

Inert Recycling Operation, associated earthworks and planting,  
Bolney Park Farm, London Road, Bolney RH17 5QF

## **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)**

hla 394 R01

*For PJB Construction Ltd*

By N Harper BA DipLA CMLI  
September 2020



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## Introduction

This report has been prepared by Nick Harper CMLI of Harper Landscape Architecture LLP (hla), September 2020. It was commissioned by PJ Brown (Construction) Ltd (the Applicants) on the 24th August 2020. The report is a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which is put forward to describe the landscape character and visual impact judgements as a result of the Inert Recycling Operations, and associated new earthworks and planting, at the Site located at Bolney Park Farm, London Road, Bolney RH17 5QF.

The LVIA has been prepared in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, 2013, by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

The LVIA has been used iteratively to inform the design and offer mitigation proposals for the judged landscape character and visual impacts. The report also seeks to respond to the landscape relevant issues as raised in DM/19/5184, West Sussex County Council Planning Application, issued 30-09-19, titled as follows.

“WSCC/070/19 - Certificate of Lawful Development for an existing use or operation or activity: the importation, deposit, re-use and recycling of waste material and use of land for storage purposes. Land At Bolney Park Farm Broxmead Lane Bolney Haywards Heath West Sussex RH17 5RJ.”

The work has been carried out in collaboration with PJB Construction Ltd.

# 1.0 Qualifications and experience

## 1.1 Qualifications

1.11 Nick Harper is a chartered landscape architect with a degree in landscape design, a post graduate diploma in landscape architecture and he is a full chartered landscape architect member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI) since 1995.

## 1.2 Experience

- 1.21 Nick is a partner of the business of hla which has operated as a landscape architecture consultancy since 2008. hla is a limited liability partnership (LLP) and a registered practice of the Landscape Institute (LI). Nick has also been a university lecturer in landscape architecture and a member of a number of design review panels.
- 1.22 Nick has good experience of LVIA in relation to development in sensitive locations (specifically agricultural environments) and has given landscape evidence, as an expert witness, at a number of Public Inquiries and Planning Hearings.
- 1.23 Nick has 31 years professional experience and prior to setting up hla had positions as, a principal at Hyder Consulting, a senior lecturer at Greenwich University, an associate at Chris Blandford Associates and a senior landscape architect with Battle McCarthy and also the London Borough of Enfield.



## 2.0 Description of the Site and Operation

### 2.1 The Site (see Figs 1, 2 and photographs below)

- 2.11 This Bolney Park Inert Recycling Operation is located in close proximity to the western edge of the High Weald AONB 2.1km north of the A272. The Site has been in operation since 2005 (see Figure 1) and is accessed via the Dantree Farm junction off the A23 which is 200m west of the recycling operations. The A23 defines the AONB's western boundary and is screened from the Site by bunding which was purposely implemented for screening the Site following the planning consent that was granted in 2010 (Ref: 10/00175CMA).
- 2.12 Prior to 2005 (as seen on Figure 1 aerial photograph 2001) and when the current operations were not in place the Site was part of the existing agricultural field located directly east of the operation. There was an access from the A23 but this appears to have been to Dantree Cottage only with agricultural tracks extending along the sides of the fields to the Site.
- 2.13 The Site is located on elevated ground at approximately 104m AOD. To the east there is an undulating rural and predominantly agricultural landscape typical of high quality High Weald AONB in this part of the designation. The local landscape is made up of organically shaped fields defined by hedgerow planting and significant blocks of woodland with occasional rural dwellings. To the west the A23 is a very busy and noisy road with a high flow of traffic that can be heard for a considerable distance from its acoustic source. Also directly to the west is mature tree planting which screens intervisibility with the Operation in that direction and to the north of the Site is Semi-natural Ancient Woodland (The Hangar) which screens views in from that direction. To the south is Park Farm (and associated buildings) which may have had some obscure and partial views to the field prior to 2005 and currently of the Operation from windows orientated towards the Site.
- 2.14 Other influences on the Site's landscape context include industrial Site's along the west side of the A23, the petrol station and Dantree Farm cottage. The spire of the Holy Trinity Church in Cuckfield is a visual landmark approximately 4.5km to the east. There are long distance views to the South Downs to the south and to High Weald ridge lines to the east.
- 2.15 There are no Listed Buildings with views of the Site.
- 2.16 Ecological interest is likely to be located along the wooded and tree lined margins and outside of the working area of the Operation.

**Figure 1 Site evolution since 2001 as seen on aerial photographs**



**Aerial photograph 2001 - pre-operation**



**Aerial photograph 2005 - in operation**



**Aerial photograph 2012 - in operation**



**Aerial photograph 2018 - in operation**

Figure 2 Location plan

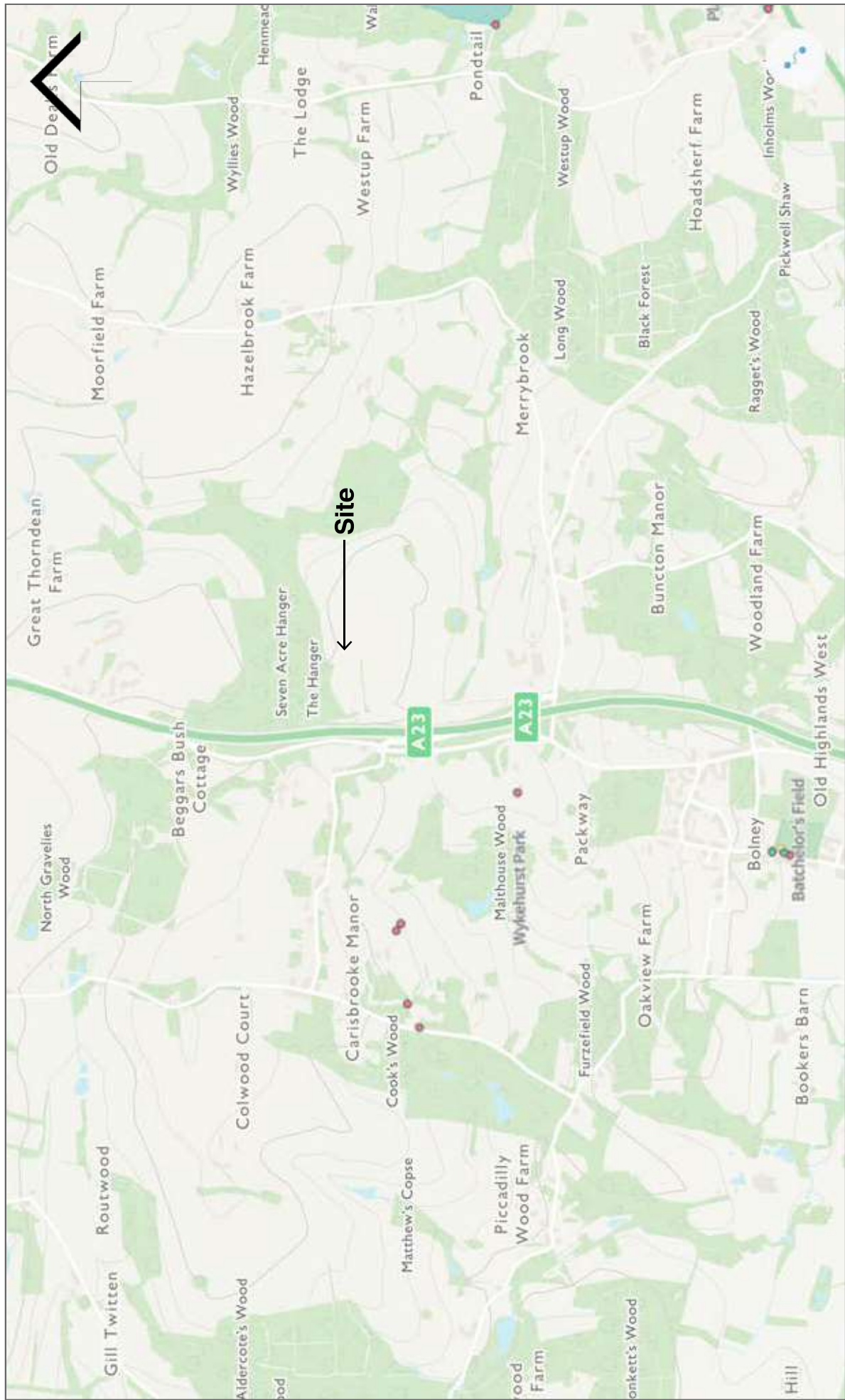


Figure 3 Aerial photograph



**2.2 Description of the Site in operation as an Inert Recycling Operation** (see Figures 4 and 5).

2.21 PJ Brown (Construction) Ltd (the Applicants) commenced the Inert Recycling Operation 01-05-2007. The Application describes the operational activities as follows.

“Operation is for the importation, deposit, re-use and recycling of waste material and use of land for storage purposes.”

2.22 PJB took over the land in 2006 from South East Tipping who operated the Site from at least 2004. The activities described in the application have been undertaken from that time to varying degrees. A planning application was submitted in 2015 by a former agent but, not progressed as it was not validated. The 2007 aerial photograph (on the Planning Portal) shows activities on the site including container, general storage and material piles. The 2012 aerial photograph again shows material storage as does the 2018 aerial photograph.

2.23 The Operation as seen 09th September 2020 is described as follows. A lockable gate gives access from the A23 to a tar and chip haul road that runs for approximately 150-200m to the recycling operation. The road is used by the vehicles of the handful of workers running the Site and by the lorries (25-30 per day between 7am and 5pm) which transport the recyclable materials. In the recycling area there is plant and machinery to break up the hard materials for recycling (including brick, concrete, road planings etc) with 3-4m height heaps of material located along the northern southern and eastern edges of the Operation. These heaps screen views in from the east although the diggers located on top of the heaps can be seen during the operational hours.



View looking north



View looking across Operation



View looking south



View east from Site

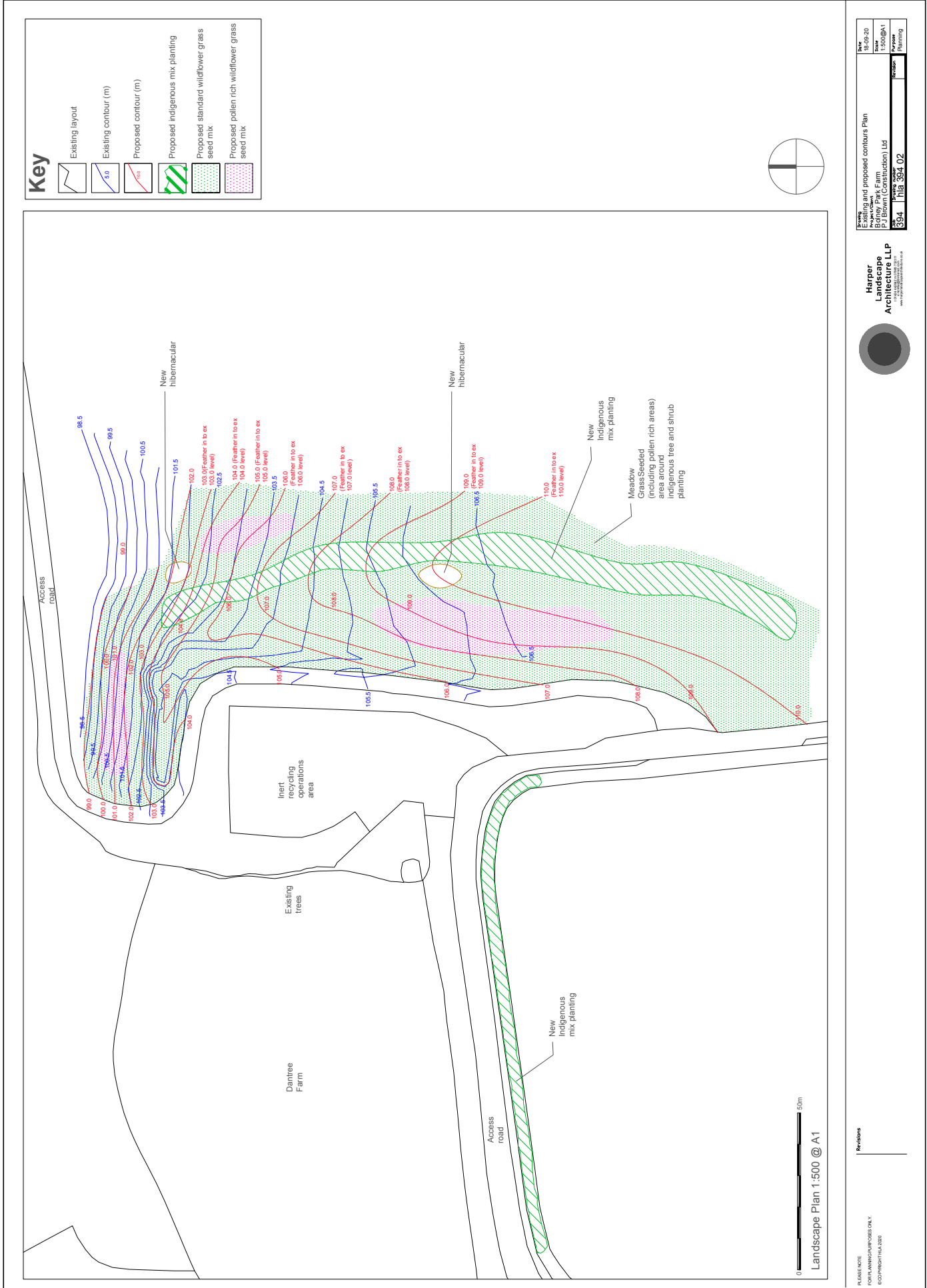


View of recycling heap



View looking west

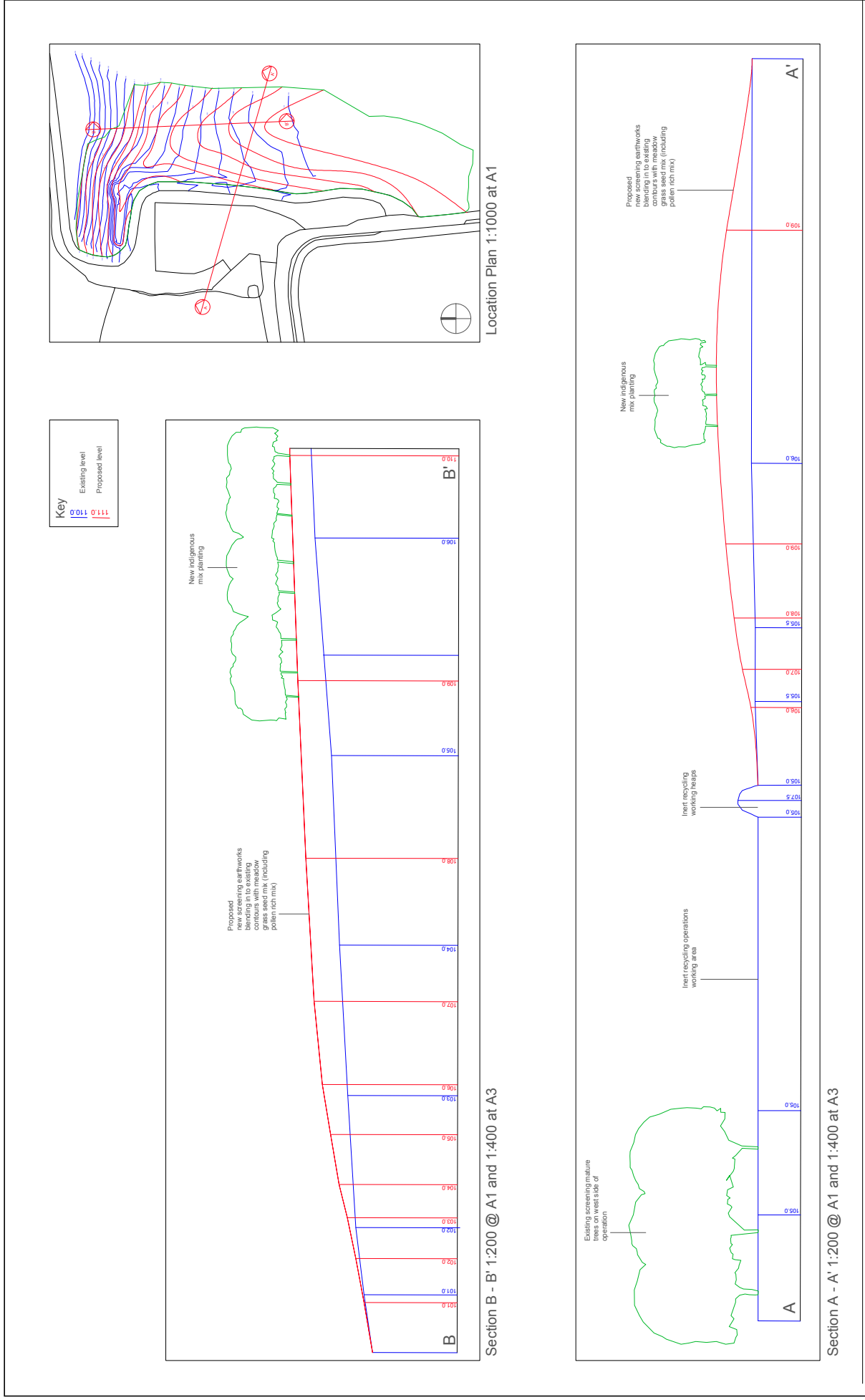
Figure 4 hla Drawing, Existing and Proposed Contours Plan, Drwg No. hla 394 02



Project	Existing and proposed contours Plan
Client	PJ Brown (Construction) Ltd
Scale	1:500@A1
Drawn	394
Checked	hla 394 02
Project No.	hla 394 02
Revision	Planting

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 122, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138, 140, 142, 144, 146, 148, 150, 152, 154, 156, 158, 160, 162, 164, 166, 168, 170, 172, 174, 176, 178, 180, 182, 184, 186, 188, 190, 192, 194, 196, 198, 200, 202, 204, 206, 208, 210, 212, 214, 216, 218, 220, 222, 224, 226, 228, 230, 232, 234, 236, 238, 240, 242, 244, 246, 248, 250, 252, 254, 256, 258, 260, 262, 264, 266, 268, 270, 272, 274, 276, 278, 280, 282, 284, 286, 288, 290, 292, 294, 296, 298, 300, 302, 304, 306, 308, 310, 312, 314, 316, 318, 320, 322, 324, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 336, 338, 340, 342, 344, 346, 348, 350, 352, 354, 356, 358, 360, 362, 364, 366, 368, 370, 372, 374, 376, 378, 380, 382, 384, 386, 388, 390, 392, 394, 396, 398, 400, 402, 404, 406, 408, 410, 412, 414, 416, 418, 420, 422, 424, 426, 428, 430, 432, 434, 436, 438, 440, 442, 444, 446, 448, 450, 452, 454, 456, 458, 460, 462, 464, 466, 468, 470, 472, 474, 476, 478, 480, 482, 484, 486, 488, 490, 492, 494, 496, 498, 500, 502, 504, 506, 508, 510, 512, 514, 516, 518, 520, 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1932, 1934, 1936, 1938, 1940, 1942, 1944, 1946, 1948, 1950, 1952, 1954, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1962, 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1972, 1974, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022, 2024, 2026, 2028, 2030, 2032, 2034, 2036, 2038, 2040, 2042, 2044, 2046, 2048, 2050, 2052, 2054, 2056, 2058, 2060, 2062, 2064, 2066, 2068, 2070, 2072, 2074, 2076, 2078, 2080, 2082, 2084, 2086, 2088, 2090, 2092, 2094, 2096, 2098, 2100, 2102, 2104, 2106, 2108, 2110, 2112, 2114, 2116, 2118, 2120, 2122, 2124, 2126, 2128, 2130, 2132, 2134, 2136, 2138, 2140, 2142, 2144, 2146, 2148, 2150, 2152, 2154, 2156, 2158, 2160, 2162, 2164, 2166, 2168, 2170, 2172, 2174, 2176, 2178, 2180, 2182, 2184, 2186, 2188, 2190, 2192, 2194, 2196, 2198, 2200, 2202, 2204, 2206, 2208, 2210, 2212, 2214, 2216, 2218, 2220, 2222, 2224, 2226, 2228, 2230, 2232, 2234, 2236, 2238, 2240, 2242, 2244, 2246, 2248, 2250, 2252, 2254, 2256, 2258, 2260, 2262, 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3260, 3262, 3264, 3266, 3268, 3270, 3272, 3274, 3276, 3278, 3280, 3282, 3284, 3286, 3288, 3290, 3292, 3294, 3296, 3298, 3300, 3302, 3304, 3306, 3308, 3310, 3312, 3314, 3316, 3318, 3320, 3322, 3324, 3326, 3328, 3330, 3332, 3334, 3336, 3338, 3340, 3342, 3344, 3346, 3348, 3350, 3352, 3354, 3356, 3358, 3360, 3362, 3364, 3366, 3368, 3370, 3372, 3374, 3376, 3378, 3380, 3382, 3384, 3386, 3388, 3390, 3392, 3394, 3396, 3398, 3400, 3402, 3404, 3406, 3408, 3410, 3412, 3414, 3416, 3418, 3420, 3422, 3424, 3426, 3428, 3430, 3432, 3434, 3436, 3438, 3440, 3442, 3444, 3446, 3448, 3450, 3452, 3454, 3456, 3458, 3460, 3462, 3464, 3466, 3468, 3470, 3472, 3474, 3476, 3478, 3480, 3482, 3484, 3486, 3488, 3490, 3492, 3494, 3496, 3498, 3500, 3502, 3504, 3506, 3508, 3510, 3512, 3514, 3516, 3518, 3520, 3522, 3524, 3526, 3528, 3530, 3532, 3534, 3536, 3538, 3540, 3542, 3544, 3546, 3548, 3550, 3552, 3554, 3556, 3558, 3560, 3562, 3564, 3566, 3568, 3570, 3572, 3574, 3576, 3578, 3580, 3582, 3584, 3586, 3588, 3590, 3592, 3594, 3596, 3598, 3600, 3602, 3604, 3606, 3608, 3610, 3612, 3614, 3616, 3618, 3620, 3622, 3624, 3626, 3628, 3630, 3632, 3634, 3636, 3638, 3640, 3642, 3644, 3646, 3648, 3650, 3652, 3654, 3656, 3658, 3660, 3662, 3664, 3666, 3668, 3670, 3672, 3674, 3676, 3678, 3680, 3682, 3684, 3686, 3688, 3690, 3692, 3694, 3696, 3698, 3700, 3702, 3704, 3706, 3708, 3710, 3712, 3714, 3716, 3718, 3720, 3722, 3724, 3726, 3728, 3730, 3732, 3734, 3736, 3738, 3740, 3742, 3744, 3746, 3748, 3750, 3752, 3754, 3756, 3758, 3760, 3762, 3764, 3766, 3768, 3770, 3772, 3774, 3776, 3778, 3780, 3782, 3784, 3786, 3788, 3790, 3792, 3794, 3796, 3798, 3800, 3802, 3804, 3806, 3808, 3810, 3812, 3814, 3816, 3818, 3820, 3822, 3824, 3826, 3828, 3830, 3832, 3834, 3836, 3838, 3840, 3842, 3844, 3846, 3848, 3850, 3852, 3854, 3856, 3858, 3860, 3862, 3864, 3866, 3868, 3870, 3872, 3874, 3876, 3878, 3880, 3882, 3884, 3886, 3888, 3890, 3892, 3894, 3896, 3898, 3900, 3902, 3904, 3906, 3908, 3910, 3912, 3914, 3916, 3918, 3920, 3922, 3924, 3926, 3928, 3930, 3932, 3934, 3936, 3938, 3940, 3942, 3944, 3946, 3948, 3950, 3952, 3954, 3956, 3958, 3960, 3962, 3964, 3966, 3968, 3970, 3972, 3974, 3976, 3978, 3980, 3982, 3984, 3986, 3988, 3990, 3992, 3994, 3996, 3998, 4000, 4002, 4004, 4006, 4008, 4010, 4012, 4014, 4016, 4018, 4020, 4022, 4024, 4026, 4028,

Figure 5 hla Drawing, Sections A - A' and B - B,' Drwg No. hla 394 03



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Revisions

Project Name	A - A' B - B'
Project No.	384
Client	Bayley Park Farm (a subsidiary of) Ltd
Location	hla 394 03
Date	18-09-20
Scale	1:200/400
Author	PL
Checker	PL
Approver	PL
Discipline	Planning



**Harper Landscape Architecture LLP**  
 www.harperlandscape.co.uk

## 3.0 Scope and Structure of Report

### 3.1 Scope of the report

3.11 This report assesses the landscape character and visual impacts that are likely to occur as a result of the new development as described above.

### 3.2 Structure of the report

3.21 The upcoming sections of the report are structured as follows, Section 4.0 describes the relevant planning policy, Section 5.0 the landscape baseline, Section 6.0 the landscape character and visual impact methodologies, Section 7.0 the landscape and visual impacts, Section 8.0 the conclusions and Section 9.0 offers a final statement.



## 4.0 Relevant planning policy

### 4.1 Introduction

4.11 The key landscape related planning policy is listed as follows.

### 4.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)

4.21 It is noted that the NPPF should be read in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Environment Act 1995, and the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended by the Environment Act 1995).

4.22 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development; which should be seen as a golden thread running through plan-making and decision-taking (Paragraph 11, page 6). This presumption means that where any adverse impacts as a result of development should not outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

4.23 The relevant landscape related policies of the NPPF are listed as follows.

#### *Chapter 2. Achieving sustainable development*

- Paragraph 8 (page 5) item c. an environmental objective.
- Paragraphs 10 and 11 (pages 5 and 6) presumption in favour of sustainable development.

#### *Chapter 3. Plan making, sub section strategic policies*

- Paragraph 20 (page 9) item d. conservation and enhancement of natural built and historic environment.

#### *Chapter 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities*

- Paragraph 93 (page 27) environmental benefits of estate regeneration.

#### *Chapter 11. Making effective use of land*

- Paragraph 118 (page 35) consideration of various environmental issues with any development.

#### *Chapter 12. Achieving well-designed places*

- Paragraph 127 (page 38) Sustain a strong sense of place.
- Paragraph 130 (page 39) Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

#### *Chapter 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change*

- Paragraph 149 (page 44) Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes.

- Paragraph 171 (page 49) item b. take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

#### *Chapter 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*

- Paragraph 170 (page 49) Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment:
- Paragraph 171 (page 49) Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites.
- Paragraph 172 (page 49) Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

4.24 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) as relevant to the existing and proposed landscape and the Development is described as follows.

- PPG Natural environment 2019. This aims to protect landscape, ecology, green infrastructure, brownfield land, soils and agricultural land. It specifically refers to the need for Landscape Character Assessments and the need to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

### **4.3 Regional Planning Policy**

4.31 At a regional level the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019-2024 (see Appendix 3) is key, the Plan states its overall intention (page 14) as,

”the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty of the High Weald AONB.”

4.32 The character of the High Weald is defined on page 24 under the heading ‘Character Defined’ as follows.

“The High Weald AONB is characterized by a deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform of clays and sandstone. The ridges tend east-west, and from them spring numerous gill streams that form the headwaters of rivers. Wide river valleys dominate the eastern part of the AONB. The landform and water systems are subject to, and influence, a local variant of the British suboceanic climate.”

4.33 On page 28 a number of Objectives are set out and those which are relevant to landscape in respect of the development are listed as follows,

- “Objective G3: To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald’s valued landscape and habitats, (page 27 and 29),
- Objective S1: To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside (pages 33 and 34),
- Objective S2: To protect the historic pattern of settlement (pages 33 and 34),

- Objective R1: To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways. (page 39),
- Objective R2: To enhance the ecological function of routeways (page 39),
- Objective W1: To maintain existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland (page 43),
- Objective W2: To enhance the ecological functioning of woodland at a landscape scale (page 43),
- Objective FH2: To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands (page 49), and
- Objective FH3: To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats. (page 49).

#### **4.4 County planning policy**

##### **4.41 West Sussex County Council (WSSCC)**

There are no specific policies at County level beyond those described at a district and regional level.

#### **4.5 District planning policy**

##### **4.51 Mid Sussex District Council (HDC) adopted the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 as a Development Plan Document on the 28th March 2018. It replaces the Mid Sussex Local Plan 2004 which has relevant saved Local Plan policies).**

##### **4.52 The District Plan policies as relevant to landscape are listed as follows.**

- Policy DP1: Sustainable Economic Development (page 24), as follows
  - “Provision for new employment land and premises will be made by allowing new small-scale economic development, in the countryside.”
- Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside (page 56), as follows.
  - “The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District”.
- Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (page 62), as follows.
  - “Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular;
    - the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;
    - the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;

- character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and
- the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.

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

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

- Policy DP22: Rights of Way and other Recreational Routes (page 70), as follows.

“Rights of way, Sustrans national cycle routes and recreational routes will be protected by ensuring development does not result in the loss of or does not adversely affect a right of way.”

- Policy DP26: Character and Design (page 75), as follows

“All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development (only relevant points listed):

- is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;
- protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;
- does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution
- positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;
- optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.”

- Policy DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows 90 (page 90), as follows.t

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

- Policy DP38: Biodiversity 92 (page 92), as follows.

“Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced.”

#### 4.6 Parish policy

4.61 The Site is in the jurisdiction of the Bolney Parish which has no Neighbourhood Plan and therefore no policies are listed at a parish scale.

#### 4.7 Public Rights of Way (PRoW) (Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the NPPF Paragraph 75)

4.71 Viewpoints 1 and 2 (both from PRoW 16CR) demonstrate the only two views from PRoWs. These Viewpoints are close together and from locations over 900m away. The on site operations have no influence on the visual composition or enjoyment of the view. As such visual impacts experienced by visual receptors on PRoWs are judged as **Not Significant**.

#### 4.8 Cumulative Impact

4.81 There are no planning applications in the local area that if considered with this Operation would lead to Significant cumulative impacts.

#### 4.9 Seasonal change

4.91 The judgements put forward would not be altered at night as there would be no night time operations nor seasonally when there would be no leaves on the trees.

#### 4.10 Certificate of Lawful development WSCC/070/019

4.101 On the 10th January 2020 the Certificate of Lawful development WSCC/070/019 was refused with the following landscape relevant District Plan Policy reasons are quoted.

“The development is unacceptable with regard to its impact upon the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; the adjacent Ancient Woodland and the habitat and species therein; the amenity of residents of the surrounding countryside; the risk to the water environment; the character of the local countryside; and because it is contrary to the policies of the Development Plan, as follows:

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014- 2031:

Policies DP12 (Protection and Enhancement of Countryside); DP16 (High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty); DP26 (Character and Design); DP37 (Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows); DP38 (Biodiversity).”

#### 4.11 Planning policy conclusions

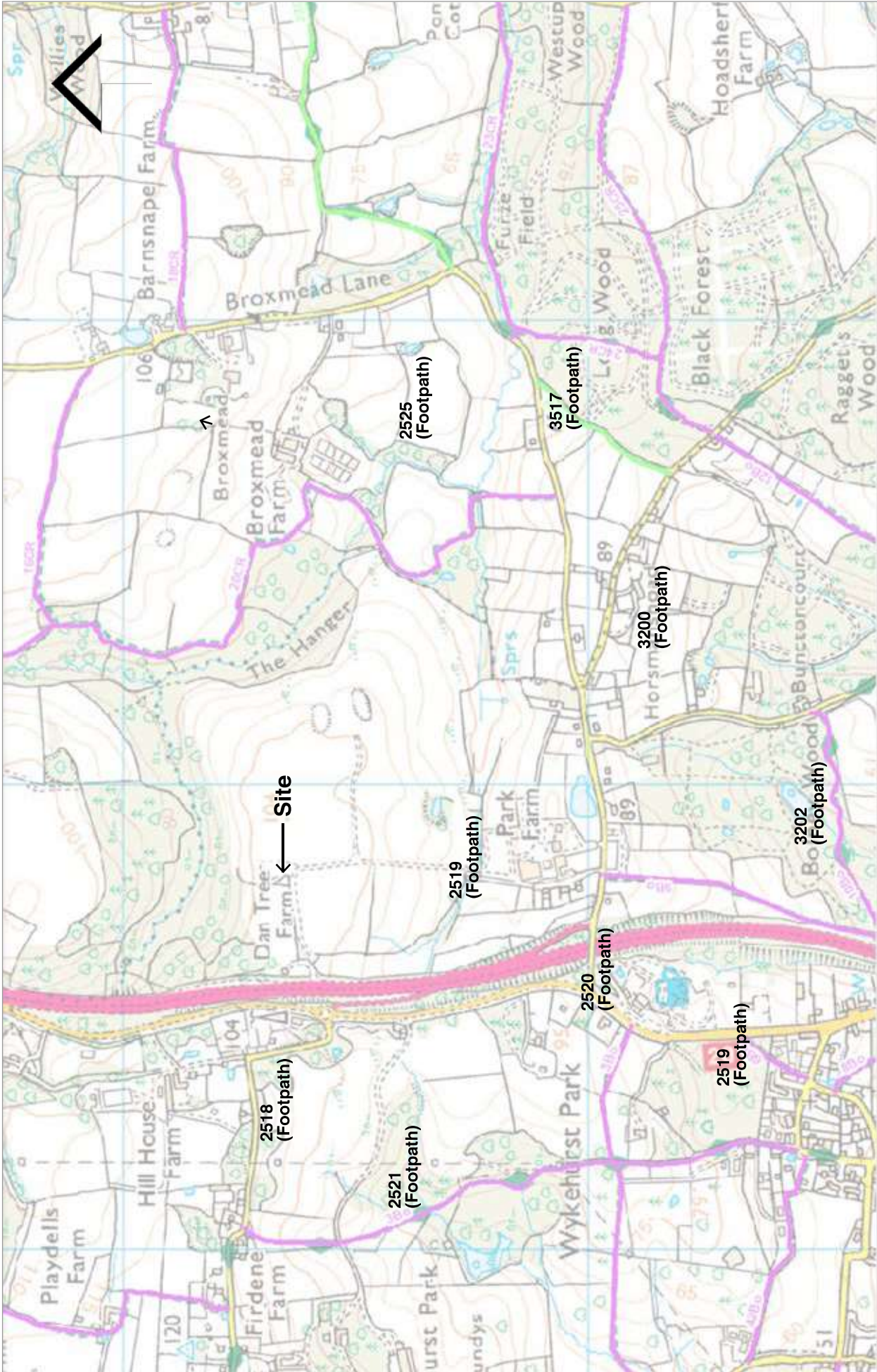
4.111 There are very few public views and those that exist are almost entirely indiscernible and from medium to long distance and visual impacts are judged as **Not Significant**. As such it is judged that the operations have no influence on the visual composition and enjoyment of the High Weald visual context. The ZTV shows an open area to the east but the only views are from the privately owned agricultural fields. Whilst the South Downs escarpment and the High Weald ridge lines are visible to the south and east respectively there is no intervisibility. The Landscape character impact of the Operation is judged at national, regional, county and district scales as **Minor Significance** of Landscape Effect and at a local scale as **Minor to Moderate Significance** of Landscape Effect.

4.112 Whilst the operations have altered the landscape character they are a necessary sustainable business located in close proximity to the significantly landscape detracting A23 which lessens sensitivity and they have a Not Significant visual impact. It is also noted that the Ancient Woodland, the trees, and key biodiversity areas are outside the operational curtilage. As such the operations are strongly aligned with the landscape related planning policy.

Figure 6 Landscape sensitive designations plan (as extracted from Magic Maps)



Figure 7 West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Public Rights of Way Map (PRoW), extract



## 5.0 Landscape Baseline Description

### 5.1 Local Character baseline description

- 5.11 The local landscape is influenced by the high quality undulating, rural, High Weald landscape to the east and the low quality A23 road corridor environment located approximately 200m to the west. The operational land used for the recycling is relatively discrete to public viewpoints although it can be seen from private land to the east. The South Downs escarpment 12km to the south and the High weald ridge lines seen at long distance to the east create a high quality backdrop in these directions although there is no discernible intervisibility from these locations (see Appendix 1, Viewpoint 6 for instance).
- 5.12 The Site has been in operation since 2005 (see Figure 1) and is accessed via the Dantree Farm junction off the A23 which is 200m west of the recycling operations. The A23 defines the AONB's western boundary and is screened from the Site by bunding which was implemented following planning consent granted in 2010 (Ref: 10/00175CMA). Prior to 2005 the Site was a small part of the existing agricultural field and was part accessed from the A23 junction to Dantree Farm. At this time the landscape was rural agricultural countryside at the western edge of the AONB. The tranquility of the landscape in this location was heavily influenced by the landscape detracting A23.
- 5.13 The Site is located on elevated ground at approximately 104m AOD with the landscape to the east made up of organically shaped fields defined by hedgerow planting and significant blocks of woodland with occasional rural dwellings. The operational part of the Site is located in an elbow of mature tree planting which screens views in from the west and north. The area of trees directly north has heritage value and is Semi-natural Ancient Woodland (The Hangar). To the south is Park Farm (and associated buildings) which may have some partial obscured intervisibility with the operational areas. The spire of the Holy Trinity Church in Cuckfield is a long distance visual landmark to the east.
- 5.14 The local landscape both pre-2005 and now has a distinct and recognisable pattern of high quality landscape elements however the significant landscape detracting nature of the A23 significantly impacts on tranquility, the perception of countryside, local distinctiveness, leads to a lack of intactness and lessened landscape value and quality.
- 5.15 In summary whilst the Site is in the High Weald AONB it is located at its western edge, it is heavily detracted by the A23 road corridor located in close proximity and it has been in operation for 15 years becoming an accepted element within the landscape baseline condition. As such at a local scale the landscape is judged to be **Medium Sensitivity**.



## 5.2 National Character Areas (NCA) (see Appendix 2)

5.21 Natural England, NCA 122, the High Weald (see Appendix 2) gives a broad scale description for the entire High Weald of which the development is only a small component.

5.211 The profile summarises the character on page 3, as follows,

“The High Weald National Character Area (NCA) encompasses the ridged and faulted sandstone core of the Kent and Sussex Weald. It is an area of ancient countryside and one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in Northern Europe.”

5.212 The NCA lists a number of *Statements of Opportunity* (SEO). SEO1 (page 17) and SEO3 (page 19) are specifically relevant to the site and the landscape and are quoted as follows,

- “SEO 1: Maintain and enhance the existing woodland and pasture components of the landscape, including the historic field pattern bounded by shaws, hedgerows and farm woods, to improve ecological function at a landscape scale for the benefit of biodiversity, soils and water, sense of place and climate regulation, safeguard ancient woodlands and encourage sustainably produced timber to support local markets and contribute to biomass production, and
- SEO 3: Maintain and enhance the distinctive dispersed settlement pattern, parkland and historic pattern and features of the routeways of the High Weald, encouraging the use of locally characteristic materials and Wealden practices to ensure that any development recognises and retains the distinctiveness, biodiversity, geodiversity and heritage assets present, reaffirm sense of place and enhance the ecological function of routeways to improve the connectivity of habitats and provide wildlife corridors.”

5.213 It goes on to list a number of *Landscape Opportunities* (page 42 and 43) and those relevant to the site and the landscape are listed as follows,

- “Maintain and enhance the complex mosaic and pattern of High Weald habitats and the distinctive pastoral fields and areas of heath. Improve the condition and connectivity of fields and heaths and their associated and interrelated habitats, including hedgerows, woodlands, ditches, and ponds and plan for the extension and or linking of existing habitats in order to strengthen landscape character and increase climate change resilience,
- maintain and enhance the distinctive pattern of dispersed settlement of historic farmsteads, hamlets and villages, to promote sustainable development in rural locations and meet local needs for affordable and where possible land based workers, and enhance the design and quality of new development in the landscape meeting local distinctiveness and design guidance, and
- manage existing and future developments to ensure that sense of place is maintained by making reference to local vernacular building styles and materials, and settlement patterns and distributions. Ensure that proposed growth is sustainable and protects and enhances the character of the area with new building sympathetic to local styles. Where development is permitted, ensure good green infrastructure is included to bring about multiple benefits for people and the environment.”

5.22 For these reasons at a national scale the landscape is judged to be **High Sensitivity**.

### 5.3 Regional Character

5.31 High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019-2024 (see Appendix 3).

5.311 The Plan is described in Planning Policy above and the Landscape Sensitivity is judged as **High**.

### 5.4 County Landscape Character Areas (LCA) (see Appendix 4 and Figure 8)

5.41 The Site is located at the centre of the Landscape Character Assessment of West Sussex, Land Management Guidelines, HW4 High Weald Fringes October 2003.

5.411 HW4 makes a statement of overall character on its first page quoted as follows

“The densely-wooded southern flanks of the High Weald Forest Ridge within West Sussex, dissected by gentle gill streams draining west to the River Adur and east to the River Ouse.”

5.412 On its second page it lists Land management Guidelines as relevant to the Site are listed as follows.

“Conserve the rich mosaic of woodland and other habitats and the intimate nature of the agricultural landscape, the high level of perceived naturalness of the area including its rural, tranquil qualities, and the intimate and unobtrusive settlement pattern throughout much of the area.

- Maintain and restore the historic pattern and fabric of the woodland and agricultural landscape for scenic, nature conservation and recreational purposes.
- Protect existing views from the area and avoid skyline development, paying particular attention to the siting of telecommunications masts.
- Plan for long-term woodland regeneration, the planting of new broad-leaved woodlands, appropriate management of existing woodlands, and reduce rhododendron invasion and bracken cover in woodlands and on heathland.
- Extend existing woodland areas rather than creating new woodland features, reinforcing existing, distinctive landscape patterns.
- Conserve woodland biodiversity and the landscape of the gills, including wet woodland, protecting rare and uncommon woodland plant communities associated with them.
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agricultural and other development including along the approach roads to settlements and along busy urban routes.
- Conserve and replant single oaks in hedgerows to maintain succession and replant parkland trees.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees and replant hedgerows where they have been lost.

- Conserve species-rich meadows and road verges.
- Seek to protect the tranquil and historic character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their nature conservation value.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness. The guidelines should be read in conjunction with:
  - County-wide Landscape Guidelines set out in A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape (November 2005) published by West Sussex County Council.”

5.413 Whilst HW4 is a contributory element within the High Weald it also includes landscape detracting settlements and roads (such as the A23) and as such at a county scale the landscape character is judged to be **Medium** to **High** Sensitivity.

## 5.5 District Landscape Character Assessment

5.51 The Site is located in the Mid Sussex District Council Landscape Character Assessment November 2005, LCA 10 High Weald Fringes (see Appendix 5).

5.511 The ‘Summary and Key Characteristics’ of this LCA is quoted on page 106, where relevant, as follows.

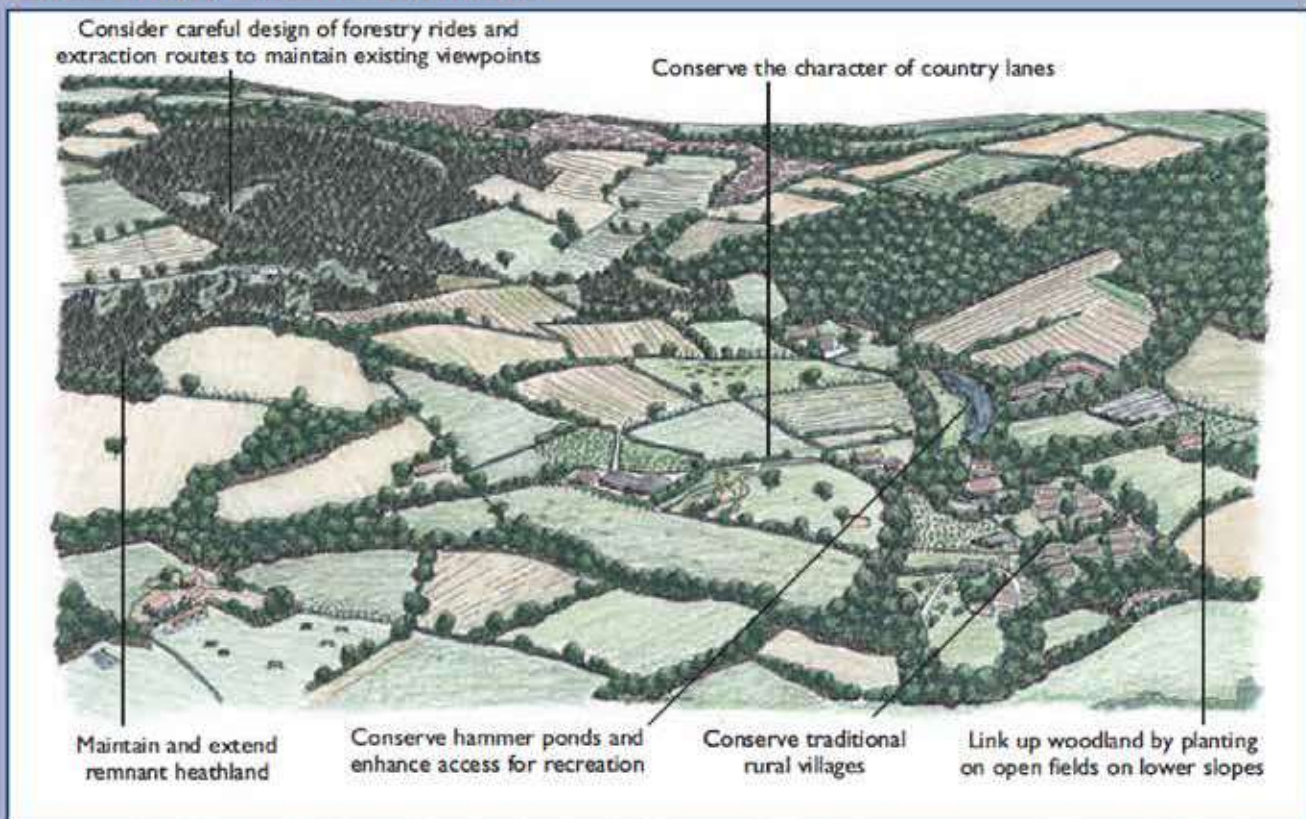
“Densely-wooded southern flanks of the High Weald Forest Ridge, dissected gentle gill streams draining west to the River Adur and east to the River Ouse. Includes the settlements of Cuckfield, Haywards Heath and Lindfield.

- Wooded, often confined rural landscape of intimacy and complexity partly within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- South and east-draining gills and broad ridges sweeping gently down to the Low Weald.
- Long views over the Low Weald to the downs.
- Significant woodland cover, a substantial portion of it ancient, and a dense network of shaws, hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Pattern of small, irregular-shaped assart fields and larger fields, and small pockets of remnant heathland.
- Biodiversity concentrated in the valleys, heathland, and woodland.
- Network of lanes, droveways, tracks and footpaths.
- Some busy lanes and roads including A and B roads bounding the area to the west, and other roads crossing north to south, including the A23 Trunk Road.
- Varied traditional rural buildings built with diverse materials including timber framing, Horsham Stone roofing, Wealden stone and varieties of local brick and tile-hanging.”

5.512 The ‘Management Objectives’ of this LCA are quoted on page 113, and are word for word the same as though described for WSCC LCA HW4 (see Figure 8).

Figure 8 WSCC Landscape, Land Management Guidelines, HW4 High Weald Fringes October 2003

## Land Management Guidelines



**Conserve the rich mosaic of woodland and other habitats and the intimate nature of the agricultural landscape, the high level of perceived naturalness of the area including its rural, tranquil qualities, and the intimate and unobtrusive settlement pattern throughout much of the area.**

- Maintain and restore the historic pattern and fabric of the woodland and agricultural landscape for scenic, nature conservation and recreational purposes.
- Protect existing views from the area and avoid skyline development, paying particular attention to the siting of telecommunications masts.
- Plan for long-term woodland regeneration, the planting of new broad-leaved woodlands, appropriate management of existing woodlands, and reduce rhododendron invasion and bracken cover in woodlands and on heathland.
- Extend existing woodland areas rather than creating new woodland features, reinforcing existing, distinctive landscape patterns.
- Conserve woodland biodiversity and the landscape of the gills, including wet woodland, protecting rare and uncommon woodland plant communities associated with them.
- Reduce the impact of forestry where possible by encouraging sensitive forestry practice including small-scale felling rotation, and incorporating mixed species.
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agricultural and other development including along the approach roads to settlements and along busy urban routes.
- Increase screening of prominent parts of new development on the southern fringes of Haywards Heath.
- Conserve and replant single oaks in hedgerows to maintain succession and replant parkland trees.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees and replant hedgerows where they have been lost.
- Maintain and manage all lakes and ponds and their margins for their landscape diversity and nature conservation value.
- Conserve and manage remnant open heathland by preventing the encroachment of scrub and create new, interconnected heathlands.
- Conserve species-rich meadows and road verges.
- Seek to protect the tranquil and historic character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their nature conservation value.
- Reduce the visual impact of stabling and grazing for horses.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.

The guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- County-wide Landscape Guidelines set out in *A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape* (November 2005) published by West Sussex County Council.
- Objectives and actions contained in the *High Weald AONB Management Plan 2004* (Adopted March 2004) published by the High Weald AONB Joint Management Committee.

5.52 At a district scale the Site is also located in the Mid Sussex District Council Landscape Capacity Study July 2007, Zone 8 Bolney and land between Bolney and Sayers Common. However the description at this scale does not offer more information and the Site is outside and to the north east of the more detailed descriptions given for the nearest LCA 60 Bolney Sloping High Weald.

5.53 For the same reasons given at a county scale it is judged that at a district scale the landscape character is judged to be **Medium** to **High** Sensitivity.

## 5.6 Parish Council Character Assessment

5.61 Bolney Parish Council have not produced a Landscape Character Assessment.

## 5.7 Visual Baseline (see Figure 9 and Appendix 1)

5.71 The site was visited 9th September 2020, (date of Appendix 1 Viewpoints 1 to 6 photographs). The photographs were taken when the weather allowed clear views and trees were in leaf. Viewpoints were selected to represent the most likely and most sensitive places where the Operation might be seen to demonstrate typical and worst case scenario views.

5.72 The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), see Figure 9, shows that there are very few public views and that these are almost entirely indiscernible medium to long distance which have no influence on the visual composition and enjoyment of the High Weald. There are no views in from the west or north as the woodland planting screens views in. The ZTV shows that there are near and middle distance views from the privately owned agricultural fields to the east. Whilst the South Downs escarpment and the High Weald ridge lines are visible to the south and east respectively there is no intervisibility.

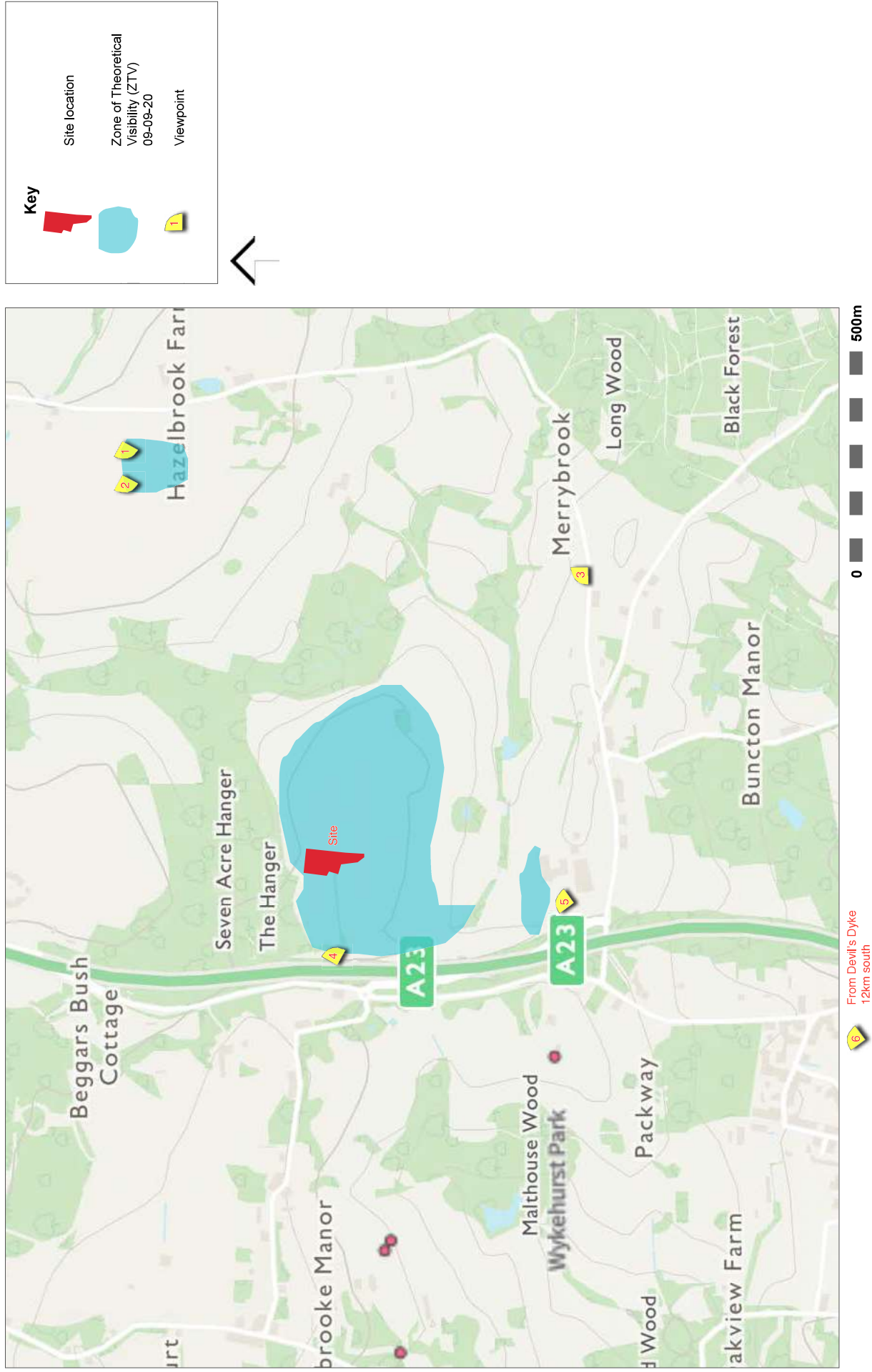
5.73 Of the 6 Viewpoints it is noted that five (Viewpoints 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) have the almost entirely indiscernible views as described above and Viewpoint 6 from the South Downs (Devils Dyke) has no view.

5.74 The Viewpoints include: one Viewpoint (4) which is judged to be **Low** Sensitivity; two Viewpoints (3 and 15) which are judged to be **Medium** Sensitivity; two Viewpoints (1 and 2 representing the rare views from PRow 16CR) which are judged to be **Medium** to **High** Sensitivity; and one (Viewpoint 6 which has no view) which is judged to be **High** Sensitivity.

## 5.8 Other potential Viewpoint Receptors

5.81 There are unlikely to be residential dwellings visually impacted by the Operations on Site although those on the northern side of Park Farm may have obscured partial views from windows oriented towards the Site.

Figure 9 Viewpoints 1 to 6 Plan



## 6.0 Landscape Character and Visual Impact Methodologies

### 6.1 Introduction

6.11 This section addresses the landscape character and visual impacts. The following section seeks to address how the landscape character and visual baseline conditions might be impacted by the development.

### 6.2 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology, general

6.21 Landscape and visual impact judgements proposed in this report, are based upon professional experience and by utilising the principles as set out in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition, 2013, by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

### 6.3 Landscape Character Impact Methodology

#### 6.31 General

6.311 Landscape impacts relate to the effects of the proposals on the physical resources and other characteristics of the landscape and its resulting character and quality. Landscape resources and character are considered to be of importance in their own right and are valued for their intrinsic qualities regardless of whether they are seen by people.

6.312 There is no standard methodology for the quantification of the scale or magnitude of relative effects for landscape character. As such the following definitions are proposed to enable landscape character judgements to be made and consideration of these has been used in making judgements.

#### 6.32 Definitions

- **Landscape Character** is the distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape.
- **Landscape Value** is the relative value attached to a landscape which expresses national or local distinctiveness, because of its quality or its special features which could include scenic beauty, tranquillity, wildness, cultural or conservation aspects. and
- **Landscape Quality** is based upon judgements about the physical state of the landscape and about its intactness from visual, functional and ecological perspectives. It also reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements which make up the character in any one place.

#### 6.33 Landscape Sensitivity

6.331 Landscape Sensitivity is described using the following terms,

- **Low** is defined as a landscape that is not valued for its scenic quality and is tolerant of the type of change envisaged,
- **Medium** is defined as a landscape with a Local Plan designation or one that is valued by local people as contributing positively to the character of their area, and one that has the capacity to accommodate a degree of the type of change envisaged and,

- **High** is defined as a landscape protected by a regional or national designation and/or widely acknowledged for its value and a landscape with distinctive character that would be altered by the type of change envisaged.

6.34 Magnitude of landscape change is described using the following terms,

- **Low** is defined as just perceptible long term change in components of a landscape or more noticeable temporary and reversible changes,
- **Medium** is defined as clearly perceptible long term changes or loss of important features in a character area but which result in only relatively subtle changes in character; or changes in a small part of a character area which will have a clear effect on the immediate locality. Clearly perceptible change in setting to a neighbouring character area which is sufficient to influence its own character, and
- **High** is defined as clearly perceptible changes, for example the loss of features which make an essential contribution to a character area, or the introduction of new large-scale features in to a character area where these are not typical, or change exerted by an overriding influence on a neighbouring character area.

6.35 Significance of Landscape Effect

6.351 The Significance of Landscape Effects is judged using Table 1

**Table 1 Significance of landscape effects**

		Magnitude of change		
		Low	Medium	High
Sensitivity of receptor	Low	<i>Negligible</i>	<i>Minor</i>	<i>Minor</i>
	Medium	<i>Minor</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Moderate</i>
	High	<i>Minor</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Major</i>

*Key to Table 1*

**Negligible** Not significant

**Minor** Mitigation should be explored but the impact should be a consideration of only limited weight in the judgement

**Moderate** Every effort should be made to mitigate the impact and if moderate residual impacts remain these should feature in the balance of considerations

**Major** As Moderate, however if residual major effects remain these should carry considerable weight in the decision



## **6.4 Visual Impact Methodology**

### **6.41 General**

6.411 Visual impacts relate to the effects on the existing visual amenity and the impact on Receptors such as residents, workers, and tourists etc. who use the site at key viewpoint locations. Effects on visual amenity, as perceived by receptors, are therefore clearly distinguished from, although closely linked to, effects on landscape resources and character.

6.412 Viewpoints 1 to 6 and visual impacts are described in Appendix 1 hla 394 R02. Near distance views are defined as being under 200m from the site, medium distance 200m to 1km and long distance as over 1km.

### **6.42 Photographic Methodology**

6.421 In demonstrating photographic evidence to support Viewpoint descriptions and impact judgements it is important to have a photographic methodology that can be repeated by any other party. As such this LVIA uses the Landscape Institute Advice Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals, 17th September 2019 (see Appendix 6) as the basis for Viewpoint Photography.

6.422 Photographic viewpoints are selected to give typical or representative views from a variety of locations and from near, middle and long distance locations. All Viewpoints are publicly accessible locations in the landscape.

6.423 Each photograph is taken from a height approximately 1.5m (eye level) above ground level.

6.424 The camera used for the viewpoints was a Canon EOS 70D digital single lens reflex camera with a 18-55mm lens on a focal distance of 50. Suppliers of cameras of this type prescribe this as the set-up which most closely resembles the image as seen by the human eye.

6.425 All photographs were taken at a time when views were clear and during the day. These photographs can be used for photomontage presentations although this is not the case with this LVIA.

### **6.43 Visual Baseline**

6.431 Views to the Site were selected by desktop and on Site assessment as the most likely public locations that views of the development might experience a change. As such they demonstrate highest impact or worst case scenario views, as seen 9th September 2020.

### **6.44 Visual Impact Assessment structure**

6.441 All judgements are made by assessing the change in view from the existing baseline visual scenario to the changes brought about by the development proposals. Tables 2 to 4 and Appendix 1 are used to make these judgements. The judgements also consider seasonal variations when leaves are off the trees.

**Table 2 Sensitivity of landscape receptors**

Sensitivity	Visual receptor
High	<i>Viewers with proprietary interest and/or prolonged viewing opportunities and/or who have a particular interest in their visual environment, for example visitors to National Parks, AONBs or Heritage Coasts</i>
Medium	<i>Viewers with moderate interest in their visual environment, for example users of local open space facilities and walkers on footpaths</i>
Low	<i>Viewers with a passing or momentary interest in their everyday surroundings, for example motorists or people at their place of work whose attention is focussed on other activities</i>

**Table 3 Visual impact magnitude**

Visual impact magnitude	Description
Major adverse visual impact or benefit	<i>The proposals would cause a dominant or complete change to the composition of the view, the appreciation of the landscape character, the ability to take or enjoy the view</i>
Moderate adverse visual impact or benefit	<i>The proposals would cause a clearly noticeable change to the the view, which would affect the composition, the appreciation of the landscape character or the ability to take or enjoy the view</i>
Slight adverse visual impact or benefit	<i>The proposals would cause a perceptible change to the the view but which would not materially affect the composition, the appreciation of the landscape character or the ability to take or enjoy the view</i>
Negligible adverse visual impact or benefit	<i>The proposals would cause a barely perceptible change to the the view, but which would not affect the composition, the appreciation of the landscape character or the ability to take or enjoy the view</i>
No change	<i>The proposals would cause no change to the view</i>
Neutral	<i>There would be a change to the view but it is not possible to judge whether this change is an adverse or beneficial impact</i>

**Table 4 Assessment of landscape or visual significance**

Sensitivity of receptor	Major impact or benefit	Moderate impact or benefit	Slight impact or benefit	Negligible impact or benefit	Neutral impact
High	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Not Significant</i>	<i>Not Significant</i>
Medium	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Not Significant</i>	<i>Not Significant</i>	<i>Not Significant</i>
Low	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Not Significant</i>	<i>Not Significant</i>	<i>Not Significant</i>	<i>Not Significant</i>

*Key to Table 4*

**Not Significant** Mitigation should be explored but the impact should be a consideration of only limited weight

**Significant** Every effort should be made to mitigate the impact and if residual impacts remain these should feature in the balance of considerations

## 7.0 Landscape Character and Visual Impacts

7.01 This section describes the judgements made in relation to landscape character and visual impacts, the results are summarised in Table 5.

### 7.1 Local Landscape Character Impacts

7.11 The impact judgements are based upon the baseline description as seen in the 2001 aerial photograph (Figure 1) and how the operations have impacted on this original baseline landscape. The landscape was rural, agricultural countryside at the western edge of the AONB and the tranquility of the local landscape was heavily influenced by the landscape detracting A23 road corridor.

7.12 At a local scale the landscape is judged to be **Medium Sensitivity** as the Site is at the western edge in the High Weald AONB and is significantly detracted by the A23 road corridor located in close proximity. It is also noted that the Operation has been running for 15 years and has become an accepted element within the local landscape baseline condition.

7.13 The Operation has resulted in a small area of the existing agricultural field becoming the recycling compound. Owing to the location of the compound, its necessary recycling heaps and the existing woodland (to the north and west) the workings are visually discretely. As such the change initiated 15 years ago is judged to be just perceptible and short term with the potential to be easily restored to agriculture. Therefore the Magnitude of Landscape Impact is judged to be **Low to Medium Adverse**. As such the Landscape Effect of the operations on the landscape character as seen prior 2005 is judged to be **Minor to Moderate Significance**.

### 7.3 Landscape Character Area Assessment Impacts

#### 7.4 National Character Areas

7.41 Natural England, National Character Area (NCA) 122, the High Weald (see Appendix 2)

7.411 NCA 122 is broad in scale and the impact of the development is judged by assessing landscape character and the relevant Statements of Opportunity (SEOs 1 and 3) as described above. At this scale the operations are an almost indiscernible new element. The Landscape Sensitivity is judged as **High**. The Magnitude of Landscape Impact is judged to be **Low Adverse** since the Operation's inception in 2005 and the Landscape Effect is therefore of **Minor Significance**.

#### 7.5 Regional Character

7.51 High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (MP) 2019-2024 (see Appendix 3)

7.511 The MP is described in Planning Policy chapter above and the judgements are the same as those put forward for the NCA. The Landscape Sensitivity is judged as **High**. The Magnitude of Landscape Impact is judged to be **Low Adverse** since the Operation's inception in 2005 and the Landscape Effect is therefore of **Minor Significance**.

## 7.6 County Landscape Character Areas

- 7.61 Landscape Character Assessment of West Sussex, Land Management Guidelines, HW4 High Weald Fringes October 2003 (see Appendix 4).

HW4 High Weald Fringes offers a county scale description which is more focussed than the NCA and the HWMP although its descriptions are also broad in scale. The operations are in accordance with the Land Management Guidelines described in the LCA and would be perceived as an indiscernible incremental new element that would have little impact at this scale. As such the following judgements are made. The Landscape Sensitivity is judged as **Medium to High**. The Magnitude of Landscape Impact is judged to be **Low Adverse** since the Operation's inception in 2005 and the Landscape Effect is therefore of **Minor Significance**.

## 7.7 District Landscape Character Areas

- 7.71 The Site is located in the Mid Sussex District Council Landscape Character Assessment November 2005, LCA 10 High Weald Fringes (see Appendix 5).

- 7.72 LCA 10 High Weald Fringes offers a district scale description which is more focussed than the national, regional and county scales although its descriptions are also broad. As such the operations are in accordance with the Land Management Guidelines described in the LCA and would be perceived as an indiscernible, incremental new element that would have little impact at this scale. As such the following judgements are made. The Landscape Sensitivity is judged as **Medium to High**. The Magnitude of Landscape Impact is judged to be **Low Adverse** since the Operation's inception in 2005 and the Landscape Effect is therefore of **Minor Significance**.

## 7.8 Landscape Character Conclusion

- 7.81 In conclusion at national, regional, county and district scales it is judged that the Operation has had **Minor Significance (Adverse)** since 2006 and after planting would be established. At a local scale it is judged that the Operation has had **Minor to Moderate Significance (Adverse)** since 2006 and **Minor Significance (Adverse)** after planting would have established.

## 7.9 Visual impacts (see Figure 9, Table 5 and Appendix 1)

- 7.91 The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), see Figure 9, shows that there are very few public views and that these are almost entirely indiscernible, medium to long distance views where the operations have no influence on the visual composition and enjoyment of the High Weald. There are no views in from the west or north as the woodland planting screens views in. The ZTV shows an open area to the east but only near and middle distance views from the privately owned agricultural fields exist. Whilst the South Downs escarpment and the High Weald ridge lines are visible to the south and east respectively there is no intervisibility.
- 7.92 Of the 6 Viewpoints it is noted that five Viewpoints (1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) have almost entirely indiscernible views as described above and Viewpoint 6 from the South Downs (Devils Dyke) has no view.
- 7.93 Viewpoint Sensitivities are re-iterated as follows. The Viewpoints include: one Viewpoint 4 which is judged to be **Low** Sensitivity; two Viewpoints which are judged to be **Medium** Sensitivity; two Viewpoints which are judged to be **Medium to High** Sensitivity; and one Viewpoint (which has no view) which is judged to be **High** Sensitivity.
- 7.94 It is judged that the operations are judged to be impacting on Viewpoints 1 to 5 as **Negligible Adverse** and Viewpoint 6 as **No Change**. As such it is judged that the development would be **Not Significant** for all Viewpoints at completion.

## 7.10 Other potential Viewpoint Receptors

7.101 There are unlikely to be residential dwellings visually impacted by the Operations on Site although those on the northern side of Park Farm may have obscured partial views from windows oriented towards the Site when there are no leaves on trees.

## 7.11 Other considerations

7.111 There would be no increase in lighting and there would be no change in judgements with regard to seasonal change.

## 7.12 Cumulative Impact

7.121 Cumulative impacts are judged as **Not Significant**.

## 7.13 Landscape Strategy (see Table 5 and Appendix 1)

7.131 Landscape Strategy proposals include the following.

- New landforms shaped to follow the existing (and pre-2005) contours and field pattern to predominantly obscure and screen views of the Operation including the recycling heaps and associated machinery.
- New indigenous species mix planting to strengthen and blend the new earthworks in to the existing landscape, to strengthen biodiversity and to screen the lorries and other traffic accessing the Site. The new planting would include the following species, *Acer campestre* (Field Maple), *Alnus glutinosa* (Alder), *Carpinus betulus* (Hornbeam), *Cornus sanguinea* (Dogwood), *Crataegus monogyna* (Hawthorn), *Fagus sylvatica* (Beech), *Ilex aquifolium* (Holly), *Ligustrum Vulgare* (Wild Privet), *Prunus spinosa* (Blackthorn), *Quercus robur* (Oak), *Rosa canina* (Dog Rose), *Sorbus aucuparia* (Rowan), and *Viburnum opulus* (Guelder Rose).
- New meadow grass seed meadow mixes including a standard general purpose meadow mixture, (Emorsgate EM2 or similar) and a pollen rich grass seed mix (Emorsgate ER1F or similar).

**Table 5, Landscape character and visual impacts summary**

	Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of impact judgement, visual or landscape character during Operation	Significance of impact	Mitigation	After planting establishment impact/significance
<b>Landscape Character Impact</b>					
<b>Landscape Character Area Descriptions</b>					
Local landscape character	Medium	Low to Medium Adverse	Minor to Moderate Significance	<i>Landscape strategy:</i> New landforms with indigenous plantain to screen the Site, enhance local planting and biodiversity.	Minor Significance
Natural England, National Character Area (NCA) 122, the High Weald 2013	High	Low Adverse	Minor Significance	<i>Landscape strategy:</i> New landforms with indigenous plantain to screen the Site, enhance local planting and biodiversity.	Minor Significance
High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019-2024	High	Low Adverse	Minor Significance	<i>Landscape strategy:</i> New landforms with indigenous plantain to screen the Site, enhance local planting and biodiversity.	Minor Significance
West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Landscape, Land Management Guidelines, Landscape Character Assessment of West Sussex, Landscape Character Area HW4 High Weald Fringes 2003	Medium to High	Low Adverse	Minor Significance	<i>Landscape strategy:</i> New landforms with indigenous plantain to screen the Site, enhance local planting and biodiversity.	Minor Significance
Mid Sussex District Council Landscape Character Area 10 High Weald Fringes 2005	Medium to High	Low Adverse	Minor Significance	<i>Landscape strategy:</i> New landforms with indigenous plantain to screen the Site, enhance local planting and biodiversity.	Minor Significance
<b>Viewpoints Impact</b>					
<b>Viewpoint 1:</b> From PRow 16CR (Footpath) 1km north east of the Site. GPS ref: Lat 51.011063, Long -0.179872. Photographic Height: 101m AOD.	Medium to High	Negligible Adverse	Not Significant	Not required	N/A
<b>Viewpoint 2:</b> From PRow 16CR (Footpath) 900m north west of the Site. GPS ref: Lat 51.11063, Long -0.181377. Photographic Height: 100m AOD.	Medium to High	Negligible Adverse	Not Significant	Not required	N/A
<b>Viewpoint 3:</b> From Broxmead Lane 990m south east of the Site. GPS ref: Lat 50.001803, Long -0.182722. Photographic Height: 90m AOD.	Medium	Negligible Adverse	Not Significant	Not required	N/A
<b>Viewpoint 4:</b> From A23 access looking east towards Site located 180m east. GPS ref: Lat 51.006768, Long -0.196991. Photographic Height: 98m AOD.	Low	Negligible Adverse	Not Significant	Not required	N/A
<b>Viewpoint 5:</b> From Park Farm Cottages housing estate 550m south of the Site. GPS ref: Lat 51.001980, Long -0.194436. Photographic Height: 85m AOD	Medium	Negligible Adverse	Not Significant	Not required	N/A
<b>Viewpoint 6:</b> From the car park at Devils Dyke approximately 12km south of the Site. GPS ref: Lat 50.885833, Long -0.212159. Photographic Height: 215m AOD	High	No Change	Not Significant	Not required	N/A

## 8.0 Conclusions

### 8.1 General

8.11 This LVIA has assessed landscape character and visual impacts and put forward a Landscape Strategy to soften the Recycling Operation which has been running since 2005. The landscape Strategy includes a new landform to follow the existing local topography and field shape with an aim to blend sympathetically with the local High Weald character. The native species planting proposals would further obscure and screen the operations and enhance local habitat biodiversity.

### 8.2 Landscape Character Impact

8.21 In conclusion at national, regional, county and district scales it is judged that the Operation has had **Minor Significance (Adverse)** since 2006 and after planting would be established. At a local scale it is judged that the Operation has had **Minor to Moderate Significance (Adverse)** since 2005 and **Minor Significance (Adverse)** after planting would have established. The sensitively designed new landform and the new native planting proposals would incrementally enhance the existing local High Weald character, further obscure and screen the operations and enhance biodiversity.

### 8.3 Visual Impact

8.31 The ZTV shows that there are very few public views and that these are almost entirely indiscernible medium to long distance. The Operation has no influence on the visual composition and enjoyment of the High Weald. There are no views in from the west or north as the woodland planting screens views in. The ZTV shows an open area to the east but this is for near and middle distance views from the private agricultural fields only. Whilst the South Downs escarpment and the High Weald ridge lines are visible from the Operational Site there is no intervisibility.

8.32 Of the 6 Viewpoints it is noted that 5 have almost entirely indiscernible views as described above and 1 Viewpoint (from Devils Dyke on the South Downs) has no views.

8.33 It is judged that the Operation has had a **Negligible Adverse** impact on 5 Viewpoints and resulted in **No Change** to Viewpoint 6 as it has no view. As such it is judged that the development has been **Not Significant** for all Viewpoints since 2006 would be **Not Significant** after the proposed landform would have been implemented and the planting would have established.

### 8.4 Other potential Viewpoint Receptors

8.41 There are unlikely to be residential dwellings which have been visually impacted by the Operations on Site and these residents have been living with this as a visual baseline condition for 15 years.

### 8.5 Other considerations

8.51 There would be no change in judgements with regard to night time lighting nor seasonal change.

8.52 The Operation is short term and easily reversible ie the landscape could be restored to its pre-2005 agricultural landscape.

### 8.6 Cumulative Impact

8.61 Cumulative impacts are judged as **Not Significant**.

### 8.7 Planning policy

8.71 The Operation and the proposed Landscape Strategy would be strongly aligned with the landscape related planning policy.

## 9.0 Final Statement

- 9.1 The Operation has become an accepted visual element that has influenced the landscape character since its inception in 2006. The Landscape Strategy proposals for the new landform and indigenous planting would incrementally enhance the existing local AONB landscape character, it would further obscure and screen the operations and it would enhance biodiversity.
- 9.2 At national, regional, county and district scales it is judged that the Operation has had Minor Significance (Adverse) since its inception in 2005 with the same judgement when new landform implementation and planting would be established. At a local scale it is judged that the Operation has had Minor to Moderate Significance (Adverse) since 2006 and there would be a Minor Significance (Adverse) after the proposed Landscape Strategy would be established.
- 9.3 Whilst the operations have altered the landscape character at a local scale they are a necessary sustainable business located in close proximity to the significantly landscape detracting A23 which lessens sensitivity. Furthermore they have had a Not Significant visual impact. It is also noted that the Ancient Woodland, the trees, and the associated biodiversity are located outside of the working Site area. As such the operations and proposed Landscape Strategy would be strongly aligned with the landscape related planning policy.
- 9.4 Therefore there are good grounds with regard landscape character and visual impact for the Operation to be allowed to continue, the Enforcement Notice to be removed and the Certificate of Lawful Development WSCC/070/019 to be reconsidered with a view to granting Consent.