



Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

*Bartons Road,
Havant*

December 2015



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REVISION HISTORY

Rev.	Date	By	Details
A	2.12.15	AG	Addition of references to Heritage Statement
B	15.12.15	AG	Minor amendments to planning policy

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The terra firma Consultancy was appointed in March 2015 to carry out a landscape and visual impact appraisal for land at Bartons Road, Havant to support the development of the land as housing.
- 1.2. This document provides an impartial assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the proposals.
- 1.3. The objectives of the landscape and visual impact appraisal are as follows:
 - To identify and describe the elements and characteristics of the landscape within the study area;
 - To systematically evaluate potential effects of the proposed development on the character and quality of the physical landscape, the character of available views and visual amenity; and
 - To influence the design process, recommending measures to mitigate adverse effects (if necessary) and potential enhancements.
- 1.4. The report describes the following:
 - Site location;
 - Planning policy context;
 - Scope and methodology of the study;
 - Proposed development strategy;
 - Landscape baseline, landscape effects, mitigation strategy and residual landscape effects;
 - Visual baseline, visual effects, mitigation strategy and residual visual effects;
 - Conclusions

2. SITE LOCATION

- 2.1. The site is located in agricultural land on the eastern edge of the town of Havant, south of Bartons Road, within the area identified as Havant / Emsworth Local Gap.

3. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

3.1. Landscape Policy Background and Guidance

- 3.1.1. A study has been made of the relevant policies providing the context for landscape and visual effects at national and local level that apply to the application site and its surroundings. This has been summarised below:

3.2. National policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

Sustainability is a central theme of the NPPF. Paragraph 6 states *'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development'*.

In relation to landscape, sustainability and green infrastructure issues, the NPPF states that the environmental role of the planning system is to protect and enhance the natural environment through the improvement of biodiversity and through positive improvements in quality of the natural and built environment.

Policies within the NPPF aim to minimise adverse effects on local and natural environment, through comprehensive assessment of ecological networks, provision of adequate mitigation where harm cannot be avoided, and the encouragement of opportunities for increased biodiversity.

Specifically, paragraph 9 sets out that development should ‘*move from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature*’, and ‘*improve conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure*’.

The document also states that core planning principles should take into account the character of different areas and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside contribute to and enhance the natural environment and reuse brownfield land where appropriate.

Paragraphs 57, 61 and 64 of the NPPF refer to the requirements for good design:-

57. It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development

61. Securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. [It should] address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

64. 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 and the way it functions.

3.3. Regional level

- 3.3.1 The site lies within the area of Hampshire County Council. The planning policy at this level relates to Mineral and Waste planning only, therefore is not relevant to this development proposal. Refer to the next section for the local level development policy framework.

3.4. Local level policy

3.4.1. Havant Borough Council (HBC) Local Development Framework

The relevant policies of HBC’s gap Development Framework are detailed in the Core Strategy document published in March 2011. As a part of the broader strategy for the area, the ‘Vision for Havant Borough in 2026’ within the Core Strategy document is that ‘it will be widely recognised for its sustainable, innovative and high quality design developments and the stewardship of its natural and built environment’.

Of those policies relevant to the site, a summary follows, with direct quotes where appropriate in italics:

- Policy CS1: Health and Wellbeing

Creating new open spaces located within or close to housing developments that are safe and accessible for children to play, and contributing to the borough’s green infrastructure. Creating opportunities for increased cycling activity for all types of trips; and opportunities for increased footpath use. In doing so, creating and improving linkages within the borough, supported by the design of development, linkage and signage.

- Policy CS8: Community Safety

Engrain community safety into the development process from the beginning, for example well-lit footpaths, cycle ways and roads while minimising adverse effects on designated habitats or the landscape. Maximise, through good design, ‘defensible space’ and natural surveillance.

- Policy CS11: Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough

Development proposals should ensure key landscape and built form principles as set out in the Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment are protected and where possible enhanced. Protection and enhancement to be achieved by appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures (e.g. habitat or water body creation). Nature conservation

designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) need to be paid particular regard, as well as protecting and enhancing as may be appropriate the borough's statutory and non-statutory heritage designations. Development proposals should protect wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors as well as the best and most versatile agricultural land, and maintain undeveloped gaps between the settlements of Emsworth/Havant.

- Policy CS12: Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
Impacts on the Chichester Harbour AONB, and its setting need to be carefully assessed by the development proposals, as well as its appropriateness for the area economically, environmentally and socially. It should conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Chichester Harbour AONB and provides mitigation of any detrimental effects.

- Policy CS13: Green Infrastructure
Development proposals should maintain and manage the network of green infrastructure identified at the sub regional and local levels. It should improve existing green infrastructure where appropriate; and create, where appropriate, new green infrastructure through on site provision or financial contributions.

- Policy CS15: Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk
All development will be required to ensure that there is no net increase in surface water run-off. Priority should be given to incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water drainage, unless it is proven that SuDS are not appropriate. Where SuDS are provided arrangements must be put in place for their whole life management and maintenance.

- Policy CS16: High Quality Design
Development proposals need to demonstrate that the design responds to, draws inspiration from and respects local context including natural and historic features; integrates with the existing local landscape, promotes biodiversity and wildlife. Development proposals should contribute to the improvement of the public realm close to the development particularly sites close to town, district and local centres and other priority regeneration areas by using high quality hard and soft landscape material and street furniture.

The Havant Borough Council Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to provide detailed information that supplements Policy CS16 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy, to raise the standard of design across the Borough and set out what the Council expects developers to deliver in terms of the design of new developments and how the distinctive character and qualities of the Borough should be respectfully improved and enhanced through development.

In addition to the core strategic policies there are development management policies that complement the strategic policies with locally relevant detail. Policies related to landscape are summarised as follows with direct quotes in italics:

- Policy DM8: Conservation, Protection and Enhancement of Existing Natural Features
Development proposals should protect and enhance local habitats and landscape distinctiveness e.g. natural features such trees, woodlands, hedgerows, soils, streams, stream corridors, springs, ditches or ponds and protect them from damage, destruction and deterioration in quality. New landscape works should integrate successfully with the local environment and existing natural features. Finally, development proposals should protect the attractiveness and visual amenity of all green open spaces that contribute to the identity of the borough.

3.4.2 Havant Borough Council Local Plan (Allocations) (Adopted 2014)

This document presents a number of policies directly related to the site, part of which has been identified as a Preferred Housing Allocation within it.

The policies related to the site are summarised as follows:

- Policy AL1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

A positive approach will be taken by the council that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

- Policy AL2: Urban Area Boundaries and Undeveloped Gaps between Settlements
Planning permission will be granted for development within the undeveloped gaps between settlements defined in Policy CS11.9 of the Core Strategy providing that it: maintains the separate identity of settlements.

3.4.3 The Formation of Strategic and Local Gaps in Havant Borough (Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd for Havant Borough Council, 2008)

This study examined the function, form and extent of local gaps and tested potential housing sites within the gaps for possible extensions to the edges of settlements that would not harm the function of the gaps. Site UE13 (the application site), which extended south to the A27, was considered in this study. The study recommended that the majority of the site was not suitable for urban extension as it is '*essential to prevent the coalescence of Havant and Emsworth and maintain the separate identities of these settlements*'. The northeast part of the site was found to be suitable for development with the provision of appropriate green infrastructure to the western boundary. This reduced site UE13 has since been allocated for housing under policy EM1 (see above).

3.5. Designations

3.5.1 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

The site lies approximately 1.7km to the north of the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is not significant in the AONB's setting as it is not visible from within the AONB.

3.5.2 Registered Parks and Gardens

There are two English Heritage Registered Parks and Gardens within a 3km radius of the site; Staunton Country Park and Stansted House. There is no intervisibility between either of these sites and the application site and the proposed development would not impact on their settings.

Hampshire County Council's Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens lists gardens of local interest. East Leigh House and Helmsley House to the north of the site are both included on the list though there is no written evidence outlining the significance of the 2 gardens.

3.5.3 Tree Preservation Order

Tree Preservation Order (TPO No.1928) is in place covering part of an existing planting strip comprising a small clump of mature, native trees in the centre of the existing arable fields (possibly remnants of a former field boundary) as well as two specimen Oak trees (*Quercus spp.*).

3.6 Summary of implications for proposals

- 3.6.1 Thus, this is a site allocated by policy where housing development can be accommodated assuming adequate, appropriate and comprehensive mitigation measures in terms of landscape and green infrastructure are proposed and implemented to contextualise the new built form.

4 CHARACTER AND DESIGN CONTEXT

4.1 Landscape character assessment

There are 2 levels of landscape character assessment that cover the application site: national and district.

4.2 National level: Natural Character Areas (Natural England)

At national level the site lies within the National Character Area (NCA) Profile 126: South Coast Plain. Key characteristics of this NCA are:

- Landform is dominated by the low relief of Tertiary sands, silts and clays that overlie the chalk
- The range of fertile soils throughout the area combined with the flat terrain and favourable climatic conditions result in high quality agricultural land.
- The rivers crossing the plain locally form wide alluvial floodplains.
- Southward facing streams, which are locally referred to as 'rifes', also cut through the lower plain.
- The lower coastal plain is relatively treeless and entails a typically homogenous landscape of large fields with few hedgerows or trees. The lower coastal plain has few trees or hedgerows and drainage ditches, wire fences or low banks are more usual as field boundaries.
- Fields throughout the lower coastal plain tend to be large and arable.
- The lower coastal plain is dominated by suburban villages and extensive seaside towns
- There is very little undisturbed land within the NCA as it covers the large urban areas of Southampton and Portsmouth and the arterial route of the A/M27 runs the length of it.

4.3 District level: Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment (HBTLSA) 2007

The site lies within the Landscape Character Type (LCT) B: Lowland settled wooded farmland and Landscape Character Area (LCA) 21: Southleigh forest. LCTs are generic areas sharing broadly similar characteristics. LCAs are geographically specific units of landscape each with an individual sense of place. Key characteristics of LCT B and LCA21 are summarised below:

- The landform gently slopes down from Comley Hill to the north in a southerly and westerly direction, with the upper levels forming part of Southleigh Forest and Hollybank Wood and the lower slopes becoming more open with the designed parkland to the south of Southleigh House and the open arable landscape to the west
- Underlying geology is London Clay with periglacial drift deposits of Head found in a band to the north and to the south. River terrace deposits align along the southern boundary; soils to the north overlying the London clay and periglacial deposits are composed of slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acidic but base rich loamy soils, this have produced a range of poorer grade agricultural land ranging from Grade 3 to Grade 4. Further to the south west, the soils are loamy with a naturally high water content producing fertile plains (grade 1) under arable production

- A habitat mosaic adjoins the woodland at the southern edge and extends to the east with grassland adjoining a large patch of arable land. There is a small area of residential development associated with this mosaic-providing habitat through gardens.
- The patch of arable land is large, with some commercial buildings on its south eastern edge
- The arable land is bordered by improved grassland which is associated with a thin strip of broadleaved woodland that runs up to the larger patch of woodland in the north
- This is one of the few areas in the Borough where the sparseness of the historical settlement pattern survives with only few later additions, and contains a number of important listed buildings
- Small regular parliamentary type fields define the historic landscape in the northwest corner and eastern quarter of the LCA. Recent hedgerow loss in both areas has degraded this historic landscape although where field boundaries survive the character is still traceable
- The central area retains the designed parkland character associated with Southleigh House
- South of East Leigh House the historic landscape is defined by medium sized regular parliamentary type fields. However, extensive boundary loss has degraded this character and it is hardly recognisable in the current landscape
- The 16th century timber-framed and thatched house of 'East Leigh', at the junction of Southleigh Road and Eastleigh Road is one of the very rare surviving examples of the early local vernacular building tradition of the Borough
- To its north, though of somewhat later date, the small cluster of flint and brick buildings at Home Farm demonstrate the later vernacular building materials of this area, including the decorative use of tabular flint in the Victorian period
- Southleigh Park retains a number of flint and brick ancillary buildings including stables and a model dairy, which together comprise a fine group, though their setting has been seriously compromised by the modern tinted glass office building to the north
- Line of gentlemen's houses built in the early 19th century within parkland estates, following the enclosure of parts of the Forest of Bere
- Interesting group of buildings focussed on Home Farm now constitutes one of the rural hamlets in the Borough
- The entrance to the sand quarry is busy however the good quality boundary vegetation filters views reducing the impact
- Road located along the wood's northern boundary is busy and detracts from the tranquil quality within adjacent areas
- The accessibility to this LCA is mixed, with the Hollybank Wood accessible with numerous footpaths and the Sussex Border Path. The parkland area of Southleigh House is private. Further to the west, the large arable fields are inaccessible as well as the mixed range of fields to the east
- The woodland provides an enclosed landscape with a variety of vegetation types, including a high density of holly, areas of coppice and yew
- Eastleigh Road due to its thick hedgerows is predominantly enclosed, while further to the north views along the elevated Bartons Road focus down across the landscape to the A27 (T) and beyond. Farmsteads are seen as individual clusters within this open rural scene
- Hollybank Wood is a prominent feature

Landscape strategy and key guidelines:

- The landscape strategy is conserve and enhance the local character
- Encourage the use of field margins for ecological benefits by providing habitat through hedgerows and land that is not cultivated for farming
- Retain, manage and improve the parkland character of Southleigh House
- Retain the historic setting for Southleigh House and associated buildings within this rural landscape
- Avoid urbanisation of area with lighting, road details and sight lines
- Maintain the scale and size of farm settlements at Locks Farm and Home Farm

- Avoid urbanizing trends i.e. close boarded wooden fencing, high brick walls, outside lighting and railings

4.4 Summary of implications for proposals

It is important to recognise and protect the key characteristics of, and promote guidelines and strategies for LCA21.

4.5 Design guidance

4.5.1 Havant Borough Council Borough Design Guide, Supplementary Planning Document 2011

Havant Borough Council Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides detailed information that supplements Policy CS16 of the Havant Borough Core Strategy, to raise the standard of design across the Borough, set out what the Council expects developers to deliver in terms of the design of new developments, and how the distinctive character and qualities of the Borough should be respectfully improved and enhanced through development.

4.5.1 PUSH (Partnership for Urban South Hampshire) Quality Places Design Charter

Each local authority in PUSH has signed a Design Charter, which commits the authorities to creating quality places. The Design Charter outlines the principles that should underpin the leadership and decision-making processes during planning for development.

A review of the above guidance documents has been undertaken and aspects relevant to the site and proposals have been taken on board. These are summarised in the section 5 of this study.

4.6 Summary of implications of policy and designations for proposals

4.6.1 The key points that should be addressed in the development of the proposals are summarised as follows:

- The design quality of the built development proposals
- The boundary treatment between the development site and the remaining agricultural land to the east and south
- The 'internal' landscape design context of the housing development in terms of sustainable green infrastructure linkages to existing landscape features and the incorporation of the TPO trees within the core of the site

5 PROPOSALS AND DESIGN EVOLUTION

5.1 Development Strategy

5.1.1 Following the collation of all available landscape related planning guidance, previous data, surveys and the field work undertaken for the landscape and visual impact assessment, a draft landscape strategy for the development of the site is proposed, which aims to address points raised in the findings of the study.

5.1.2 The following specifically landscape related points have been addressed in the design of the strategy:

- The retention and protection of the existing TPO trees and landscape surrounds
- The need to create robust landscape boundaries along the eastern and southern borders of the new development, creating a strong edge to the countryside gap
- Retaining existing and adding new planting to the northern boundary adjacent to the listed East Leigh House, to limit intervisibility

- The creation of contextualised, sustainable green infrastructure linkages around, within and throughout the development, connecting existing landscape features within and surrounding the proposed site

5.1.3 These principles are set out in the explanatory 'Development Landscape Strategy' plan included in this appraisal at *Figure 16*.

6 SCOPE OF STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

6.1 Scoping of the study

- 6.1.1 The scope of the study was established as appropriate in June 2015, in consultation and agreement with Landscape Officer Michelle Good of Havant Borough Council.
- 6.1.2 The geographical scope of the landscape baseline included the site itself and areas within its immediate surrounds likely to be impacted by the proposals.
- 6.1.3 The landscape character of the wider area, as described by landscape character assessments carried out at national and district level, has been reviewed and used as context, however the character of the site and immediate setting as assessed by The terra firma Consultancy is described in further detail in this study.
- 6.1.4 The scope of the visual baseline included a photographic survey, with photographs of the site taken from publicly accessible viewpoints, chosen to represent a range of distances and directions from the site, out to a radius of approximately 3km within a defined zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV). The locations of viewpoints are shown and annotated photographs included in this report (*refer to figures 5-14*). It must be noted that the site is not physically visible from any point outside approximately a half kilometre radius and the ZTV diagram is misleading in this regard.

6.2 Methodology Guidance

- 6.2.1 This study has been undertaken in a systematic fashion based on the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' 3rd Edition (Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and The Landscape Institute, 2013), referred to in this report as GLVIA3 and 'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland' (The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002).

6.3 Desktop research

- 6.3.1 The desktop survey included the review of Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photography, landscape character assessment documents and related planning policy, as well as the development strategy and available survey data.

6.4 Method statements

- 6.4.1 In order to carry out a robust photographic survey, the geographical extent of the site's visibility was first determined by creating and studying a GIS-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). Potential viewpoint locations were identified to allow visibility within the zone to be checked in the field. A photographic record of representative views from publicly accessible places was taken to illustrate the visibility of the site.
- 6.4.2 Photograph locations are plotted on an Ordnance Survey map base (*refer to Figure 5*).
- 6.4.3 The photographic survey was undertaken in late spring, meaning that deciduous vegetation was lacking leaf cover and provided minimum screening, demonstrating 'worst-case' visibility. Seasonal changes in screening resulting in leaf cover would therefore be favourable compared to the survey results.
- 6.4.4 Photographs were taken using a Nikon digital SLR camera with an 18-55mm variable zoom lens, set at a focal length of 35mm, which is accepted as being equivalent to a fixed 50mm lens on a non-digital SLR, which is in turn generally accepted to most closely represent views seen with the naked eye. Photographs taken using a wide-angle focal length setting (in order

to show close-up foreground views) or where a zoom setting was used to show more detail in a distant view have been highlighted.

6.5 Evaluation criteria

6.5.1 The evaluation criteria for both the landscape and visual effects are set out in *Appendix 1*.

6.6 Limitation and assumptions

6.6.1 Limitation and assumptions of the study can be summarised as follows:

- Distances of viewpoints were approximated from the centre of the site;
- Where no direct view of the site was available, direction may have been estimated.
- Visibility from individual private buildings or land has not been verified, but representative viewpoints have been selected to indicate likely residential views where appropriate.
- Ground heights were estimated from OS mapping where topographic information was not available.

7 LANDSCAPE BASELINE CONDITIONS

7.1 Description of existing site and setting

7.1.1 The proposed development site comprises agricultural farmland within the heart of which are two groups of protected (TPO) trees

7.1.2 The site sits within the area characterised locally as the Havant / Emsworth Local Gap.

7.1.3 To the north of the site the boundary is formed by the private garden fence lines of Helmsley House and East Leigh House, plus a short section of car park in the garden centre grounds. The entire length of the interface between the two private houses is heavily planted with both upper canopy strategic tree cover and under-storey hedgerow planting. The western section of this boundary line is completed by a boundary fence and off-site, soft landscape planting [Silver Birch (*Betula spp.*) and Scots Pine (*Pinus spp.*) plus an under-storey of mostly Ivy (*Hedera spp.*) and bramble (*Rubus spp.*)] that segregates the site from the extension car park of the adjacent garden centre. A public footpath runs north-south between the garden centre car park and East Leigh House and across the site.

7.1.4 The northern-most part of the western boundary comprises a section of fence line that defines the interface between the site and the garden centre car park and storage/delivery area. Within the garden centre site the fence line is 'softened' by similar planting effects mentioned in 7.1.3 above. The remainder of the western boundary is defined by a zone of soft landscape buffer planting (planted approximately 14 years ago by the site's current owner to help mitigate the adverse visual affects of the residential development to the west of the site). The 20m wide planting zone includes an upper canopy tree mix of Alder (*Alnus spp.*), Willow (*Salix spp.*), Birch (*Betula spp.*), Poplar (*Populus spp.*), Oak (*Quercus spp.*) and Ash (*Fraxinus spp.*) with an under-storey mix of Dogwood (*Cornus spp.*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus spp.*), Maple (*Acer spp.*), Hazel (*Corylus spp.*) and Dog Rose (*Rosa spp.*). A short section of informal public footpath connects the site to the existing residential development along the southern boundary line to the garden centre.

7.1.5 To the south and the east the proposed site sits adjacent the remainder of the open agricultural farmland making up the core section of the 'local gap'

7.1.6 The proposed access point to the site is situated immediately adjacent the eastern boundary fence of Helmsley House (running north to south) in the northwest corner of the 'local gap'. Access and egress will be directly from and to Bartons Road. The boundary along the northern edge of the gap (between it and the line of Bartons Road) is defined by a grass verge, tarmac footpath and a gappy, mixed vegetation hedgerow. Along the eastern section the 'hedge' comprises mostly low-level brambles (*Rubus spp.* - 1m or less), which then merge into a poorly managed/maintained hedge comprising mostly Hawthorn (*Crataegus spp.*) and

bramble (*Rubus spp.*) (maximum 4m height). There are open views for pedestrians (and at certain sections for passing motorists) to the south, towards the coastline, across the 'local gap'.

7.2 Individual elements and features of the existing site and setting

The landscape baseline has been established by describing the following site features and elements and how they contribute to the character of the site and setting:

7.2.1 Topography

- 7.2.1.1 The site slopes gently, approximately 5-10m, from the northwest corner of the site to the south and east (*refer to Figure 2*). At a wider scale, the landform slopes gently southwards towards the sea.

7.2.2 Soils

- 7.2.2.1 The Agricultural Land Classification Map London and South East Region (ALC007), as produced by Natural England published in 2010, shows the site as lying within Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land. DEFRA's MAGIC website (which is undated but assumed to be up to date) also shows the site classed as Grade 2 and Grade 3 land.

In practice, however, the soil, which is medium clay over a shallow gravel seam at approximate depth 1m, has for many years been used for arable cereal and combinable break crops typically grown on land classified as MAFF grade 3. It is not suitable for the higher value root or vegetable crops normally grown on MAFF Grade 1 and 2 soils.

7.2.3 Vegetation and ecology

- 7.2.3.1 The majority of the site is agricultural farmland with a clump of mature, TPO'd oak trees to the western edge and a small clump and pond on the eastern boundary. Both these clumps were possibly historically associated with East Leigh House. There are tree belts to the northern boundaries and a young woodland to the south western edge. Separate arboricultural and ecology surveys accompany this application.

7.2.4 Access and circulation

- 7.2.4.1 Currently, the only access is for agricultural farm vehicles and pedestrians. The latter are able to access the site along a public footpath to the western boundary. A field gate for vehicular access is located on East Leigh Road in the south eastern corner of the wider field.

7.2.5 Historic landscape character (of the site and surroundings)

- 7.2.5.1 Although currently open agricultural fields, OS County Series Maps (Sussex) of the late 1800s show the area to have been a more intimate series of parcelled farming land strips bordered and defined possibly by hedgerows.
- 7.2.5.2 East Leigh House, Bartons Road, Havant PO9 5NA (to the north of the proposed development site) is a Grade II Listed property dating back to the 1820s (listed by English Heritage in 1952). The property is separated from the proposed development site by a relatively dense and tall native specie hedgerow planting (under-storey) and a taller tree canopy cover that follows the low-level, fence boundary line. To the west lies the line of the public footpath from Bartons Road to the proposed site; to the north is Bartons Road and the eastern boundary is defined by the adjacent property, Helmsley House.
- 7.2.5.3 A Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment has been carried out by Wessex Archaeology. This report confirms that the significance of the listed East Leigh House is enhanced by its setting both within its garden and, less importantly, the wider agricultural landscape, which offers opportunities for understanding and appreciating its past function, and its position in the organisation of the landscape during the 19th century. The report recommends the retention of existing boundary planting as well as new planting between the garden and the site.

7.3 Landscape Character of the Site and Setting

- 7.3.1 The wider published landscape character assessments have been described above. To give a more detailed understanding of landscape character of the site and immediate vicinity, The terra firma Consultancy has divided the area into four sub-landscape character areas (local LCAs - A through D), which have the potential to be impacted on by the proposed development. These form the landscape character receptors against which the proposals are assessed. Refer to *Figure 4* for the extent of these.
- 7.3.2 It is important to set the LLCAs in the context of the wider landscape character assessment that has been described in Section 4 above.
- 7.3.3 **Local Landscape Character Area A (LLCA A): Agricultural Farm Land**
- 7.3.3.1 The area of the development covers approximately one third of the land area of the entire field. The remaining two thirds (approx.) of the agricultural farmland will share a boundary with the proposed development and thus, inter-visibility.
- 7.3.3.2 LLCA A is largely typical of the wider landscape character area, sharing a number of key characteristics; topography, soils, land use and elevated views from Bartons Road. The area is partly enclosed by tree belts (north western part) and contains significant mature trees around which the arable crops are planted. The northern and north western parts are influenced by the neighbouring development and busy Bartons Road with the eastern and southern parts more tranquil and rural. The eastern and southern parts of the LLCA form part of the undeveloped gap between Havant and Emsworth (Havant Borough Council policy AL2).
- 7.3.4 **Local Landscape Character Area B (LLCA B): Residential Development**
- 7.3.4.1 The residential development borders the proposed site along the south-western edge. This area is a modern housing development with a suburban feel, and the northern section set around a central open space. There is limited tree cover within the estate and a substantial strip of young woodland planting on the boundary with the site, creating an inward-looking development.
- 7.3.5 **Local Landscape Character Area C (LLCA C): Commercial (Light Industrial) Development**
- 7.3.5.1 The commercial development immediately adjacent the west and northwest boundaries of the proposed development comprises a garden centre warehouse building and surrounding car park. Further to the west beyond the garden centre buildings is a much larger area of commercial/light industrial development that cannot be seen directly from the site or *vice-versa*.
- 7.3.5.2 Apart from a shared boundary there is no direct physical connection between the two sites at present (and none currently proposed for the future). However, inter-visibility will be an inevitable consequence if the proposed development goes ahead.
- 7.3.5.3 The line of the shared boundary is defined by a high-level metal railing, security fence planted on the LLCA C side with low quality, intermittent tree planting and under-storey shrub planting.
- 7.3.6 **Local Landscape Character Area D (LLCA D): Rural Development**
- 7.3.6.1 There are three clearly identified areas of what might be considered 'rural development': to the north immediately adjacent the site in terms of East Leigh and Helmsley Houses (and surrounding grounds/gardens); directly to the east across the 'local gap' and remaining agricultural farm land along East Leigh Road; and to the southeast across the 'local gap' and remaining agricultural farm land along East Leigh and South Leigh Roads. The houses vary from small to very large and are generally set in generous-sized gardens, often robustly planted with trees and shrubs, particularly East Leigh House and Helmsley House to the north of the site and Southleigh Park House to the east.

7.3.6.2 Apart from a shared boundary there is no direct physical connection between the LLCA and the site at present (and none currently proposed for the future). Pedestrian access is possible across the agricultural farmland but there are no defined, direct footpath linkages.

7.3.7 Landscape Character Area 21 Southleigh Forest (HBTLSA)

7.3.7.1 The site shares some characteristics of this LCA. Of particular relevance are the mention of elevated views from Bartons Road and the erosion of the field pattern south of East Leigh House through loss of hedgerows. The extent to which the proposed development affects the wider LCA will be assessed below.

8 APPRAISAL OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Landscape effects are considered through the assessment of the sensitivity of the receptor (value and susceptibility to change) and the magnitude of the landscape effect (size or scale, duration and reversibility) as described in the evaluation criteria (*Appendix 1*). Local landscape character areas (LLCAs) have been identified as receptors and the effects on each have been assessed.

8.1 Local Landscape Character Area A (LLCA A): Agricultural Farm Land

8.1.1 *The sensitivity of this landscape receptor is assessed as being MEDIUM for the following reasons:* The eastern part of LLCA A (outside the site boundary) has value as open countryside separating Havant from Emsworth (Havant Borough Council Planning Policy AL2); the LLCA contains trees protected under TPO controls; the northern part of the LLCA forms the setting of a listed building (although intervisibility is limited); the LLCA is currently representative of the wider landscape character area; the western part of the LLCA is influenced by the urban edge and, thus, has a low susceptibility to the type of change proposed; the proposed changes will have a greater impact upon the open countryside boundaries of the eastern and southern margins, the latter being relatively tranquil compared to the western and northern parts that are affected by the road and the urban edge.

8.1.2 *The magnitude of the landscape effect is assessed as being MEDIUM ADVERSE for the following reasons:* The proposed development constitutes a permanent loss of a small section of open countryside and a minor alteration to the overall LLCA. High quality design built-form will be introduced set in a high quality, sustainable urban landscape context surrounded by native landscape screening, creating improved habitat and biodiversity and a strongly vegetated urban edge. All TPO'd trees will be retained, protected, appropriately managed and maintained to ensure their longevity. The geographical area affected is limited to an area of land that does not adversely affect the overall composition of the defined Local Gap. The characteristic elevated view south from Bartons Road is retained.

8.1.3 The MEDIUM sensitivity of the landscape receptor combined with the MEDIUM ADVERSE magnitude of change, result in a **MODERATE ADVERSE landscape effect on LLCA A.**

8.2 Local Landscape Character Area B (LLCA B): Residential Development

8.2.1 *The sensitivity of this landscape receptor is assessed as being LOW for the following reasons:* The modern housing area is densely developed with no distinct character. The rural landscape context and setting of LLCA B is not strongly apparent as it is separated by the substantial strip of young woodland planting on the eastern boundary of LLCA B.

8.2.2 *The magnitude of the landscape effect is assessed as being LOW ADVERSE for the following reasons:* The proposals constitute an extension to the settlement by introducing quality design built form set in a high quality, sustainable urban landscape context surrounded by native landscape screening creating improved habitat and biodiversity. A substantial width of the planting belt to the eastern edge will be retained, protected, appropriately managed and maintained to ensure its longevity.

8.2.3 The LOW sensitivity of the landscape receptor combined with the LOW ADVERSE magnitude of change result in a **MINOR ADVERSE landscape effect on LLCA B.**

8.3 Local Landscape Character Area C (LLCA C): Commercial (Light Industrial) Development

- 8.3.1 *The sensitivity of this landscape receptor is assessed as being LOW for the following reasons:* The area has an industrial character with few positive attributes and limited quality tree and shrub planting.
- 8.3.2 *The magnitude of the landscape effect is assessed as being LOW ADVERSE for the following reasons:* The proposals constitute an extension to the settlement by introducing quality design built form set in a high quality, sustainable urban landscape context surrounded by native landscape screening creating improved habitat and biodiversity. The connection with adjacent open farmland will be lost.
- 8.3.3 The LOW sensitivity of the landscape receptor combined with the LOW ADVERSE magnitude of change result in a **MINOR ADVERSE landscape effect on LLCA C.**

8.4 Local Landscape Character Area D (LLCA D): Rural Development

- 8.4.1 *The sensitivity of this landscape receptor is assessed as being HIGH for the following reasons:* The area is generally positive in character, containing valued buildings in wooded or parkland settings. The gardens of East Leigh House and Helmsley House are included on the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.
- 8.4.2 *The magnitude of the landscape effect is assessed as being LOW ADVERSE for the following reasons:* The proposed changes would be permanent and would result in the erosion of the rural setting of part of the area including the listed East Leigh House and Helmsley House, though the site plan has been developed to include a generous open space to the south of East Leigh House. The character of the eastern and southern parts of LLCA D would be unaffected.
- 8.4.3 The HIGH sensitivity of the landscape receptor combined with the LOW ADVERSE magnitude of change result in a **MODERATE ADVERSE landscape effect on LLCA D.**

8.5 Landscape Character Area 21 Southleigh forest (HBTLSA)

- 8.5.1 *The sensitivity of this landscape receptor is assessed as being HIGH for the following reasons:* LCA 21 is valued for its SINC sites and listed buildings and the landscape strategy is to conserve and to enhance, indicating a generally positive character.
- 8.5.2 *The magnitude of the landscape effect is assessed as being LOW ADVERSE for the following reasons:* The proposed development will not change any key characteristics of LCA 21 and the majority will be unaffected.
- 8.5.3 The HIGH sensitivity of this landscape receptor combined with the LOW ADVERSE magnitude of change result in a **MODERATE ADVERSE landscape effect on LCA 21.**

8.6 Mitigation strategy and residual landscape effects

- 8.7 The majority of the mitigation has been designed into the proposals and is described within Section 5 of this report. Additional proposed mitigation measures will include the following:
- 8.8 Soil stripping and storage will be carefully managed to enable reuse on the site where possible; topsoil and subsoil will be stripped and stored separately to avoid contamination; and soil storage bunds will be carefully shaped to ensure soils are free draining and not compacted.
- 8.9 The use of 'no-dig' construction techniques where tree root protection zones will be affected.
- 8.10 Method Statements of contractual operations to ensure best practice ensues across all elements of the development process.
- 8.11 The introduction of a comprehensive landscape management and maintenance plan to ensure the long-term sustainability of all areas of the proposed development.
- 8.12 **Summary of potential landscape effects**
- 8.13 Effects on the landscape receptors are summarised as follows:
- Major and major / moderate adverse landscape effects are deemed to be significant effects and there are no landscape receptors affected to this degree.

- As would be expected the greatest effect will be on LLCA A which includes the site. The positive benefits of creating a strong landscape edge to the settlement mean the overall effect on LLCA A is reduced to MODERATE ADVERSE. The more sensitive character areas of LLCA D and LCA 21 will also be subject to a MODERATE ADVERSE change. The effect on LLCAs B and C, which are less sensitive is MINOR / ADVERSE.

9 VISUAL BASELINE CONDITIONS

9.1 Representative viewpoints and site visibility

- 9.1.1 Viewpoint locations – Figure 5 indicates the location of photographic viewpoints, showing their approximate distance from the site. Viewpoints have been chosen as representative of the likely view or specific, i.e. showing a particular view. Viewpoints are colour coded to show which where in the surrounding area the site is visible from, either fully or partly.
- 9.1.2 Viewpoint photographs – annotated photographs found in Figures 6 to 15 illustrate these views and describe the viewpoint location and nature of view. Where viewpoints are of a similar nature these are grouped. Where viewpoints are indicated on Figure 5 as having no view of the site these are not described in the following section.

10 APPRAISAL / ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

10.1 Visual effects

- 10.1.1 Visual effects are considered through the appraisal of the sensitivity of the receptor (value and susceptibility to change) and the magnitude of the visual effect (size or scale, extent, duration and reversibility) as described in the evaluation criteria (Appendix 1). The baseline categories have been used as a basis for the appraisal. Where the site is not visible, these viewpoints are not considered in the appraisal.

10.2 Visual effects from the north over 1km

- 10.2.1 The site is not visible from any viewpoint at this distance due to landform, topography and intervening vegetation.

10.3 Visual effects from the west over 1km

- 10.3.1 The site is not visible from any viewpoint at this distance due to landform, topography and intervening built-form.

10.4 Visual effects from the south over 1km

- 10.4.1 The site is not visible from any viewpoint at this distance due to landform, topography and intervening vegetation/built-form

10.5 Visual effects from the east over 1km

- 10.5.1 The site is not visible from any viewpoint at this distance due to landform, topography and intervening vegetation/built-form

10.6 Visual effects from the north within 1km

- 10.6.1 *The sensitivity of the visual receptor is assessed as being HIGH for the following reasons:* Viewers are likely to include pedestrians, cyclists and motorists along Bartons Road and using the footpaths and the residents/visitors of/to the two adjacent detached properties (East Leigh and Helmsley Houses).
- 10.6.2 *The magnitude of the visual effect is assessed as being LOW ADVERSE for the following reasons:* The access road and eastern part of the development would be visible when passing the access road along Bartons Road. New planting and landform along the eastern edge of the proposed development would screen views from further east along Bartons Road. It could be viewed from the overflow car park of the adjacent garden centre development and glimpsed by pedestrian traffic from the link footpath leading off the Bartons Road and partially

from the two properties, East Leigh House and Helmsley House that comprise the remaining part of the northern boundary. The carefully considered landscape contextual design combined with the high quality design of the built form will provide a high degree of mitigation in relation to close up views from north.

- 10.6.3 The HIGH sensitivity of the visual receptors combined with the LOW ADVERSE magnitude of change result in a **MODERATE ADVERSE visual effect on these viewpoints**, with direct views along the access road unaffected by the growth of new planting over time.

10.7 Visual effects from the west within 1km

- 10.7.1 *The sensitivity of the visual receptor is assessed as being MEDIUM for the following reasons:* Viewers are likely to include walkers on the public footpath within the site and visitors to the garden centre. Views from the footpath already contain elements of the urban edge, making them less sensitive than they might be in a more rural setting.

- 10.7.2 *The magnitude of the visual effect is assessed as being HIGH ADVERSE for the following reasons:* The proposed development would be partially visible from the garden centre car park area, through existing vegetation along the boundary fence, and would be openly visible from the public footpath running along the entire western boundary, blocking views across the open field. The site cannot be seen from within the existing adjacent housing development due to the density of the bund planting separating the two sites. The carefully considered landscape contextual design combined with the high quality design of the built form will provide a high degree of mitigation in relation to views from the western section of the site.

- 10.7.3 The MEDIUM sensitivity of the visual receptors combined with the HIGH ADVERSE magnitude of change result in a **MAJOR / MODERATE ADVERSE visual effect on these viewpoints**, unaffected by the growth of new planting over time.

10.8 Visual effects from the south within 1km

- 10.8.1 *The sensitivity of the visual receptor is assessed as being MEDIUM for the following reasons:* Viewers are likely to be road users, nursery school users and a small number of residents.

- 10.8.2 *The magnitude of visual effect is assessed as being LOW ADVERSE for the following reasons:* Views are only possible from a short section of East Leigh Road. Built form is already visible. The carefully considered landscape contextual design will ensure close up views from the south will be subject to a small change, with glimpses of new houses initially.

- 10.8.3 The MEDIUM sensitivity of the visual receptors combined with the LOW ADVERSE magnitude of change result in a **MODERATE / MINOR ADVERSE visual effect on these viewpoints**, reduced to Neutral following 5-10 years of growth of the proposed boundary planting..

10.9 Visual effects from the east within 1km

- 10.9.1 *The sensitivity of the visual receptor is assessed as being MEDIUM for the following reasons:* Viewers are likely to be road users and a small number of residents.

- 10.9.2 *The magnitude of the visual effect is assessed as being LOW ADVERSE for the following reasons:* Views are only possible from a short section of East Leigh Road. Built form is already visible. The carefully considered landscape contextual design combined with the high quality design of the built form will provide a high degree of mitigation in relation to views from the northern section of the site.

- 10.9.3 The MEDIUM sensitivity of the visual receptors combined with the LOW ADVERSE magnitude of change result in a **MODERATE / MINOR ADVERSE visual effect on these viewpoints**, reduced to Neutral following 5-10 years of growth of the proposed boundary planting.

11 MITIGATION STRATEGY

11.1 Mitigation measures

- 11.1.1 The majority of the mitigation has been designed into the proposals and is described within Section 5 of this report, however the passage of time will increase the screening provided by new vegetation, provided good management is maintained. For the purposes of this appraisal growth time is considered over a 5-10 year period and residual effects are given above.

11.2 Summary of visual effects

- 11.2.1 Views of the proposed development are limited to close-range views in the immediate site area. Views from the south and east would be screened once vegetation has grown. Views from the footpath within the site would inevitably be affected the most (major / moderate) and the view from Bartons Road directly down the access road would be affected in a moderately adverse way.

12 CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1.1 If designed and implemented to the highest design standards suggested in terms of contextualised housing stock, green infrastructure and more general landscape design, the effects of the loss of this relatively small section of agricultural farmland will be relatively limited in all aspects, confined to the immediate site itself.

13 REFERENCES

- National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
- Havant Borough Council Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011
- Saved policies from 2005 Havant Borough Council Local Plan
- Havant Borough Council Emerging Local Plan (Allocations) – October 2013
- Emsworth Design Statement (July 2008)
- Havant Borough Design Guide SPD (December 2011)
- Strategic and Local Gaps, Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd for Havant Borough Council (2008)
- Natural Character Areas, Natural England: (2012)
- The Landscape Institute and IEMA 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' 3rd Edition (2013)
- Agricultural Land Classification mapping, Natural England: (2010)
- MAGIC website
- Havant Borough Council Website

Figure 1: Site location

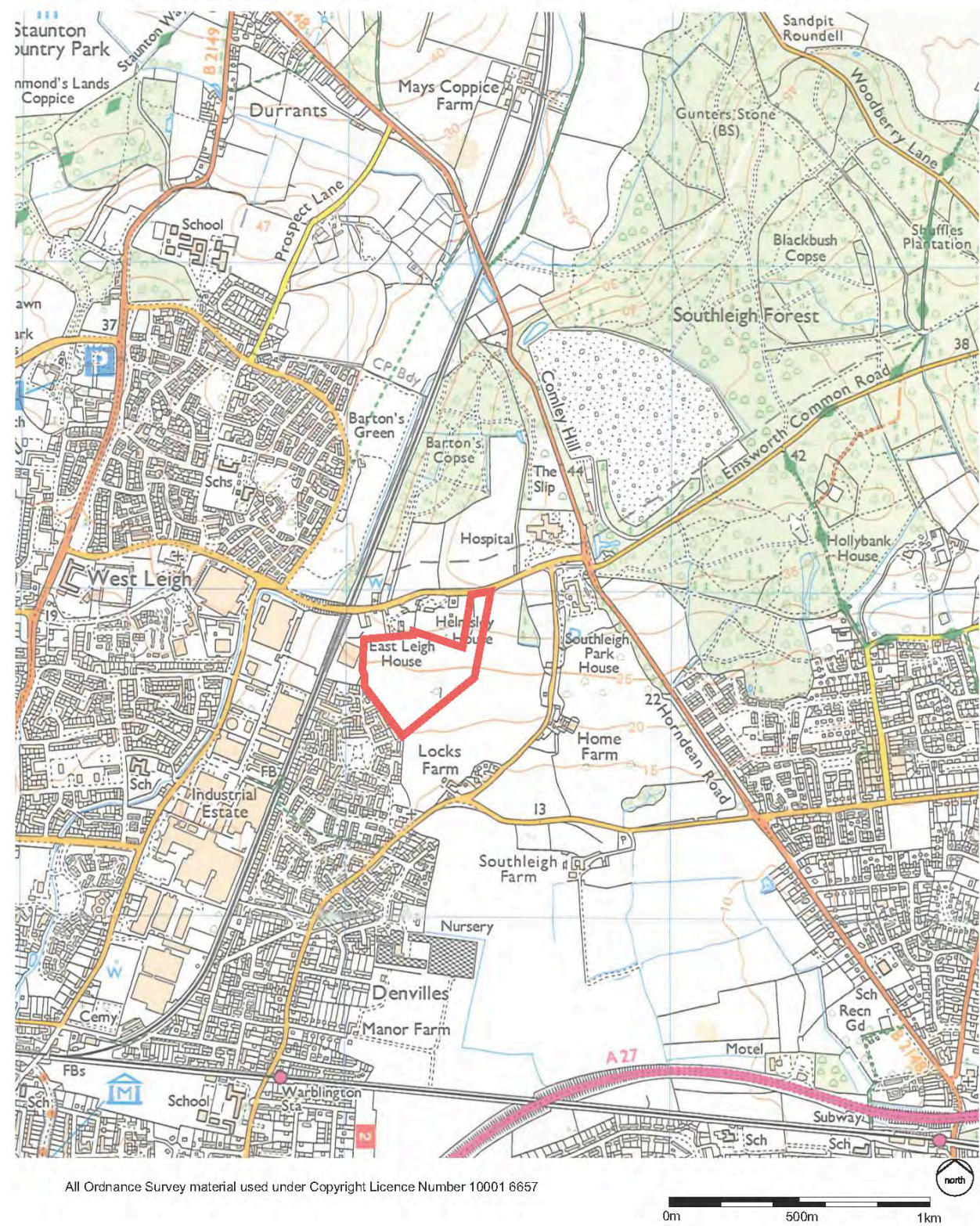


Figure 2: Topography

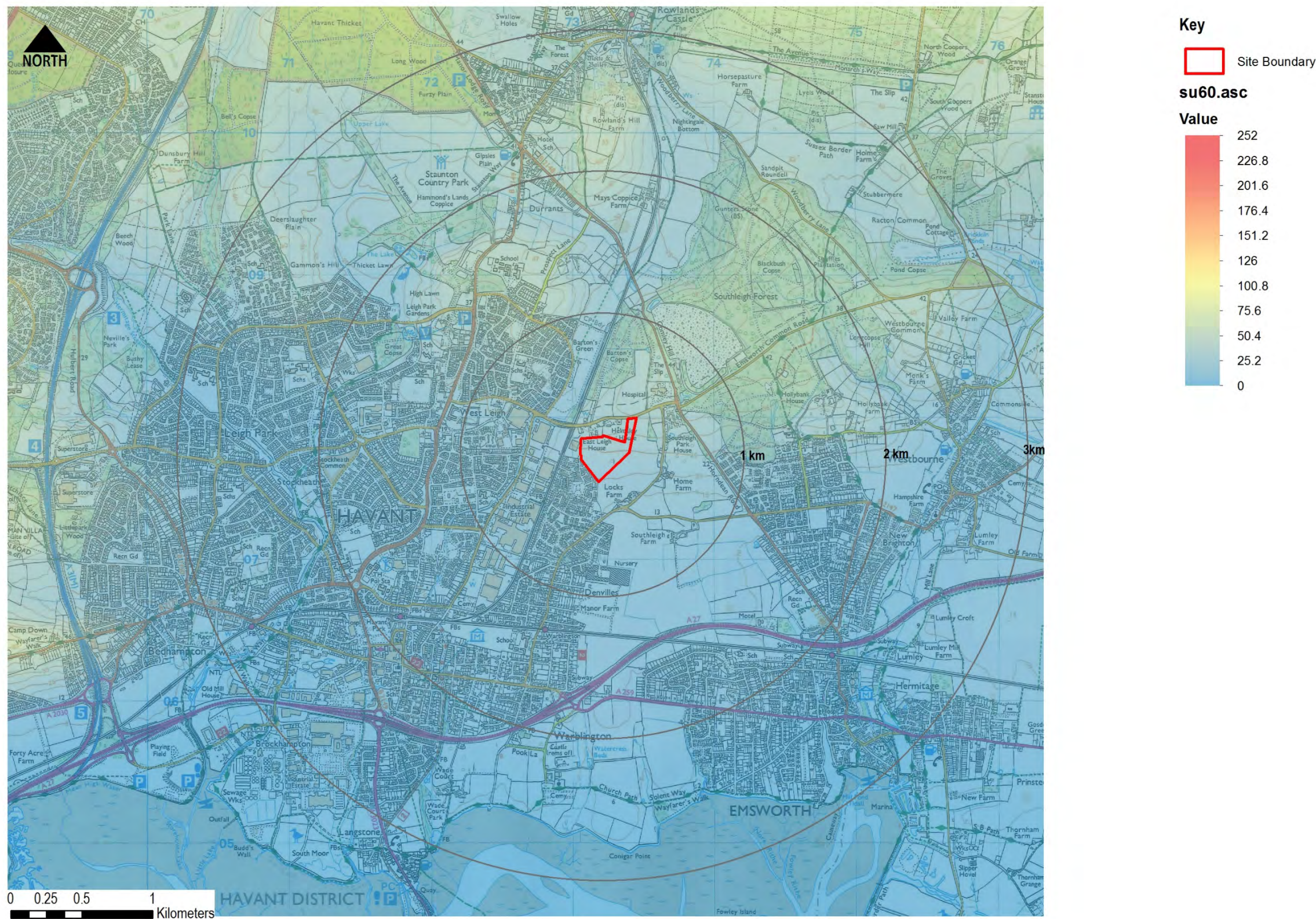
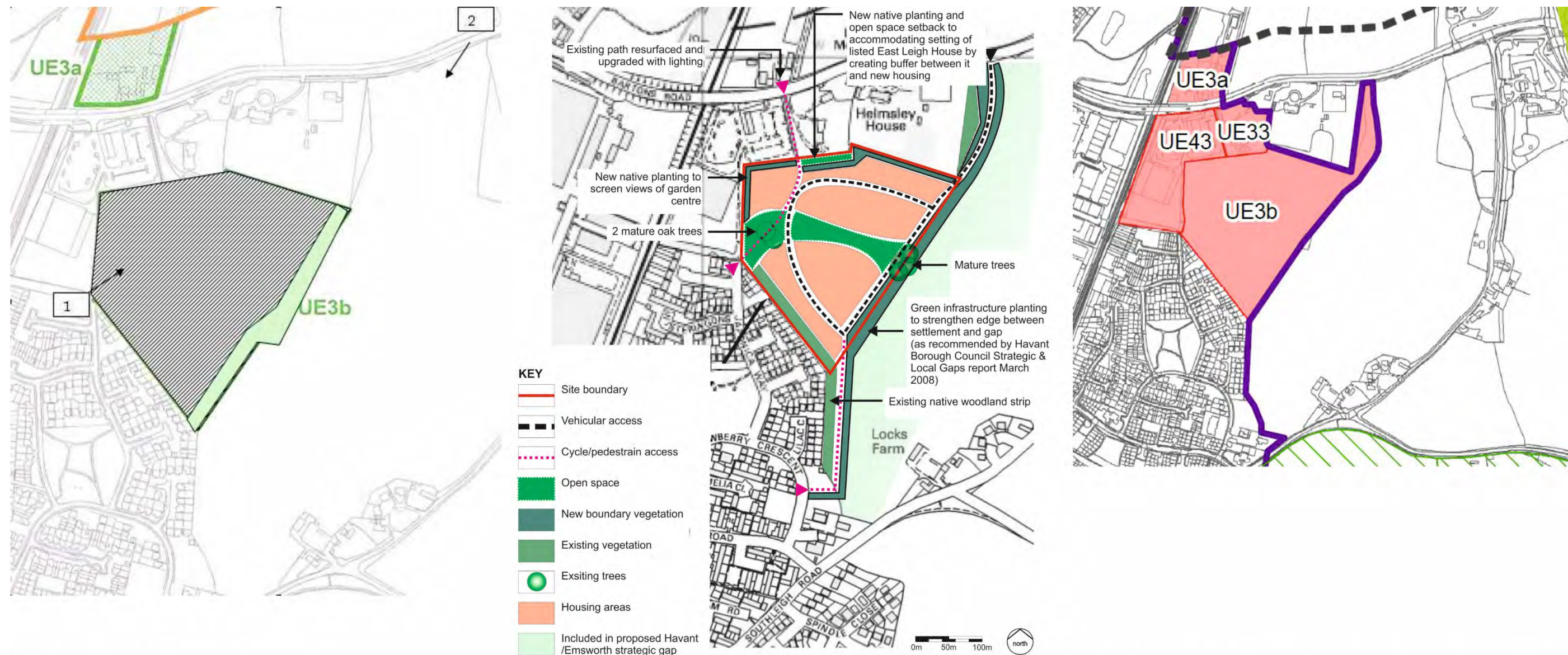


Figure 3: Landscape planning background



Strategic and local gaps study 2008

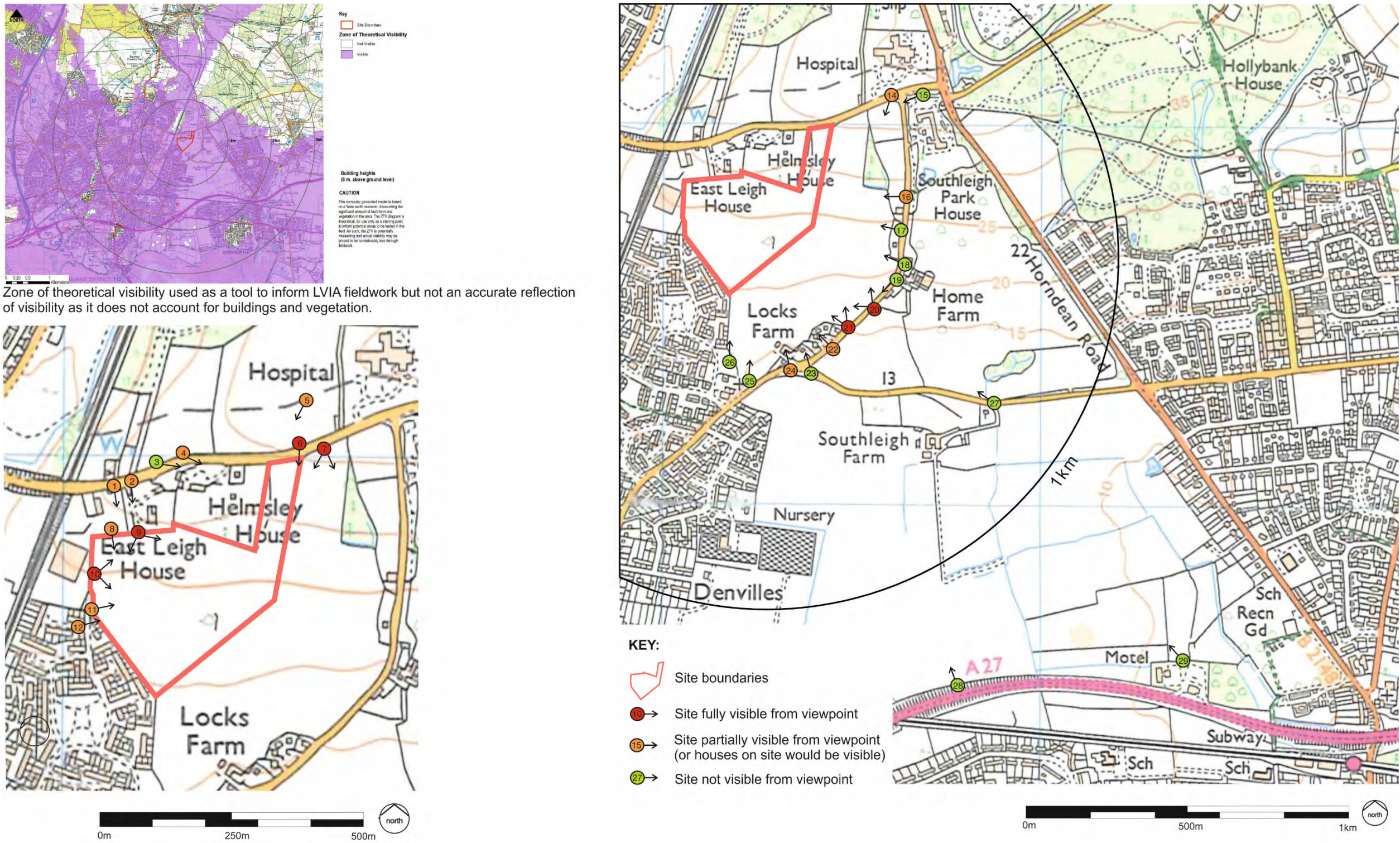
Conceptual development plan presented to inform site allocations 2013

Site allocation as Local Plan (Allocations) Adopted Version July 2014

Figure 4: Landscape character



Figure 5: Viewpoint locations



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Figure 6: Viewpoint photographs



Viewpoint 1: Photo taken on the LHS of the main entrance to the garden centre looking towards the site (in the LH corner only) and the garden centre buildings on the RHS



Viewpoint 2: Taken from the main public footpath running adjacent Bartons Road looking down towards the site along the public access footpath. The steel tubing is the access restrictor at the entrance. In the centre of the photo the open fields of the site can just be seen in the distance



Viewpoint 3: Photo taken from the north side of Bartons Road to depict a significant landscape feature of the exceptionally large specimen Oak (*Quercus* spp.) in the front garden of Longmeadow House immediately adjacent the front garden boundary fence

Figure 7: Viewpoint photographs



Viewpoint 4: Panoramic view (comprising 3 no. photos) taken from a position directly opposite the boundary between Helmsley House & East Leigh House looking towards the east along Bartons Road and around to the northeast across to the newly constructed crematorium grounds



Viewpoint 5: Photo taken from along the roadside within the crematorium site looking towards the southwest across towards the site. Nothing is visible of the site from here other than the tops of the trees that form the boundary margins of the gardens to Helmsley House and East Leigh House



Viewpoint 6: Photo taken from the north side of the Bartons Road carriage way looking south towards the entrance of the site with Helmsley House front boundary hedge and fence line on the RHS

Figure 8: Viewpoint photographs



Viewpoint 7: Panoramic view (comprising 6 no. photos) taken from a position in a gap in the road side hedgerow starting with a view towards the east and panning around to the west and eventually the north side of Bartons Road. The site can be viewed towards the RHS of the second photograph of the panorama



Viewpoint 8: Taken from inside car park of garden centre car park overlooking the site towards the south; 2000mm high spiked metal fence forms the main boundary edge definition with a 3m wide planting bed on the garden centre side of the boundary [planting consists of young Alder (*Alnus* spp.), Birch (*Betula* spp.), and Pine (*Pinus* spp.) with dense Ivy (*Hedera* spp.) ground cover]

Figure 9: Viewpoint photographs



Viewpoint 9: Panoramic view (comprising 7 no. photos) taken from the exit of the access footpath from Bartons Road looking south across the fields from east to west. The taller vegetation on the LHS is the boundary line to the properties on the northern margin (East Leigh House & Helmsley House); within the open field can be seen a single stem mature Oak (*Quercus* spp.) on the far left immediately adjacent the aforementioned boundary line, a small wooded copse towards the centre of the field (3rd photo) and the stand of two specimen Oak (*Quercus* spp.) trees towards the RHS in the main field



Viewpoint 10: Panoramic view (comprising 8 no. photos) taken from a position in line with the north-east-most corner of the garden centre building looking across the site to the east. The green spiked metal railing fence to the LHS is the boundary line of the garden centre car park area (northern site boundary). The single Oak, the small wooded copse and the two specimen Oaks (closest on the RHS of the picture) can all be identified here. The vegetation boundary on the RHS borders the western-most boundary of the site separating it from the new housing development and the garden centre.

Figure 10: Viewpoint photographs



Viewpoint 11: Photo taken looking into the site from a position on the footpath leading into it between the adjacent housing development (western boundary) and the garden centre. The metal tubing is a similar access restrictor to the one mentioned in Photo No.3

Viewpoint 13 not used



Viewpoint 12: Photo taken within the centre of the road in the adjacent housing estate (Forsythia Close) looking west towards the trees defining the site boundary beyond. The photo depicts a typical street scene within the estate. Approximately 90% screening in summer months



Viewpoint 14: Photo taken from the north side of Bartons Road on the RHS of the hospital entrance bell-mouth looking towards the site and the southwest. The site is heavily disguised even in this winter/early spring view by road side vegetation

Figure 11: Viewpoint photographs



Viewpoint 15: Photo taken from the gap in the road junction of Bartons Road and the B2148 looking west towards the site. This depicts much of the typical local road layout and street furniture/signage



Viewpoint 16: Photo taken at another gap in the hedgerow with lower level vegetation in the extended garden of Leigh House looking across the site towards the west where the roof of the garden centre is visible in this winter/early spring view



Viewpoint 17: Photo taken at a point in a gap in the hedge line a short distance to the north of Leigh House along the East Leigh Road. The vegetation in the immediate foreground disguises the site from view



Viewpoint 18: Photo taken looking towards the site from the entrance driveway on the south/west side of East Leigh Road of Home Farm cottages. This depicts a winter view through a hedgerow of varying quality and density on a slight embankment towards the northwest corner of the site. The roof of the garden centre is just visible from this vantage point

Figure 12: Viewpoint photographs



Viewpoint 19: Photo taken looking towards the southwest along East Leigh Road from the same position as No. 18. On the RHS of the photo is the more substantial hedgerow bordering the main line of the open fields



Viewpoint 20: Panoramic view (comprising 4 no. photos) looking towards the northwest corner of the site from a position adjacent the boundary hedge bordering the north side of the East Leigh Road (no footpath at this point on either side of the road). Details similar to picture 21 but slightly more exposed in all areas

Figure 13: Viewpoint photographs



Viewpoint 21: Panoramic view (comprising 2 no. photos) looking across the site towards the northwest corner from a position on the north side of East Leigh Road adjacent a disused farm gate into the open fields. The garden centre can be viewed towards the LHS with the two specimen Oak trees immediately in front of it; the small wooded copse area towards the centre of the photo and the tall vegetation that defines the northern boundary of the site in front of the old houses (East Leigh & Helmsley)



Viewpoint 22: Photo taken on the south side of East Leigh Road through the existing bungalows in Woodleigh Close (on the north side) towards the northwest corner of the site. The roof structure of the garden centre can be viewed (winter only) from this vantage point on the LHS and the large boundary trees of the northern margins can be seen through the gap between the buildings on the RHS



Viewpoint 23: Photo taken at the western end of South Leigh Road (where it joins East Leigh Road; south side footpath) looking to the northwest towards the site on a slight embankment. A glimpse of the houses on the northern boundary of the site can be identified through the winter/early spring vegetation

Figure 14: Viewpoint photographs



Viewpoint 24: Photo taken from a slightly raised section of land from a point marginally to the west of the junction of East Leigh Road and South Leigh Road (south side footpath). The photo looks north through winter vegetation towards the site. Just above the fence line the northern boundary of the site can be seen in the guise of East Leigh House and Helmsley House



Viewpoint 26: Photo taken atop a small mound looking north towards the site in a mini-area of public open space in the adjacent housing estate. Identifies a complete barrier into the site even in early spring/winter



Viewpoint 25: Wide angle photo taken from the footpath adjacent East Leigh Road at a position close to the southern apex of the fields looking north in towards the site but across the nursery playground area

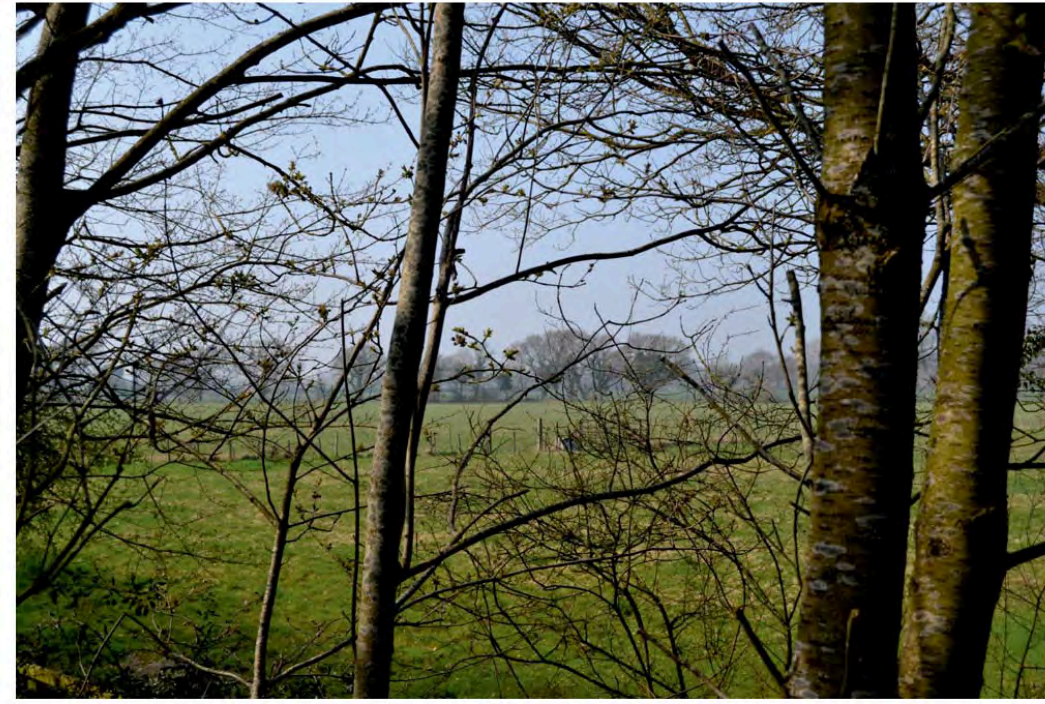


Viewpoint 27: Photo taken from South Leigh Road at the entrance to South Leigh Farm looking towards the northwest and into the site. View is obscured by the roadside hedge and low level vegetation beyond even in winter/early spring

Figure 15: Viewpoint photographs



Viewpoint 28: Typical photo taken in a car travelling within the speed limit from the A27 heading in an easterly direction across towards the site and northwards into the Gap. Nothing can be seen of the site in any tangible sense



Viewpoint 29: Photo taken from a vantage point atop a small embankment defining the northern boundary of a motel and petrol filling station along the A27. The view is towards the northwest and highlights that nothing can be seen of the site from this far south along the A27 main road

Figure 16: Landscape strategy



Figure 17: Landscape proposals plan



APPENDIX 1: LVIA METHODOLOGY

14 EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR LANDSCAPE EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

14.1 Reporting on the landscape baseline

The landscape baseline report should:

- Map, describe and illustrate the character of the landscape by appropriate means;
- Identify landscape based designations and others (conservation, heritage etc.) that may be impacted by the development;
- Identify and describe the individual elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape that contribute to the character;
- Indicate the condition of the landscape;
- Establish the relative value of the landscape as attached to it by society.

- **Landscape receptors**

The landscape receptors need to be identified; these are components of the landscape such as individual elements or features or landscape character areas that are likely to be affected by the scheme. These character areas are as determined by fieldwork (Local Landscape Character Areas; LLCA) or identified in published Landscape Character Assessments at District level or higher as relevant).

Criteria have been set for the selection of LLCAs within likely envelope of influence. The process of identification starts with a study of baseline mapping, describing all within the possible area. For an area to be taken forwards as a receptor it must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Shared boundary with the site;
- Physical connection/s with the site (PROWs, roads, vegetation belts);
- Views of the site (particularly where a view of the site is a key characteristic of the LLCA).

Note: If intervisibility is the only criteria this is considered within the visual assessment through assessment of the effect on representative views.

- **Effect on landscape receptor**

The likely landscape effect is described and for each effect the significance of the landscape effect can be assessed by combining the level of sensitivity of the landscape receptor with the magnitude of the landscape effect.

- **Sensitivity of landscape receptor**

The sensitivity of the landscape or feature of the landscape as a receptor needs to be established. This is dependent on:

- Value: the relative value attached to the landscape by society, either formally or informally. Value can be understood through relevant landscape designations, the use of available landscape character assessments (as a starting point), information on status of features (such as conservation areas, tree preservation orders, cultural and historic associations), recognition of perceptual aspects (scenic beauty or tranquillity), art and literature and material available on local or community interests.
- Susceptibility to specific change: the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequence for the maintaining of the baseline situation, or the achievement of landscape planning policy or strategies.

- **Level of sensitivity of landscape receptor**

The level of sensitivity of a landscape receptor can be defined as high, medium or low using one or more of the following criteria:

High	• High value, with acknowledged or perceived positive character and quality. • Particularly susceptible to change; not able to accommodate proposed development without detrimental consequences to the baseline situation or landscape planning policies and strategies.
Medium	• Moderate value, with acknowledged or perceived positive character and quality that may have been reduced through alteration or degradation of character or features. • Moderately susceptible to change; may be able to accommodate proposed development without detrimental consequences to the baseline situation or landscape planning policies and strategies.
Low	• Low value, without acknowledged or perceived positive character and quality. • Low susceptibility to change; able to accommodate proposed development without undue consequences to the baseline situation or landscape planning policies and strategies.

- **Magnitude of landscape effect**

The magnitude of the landscape effect of the proposals needs to be established. This is dependent on:

- Size or scale: this should take into consideration the extent of the loss of the existing landscape, the proportion of the total extent this represents and the contribution of the element to the character of the landscape; the degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered; and whether the effect changes the key distinctive characteristics of the landscape.
- Extent: consideration of the geographical area over which landscape effects are felt
- Duration: long, medium or short term.
- Reversibility: this is a judgement on the reversibility of a proposal in, say, a generation.

- **Magnitude of landscape effect**

The magnitude of the landscape effect can be defined using one or more of the following criteria. The magnitude can be high, medium, low or nil and can be either adverse or beneficial. This is defined more fully below:

Adverse	High	• Major loss of or alteration to an existing landscape element that may be key to landscape character. • Major loss of or alteration to perceived landscape character as a whole. • Major loss or alteration to key characteristics of the landscape that are critical to its distinctive character. • Large geographical area affected. • Long-term and irreversible effect.
	Medium	• Moderate loss of or alteration to an existing landscape element that may be key to landscape character. • Moderate loss of or alteration to perceived landscape character as a whole. • Moderate loss or alteration to key characteristics of the landscape that are critical to its distinctive character. • Medium sized geographical area affected. • Medium-term and effect that may be partially reversible.
	Low	• Minor loss of or alteration to an existing landscape element that may be key to landscape character. • Minor loss of or alteration to perceived landscape character as a whole. • Minor loss or alteration to key characteristics of the landscape that are critical to its distinctive character. • Small sized geographical area affected. • Short-term and effect that may be reversible.
Neutral	Nil	• No perceptible loss or alteration to existing landscape elements, landscape character as a whole or key characteristics of the landscape.
Beneficial	Low	• Minor beneficial alteration to existing landscape elements, landscape character as a whole or key characteristics of the landscape.
	Medium	• Moderate beneficial alteration to existing landscape elements, landscape character as a whole or key characteristics of the landscape.
	High	• Major beneficial alteration to existing landscape elements, landscape character as a whole or key characteristics of the landscape.

- **Landscape effects and significance**

The landscape effect is a combination of the level of sensitivity of the landscape receptor and the magnitude of the landscape effect, which can be adverse, beneficial or neutral.

Effects are assessed to be significant where they are major or major/moderate and are indicated by shading illustrated in the table below:

		Sensitivity of Landscape		
		High	Medium	Low
Magnitude of landscape effect	High	Major adverse	Major / Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse
	Medium	Major / Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse	Moderate / Minor adverse
	Low	Moderate adverse	Moderate / Minor adverse	Minor adverse
	Nil	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	Low	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial
	Medium	Moderate beneficial	Moderate beneficial	Moderate beneficial
	High	Major beneficial	Major beneficial	Major beneficial

- **Definition of significance**

Major effects are defined to be effects of key importance for consideration in the decision making process and / or of national importance and therefore significant.

Major/Moderate effects are defined to be effects of key consideration in the decision making process and / or of regional or district importance therefore significant.

Moderate effects can be defined to be effects likely to be a lesser consideration in the decision making process and / or of local importance but not significant. Where seen in combination in cumulative assessments, moderate effects could become significant.

Moderate/minor effects can be defined to be effects unlikely to be a consideration in the decision making process and / or of local importance and therefore not significant.

Minor effects can be defined to be effects unlikely to be a consideration in the decision making process and / or of very local importance and therefore not significant.

- **Mitigation and residual effects**

Where landscape effects are judged to be significantly adverse, mitigation proposals are described where possible. The significant residual landscape effects remaining after mitigation are then summarised.

- **EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR VISUAL EFFECTS ASSESSMENT**

0.1. Reporting on the visual baseline

The visual baseline report should:

- Identify the area in which the development may be visible;
- Identify the different groups of people who may experience views of the development;
- Identify representative viewpoints where views will be affected and the nature of those views, including where these are within the site area;
- Identify any recognized viewpoints (known viewpoints in the landscape);
- Identify any views characteristic of the landscape character area;
- Identify any illustrative viewpoints (that might identify a particular effect or issue).

- **Visual receptors**

The visual receptors need to be identified; these are the people within the area who will be affected by the changes in views and visual amenity.

- **Effect on visual receptor**

The likely landscape effect is described and for each effect the significance of the visual effect can be assessed by combining the level of sensitivity of the visual receptor with the magnitude of the visual effect.

- **Sensitivity of the visual receptor**

The sensitivity of the visual receptor needs to be established. This is dependent on:

- Value: the value attached to the particular view (through planning designations, visitor or cultural value).
- Susceptibility to specific change: this is dependent on the occupation or activity of people experiencing the views and the extent their attention or interest is likely to be focused on the on views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations.

Examples of those most susceptible to change are likely to include residents at home, people engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape, visitors to heritage assets where the landscape contributes to the experience and communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area.

Travellers on road, rail and transport routes are likely to fall into a category of moderate susceptibility to change, however where travel involved scenic routes this is likely to increase as awareness of views is heightened.

Those least susceptible include people engaged in outdoor sport or recreation that does not involve or depend appreciation of views and people at their place of work where attention is not focused on their surroundings.

- **Level of sensitivity of the visual receptor**

The level of sensitivity of the visual receptor can be defined as high, medium or low using one or more of the following criteria:

High	• High value within a high quality landscape, or a recognized viewpoint (at any level from local to national). • Visual receptors particularly susceptible to change in general due to a high level of interest in the surrounding landscape.
Medium	• Moderate value within a medium quality landscape. • Visual receptors moderately susceptible to change in general due to a moderate level of interest in the surrounding landscape.
Low	• Low value within a low quality landscape. • Visual receptors with a low susceptibility to change in general due to a low level of interest in the surrounding landscape.

- **Magnitude of visual effect**

The magnitude of the visual effect of the proposals needs to be established. This is dependent on:

- Size or scale: this should take into consideration the scale of change in the view with respect to loss or addition of features in the view and changes to its composition (including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development and the degree of contrast or integration of the proposed development with the existing landscape elements and characteristics) and the nature of the view in terms of duration and degree of visibility.
- Extent: this will vary with different viewpoints and is likely to reflect the angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor and the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development.
- Duration: long, medium or short term.
- Reversibility: this is a judgement on the reversibility of a proposal in, say, a generation.

- **Magnitude of visual effect**

The magnitude of the visual effect can be defined using one or more of the following criteria. The magnitude can be high, medium, low or nil and can be either adverse or beneficial. This is defined more fully below:

Adverse	High	• Major change in view composition resulting from a loss of or alteration to features. • Direct angle of viewing in relation to main activity of the receptor. • Close-range view. • Prolonged exposure to view. • Long-term and irreversible effect.
	Medium	• Moderate change in view composition resulting from a loss of or alteration to features. • Indirect angle of viewing in relation to main activity of the receptor. • Mid-range view. • Moderate exposure to view. • Medium-term and irreversible effect.
	Low	• Minor change in view composition resulting from a loss of or alteration to features. • Peripheral view in relation to main activity of the receptor. • Distant view. • Brief exposure to view. • Short-term and irreversible effect.
Neutral	Nil	• No perceptible change to the composition of the view.
Beneficial	Low	• Minor beneficial change to the composition of the view.
	Medium	• Moderate beneficial change to the composition of the view.
	High	• Major beneficial change to the composition of the view.

- **Significance of visual effect**

The significance of the visual effect is a combination of the level of sensitivity of the visual receptor and the magnitude of the visual effect, which can be adverse, beneficial or of no significance.

Effects are assessed to be significant where they are major or major/moderate and are indicated by shading illustrated in the table below:

		Sensitivity of Receptor		
		High	Medium	Low
Magnitude of visual effect	High	Major adverse	Major / Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse
	Medium	Major / Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse	Moderate / Minor adverse
	Low	Moderate adverse	Moderate / Minor adverse	Minor adverse
	Nil	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	Low	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial
	Medium	Moderate beneficial	Moderate beneficial	Moderate beneficial
	High	Major beneficial	Major beneficial	Major beneficial

- **Definition of significance**

Major effects are defined to be effects of key importance for consideration in the decision making process and / or of national importance and therefore significant.

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Minor effects can be defined to be effects unlikely to be a consideration in the decision making process and / or of very local importance and therefore not significant.

- **Mitigation and residual effects**

Where visual effects are judged to be significantly adverse, mitigation proposals are described where possible. The significant residual visual effects remaining after mitigation are then summarised.

- **APPROPRIATENESS OF ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY (ZTV) ANALYSIS**

It should be noted that the establishment of a ZTV is a potentially misleading exercise, showing an indiscriminate level of visibility using a 'bare earth' scenario, without consideration for vegetation and built form that may often prevent views, and takes no account of the extent of accessible viewpoints.

It is a desktop exercise, a tool to inform the scope of fieldwork that has then to be tested in the field to check the reality of the situation.

A LVIA should be proportional to the nature of the proposals to which it relates and there may be no need to carry out a ZTV exercise. This should be judged on a project-by-project basis, in consultation with the Local Planning Authority if necessary, then agreeing the scope of the study.

