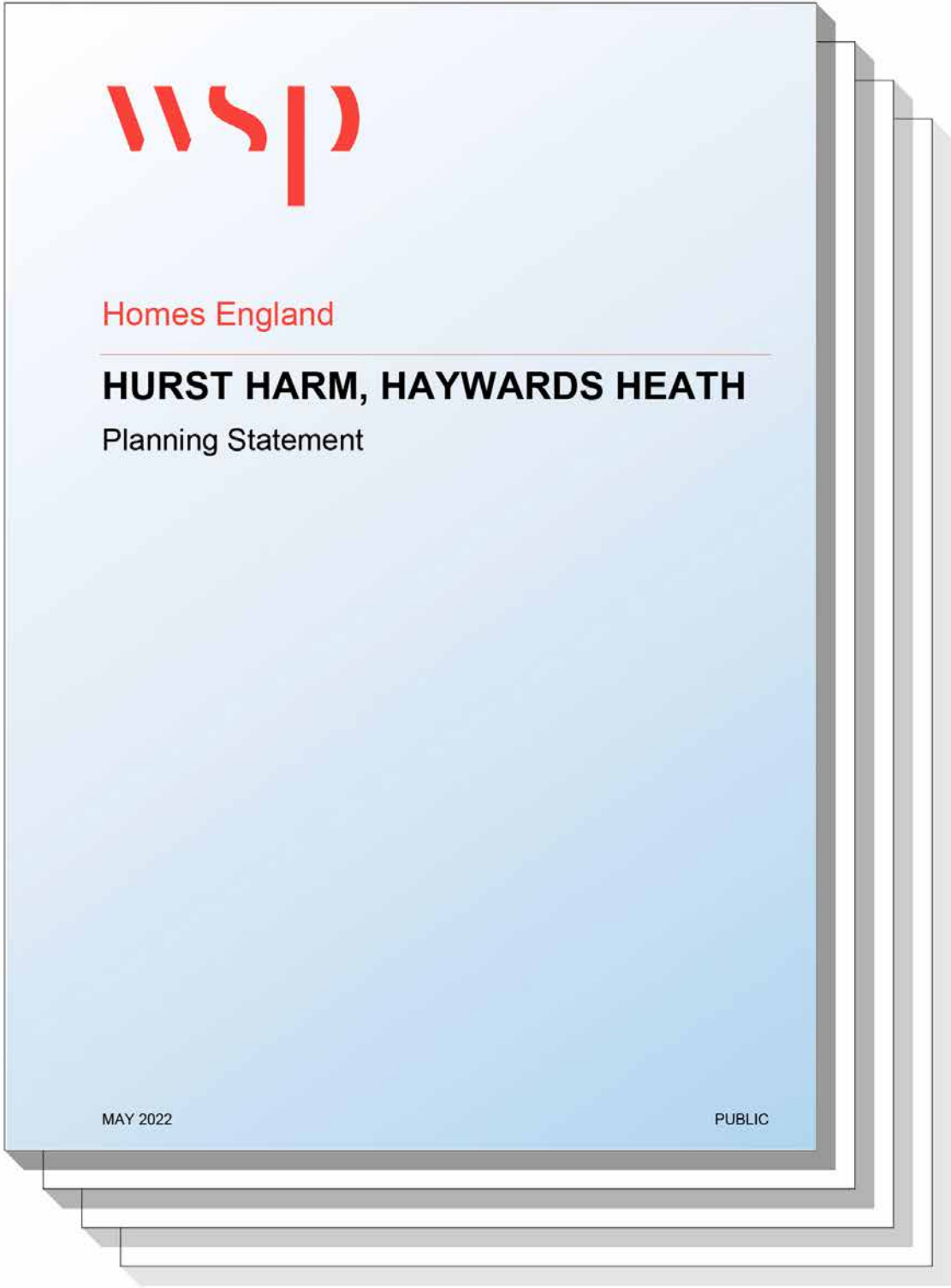


Illustration of Planning Statement Document by WSP

02 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

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2.8 Ecology

The Environmental Statement together with the Biocensus document reports the outcome of the assessment of likely minor or significant effects arising from the Proposed Development upon ecology and biodiversity and acts as an update to the previous Environmental Statement conducted by EPR in 2017.

Ecological baseline information has been collected through desktop studies and field surveys using recognised methodologies. The data has been analysed to identify the relevant ecological factors that would be sensitive to effects arising from the sites development.

Designated conservation sites included within 1 km of the development and possibly vulnerable to effects from the proposed development include 10 ancient woodlands and ancient replanted woodlands. It is considered unlikely that the Development would have a significant negative effect on the ancient and replanted woods, except for Anscombe Wood. Due to its proximity to the Site, extensive public access is likely and in the absence of the proposed mitigation contained in the report, if the site were developed, Anscombe Wood would be considered to be Influenced.

Other ecological factors identified and assessed include grassland areas within the eastern Site, hedgerows and other woodlands on Site, badgers, bats, reptiles, and breeding birds. In almost all cases, it is considered that only minor adverse effect were to be expected. (at a local or Zone of Influence Level) , or significant only in the absence of mitigation and compensation measures.

Mitigation and compensation strategies are required to offset predicted effects during the construction and operational phases. These include, but are not limited to; translocation of reptiles, temporary considerations of works in order to avoid sensitive seasons, the identification of the needs of protected species, licence applications, landscape management to reduce pressure on protected and notable habitats, and the creation of new varied, diverse structured habitats. Provided there is full implementation of the strategies contained within the documents it is considered that there will be a negligible

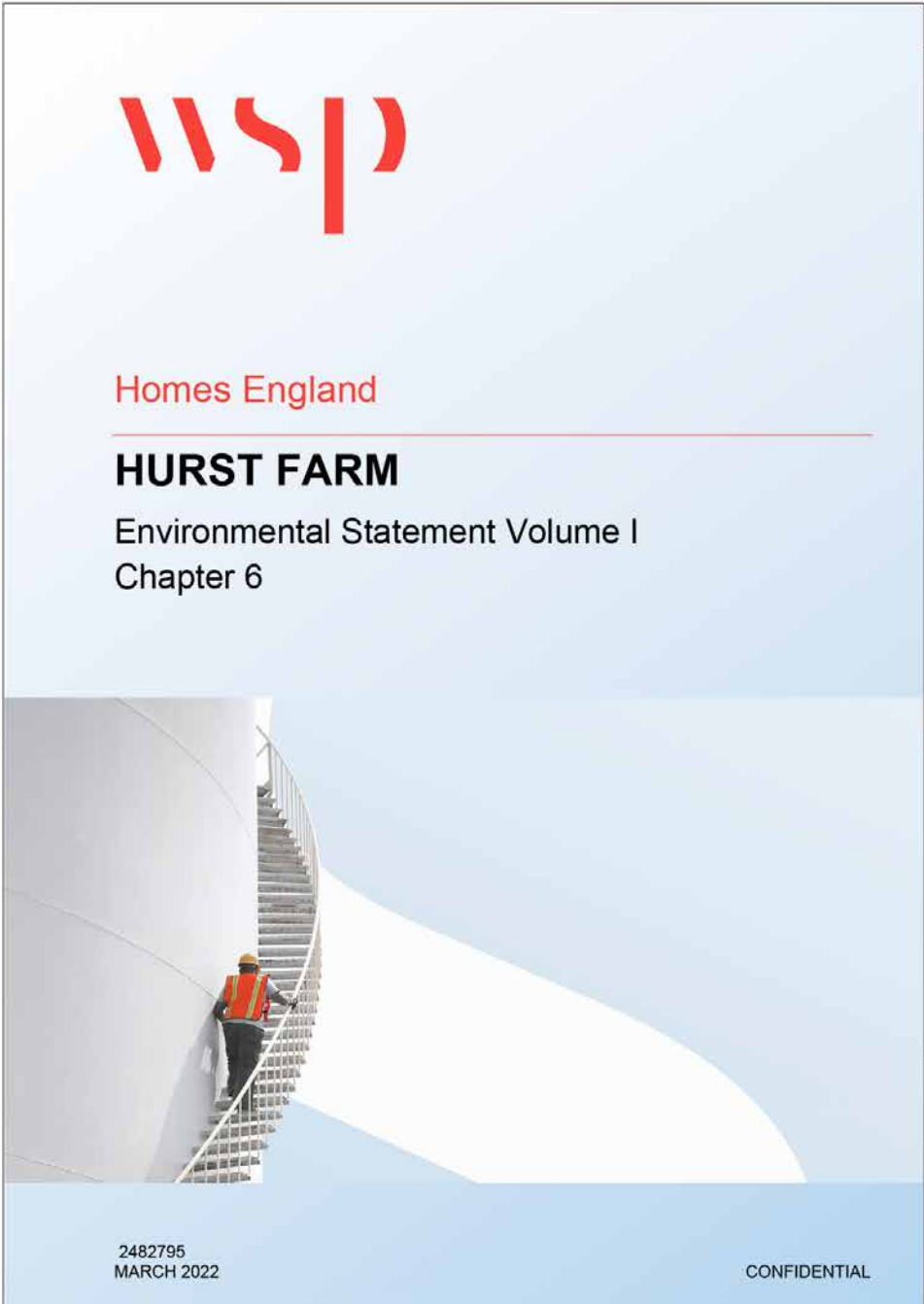


Illustration of Environmental Statement Document by WSP

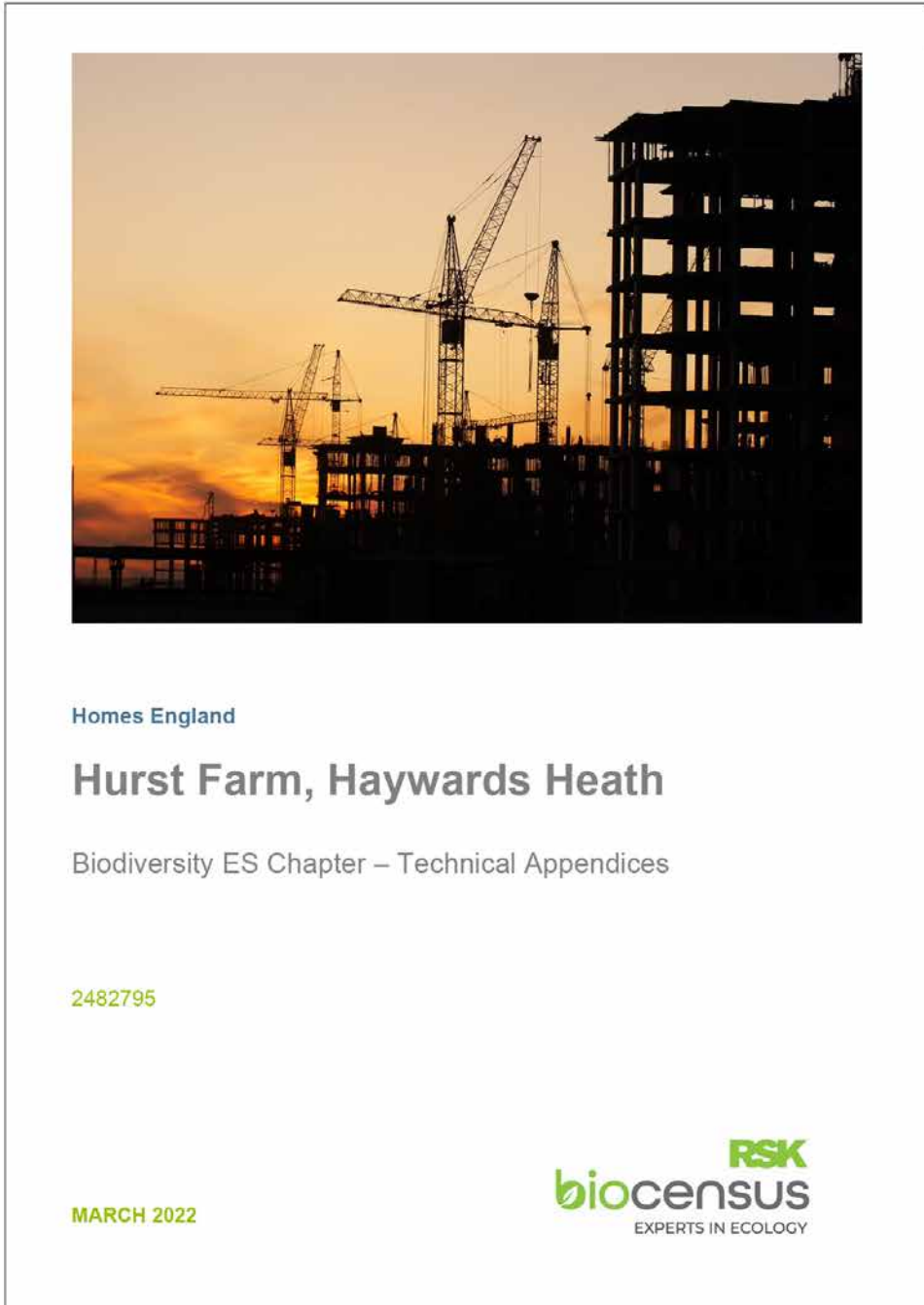


Illustration of Biocensus Technical Appendices by RSK

02 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

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2.9 Arboricultural Report

The Arboricultural Implications report summarises and sets out the main conclusions from the baseline data collected during the tree survey and identifies those trees or groups of trees whose removal could result in a significant adverse impact on the character or appearance of the local area . It details and assesses the impacts of the proposed development on the adjacent ancient woodland and on individual trees and groups of trees, including those to be removed , those to be pruned, those which might incur root damage that might threaten their viability, and those that might come under pressure for removal after occupation because of shading. A summary and conclusions, with regard to local planning policy, are also presented.

The SJA assessment concludes that the arboricultural impact of this scheme is of low magnitude.

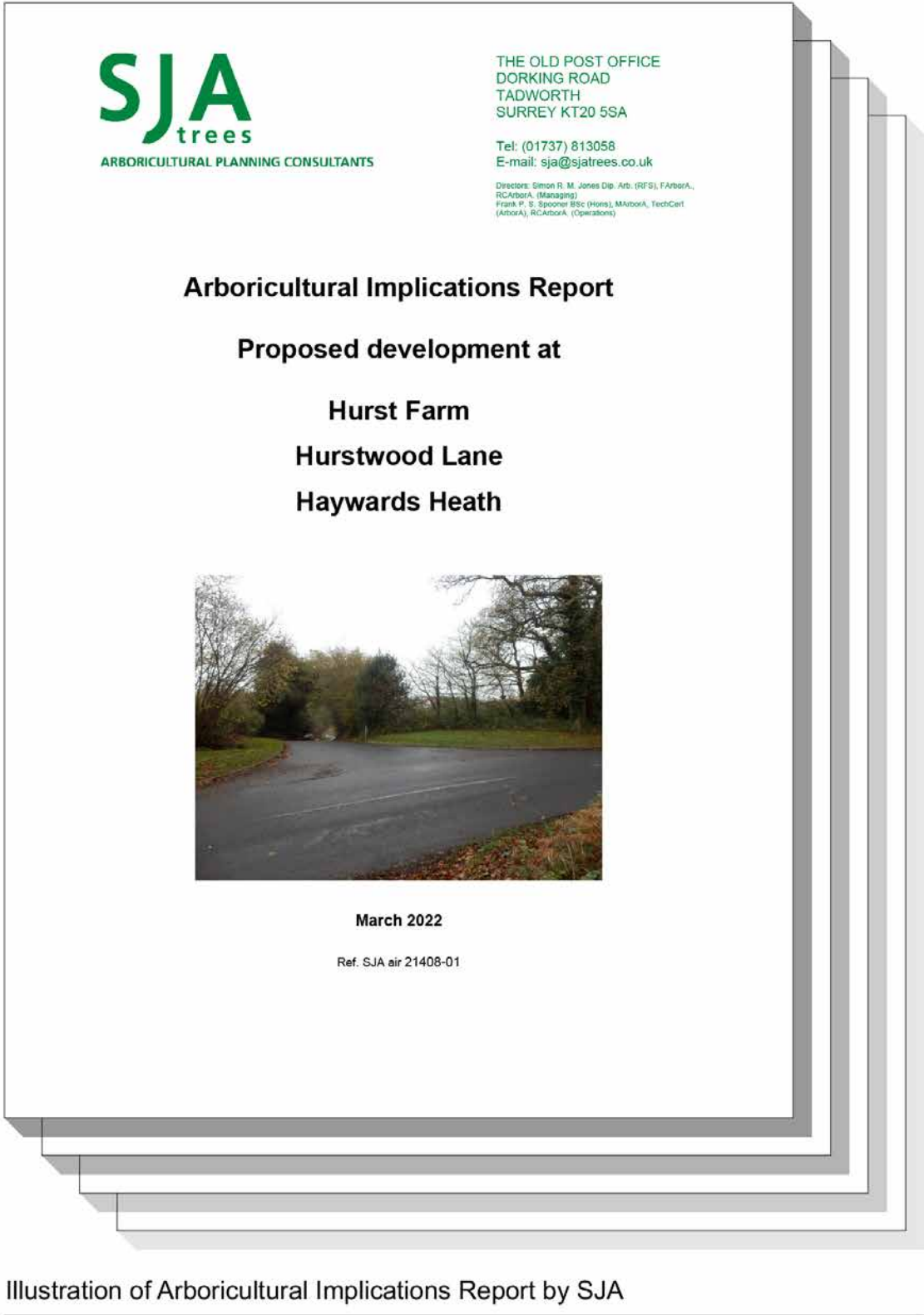
There are no incursions into the areas of ancient woodland, and consequently the proposals will not result in any loss of ancient woodland, will avoid any potentially harmful effects on the woodland, and will comply with current UK Planning and development guidance.

It concludes that no trees of high landscape or biodiversity value are to be removed. The proposed removal of only five mature trees and only one category ‘B’ specimen (out of 457 trees) will represent a very minor alteration to the overall arboricultural character of the site and will not have a significant adverse impact on the arboricultural character and appearance of the local landscape.

Proposed pruning is minor in extent, will not detract from the health or appearance of these trees, and complies with current British Standards.

The indicative incursions into the Root Protection Areas of trees to be retained are minor. Many can be avoided or reduced, or will not impact trees by the use of permeable no-dig surfaces that will avoid soil compaction, and subject to implementation of the measures recommended in the report will result in no significant or long-term damage to the root systems or environments of retained trees.

None of the proposed dwellings or private gardens are likely to be shaded by retained trees to the extent that this will interfere with their reasonable use or enjoyment by incoming occupiers, which might otherwise lead to pressure on the LPA to permit felling or severe pruning that it could not reasonably resist.



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2.10 Archaeology and Heritage

The Built Heritage and Archaeology report documents the outcome of the assessment of potential effects arising from the Proposed Development upon built heritage and archaeology. The focus of the assessment is on buried heritage assets (archaeological remains) and above ground heritage assets (buildings, structures, monuments and areas of heritage interest); including the historic character and setting of designated heritage assets.

The assessment has established that a staged programme of preliminary archaeological site-based investigation, to enable the LPA Archaeological Advisor to formulate an appropriate archaeological mitigation strategy for any significant remains which may be affected is needed.

A programme of geophysical survey followed by archaeological trial trenches will be required to clarify the presence, nature, date and significance of any archaeological remains present. Depending on the results, mitigation may comprise archaeological excavation or 'strip, map and sample' in advance of construction and/or a watching brief during ground works for other remains. This will ensure that significant archaeological assets are preserved by record, prior to removal.

The management of working hours, construction phasing and the implementation of measures to control dust, vibration and noise will be implemented through preparation of a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP), which will manage the disruption within, and impact upon, the setting of the identified built heritage assets during construction.

There are 15 built heritage assets within the study area. Of these, 12 are scoped out of the assessment. Three built heritage assets remain and are then considered. Hurst Farmhouse (Grade II*), Hurst Barn (Grade II), and Middlefield Cottage (Grade II)

Measures to reduce the impact of the operational phase of the Development on the setting of the identified built heritage assets have been incorporated into the design. Taking into account the existing context of the Site, the

extent of change to the setting of the buildings and the design of the Proposed Development, it is considered that there are no significant adverse effects on built heritage from the operational phase of the Proposed Development.

The masterplan proposed development will sit within the setting of three statutorily listed buildings, the Grade II* Hurst House, and the Grade II Hurst Barn and Middlefield Cottage.

The illustrative masterplan and parameters plans have been designed to protect the setting of these heritage assets by avoiding new built-form immediately adjacent to these buildings. This is most notable at the bottom of parcel 1 where land is left as open space to ensure views from the Grade II* Hurstwood House continue to look out onto undeveloped land. The proposals will open this space up for public access which will increase the appreciation of the special heritage asset.

The impact on the setting of Hurst Barn building is less material owing to its set back from the application boundary with the existing employment buildings.

To the west of the site, facing on to Fox Hill is the Grade I Middlefield Cottage, a 17th Century cottage. The development of this part of the site will have an impact on the historic rural setting of the cottage which could be concluded as being detrimental to its significance. To off-set this, the masterplan proposes to include separation at this point of the site boundary to facilitate relief to the listed building and minimise the impact on its setting.

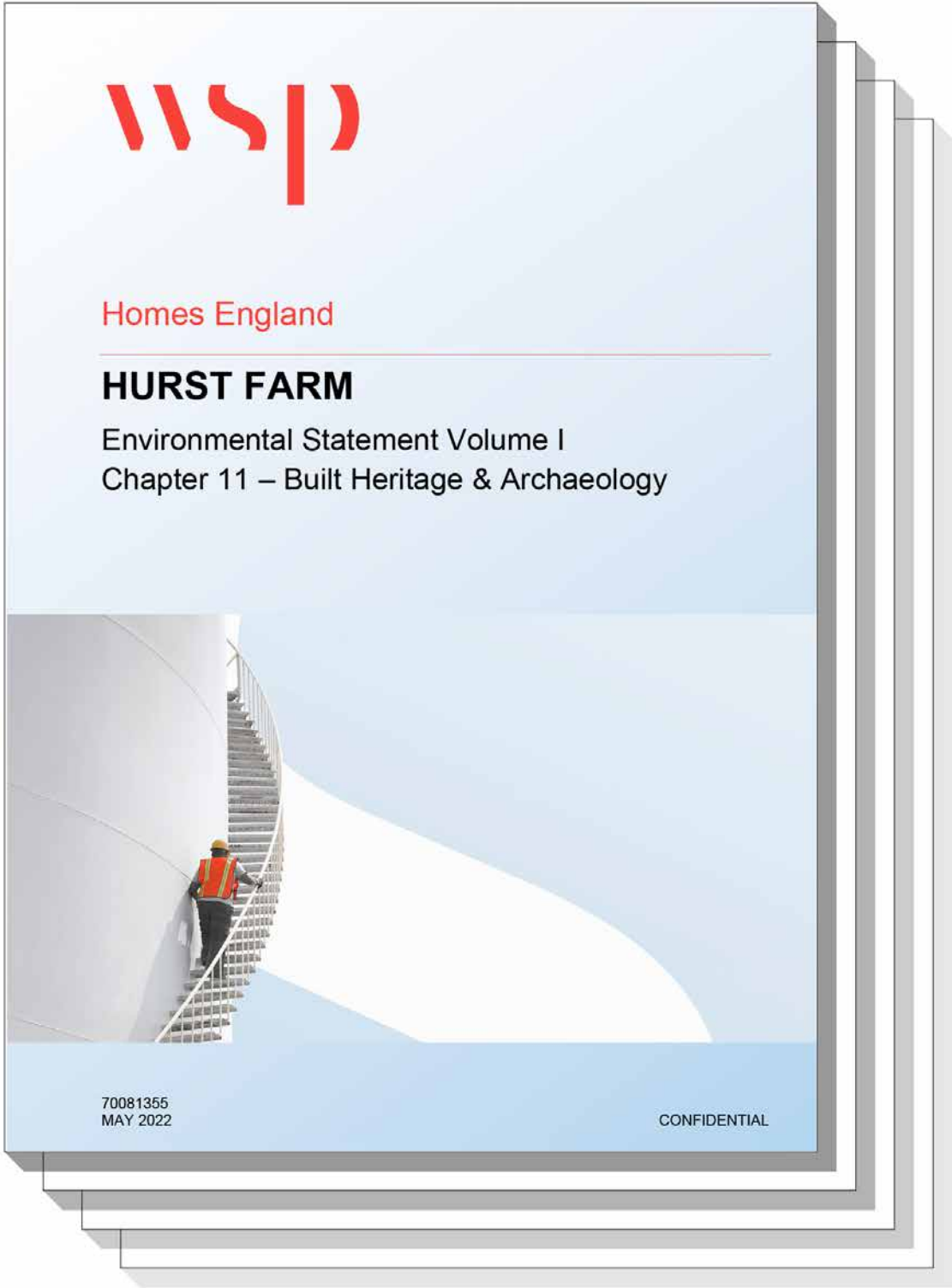


Illustration of Built Heritage & Archaeology by WSP