Plot 400, Dunsbury Park, Portsmouth

Landscape and Visual Evidence and Appraisal

Volume 1 Landscape and Visual Evidence - plot 400

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Appendix 1: LVE Methodology
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1. Introduction

1.1. Appointment

1.1.1. The terra firma Consultancy was appointed in April 2025 to provide landscape architectural services to accompany the detailed planning application for the proposed development of Plot 400, Dunsbury Park, Havant. Our services involve the production of a Landscape and Visual Evidence and Impact Appraisal (LVA) which, all in light of the client brief, comprises:

- Developing an understanding of the site and its setting;
- Defining what matters most about the landscape and visual aspects;
- Incorporating these into the best possible development proposals which maximises opportunities and potentials; and
- Minimises and mitigates harm;

1.1.2. terra firma previously worked at Dunsbury, firstly producing landscape plans for the road infrastructure and Hermitage Stream enhancements, and later producing a Visual Framework document for Park Lane, and working with the ecologist to produce a Landscape Open Space and Ecology Strategy.

1.1.3. For the purposes of the planning process the above work is presented in two volumes:

- **Volume 1 Landscape and Visual Evidence** comprises our understanding of the site and its setting and the identification of what is important. This is critical in developing context-appropriate proposals and minimising harm and is the starting point for our work. The design and assessment should not be viewed as a linear process but rather an iterative one, with the identification of potential harm and mitigation informing the design at every stage, along with the work of other disciplines.
- **Volume 2 Landscape and Visual Appraisal** will comprise the appraisal section of the final landscape report which will be completed once the final design is confirmed and will be an impartial assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the final proposals.

1.2. Report structure

1.2.1. Volume 1 is set out as below:

- Introduction; report structure; project brief; site location;
- Policy framework; planning policies; landscape character assessments; planning evidence;
- Landscape elements, qualities, functions and character: description and sensitivities;
- Views: description and sensitivities;
- Summary of emerging key design drivers; constraints and opportunities.
- Appendix 1: Landscape and Visual Evidence methodology
- Appendix 2: Landscape Baseline Table

1.3. Project brief

1.3.1. The brief for the design team is to produce a detailed planning application for the development comprising an industrial building with associated loading yard and car parking. The brief for landscape architectural input is to advise on landscape mitigation measures and set out likely landscape and visual effects.

1.3.2. The proposed development relates to plot 400 as illustrated in Figure 2.

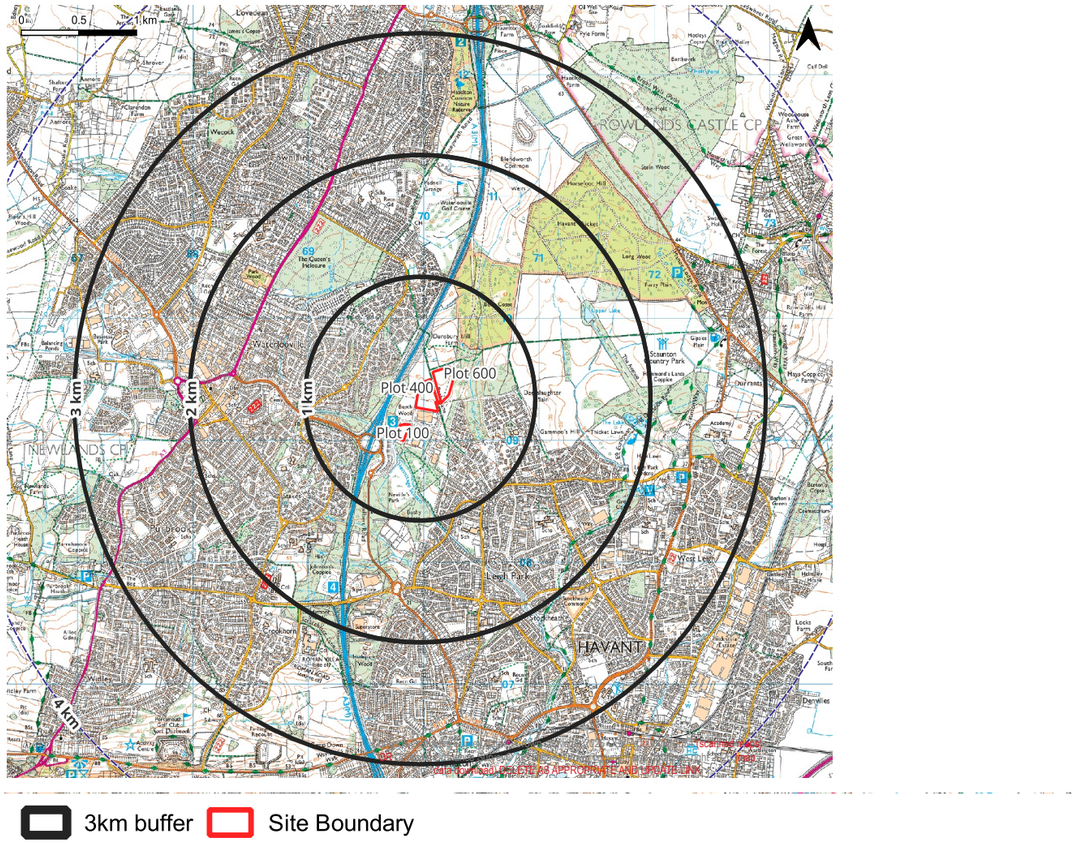
1.4. Site location and scope of study

1.4.1. Dunsbury Park is located between Waterlooville and Leigh Park on the eastern side of the A3 (see Figure 1). Plots 100, 400 and 600 (as shown in Figure 2) are currently undeveloped and are the subject of a separate outline planning submission. The area labelled plot 400 is the subject of this detailed application.

1.4.2. The geographical scope of the landscape baseline is proposed as an approximate 1 km radius around the site (see Figure 2). Focus is on the area east of the A3 due to the strong physical and visual barrier of the road corridor. The landscape character of the wider area, as described in published landscape character assessments has been reviewed and used as context. A detailed character assessment of the site and its immediate setting forms part of this study.

1.4.3. The geographical scope of the visual study is informed by the previous study and includes a computer-generated zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) to demonstrate where there are some areas where landform would block views. On site verification of visibility has been undertaken to establish what is visible in the surrounding area from eye level. The ZTV and site assessment of visibility has been checked during fieldwork from publically accessible viewpoints within the study area and photographs are included to record views towards the site.

Figure 1 - Site location - wider context



2. Policy and guidance framework

2.4.1. Planning policy of relevance to landscape and visual aspects and the Dunsbury Park area are summarised below, along with commentary as to their implications.

2.4.2. European Landscape Convention (ELC)

- The ELC sets out in the preamble the need for 'Acknowledging that the landscape is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in urban areas and in the countryside, in degraded areas as well as in areas of high quality, in areas recognised as being of outstanding beauty as well as everyday areas'.
- The implication is that it is not just the designated areas, but the whole landscape that has many values and that all of them are formally recognised, but landscape matters to, and is valued by, people and provides a context for people's lives.
- This implication applies to all landscapes everywhere and in any condition – land, inland water, inter-tidal, marine, natural, rural, urban and peri-urban, outstanding, ordinary and degraded.

2.1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.1.1. The NPPF confirms that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development and that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Planning policy-making and decision-making should take into account the roles and character of different areas and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services. Paragraph 187 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- *'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)'*
- *'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland'*
- *'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs'*

2.1.2. In paragraph 189 the NPPF states that:

> *'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimize adverse impacts on the designated areas'.*

2.2. South Downs National Park (SDNP)

2.2.1. The site approximately 2km south of the South Downs National Park (SDNP) boundary but with no physical or visual connection to it.

2.3. Havant Borough Core Strategy (2013)

2.3.1. The site is a strategic site allocation, policy CS18. The site is also included in the SHELAA(ED04) and as an allocation in the draft local plan – Building a Better Future Plan - (Allocation 27). The Planning Statement forming part of this application sets out the details of these policies in detail, with landscape-related aspects listed below along with other policies of particular relevance to landscape:

2.3.2. **Policy CS11 Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage** of Havant Borough states planning permission will be granted for development that protects and, where possible, enhances Havant's key landscape, biodiversity, and heritage assets. Proposals near locally designated sites such as SINCs must include appropriate mitigation to safeguard ecological value. Development should prevent habitat fragmentation, support species adaptation to climate change, and integrate land management practices that improve natural features. Partnership working with conservation bodies is encouraged to ensure biodiversity protection and public understanding, particularly near sensitive areas. The applicant's team ecologist will advise on ecology aspects and the interface with landscape.

2.3.3. **Policy CS13 Green Infrastructure** states development will be permitted if it maintains and enhances the green infrastructure network, creates new green spaces where needed, and does not harm its integrity.

2.3.4. **Policy CS18 Strategic Site Delivery** (landscape related):

- The design of the new buildings, particularly their bulk and orientation, will respect and enhance the character of their woodland location outside the built up area
- Park Lane will be enhanced as a leisure route and be provided with a metalled surface for use by cyclists and pedestrians
- Green infrastructure links between Havant Thicket Reservoir and Dunsbury Hill Farm will be enhanced

2.3.5. **Policy DM8 Conservation, Protection and Enhancement of Existing Natural Features** requiring the protection of features such as trees, integrating them into the design and using local landscape materials.

2.3.6. Building a Better Future Plan has a number of policies relating to the protection of existing trees, hedgerows and woodland, BNG of 10 percent minimum, and protection of protected and notable species. Again, the team's ecologist will advise on these aspects. In addition the allocation requirements states there should be landscape buffers to offset development from the public right of way and landscape proposals should be native-led and take into account local distinctiveness and conservation priorities.

2.4. Landscape character assessment

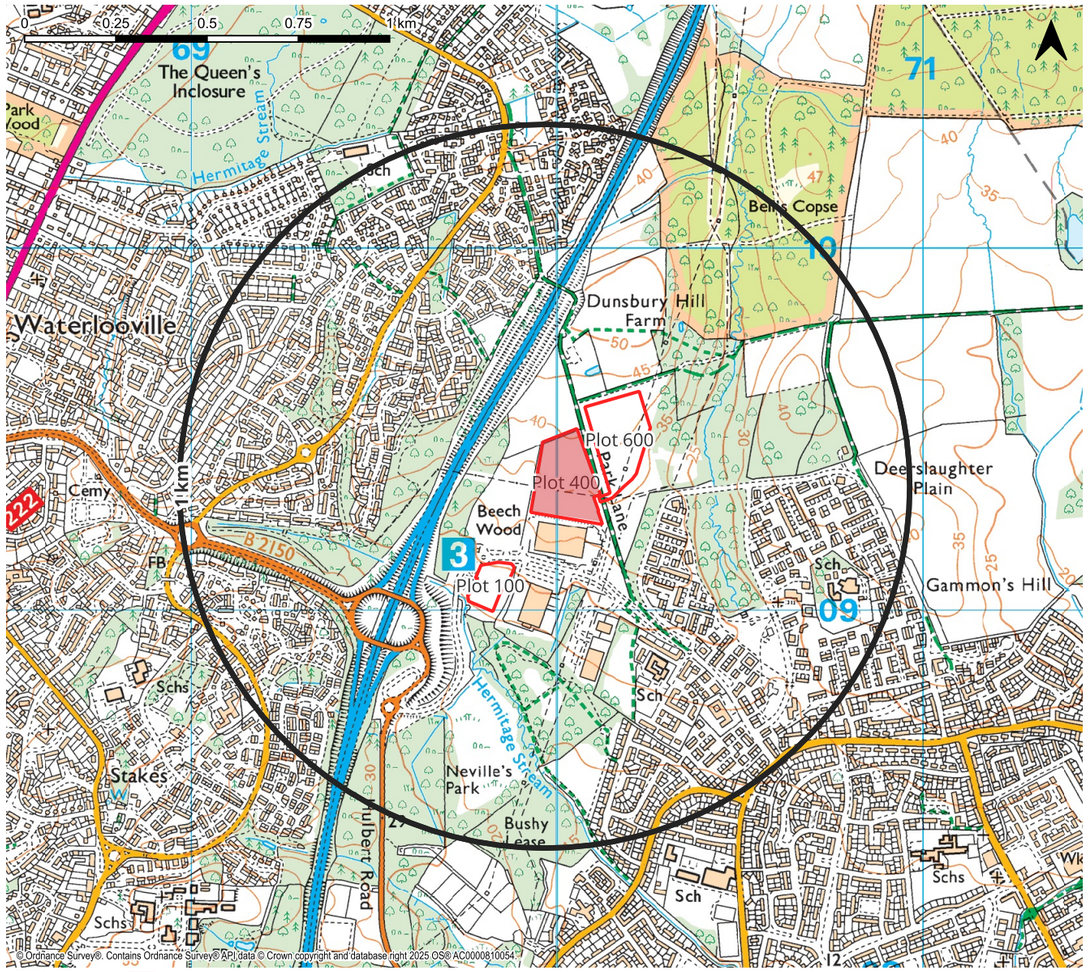
2.4.1. Relevant published landscape character assessments are listed below. These have been reviewed and the relevant key characteristics and guidelines taken into account in section 3 and the table in Appendix 2. The most detailed of these is the Havant Borough study and although it is relatively old it has a good level of detail and identifies valued characteristics as well as detractors and strategies. Therefore we have focussed on this, adding other aspects from the National Character Area (NCA) and Hampshire County, as well as our own observations, where they add to our understanding. The South Downs Landscape Character Assessment is a recent LCA (2020) but has not been considered as the nearest landscape character area is approximately 2km to the north.

- National Character Assessment: NCA 128 South Hampshire Lowlands
- Hampshire County Integrated Character Assessment; LCA Forest of Bere East
- Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment (2007); LCA 11 A3 (M) Eastern Corridor

2.5. Summary

2.5.1. The key implications of the above policies, assessments and guidance have been considered further in relation to landscape and visual aspects in the following sections 3-4.

Figure 2 - Site location - Plot 400



3.2. General description of existing site and setting (see photos in Figure 3)

3.2.1. Dunsbury Park is a business park with some plots already developed and some vacant plots including plots 100, 400 and 600 (as shown in Figure 2) which are the subject of a separate outline planning application, with plot 400 being a detailed application to which this LVA relates.

3.2.2. The residential area of Waterlooville lies to the west of the site, while the Leigh Park estate lies to the east. Open countryside consisting of blocks of woodland and agricultural fields lie to the north of the site. There is a further area of woodland and agricultural fields to the south of the site, with superstores located further south on Purbrook Way.

3.2.3. Plot 400 lies to the north boundary of Dunsbury Park north of an already developed plot with open ground to the north beyond a tree belt. The eastern boundary is formed by the Park Lane public right of way (PRoW). Further built unit line the western edge of plot 400 separated by a line of trees.

3.2.4. Fitzwygram Way which forms the main access to Dunsbury Park and will serve as access to plot 400. It was constructed several years ago to create the framework for the park. It has a strong landscape framework with wide grass verges, avenue trees, pedestrian footpaths and drainage ditches.

3. Landscape elements, qualities, functions and character

3.1. Methodology

3.1.1. The landscape elements, qualities, functions, and character of the site and its wider area are described in the table set out in Appendix 3 and summarised below. These form the landscape baseline evidence which both informs the development proposals and, where likely to be affected by the development, form the landscape receptors against which the proposals are assessed. The sensitivity of landscape receptors is established by combining judgements on value with those on susceptibility to the type of change proposed, in line with the methodology set out in Appendix 1.

Figure 3 - Site photos

Looking east along Fitzwygram Way. Plots 400 lies beyond the building.

Looking north to plot 400 which lies between the white and grey building and the trees to the right. The trees mark the route of Park Lane public right of way. Plot 400 comprises areas of partly vegetated spoil.