

PONTAIL FARM,
MERCER ROAD,
NORTH HORSHAM

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT



Ecology
Archaeology
Arboriculture
Landscape Architecture



Written By:	PHD
Checked By:	JS
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Contents

1.0	Non-Technical Summary	1
2.0	Introduction, Purpose and Methodology	3
3.0	Policy	7
4.0	Baseline Information: Character	13
5.0	Baseline Conditions: Visual	24
6.0	Proposals and Mitigation	27
7.0	Assessment of Effects	29
8.0	Conclusions and Discussions	40
9.0	Appendices	43

1.0 Non-Technical Summary

- 1.1 ACD Environmental was originally commissioned to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) for the proposed development at Pondtail Farm, Mercer Road, Horsham RH12 3RL (“the site”) in 2019, to inform planning proposals and accompany the planning application for the site. An initial desk-based study was carried out in June 2019 and the LVIA was produced in November 2020.
- 1.2 Riverdale Developments have subsequently amended the proposals, reducing the overall number of units and the proportion of affordable dwellings within the scheme. This LVIA has been updated to reflect these changes. To account for the passage of time the viewpoints were revisited in late November 2023 in order to take a new set of photographs.
- 1.3 The current proposals are for the provision of 304 units, comprising 30 affordable and 274 private dwellings, with associated car parking and several open spaces including a play area for children.
- 1.4 In compiling this baseline information for this report, ACD have undertaken a desktop study including reviews of aerial photography, web searches, Local Planning Authority (LPA) publications, local landscape character assessments and National Character Assessment (NCA) information. ACD then undertook a field assessment which includes a photographic survey of the landscape, using photography from a number of representative viewpoints.
- 1.5 The site does not fall within any land that has any formal designations. However, there are a number of other designations within the study area. The site is located within National Character Area The Low Weald (NCA121) and the boundary of the adjacent NCA The High Weald is approximately 1.2km to the south west. The boundary of the High Weald National Landscape (formerly known as High Weald AONB) is 2.4km east of the site.
- 1.6 Land to the east of the site was earmarked for development several years ago under Policy SD1 of the Horsham District Planning Framework, and was known

as “Land North of Horsham”. Outline permission for 2,750 homes, retail units, educational facilities and other infrastructure was granted in March 2018 under application number DC/16/1677, and construction has now commenced on the site.

- 1.7 The emerging Local Plan was in consultation until March 2020 and the Submission Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19) has now been prepared, although behind the timeframes originally envisaged. At the time of writing adoption of the Local Plan is due in May 2025. It identifies some smaller sites to meet housing needs (500 homes or less) with potential for allocation. SA568 – Land at Mercer Road is on a short list of sites with potential for allocation as a small amount of expansion to the west of the approved North Horsham site.
- 1.8 In terms of visual amenity, the site as a whole, is visually enclosed from the south, west and north. The existing vegetation along these site boundaries, and the railway line running north to south along the western boundary, provide strong visual barriers from throughout the immediate local landscape. There are limited views of the site from the east along Langhurst Wood Road at points where there are breaks in the hedgerow.
- 1.9 Views from all other viewpoints were negligible due to the topography and existing built form and vegetation forming visual barriers.
- 1.10 Following the implementation of the landscape strategy and mitigation planting, the residual overall visual effects of the proposed development will remain for viewpoints along Langhurst Wood Road. The main receptors for these views however, will be road users, and due to the speed in which they experience and perceive the landscape they are less sensitive to change.

2.0 Introduction, Purpose and Methodology

Introduction

- 2.1 ACD Environmental has been commissioned by Riverdale Developments Ltd to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) for the proposed development at Pondtail Farm, Mercer Road, Horsham ('the site') to inform planning proposals and accompany the planning application for the site. The purpose of this LVIA is to inform planning proposals and accompany the planning application for the site.
- 2.2 The original proposals were for 326 units. Following consultation, a revised scheme has been drawn up to reduce the unit numbers by 22 to 304. The general layout and fundamental principles remain the same, but the site has a lower density to facilitate more landscape opportunities.
- 2.3 The development proposals include 304 residential units, associated car parking, streets and several open spaces. This is outlined in the appendices of this report and shown on **Figure 6 and 7**.
- 2.4 The site lies to the west of Langhurst Wood Road and either side of Mercer Road in the village of North Horsham, Sussex. An ordnance survey plan showing the site location is included in the appendices of this report and is shown on **Figure 1**. The site rises from south to north and consists of grassland fields with tree lines, hedgerows and a small area of woodland. The north of the site is enclosed by a small area of dense Ancient Woodland with industrial buildings including a large recycling facility behind it. Further north are more areas of industrial estates, a clay pit with an SSSI designation, pockets of Ancient Woodland and grassland fields. To the west of the site a railway line runs north to south with Warnham train station accessed from the west end of Mercer Road. On the other side of the railway is a stream, Boldings Brook, with agricultural fields stretching to the village of Warnham in the far west. Dense woodland and vegetation is located immediately to the south of the site with the A264 running beyond that. Further south on the other side of the dual carriageway is the high-density built-up area of Horsham. Warnham Nature

Reserve is to the southwest of the site. To the immediate east of the site is Langhurst Wood Road. Further to the east the landscape is characterised by open grassland and agricultural fields which are gradually being transformed into a housing development.

- 2.5 An aerial photograph of the site is included in the appendices of this report and is shown on **Figure 2**.
- 2.6 The site does not fall within any land that has any formal designations, however the edge of the 2.5km study area falls within the High Weald National Landscape (formerly AONB). There are a number of other designations within the study area including Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland, Ancient Replanted Woodland, Registered Parks and Gardens (Warnham Court), Local Nature Reserve (Warnham), Conservation Areas (Warnham and Horsham), a Long Distance Walking Path (West Sussex Literary Trail), a Site of Special Scientific Interest (Warnham) and Scheduled Monuments (Moated site, Motte and bailey castle and the 'Castle' moated site).
- 2.7 A Landscape Designations Plan is included in the appendices of this report and is shown on **Figure 5**.
- 2.8 The proposed development has considered the relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Horsham District Planning Framework, the relevant policies of which can be found within **Appendix G**.

Purpose

- 2.9 LVIA's can be defined as a mechanism by which the landscape can be assessed against its capacity to accommodate change.
- 2.10 The aim of this report is to provide a full assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects of a proposed development upon the receiving landscape, in line with current legislation and guidance.
- 2.11 In compiling this baseline information for this report, ACD have undertaken the following:

- A desktop study of relevant background documents, maps and databases. The desktop study included reviews of aerial photography, web searches, Local Planning Authority (LPA) publications and landscape character assessments and National Character Assessment (NCA) information;
- A field assessment which includes a photographic survey of the landscape, using photography from a number of representative viewpoints. The field assessment was undertaken by a qualified landscape architect; and
- Providing the baseline conditions with respect to landscape character and receptors visual amenity.

Methodology

- 2.12 This proposal is not subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). However, this LVIA has been undertaken in accordance with 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Third Edition), published by the Landscape Institute and the IEMA (2013) (GLVIA) as this document is relevant to non-EIA schemes. Reference was also made to 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (Second Edition), published by Natural England (2018).
- 2.13 Potential receptors were identified within the study area and the assessment identifies the sensitivity of receptors, the magnitude of change and the level of effect. The methodology of assessment is included within **Appendix A**.

Study Area

- 2.14 The study area was set to a radius of approximately 2.5km from the centre of the site (N51°05'27, W0°19'31) on the basis that, at this distance, this form of development, when seen by the human eye, would be hardly discernible or not legible. The 2.5km study area is shown on the designations plan is included in the appendices of this report and is shown on **Figure 5**.

2.15 The baseline information focused on identifying national and local landscape and other associated designation within 2.5km of the site and providing a general understanding of the site, its location within the landscape and context.

3.0 Policy

Landscape Planning Policies

3.1 Guidelines, legislation and planning policy documents provide the framework for the protection and conservation of landscape within the study area, the most relevant of which are outlined below.

3.2 Of these, statutes exist to ensure both direct and indirect protection of our most valued and important landscapes, their intrinsic visual qualities and the individual elements and components that constitute their appeal. Those with direct relevance to the assessment comprise the following:

- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
- Hedgerow Regulations 1997;
- Environment Act 1995;
- Countryside Act 1968; and
- The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

National Planning Policy

3.3 At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a presumption in favour of sustainable development running through both plan-making and decision-taking. For landscape, this means recognising the intrinsic beauty of the countryside and balancing any harm to the land resource with the benefits of the scheme in other respects. This balance is to be undertaken by the decision makers and falls outside the remit of this report. The benefits of the scheme are to be weighed against the effects on the landscape character and visual amenity as set out in this report and as detailed in the Planning Statement

accompanying this application. The policy framework is supported by the National Planning Guidance (NPPG) where relevant.

Local Planning Policy

3.4 The Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 (HDPF) is the current overarching planning document for Horsham district outside the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and replaces the Core Strategy and General Development Control Policies documents which were adopted in 2007. A full list of relevant policies are included in **Appendix G** and a summary of the relevant policies are outlined below:

3.5 **Policy 2** - To maintain the district's unique rural character whilst ensuring that the needs of the community are met through sustainable growth and suitable access to services and local employment, the spatial strategy to 2031 is to:

- Focus development in and around the key settlement of Horsham and allow for growth in the rest of the district in accordance with the identified settlement hierarchy.
- Manage development around the edges of existing settlements in order to prevent the merging of settlements and to protect the rural character and landscape.
- Guide development form and provide access to strategic green space and recreational opportunities in and around the built-up urban areas.
- Support the provision of rural housing which contributes towards the provision of affordable housing where there is a demonstrable need.
- Retain and enhance natural environmental resources, including landscapes and landscape character, biodiversity, and retaining and enhancing environmental quality including air, minimises energy and resource use and provides flood mitigation.

3.6 **Policy 3** - Development will be permitted within towns and villages which have defined built-up areas. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to

demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale to maintain characteristics and function of the settlement in accordance with the settlement hierarchy.

3.7 The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape and townscape character features are maintained and enhanced.

3.8 **Policy 4** - The growth of settlements across the district will continue to be supported in order to meet identified local housing, employment and community needs. Outside built-up area boundaries, the expansion of settlements will be supported where;

3.9 **Policy 17** - In exceptional circumstances limited amounts of greenfield land, that would not otherwise be released for general market housing, may be released for the development of affordable homes provided that:

1. There is an identified local need for such homes and no suitable alternatives exist within the locality to meet that need;

2. The development would solely meet the needs of a particular parish (or that parish plus its immediately adjoining parishes within Horsham district) and that the needs identified comprise housing for: Existing residents of the parish in unsuitable accommodation or needing separate accommodation in the area (excluding existing owner occupiers).

a. People whose work provides important services and who need to live in the parish.

b. People who may no longer be resident in the parish but have longstanding links with the local community.

c. People with the offer of a job in the parish who cannot take up the offer because of a lack of affordable housing.

3. The development would provide subsidised housing in perpetuity which will normally be managed by a provider that is registered with the Homes and Community Agency.

3.10 The major development of 'Land North of Horsham' has an approved Outline permission for the below (Planning ref DC/16/177);

- Up to 2,750 dwellings with a mix of house types and tenures,
- 46,450sqm business park,
- Two primary schools,
- Site for and contributions to a new secondary school,
- Provision for special educational needs,
- 'Early years' provision,
- Local centres and community facilities,
- Retail provision of 4,900sqm floorspace with other appropriate local shopping facilities,
- Land safeguarded for a parkway railway station on the Crawley/Horsham line,
- Open space including nature park, sport and recreation facilities and allotments,
- Landscape buffers,
- A cemetery,
- Commercial leisure facilities of up to 5,100 sqm.

3.11 The emerging Local Plan was in consultation until March 2020 and the Draft Local Plan has been prepared for submission to the independent Planning Inspector. It is anticipated that the Local Plan will be adopted in May 2025. It identifies some smaller sites to meet housing needs (500 homes or less) with potential for allocation. SA568 – Land at Mercer Road is on a short list of sites with potential for allocation as a small amount of expansion to the west of the

current North Horsham site. A full list of relevant policies within the emerging Local Plan are included in **Appendix G** and a summary of the relevant policies are outlined below:

3.12 **Strategic Policy 6:** Economic Growth identifies Land Around Mercer Road, Warnham Station (North). Around 3ha may have potential for expansion of the employment land to the north. The site is suitable for B1, B2 and B8 uses.

3.13 **Strategic Policy 25:** Environmental Protection. The high quality of the District's environment will be protected through the planning process and the provision of local guidance documents. Taking into account any relevant Planning Guidance Documents, developments will be expected to minimise exposure to, and the emission of, pollutants including noise, odour, vibration, air and light pollution arising from all stages of development.

3.14 **Strategic Policy 27:** The Natural Environment and Landscape Character. The Natural Environment and landscape character of the District, including the landscape, landform and development pattern, together with protected landscapes and habitats, will be protected against inappropriate development. The Council will expect development proposals to be landscape led from the outset so that they clearly inform the design and layout. Proposals will also be required to:

- Protect, conserve and enhance the landscape and townscape character, taking into account areas identified as being of landscape importance, the individual settlement characteristics, and maintain settlement separation;
- Maintain and enhance the Green Infrastructure Network, the Nature Recovery Network and, where practicable, help to address any identified deficiencies in the District;
- Maintain and enhance the existing network of geological sites and biodiversity, including safeguarding existing designated sites and species, and secure net gains in biodiversity;

- Incorporate SUDS into a scheme in an optimal location for their purpose whilst also securing landscape enhancements and good quality spaces. Proposals will be expected to provide details to demonstrate that the whole life management and maintenance of the SUDS are appropriate, deliverable and will not cause harm to the natural environment and/or landscape.

3.15 **Strategic Policy 29:** Settlement Coalescence. Landscapes will be protected from development which would result in the coalescence of settlements in order to protect local identity and a sense of place.

3.16 **Strategic Policy 31:** Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity. Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains and enhances the existing network of green infrastructure, the Nature Recovery Network, natural capital and biodiversity. Proposals will be expected to retain and enhance existing fresh water features, hedgerows, trees and deciduous woodland and the provision of additional hedgerow and tree planting will be sought subject to appropriate consideration of local and wider context, habitats and species.

Proposals should create and manage appropriate new habitats, taking into account pollination, where practicable. The Council will support new development which retains and /or enhances significant features of nature conservation on development sites. The Council will also support development which makes a positive contribution to biodiversity, and where appropriate the Nature Recovery Network, through the creation of green spaces, and linkages between habitats to create local and regional ecological networks and allow the movement of wildlife through development sites.

4.0 Baseline Information: Character

- 4.1 This section identifies potential receptors within the study area and provides a description of the site, study area and landscape context. Desktop and field analysis has been used to scope out sensitive receptors within the 2.5km study area.
- 4.2 Landscape related designations are shown in the appendices of this report and are shown on **Figure 5**.
- 4.3 The southern parcel is relatively level, at around 45m above ordnance datum (AOD) and includes Pondtail Farm. The northern parcel rises to approximately 55m AOD. Mercer Road runs west to east across the site and provides access to Warnham Station, but no longer connects fully with Station Road on the other side of the railway. There is a level crossing only for pedestrians and cyclists, controlled by a red/green light. A line of 18 closely spaced Victorian or Edwardian semi-detached cottages is located on the opposite side of the line, and industrial yards and vehicle storage areas surround the station.
- 4.4 To the north is a brick factory and a recycling plant. The original clay quarry which supplied the brickworks is shown on the modern OS map as a landfill site, and clay is now being extracted from a pit to the northeast of the brick factory and transported via a conveyor which crosses Langhurst Wood Road around 1.3km north of the site. The clay pit has been designated as an SSSI for its geological interest. According to the Natural England citation it preserves freshwater, brackish and marine plant and fish fossils from the Lower Cretaceous period of around 130 million years ago.
- 4.5 The village of Warnham lies just over a kilometre to the west of the site, a relatively small settlement with a primary school and a church dating from the fourteenth century. There are a number of listed buildings within the historic centre of the village, and Warnham Court, now a registered park / garden, was built in 1825. The land between the site and Warnham village is bisected by the A24; fields to

the east of the A24 slope gently down to Boldings Brook, a small watercourse which flows into Warnham Mill Pond and from there into the River Arun.

- 4.6 To the east of the site is a major development area, a mixed use development including up to 2,750 dwellings, a business park, retail, a community centre, leisure facilities, schools, public open space, landscaping and related infrastructure. The site was granted outline planning permission in March 2018 and is now being built out in phases, starting with developments centred on Rusper Road. The development will affect the wider landscape character during construction will have indirect visual effects. The development will result in a loss of landscape elements. There will be changes to the open field pattern and the existing rural countryside. The development will introduce more noise and traffic along Langhurst Wood Road.
- 4.7 To the south, separated by a semi-circular parcel of woodland, is the busy A264 dual carriageway road which carries traffic around the northern extents of Horsham. A residential neighbourhood off Pondtail Lane in the north west corner of Horsham is directly south of the A264, and the aforementioned Warnham Mill Pond and Rookwood Golf Course lie to the south-west. The Mill Pond is a Nature Reserve with several hides overlooking the pond, wildflower meadows, a boardwalk along Boldings Brook and a visitor centre with a café.

Conservation Area

- 4.8 There are two Conservation Areas within the study area, namely Warnham Conservation Area (approximately 1.2km at its nearest point to the west) and Horsham Conservation Area (approximately 1.9km at its nearest point to the south). There is no visibility between Horsham Conservation Area and the site due to a combination of existing vegetation, existing built form and distance from view. Viewpoint 2 is representative of the view from the west including Warnham Conservation Area.

Long Distance Walking Paths

4.9 The West Sussex Literary Trail passes through the study area diagonally across the south west corner. At its nearest point the path is approximately 1.9km from the site. There is no visibility between the trail and the site due to a combination of existing vegetation, existing built form and distance from view.

Public Rights of Way

4.10 There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) which transect the landscape and are shown on the Ordnance Survey Plan which is included in the appendices of this report and is shown on **Figure 1**.

4.11 West Sussex County Council has an online resource which provides a map of Public Rights of Way within the council's area (iMap). This resource was utilised to provide reference numbers to identify footpath routes.

- Path number 1420 is a footpath to the north west of the site. Viewpoint 1 is representative of potential views from this PRoW.
- Path numbers 1577 and 1578 are located to the west of the site. Viewpoint 2 is representative of potential views where the two paths meet.
- Path 1421 is located to the east of the site in grassland fields adjacent to Langhurst Wood Road. Viewpoint 6 and 7 are representative of potential views from this PRoW at two different locations.
- Path number 1586 is a footpath to the east of the site adjacent to the A264. Viewpoint 8 is representative of potential views from this PRoW.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

4.12 There is one SSSI located within the study area. Warnham SSSI also known as Langhurst Wood Quarry is a large working brick quarry with exposed clay faces. Access is not permitted to the public. It is located to the north of the site with no visibility to the site due to a combination of existing vegetation and distance from

view. It was also not highlighted in the zone of theoretical visibility and has therefore been scoped out of this report.

Heritage Designations

- 4.13 Within the study area there are three Scheduled Monuments located to the east and south of the site. Viewpoint 4 is on Langhurst Wood Road close to the Scheduled Monument to the north east corner of the site, listed as a moated site, but since the scheduled monument is surrounded with trees and the road is lined with trees, it was not possible to see it.
- 4.14 For the other two Scheduled Monuments to the east (listed as Motte and bailey castle and the 'Castle' moated site) no view is possible between this designation and the site due to a combination of existing vegetation, buildings and distance of view.
- 4.15 There are several listed buildings within the study area, the closest being the group around 600m away to the south west of the site along the A24 Dorking Road. All of these properties are surrounded by groups of trees which would obscure views from the site, and are already adversely impacted by the proximity of the busy A24. The proposals at Mercer Road are not likely to affect these listed buildings.

Nature Reserves

- 4.16 Warnham Local Nature Reserve includes a 17-acre millpond, marshes, grassland, reed beds, hedges and woodland. Viewpoint 9 is representative of the views from the nature reserve looking north towards the site.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 4.17 The High Weald AONB is located to the south-east of the site. It is approximately 2.4km from the site and not highlighted in the zone of theoretical visibility and has therefore been scoped out of this assessment.

Ancient and Replanted Woodland

- 4.18 There is an area of Ancient Woodland on the northern boundary of the site. There is no public access to it so no viewpoint was considered. Another area of ancient woodland is located close to the site to the east. Viewpoint 6 is representative of the potential views between this woodland and the site.

Registered Parks and Gardens

- 4.19 Warnham Court is located to the southwest of the site on the west side of the A24. The estate includes the principal building, part of which is grade II listed, surrounded by terraced ornamental and kitchen gardens and wooded pleasure grounds. Routes around the park were visited however due to a combination of existing vegetation, the A24 and relative flat topography, views of the site could not be appreciated.

Landscape Elements

- 4.20 The site has two veteran oak trees which are numbered 57 and 79 on SJA trees survey schedule and are Category A. Both trees are in the southeastern area of the site and will have veteran buffer zones as they form important habitat. The existing trees on site are a mixture of oak, horse chestnut and large leafed lime predominantly. Sycamore, ash, Norway maple, Scots pine and wych elm are also present. Along Mercer Road, the tree species are mainly mature horse chestnuts and large leaf limes which are Category B, C or U. Between the trees there is infill shrub planting and ivy. Mercer Road is also a Public Right of Way Ref. 1574.
- 4.21 Along the boundary of Langhurst Wood Road there are large oak trees and wych elms with a strong hedgerow containing a mixture of species such as hawthorn, hazel, bramble, elder and holly. There is an area of Ancient Woodland to the north of the site which has a 15m buffer zone.
- 4.22 The site has several fields which are used as horse paddocks and have been heavily grazed. The fields comprise of species-poor semi-improved grassland. There are areas of tall ruderal and dense scrub along boundaries.

- 4.23 A running stream called Pondtail stream is located to the south of the site close to an area of woodland including trees No 57, 260-263. It runs east to west between the boundary of two fields. Within the woodland in this area are oak, ash, sycamore and goat willow.
- 4.24 There are four ponds on site. Pond 1 and 2 are located to the north of the site within woodland. Pond 3 is located in a woodland block to the east of the site, north of Pondtail stream. This pond is heavily shaded by woodland. Pond 4 is located on the western boundary in an area of scrub and willow.
- 4.25 Historically the field patterns of the site have not changed greatly from ordnance survey circa 1900 but the hedgerows have become more defined. Pondtail Farm and Graylands Farm remain with slightly different building footprints. The A264 road to the south of the site was built in the 1980s and a large housing development south of this road. Around this time Warnham Works and Biffa Waste Management were built to the north of the site and Horsham Locksmith was also built near Warnham Station.

Landscape Character

- 4.26 A review of site and local landscape character has been undertaken as part of this report and includes a review of the National Character Assessment, Landscape Character Assessments and site assessment.

National Character Assessment

- 4.27 Natural England has published a study entitled 'Countryside Character Initiative'. This initiative is concerned with the management of England's countryside through an understanding of its character. It aims to guide policy developments, national decision making, and give a context to local planning, action and development.
- 4.28 The site lies within the Low Weald National Character Area (NCA) 121. While the description is broadly representative of the wider landscape, many characteristics are exhibited in the site and study area, including:

- Broad, low-lying, gently undulating clay vales with outcrops of limestone or sandstone providing local variation.
- The underlying geology has provided materials for industries including iron working, brick and glass making, leaving pits, lime kilns and quarries. Many of the resulting exposures are critical to our understanding of the Wealden environment.
- Field boundaries of hedgerows and shaws (remnant strips of cleared woodland) enclosing small, irregular fields and linking into small and scattered linear settlements along roadsides or centred on greens or commons. Rural lanes and tracks with wide grass verges and ditches.
- Small towns and villages are scattered among areas of woodland, permanent grassland and hedgerows on the heavy clay soils where larger 20th-century villages have grown around major transport routes. Frequent north–south routeways and lanes, many originating as drove roads, along which livestock were moved to downland grazing or to forests to feed on acorns.
- Small areas of heathland particularly associated with commons such as Ditchling and Chailey. Also significant historic houses often in parkland or other designed landscapes.
- The Low Weald boasts an intricate mix of woodlands, much of it ancient, including extensive broadleaved oak over hazel and hornbeam coppice, shaws, small field copses and tree groups, and lines of riparian trees along watercourses. Veteran trees are a feature of hedgerows and in fields.
- Many small rivers, streams and watercourses with associated water meadows and wet woodland.
- Abundance of ponds, some from brick making and quarrying, and hammer and furnace ponds, legacies of the Wealden iron industry.

Local Landscape Character Assessment

4.29 A Landscape Character Assessment was prepared by Chris Blandford Associates for Horsham District Council in October 2003 which offers guidance on the sub regional level character. Within the study area there are three landscape character areas, as illustrated on Figure 6. The eastern side of the application site falls within Narrow Clay Vale Farmland District Landscape Character Type K. The key characteristics of this landscape are:

- Flat / Gently undulating narrow clay vale landscape;
- Partly enclosed by hedgerows;
- Field trees are feature.

4.30 Using the Landscape Character Type, the study then identified Landscape Character Areas. These are unique areas, with a recognisable pattern of landscape characteristics, both physical and experiential that combine to create a distinct sense of place.

4.31 Within the Narrow Clay Vale Farmland District Landscape Character Type K, two different Landscape Character Areas have been identified; the application site is situated within the Warnham & Faygate Vale Landscape Area K2. The key characteristics are as follows:

- Flat to gently undulating clay vale;
- Medium to large scale field pattern of arable farmland, with smaller areas of pasture;
- Isolated patches of woodland;
- Semi enclosed or open character;
- Dominance of major road and rail communication routes;
- Significant area historic parkland of Warnham Court;

- Visual intrusion in parts from retail and industrial areas, housing and sand gravel.
- 4.32 The western part of the site falls within landscape character type P, Minor River Valleys. The key characteristics of this landscape character type are:
- Narrow alluvial floodplain
 - V-shaped valley landform
 - Small irregular fields
 - Intimate character.
- 4.33 The landscape character type has been broken down into two sub-categories, and the site is within the outer reaches of P1, the Upper Arun Valley where the Boldings Brook meanders through a relatively narrow valley on the western side of the railway line. The planning and land management guidelines published in the landscape character assessment recommend that “any small scale development on the valley sides respects historic settlement pattern, form and building materials and is integrated into the existing landscape pattern of small woodlands and hedgerows.” The establishment of new small wetlands and the planting of new willow trees is also recommended.
- 4.34 To the north of the study area, beyond the brick factory, is a third landscape character type identified as I2, Warnham and Rusper Wooded Ridge. This rural landscape is characterised by a high density of woodlands and hedgerows, and includes small pasture fields cut out of tracts of woodland, as seen in the Ancient Woodland fragments in Figure 5. The landscape features scattered hamlets and farmsteads served by narrow lanes often running in a north – south direction. This character type is bisected by the P1 river valley.

West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment

4.35 The site falls within LW8 Northern Vales Low Weald. This Character Area comprises a narrow clay vale running north east/south west between low wooded ridges to the north and higher wooded ridges of the High Weald to the south.

The key characteristics of this landscape character type are:

- *Flat to gently undulating narrow clay vale, with floodplain and upper tributaries of the River Mole in the north east.*
- *Crossed by the upper reaches of the River Arun in the south west including one of its main tributaries, Boldings Brook.*
- *Pattern of small, medium and large fields with a variable density of hedgerows.*
- *Predominantly pasture farmland in the north east changing to arable farmland with smaller areas of pasture around Warnham and Faygate to the south west.*
- *Scattered tree cover, isolated woodlands and copses.*
- *Distinctive field trees and farm ponds.*
- *Major road and rail corridors and pylon lines.*
- *Strong suburban and urban fringe influences of Crawley, Horsham and Gatwick Airport.*
- *Some localities retain an enclosed rural character, for instance, west of Ifield.*
- *Significant area of historic parkland of Warnham Court.*
- *Large golf course near Ifield.*
- *Visual intrusion in parts from retail and industrial areas, housing, and sand and gravel workings*

4.36 Management Guidelines for LW8 Northern Vales Low Weald are to conserve the rural character of the area which include:

- *Conserve, manage and restore woodlands, hedgerows, hedgerow trees, field ponds, species rich grassland and meadows, unimproved grassland and meadows.*
- *Maintain historic character including small scale field patterns, earthworks and historic parkland.*
- *Establish a framework of new woodland and hedgerow planting.*
- *Promote the establishment of field margins in arable areas.*
- *Conserve the open character of the floodplain and promote natural floodplain management avoiding the introduction of engineered flood defences.*
- *Conserve, enhance or restore marginal vegetation along the River Mole and River Arun tributaries.*
- *Conserve historic lanes with their ancient oaks and unimproved roadside verges.*
- *Focus on the enhancement of the major transport corridors, seeking better integration into the existing field pattern of the wider landscape.*
- *Ensure any small scale development responds to the historic dispersed settlement pattern and local design and materials.*
- *Seek to reduce the intensity and visual impact of horse grazing.*
- *Ensure any new development around the urban edges, in particular Horsham, Crawley and Southwater, is well integrated with the wider landscape pattern. Encourage bold native woodland and hedgerow planting. Buildings should also blend in with the landscape in scale, form, colour and design.*
- *Plant amenity trees in settlements, particularly around new housing areas.*
- *Encourage screen planting of native trees and woodland around roadside buildings and service areas, and industrial and commercial development, including Gatwick Airport.*
- *Support any initiative to create community woodland for multi purpose objectives including active and passive recreation, timber production and coppicing.*

Horsham District Capacity Study

4.37 The site falls within zone 3 'West and North West Horsham' which is numbered 37 and yellow for moderate capacity however the northern parcel has been excluded.

The Landscape Character Sensitivity:

- *This area has a flat to very gently undulating landform containing the meandering course of Boldings Brook.*
- *There is a medium scale pattern of irregular arable and pasture fields together a few old parkland trees*
- *Some significant old and thick hedgerows on hedgerow banks*
- *The area is truncated by the railway and bounded to the south by the A264*
- *Overall good landscape condition, except near the A264*

4.38 The sites visual sensitivity is described as having variable enclosure from hedgerows and hedgerow trees gives a moderate visual sensitivity to both employment and housing development.

4.39 The landscape value is:

- Ecological interest of Boldings Brook and some thick hedgerows
- Low tranquillity due to road and rail corridor
- Very limited public access on rights of way through this area

4.40 The report states that there is some capacity for major housing or employment in this area to low-moderate landscape value. The overall landscape capacity is moderate-high for medium scale housing and moderate for large scale housing or employment.

Conclusion of site, representative of the Character Guidance

- 4.41 The site lies within the Low Weald National Character Area (NCA) 121 and is typical of these characteristics such as field boundaries, woodland, rural lanes, grass verges, ponds and watercourses. The site does not have heathland which is another characteristic of this area.
- 4.42 The eastern side of the application site falls within Narrow Clay Vale Farmland District Landscape Character Type K and the site is typical also of these characteristics which are flat / gently undulating narrow clay vale landscape, partly enclosed by hedgerows and field trees are feature.
- 4.43 The western part of the site falls within landscape character type P, Minor River Valleys. The key characteristics of this landscape character type are narrow alluvial floodplain, V-shaped valley landform, small irregular fields and Intimate character. The western part of the site is not particularly representative of this character due to the railway line.
- 4.44 Within the West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment the site falls within LW8 Northern Vales Low Weald. This character again mentioned undulating narrow clay vale and patterns of fields and hedgerows which is similar to the site.

Site Assessment

- 4.45 **Figure 1:** Ordnance Survey Plan within the appendices of this report show the topographical information of the site and study area. The site lies to the west of Langhurst Wood Road and either side of Mercer Road in the village of Warnham, Horsham, Sussex. The site is relatively flat and consists of grassland fields with tree lines, hedgerows and a small area of woodland. The boundaries of the site are comprise of a strong framework of mature hedgerows, trees and woodland that give the site an enclosed feel.

- 4.46 The immediate land uses surrounding the site are predominantly arable farmland, with blocks of woodland and lines of mature trees and hedgerows. An area of Ancient Woodland is located adjacent to the north of the site with a larger area of woodland on the southern boundary. The urban settlement of Horsham is located further to the south of the site past the A264. Further to the north are industrial estates for car repairs, recycling facilities and building material merchants.
- 4.47 The tributary stream Boldings Brook, from the River Arun, creates a low-lying undulating topography in the immediate and surrounding landscape of the site. The busy main road of the A264 dissects the study area with the entrance to the site accessed just off this major road. The railway line runs north to south along the west of the study area, with Warnham Train Station located at the north-west corner of the site, and terminates at London Waterloo.
- 4.48 **Image A** illustrates the rising ground of the northern parcel of the site, with a belt of mature trees at the top of the slope which will shelter the development. The hedgerow to the right of the image is characteristic of the landscape and creates a sense of enclosure around the site and creates a visual barrier from Langhurst Wood Road.



Image A: Northern parcel

4.49 **Image B** is the view along Mercer Road from the western end, close to the entrance to the commercial premises adjacent to the station yard. The roadside boundaries are defined by mature native hedgerow, hedgerow trees and mature legacy tree species. There are no pavements along this road.



Image B: Mature mixed native hedgerows defining the edges of Mercer Road.

4.50 **Image C** shows the new Cala Homes housing development at Mowbray Village and is close to Viewpoint 10.



Image C: New housing at Mowbray Village.

4.51 **Image D** shows the yard at Warnham Station and the barriers installed at the former level crossing to prevent vehicular traffic travelling between Station Road on the west side of the line, and Mercer Road on the east side.



Image D: Station Yard at the western end of Mercer Road.

5.0 Baseline Conditions: Visual

Introduction

- 5.1 From the results of the initial desk study and site appraisal it is clear that the proposed development will be visible from a limited number of locations, at varying distances, and from both public and private areas.
- 5.2 A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was prepared and included in the appendices of this report and is shown on **Figure 3**. Viewpoints are included within **Appendix D** of this report and locations are shown on **Figure 4**, within the report appendices.
- 5.3 This section identifies those visual receptors that have the potential to view the site, their distribution, character and sensitivity to change.
- 5.4 The original photographic study to support the application was undertaken in October 2020 and was recently re-visited during November 2023 to provide updated information. Viewpoints at varying close distance from the site were selected to represent the typical views of the site. **Figure 4** shows the location of these viewpoints. In determining the viewpoints, whether in the immediate locality or further away, the main public highways, sections of public footpaths, and some of the publicly available spaces within the study area were visited. It is acknowledged that from public places, more viewers are likely to be affected thereby adding to the overall impact upon receptors in those locations.
- 5.5 The following viewpoints in **Table 1** were selected as being representative of the potential visual issues associated with the proposed development.

Table 1: Viewpoint Details

No	Location	Distance (km) and direction of view	Northing	Westing	Rationale for selection
1	PRoW accessed from Mayes Lane	1.96km, SE	51°06'05"	0°21'01"	Elevated location on a PRoW
2	Shelley Cycle Path outside Warnham village	1.23km, ENE	51°05'20"	0°20'34"	View from edge of conservation area
3	Warnham Train Station	0.25km, E	51°05'33"	0°19'46"	View from publicly accessible route
4	Mercer Road	0.13km, W	51°05'33"	0°19'27"	Close view into site
5	Langhurst Wood Road	0.25km, NW	51°05'27"	0°19'21"	Close view into south east corner of site
6	PRoW accessed from Langhurst Wood Road	0.51km, W	51°05'29"	0°19'08"	View from PRoW close to site
7	Graylands Business Park	0.82km, SW	51°05'55"	0°19'15"	Elevated location, receptors at work
8	PRoW Bush Lane	2.57km, W	51°05'21"	0°17'23"	View from PRoW within ZTV
9	Warnham Nature Reserve	1.69km, N	51°04'41"	0°20'01"	View from Nature Reserve within ZTV
10	Moat Road, Hawksbourne	1.63km, W	51°05'32"	0°18'10"	Elevated location within new housing development
11	View from Mercer Road	0.1km, E	51°05'33"	0°19'42"	PRoW close view
12	Langhurst Wood Road	0.2km, W	51°05'34"	0°19'25"	Meeting of two roads
13	Langhurst Wood Road	0.1km, SE	51°05'37"	0°19'26"	Proposed road access

5.6 The findings of the site appraisal show that viewpoint 4, on Mercer Road has open views into the site. This is to be expected due to the location of the viewpoint on the road through the middle of the proposals. Viewpoint 5 on Langhurst Wood Road has a view into the site from the east. Other close-range views (viewpoints 2, 3, 6 and 7) would not appreciate a change due to existing vegetation obstructing views of the proposed development. Longer range views (viewpoints 1, 8, 9 and 10) would also not appreciate any change due to the site being enclosed by woodland, hedgerows and the train line.

Visual Receptors

Public Rights of Way Users

- 5.7 Users of PRow, bridleway and National Trails are considered to have a high sensitivity and so the visual assessment included a comprehensive analysis on the visual effects of this user group.

Residential Properties and Users

- 5.8 Views from private residential properties, although likely to have a high sensitivity to any changes in a view, are not protected planning regulations, policies or guidance. There are limited adjacent residential properties, many of which are however set within a strong landscape framework and have limited visibility of the site.

Road Users

- 5.9 Road users are less sensitive than residential receptors or users of PRow due to the speed in which they experience and perceive the landscape, however road users are notable receptors. The A264 dual carriageway passes close to the southern boundary of the site and is raised to allow the road to pass over the railway. Google Streetview suggests that there are views into the site from the railway bridge on the eastbound carriageway, but this location could not be visited on foot as there is no safe access. There are glimpsed views of the site from Langhurst Wood Road as illustrated by Viewpoint 5.

6.0 Proposals and Mitigation

The Proposed Development

- 6.1 The development proposals are laid out in full in The Design and Access Statement in support of this application. The illustrative sketch is shown in **Figure 7**.
- 6.2 The proposals include the following:
- Site access off Mercer Road
 - 304 residential units
 - Associated car parking
 - Open spaces
 - Play area
 - Wetland pond features
- 6.3 The heights of the proposed buildings have been carefully considered to ensure that views are not impacting on the existing landscape setting.

Landscape Mitigation

- 6.4 The conclusions of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment have influenced the illustrative sketch layout through an iterative process. The proposals therefore include a degree of mitigation already as to avoid or reduce the potential effects. These include:
- Retaining the existing site boundary vegetation and include additional native species which are prevalent in the local area, to provide dense vegetative features along all of the site boundaries, where there is some level of vegetation,

- Providing a 15m buffer to the Ancient Woodland located to the north of the site,
- Providing a separate landscape framework around the new dwellings to enhance and strengthen the visual barriers of these properties,
- Retention of existing trees within the site, to maintain a mature landscape setting,
- Locating the new residential dwellings to the centre and western extents of the site, so they can be appropriately screened with landscape buffers,
- Inclusion of proposed tree planting throughout the proposals to visually break up the roofscape and to subtly blend the proposals into the surrounding landscape.
- Incorporate materials which reflect the surrounding site context, both within the soft and hard landscape design.
- Materials that form the external envelope and roof of the proposed buildings to match the surrounding existing palette.
- Proposed planting species should be partly reflective of those already found within the context of the site but also reflective of the historical heritage. A native species palette should be utilised throughout in order to visually blend with the surrounding landscape.
- The scale of the development should be limited to a maximum of 2.5 storeys to retain the same scale of development that exists within adjacent residential properties.
- Planting will be added for viewpoints 4, 5, 11, 12 and 13 to reduce the visual effects and create a visual barrier between the development and the road. These viewpoints are all from Mercer Road or Langhurst Wood Road.

- 6.5 In adopting the above measures, the proposals will reduce the magnitude of potential landscape and visual effects on the identified receptors.
- 6.6 After a period of 10-15 years the above mitigation measures will have weathered and planting will have become established to further reduce the visual impact.

7.0 Assessment of Effects

Introduction

- 7.1 Predicted effects on receptors are assessed at operation. The assessment of landscape and visual effects considers the site in its current baseline condition and judges the type and level of effects of the proposals. The site layout is shown in **Figure 6**.
- 7.2 The landscape strategy is to provide a high-quality mixed use development set within a site that has a strong, mature landscape framework. This includes the retention of the existing vegetation, to maintain a similar visual baseline. New planting will provide visual barriers to the new parking areas. The new residential dwellings will be set within a mature landscape, supplemented with native hedge, tree and understorey to be visually enclosed. The landscape strategy is illustrated within the Landscape Masterplan which will accompany the Planning Application. The strategy would help to visually blend the proposals into the receiving landscape and soften the look of the built form over time. The assessment of effects is outlined in **Appendix C** (character) and **Appendix D** (visual).
- 7.3 It is considered that there is the potential for effects on the following receptors:

Landscape

- Landscape elements such as trees, hedgerows, watercourses and the agricultural landscape.
- The landscape character of the site and the local area surrounding the site.

Visual

- Public Rights of Way in the local area;
- Roads adjacent to and surrounding the site.

- Residential receptors adjacent to site boundaries

7.4 The sensitivity of the visual receptors in the viewpoints are outlined in **Table G** within **Appendix A** of this report.

Effects upon the Receiving Landscape

7.5 Effects on the landscape is considered as a multi-stage process:

1. Effects on the character of the site, that includes the direct effects on the different elements that make up the site character;
2. The receiving landscape character, as defined in the Landscape Character Assessments; and
3. Effects on the local landscape context which includes the indirect effects on the defined landscape character that surrounds the site.

Table 2: Effects on Landscape Elements within the Site

Landscape Elements	Sensitivity or value	Description and effect	Magnitude of change	Mitigation	Residual effect	Rationale
Existing trees, woodland and veteran trees	High	Loss of individual trees for drainage features and access from Langhurst Wood Road	Medium	Retention of individual trees and groups of trees where possible with TPF. Veteran oaks to be retained and a buffer zone to be applied.	Moderate	No mature, ancient, veteran or notable trees will be lost. The proposed removal of trees will represent very minor alteration to the main arboricultural features of the site.
Hedgerows	High	A section of hedgerow will be removed from Langhurst Wood Road to create access into the northern parcel. A road will pass through the hedgerow within northern parcel at existing gap between fields.	Medium	New hedges of <i>Carpinus betulus</i> will be planted around the Langhurst Wood entrance, and central hedgerow strengthened with additional buffer planting.	Moderate	The character of the boundary hedgerows will remain unaffected and additional, more formal hedges introduced within the site.
Ancient Woodland	High	There is no incursion into the ancient woodland or the 15m minimum buffer zone on the northern boundary.	Negligible	No loss of ancient woodland.	Minor	The closest built development is 5m from the buffer zone and 20m from the woodland itself.
Fields and grassland	Medium	The fields comprise of species-poor semi-improved grassland and grazed by horses. It has limited ecological value.	Large	The grassland has limited biodiversity value. Wildflower grassland will be sown.	Major/Moderate	The fields comprising the site will be built over.
Watercourses	Medium	Pondtail stream to be retained. Four ponds to be retained.	Medium	Watercourses are to be retained.	Moderate	The stream is located in the hedgerow to the south of the site which is retained. Ponds tests negative for GCN presence. Ponds are located within woodland or ancient woodland.
Field patterns	Medium	Historically field patterns of the site have not changed but hedgerows have become more defined.	Medium	Majority of the hedgerows and trees on the field boundaries are to be retained with development within the fields.	Moderate	The pattern of fields will be retained in as far as the development will sit within the existing boundary hedges, however the character will change.

Table 3: Landscape Character Effects

Landscape Character Areas	Sensitivity or value	Description and effect	Magnitude of change	Mitigation	Residual effect	Rationale
National Character Area - The Low Weald (NCA No.121)	Medium	Clay vales, limestone/ sandstone. Iron working, brick, glass, lime kilns, quarries. Loss of rural fields due to development. Hedgerows and shaws, rural lanes, grass verges. Small towns/ villages. Heathland. Woodlands. Rivers, streams, watercourses, ponds.	Low	Retention of trees and hedgerows where possible with TPF. Mitigation planting to be proposed. Retention of watercourses.	No effects	Application lies north of Horsham on the southern fringes of the character area. Retention of watercourses. Retention of trees and hedgerows and mitigation planting to be included.
Local Landscape Character Assessment Character Type K	Medium	Flat /Gently undulating narrow clay vale landscape. Partly enclosed by hedgerows. Field trees are a feature. Loss of rural fields due to development.	Low	Retention of trees and hedgerows. Substantial mitigation tree planting to be proposed on boundaries.	Negligible	Retention of trees and hedgerows and mitigation planting to be included.
Narrow Clay Vale Farmland District Landscape Character Type K Warnham & Faygate Vale Landscape Area K2.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat to gently undulating clay vale. • Medium to large scale field pattern of arable farmland, with smaller areas of pasture; • Isolated patches of woodland; • Semi enclosed or open character; • Dominance of major road and rail communication routes; • Significant area historic parkland of Warnham Court; • Visual intrusion in parts from retail and industrial areas, housing and sand gravel. Loss of rural fields due to development, part of the enclosed nature of the site will be lost	Medium	Fields and paddocks will be lost. Woodland patches will be retained. Additional planting on boundaries.	Minor	Retention of woodland. Semi-enclosed character partly lost with introduction of access points but additional planting will mitigate this.

Landscape Character Areas	Sensitivity or value	Description and effect	Magnitude of change	Mitigation	Residual effect	Rationale
Narrow Clay Vale Farmland District Landscape Character Type P (western part of site) Minor River Valleys	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrow alluvial floodplain V-shaped valley landform Small irregular fields Intimate character. 	Low	Fields will be lost to the development but the intimate character to be maintained.	Negligible	No effect - retention of the intimate character with hedgerows and trees.
West Sussex landscape character assessment. LW8 Northern Vales Low Weald.	Medium	Clay vale, floodplain, crossed by River Arun. Fields with variable hedgerows. Pasture farmland. Scattered tree cover. Field trees and farm ponds. Road/rail corridors. Suburban/urban fringe. Rural character, Historic parkland of Warnham Court. Visual intrusion from retail and industrial areas.	Low	Pasture farmland and grassland will be lost by the development but retain the character with retention of trees and ponds. Amenity trees and screen planting along roadsides.	Negligible	Enhancement of woodlands and hedgerows with additional planting and improving the grassland with meadow mixes.
Horsham District Capacity Study - Zone 3 West and North West Horsham.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flat undulating landform, Boldings Brook. Medium scale pattern of irregular arable/pasture fields Old thick hedgerows/banks Railway and A264 Overall good landscape condition, except A264 	Low	Loss of pasture fields but retention of trees hedgerows.	Low	Significant old hedgerows and irregular pasture fields.

7.6 In 2003 the Landscape Character Assessment evaluated the landscape condition and the sensitivity to change of each local landscape character area. The results are summarised below:

a) Character Area K2: Warnham and Faygate Vale:

- Landscape Condition: “Condition is considered to be overall declining, locally poor, due to intensive arable agriculture, visual and noise intrusion of major traffic routes, and visual impact of industrial / retail areas in the Broadbridge Heath area.”
- Sensitivity to Change: “Overall the area has a moderate sensitivity to change reflecting its mostly moderate intervisibility and only moderate intrinsic landscape qualities.

b) Character Area I2: Warnham and Ruser Wooded Ridge:

- Landscape Condition: “Condition is mostly good.”
- Sensitivity to Change: “Overall sensitivity is high. Despite the high degree of enclosure in many parts of the area, some ridgetops and slopes are prominent and the area has many intrinsic landscape qualities.”

c) Character Area P1, Upper Arun Valley:

- Landscape Condition: “The overall condition is good, with some local areas of decline of unspoilt character in the Horsham area.”
- Sensitivity to Change: “Overall sensitivity to change is high reflecting many landscape qualities of the areas, visual prominence of some valleysides.”

7.7 A Housing Capacity Study was carried out in 2014 to assess the capacity of different areas to accommodate additional housing developments. The area boundaries do not coincide with the landscape character areas evaluated in 2003, and do not cover the whole study area. The map accompanying the North Horsham and West Crawley Study shows four zones in proximity to the site,

numbered 10, 14, 15 and 37. The southern parcel of the site lies within area 37, “Land North West of Horsham”. The capacity study states that there is a moderate capacity for major housing or employment development in area 37. The landscape value was assessed as low to moderate, based on the limited public access on rights of way, and the low tranquillity due to the road and rail corridors. The visual sensitivity was assessed as moderate due to “variable enclosure from hedgerows and hedgerow trees.”

- 7.8 The parts of the study area which were considered to be more sensitive to development in the 2014 capacity study included visually prominent landform to the north east of the site (identified as area 10) where change would be more evident from land immediately to the south, generally within the Warnham and Rusper Wooded Ridge character area, and areas 35 and 36 where the Warnham Court and the Nature Reserve are located.

Effects on the Site

- 7.9 The quality of the site, including the trees, hedges and grassland within it and Mercer Road / footpath 1574, has been assessed as having an overall **medium/high** landscape quality. Most of the landscape elements remain intact and in good repair, and the public right of way provides limited views into the site.
- 7.10 The value of the site is assessed as **medium**, since the landscape typology of fields surrounded by mature trees and hedgerows is common in the local landscape, and the site is not within a National Landscape or National Park.
- 7.11 The landscape elements of the site are judged to have a **high** susceptibility to change since the introduction of housing and roads into the site will reduce the amount of grassland and the vegetative boundary features will be cut through to create access. However this level of susceptibility to change only applies to the site itself and not to the surroundings which are assessed below.
- 7.12 The visual sensitivity of the site is assessed as **medium**. The assessment includes a consideration of the relative numbers of people likely to be affected. This

considered to be low as there are very few existing dwellings with views into the site. Mercer Road is a public right of way (PRoW 1574) and a no-through-road to traffic which cannot cross the railway, making it more attractive to walk on than other minor roads without pavements, but it is not a rural footpath with extensive views over surrounding countryside; there are many vegetative features which interrupt views. The overall sensitivity of the site is **high**.

- 7.13 The magnitude of the landscape impacts of the development on the site is assessed as **large** since the fields will be converted into residential properties, roads and parking areas. The layout of the site has been designed to minimise the impact on trees and hedgerows, removing only those which are necessary to create roads into and within the development.
- 7.14 The combination of a large impact and a medium to high susceptibility to change infer a **major to moderate** landscape impact on the site.

Effects on the area surrounding the site within the wider study area

- 7.15 This section discusses the vulnerability of the landscape within close reach of the site, defined as the land south of the hills and between the A24, the A264 and Rusper Road. This encompasses the railway and station, Langhurst Wood Road, the dual carriageway, the brickworks, surrounding fields and woodland.
- 7.16 The quality of the surrounding area is considered to be **low**, since it includes many industrial areas such as the station yard, the brickworks and the Graylands Estate. Few buildings are in local vernacular style and trees and hedgerows along Mercer Road are poorly maintained. The presence of the railway line to the west and the A264 dual carriageway immediately to the south introduce further detracting elements, and taken together these features have downgraded the assessment of landscape quality from medium to low. This is defined in Table A in Appendix A of this report.
- 7.17 The value of the existing landscape within the wider study area has been assessed as **medium**. The undulating rural landscape to the north of Horsham has

recreational value, however there are few public rights of way through the area immediately around the site. The parts of the study area with higher landscape value are located to the southwest of the site beyond the A24 / A264 and the railway line including the nature reserve and parkland landscape around Warnham Court. The ecological and recreational values of the nature reserve and mill pond are clearly high, and the landscape around Warnham Court, with its historic deer park has cultural value. There are however some detracting landscape elements such as the busy Langhurst Wood Road, which is a dominant presence with lorries and trucks utilising it for access to the industrial facilities to the north of the site. This is defined in **Table B** in **Appendix A** of this report

- 7.18 The susceptibility to change of the landscape surrounding the site and the study area in general has been defined as **low**, due to the high number of man-made features in the area. The site is bounded by a dual carriageway, a road used by lorries visiting the brickworks and a railway. There is also a major new residential development under construction within the study area. Beyond these elements however, the landscape is rural and has strong landscape elements which create enclosure such as hedgerows and trees. In terms of tranquillity, it is subject to noise and movement from the railway, roads and the industrial units between the railway and the site. This is outlined in **Table C** in **Appendix A** of this report.
- 7.19 As defined in **Table D** the visual sensitivity of the surrounding landscape has been defined as **low** as the landscape has an undulating topography with frequent vegetative features. The land between the A24 and the railway line has no public rights of way, only Station Road provides access to this area. The surrounding land to the east has two public footpaths which would have a degree of focus on the landscape and are explored in viewpoints 6 and 10. The majority of the surrounding area is within the zone of theoretical visibility of the site, however the density of tree cover considerably reduces the openness of the landscape. There are several industrial areas but they are not particularly conspicuous in the landscape. The busy trunk roads are well screened by belts of woodland although noise is evident.

- 7.20 The impact of the major development of 'Land North of Horsham', located to the east of the site on the landscape must also be considered. There is an approved Outline permission (Horsham Planning Portal reference DC/16/1677) for 2,750 dwellings, business park, retail, community centre, leisure facilities, education facilities, public open space, landscaping and related infrastructure. Since the first draft of this LVIA was written in November 2020, construction has commenced with alterations to the Rusper Road roundabout on the A264 and the building of new housing to the north of the roundabout. This can be seen in the aerial photograph in Figure 2. The plans indicate an extension of Mercer Road into the major development area, with a new roundabout on Langhurst Wood Road. Due to the scale of this development, it is likely that the introduction of this development will have an impact and affect the baseline conditions of the existing landscape, for example the open field pattern and rural character of the countryside will be into a suburban residential district. Viewpoints 6, 8 and 10 are within the proposed major development area.
- 7.21 The overall weighted assessment of landscape susceptibility to change has been assessed as **low**.
- 7.22 The site currently has good enclosure and containment of views within the landscape from the existing woodland, hedgerows, trees and railway line, restricting views to short distance views from adjacent roads. The impact of the development on the surrounding area, bearing in mind the nearby major development, is assessed as **small**, since it will involve the introduction of elements that may be prominent but not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.

Cumulative effects

- 7.23 The cumulative effects of this development and the major development to the east of the site are:
- increased traffic on Langhurst Wood Road and introduction of a roundabout joining Mercer Road.

- visual effects during construction for fencing and machinery
- loss of landscape elements for access
- changes to open field pattern and rural character.

7.24 The overall landscape character effect is therefore assessed as **minor**. This is outlined in **Table F** in **Appendix A** of this report. It must be considered that the site currently has good enclosure and containment of views within the landscape from the existing woodland, hedgerows, trees and railway line, restricting views to short distance views from adjacent roads.

Effects on the Wider Study Area

7.25 This paragraph addresses the impacts on the remainder of the study area. The urban area of Horsham occupies around 20 percent of the remainder of the study area and to the north there are wide swathes of land on the opposite side of the ridge beyond the ZTV. A large part of the land within the ZTV is the major development area where the baseline is being dramatically changed as the housing is built out. For these reasons it is anticipated that any additional development within the site would have a **negligible** impact on the wider parts of the study area.

Visual Impacts

7.26 Visual impact assessment considers the sensitivity to change of visual receptors within the study area, and the magnitude of change associated with the introduction of the proposed development into the existing visual context.

7.27 A summary of the visual effects at each viewpoint location is shown in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Summary and comparison of Overall Residual Visual Effects

No	Viewpoints	Receptor Type	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Visual Effects	Magnitude of Change	Overall Visual Effects
				Operational Stage		Residual Stage	
1	PRoW accessed from Mayes Lane	Users of PRoW	High	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
2	PRoW accessed from Church Street	Users of PRoW	High	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
3	Warnham Train Station	Users of publicly accessible route	High	Small	Moderate	Small	Moderate
4	Mercer Road	Users of road	Medium	Very large	Major	Large	Major
5	Langhurst Wood Road	Users of road	Medium	Very large	Major	Large	Major
6	PRoW accessed from Langhurst Wood Road	Users of PRoW	High	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
7	Graylands Business Park	Workers	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
8	PRoW Bush Lane	Users of PRoW	High	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
9	Warnham Nature Reserve	Users of nature reserve	High	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
10	Moat Road, Hawksbourne	Residents	High	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
11	View from Mercer Road	Users of PRoW	High	Medium	Major	Medium	Major
12	Langhurst Wood Road	Residents	High	Large	Major	Large	Major
13	Langhurst Wood Road	Residents	High	Very Large	Major	Very Large	Major

Conclusion of Overall Residual Visual Effects

7.28 Table 4 considers the sensitivity to change for visual receptors within the study area and the magnitude of change associated with the introduction of the proposed development. The overall visual effects during operational stage were found to be major from 5 viewpoints 4, 5, 11, 12, and 13. The magnitude of change was found to be large from 3 viewpoints which are 4, 5, and 12 and very large from 13. The overall visual effects during residential stage were major from 5 which were 4, 5, 11, 12 and 13. These potential visual effects can be reduced on maturation with a mitigation strategy.

Residential Receptors

7.29 Residential receptors are considered to have a high level of sensitivity, even though in planning terms there is no right to view from a residential property. This report does not specifically assess any viewpoints from residential receptors, due to the limited number within the local landscape, however Viewpoint 10 is within the new residential neighbourhood of Mowbray Village. From this viewpoint the proposed development at Pondtail Farm would be situated beyond a dense band of mature trees along Langhurst Wood Road and the hedge running alongside footpath 1421. Views from the residential areas to the south of the A264 within the ZTV have no views of the site due to the dense tree planting along both sides of the A264.

7.30 Viewpoint 5 can be considered to represent views from the small number of properties at the southern end of Langhurst Wood Road. There will be a major visual impact here due to the proximity of the site to the properties. The open field currently used for grazing horses will be filled with housing and roads.

Users of Public Rights of Way and bridleway

7.31 Users of Public Rights of Way are considered high in that receptors' attention is often focused on the landscape through which they are travelling. Receptors often use Public Rights of Way for recreational purposes and the landscape is

considered an important component to their overall experience. The following PRow's have been assessed as follows:

- Viewpoint 1, north east of the site, is taken from a PRow along Mayes Lane. Overall the magnitude of change for users of this location is negligible as the development is not visible from this location. Although there are open views across the parkland landscape, there are many intervening belts of trees between the viewpoint and the site.
- Viewpoint 2 is taken from where Footpath 1577 leading east out of Warnham village meets Bridleway 36471-1, known locally as Shelley Cycle Path. The winter scene shows a prominent tree in the centre of a field and belts of woodland screening Dorking Road (the A24). Due to the interceding vegetation between the PRow and the site, the overall visual effect for users of this PRow is negligible and no change to the view would be appreciated.
- Viewpoints 3 and 4 are on Station Road and Mercer Road respectively; the route between these two points is designated as a footpath (reference 1574) since the through road over the former level crossing is now closed to motor traffic. At Viewpoint 3 views of the site are obscured by buildings in the station yard and a dense conifer hedge around the properties on the other side of the railway line. At Viewpoint 4 the site is clearly visible and there would be a major impact on this view due to its proximity.
- Viewpoint 6 has been taken from Footpath 1421, a PRow located to the east of the site. The view directly towards the site would be a side-on view of the dense hedgerow which runs along the western side of the path, and acts as a visual barrier to the site, therefore the camera has been angled to the south to give a more informative view of the hedge and the rural character of the land to the east of the site.

- Viewpoint 8 is taken from Bush Lane, a rural track running in an east – west direction which provides access from Rusper Road to Owlscastle Farm. The track is designated as a bridleway, number 1585. a PRow accessed from Bartholomew Way. Although the ZTV suggests that the site could be visible from this viewpoint, it is around 2.5km across flat land with much intervening woodland and hedges which prevent views. The overall visual effect for users of this PRow is negligible as no change to the view would be appreciated.

Road Users

- 7.32 Road users are typically less sensitive than users of Public Rights of Way or residential receptors due to the speed through which they travel through the landscape. Road users' attention may also not be focused on the landscape. Viewpoint 5, discussed above, is located on Langhurst Wood Road, and has views into the southeastern corner of the site. During the summer the roadside vegetation is much denser than in winter however there are glimpses of visibility over the top of the hedgerow into the site. The buildings will be higher than the hedge and so will be visible in some locations along Langhurst Wood Road. It is considered that there would be a major impact on views experienced by motorists travelling at 30 miles per hour, especially passing entrances to the site where vegetation has been cleared to create visibility. A mitigation strategy will be required along this boundary where there are views into the development. Several other roads within the study area were visited, as they were indicated as having potential views on the ZTV, but no change would be appreciated as most roads have trees and hedges alongside, or there are houses and other buildings obscuring views of the site.

Workers

- 7.33 Viewpoint 7 is at an elevated position within the Graylands Industrial Estate to the north of the site. Most of the receptors at this location will be workers or visitors to the industrial units and are considered to have a low sensitivity to visual impacts.

The site is not visible from Graylands Estate therefore the visual impact is negligible.

Nature Reserve

- 7.34 Warnham Local Nature Reserve, featuring Warnham Mill Pond, is situated approximately 1.5 km south west of the site and is enjoyed by birdwatchers and recreational visitors as well as volunteers working in the reserve. Due to the dense belt of trees at the northern end of the Mill Pond, and the trees alongside the intervening A264, the site cannot be seen from Viewpoint 9, within a bird hide at the southern end of the pond.

Summary of Visual Impacts

- 7.35 In terms of visual amenity, the site as a whole is visually enclosed from the south, west and north. The existing vegetation along the site boundaries, the railway line running north to south along the western boundary and the belts of trees along both sides of the A24 and A264 provide strong visual barriers from throughout the immediate local landscape. Occasional views of the site from the east, along Langhurst Wood Road are possible, largely due to the breaks in the hedgerow opening up views into the site. Receptors using Mercer Road will experience the largest visual impact due to the proximity of the proposals.
- 7.36 Views from all other viewpoints were negligible due to the topography, existing built form and vegetation which form strong visual barriers even in the winter months when trees have lost their leaves.

8.0 Conclusions and Discussions

- 8.1 This report provides a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for the site at Pondtail Farm, Mercer Road, Horsham to inform planning proposals and accompany the planning application for the site.
- 8.2 In compiling this baseline information for this report, ACD have undertaken a desktop study including reviews of aerial photography, web searches, Local Planning Authority (LPA) publications and landscape character assessments and National Character Assessment (NCA) information. ACD then undertook field assessments which includes a photographic survey of the landscape and using photography from a number of representative viewpoints.
- 8.3 The site does not fall within any land that has any formal designations. However, there are a number of other designations within the study area including Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland, Ancient Replanted Woodland, Registered Parks and Gardens (Warnham Court), Local Nature Reserve (Warnham), Conservation Areas (Warnham and Horsham), a Long Distance Walking Path (West Sussex Literary Trail), a Site of Special Scientific Interest (Warnham) and Scheduled Monuments (Moated site, Motte and bailey castle and the 'Castle' moated site).
- 8.4 The emerging Local Plan was in consultation until March 2020 and the Draft Local Plan is now being prepared for submission, with adoption due in 2025. It identifies some smaller sites to meet housing needs (500 homes or less) with potential for allocation. SA568 – Land at Mercer Road is on a short list of sites with potential for allocation as a small amount of expansion to the west of the current North Horsham site.
- 8.5 The site is located in a rural location which is close to a major trunk road and a railway, and the local roads are regularly used by heavy vehicles associated with the nearby brickworks and industrial estates. These features have an inevitable impact on the tranquillity of the area. The landscape typology of gently undulating fields and lanes lined with sparse hedgerows is not uncommon in the area. The

site is separated from the built-up areas of Horsham by the busy A264; the nearest dwellings are the row of semi-detached railway houses on the other side of the railway and some isolated properties on Langhurst Wood Road.

- 8.6 Due to the change in baseline characteristics (i.e. introduction of a large residential development into open grassland fields) a change in the landscape character will be appreciated, but this will be similar to the impacts of the much larger housing development already underway to the east.
- 8.7 When considering the landscape quality, value, character and visual sensitivity, the overall weighted assessment of landscape sensitivity of the site has been assessed as **high**, and the magnitude of landscape impacts on the extent of the site is **large**.
- 8.8 The overall landscape character effect of the development on the site is assessed as **major**. This is outlined in **Table F** in **Appendix A** of this report.
- 8.9 The area surrounding the site is assessed as having a **low** landscape sensitivity as there are several detracting elements within this area, namely busy roads, a railway line and several industrial areas. The potential impacts of the development on the immediate surroundings are considered to be **small**, therefore the overall landscape character effects are **minor**.
- 8.10 It must be considered that the site currently has good enclosure and containment of views within the landscape from the existing woodland, hedgerows, trees and railway line, restricting views to short distance views from adjacent roads.
- 8.11 In terms of visual amenity, the site as a whole is visually enclosed from the south, west and north. The existing vegetation along these site boundaries, and the railway line running north to south along the western boundary, provide strong visual barriers from throughout the immediate local landscape. Views of the site from along Langhurst Wood Road are afforded, largely due to the breaks in the hedgerow opening up views into the site.

- 8.12 Views from all other viewpoints were **negligible** due to the topography and existing built form and vegetation forming visual barriers.
- 8.13 The overall visual impact of the development on the local landscape has been assessed as **medium** with reference to the criteria in **Table H**, giving an overall visual effect of **moderate / minor**.
- 8.14 Following the implementation of the landscape strategy and mitigation planting, the residual overall visual effects of the proposed development will remain for viewpoints along Langhurst Wood Road and Mercer Road. The main receptors for these views, however, will be road users, and due to the speed in which they experience and perceive the landscape they are less sensitive to change.

9.0 Appendices

Appendix A – Methodology

Appendix B- Zone of Theoretical Visibility Methodology

Appendix C- Landscape Effects

Appendix D- Visual Effects

Appendix E- Glossary of Terms

Appendix F - Sources of information

Appendix G - Policy

Appendix H - Published Landscape Character Areas

Figure 1- Ordnance Survey Map

Figure 2- Aerial Photography

Figure 3- Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Figure 4- Viewpoint Locations

Figure 5- Statutory Designation Plan

Figure 6- North Site Proposal Plan

Figure 7 – South Site Proposal Plan

Appendix A- Methodology

Quality

- 9.1 Quality or condition relates to the physical state of the landscape and its intactness from the visual, functional and ecological perspectives, together with the state of repair of its constituent features or elements (e.g. hedgerows, woodlands, field pattern etc.). Local landscape quality within the study area has been considered based on the criteria described in the following table.

Table A. Landscape Quality (or Condition)

Landscape Quality (or Condition)	Typical Indicators
Very High	All landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are in local vernacular and materials. No detracting elements are evident
High	Most landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Most buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Few detracting elements are evident
Medium	Some landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Some buildings are in local vernacular and materials and some detracting elements are evident
Low	Few landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Few buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Many detracting or incongruous elements are evident
Very Low	No landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are not in local vernacular and materials. Detracting or incongruous elements are much in evidence

Value

- 9.2 The value attributed to an area of landscape reflects communal perception at a local, regional, national or, occasionally, international scale. It is informed by a number of factors including scenic beauty, wildness, tranquillity and particular cultural associations. Cultural associations may be widely held at a national scale or more local in nature. Landscapes considered to be of the highest value would generally be formally designated at the national level, whereas those considered of lowest value would generally be undesignated, degraded landscapes, perhaps identified as being in poor condition and requiring either restoration or re-creation. Although value is largely determined by reference to statutory and planning policy designations, an absence of such designation does not necessarily imply the absence of value, as other factors such as scarcity or cultural associations can establish an area of otherwise unremarkable landscape as a valued local resource. The value of landscape

character areas and designations has been determined using the criteria described in the following table.

Table B. Landscape Value

Landscape Value	Typical Indicators
Very High	Areas comprising a clear composition of valued landscape components in robust form and health, free of disruptive visual detractors and with a strong sense of place. Areas containing a strong, balanced structure with distinct features worthy of conservation. Such areas would generally be internationally or nationally recognised designations, e.g. National Parks
High	Areas primarily containing valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition and lacking prominent disruptive visual detractors. Areas containing a strong structure with noteworthy features or elements, exhibiting a sense of place. Such areas would generally be national statutorily designated areas, such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Such areas may also relate to the setting of internationally or nationally statutory designated areas, e.g. National Parks.
Medium	Areas primarily of valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition with low levels of disruptive visual detractors, exhibiting a recognisable landscape structure. Such areas would generally be non-statutory locally designated areas such as Areas of Great Landscape Value. Such areas may also relate to the setting of national statutorily designated areas, such as AONB.
Low	Areas containing some features of landscape value but lacking a coherent and aesthetically pleasing composition with frequent detracting visual elements, exhibiting a distinguishable structure often concealed by mixed land uses or development. Such areas would be commonplace at the local level and would generally be undesignated, offering scope for improvement.
Very Low	Areas lacking valued landscape components or comprising degraded, disturbed or derelict features, lacking any aesthetically pleasing composition with a dominance of visually detracting elements, exhibiting mixed land uses which conceal the baseline structure. Such areas would generally be restricted to the local level and identified as requiring recovery.

Susceptibility to change

- 9.3 Each landscape character area or designation is assessed for the sensitivity of its character to the introduction of the proposed development, considering key characteristics, landscape elements, composition and cultural associations. Certain aspects of landscape character are particularly important indicators of the degree to which a landscape is likely to be able to successfully accommodate development. These include the general scale and complexity of its landforms and elements; the degree of enclosure or openness; the degree and nature of manmade influences upon it; and whether it offers particular experiences such as remoteness or tranquillity. The criteria used to determine the sensitivity of landscape character are set out in the following table.

Table C. Susceptibility to change

Susceptibility of Change	Typical Indicators
Very High	<p>Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape susceptible to change and of high quality and condition.</p> <p>Scale and Enclosure: Small-scale landform/land cover/ development, human scale indicators, fine grained, enclosed with narrow views, sheltered.</p> <p>Manmade influence: Absence of manmade elements, traditional or historic settlements, natural features and 'natural' forms of amenity parkland, perceived as natural 'wild land' lacking in man-made features, land use elements and detractors</p> <p>Remoteness and Tranquillity: Sense of peace, isolation or wildness, remote and empty, no evident movement.</p>
High	Where, overall, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium
Medium	<p>Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape of moderate susceptibility to change and of medium quality and condition.</p> <p>Scale and Enclosure: Medium-scale landform/land cover/ development, textured, semi-enclosed with middle distance views.</p> <p>Manmade influence: Some presence of man-made elements, which may be partially out of scale with the landscape and be of only partially consistent with vernacular styles.</p> <p>Remoteness and Tranquillity: some noise, evident, but not dominant human activity and development, noticeable movement.</p>
Low	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low.
Very Low	<p>Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape insusceptible to change and of low quality and condition.</p> <p>Scale and Enclosure: Large-scale landform/land cover/ development, Featureless, coarse grained, open with broad views.</p> <p>Manmade influence: Frequent presence of utility, infrastructure or industrial elements, contemporary structures e.g. masts, pylons, cranes, silos, industrial sheds with vertical emphasis, functional man-made land-use patterns and engineered aspects.</p> <p>Remoteness and Tranquillity: Busy and noisy, human activity and development, prominent movement.</p>

Visual Sensitivity of Landscape Areas:

- 9.4 The visual sensitivity of an area of landscape relates to its general level of openness, the nature and number of visual receptors present within a landscape, and the probability of change in visual amenity due to the development being visible. It should be noted that landscape visual sensitivity refers to the visual sensitivity of the entire landscape that is being assessed, rather than an assessment of the visual effects of a specific, individual development.
- 9.5 The following table provides an overview of the typical indicators of visual sensitivity, which can be used to give a transparent, reasoned judgement regarding landscape visual sensitivity.

Table D. Landscape Visual Sensitivity

Landscape Sensitivity	Visual	Typical Indicators
Very High		Visual interruption: Flat or gently undulating topography, few if any vegetative or built features. Nature of views: Densely populated, dispersed pattern of small settlements, outward looking settlement, landscape focused recreation routes and/or visitor facilities, distinctive settings, gateways or public viewpoints.
High		Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium.
Medium		Visual interruption: Undulating or gently rolling topography, some vegetative and built features. Nature of views: Moderate density of population, settlements of moderate size with some views outwards, routes with some degree of focus on the landscape.
Low		Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low.
Very Low		Visual interruption: Rolling topography, frequent vegetative or built features. Nature of views: Unpopulated or sparsely populated, concentrated pattern of large settlements, introspective settlement, inaccessible, indistinctive or industrial settings.

- 9.6 The overall landscape sensitivity is derived by combining the assessed values attributed to landscape condition, landscape value, character sensitivity and effects on landscape elements and landscape visual sensitivity, to define an overall value within the range of Very High, High, Medium and Low.
- 9.7 Since each criterion has a varying weight in its contribution to sensitivity the overall value is determined by professional judgement.
- 9.8 For the purposes of this assessment greater weight is attributed to Landscape Value and susceptibility to change since these factors have greater defining criteria in the description of the landscape characterisation.

Magnitude of Change

- 9.9 Magnitude of change has been predicted by considering the anticipated loss or disruption to character forming landscape elements (e.g. tree planting, landform, buildings, and watercourses etc.), which would arise through introduction of the proposed scheme.

Table E: Definition of Magnitude of Landscape Impacts

Magnitude	Description
Large	Total loss of or major alteration to key valued elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements considered being prominent and totally uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be at a considerable variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. Would cause a high quality landscape to be permanently changed and its quality diminished.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be out of scale with the landscape, and at odds with the local pattern and landform. Will leave an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality.
Small	Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. May not quite fit into the landform and scale of the landscape. Affect an area of recognised landscape character
Negligible	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Maintain existing landscape quality, and maybe slightly at odds to the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape.

Overall Landscape Character Effect

9.10 The overall landscape character effect is determined by the assessment of landscape sensitivity set against the magnitude of change as indicated by the matrix in the table below.

Table F: Overall Landscape Character Effects

Magnitude	Sensitivity			
	Very High	High	Medium	Low
Large	Major	Major	Major/moderate	Moderate
Medium	Major	Major/moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ minor
Small	Moderate	Moderate/minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Minor/moderate	Minor	Minor/ Negligible	Negligible

9.11 The prediction and extent of effect cannot always be absolute. It is for each assessment to determine the assessment criteria and the thresholds, using informed and well-reasoned professional judgement supported by thorough

justification for their selection, and explanation as to how the conclusions for each effect assessed have been derived, as noted in GLVIA 3rd edition para 2.23-2.26 and 3.32-36.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

- 9.12 The locations from which the proposed development will be visible are known as visual receptors. The assessment of visual sensitivity considers both the category of visual receptor and the nature of their existing view. It takes account of the location of the receptor or viewpoint; the expectations, occupation or activity of the people present; the quality of the existing visual context; and the importance or value likely to be attributed by them to the available view. It is therefore the case that not all receptors within a given category are deemed to display equal sensitivity.
- 9.13 In accordance with the GLVIA, for the purposes of the visual assessment, the visual receptors have been graded according to their sensitivity to change against criteria set out in the table below.

Table G: Visual Receptor sensitivity

Receptor Sensitivity	Description
High	Occupiers of residential properties. Users of outdoor recreational facilities, including public rights of way, whose attention or interest may be focused on the landscape Communities where the development results in changes in the landscape setting or valued views enjoyed by the community.
Medium	People travelling through or past the affected landscape in cars, on trains or other transport routes where higher speeds are involved and views sporadic and short-lived. People engaged in outdoor recreation where enjoyment of the landscape is incidental rather than the main interest.
Low	People at their place of work, Industrial facilities.

- 9.14 The number of people likely to be present and the duration of time that a view is likely to be experienced may also influence the visual sensitivity of a particular location.
- 9.15 It is sometimes the case that different categories of visual receptor might be present at a selected representative viewpoint (e.g. a selected location may

include both residential properties and workplaces suggesting different levels of sensitivity). In such cases the primary receptor category is identified (usually the more sensitive).

Visual Magnitude of Change

- 9.16 The visibility of the proposals and the magnitude of their change upon a view and the resulting effect of visual effect are dependent on the range of factors already outlined, together with, the angle of the sun, the time of year and weather conditions. Of equal importance will be whether the site is seen completely, or in part; whether the site appears on the skyline; whether it is viewed with a backcloth of land or vegetation; or with a complex foreground; and whether the site forms part of an expansive landscape or is visible within a restricted view. The aspect of dwellings and whether the view is from a main window or a secondary window, which may be used less frequently, is also a consideration. From highways, the direction and speed of travel are also a consideration. In the assessment magnitude of change is ranked in accordance with the follow table.

Table H: Definition of Magnitude of Visual Impact

Magnitude	Examples
Very Large	The development would result in a dramatic change in the existing view and/or would cause a dramatic change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would appear large scale and/or form the dominant elements within the overall view and/or may be in full view the observer or receptor. Commanding, controlling the view.
Large	The development would result in a prominent change in the existing view and/or would cause a prominent change in the quality and /or character of the view. The development would form prominent elements within the overall view and/or may be easily noticed by the observer or receptor. Standing out, striking, sharp, unmistakable, easily seen.
Medium	The development would result in a noticeable change in the existing view and/or would cause a noticeable change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would form a conspicuous element within the overall view and/or may be readily noticed by the observer or receptor. Noticeable, distinct, catching the eye or attention, clearly visible, well defined.
Small	The development would result in a perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or character of the view. The development would form an apparent small element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Visible, evident, obvious.
Very Small	The development would result in a barely perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or would form an inconspicuous minor element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Lacking sharpness of definition, not obvious, indistinct, not clear, obscure, blurred, and indefinite.
Negligible	Only a small part of the development would be discernible and/or it is at such a distance that no change to the existing view can be appreciated. Weak, not legible, near limit of acuity of human eye.

Overall Visual Effect

9.17 The overall visual effects are determined by the assessment of receptor sensitivity set against the magnitude of change, as indicated by the matrix in **Table I**.

Table I: Overall Visual Effects

Magnitude	Sensitivity		
	High	Medium	Low
Very large	Major	Major	Major/moderate
Large	Major	Major/moderate	Moderate
Medium	Major/moderate	Moderate	Moderate/minor
Small	Moderate	Moderate/minor	Minor
Very Small	Minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Visual Assessment Parameters

9.18 In order to evaluate what the visual impact of the development will be and, if appropriate, what can be done, to ameliorate the impact, it is necessary to describe the existing situation to provide a basis against which any change can be assessed. The assessment of visual impact from any one location takes into account the:

- Sensitivity of the views and viewers (visual receptor) affected;
- Nature, scale or magnitude and duration of the change
- Extent of the proposed development that will be visible;
- Degree of visual intrusion or obstruction that will occur;
- Distance of the view;
- Change in character or quality of the view compared to the existing.

9.19 A range of fixed visual receptors was initially considered, with emphasis placed on identification and selection of locations with a clear relationship to the proposed scheme where potential visual implications were deemed to be greatest. The key visual receptors normally include statutory and non-statutory designated or protected areas, cultural heritage resources, residential properties and farmsteads, recreational/tourist resources, panoramic hilltop views, focused or directed views, and cumulative views. Viewpoints were selected to be representative of these visual receptor types.

9.20 These preliminary viewpoints locations were assessed in terms of visibility during field investigation resulting in some preliminary viewpoints either being repositioned to locations offering improved visual representation or discounted as not offering any views. In addition, field investigation identified a number of other closer viewpoints.

- 9.21 For the field assessment, a Canon EOS 500D camera with an 18-55mm lens was used, set at 35mm focal length. This is in line with best practice as shown in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals.
- 9.22 Field investigation from the preliminary viewpoints was used to assess the actual visibility of the proposed development within the study area, taking into account the visual barrier effect of vegetation and buildings.

Site Appraisal/ Photographic Studies

- 9.23 The photographic study was undertaken in October and December 2020. Viewpoints at varying close distance from the site were selected to represent the typical views of the site. **Figure 4** shows the location of these viewpoints. In determining the viewpoints, whether in the immediate locality or further away, the main public highways, sections of public footpaths, and some of the publicly available spaces within the study area were visited. It is acknowledged that from public places, more viewers are likely to be affected thereby adding to the overall impact upon receptors in those locations.
- 9.24 The locations from which the proposed development will be visible are known as visual receptors. In accordance with the “Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition”, for the purposes of the visual assessment the visual receptors have been graded according to their sensitivity to change.
- 9.25 From the results of the initial desk study and site appraisal it is clear that the proposed development will be visible from a limited number of locations, at varying but close distances, and from both public and private areas.
- 9.26 In order to evaluate what the visual impact of the development will be and, if appropriate, what can be done to ameliorate the impact, it is necessary to describe the existing situation to provide a basis against which any change can be assessed. Each assessment of visual impact has therefore been made taking into consideration the character and quality of the existing view.

Limitations of Assessment

- 9.27 In determining the viewpoints, whether in the immediate locality or further away, the main public highways, sections of public footpaths, and some of the publicly available spaces within the study area were visited. It is acknowledged that from public places, more viewers are likely to be affected, thereby adding to the overall impact upon receptors in those locations.
- 9.28 For the purposes of this report, the assessment has been based on development proposals illustrated in the planning application. The proposals include a series of elevations and sections for the various heights of buildings and a series of detailed development plans.

APPENDIX B – Zone of Theoretical Visibility Methodology

- 9.29 Following an initial desk based assessment of aerial photography, Ordnance Survey mapping a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was prepared.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 9.30 In order to assist in the assessment of the potential visual effects of any development, a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) is normally modelled. The computer ZTV is used as a working tool to inform the assessment team of the extent of the zone within which the proposed development may have an influence or effect on landscape character and visual amenity and the areas within which the study area together with site survey work should be concentrated. It should be noted that this is a topographical information based exercise with no account being taken of the visual barrier effects of vegetation or buildings.
- 9.31 A computer generated ZTV was established and a study area together with a number of representative viewpoints determined. All these viewpoints are at various distances from the scheme and cover all main points of the compass.
- 9.32 The extent of study area and viewpoints were selected as being representative and having the potential to offer a degree of landscape and visual effects.

APPENDIX C- Landscape Assessment

LOCAL CHARACTER AREA

The site lies to the west of Langhurst Wood Road and either side of Mercer Road in the village of Warnham, Horsham, Sussex. The site is relatively flat and consists of grassland fields with tree lines, hedgerows and a small area of woodland.

The north of the site is enclosed by a small area of dense Ancient Woodland with industrial buildings including a large recycling facility behind it. Further north are more areas of industrial estates and pockets of ancient woodland and grassland fields.

To the west of the site a railway line runs north to south with Warnham train station accessed from the west end of Mercer Road. On the other side of the railway is a stream, Boldings Brook, with agricultural fields stretching until the village of Warnham in the far west.

Dense woodland and vegetation is located immediately to the south of the site with the A264 running beyond that. Further south on the other side of the dual carriageway is the high density built up area of Horsham. Warnham Nature Reserve is to the south west of the site.

To the immediate east of the site is Langhurst Wood Road. Further to the east are open grassland and agricultural fields.

Assessed Landscape Sensitivity of the Site		
Criteria	Indicator Description	Assessed Result
Quality	Most of the landscape elements remain intact and in good repair, and the public right of way provides limited views into the site.	Medium/High
Value	This type of landscape is relatively common within the county of West Sussex.	Medium
Landscape susceptibility to change	The introduction of housing and roads into the site will reduce the amount of grassland and the vegetative boundary features will be cut through to create access.	High
Landscape visual sensitivity	Mercer Road is a public right of way (PRoW 1574) and a no-through-road to traffic which cannot cross the railway, making it more attractive to walk on than other minor roads without pavements, however it is not a rural footpath with extensive views over surrounding countryside; there are many vegetative features which interrupt views; low population density.	Medium
	Overall, Weighted Landscape Sensitivity.	High

Assessed Landscape Sensitivity of the Surrounding Area (as defined in paragraph 7.15)		
Criteria	Indicator Description	Assessed Result
Quality	Includes many detracting elements: industrial areas such as the station yard, the brickworks and the Graylands Estate. Few buildings are in local vernacular style and trees and hedgerows along Mercer Road are poorly maintained.	Low
Value	The undulating rural landscape to the north of Horsham has recreational value, however there are few public rights of way through the area immediately around the site.	Medium
Landscape susceptibility to change	The site is bounded by a dual carriageway, a road used by lorries visiting the brickworks and a railway. There is also a major new residential development under construction within the study area. Beyond these elements however, the landscape is rural and has strong landscape elements which create enclosure such as hedgerows and trees. In terms of tranquillity, it is subject to noise and movement from the railway, roads and the industrial units between the railway and the site.	Low
Landscape visual sensitivity	The majority of the surrounding area is within the zone of theoretical visibility of the site, however the density of tree cover considerably reduces the openness of the landscape. There are several industrial areas but they are not particularly conspicuous in the landscape. The busy trunk roads are well screened by belts of woodland although noise is evident. The population is relatively low within this area, i.e. fewer receptors.	Low
	Overall, Weighted Landscape Sensitivity.	Low

APPENDIX D- Visual Assessment

Viewpoint 1: View from Public Right of Way (1420)



Vp1	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 1.96 km looking south east)	
Baseline Description	This is a view from the Public Right of Way (ref 1420 West Sussex County Council online map) accessed from the rural Mayes Lane. It is representative of views from the Public Right of Way and is within the ZTV.	
	The public right of way runs east to west, crossing Mayes Lane at a point between Mayes Park Farm and a group of farm cottages. Walking east, one crosses a small grassed area and the driveway leading to Mayes Park House, and passes through a gate in the roadside hedge to reach this point where the view opens out to a parkland landscape. The view is attractive in winter when the branching structure of the trees is clearly visible, however there is some acoustic disturbance from the A24 road.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint the proposals will be set beyond the woodland seen in the distance and beyond the A24. No change in the view is likely.	
Type of effect	The development would not be visible from this PRoW.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would not impact upon the landscape from this location.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Users of PRoW - High Negligible
Overall Visual Effects		Negligible

Viewpoint 2: View from Public Right of Way (1577/1578)



Vp2	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 1.23km looking east-north-east)	
Baseline Description	This is a view from Shelley Cyclepath on the outskirts of Warnham village. The 10km long path between Horsham Park and Warnham was opened in the summer of 2022 and named to commemorate the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley who was born in Horsham. At this point two public rights of way meet, (identified as Footpath 1577 and Bridleway 3647_1 on West Sussex County Council online map) and there are extensive views across the open parkland of Warnham Park, a large estate with a renowned deer park. This viewpoint is close to Warnham Conservation Area and so represents views from the Conservation Area and PRowWs.	
	The landscape has a rural feel at this location with an openness provided by the large arable fields. The vegetation is mainly native deciduous species located along the boundaries of the pastoral landscape, with individual tree specimens along field edges. The landscape is relatively flat at this location with no change in topography appreciated.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint the proposals will be set beyond the hedge to the left of the photograph and the network of vegetation which exists between the site and this location. No change in the view is likely. The late autumn view demonstrates that the vegetation provides a dense screening all year round.	
Type of Effect	The development would not be visible from this PRow.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would not impact upon the landscape from this location.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Users of PRow - High Negligible
Overall Visual Effects		Negligible

Viewpoint 3: View from western side of railway at Warnham Train Station



Vp3	Type 1: Panoramic View	(Distance 0.25km looking east)
Baseline Description	<p>This is a view from Warnham Train Station. Although there is no vehicular access across the tracks, pedestrians and cyclists can cross when the stop / go light in the centre of the photograph shows green. The view is cluttered with railway fencing, signage, lights and other infrastructure, and there is a row of conifers providing a dense screen to part of the site. Behind the camera is a row of 18 semi-detached cottages which are likely to have been built to house railway workers. This view is representative of the potential views of users of the train, the route through to Mercer Road and the residents in those houses.</p> <p>The landscape has an urban feel at this location, with a great number of man-made visually intrusive elements installed to ensure public safety. From this viewpoint the proposals will be located on the other side of the crossing beyond the existing vegetation; the site stretches alongside the railway line to the right of the photograph for approximately 400 metres.</p>	
Predicted change	The photograph demonstrates that views of the site would be restricted by the existing railway and the mixed evergreen and deciduous vegetation alongside the railway line.	
Type of Effect	The development would be partially visible from this viewpoint.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would have a minor impact upon the landscape from this location, and considering the visually distracting elements already present in the view, the addition of housing will not have a large adverse effect.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Residents and users of publicly accessible route - High Small
Overall Visual Effects		Moderate

Viewpoint 4: View from Mercer Road



Vp4	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 0.13km looking west)	
Baseline Description	<p>This is a view from Mercer Road directly into the north-east corner of the southern parcel of the site and is representative of users of the road which passes through the site, dividing the north and south parcels. The viewpoint is close to the junction with Langhurst Wood Road which is indicated by the trees and hedges on the left of the photograph. The Moated site Scheduled Monument is approximately 300m further to the north along Langhurst Wood Road.</p> <p>The landscape has a rural feel at this location, the circular cattle feeder indicating use of the land for grazing. Mercer Road is used only by traffic accessing the industrial units at the western end, since the road is closed at the railway line. However Langhurst Wood Road is busy with large lorries and trucks accessing the clay quarry and the recycling facility further north, and there are no pavements to either road in this area. The view shows an open field with scattered trees and a post and wire fence enclosing an area grazed by horses. The house to the left of centre is Pondtail Farm, excluded from the site.</p>	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint the proposals will be clearly visible across the entire vista.	
Type of Effect	The proposed layout of the development includes a perimeter road around this corner with green open space between the perimeter road and the existing roads. A footpath through the open space provides a link to the junction of Mercer Road and Langhurst Wood Road. Detached and semi-detached homes will line the far side of the perimeter road therefore from this viewpoint it will be possible to see roads, houses and cars parked between the houses.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would result in a prominent change in the existing view and would form a prominent element within the overall view that would be readily noticed by the observer.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Users of road -Medium Very large
Overall Visual Effects		Major

Viewpoint 5: View from Langhurst Wood Road



Vp5	Type 1: Panoramic View	(Distance 0.25km looking north west)
Baseline Description	This is a view from Pondtail Cottage on Langhurst Wood Road and is representative of users of the road adjacent to the site. The landscape has a rural edge character at this location as the road is very busy with large lorries and trucks accessing the recycling facility further north along Langhurst Wood Road. Traffic joins this road from the busy A264 dual carriageway road. At the southern end of Langhurst Wood Road are a few scattered properties including Pondtail Farm. On the otherwise of the fence boundary to Pondtail Cottage, trees will be proposed to screen views of the site. A proposed property will be set back 9m from this fence line which will be visible and glimpsed views into the south-east corner of the southern parcel.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint the proposals there will be visibility into the corner of the site which will be screened with trees. A perimeter road would be set close to the boundary here with verges. The closest houses would face the observer at this point.	
Type of Effect	The development would be highly visible from this viewpoint.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would have a major impact upon the landscape from this location.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Users of road - Medium Very large
Overall Visual Effects		Major

Viewpoint 6: View from Public Right of Way (1421)



Vp6	Type 1: Panoramic View	<i>(Distance 0.51km looking south - site is to the west beyond the hedge)</i>
Baseline Description	This is a view from the Public Right of Way (ref 1421 West Sussex County Council online map) accessed from Langhurst Wood Road. It is representative of views from the Public Right of Way and is within the ZTV. This viewpoint is looking towards an area of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland from a PRow within open arable fields. The footpath runs along the far side of a large hedge, relative to the site, and the site is not visible. The camera is facing south along the path rather than directly towards the site which is to the right, beyond the hedge. Further north along the path there is also a block of ancient woodland between the path and the site. The landscape is relatively flat at this location with no change in topography appreciated.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint the proposals will be set beyond the hedge which exists between the site and this location. No change in the view is likely.	
Type of Effect	The development would not be visible from this viewpoint.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would not impact upon the landscape from this location.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Users of PRow - High Negligible
Overall Visual Effects		<i>Negligible</i>

Viewpoint 7: View from Graylands Estate



Vp7	Type 1: Panoramic View	(Distance 0.82km looking south west)
Baseline Description	<p>Graylands Estate is described as a restored collection of offices and workshops in a parkland setting; it houses diverse businesses including an American style diner, a Kung Fu school and engineering firms. The original Graylands House is set in a prominent location in the south-east corner of the built-up part of the estate, commanding views to the south towards Horsham. The buildings are set at a high point in the landscape, approximately 95m above ordnance datum (the development site on Mercer Road is at around 45m AOD). There is a one-way adopted road around the site with two roads leading down to Langhurst Wood Road, with a lodge at the southern entrance.</p> <p>The white building in the centre of the photograph is part of the recycling facility on Langhurst Wood Road. The development site is hidden within the deciduous woodland along this road.</p>	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint the proposals will be set within the network of forest vegetation which exists between the site and this location. No change in the view is likely.	
Type of Effect	The development would not be visible from this viewpoint.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would not impact upon the landscape from this location.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Workers in business park - Low Negligible
Overall Visual Effects		Negligible

Viewpoint 8: View from Public Right of Way (1585)



Vp8	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 2.57km looking west)	
Baseline Description	This is a view from the Public Right of Way (ref 1585 West Sussex County Council online map) accessed from Rusper Road. It is representative of views from the Public Right of Way and is within the ZTV.	
	There is a rural feel at this location, however the A264 can be heard as it runs along the south of this viewpoint. At this point on the PRow there are open views across the grassland fields with mature native deciduous vegetation visible along the field boundaries. The landscape is relatively flat at this location with no change in topography appreciated.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint the proposals will be set beyond the network of vegetation which exists between the site and this location. No change in the view is likely.	
Type of effect	The development would not be visible from this PRow.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would not impact upon the landscape from this location.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Users of PRow - High Negligible
Overall Visual Effects		Negligible

Viewpoint 9: View from Warnham Nature Reserve



Vp9	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 1.69km looking north)	
Baseline Description	<p>This is a view from the south end of the Millpond in Warnham Nature Reserve, taken from one of the new hides which were under construction when the set of photographs accompanying the previous LVIA was taken. This is a view representative of users of Warnham Nature Reserve. The railway runs behind the dense block of woodland on the centre right and this includes evergreen conifers. Woodland effectively surrounds the north and east sides of the lake and screens the railway and busy dual carriageway from view, although traffic noise is very apparent. Since the site is beyond the A264 this is not visible.</p> <p>Although the lake is man-made, originally built as a mill pond to serve the iron industry, the landscape has a natural character at this location. The Nature Reserve has a welcoming feel with a attractive signage and a café staffed by volunteers, and is an important local facility where people can watch birds and take walks around the lake.</p>	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint, the proposals will be set beyond the pond and vegetation. Views into the site are not possible due to the existing woodland and distance between the site and this viewpoint location.	
Type of Effect	The development would not be visible from this viewpoint.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would not impact upon the landscape from this location.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Users of Nature Reserve - High Negligible
Overall Visual Effects		Negligible

Viewpoint 10: View from Cala Homes Hawksbourne (new housing estate)



Vp10	Type 1: Panoramic View	(Distance 1.63km looking west)
Baseline Description	This is a view from a location that was not publicly accessible at the time of the previous LVIA, within the new housing development to the east of the site. The viewpoint is midway between Old Holbrook Lane and Rusper Road, on a new road called Moat Road, and at this point there is a break in the hoardings allowing a view across the future development area towards the site. A new road has been constructed and piles of soil and Heras fencing panels are evident. Excavators can be seen at work, and there is a group of site cabins on the right hand side of the view. It is clear that the view from this point will undergo a massive change within the next year.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint, the proposals will be set beyond the trees seen in the distance, beyond Holbrook Park indicated in the centre of the photograph. Views into the site are not possible due to the existing trees, vegetation and distance between the site and this viewpoint location.	
Type of Effect	The development would not be visible from this viewpoint.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would not impact upon the landscape from this location.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Residents of the new housing development - High Negligible
Overall Visual Effects		Negligible

Viewpoint 11: View from western end of Mercer Road looking east



Vp11	Type 1: Panoramic View	(Distance 0.1km looking east)
Baseline Description	This panoramic was taken in July 2025. This is a view around 80m from Warnham Station on Mercer Road looking east. The site is located either side of this road. The road to the left leads to Industrial Units. Mercer Road is a PRow (Ref 1574) which connects Dorking Road to the west and Langhurst Wood Road to the east. Mercer Road does not connect to Dorking Road for vehicles due to the railway line. At this viewpoint there are boundary trees and vegetation on either side of Mercer Road which create a dense canopy. There are some glimpse views through the vegetation to the site. The trees in this view will be retained and additional trees will be planted behind them. The houses will be set back 25m from the road to the south and 29m from the road to the north. A footpath will be added just behind where the telegraph pole is in this view in a gap through the vegetation.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint, the vegetation will be retained and trees are proposed 8-10m from the road. There will be glimpse views through the vegetation and footpaths will be added in gaps between trees but they are limited by the existing vegetation.	
Type of Effect	The development will have visibility in gaps through the vegetation.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would result in a change in the existing view due to footpaths being constructed which would be noticed by the observer.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Users of PRow - High Medium
Overall Visual Effects	Major	

Viewpoint 12: View from Langhurst Wood Road



Vp12	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 0.2km looking west)	
Baseline Description	The panoramic was taken in July 2025. This is a view where Langhurst Wood Road meets Mercer Road. The site will be located either side of Mercer Road. Vehicles move very quickly along Langhurst Wood Road. The trees and vegetation in this view will be retained. A mixture of additional native trees are proposed 6-12m back from Langhurst Wood Road. The nearest property plot 77 is set back 22m from this road.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint, the proposals will be set beyond the trees. There will be glimpse views into the site through existing and proposed trees. An entrance through Langhurst Wood Road is proposed further north to the right of this view.	
Type of Effect	The development will be visible through vegetation in the foreground.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would result in a change in the existing view on Langhurst Wood Road which would be noticed by the observer.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Residents - High Large
Overall Visual Effects		Major

Viewpoint 13: View from Langhurst Wood Road near Stable Cottage looking southwest



Vp13	Type 1: Panoramic View	(Distance 0.1km looking east)
Baseline Description	<p>This panoramic was taken in July 2025. This is the view near the entrance to Stable Cottage which can be seen in the left side of the photo. Looking southwest there is a dense hedgerow along the boundary of the road and site. In the middle of this hedgerow a site entrance is proposed which will create a gap in this hedgerow with road access which have a hedge proposed either side. The access road will create visibility into the site. The housing is set back 25m from the road so the views will still be limited.</p>	
Predicted change	<p>From this viewpoint, the proposals will mostly be set beyond the hedgerow with a buffer between the road and the housing. The access road will create a gap in this hedgerow and change this view.</p>	
Type of Effect	<p>The development will be visible when the proposed road access is added.</p>	
Magnitude of Change	<p>The development would result in a change in the existing view on Langhurst Wood Road due to the creation of an access road.</p>	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude	Residents - High Very Large
Overall Visual Effects		Major

APPENDIX E - Glossary of terms

Analysis (landscape)	The process of breaking the landscape down into its component parts to understand how it is made up.
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Assessment (landscape)	An umbrella term for description, classification and analysis of landscape.
Biodiversity	The concept of variety in all species of plants and animals through which nature finds its balance.
Classification	A process of sorting the landscape into different types using selected criteria, but without attaching relative values to the different kinds of landscape.
Compensation	The measures taken to offset or compensate for residual adverse effects that cannot be mitigated, or for which mitigation cannot entirely eliminate adverse effects.
Constraints map	Map showing the location of important resources and receptors that may form constraints to development.
Countryside	The rural environment and its associated communities (including the coast)
Cumulative Effects	The summation of effects that result from changes cause by a development in conjunctions with other past, present or reasonably foreseeable actions.
Diversity	Where a variety of qualities or characteristics occurs.
Element	A component part of the landscape (for example, roads, hedges, woods)
Enhancement	Landscape improvement through restoration, reconstruction or creation.
Environment	Our physical surroundings including air, water and land.

Environmental appraisal	A generic term for the evaluation of the environmental implications of proposals (used by the UK Government in respect of policies and plans).
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	The evaluation of the effects on the environment of particular development proposals
Field pattern	The pattern of hedges and walls that define fields in farmed landscapes.
Geographical Information System (GIS)	Computerised database of geographical information that can easily be updated and manipulated.
Heritage	Historical or cultural associations.
Indirect impacts	Impacts on the environment, which are not a direct result of the development but are often produced away from it or as a result of a complex pathway. Sometimes referred to as secondary impacts.
Landcover	Combinations of land use and vegetation that cover the land surface.
Landform	Combinations of slope and elevation of the land conditioned by knowledge and identity with a place.
Landscape capacity	The degree to which a particular landscape character type or area is able to accommodate change without unacceptable adverse effects on its character. Capacity is likely to vary according to the type and nature of change being proposed.
Landscape character	The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular type of landscape, and how this is perceived by people. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement. It creates the particular sense of place of different areas of the landscape.
Landscape character type	A landscape type will have broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern discernible in maps and field survey records.

Landscape effects	Change in the elements, characteristics, character and qualities of the landscape as a result of development. These effects can be positive or negative.
Landscape evaluation	The process of attaching value (non-monetary) to a particular landscape, usually by the application of previously agreed criteria, including consultation and third party documents, for a particular purpose (for example, designation or in the context of the assessment)
Landscape factor	A circumstance or influence contributing to the impression of a landscape (for example, scale, enclosure, elevation)
Landscape feature	A prominent eye-catching element, for example, wooded hilltop or church spire.
Landscape quality (or condition)	is based on judgements about the physical state of the landscape, and about its intactness, from visual, functional, and ecological perspectives. It also reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements which makes up the character in any one place.
Landscape resource	The combination of elements that contribute to landscape context, character and value.
Landscape sensitivity	The extent to which a landscape can accept change of a particular type and scale without unacceptable adverse effects on its character.
Land use	The primary use of the land, including both rural and urban activities.
Landscape value	The relative value or importance attached to a landscape (often as a basis for designation or recognition), which expresses national or local consensus, because of its quality, special qualities including perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness, cultural associations or other conservation issues.
LCA	Landscape Character Area
Magnitude	A combination of the scale, extent and duration of an effect.
Methodology	The specific approach and techniques used for a given study.

Mitigation	Measures, including any process, activity or design to avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate for adverse landscape and visual effects of a development project.
NCA	National Character Assessment
Perception (of landscape)	The psychology of seeing and possibly attaching value and/or meaning to landscape.
Precautionary principle	Principle applied to err on the side of caution where significant environmental damage may occur, but where knowledge on the matter is incomplete, or when the prediction of environmental effects is uncertain.
Preference	The liking by people for one particular landscape element, characteristic or feature over another.
PRoW	Public Right of Way
Quality	See Landscape quality
Receptor	Physical landscape resource, special interest or viewer group that will experience an effect.
Scenario	A picture of a possible future.
Scoping	The process of identifying the likely significant effects of a development of the environment.
Sense of place (genius loci)	The essential character and spirit of an area; <i>genius loci</i> literally means 'spirit of the place'.
Sensitive/sensitivity	See landscape sensitivity
Sieve mapping	Technique for mapping environmental constraints, working from a series of overlays, sieving out less important factors.
Sustainability	The principle that the environment should be protected in such a condition and to such a degree that ensures new development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Technique	Specific working process

Threshold	A specified level in grading effects, for example, of magnitude, sensitivity or significance.
Visual amenity	The value of a particular area or view in terms of what is seen.
Visual effect	Change in the appearance of the landscape as a result of development. This can be positive (ie beneficial or an improvement) or negative (ie adverse or a detraction)
Visual envelope	Extent of potential visibility to or from a specific area or feature.
Visualisation	Computer simulation, photomontage or other technique to illustrate the appearance of a development.
Worst-case situation	Principle applied where the environmental effects may vary, for example, seasonally to ensure the most severe potential effect is assessed.
Zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV)	Area within which a proposed development may have an influence or effect on visual amenity.

APPENDIX F - Sources of Information

9.33 The following sources of information were obtained or consulted during the course of the assessment:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013).
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2018).
- Technical Advice Note 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals (2019).
- National Planning Policy Framework (2019).
- Consultations with the client regarding the development proposals;
- Natural England published national landscape character assessment;
- Horsham District Council published landscape character descriptions (2015);
- Aerial photography;
- Ordnance Survey Mapping at 1:10,000, 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 scale;
- Site visits and fieldwork to confirm data derived from available mapping and to identify and assess potential impacts.

APPENDIX G – Policy

The site falls within the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 (HDPF). The relevant landscape policies which have been considered during the design development and assessment of the scheme include:

Policy 2

Strategic Policy: Strategic Development

To maintain the district's unique rural character whilst ensuring that the needs of the community are met through sustainable growth and suitable access to services and local employment, the spatial strategy to 2031 is to:

- 1. Focus development in and around the key settlement of Horsham, and allow for growth in the rest of the district in accordance with the identified settlement hierarchy.*
- 2. Recognise and develop Horsham town's role as the primary town for the District, promoting its historic function as a market town and safeguarding its compact and attractive character, and complemented by rationalisation and redevelopment at Broadbridge Heath Quadrant.*
- 3. Bring forward three strategic development areas of at least 2,500 dwellings immediately to the north of Horsham Town, around 600 dwellings West of Southwater, and around 150 dwellings South of Billingshurst to meet the strategic requirement for new homes, and to provide access to new employment, health, educational and recreational opportunities.*
- 4. Bring forward a strategic mixed used opportunity at the former Novartis site in Horsham for employments, education and specialist housing at the equivalent of around 200 units.*
- 5. Continue to support in principle the sustainable development of settlements through an appropriate scale of development which retains the existing settlement pattern over the plan period.*

6. *Manage development around the edges of existing settlements in order to prevent the merging of settlements and to protect the rural character and landscape.*

7. *Guide development form and provide access to strategic green space and recreational opportunities in and around the built-up urban areas.*

8. *Encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.*

9. *Identify existing sites of important employment use, and to safeguard their function through flexible policies and designation of Key Employment Areas, together with supporting the rural economy, to allow people the opportunity to work close to where they live.*

10. *Provide for the varied housing needs of the community in terms of tenure, affordability, care and other support needs and the specific temporary and permanent needs of the Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.*

11. *Support the provision of rural housing which contributes towards the provision of affordable housing where there is a demonstrable need.*

12. *Retain and enhance natural environmental resources, including landscapes and landscape character, biodiversity, and retaining and enhancing environmental quality including air, minimises energy and resource use and provides flood mitigation.*

13. *Support development which protects, conserves and enhances the District's built heritage whilst ensuring that new development is safe, well designed, adapts to climate change and helps to reduce the District's carbon emissions.*

14. *Monitor delivery of the Strategy and associated infrastructure in conjunction with partner organisations, developers and landowners.*

Policy 3

Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy

Development will be permitted within towns and villages which have defined built-up areas. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale to maintain characteristics and function of the settlement in accordance with the settlement hierarchy below:

Settlement Type	Settlement Characteristics and Function	Settlements
Main Town	Settlement with a large range of employment, services and facilities and leisure opportunities, including those providing a district function. Strong social networks, with good rail and bus accessibility. The settlement meets the majority of its own needs and many of those in smaller settlements.	Horsham
Small Towns and Larger Villages	These are settlements with a good range of services and facilities, strong community networks and local employment provision, together with reasonable rail and / or bus services. The settlements act as hubs for smaller villages to meet their daily needs, but also have some reliance on larger settlements / each other to meet some of their requirements.	Billingshurst Bramber and Upper Beeding Broadbridge Heath Henfield Pulborough and Codmore Hill Southwater Steyning Storrington & Sullington
Medium Villages	These settlements have a moderate level of services and facilities and community networks, together with some access to public transport. These settlements provide some day to day needs for residents, but rely on small market towns and larger settlements to meet a number of their requirements.	Ashington Barns Green Cowfold Partridge Green Rudgwick and Bucks Green Slinfold Warnham West Chilmington Village and Common
Smaller Villages	Villages with limited services, facilities, social	Christ's Hospital Lower Beeding

	networks but with good accessibility to larger settlements (e.g. road or rail) or settlements with some employment but limited services facilities or accessibility. Residents are reliant on larger settlements to access most of their requirements.	Mannings Heath Rusper Small Dole Thakeham (The Street and High Bar Lane)
Unclassified settlements	Settlements with few or no facilities or social networks and limited accessibility, that are reliant on other villages and towns to meet the needs of residents	All other settlements

Policy 4

Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion

The growth of settlements across the District will continue to be supported in order to meet identified local housing, employment and community needs. Outside built-up area boundaries, the expansion of settlements will be supported where;

- 1. The site is allocated in the Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins an existing settlement edge.*
- 2. The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement type.*
- 3. The development is demonstrated to meet the identified local housing needs and/or employment needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services.*
- 4. The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long term development, in order not to conflict with the development strategy; and*

5. *The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape and townscape character features are maintained and enhanced.*

Policy 17

Exceptions Housing Schemes

In exceptional circumstances limited amounts of greenfield land, that would not otherwise be released for general market housing, may be released for the development of affordable homes provided that:

1. *There is an identified local need for such homes and no suitable alternatives exist within the locality to meet that need;*

2. *The development would solely meet the needs of a particular parish (or that parish plus its immediately adjoining parishes within Horsham district) and that the needs identified comprise housing for:*

a. *Existing residents of the parish in unsuitable accommodation or needing separate accommodation in the area (excluding existing owner occupiers).*

b. *People whose work provides important services and who need to live in the parish.*

c. *People who may no longer be resident in the parish but have longstanding links with the local community.*

d. *People with the offer of a job in the parish who cannot take up the offer because of a lack of affordable housing.*

3. *The development would provide subsidised housing in perpetuity which will normally be managed by a provider that is registered with the Homes and Community Agency.*

The new Local Plan will cover the period 2019-36 and is due to be adopted in May 2025. The relevant landscape policies which have been considered during the design development and assessment of the scheme include:

Strategic Policy 6: Economic Growth

Sustainable economic growth, including support for existing businesses for the period up to 2036, will be achieved through the provision of sufficient employment land to meet the Council's identified requirements for use classes B1, B2 and B8. This will be achieved through:

- 1. The allocation of sufficient sites from land identified in the table below for employment. The provision will be expected to be well-designed, suitable for incorporating a range of unit sizes and flexibility in use with appropriate regard to floor to ceiling heights, floor loading, power, servicing and loading facilities;*
- 2. Within Horsham Town, particularly within or near the centre and train station, office development (Use Classes B1a and B1b) will be permitted where this adds to the overall stock of Grade A offices and subject to the submission of evidence demonstrating any adverse impacts would not significantly outweigh the benefits;*
- 3. Retention, redevelopment, regeneration, intensification and smart-growth of existing employment sites in accordance with Strategic Policy 7 - Employment Development;*
- 4. Taking a positive approach to the formation of small start-up businesses, homeworking and home-based businesses, and proposals that seek the retention of existing businesses within the District;*
- 5. Requiring major developments to provide appropriate ICT infrastructure, such as high-speed broadband and full fibre, as an integral part of all forms of development, to provide businesses with the flexibility to operate anywhere;*

6. *Requiring proposals to maintain and enhance the attractiveness of the District to ensure it is an attractive place to stay and visit, to increase the value of all economies, including tourism, retail and leisure;*

7. *Encouraging sustainable local economic growth through Neighbourhood Development Plans; and,*

8. *Encouraging the expansion of higher education facilities related to research and development and employment training activity.*

Strategic Policy 15 – Strategic Site Development Principles

Where land is allocated in the Local Plan for strategic scale development, proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they adhere to the following principles:

1. *The design and layout of the development is landscape-led, responding to and complementing positive landscape characteristics and qualities of the site and surrounding area. A strong landscape buffer shall be provided to any open countryside beyond the allocation to provide a robust, long-term defensible boundary to the development. Development will be designed to a high quality that is locally distinctive, uses local materials and accords with garden community principles. Proposals should also be designed to bring forward healthy communities and lifestyles.*

2. *Masterplans will be expected to identify key areas of biodiversity enhancement, demonstrating that a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain can be achieved. It is expected that the proposed development will respond to and complement existing features, and that any SuDs features will be incorporated into the provision of biodiversity gain and wider green infrastructure provision.*

3. *Development will be expected to contribute to the achievement of zero carbon through a range of measures. Development will be expected to achieve this through direct measures such as the design and construction of development and the provision of alternative sources of energy such as*

combined heat and power, together with indirect measures such as design of the development to minimise the need to travel by car.

4. Deliver high-quality mixed-use communities that provide a range of housing types and tenures, including provision for young families, older people and Gypsies and Travellers. Strategic Site allocations developers will be expected to take into consideration the demand for self-build and custom build housing and provide enough serviced plots of land to meet the identified need.

5. Development will be expected to deliver the necessary services and facilities that contribute to the development of a successful community. This will include, but is not necessarily limited to, education facilities including SEND and alternative provision, healthcare, community buildings, and leisure and recreational facilities and new retail centres. Proposals will be expected to consider how they can accommodate any District-wide leisure facilities that may have been identified.

6. Provide sufficient new employment opportunities through new employment land and through other opportunities to meet the principle of one new job per home.

7. Deliver the necessary new infrastructure to support the new development, including provision of utilities, water supplies, waste water treatment and any necessary transport mitigation. The design of development should consider the future direction of refuse collection and disposal. All developments will be expected to provide full fibre broadband.

8. Be designed to minimise the need to travel in the first instance and prioritise pedestrian and cycling opportunities. Development shall have a legible layout that facilitates other modes of sustainable transport and minimises reliance on the private car. It is expected that extensive provision for electric vehicle charging will be incorporated into the development.

9. Identify long-term management structures to ensure the long-term success of communities which are created.

Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection

The high quality of the District's environment will be protected through the planning process and the provision of local guidance documents. Taking into account any relevant Planning Guidance Documents, developments will be expected to minimise exposure to, and the emission of, pollutants including noise, odour, vibration, air and light pollution arising from all stages of development. Development proposals must ensure that they:

Address land contamination by promoting the appropriate re-use of sites and requiring the delivery of appropriate remediation. Proposals where contamination is known or suspected, or the site is within the vicinity of contaminated land, must be accompanied by a Land Contamination Assessment;

Are appropriate to their location, taking account of ground conditions and land instability;

Maintain or improve the environmental quality of any watercourses, groundwater and drinking water supplies, and prevent contaminated run-off to surface water sewers;

Minimise the impact of lighting on neighbouring uses and the wider landscape, including potential glare and spillage. Proposals where illumination is to be installed must be accompanied by a Lighting Assessment;

Demonstrate that users of residential and other noise sensitive development will not be exposed to unacceptable noise disturbance from existing or future users. Development proposals which are known or suspected to be noise generators, or to be sensitive to noise from nearby sites, must be accompanied by a Noise Assessment;

Minimise the air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in order to protect human health and the environment;

Contribute to the implementation of local Air Quality Action Plans and do not conflict with its objectives;

Maintain or reduce the number of people exposed to poor air quality including odour. Consideration should be given to development that will result in new public exposure, particularly where vulnerable people (e.g. the elderly, care homes or schools) would be exposed to the areas of poor air quality; and

Ensure that the cumulative impact of all relevant committed developments is appropriately assessed.

Strategic Policy 27 - The Natural Environment and Landscape Character

The Natural Environment and landscape character of the District, including the landscape, landform and development pattern, together with protected landscapes and habitats, will be protected against inappropriate development. The Council will expect development proposals to be landscape led from the outset so that they clearly inform the design and layout. Proposals will also be required to:

Protect, conserve and enhance the landscape and townscape character, taking into account areas identified as being of landscape importance, the individual settlement characteristics, and maintain settlement separation;

Maintain and enhance the Green Infrastructure Network, the Nature Recovery Network and, where practicable, help to address any identified deficiencies in the District;

Maintain and enhance the existing network of geological sites and biodiversity, including safeguarding existing designated sites and species, and secure net gains in biodiversity;

Incorporate SUDS into a scheme in an optimal location for their purpose whilst also securing landscape enhancements and good quality spaces. Proposals will be expected to provide details to demonstrate that the whole life management and maintenance of the SUDS are appropriate, deliverable and will not cause harm to the natural environment and/or landscape; and

Where applicable, conserve and, where possible, enhance the setting of the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Policy 29 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Coalescence

Landscapes will be protected from development which would result in the coalescence of settlements in order to protect local identity and a sense of place. Development between settlements will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that:

There is no significant reduction in the openness and 'break' between settlements;

It does not generate urbanising effects within the retained 'break' between settlements, including artificial lighting, development along and/or the widening of the roads between the settlements; and increased traffic movements.

Proposals respect the landscape and contribute to the enhancement of their countryside setting, including, where appropriate, enhancements to the Green Infrastructure network, the Nature Recovery Network and/or provide opportunities for quiet informal countryside recreation.

Redevelopment of existing sites that seek to reduce the existing urbanised character and appearance of an area between settlements, particularly along road corridors, will be supported.

Policy 31 - Strategic Policy: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains and enhances the existing network of green infrastructure, the Nature Recovery Network, natural capital and biodiversity. Proposals that would result in the loss of existing green infrastructure or part of the Nature Recovery Network will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that new opportunities will be provided that mitigates or compensates for this loss, and ensures that the ecosystem services of the area are retained.

Proposals will be expected to retain and enhance existing fresh water features, hedgerows, trees and deciduous woodland and the provision of additional hedgerow and tree planting will be sought subject to appropriate consideration of local and wider context, habitats and species.

Where the felling of a tree is necessary, for example due to disease, replacement planting with a suitable species and location to retain the link with the wider network of habitats and Green Infrastructure, will be required.

Development proposals will be expected to remove invasive species and will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and deliver, as a minimum, a 10% net gain through the delivery of appropriate on-site biodiversity net gain or, where this is not practicable, to off-set the delivery to the Nature Recovery Network.

Proposals should create and manage appropriate new habitats, taking into account pollination, where practicable. The Council will support new development which retains and /or enhances significant features of nature conservation on development sites. The Council will also support development which makes a positive contribution to biodiversity, and where appropriate the Nature Recovery Network, through the creation

of green spaces, and linkages between habitats to create local and regional ecological networks and allow the movement of wildlife through development sites.

Particular consideration will be given to the hierarchy of sites and habitats in the District as follows:

Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs)

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and any areas of Ancient Woodland, traditional orchards, local geodiversity or other irreplaceable habitats not already identified in a & b above.

Where development is anticipated to have a direct or indirect adverse impact on sites or features of importance to nature conservation, development will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that:

The objectives of a site's designation, where applicable, and integrity of the area will not be undermined;

The reason for the development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of the site; and,

That appropriate mitigation and compensation measures are provided.

Any development with the potential to impact Arun Valley SPA or the Mens SAC will be subject to a Habitats Regulation Assessment to determine the need for an Appropriate Assessment. In addition, development will be required to be in accordance with the necessary mitigation measures for development set out in the HRA of this plan.

APPENDIX H - Published Local Landscape Character Areas

9.34 Natural England has published a set of National Character Areas, which classifies landscape character on a national scale. It should be noted that this level of character guidance sets the broad scene for the study area. In this case, the sub regional character assessment provides the local context for understanding the landscape character of the site. However, the key characteristics for this NCA (121: Low Weald) that can be seen as relevant to the site would be as follows:

- *Broad, low-lying, gently undulating clay vales with outcrops of limestone or sandstone providing local variation.*
- *The underlying geology has provided materials for industries including iron working, brick and glass making, leaving pits, lime kilns and quarries. Many of the resulting exposures are critical to our understanding of the Wealden environment.*
- *A generally pastoral landscape with arable farming associated with lighter soils on higher ground and areas of fruit cultivation in Kent. Land use is predominantly agricultural but with urban influences, particularly around Gatwick, Horley and Crawley.*
- *Field boundaries of hedgerows and shaws (remnant strips of cleared woodland) enclosing small, irregular fields and linking into small and scattered linear settlements along roadsides or centred on greens or commons. Rural lanes and tracks with wide grass verges and ditches.*
- *Small towns and villages are scattered among areas of woodland, permanent grassland and hedgerows on the heavy clay soils where larger 20th-century villages have grown around major transport routes.*
- *Frequent north–south routeways and lanes, many originating as drove roads, along which livestock were moved to downland grazing or to forests to feed on acorns.*

- *Small areas of heathland particularly associated with commons such as Ditchling and Chailey. Also significant historic houses often in parkland or other designed landscapes.*
- *The Low Weald boasts an intricate mix of woodlands, much of it ancient, including extensive broadleaved oak over hazel and hornbeam coppice, shaws, small field copses and tree groups, and lines of riparian trees along watercourses. Veteran trees are a feature of hedgerows and in fields.*
- *Many small rivers, streams and watercourses with associated watermeadows and wet woodland.*
- *Abundance of ponds, some from brick making and quarrying, and hammer and furnace ponds, legacies of the Wealden iron industry.*
- *Traditional rural vernacular of local brick, weatherboard and tile-hung buildings plus local use of distinctive Horsham slabs as a roofing material. Weatherboard barns are a feature. Oast houses occur in the east and use of flint is notable in the south towards the South Downs.*

9.35 The key opportunities from this character assessment are as follows:

- *SEO 1: Protect, manage and significantly enhance the area's intricate and characteristic mix of semi-natural ancient woodlands, gill woodland, shaws, small field copses, hedgerows and individual trees to reduce habitat fragmentation and benefit biodiversity, while seeking to improve and encourage access for health and wellbeing and reinforce sense of local identity.*
- *SEO 2: Conserve and enhance the distinctive historical aspects of the Low Weald landscape, including its important geological features and sites of heritage interest, particularly those associated with Wealden iron industry, enabling access, continued research, interpretation, understanding and enjoyment of the extensive and nationally significant resources.*

- *SEO 3: Work at a landscape scale to improve the quality, state and structure of all Wealden rivers, streams and standing waterbodies and their appropriate flood plains, taking account of water quality, water flow and hydraulic connection with the flood plain, while seeking to enhance biodiversity, historic features and recreation opportunities and reinforcing sense of place.*
- *SEO 4: Maintain the sustainable but productive pastoral landscape of the Low Weald, while expanding and connecting semi-natural habitats to benefit biodiversity, regulating soil and water quality by promoting good agricultural practice, and maintaining the extent and quality of unimproved permanent grassland and meadows. Restore degraded neutral grasslands to buffer sites and encourage pollinators and predators for pest regulation.*
- *Additional Opportunity 1. Plan for the creation of high-quality blue and green space and green corridors to provide a framework for new and existing development in urban areas and along major transport routes for the enjoyment and wellbeing of communities and to enhance biodiversity.*

Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment

9.36 A Landscape Character Assessment was prepared by Chris Blandford Associates for Horsham District Council in October 2003 which offers guidance on the sub regional level character. The application site falls within Narrow Clay Vale Farmland District Landscape Character Type K.

9.37 Within the Narrow Clay Vale Farmland District Landscape Character Type K, two different Landscape Character Areas have been identified; the application site is situated within the Warnham & Faygate Vale Landscape Area K2. The landscape characteristics of area K2 are defined as follows:

Overall Character

- *This area comprises a narrow vale on Weald Clay, with a medium large scale field pattern of mainly arable farmland. The traditional hedgerowed field pattern has become fragmented or lost, and only small isolated patches of woodland occur. Much of the area retains a low density settlement pattern with a few scattered farmsteads, and small hamlets. However, in the south significant large scale urban development around Broadbridge Heath has eroded character. Major road and rail routes truncate the area. There is also localised intrusion from sand and gravel works. The large areas of historic parkland at Warnham with its prominent tree clumps in grassland, extensive boundary tree belts and avenue tree features provide a distinct contrast to the west of the character area.*

Historic Features

- *Motte and Bailey Castles*
- *Historic north-south drove roads*
- *Historic parklands at Warnham Court*

- *Mix of irregular historic and straighter more recent field boundaries*

Biodiversity

- *Both thick hedgerows and low/degraded hedgerows*
- *Small isolated field corner copses and pockets of streamside woodland*
- *Ecological character weakened by intensive arable farmland*

Key Issues

- *Progressive loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees*
- *Pressure of traffic on rural lanes*
- *Pressure for further urban development*

Landscape Condition

- *Condition is considered to be overall declining, locally poor, due to intensive arable agriculture, visual and noise intrusion of major traffic routes, and visual impact of industrial/retail areas in the Broadbridge Heath area.*

Sensitivity to Change

- *Overall, the area has made a moderate sensitivity to change reflecting its most moderate intervisibility and only moderate intrinsic landscape qualities. Key sensitivities are to:*
- *Large scale commercial development*
- *Minor and major road improvements*
- *Any change that would result in loss of existing woodlands, hedgerows and hedgerow trees, historic parkland*

Planning and Landscape Management Guidelines

- *Ensure any further built development expansion around Horsham and Broadbridge Heath is integrated with existing landscape patterns by bold native woodland and hedgerow planting. Buildings should also blend in with the landscape in scale, form, colour and design.*
- *Reduce the visual impact of the A264 by additional planting, integrated with the existing hedgerow pattern.*
- *Encourage sound management of existing woodlands.*
- *Restore/create new streamside woodlands and marsh.*
- *Conserve and strengthen existing hedgerows, and plan plant new hedgerows.*
- *Establish arable field margins.*



LEGEND



Site boundary



For ordnance survey map legend, refer to:
<https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/docs/legends/25k-raster-legend.pdf>

Client: Riverdale Developments	
Scheme: Pondtail Farm, Mercer Road, North Horsham	
Drawing: Ordnance Survey Plan	Figure No: 1
ACD Ref: RIV22501	
Scale: NTS@A3	Drawn: IN Checked: JM





LEGEND



Site boundary



Image supplied by Google Maps
<https://maps.google.co.uk/>
Accessed 7 June 2019

Client: Riverdale Developments

Scheme: Pondtail Farm, Mercer Road, North Horsham

Drawing: Aerial Photograph

Figure No: 2

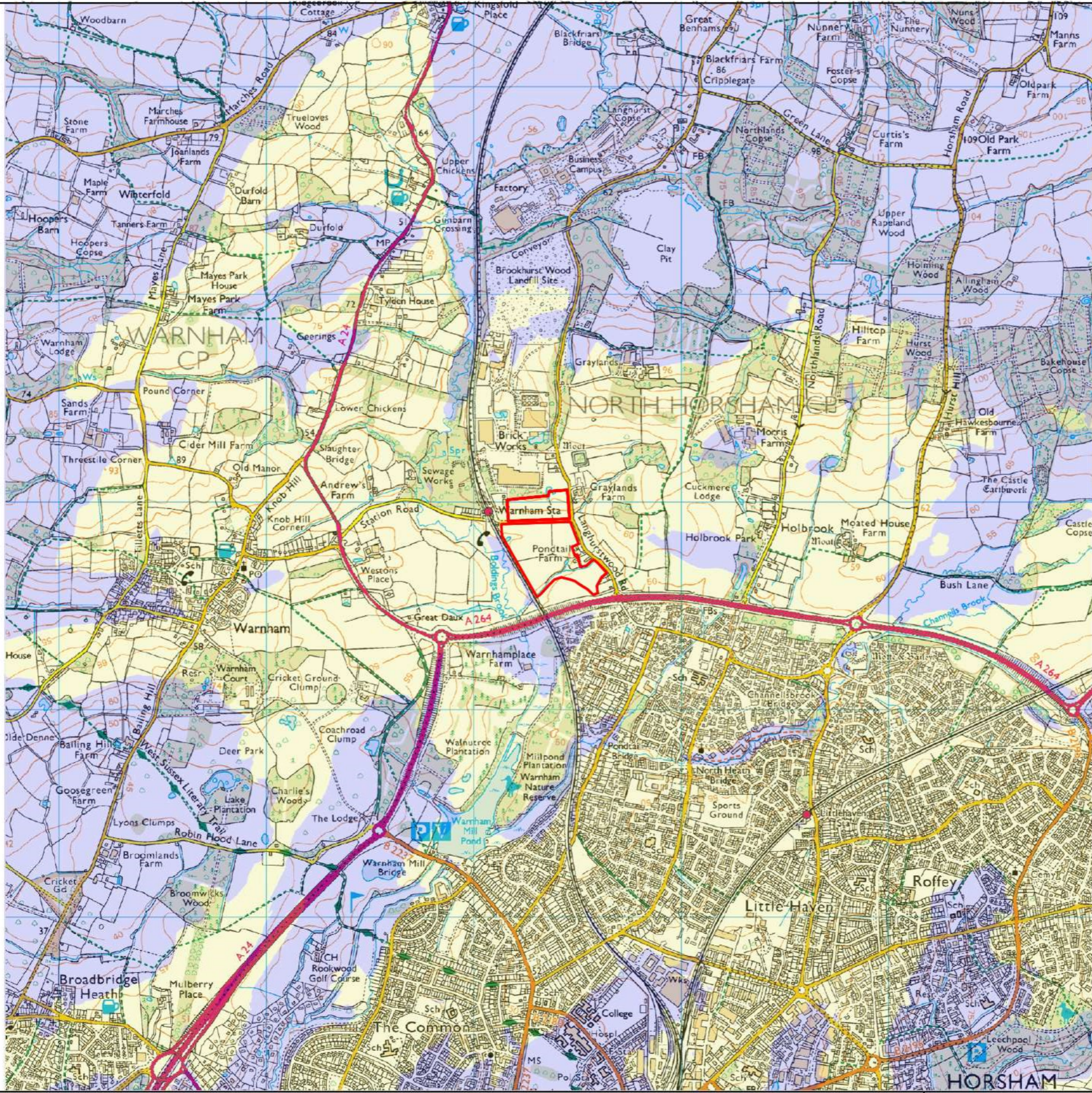
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Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: IN

Checked: JM

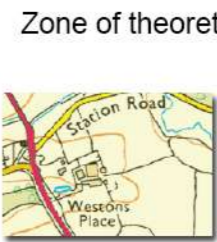




LEGEND



Site boundary



Yellow wash - Potential view



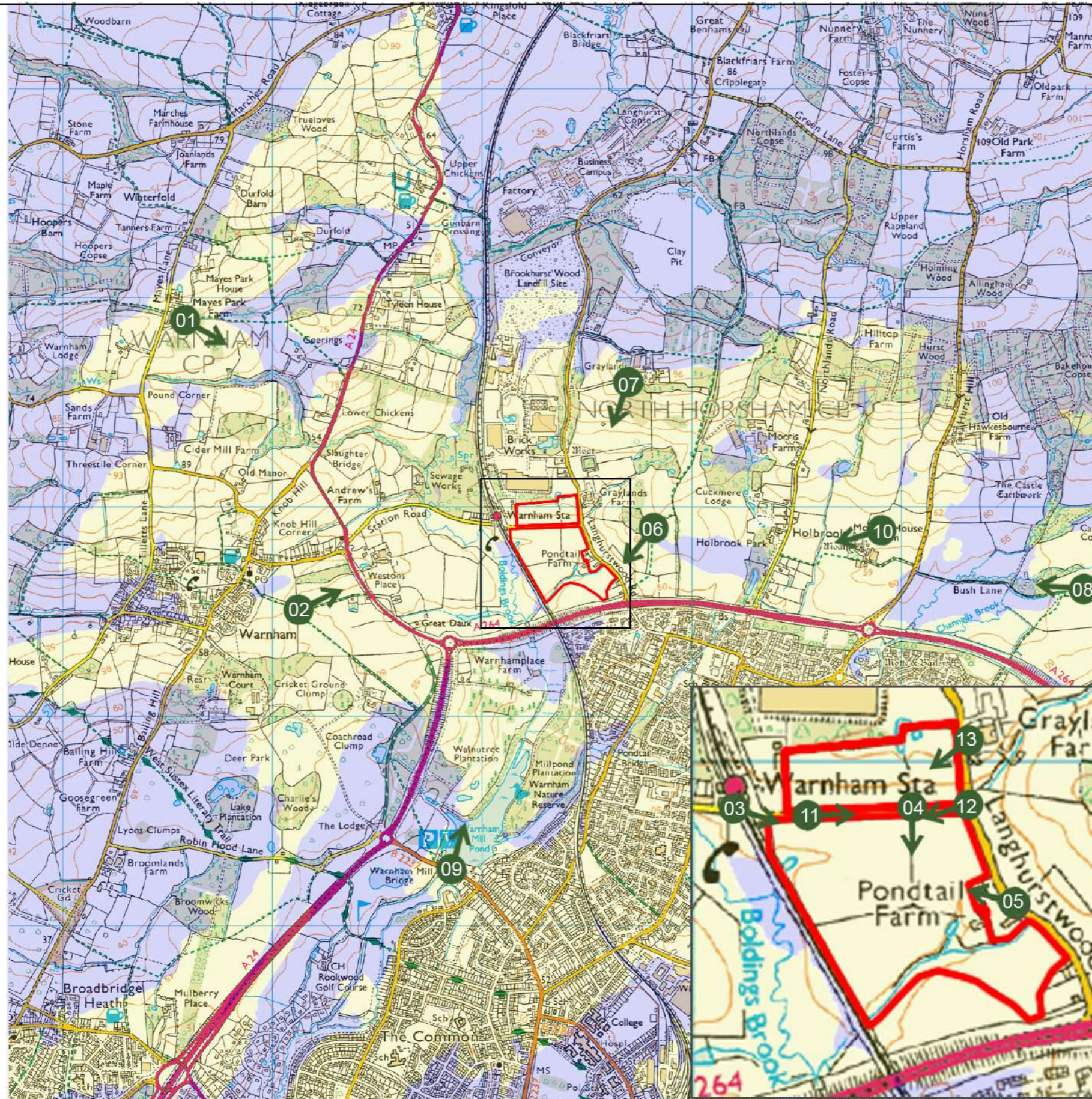
Blue wash - No potential view



NB: Generated using Ordnance Surveys Terrain 5 Dataset which is based on 5m resolution Digital Terrain Model (DTM), incorporating the proposed development modelled across the site to a maximum anticipated height of 12m. Proposed scheme is derived from the proposed Red Line Boundary (RLB) areas dated 03/12/2020 with reference points included across the full extent of the RLB site. The ZTVs do not include the layout of buildings which are not known at this stage. ZTV calculated using MapInfo Pro 17.0 with observer eye height 1.6m above ground. Viewshed analysis represents surface topography, without taking into account potential visual barriers in the form of trees, hedgerows, woodland, buildings and other manmade elements.

Client: Riverdale Developments		
Scheme: Pondtail Farm, Mercer Road, North Horsham		
Drawing: Zone of Theoretical Visibility	Figure No: 3	
ACD Ref: RIV22501		
Scale: NTS@A3	Drawn: IN	Checked: JM





LEGEND



Site boundary



Viewpoint location

Zone of theoretical visibility



Yellow wash - Potential view



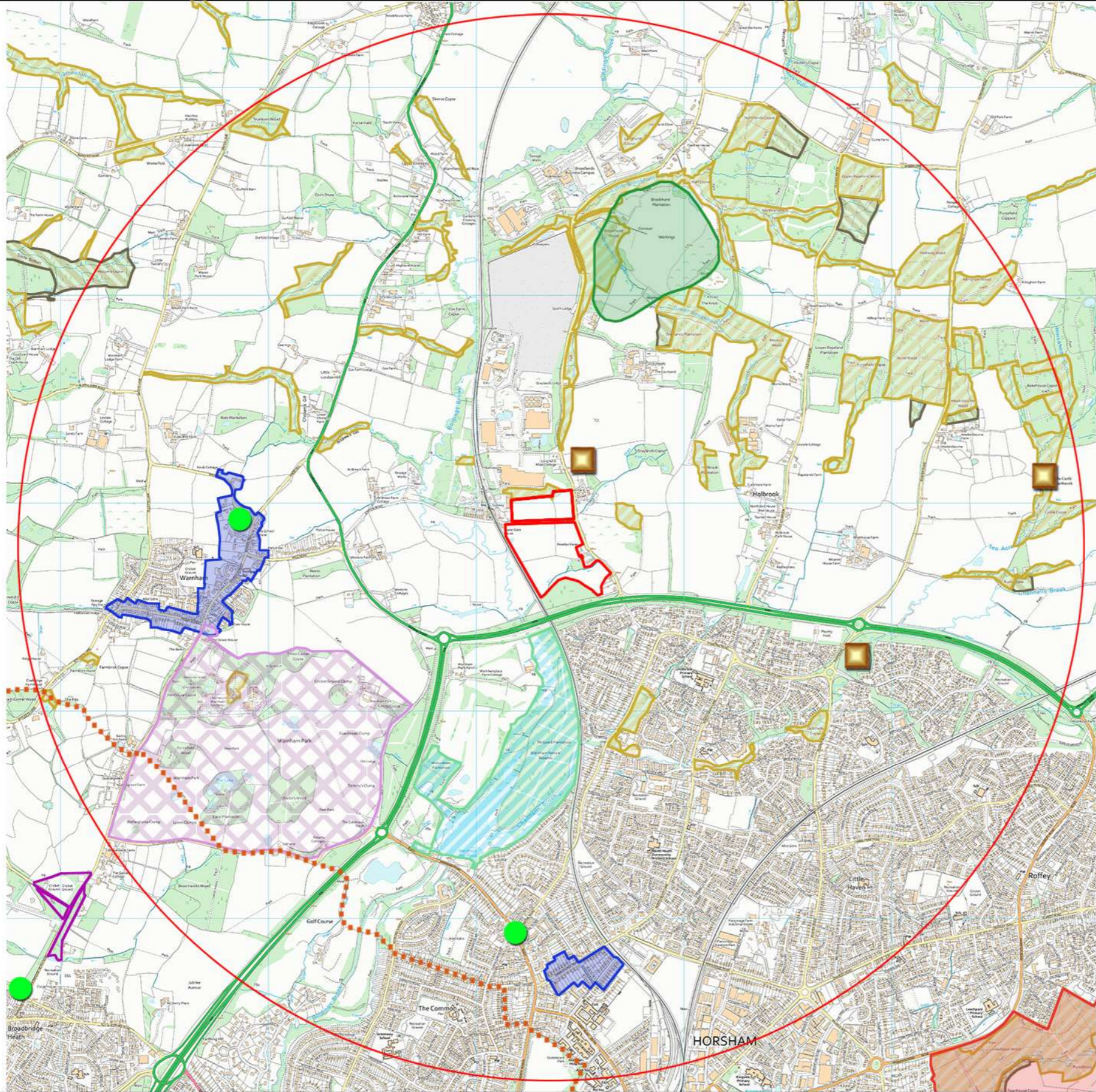
Blue wash - No potential view
















NB: Generated using Ordnance Surveys Terrain 5 Dataset which is based on 5m resolution Digital Terrain Model (DTM), incorporating the proposed development modelled across the site to a maximum anticipated height of 12m. Proposed scheme is derived from the proposed Red Line Boundary (RLB) areas dated 03/12/2020 with reference points included across the full extent of the RLB site. The ZTVs do not include the layout of buildings which are not known at this stage. ZTV calculated using MapInfo Pro 17.0 with observer eye height 1.6m above ground. Viewshed analysis represents surface topography, without taking into account potential visual barriers in the form of trees, hedgerows, woodland, buildings and other manmade elements.

Client: Riverdale Developments		
Scheme: Pondtail Farm, Mercer Road, North Horsham		
Drawing: Viewpoint Location Plan	Figure No: 4	
ACD Ref: RIV22501		
Scale: NTS@A3	Drawn: IN	Checked: PD





LEGEND

-  Site Boundary
-  2.5km Radius
-  Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland
-  Ancient Replanted Woodland
-  Registered Parks and Gardens - Warnham Court
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - High Weald
-  Local Nature Reserve - Warnham
-  Conservation Areas
-  Registered Commonland
-  Long Distance Walking Path
-  Site of Special Scientific Interest - Warnham
-  Town and Village Greens
-  Scheduled Monuments



Note: No listed buildings within 500m of the Site

Client: Riverdale Developments		
Scheme: Pondtail Farm, Mercer Road, North Horsham		
Drawing: Designations Plan		Figure No: 5
ACD Ref: RIV22501		
Scale: NTS@A3	Drawn: IN	Checked: JM





Accommodation Schedule

Private		
Private Apartments		
Type A1	1 bed apartment	12
Type A2	1 bed apartment	2
Type A3	1 bed apartment	4
Type A4	2 bed apartment	7
Type A5	2 bed apartment	8
Type A6	1 bed apartment	3
Type A7	2 bed apartment	8
Type A8	2 bed apartment	4
Type A9	1 bed apartment	4
Total Private Apartments		52
Private Houses		
Type H1	2 bed house	30
Type H2	2 bed house	28
Type H3	2 bed house	1
Type H4	2 bed house	1
Type H5	3 bed house	78
Type H6	4 bed house	1
Type H7	4 bed house	6
Type H8	4 bed house	10
Type H9	4 bed house	11
Type H10	4 bed house	9
Type H11	4 bed house	20
Type H12	5 bed house	4
Type H13	3 bed house	23
Total Private Houses		222
Total Private Dwellings		274
Affordable		
Affordable Apartments		
Type AA8	2 bed apartment	3
Type AA9	1 bed apartment	4
Type AA10	1 bed apartment	3
Type AA11	1 bed M4(3) apartment	3
Total Affordable Apartments		13
Affordable Houses		
Type AH1	2 bed house	7
Type AH2	3 bed house	7
Type AH3	4 bed house	3
Total Affordable Houses		17
Total Affordable Dwellings		30
Grand Total Dwellings		304

Key

- Existing trees to be retained
- Existing trees to be removed
- New Indicative tree planting (by others)
- Visitor parking space
- Un-allocated parking space
- Garage
- Car port
- Refuse store
- Cycle store
- Refuse collection point
- Sheffield cycle stand
- Timber bollard
- Lockable bollard for emergency access

Note: Refer to drawing no. 1644 / P / 10.05 for details of Boundary Treatments.

		No: Mercer Road, Horsham
		Title: Site Layout - North Parcel
		Scale: 1:500 @A1
		Date: November 2023
		Drawing: 1644 / P / 10.02



Client: Riverdale Developments
 Scheme: Pondtail Farm, Mercer Road, North Horsham
 Drawing: North Site Proposal Plan Figure No: 6
 ACD Ref: RIV22501
 Scale: NTS@A3 Drawn: IN Checked: JM





Accommodation Schedule		
Private		
Private Apartments		
Type A1	1 bed apartment	12
Type A2	1 bed apartment	2
Type A3	1 bed apartment	4
Type A4	2 bed apartment	7
Type A5	2 bed apartment	8
Type A6	1 bed apartment	3
Type A7	2 bed apartment	8
Type A8	2 bed apartment	4
Total Private Apartments		
52		
Private Houses		
Type H1	2 bed house	30
Type H2	2 bed house	28
Type H3	2 bed house	1
Type H4	2 bed house	1
Type H5	3 bed house	78
Type H6	4 bed house	1
Type H7	4 bed house	8
Type H8	4 bed house	10
Type H9	4 bed house	11
Type H10	4 bed house	9
Type H11	4 bed house	20
Type H12	5 bed house	4
Type H13	3 bed house	25
Total Private Houses		
222		
Total Private Dwellings		
274		
Affordable		
Affordable Apartments		
Type AA5	2 bed apartment	3
Type AA6	1 bed apartment	4
Type AA7	1 bed apartment	3
Type AA11	1 bed (MAG) apartment	3
Total Affordable Apartments		
13		
Affordable Houses		
Type AH1	2 bed house	7
Type AH2	3 bed house	7
Type AH3	4 bed house	3
Total Affordable Houses		
17		
Total Affordable Dwellings		
30		
Grand Total Dwellings		
304		

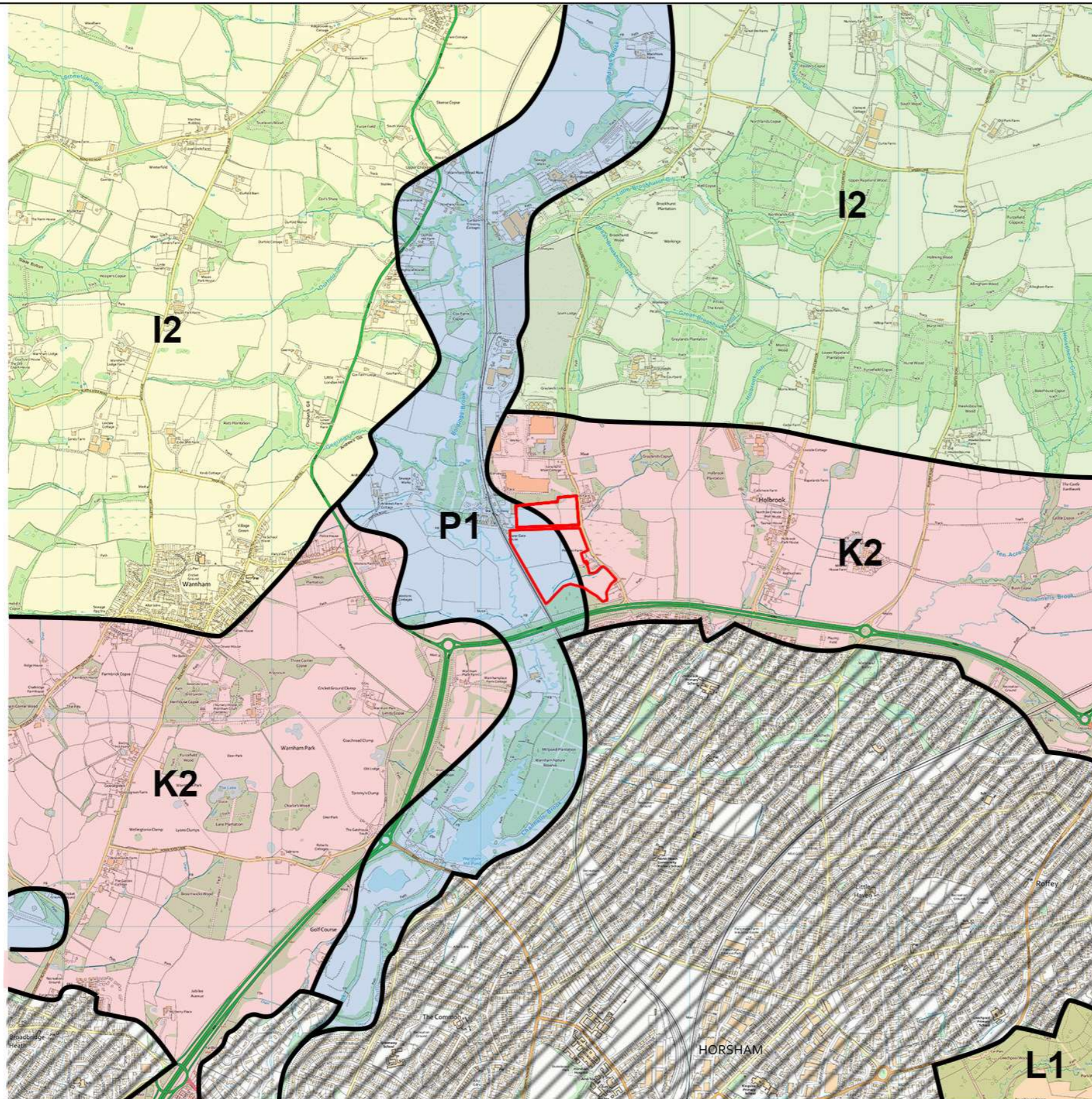
- Key**
- Existing trees to be retained
 - Existing trees to be removed
 - New indicative tree planting (by others)
 - ▽ Visitor parking space
 - ▽ Un-allocated parking space
 - ▽ Garage
 - ▽ Car port
 - ▽ Refuse store
 - ▽ Cycle store
 - ▽ Refuse collection point
 - ▽ Sheffield cycle stand
 - ▽ Timber bollard
 - ▽ Lockable bollard for emergency access
- Note: Refer to drawing no. 1044 / P / 10.05 for details of Boundary Treatments.

		Mercer Road, Horsham Site Layout - South Parcel 1:500 @ A0 1044 / P / 10.05
	November 2023	



Client: Rivdale Developments		
Scheme: Pondtail Farm, Mercer Road, North Horsham		
Drawing: South Site Proposal Plan	Figure No: 7	
ACD Ref: RIV22501		
Scale: NTS@A3	Drawn: IN	Checked: JM





LEGEND



Site Boundary

Landscape Character Areas:



P Minor River Valley
P1 Upper Arun Valleys



K Narrow Clay Vale Farmlands
K2 Warnham and Faygate Vale



I Wooded Ridges
P1 Warnham & Rusper Wooded Ridge



L Forest Ridges & Ghylls
L1 St Leonards Forest



Client: Riverdale Developments

Scheme: Pondtail Farm, Mercer Road, North Horsham

Drawing: Landscape Character Areas

Figure No: 8

ACD Ref: RIV22501

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: ACG

Checked: JM





Head Office

Rodbourne Rail Business Centre
Grange Lane
Malmesbury
SN16 0ES
Tel: 01666 825646

Surrey Office

The Old Mill, Fry's Yard
Bridge Street
Godalming
GU7 1HP
Tel: 01483 425714

Hampshire Office

Suite 6
Crescent House
Yonge Close
Eastleigh
SO50 9SX
Tel: 02382 026300

Email: mail@acdenv.co.uk

Website: www.acdenvironmental.co.uk

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