

Background to the Application

THE WARREN HERITAGE PROJECT





THE WARREN ESTATE

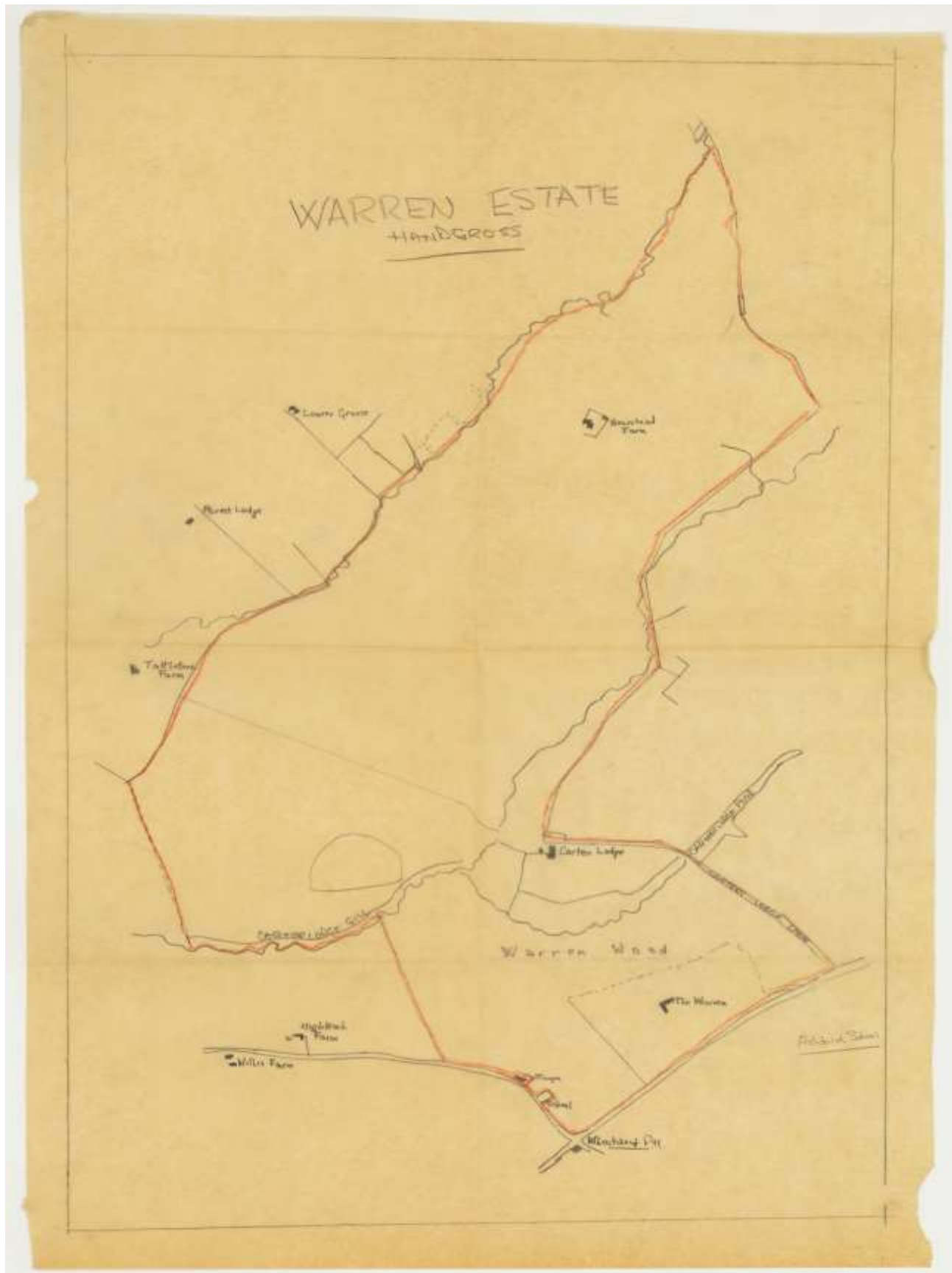
These black and white photographs were not taken in 1895 when the first house was built here, nor in 1913 when it was extended as the First World War was about to begin, but in 2022 as the Covid epidemic ended and once again, we were able to look to the future with hope and optimism.

The Warren Estate has not always looked so impressive. After and because of the World War Two, the 650-acre estate was divided into lots and sold. In the 1960s the house was converted to flats. By the 1990s it was decrepit, separated from its parkland gardens, facing ruin. Yet it is still one of the finest country houses in Sussex.

In 1994 a grandson of the last owner inherited the remains of the estate - about 30 acres – and purchased a substantial portion of the house with the intention of restoring and reintegrating the whole. Hundreds of thousands have been invested over the past 30 years but there is still more to do.

The Warren Estate project has been devised to bring different elements of this unique estate into a settled relationship in the interests of current and future stakeholders, permanently reverse division and decline, and encourage public appreciation and support for its lasting place and value in the community.





PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project is to secure the future of a distinctive 19th century country house in its remaining surroundings with a residential population of more than 50 people, potentially 80. It will greatly contribute to and safeguard our local quality of life.

Informal agreement has been reached with neighbouring landowners for its enduring purposes, to uphold the heritage value and integrity of the National Landscape and facilitate and encourage interest and support among the local community. A network of public rights of way crosses the original estate, still extant but vulnerable to continuing subdivision and decline.

This is a unique opportunity to make lasting improvements in the public interest which will otherwise be lost.

Proposals were first presented to Horsham District Council in March 2024 and Pre-application Advice was received in July 2024. Meetings were held with the High Weald AONB in October, and subsequently with Historic England and Natural England, neighbouring landowners, the Parish Council and local residents. The project takes account of these and other discussions.

The Warren is predominantly a residential estate of 14 existing dwellings with extensive parkland gardens, woodland and outbuildings. The sale of land for three new homes and the replacement of some existing dwellings will provide the necessary capital.

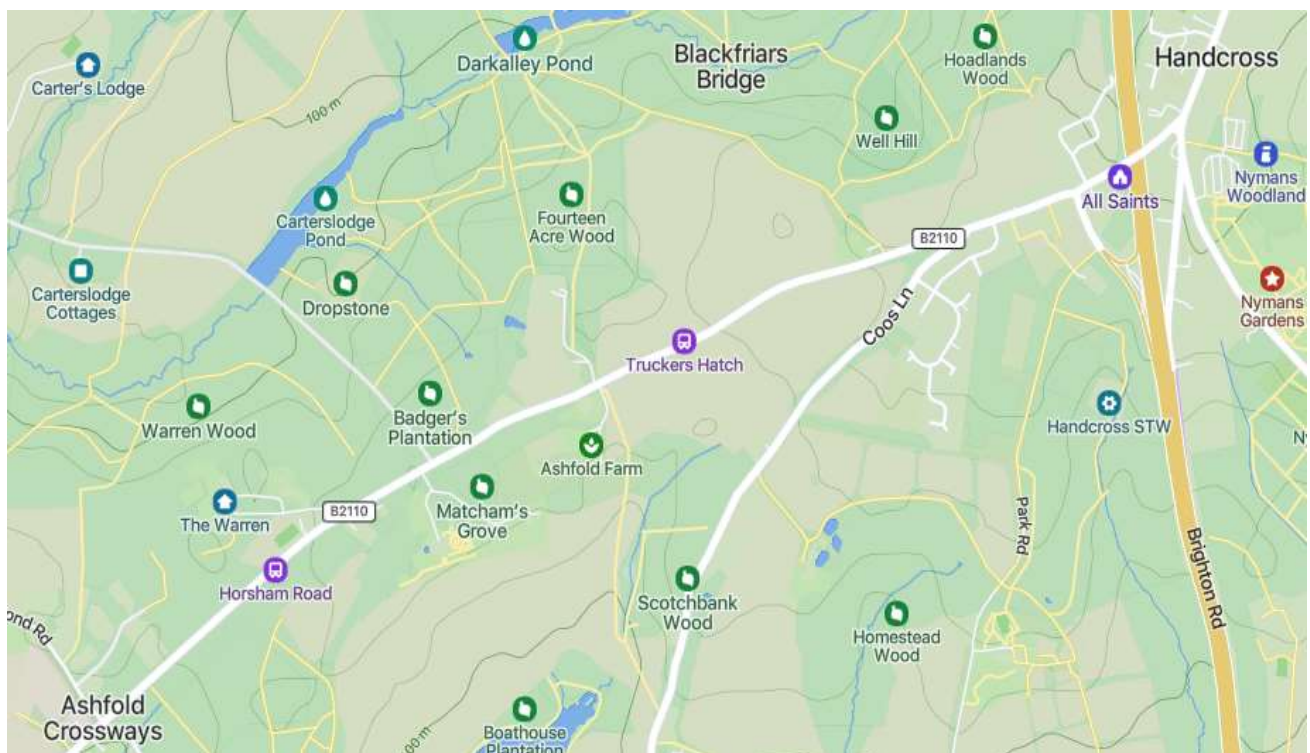
It will enable a sustainable economic model ensuring the future of the principal heritage building, enhance public rights of way and enjoyment of the estate, and explain its historical and spatial context, present restoration, farming and agroforestry activities.

Within the purview of the estate owner's existing work relating to human health and agriculture, a heritage and innovation centre will contribute to the national and rural economy, biodiversity and landscape.

The project has been devised as a single unified whole, overwhelmingly in the public interest, fully justifying minimal enabling development solely within previously consented parts of the estate.

1.0 HERITAGE

The Warren Estate extends to some 33 acres around a late-Victorian mansion called The Warren, bottom left, less than a mile west of Handcross village. It adjoins Warren Wood, shown to the north at the edge of St. Leonard's Forest, and is accessed at 3 points: from the B2110 Horsham Road adjacent to a bus stop; from a south gate halfway between the main drive and Ashfold Crossways; and from a western gate in Handford Way, a private road off Hammer Pond Lane, bottom left from Ashfold Crossways. It is the remnant of a much larger estate which until 1952 extended to 662 acres and included the adjacent Newstead Farm (472 acres), Carters Lodge (44.5 acres, immediately below), 2 semi-detached cottages in Hammer Pond Road and 3 terraced cottages in Handcross village. An adjacent estate occupies the land to the east up to Handcross village where the Grade II Listed house, The Hyde, is similarly subdivided.

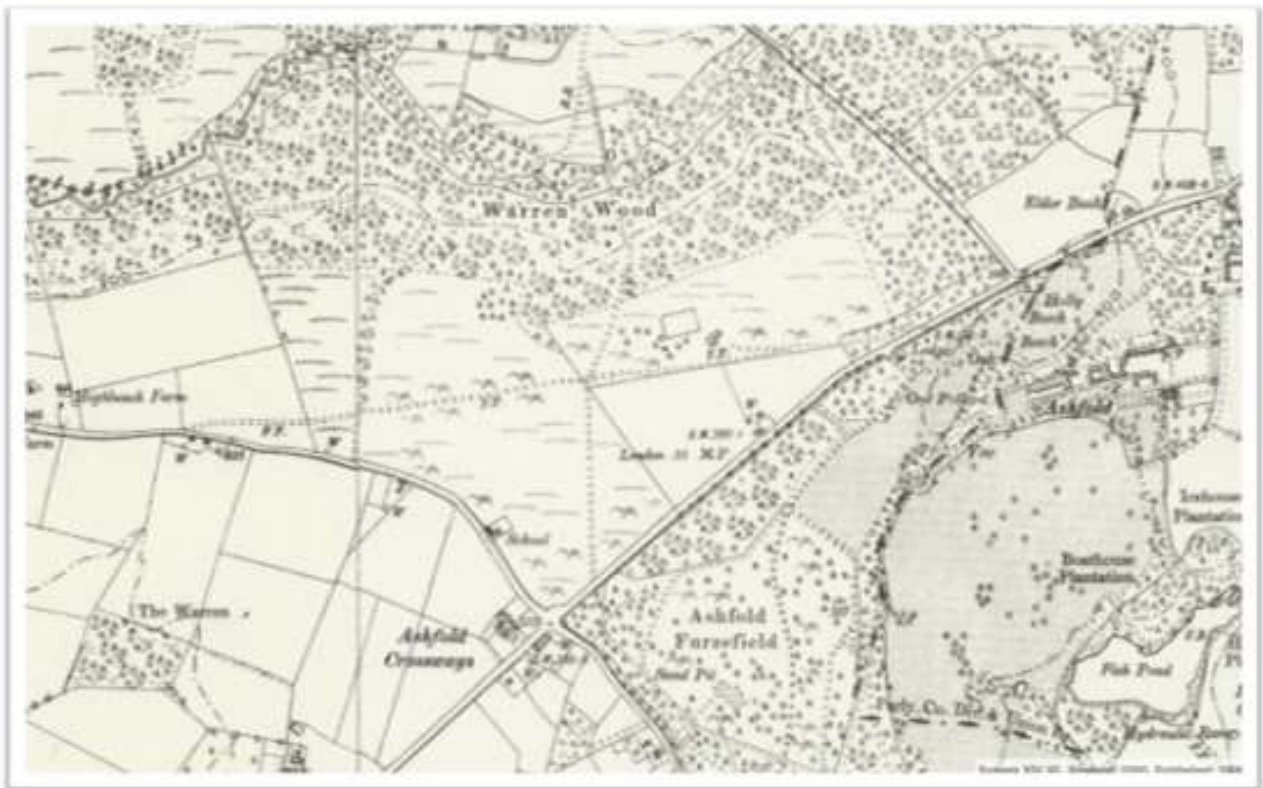


The Warren is an undesignated heritage asset built and substantially extended between 1895 and 1912 by Leicester Morgan Reed, Justice of the Peace for Sussex and later an owner of Crawley-based William Reed Publishing, founded by his father in 1862. The present Warren Estate was acquired in 1952 by the current owner's grandfather, who converted it to leasehold flats in 1965. Tudor Lodge, opposite the main drive on the neighbouring Ashfold Estate, is also a Grade II Listed Building. Architecturally, The Warren is a particularly fine example of a Sussex country house of that style "when the Gothic Revival gave way to a further classical revival (based on) carefully considered historical sources from 17th Century neo-vernacular traditions" (Historic England).

The architect was E. P. Warren FRIBA, who designed Shelley House in Chelsea with its connections to Horsham's famous romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. He also restored Lamb House in Rye, home to American author Henry James, whose life-long 'renowned and dedicated amanuensis' (National Trust) was Theodora Bosanquet. Theodora was 5th cousin to Eveline Louise Emmeline Bosanquet, wife of Colonel J R Warren, whose family still own The Hyde estate at Handcross, adjacent to The Warren. Eveline's elder sister, Cicely Alice Colquhoun Bosanquet, married Major George Edward Shelley, cousin once removed to Percy Bysshe Shelley. The 90-mile High Weald Landscape Trail from Horsham to Rye in East Sussex on the South Coast, is accessed from, and passes through, more than a mile of The Warren Estate.

Within the estate boundary, several residential properties are now in separate ownership, including the former stables and garaging, now a large house between the mansion and Horsham Road set in 4 acres called Warren Wood, and the former gate-lodge with the original paddock and equestrian facilities at the main entrance. Between 1965 and 1973 five detached houses were built on 11 acres within the estate along Handford Way. By 1994 when the present owner came to live at The Warren, its architectural integrity had been substantially compromised. The parkland and woodland had been decimated by a hurricane in 1987 and the access tracks and public footpaths were impassable. With other leaseholders and sound management, much has been done to restore the mansion and reintegrate it into its surroundings, mindful of its landscape and heritage value.

The Warren Estate and surrounding area. OS Map 1850 - Sussex XIV.SE Revised 1895



The Warren mansion and outbuildings, 1908. Source: Slaugham Archives



The mansion was extended 1910-12 and converted to 11 flats in 1965 (photo 2020)



Restored sash windows, materials, chimneys and entrance portico (photo 2025)



DIVISION AND DETERIORATION SINCE 1952

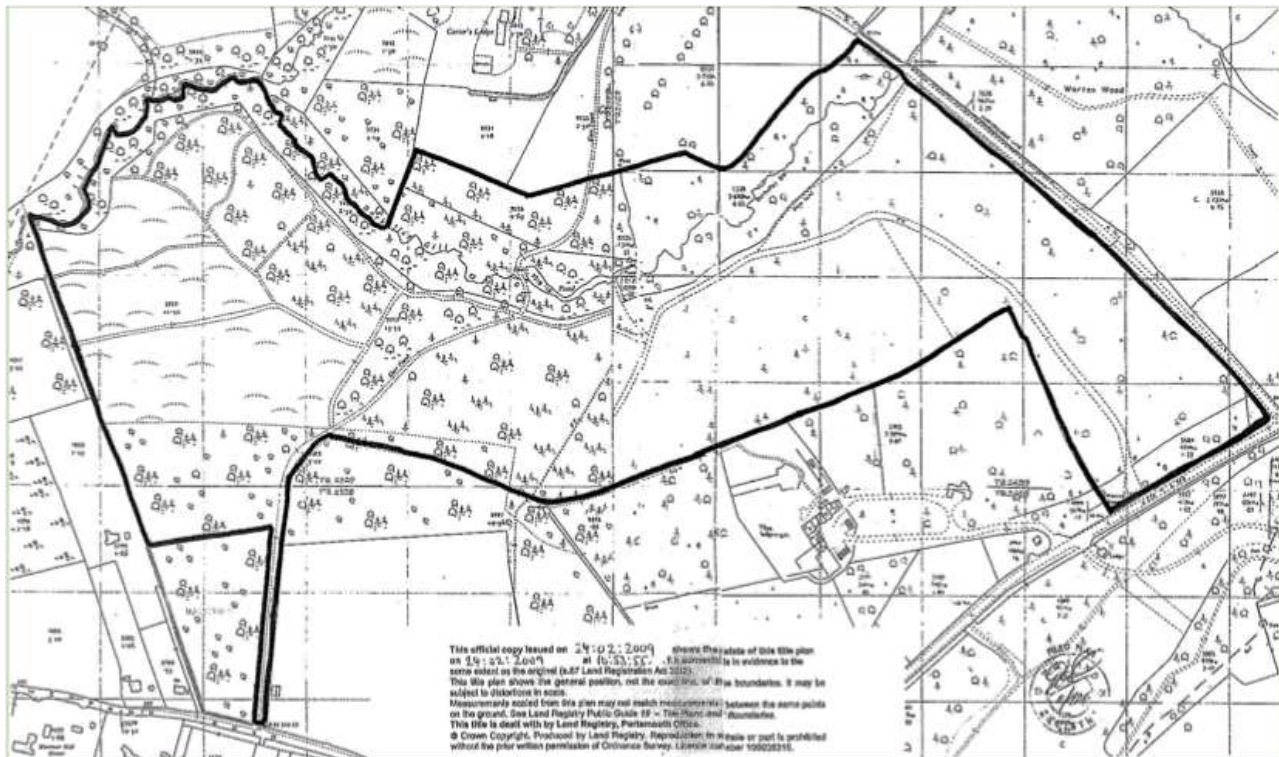
The Warren Estate was sold in 1952 in three main land parcels – lot 1 as The Warren and lots 2 and 3 to a speculator who divided and resold them in 1958. These remain in separate ownerships as the old Carters Lodge (renamed), a new Carters Lodge to the north-east, Carters Lodge Farm, formerly Newstead Farm, and Warren Wood.

This further parcel of some 100 acres of woodland is shown overleaf, between the Farm and The Warren. It was not sold again until 2009 when it was again purchased by a speculator, who further subdivided it into two parcels, one of which was again subdivided and sold yet again in 2011. The remaining section called Lester Wood, is currently being further subdivided and sold, its future use and environmental effects unknown.

The original estate thus diminished at an increasing pace over 73 years from one to 12 parcels of land, and unless reversed, will bring the present average to 1 subdivision every 4 years. The landscape too was devastated by a hurricane in 1987 and an escalating deer population has greatly affected re-planting. Ecological surveys in 1992 and 1998 evidenced the dramatic loss of, but at the same time the significant potential to restore, the biodiversity of the landscape which should have been preserved in the High Weald AONB.

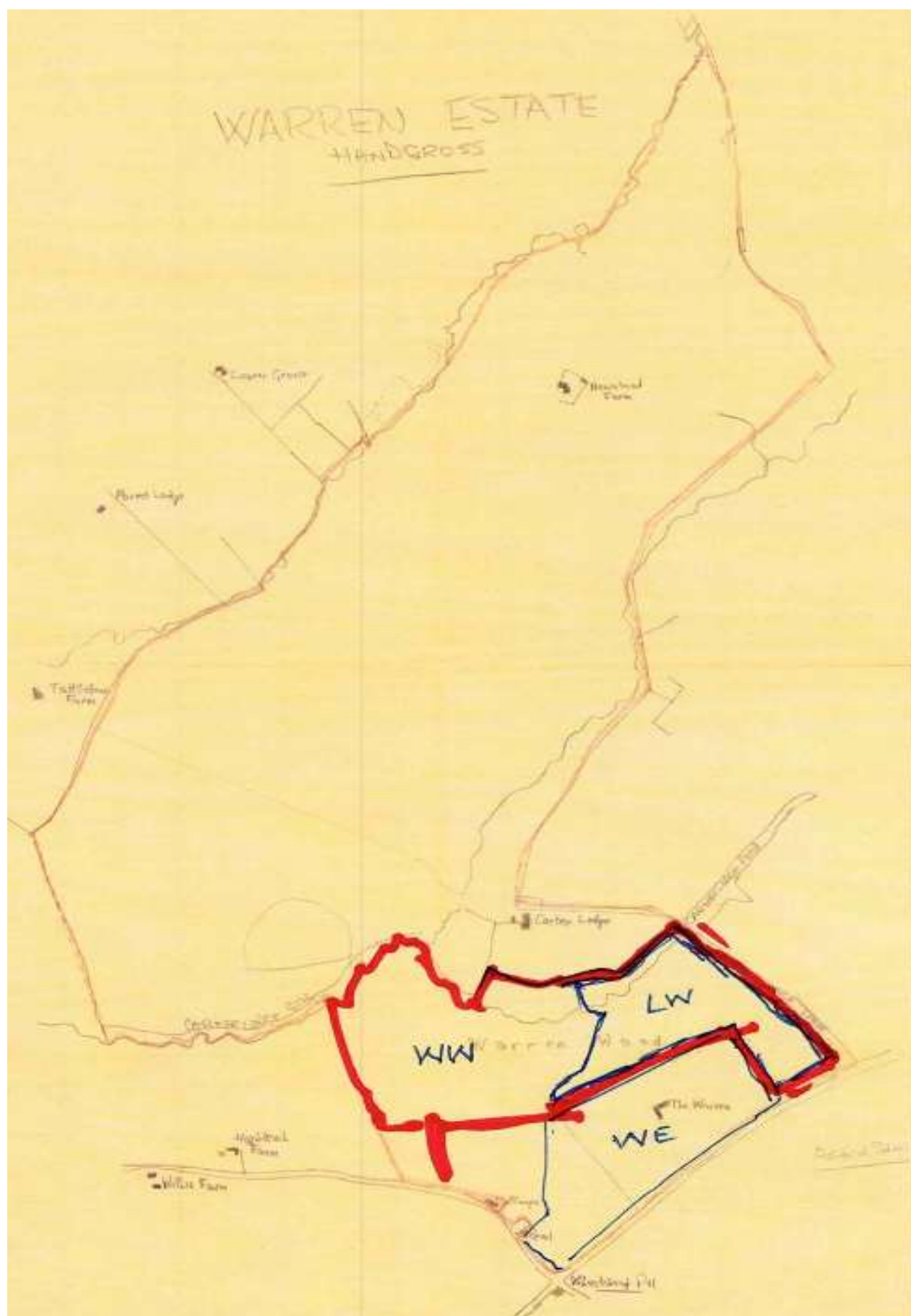
Meanwhile, within the remaining Warren Estate, between 1965 and 1975 some 7 of the 11 acres granted Building Consent, was sold for residential development. In 1983, The Warren itself was sold. Estate ownership was replaced by a leaseholder-run freehold management company, radically altering the economic model with no provision for restoration, resulting in its substantial dilapidation over the next decade to 1994.

Subdivision of The Warren and Newstead Farm to produce Warren Wood, 1958



Subdivision of Warren Wood into 60 acres and Lester Wood 40 acres, 2011





Parkland, woodland and Public Footpath 1706 - inaccessible from 1987 - 1994





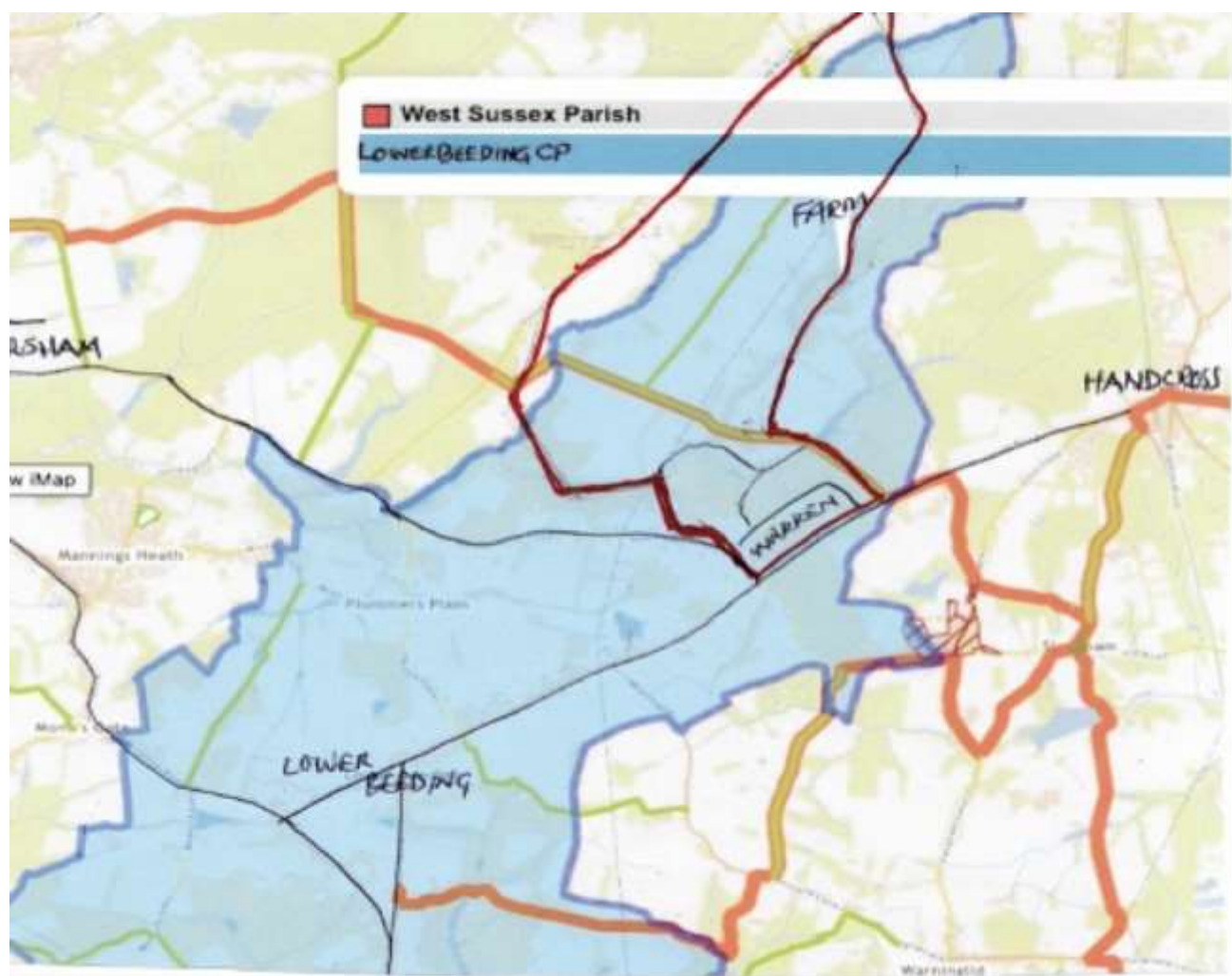


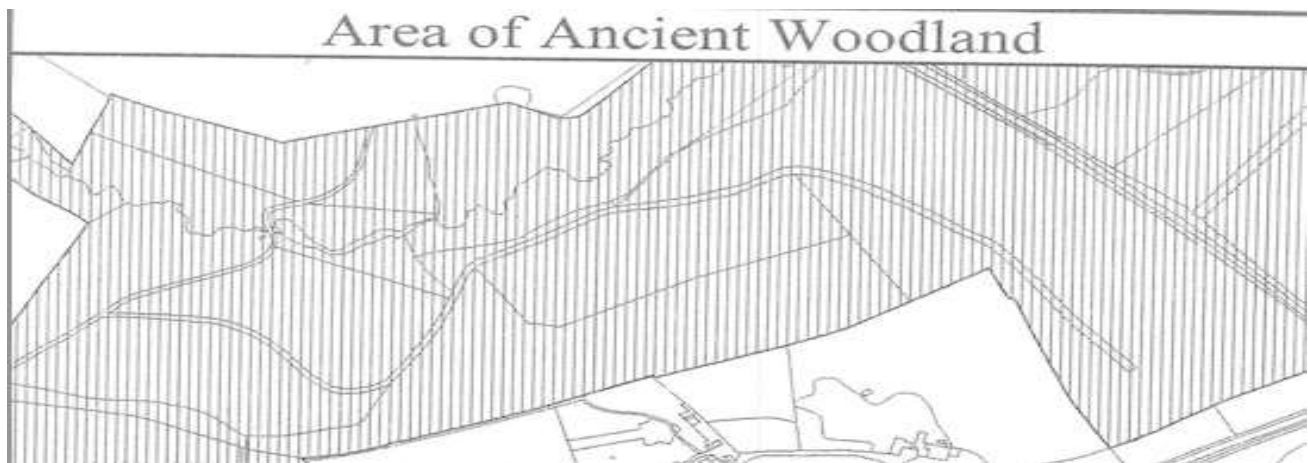


2.0 LOCAL CONTEXT – LOWER BEEDING PARISH AND THE HIGH WEALD AONB

In 1973 The Warren Estate was within an area designated of 'Great Landscape Value'. Following a sub-regional study in 1972, however, the Government Joint Planning Advisory Committee concluded it was "not within an area of above average landscape quality", and the Minister excluded it from a newly-planned, cross-county AONB which later became the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – today the High Weald National Landscape Partnership.

Until 1976, neither the Government Commission nor West Sussex County Council included Plummer's Plain or the Estate land in the AONB. But by 1980, after continued lobbying by Horsham District Council, the Countryside Commission finally settled on Hammer Pond Road and the B2110 (then the A279) as "the most convenient" way to solve "the problem of defining a suitable boundary in the Plummers Plain area where there is a difference between us". **Thus, as the estate land granted Building Consent was still being marketed, its designation became the western extremity of the High Weald AONB, now part of High Weald National Landscape, in the Parish of Lower Beeding.**

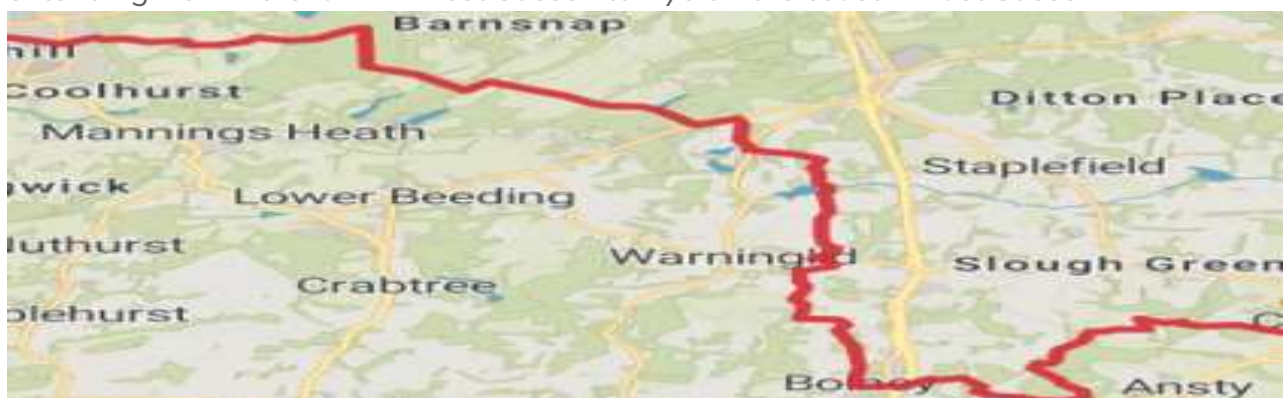


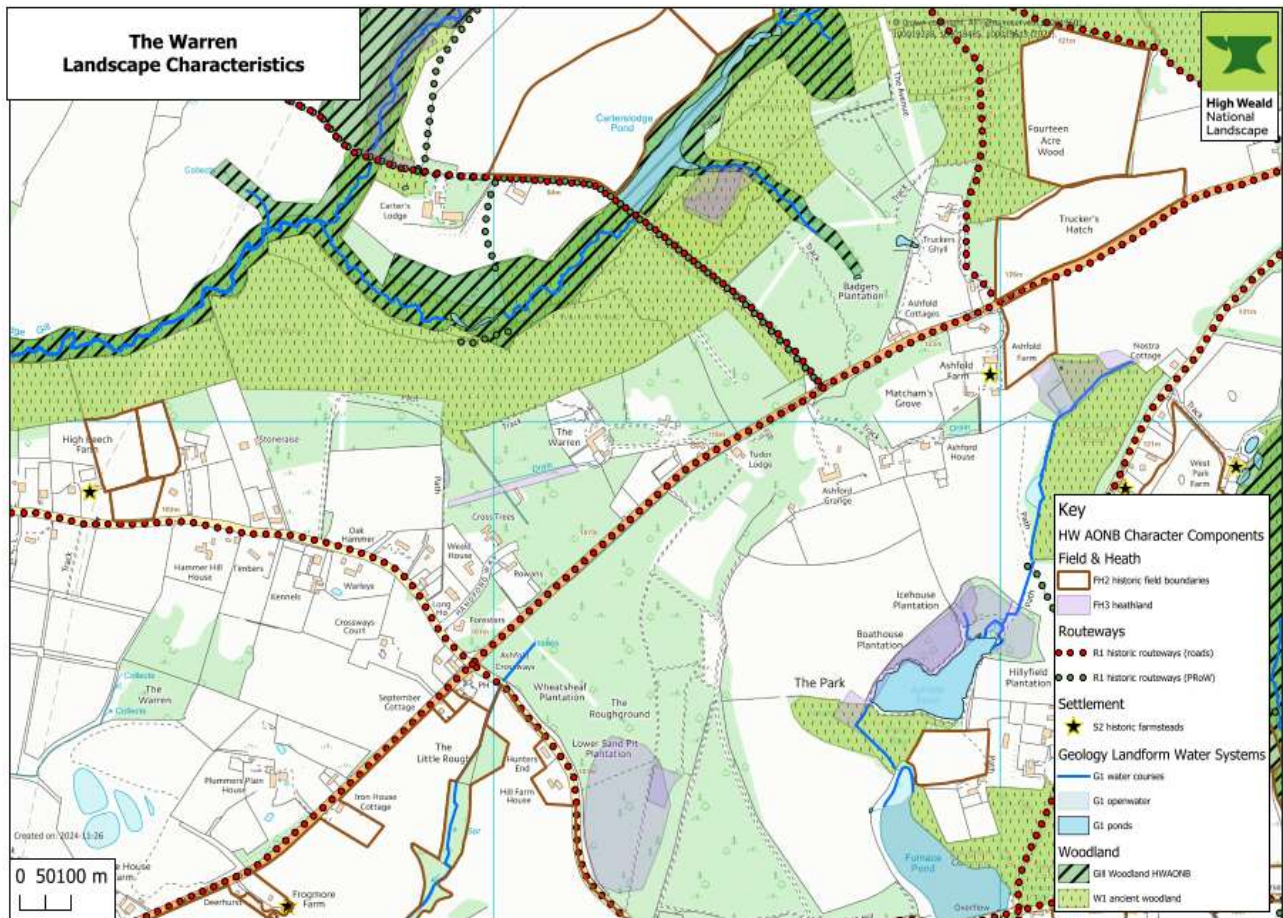


To the north the Estate largely abuts an area once designated Ancient Woodland, before and after 1945 commercially developed as pine and larch plantations. The High Weald AONB Vision, agreed by the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee, includes the following aims relevant to the future of the Estate in the High Weald AONB:

- ...retains its distinctive historic character and beauty as a **small-scale anciently enclosed working landscape, with a mosaic of landscape features and habitats;**
- ...has **restored its rich biodiversity and abundance of characteristic species;**
- ...**sustainable land management practices, such as agroforestry activities and appropriate infrastructure supported and nurtured where they deliver public benefits;**
- ...sustained by **sensitive small scale woodland management;**
- ...sustains a **diverse range of people and more young people working in farming, forestry and rural land management, supported by appropriate workspace;**
- ...**has protected its historic landscape features and heritage assets, allowing people to experience the sense of history;**
- ...exhibits appropriate **high quality and landscape-led new housing, including affordable housing, and workspace to support thriving rural communities, and which does not compromise the High Weald's character;**
- ...has adopted a **net-zero future, relying on nature-based solutions** for climate cooling;
- ...is a **more accessible landscape, with modal shifts in transport and more opportunities for walking**

For example, below: the High Weald Landscape Trail passes through The Warren Estate extending from Horsham in West Sussex to Rye on the coast in East Sussex





The High Weald Joint Advisory Committee's High Weald Management Plan provides more detailed guidance, including the following, of particular relevance:

- Noting that whether development is major or not is a matter of planning judgement for the decision maker (in the context of the AONB under para 183 of the NPPF), the High Weald Partnership recommends that, in forming that judgement, specific consideration be given to the following:

- a. The **potential of the proposal to have a significant adverse impact on the natural beauty for which the AONB is designated and defined**, as set out in this Management Plan, for example, where the nature, scale and setting of the proposal could significantly harm any of the character components.

- b. The potential for such adverse impact from **cumulative development** and that on a precautionary basis, such consideration is also applied to the plan-making stage and any proposed allocations for development in the AONB.

- The High Weald Partnership recommends that **new development should be 'landscape-led' and consistent with the objectives set out in this Plan** and expanded on in the High Weald Housing Design Guide.

- The Guide sets out the urban design expectations for all new housing developments within the High Weald AONB, with the objective **of achieving higher quality and landscape-led design that reflects intrinsic High Weald character**, that steers away from generic or suburban layout and design approaches, and that is instead embedded with a **true sense of place**, without stifling innovation and creativity.

The term *landscape* used here includes landscape history, physical character and perceived qualities, and socio-economic and ecological functioning – all of which contribute to understanding a place.

Landscape-led design means using **landscape as a framework** to understand the site and formulate a design response. A design response includes site capacity, layout, form, scale and detailing as well as landscaping and ecology plans which combine to make a place **beautiful and distinctive and integrated into the surrounding AONB**.

In relation to the High Weald AONB Vision and Management Plan, the Warren Estate Project sets 10 relevant objectives relating to the above, as follows:

- Bring forward a **sustainable exemplar** through a holistic package of self-sustaining, organic agroforestry and woodland management-led projects, for the provision of public benefits and enhancing the High Weald AONB.
- Secure the settled, long-term future of the Estate **for the community within its borders**, its existing connections within the Parish, with its original heritage estate shown on previous pages, and with Handcross village and its environs.
- Create and trial innovative organic **agroforestry activities** to foster local research and commercial development, public education and participation.
- Enable the house and estate to stay intact as a single unit **without excessive or cumulative development**.
- Provide opportunities for the **development of rural industries** through appropriate interaction with regional academic, commercial and public organisations.
- Facilitate synergistic habitat enhancements with a **net gain in biodiversity**, including the management of plants, *Cervidae* (deer) and other wild species.
- Provide **improved public access and connectivity** with distance footpaths linked to an educational centre explaining the temporal and spatial context of the estate and its environs.
- Residential development to be limited to replacement dwellings and necessary enabling development **to facilitate the AONB enhancements and public benefits**.
- Ensure the nature, scale and setting of proposals **would not significantly harm** the character of the AONB, or continuity of the natural beauty for which it is designated.
- Ensure proposals for the built and natural environment are 'landscape-led' and **reflect the intrinsic High Weald character** and heritage value of the Estate.

3.0 LOCAL CONTEXT – HANDCROSS AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

The Warren Estate encompasses a community of 18 dwellings currently laid out to accommodate some 50 people.

Within a mile is the rapidly developing village of Handcross on the M23 which provides a full range of day-to-day facilities and services including a primary state school and an independent school; a full-service health centre with medical and dental surgeries; two churches; a large restaurant and public house; a parish hall; a recreation ground, sports and social club; a high street including a food supermarket (opened in 2024), convenience stores, bedding centre, carpet centre, butcher, newsagent, hardware store, florist, beauty salon, hairdresser and cafés. Handcross is identified as a Category 3 'Medium Sized Village' in the Mid Sussex District Local Plan (adopted 2018), which states:

"Medium-sized villages provide essential services for the needs of their own residents and immediate surrounding communities. Whilst more limited, these can include key services such as primary schools, shops, recreation and community facilities, often shared with neighbouring settlements."

The Mid Sussex District review - the Submission Draft District Plan (July 2024), continues to identify Handcross in this category.

The Estate has long been and remains an intrinsic part of the communities of Handcross and Lower Beeding, the settlement boundaries of which are under 1 mile from the Estate entrance. Handcross village is nearest, within 3-6 minutes walking and cycling distance with bus stops at both ends of the estate, one at the end of the driveway to The Warren and the other at Hammer Pond Road.

The Estate is as close or closer to Handcross than similar locations are to the edges of other larger settlements within the Horsham District. Moreover, those settlements have nowhere near the comprehensive retailers and community facilities of Handcross:

DISTANCES TO:	From the Warren Estate / Handford Way	From Southern Settlement Boundary of Southwater	From Eastern Boundary of Broadbridge Heath
Nearest Bus Stop	To Handcross High Street - 3-6 minutes 0m, Warren Bus Stop (at Estate Entrance) 150-300 m (The Wheatsheaf, Handcross)	To Southwater Centre - 6 minutes 350 m (Southwater)	To Horsham Centre - 5-10 minutes 500 m (Broadbridge Heath)
Nearest Public House	150 m (The Wheatsheaf) - from Handford Way	1.6 km (Southwater)	1.9 km (Broadbridge Heath)
Nearest High Street	2.8 km (High Street) - from Handford Way 1.9 km (High Street) - from Estate Entrance	1.6 km (Southwater)	3.2 km (Horsham), 1.6 km (Tesco)
Nearest Primary School	2.7 km (Lower Beeding) - from Handford Way 2.7 km (Handcross) - from Estate Entrance	2-2.5 km (Southwater)	1.2-2.2 km (Broadbridge Heath)

4.0 CURRENT USES AND PROPOSALS

The Warren Estate with 18 dwellings and neighbouring properties - ground plan 2021



4.1 The Warren - area 1

When the mansion was converted to 11 two-bedroomed leasehold residential units with 3 garage blocks, about 3 acres was divided into small gardens for each of the flats. In 1983 the freehold interest was transferred to a not-for-profit management company owned by the leaseholders, in which the estate owner is the largest minority shareholder.

Although the mansion has been substantially restored, considerable capital sums beyond the means of current leaseholders are still required to preserve the heritage asset, including particularly large costs to restore architectural features and replace 1960s garage blocks which are no longer fit for purpose, unsightly and beyond repair.

The Warren Estate project – illustrative location plan

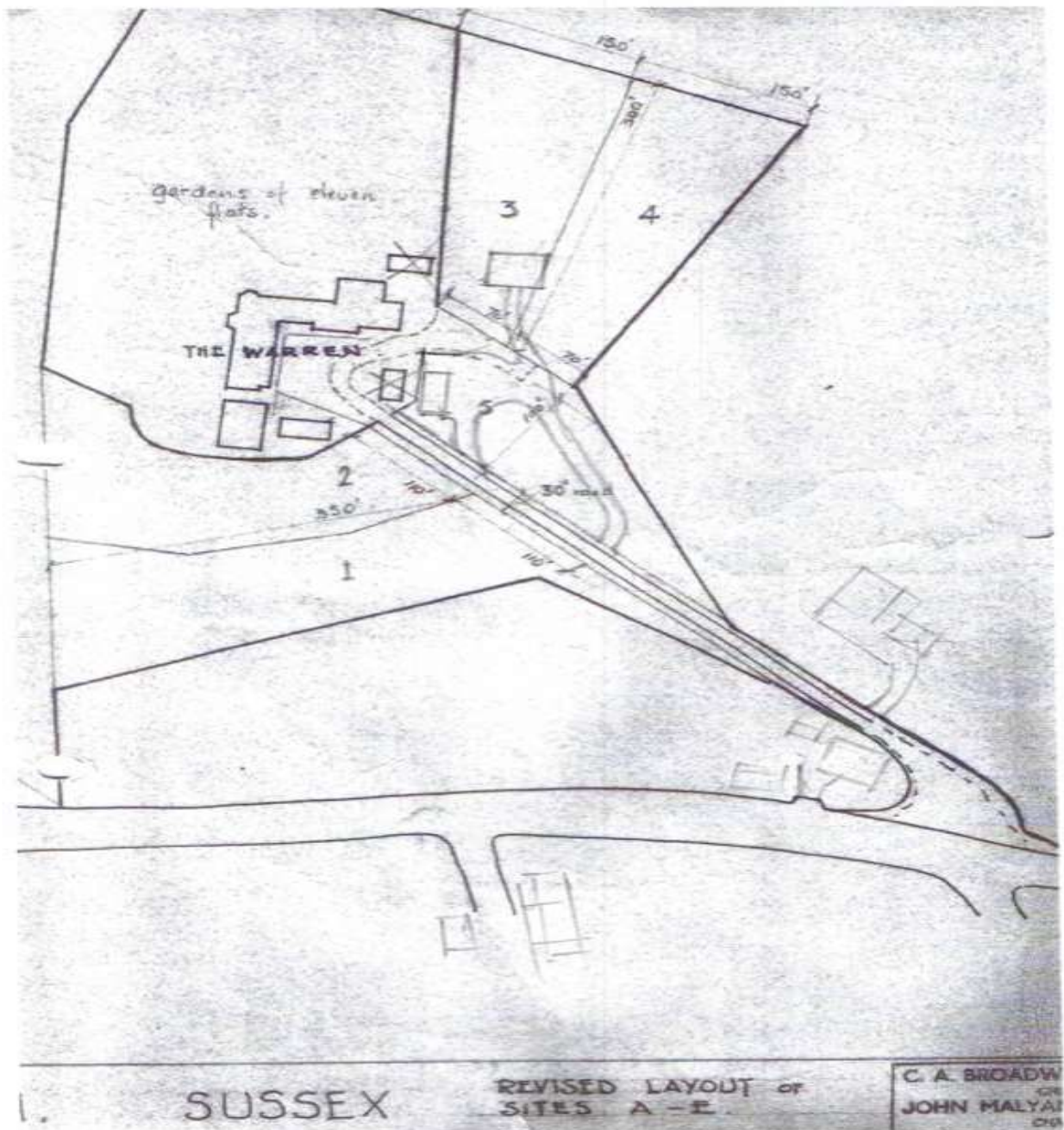


The use of vans and lorries to deliver groceries and other goods purchased online has increased exponentially in recent years. Combined with refuse collection and liquid gas deliveries beyond the normal traffic to the dwellings, all having to turn round in the limited space of the heritage courtyard, has also overburdened the area in front of the mansion and increased the risk of accidental injury and damage to the substrate. This and the obsolescence of garages has consequently increased the need for additional parking and safety. The project aims to establish a sustainable and functional economic model through enabling development.

4.1.1 Replacement garages

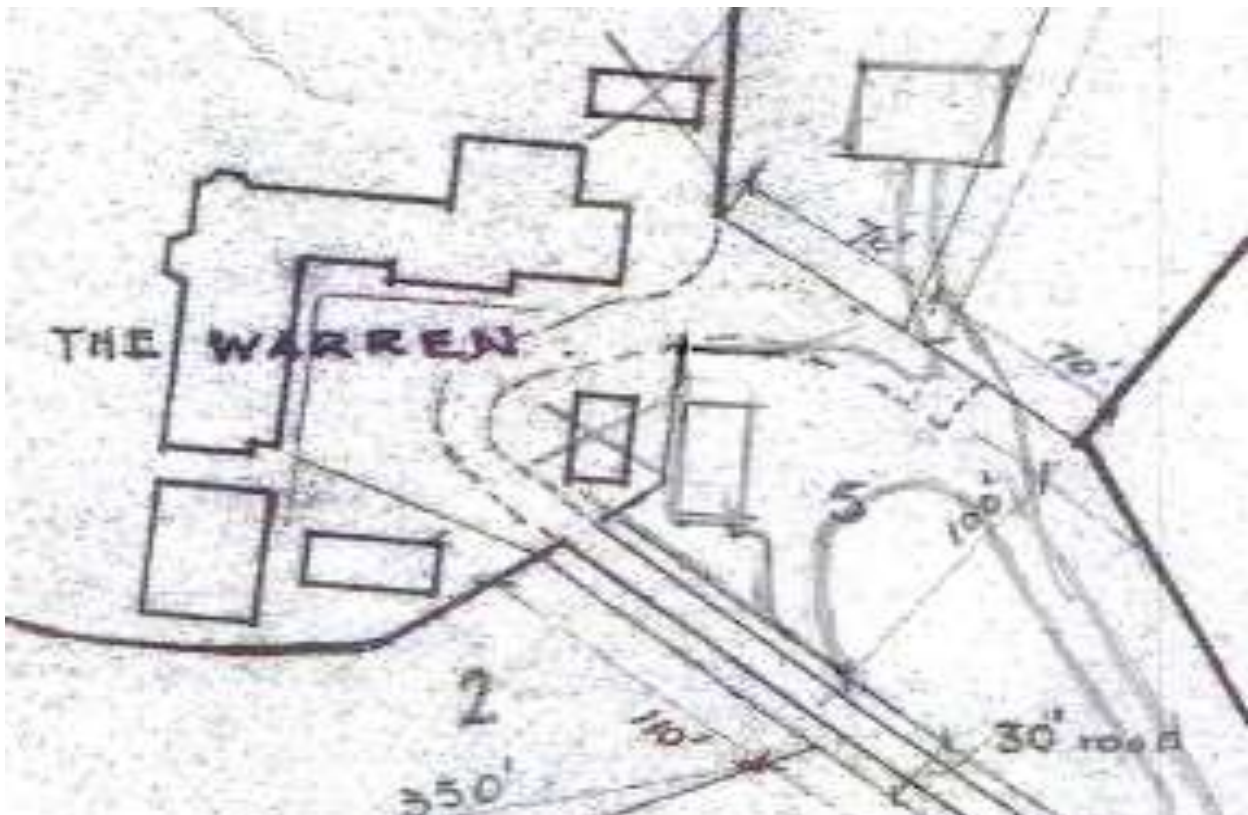
It has been agreed that garaging needs to facilitate safe and easy access from the individual flats which, given their location in the building, still requires separate garaging areas close to the courtyard and close to the rear and front of the building.

The largest number of garages for the five flats at the rear of the building (flats 7, 8, 9, 10, 11) would be accommodated in a new courtyard building shown brown in the ground plan to the right of the main building and enlarged in the sketch below, between nos. 3 and 4.



This courtyard building effectively replaces the original coach house, now Warren Wood, a private residence set in four acres to the right of and below areas 3 and 4 in the sketch on the previous page. It would include nine garages and stores, for the five flats and four enabling dwellings. The whole would be designed and built in the style of the heritage mansion.

In addition, a replacement block of 4 garages would be provided in area 5 on the plan below for the four dwellings in the existing courtyard at the front of the house (flats 3, 4, 5 and 6). This would also be well-screened from the house and combine two other new amenities to resolve the current traffic problems.



The sketch shows the existing drive to The Warren extended in an arc to provide new facilities for delivery vehicles to safely park and deliver on foot across the courtyard, also removing the need for vehicular turning and directing a one-way traffic flow.

The dotted lines through the main courtyard in front of the house show the original arc returning to the old coach house, now Warren Wood, and should otherwise be ignored.

The new arc would also facilitate the urgently needed access to a single Council refuse collection point also at no. 5 on the plan. There are currently three separate bin collection points behind each of the three old garage blocks which has meant dragging wheeley bins across the gravel courtyard.

The land in area 5 would be shared with the heritage asset management company, subject to the normal rights of way and maintenance arrangements, the garage replacement and proper funding of the heritage asset.

Access would remain served by the original driveway with only slight amendment, including a passing space on the main approach and possibly a gated entry for security.



4.1.2 Replacement dwellings

The final four garages from the 1960s, shown just above and to the left of the no. 2 in the above plan, would combine with a replacement dwelling shown immediately right of the no. 2 (to serve flats 1 and 2 and the replacement dwelling).

This resolves another current difficulty, providing safer access to the liquid gas storage tanks behind the existing garage block, which are difficult to access and again require a large tanker to turn in the main courtyard and block the garages whilst delivering.

Without increasing the total number of dwellings, by replacing residential units incorporated into a single dwelling in the main house, a second replacement dwelling is proposed as a restored summer house west of the main house which is not within the demise or current use of the existing flats.

The restoration of this thatched Summer House built between 1895 and 1910 is part of the heritage restoration project, without ancillary restriction because it does not naturally combine with any one of the leasehold properties.

Surface water capture from most of The Warren roof gulleys and gutters still drains into an artesian well which is part of the Summer House complex.

All these proposals can be sited in restored, secluded woodland garden settings, well screened from the house, from the main drive, and from the new garaging, refuse collection and delivery area at 5.

4.1.3 Enabling development

The enabling development would provide larger, well-equipped modern garaging and storage, with safe and convenient access from each flat. It would remove up to £200,000 of estimated restoration costs from the management company, and make a significant capital contribution to a Heritage Restoration Fund, permanently changing the economic model to be entirely sustainable in the long term.

Refuse collection and delivery lorries would no longer use the main courtyard, enhancing health and safety as well as the heritage asset.

Architectural guidelines would ensure standards to the best of the historic vernacular and establish appropriate parameters of style and materials quality for benchmarked restoration. Landscape standards will also set out parameters of style and purpose to ensure a cohesive and diverse natural environment. The whole would provide the context in which modern considerations for electric vehicles, parking, passing and turning areas can be adequately accommodated.

The whole of the proceeds of the enabling development will be used to complete The Warren Heritage Project.

4.2 Public amenities and landscape enhancement - areas 3 and 4

Beyond the residential enclaves at either end of the estate, some **20 acres of parkland and woodland gardens** are currently being restored. 120-year-old ornamental rhododendrons, a great many upwards of 30' in height, grow among spindly birch and sycamore, exotic acer, pine and azalea species along with well-established native broadleaved trees like chestnut, oak and beech. Many fallen trees have re-rooted, forming unique habits as a direct result of non-interference after the 1987 hurricane. A few stands of Scots pine survived the hurricane, together with chestnut, rowan, ash, beech, ancient oak trees and other native species. The estate owner has planted hundreds of native trees including oak,

hornbeam, English and Irish yew, and with the Conservation Foundation, disease-resistant elm as part of David Bellamy's 'Great British Elm Experiment' in 2010. But in the past 12 years invasive deer have more than quadrupled, wreaking havoc on new planting.



Many different types of environments range from natural heathland in the west, to steep shaded elevations to the north and more gradual wooded elevations to the south. Various surveys of species and habitats have been conducted since the 1960s providing invaluable data but evidence of lost biodiversity.

The heritage project aims to restore an appropriate **balance of native plant and animal species**, along with the restoration of these formal and informal gardens. Within this, various agroforestry activities will **increase and sustain biodiversity** and ensure the long-term integrity of the estate. When feasible the area will be accessible for necessarily limited, **controlled public viewing** especially by the local community.

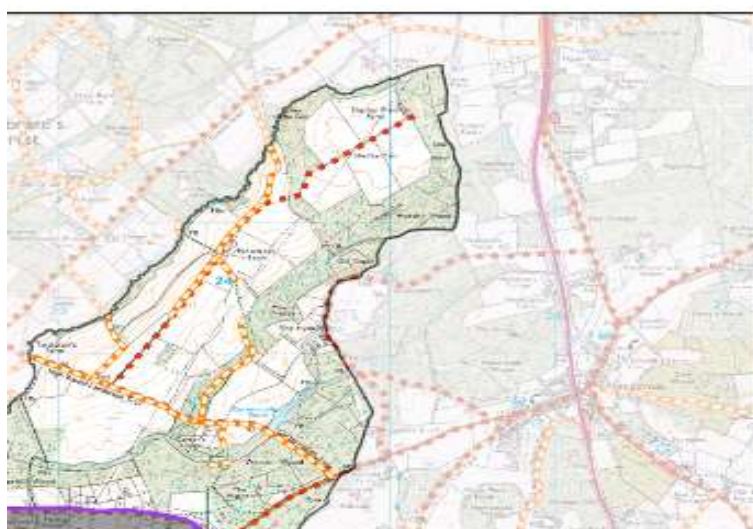
The northern and western boundaries of the estate would necessarily be **protected from deer** in an environment-friendly manner using grids, hedges and hollows to enable the movement of other species whilst allowing the extensive re-planting necessary to ensure sustainable biodiversity.

The upper area 4 borders Warren Wood which has recently undergone restoration as a private arboretum and contains valuable heritage assets which were part of the original estate.

Activities with neighbouring landowners would aim to replace plantations with native woodland with all the gains for biodiversity that would entail and engage in heritage projects including the restoration of a 19th century pumping station and artesian well which until 1950 fed water to the mansion and electricity to the farm. For more than 400 years the South East of England had a rich agricultural and iron-working tradition with areas of industrial significance including shipbuilding, defense and maritime trade, and remains a fount of industrial and agricultural innovation.

The project includes a **heritage centre with controlled public access in area 3**. The centre will explain the temporal and spatial context of the 650-acre estate including its present-day activities and the local and wider community with a means of involvement and participation. **In lower area 4**, a tranquil **heritage garden** has been designed as an adjunct to footpath 1706, used by 19th-century Handcross children walking to a schoolhouse in Hammer Pond Road since at least 1825. A small **car park** suitable for some 20 cars at the beginning of this footpath, off the B2110 Horsham Road, will improve public access to the valuable network of historic rights of way from Lower Beeding to Horsham, Pease Pottage, Slaugham and all the way through East Sussex to the harbour at Rye (and Lambs House) on the south coast.

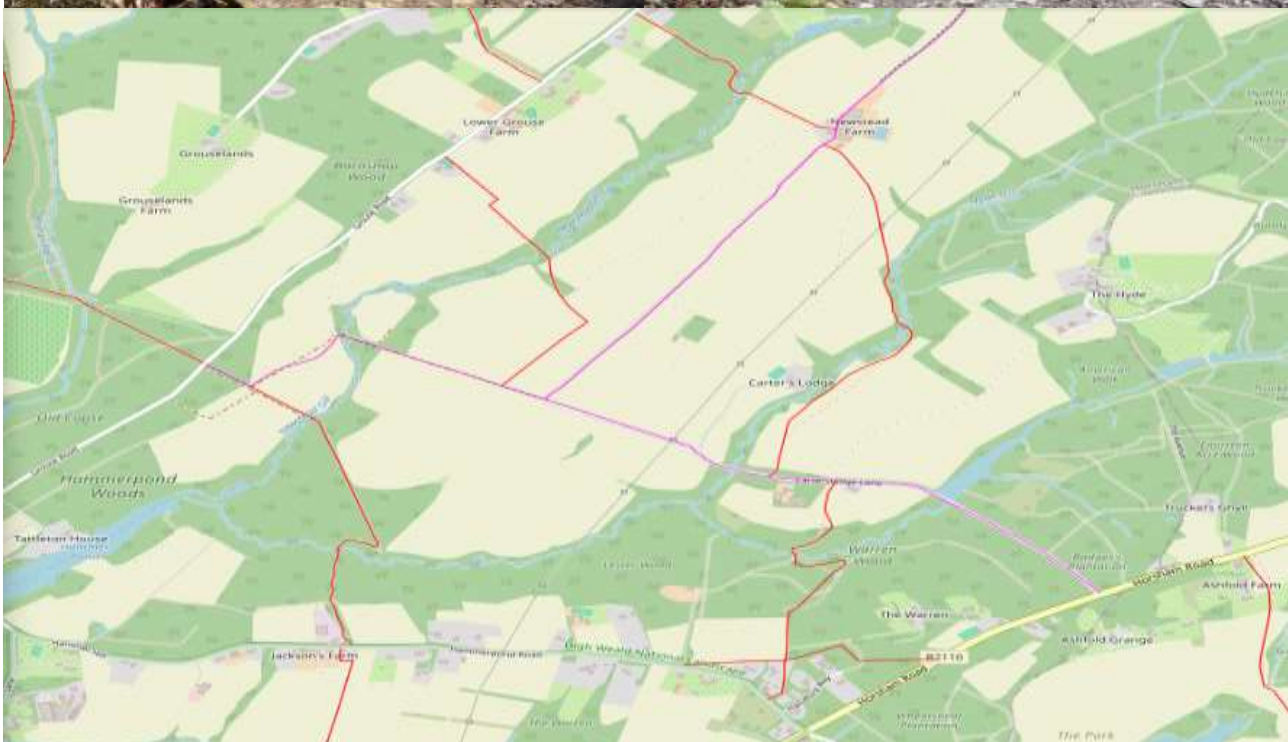
A photograph by Ernest Straker, the frontispiece to *Wealden Iron*, his 1931 history of the industry between the 16th and 19th centuries, shows 'the broken bay of the Warren Furnace' in St. Leonard's Forest in 1887 (a 'bay' is the dam holding up a stream to form a pond). If in 1572 the Duke of Norfolk had succeeded in exchanging the Forest of St. Leonard's (plus manors at Chesworth and Sedgewick Park, Horsham) for his debts to Queen Elizabeth I, he might have kept his head instead of losing it and changed the history of Sussex. This book is also the history of many other people and families in Sussex, Surrey and Kent, no less connected with each other, than they were with these industries. Many of their descendants still live and work in the area - just as local people describe how their forebears were directly involved with everyday activities at The Warren and The Hyde.



High Weald AONB Landscape Character: Historic routeways **Lower Beeding Parish**

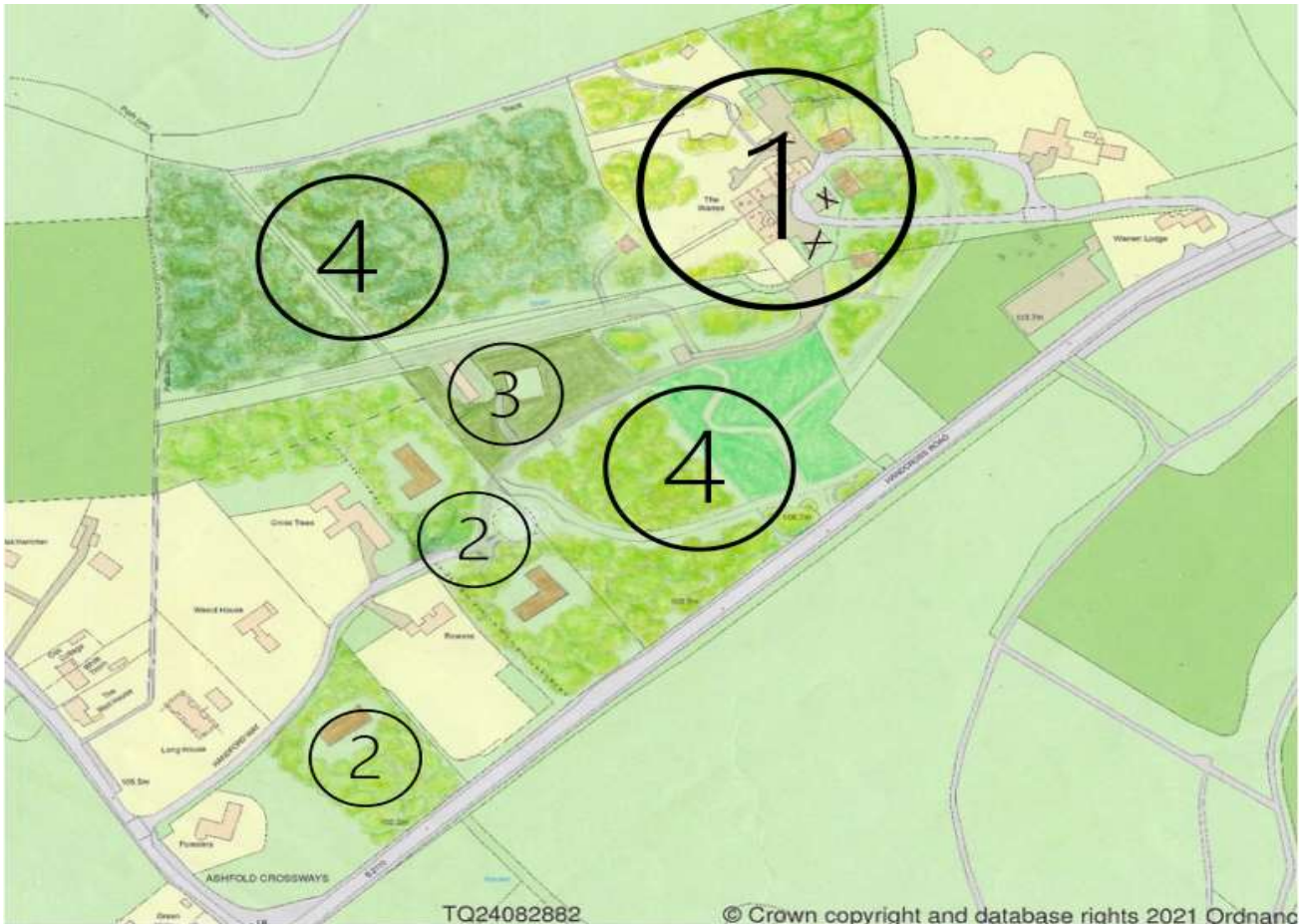
Key	
—●—●—●—●—	Historic routeways - roads (R1)
—●—●—●—●—	Historic routeways - PROW (R1)
	Area of parish outside the High Weald AONB for which data is not displayed or not available (NB: only applicable where parishes straddle the AONB boundary)
—	High Weald AONB boundary

A heritage garden will provide a peaceful haven accessed from footpath 1706



Half a dozen public rights of way which cross the Warren Estate (from the yellow B2110 Horsham Road bottom right, north-west across the valley to Grouse Road white diagonal at Bucks Head bottom left to top right) through ancient woodland and farmland little changed over two centuries) include the 90-mile High Weald Landscape Heritage Trail from Horsham in West Sussex to the ancient coastal town of Rye in East Sussex.

4.3 Handford Way - area 2 on the plan



Previously the Back Drive, Handford Way is the private road constructed to serve the 11 acres granted Building Consent in 1963 at the south-west corner of the estate, bordering the B2110 Horsham Road and Hammer Pond Road. As described above, five freehold residential plots, each of more than an acre, was sold either side of Handford Way during the decade 1965-75, the last house, Rowans, having been built in 1976.

The project proposes **three further architect-designed single dwellings**, conforming with the AONB guidelines, as enabling development, one sited on an empty infill plot between two existing houses (the lower no. 2 on the plan) and two further houses within the 4 acres which remain within the consented area, as shown on the plan above and below, north and south of Handford Way (upper 2 on the plan).

Provision would be made for traffic enhancement including new passing bays and turning areas in line with good practice and architectural guidelines established for the purpose. By covenant, these enabling dwellings would be the permanent extent of residential development on the estate.

The 11-acre site granted Planning Consent (Ordnance Survey 1963)



From Handford Way, the project would establish a **woodland walk** between these 8 dwellings and the 13 dwellings at The Warren, **a total community of between 60 and 70 people in 21 dwellings.**

This would provide access to the Warren bus stop via a pleasant woodland walk about a mile in length along an improved footpath. which was used by children walking from Handcross to a schoolhouse in Hammer Pond Road since at least 1825.

An **administrative and economic basis** for the future management of the woodland walk, the private roadway, drainage and gating and the public garden, would be secured by a simple community management company largely provided through a service charge from the enabling development.

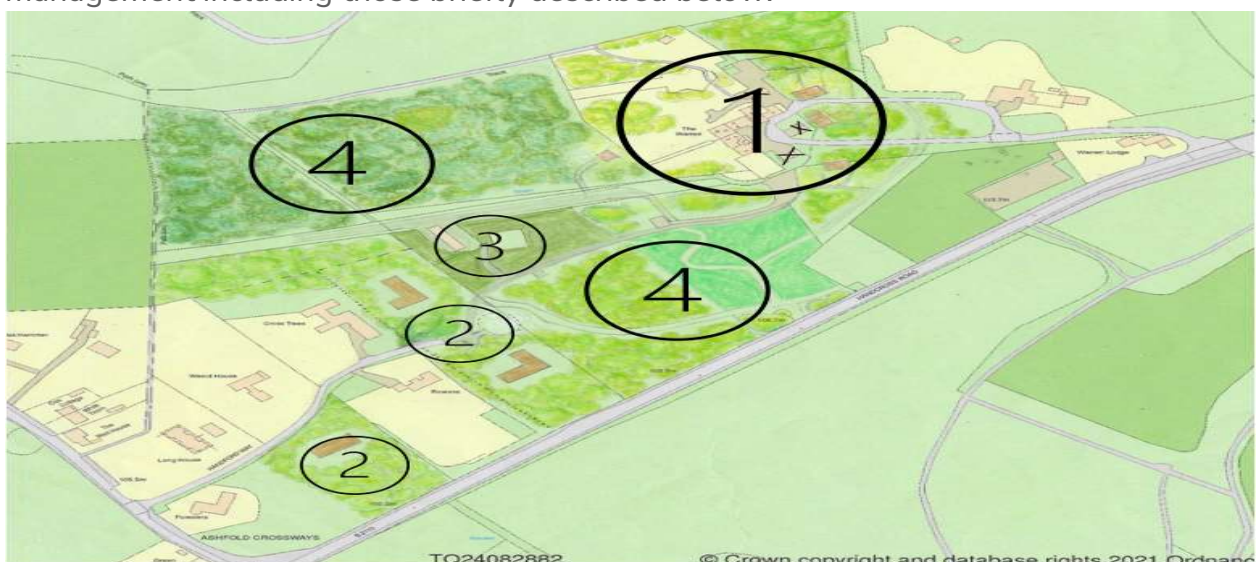
Handford Way is a private road to Warren Virgate and the Back Drive



5 ESTATE AGROFORESTRY ACTIVITIES IN AREAS 3 AND 4

These activities provide a sustainable means to maintain both the biodiversity and the physical upkeep of the estate.

The main park and woodland extending north and south from Back Drive would be reserved for a small number of **integrated agroforestry activities** under estate management including those briefly described below.



An enlarged **innovation centre** at no. 3 on the plan, also housing the public access heritage centre, will conduct research and interact with local rural enterprises such as farms and estates as well as schools, woodland or educational trusts, universities and interested industries. It will seed and support rural enterprise and employment in other existing or new locations, including these enterprises.

The estate owner has been involved in the production of native wild seaweeds in the British Isles and Nordic region for almost three decades and has long been engaged in research and innovation for its uses for human, animal and plant nutrition, working with many UK universities and research and medical establishments as well as manufacturing industries at home and abroad. These endeavours have been awarded for research and environmental sustainability since 1998 and for their innovative contribution to human nutrition and food manufacturing, including salt reduction in manufactured foods, award-winning population studies in obesity, and micronutrient sufficiency.

Seagreens is a certified organic food producer in the British Isles and Nordic region, a member of the Biodynamic Association (BDA) and the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), and a past Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA). His company has considerable expertise in the use of these types of assets with a worldwide market and subsidiaries in the European Union and Australasia. Food manufacturing in the South East contributes almost £4 billion in Gross Added Value to the national economy and employs 28,000 accounting for 15% of the regional GVA. The Premier Foods site at Ashford, Kent has long been one of Europe's largest dry food manufacturing plants and a Seagreens manufacturing brand partner.

Seagreens Trust has commercial production, warehousing and distribution centres elsewhere, as well as connections to a network of farms and rural estates and enterprises in addition to manufacturing customers, for whom the innovation centre would provide research, seeding and support for commercialization with little or no commercial activities on the estate. Together with the Biodynamic Association between 2012 and 2016 the Trust developed the Nutritious Food Seaweed (NFS) quality assurance scheme and standard to produce our native wild seaweeds for human nutrition, officially launched at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh in 2016. As an agricultural input, seaweed has a role in all of the agroforestry activities.

Activities will explore synergistic relationships between existing species such as oak trees, mushrooms, bamboos, brackens, ferns and bees, and developments such as food production, human and animal nutrition and health, viticulture, and composting. Expert onsite management and innovation requires partnership with external bodies which in turn requires suitable working, office and storage facilities with B1 use for a variety of different but interdependent activities, further described in Annex 1.

These activities require the **upgrading and extension of the existing estate store and office building**, for the purpose of project partnering (in area 3 on the plan). A suitable building of traditional design such as an elongated single story oak framed building combining offices and stores is envisaged, somewhat larger than the existing building and sited to comprise a courtyard with car parking.



The building will be re-structured to provide electricity generation from **solar panels**, return power to the national grid, and **store rain from roofing run-off** to minimize estate use of mains water. An underground aquifer and **existing artesian well** within some 300 metres which have existed for at least 125 years would be returned to service. It may also be possible to restore historically pumped stream water to contribute to **water neutrality** and electricity generation.

To ensure the settled future of this heritage estate, the project must function in its entirety and requires permission in principle for enabling development, replacement dwellings, and improved facilities for public access and the agroforestry activities.

These photographs briefly highlight some of the improvements achieved since 1994.

Public Footpath 1706, inaccessible since 1987, re-opened by the Estate 1995



Restoration of walls and gates at Warren Virgate to Back Drive and the memorial garden



Restoration of the house and gardens





Restoration of the thatched summer house and lawns



Completed memorial garden, integrated into footpath 1706



Restoration of Public Footpath 1705 across Warren Wood from 2011



Restoration has begun on the 19th century pump house and electric generator



From Newstead Farm the view to the adjacent Hyde Estate, unchanged for a century



Water collection and distribution requires careful planning and co-operation



6.0 LOWER BEEDING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The LBNP was approved in 2024 by Horsham District Council. All of the aims of the project are in complete accord with the Plan. Relevant sections highlight the following.

At the time of the last census, the Parish included 421 dwellings, 401 of which were occupied. The population of the Parish in 2011 was 1,022. This was an increase of 21 people from the census data in 2001. Since 2011, the development of Trinity Fields has been completed which includes 35 new dwellings. HDC have confirmed a total of 17 dwellings have been granted planning permission and 42 dwellings have been completed in the Parish since 2011, resulting in a net increase of 59 dwellings.

Strategic objectives include:

Protect and enhance the rural character, distinctive heritage assets and rural biodiversity of the Parish. Enhance the sustainability of the Parish by supporting sympathetic development. Ensure development consists of appropriately sized and sustainable housing developed in sympathy with adjacent buildings, the village and its surroundings. Ensure housing densities in keeping with existing densities in the surrounding area. Maintain the distinctive views and visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside from public places in all the built-up areas. Maintain the balance between residential and business uses and business needs do not adversely affect residential amenity. Support improvements for off-road access on public footpaths, cycle paths and bridleways. Village location on the edge of the High Weald AONB is greatly valued by all who live in the Parish and the residents wish to preserve the rural look and feel of the village. Protect important open spaces within the Parish. Protect and enhance the high quality and sensitive landscape within the Parish.

Specifically:

In order to protect and enhance biodiversity, plans should promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. Lower Beeding Parish Council wish to support development proposals which incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around development proposals, especially where this can secure measured gains in biodiversity. Development proposals which conserve and enhance the natural environment and landscape character and existing green infrastructure networks, and which incorporate landscaping and provide additional trees and hedging, and sustainable resource measure to adapt to the impacts of climate change and to maximize the energy efficiency of new buildings, will be supported, which also seek to reduce light and air pollution and protect and enhance the waterbodies and water courses. Development proposals for residential development on unidentified sites within the defined built-up area of Lower Beeding will be supported where they:

1. Are proportionate in scale and relate positively to the character of the area.
2. Ensure the design is in keeping with the character of the area; and
3. Avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of the existing dwelling and nearby properties.
4. All development within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone (WRZ) will need to demonstrate water neutrality through water efficient design and offsetting of any net additional water use of the development. All proposals should look to be compliant with Policy 19: Water Neutrality.

Development proposals will be supported which reflect prevailing density, waste management, recycling, provide car parking and enhance Public Rights of Way (PRoW).

LBPC sought advice from HDC on whether the LBNP should accommodate some growth in Crabtree. In response, HDC advised the majority of growth should be accommodated within Lower Beeding with modest development being possible in Crabtree. On this basis, LBPC resolved to allocate the majority of growth in and around Lower Beeding with modest development to be allocated in Crabtree.

LBPC resolved to allocate four sites for residential development. These sites have been identified having regard to the sustainability of the Parish's settlements, the environmental and policy constraints of the sites, and feedback from local residents. The following sites are considered the most suitable, and are capable of delivering the upper end of the indicative housing number provided:

- Cyder Farm: around 6 dwellings;
- Trinity Cottage: around 7 dwellings;
- Land north of Sandygate Lane: around 20 dwellings;
- Glayde Farm Field B: around 14 dwellings.

These proposed allocations seek to facilitate the delivery of around 47 residential dwellings. The remainder of the indicative number requirement (51) will be met through windfall development over the Plan period.

Lower Beeding has a strong history of delivering windfall development within the BUAB. In accordance with the NPPF, LBPC wish to plan positively to meet the housing need of the Parish. Therefore, and in line with Policy 3, LBPC wish to support windfall development within the BUAB. It is considered this positive approach will facilitate the delivery of additional housing in the Parish to enable LBPC to positively meet the indicative housing number of 51 units over the Plan period. In order to ensure there is no 'double counting' for the purposes of monitoring in relation to recording the wider windfall allowance for the district, once 4 dwellings have been met through the windfall allowance policy, it follows further windfalls to come forward would contribute to the wider District allowance and be recorded accordingly.

7.0 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

The Warren Estate project has been prepared having regard to national and local planning policies and relevant considerations such as biodiversity, energy and water resources, and environmental sustainability.

The project aims to deliver economic stability and improved amenities to benefit existing and future residents and ensure the sustainable future of the estate, as well as contributing to local rural enterprise and sustainable development within the High Weald National Landscape.

The estate owner takes the view that a few further residential dwellings now, when he can complete the restoration of the estate and ensure no further development, is more demonstrably in the public interest, than an uncertain future for the Estate.

6.1 National Planning Policies

The proposal is designed to be in accordance with national planning policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] (December 2023 and updated January 2025). This includes the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings, and the development and diversification of agricultural and rural businesses.

A summary of our **NPPF Policy Assessment** document is attached separately to the Permission in Principle Application - and **outlines the compliance with in-principle policies**, set against the interpretation of the in-principle 'policy tests' as agreed in pre-application correspondence with HDC.

The sections below provide a broader overview of the NPPF policies and the proposals in the context of the NPPF, but should be read in conjunction with the **NPPF Policy Assessment** document.

(a) The Presumption in Favour, Sustainability, Housing and Decision-Making

The following sections of the NPPF in relation to decision-making, the presumption in favour of granting permission, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and policies for housing development, are particularly relevant (emphasis added):

"8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually

supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) **an economic objective** – to **help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy**, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time **to support growth, innovation and improved productivity**; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) **a social objective** – to **support strong, vibrant and healthy communities**, by ensuring that **a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations**; and by **fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces** that reflect current and future needs and **support communities' health, social and cultural well-being**; and
- c) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, **including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently**, minimizing waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy"

"11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. ...For decision-taking this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date ⁽⁸⁾, **granting permission unless:**
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

⁽⁸⁾ This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where:

- (a) **the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply...**"

"38. Local planning authorities should **approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way**. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and **work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area**. **Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.**"

"70. Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should: ...

b) seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing and self-build and custom build housing;

d) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and..."

"73. Local planning authorities should support the development of exception sites for community-led development (as defined in Annex 2 of this Framework) on sites that would not otherwise be suitable as rural exception sites. These sites should be on land which is not already allocated for housing and should:

a) comprise community-led development that includes one or more types of affordable housing as defined in Annex 2. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding; and

b) be adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate in size to them, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in this Framework, and comply with any local design policies and standards."

"79. To maintain the supply of housing, local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below the local planning authority's housing requirement over the previous three years, the following policy consequences should apply: ...

c) where delivery falls below 75% of the requirement over the previous three years, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, as set out in footnote 8 of this Framework, in addition to the requirements for an action plan and 20% buffer."

"82. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs, including proposals for community-led development for housing. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide

affordable housing to meet identified local needs and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this."

"84. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an **essential need for a rural worker**, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;*
- b) the **development would** represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would **be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets**;*
- c) the development would **re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting**;*
- d) the development would **involve the subdivision of an existing residential building**; or*
- e) the **design is of exceptional quality, in that it: - is truly outstanding**, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and - **would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.**"*

The Warren Estate project is of itself, a self-sustaining development to create a settled future for the estate and the existing residential community, within the AONB. The proposals combine all of the objectives and derive benefits under each, for rural economy, homes, and enhancing natural and built environments and improving biodiversity.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development is therefore applicable – as the development is for a self-sustaining eco-system, close to an existing settlement and with walking and public transport accessibility, whilst promoting the vision for the AONB, and is in accordance with the NPPF as a whole.

It is also noted that the requirement to grant permission in the absence of a 5-year housing supply, and in the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan, is in full force. The proposals are specifically designed to enhance the AONB through sustainable agroforestry, biodiversity and access proposals, and there is no clear and specific reason for refusing, as the proposals are overall positive for the AONB, and any negative aspects from new development can be mitigated with careful siting and design for limited enabling development.

The Warren Estate currently comprises 11 dwellings in the mansion house, and in separate ownerships there are 5 dwellings on Handford Way, and 2 between the mansion and its main entrance. The proposals represent a re-organization and replacement of 2 existing dwellings, 4 flats above the garage replacement courtyard, and a limited addition of 3 further enabling plots in Handford Way, as part of a wider estate plan for rural development in relation to the long-term future of the estate, which is in part brownfield land, and improvements to the AONB including for re-planting and public and community access.

Rural housing is recognized in the NPPF, and in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Collectively, this is considered to represent a compelling case for meeting local agroforestry needs and a limited proportion of enabling housing development, to meet local housing needs, as part of package of landscape-led enhancements.

Specifically, as regards the 3 infill plots on Handford Way, which are also enabling development, and are distinct from the replacement dwellings and enabling development over replacement garages in the setting on the Warren mansion house, these have been considered against NPPF policy for the National landscape. As the proposed 3 Handford Way dwellings **would be ‘limited development’** (NPPF 189), **and NOT ‘major development’** (NPPF 190) **in the High Weald National Landscape, the development is ‘allowed’ for by the Policy wording** (NPPF 189/190), and would meet the relevant tests, NPPF 11d then applies as follows:

- As the 3 plots proposed are **‘limited development’, and not ‘major development’** by definition it is not ‘contrary’ to the policy (NPPF 189/190), and even if it did fail that first test, it would pass the final test by virtue of other benefits being in the national interest for the Project as a whole. The policy cannot then be said to provide any reason, and no **‘strong reason’**, which is a higher bar, for dis-applying the **‘requirement’ to ‘grant permission’**.

IF, and only If there was ‘strong reason’ from a non-compliance with the above policy (NPPF 189/190), then the second part of the test (NPPF 11d) would apply – to determine if there were ‘adverse impacts’, and if so **if any ‘adverse impacts’ would ‘significantly and demonstrably’ outweigh the benefits**, which would not be the case for this proposal, as demonstrated as follows:

- The benefits, and as shown in compliance with, and drawing policy support and positive presumptions from other policy tests, as set out, would be **significant benefits**, including: **the requirement to grant housing permissions** when there is only a 1 year supply (NPPF 11d); **securing the future of a**

heritage asset and its estate (NPPF 84 / 221); enable growth and diversification of a rural business (NPPF 88); meeting rural business needs (NPPF 89); supporting enhancing biodiversity and improved public access to nature (NPPF 193).

- The above **significant benefits** would **NOT** be '**significantly outweighed**' by any **adverse impacts**, even if there were any, as the bar to '**significantly outweigh**', is higher than to '**outweigh**', and the benefits **would require the negative value of the adverse impacts to be significantly greater than the positive value of the benefits.**

The proposed 3 Handford Way infill plots are **also, in addition to be acceptable in their own right as 'non-major' and 'limited' development in a National landscape [NPPF 189/190], are appropriate enabling development to secure the future of the non-statutory heritage asset [NPPF 84], the Warren Estate House and its setting and grounds, as follows:**

- **Allowing for the retention of the Estate as a whole, to prevent further sub-division, and long term up-keep and restoration of the Estate and heritage asset.**
- **Providing for the future of the non-statutory heritage asset and its setting, with a new economic model and adequate amenities for safe, hygienic modern living, and including the provision of replacement garaging and storage for the post war garage blocks, and restoring the summer house, artesian well and water retention from the mansion.**
- **Determining through an enabling development viability calculation that the proposed 3 Handford Way dwellings are the minimum necessary as enabling development.**

(b) The Rural Economy

The NPPF also recognizes that sites to meet local business needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In this regard the site already includes business and residential enclaves, is close to existing settlements, has the benefit of public transport with a community bus stop at the site entrance.

*"88. Planning policies and **decisions should enable:***

- a) **the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, beautiful new buildings;***
- b) **the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;***

c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, **such as** local shops, meeting places, sports venues, **open space**, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship."

"89. Planning policies and **decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements**, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be **important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings**, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and **exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport)**. The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist."

For the Warren Estate project, there is clear support for rural businesses, and development sensitive to its surroundings, which the proposal has been designed to be, making use of naturally screened parts of the estate, and protecting the woodland areas. There is clear NPPF policy support from:

- **Expanding the existing rural business barn building and facilities**, to be used by the Estate Office for managing the estate and agroforestry activities, with Seagreen's Innovation Centre (an R&D facility for human and animal health and plant nutrition) by a total of **600 sq.m.**
- The creation of employment in this and other local rural enterprises, including up to an additional **12 people on site.**
- The expanded facilities will also house a **public information and heritage centre**, with controlled **educational and public access.**

The proposals specifically provide for meeting local business needs in a rural area, which will be achieved through:

- **Expanding the existing rural business barn building and facilities with B1 use**, to meet the needs of the Estate Office, for managing the estate and agroforestry activities, and Seagreens (an established organic seaweed producer and ingredient manufacturer with strong research and development capabilities), by a total of **600 sq.m**
- The design will be in keeping with a traditional vernacular **Sussex rural barn design** and appropriate to the setting.

- The proposals will specifically **improve access on foot with new drainage to 'boggy' footpaths, and car parking facilities, and new access to natural landscape.**
- The increased traffic from the limited development, spread across a day and the two entrances to the site, would be negligible.

(c) Conservation of heritage assets, the natural environment and AONB

The NPPF sets out the following guidance that is particularly relevant to the proposals in relation to preserving the historic and built environment, including within the AONB:

“180. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

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

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

190. When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;*
- b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and*

c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

"193. When **determining planning applications**, local planning authorities should apply the following principles: ...

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate."

"216...**The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required** having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."

"221. Local planning authorities **should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies."**

The Warren Estate project approach is consistent with the NPPF on development within a National Landscape (AONB), where the scale and extent of development should be limited, which the proposal is, and is in support of a rural agroforestry business, and landscape enhancements through re-planting and public access improvements.

The proposal is not for 'major development' of over 9 dwellings or for more than 1,000 square metres of rural business floorspace, and is carefully designed, making use of existing built and landscape features and screening, 'to avoid any significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined', and does not therefore fall to be considered under the exceptions test of paragraph 183 of the NPPF for 'major development'. In particular:

- As a starting point – national and local planning policy ordinarily defines **more than 9 dwellings as 'major development'**, and 9 or less dwellings as 'minor development'.

- Previous **Appeal precedent** has also supported the use of the normal meaning of the word 'major'. In appeal reference APP/Y2736/A/13/2197184 it was held that a **30 unit resident development was not major development**, in the Howardian Hills AONB and outside the settlement. In appeal APP/C3621/A/11/2159362, for land to the rear of Springfield Road, Dorking, in the AONB, the Inspector concluded that "major development" may include both published and "common sense" criteria, and that a **development of 14 dwellings was not "major development" on any criteria.**
- With regards to 'nature and scale' of the 3 infill plots proposed – these are '**small**' in number, the **built footprint will occupy less than 1% of the Warren Estate land, and less than 0.0005% of the area of the High Weald National Landscape.**
- Their scale would be **limited compared to the main Warren Estate house**, and would be **consistent with the previously consented 5 plots on Handford Way.**
- The **setting of the 3 infill plots is within the boundary of the previous Handford Way planning consent** (which included 'un-built' land consented for residential development) with 5 of the 8 plots having been developed. The public footpath was moved at the time to accommodate the 8 plots, and the remaining 3 plots are well screened from public views, are beyond the woodland gardens, and do not involve development on TPO land or any other designation.

IF the above points did not demonstrate that the 3 dwellings were NOT 'major development', based on normal objective criteria for the nature, size and scale of the proposals:

- It would then be necessary to consider whether their nature, size and scale **would NOT be 'major development'**, by virtue of **NOT having a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the AONB was designated.**
- The 3 infill plots are within the boundary of the previous Handford Way planning consent, which included 'un-built' land consented for residential development, within an area of then Great Landscape Value.
- This demonstrates that this land was **previously considered suitable for development.**
- The setting of the 3 infill dwellings is at the south-eastern boundary of the National Landscape designation (formerly AONB). When the AONB was designated in 1976, the Council lobbied for inclusion of this land, although it had initially been rejected by the Minister and the Countryside Commission (the proposed boundary was the present West Sussex County line). The Minister in the end agreed to grant HDC's request to include the land within the AONB "as the most convenient solution to the

problem of defining a suitable boundary in Plummers Plain where there is a difference between us”.

- This demonstrates that this particular corner of the AONB was added for rounding off on the plan and on the ground, as lobbied for by HDC, even though it had not met the objective criteria for inclusion in the AONB (the Countryside Commission “**felt that the area did not merit inclusion**”).
- As the proposals are only for a very small element of infill development, in a part of the site preciously consented, in a part of the AONB not originally intended to be AONB, as it lacked the intrinsic qualities, and the land concerned is separate from the woodland gardens as well screened ‘plots’, left over from the previous consent, there is objectively **no adverse impact** to the purposes of the designation of the AONB, and certainly **no significant adverse impact**.
- Furthermore, by virtue of the wider benefits of the Project as a whole, that the 3 plots would enable, including securing the future of heritage assets, rural business growth, landscape and bio-diversity net gains, and improved public access and appreciation, to permanently secure the whole against otherwise demonstrable inevitable decline, disintegration and division of the estate and natural landscape, and that there is overall a **net positive impact** in relation to the purposes for which the AONB has been designated, and which implicitly allows for ‘non-major’ residential development.

IF the above points did not demonstrate that the 3 dwellings were NOT ‘major development’:

- **It would be necessary to go to the final test, and exceptionally consider the extent to which the Warren Heritage Project as a whole was in the ‘public interest’.**
- **If so – being ‘in the public interest’ would be demonstrated by compliance with and support from other NPPF policies, and the comprehensive benefits of the proposals, as set out.**
- **The scale of plots of land is also crucial to the viability of the project, which is in its totality in the public interest because, as the alternative is the disintegration of the estate, the decay of the heritage assets and the continuing subdivision of the surrounding landscape.**

In relation to biodiversity, **the proposals specifically provide for up to 30 acres of land for bio-diversity net gain land, being the majority of the Estate Land, and public access to nature**, which will be achieved through:

- Securing the estate boundaries as far as possible with fencing against encroachment by the local deer population, and allow for the **habitats to be restored and re-planted**, and maintained for species rich bio-diversity net gain, and creation and maintenance of habitats for a variety of wildlife.
- **Improved public access** to the woodlands and bio-diversity net gain areas as **heritage and nature trails**.

In relation to the non-designated Heritage Asset, the 3 Handford Way infill plots are appropriate enabling development to secure the future conservation of the non-statutory heritage asset, and its setting and grounds, as follows:

- Allowing for the **retention of the Estate as a whole**, to **prevent further sub-division**, and create a viable agroforestry unit, together with the long term restoration of the Estate and heritage asset.
- Providing for the **restoration of the non-statutory heritage asset and its setting**, including **removal of 3 unsightly and inappropriate post war garage blocks**, and **restoring the summer house and the artesian well and pumping facilities**.
- Determining through an enabling development viability calculation that the proposed 3 Handford Way infill plots are **the minimum necessary for the beneficial enabling development**.

As the proposals as a whole provides for enabling development which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, this outweighs any dis-benefits as follows:

- To the extent that there are any dis-benefits of the enabling development 3 new Handford Way infill plots, **any dis-benefits would objectively be 'minor'** for the 'non-major' and 'limited' development, in well screened plots, and within the boundaries of a former consent for plots, and to achieve the new economic model to sustain the future of the whole estate.
- As such the **significant heritage asset conservation benefits would outweigh any minor dis-benefits of the enabling development, if there are any such dis-benefits, given policy compliance, as set out above.**

6.2 Local Planning Policies and Guidance

a) The Horsham District Planning Framework (November 2015)

The Horsham District Planning Framework (November 2015) is the statutory Local Plan for the area, although this is now technically out-of-date in accordance with NPPF guidance, and is subject to review.

The Horsham District Planning Framework adopts a similar approach to the NPPF with regards rural business expansion, rural enhancements, and limited rural housing in the countryside and AONB. Relevant policies include:

*“Policy 10 - Rural Economic Development. **Sustainable rural economic development and enterprise within the district will be encouraged** to generate local employment opportunities and economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities. **In the countryside, development which maintains the quality and character of the area, whilst sustaining its varied and productive social and economic activity will be supported in principle.** Any development should be appropriate to the countryside location and must:*

*1. **Contribute to the diverse and sustainable farming enterprises within the district** or, in the case of other **countryside-based enterprises and activities, contribute to the wider rural economy** and/or promote recreation in, and the enjoyment of, the countryside; and either a. Be contained wherever possible within suitably located buildings which are appropriate for conversion or, in the case of an established rural industrial estate, within the existing boundaries of the estate; or b. **Result in substantial environmental improvement** and reduce the impact on the countryside particularly if there are exceptional cases where new or replacement buildings are involved. **New buildings or development in the rural area will be acceptable if it supports sustainable economic growth towards balanced living and working communities** and criteria a) has been considered first.*

2. Demonstrate that car parking requirements can be accommodated satisfactorily within the immediate surrounds of the buildings, or an alternative, logical solution is proposed. Proposals for the conversion of rural buildings to business and commercial uses will be considered favourably over residential in the first instance.”

Although the housing policies for new development do not directly align with this type of proposal, it is considered that the replacement of 3 existing flats, and limited development of 3 new dwellings as enabling development, to secure the future of the estate and the rural business and having regards to landscape characteristics and previous consents for Handford Way, is not in conflict with the policies overall having regard to all material considerations.

There are elements of support that can be inferred from:

Policy 28 - that allows for re-placement dwelling in the countryside;

Policy 15 - which includes an allowance of windfall units from minor developments;

Policy 17- for exception sites for affordable homes; and

Policy 20 - for rural workers accommodation.

Although in this case the proposal is for replacement dwellings, and limited new dwellings, which are not restricted to a particular user type, but are designed to enable and secure the growth of the rural business and preservation and enhancement of the

Estate for the long term, and the proposals have had regard to the general considerations for other types of dwellings as rural exceptions and agricultural worker accommodation. There is not a specific category for enabling development to support a rural business and rural estate preservation and enhancement, but which are objectives under the rural economic development and countryside policies.

For development within the countryside, Policy 26 is relevant, and protects against 'inappropriate development' in the countryside but allows for development supporting the needs of agriculture or forestry and is of a suitable scale in relation to the location and can conserve or enhance the rural location.

*"Policy 26 Strategic Policy - Countryside Protection. Outside built-up area boundaries, **the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development. Any proposal must be essential to its countryside location, and in addition meet one of the following criteria:***

- 1. **Support the needs of agriculture or forestry;***
- 2. **Enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste;***
- 3. **Provide for quiet informal recreational use; or***
- 4. **Enable the sustainable development of rural areas. In addition, proposals must be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protects, and/or conserves, and/or enhances, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located, including;***
 - 1. The development pattern of the area, its historical and ecological qualities, tranquility and sensitivity to change;*
 - 2. The pattern of woodlands, fields, hedgerows, trees, waterbodies and other features; and*
 - 3. The landform of the area."*

For the AONB, Policy 30 also sets out the relevant criteria applicable for proposals which are not 'major development' and allows for appropriate development where there will be no adverse impacts and encourages enhancement.

Policy 30 - Protected Landscapes.

- 1. **The natural beauty and public enjoyment of the High Weald AONB and the adjoining South Downs National Park will be conserved and enhanced** and opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities will be promoted. **Development proposals will be supported in or close to protected landscapes where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts to the natural beauty and public enjoyment of these landscapes** as well as any relevant cross boundary linkages.*
- 2. **Proposals should have regard to any management plans for these areas and must demonstrate:** a. **How the key landscape features or components of natural beauty will***

be conserved and enhanced. This includes maintaining local distinctiveness, sense of place and setting of the protected landscapes, and if necessary, providing mitigation or compensation measures. **b. How the public enjoyment of these landscapes will be retained.** **c. How the proposal supports the economy of the protected landscape and will contribute to the social wellbeing of the population who live and work in these areas.**

3. In the case of major development proposals in or adjoining protected areas, applicants will also be required to demonstrate why the proposal is in the public interest and what alternatives to the scheme have been considered.”

b) Regulation 19 Local Plan (January 2024)

The Regulation 19 Local Plan (January 2024) for the replacement Local Plan, was suspended by the Inspector (via a letter of the 16th of December 2024), due to significant concerns about the soundness and legal compliance of the Plan in respect of a number of areas. Further examination dates were cancelled due to the seriousness of the Inspector's concerns. As of April 2025, the Inspector has recommended withdrawal of the Local Plan, in advance of it being found 'unsound'. As of April 2026 the Local Plan Examination process has however now recommenced.

Relevant policies of the Plan, which will not carry any status once withdrawn, include:

Policy 1 - Sustainable Development.

*When considering development proposals, the **Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.** It will always work pro-actively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.*

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and where relevant, with policies in Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application is out-of-date, then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise taking account of whether:

- 1. Specific Policies in that Framework indicated that development should be restricted; or*
- 2. Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole.”*

With regards rural economic development, Strategic Policy 31 provides for support for rural economic growth, including that which does not prejudice its location, and contributes to sustainable farming enterprises and other enterprises that create sustainable custodianship of the countryside, and contributes to the wider rural economy.

Policy 31 - Rural Economic Development.

1. Sustainable rural economic development and enterprise within the district will be supported where it is shown to generate local employment opportunities and economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities.

2. Outside built-up area boundaries or secondary settlements, economic development, which maintains the quality and character of the area whilst sustaining its varied and productive social and economic activity, will be supported in principle.

Any development should be appropriate to the countryside location, and will be supported provided that: a) It does not prejudice, and contributes to, the diverse and sustainable farming enterprises within the District; b) It contributes to the sustainable custodianship of the countryside; and c) In the case of non-farming countryside-based enterprises and activities, it contributes to the wider rural economy and/or promotes recreation in, and the enjoyment of, the countryside, and complies with the following hierarchy:

i). As first preference, is contained within suitably located existing buildings which are appropriate for conversion or, in the case of an established rural industrial or commercial site, within the existing boundaries of the site; ii. Where i) is not feasible, proposals for new buildings or development will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will contribute to sustainable rural economic growth that supports balanced living and working communities.

3. Proposals will be supported if they: a) Do not adversely affect the character, appearance or visual amenities and the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the location in question; and b) Demonstrate a net increase in biodiversity in and around the site.

4. Proposals will be supported if car parking requirements can be accommodated satisfactorily within the immediate surroundings of the buildings, or an alternative logical solution is proposed."

With regards to countryside protection and protected landscapes, Strategic Policy 14 and 15 allow for development which is not 'inappropriate development' or 'major development' and specifically allow for the potential for development which supports agriculture or

forestry, and where it is 'small scale development' that helps to support the social and economic well-being of the rural area and AONB.

Policy 14: Countryside Protection.

1. Outside built-up area boundaries and secondary settlements, **the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development.**
2. Any **proposal must be essential to, and justify, its countryside location, and must meet one of the following criteria: a) Support the needs of agriculture or forestry b) Enable the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste; c) Provide for quiet informal recreational use; or d) Enable the sustainable development of rural areas.** 2. In addition, all proposals must be **appropriately integrated within the landscape and be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. Development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protects, conserves, and seeks to enhance, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area** in which it is located, including; a) The development pattern of the area, its historical and ecological qualities, tranquility and sensitivity to change; b) The pattern of woodlands, fields, hedgerows, trees, waterbodies and other features; c) The landform of the area; and d) The protection of dark skies, in particular where it may impact on a designated International Dark Sky Reserve (IDSR), Neighbourhood Plan designations and High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives..”

Policy 16: Protected Landscapes.

1. Development proposals within and adjacent to the **High Weald AONB** must **demonstrate how their development proposals conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB**, having appropriate regard to the setting and views into and out of the AONB, the High Weald AONB Management Plan, any updates and any other relevant documents.
2. Proposals will be required to set out any proposed mitigation or compensation measures needed to address any harm. **Small-scale development that helps to support the social and economic wellbeing of the AONB will be supported, provided that the scheme is compatible with the purpose of the designation.**
3. Major development within the AONB will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Applicants will be required to demonstrate why the proposal is in the public interest and what alternatives to the proposal have been considered.
4. Proposals within land that contributes to the setting of the South Downs National Park should be consistent with National Park purposes and have regard to the South Downs Local Plan, the South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment, the South Downs Partnership Management Plan and any other relevant document and updates. In particular, proposals should not cause harm to

the special qualities (including dark skies), local distinctiveness or sense of place, by negatively affecting views into and out of the National Park. Proposals will be required to set out any proposed mitigation or compensation measures needed to address any harm."

With regards to housing policies, Policy 45 allows for replacement dwellings in the countryside. There are also elements of support that can be inferred from: Policy 41 - for exception sites for affordable homes; and Policy 44 - for Rural Workers accommodation.

The policies support replacement dwellings, which would apply to the flats above the replacement garages. Although there is not specific category for new enabling development to support a rural business and rural estate preservation and enhancement, these are strategic objectives under the rural economic development and countryside policies, and the policy considerations have been considered.

The proposal has also considered other policy requirements including Strategic Policy 17 for Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity, and Strategic Policy 20 Development Principles, and it is considered that the proposals would avoid any direct impact on protected sites, and can make allowance for Biodiversity Net Gain, and detailed design considerations at the detailed design stage, if the proposal is supported for Permission in Principle.

c) Sussex North Offsetting Water Strategy (SNOWS)

Water neutrality is defined as development that takes place which does not increase the rate of water abstraction for drinking water supplies above existing levels. In September 2021, Natural England issued a position statement, which affects Horsham District and other authorities in West Sussex:

"Development coming forward in the affected area, must be "water neutral", which Natural England define as "the use of water in the supply area before the development is the same or lower after the development is in place".

"In practice, this means that new development needs to be built to high water efficiency standards, such as by installing water efficient appliances, or including rainwater harvesting or water recycling schemes. Any remaining additional water use will then need to be 'offset' elsewhere within the affected area. Essentially, making new development as water efficient as possible helps to reduce the amount of offsetting that is required to achieve water neutrality."

"To address the water efficiency of new development, the affected authorities in the Sussex North area have jointly developed a water neutrality local plan policy, which sets a water efficiency standard that is more ambitious than the current 110 litres per person per

day standard applied through the Building Regulations. This local standard is set at 85 litres per person per day for new residential development, or a score of 3 credits within the water (WAT01 Water Consumption) issue category for the BREEAM Standard for non-residential development."

SNOWS is a water management initiative led by the Sussex North authorities (Horsham DC, Chichester DC, Crawley BC, Mid Sussex DC, South Downs National Park Authority & West Sussex CC) located in Southern Water's Sussex North Water Resource Zone (WRZ). The guidance sets out the following relevant principles:

"Whilst water neutrality requirements are compulsory for developers or applicants seeking approval for new water-consumptive development, the use of SNOWS for offsetting is optional. Developers and applicants have the freedom to choose whether they prefer to utilize SNOWS or implement their own water offsetting solutions that align with water neutrality requirements."

Applicants with approved developments (see below) will be able to purchase access into SNOWS to cover any remaining water use of their new developments after they have taken steps to reduce the water use of their developments in line with the Sussex North authorities' local plan water neutrality policies, and subject to the scheme having available capacity.

The scheme will rely on developers requesting access to SNOWS at the application stage, at which point the application will be prioritized against the current available capacity in the scheme. If there is sufficient capacity to meet the development's needs, the applicant will be able to secure their access into SNOWS. If the application is granted and the SNOWS access charge is paid in full, SNOWS will confirm that the application has been assigned to available water capacity. If there is insufficient capacity in the scheme to meet the development's needs, the applicant and DM officer will be notified. The applicant may then need to consider an alternative offsetting solution to SNOWS or await further capacity becoming available in the SNOWS scheme.

SNOWS will initially determine whether Southern Water's WRMP 'baseline' water savings are sufficient to demonstrate water neutrality. Where we forecast that Southern Water WRMP baseline savings will be insufficient to meet local plan growth water demand forecasts, SNOWS will supplement the Southern Water savings with a separate offsetting programme."

In relation to the Estate Project, the following key points are relevant:

- The Estate has access to its own well, that can be brought back into use, potentially achieving water neutrality for the agroforestry facilities and activities.

- The Estate is also exploring the reinstatement of a traditional water supply within the original estate which may achieve the same for the enabling residential development.
- The new homes proposed for the Estate would be designed to the required water efficiency standards.
- If none of the above measures were applicable, then in a worst-case scenario, the proposals would fall to be considered against the SNOWS scheme for offsetting at the point of a detailed planning consent (i.e. at Technical Consent following a Permission in Principle).

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The project requires significant investment. Moreover, it needs to be implemented. Without this, neither the heritage asset, nor the estate, are economically viable and the project will be abandoned. The estate has only been saved from complete deterioration since 1994 by the present owner.

Rather than see the estate broken up, or developed piecemeal in future years, its undoubted alternative future, the owner wishes to bring its remaining elements into a settled and comprehensive relationship, to benefit current and future stakeholders in the local community and ensure the continuing integrity of the built and natural environment.

While these things might be done gradually, there is neither a next generation nor a supportive economic and regulatory environment in which to continue them. Neither is there an appropriate commercial development option within this small residential estate.

The logical way to generate sufficient funds is to provide limited additional quality dwellings in an area with historical Planning Consent which will at the same time retain the integrity of the estate with no future development.

Against this must be weighed, controlled new access for members of the public, and significantly enhanced amenities for more than 60 people who might live within the boundary of the estate and more from the immediate environs, such that their interests will

undoubtedly be best served and their surroundings greatly enhanced, by the implementation of this project.

For the above reasons it is considered that very limited residential development, to facilitate and enable the public benefit in the High Weald AONB, in accordance with the Vision and Management Plan, would be appropriate.

In accordance with the NPPF, exceptional circumstances apply in the context of the 5-year land supply shortfall and absence of an up-to-date Local Plan, and the presumption in favour of development.

There can be no justifiable reason for refusal, as the proposals are overwhelmingly in the public interest and demonstrably enhance the National Landscape, and are 'non-major' and limited development that is acceptable in a National Landscape. Even if there were any non-policy compliance, this would be minor, and not reach the threshold of significant adverse effects, and even if it did, it would be outweighed by significant benefits including for the rural economy, biodiversity, and public access. Even if this test was failed, the proposals would qualify under the exceptions test for benefits in the public interest and enabling development for ensuring the future of a heritage assets and its estate.

ANNEX 1 Agroforestry innovation activities

Examples include current research into the dietary use of seaweed to **reduce methane emissions** from cattle and opportunities exist to conduct trials on local farms in Horsham District and elsewhere in West Sussex.

Another is **the production of umami**, a 'fifth' taste beyond sweet, salty, sour and bitter known to have receptors in the mouth and intestinal tract. Identified in Japan in the early 1900s it is found in a combination of dried mushrooms, seaweed and fish in which healthy seaweed glutamates and inosinate from the fish significantly intensify the taste response, salivation and digestion impaired and leading to a cycle of rapid decline in the elderly.

The use of seaweed in **composting and fermentation** has wide application on a large scale where space and facilities permit. At the same time, it is a primary input for the restoration of the flora and fauna on the estate and illustrates how each of the agroforestry activities are interdependent yet synergistic with coastal production of seaweed at their core.

Research may be conducted into the use of seaweed in combating the parasitic varroa mite in **traditional bee keeping**, which not only has a vital role in pollination, but as an important determinant in the estate planting programme.

Research is underway with therapists in West Sussex into the patented use of seaweed to remove the **harmful effects of chlorinated water** in swimming pools. Such activities can

seed production of micro or even full-scale industries which can be taken on and developed on farms and rural estates or by manufacturers in the UK and elsewhere.

The facilities within this aspect of the project will cater for such a variety of activities.

Timber (areas 3 - 4)

Timber drawn from windfall and arboricultural management provides sufficient wood fuel for estate and local consumption and will be newly equipped and managed to be economically sustainable and provide a contribution to estate maintenance costs. For example, the estate can produce some 35m³ of 100 x 400mm cut fuel logs per annum from windfall alone. Facilities will include an electric / motorized log splitter, open-air 9 x 6m racking, to hold at least a year's supply of windfall in the ambient drying stage after or prior to cutting, with covered storage for a minimum 18 months, drying to $\leq 15\%$ moisture content. Timber for oak logs from existing and new plantings will be used to grow mushrooms and produce stakes used to protect plants, for fencing to delineate spaces and planting out, and maintenance of park and woodland. A specialized tree and plant nursery (area 3) will enable the appropriate propagation of local flora, to replant the parkland and woodland and for sale by appointment, making use of the timber glazed greenhouse in the lower courtyard. The nursery necessarily requires controlled use of the existing car parking area from the B2110 gate, both for the tree nursery and improved access to the public footpaths and education centre. The nursery will serve timber, mushroom, honey, tree, tea and fern activities and composting is symbiotic with all of these activities.



Mushrooms (areas 3 - 4)

The production especially of *Shiitake* mushrooms (*Lentinus edodes* species, the Japanese *shii* meaning oak, *take* mushroom), requires facilities for the preparation of spores, logs, inoculation and management of the project, and workspace for finished produce, packing and wholesale dispatch. Additional production of dried mushroom will be used for foods such as *Umami* mushroom and seaweed seasoning, for which the Estate owner has an established market, briefly described on pages 19-20.

Bee-keeping (area 4)

In addition to research into the causes, prevention and treatment of varroa infestation the production of organic raw honey requires similar working facilities as mushrooms, with associated planting of species for forage and siting of beehives away from houses. The estate intends to follow natural beekeeping guidelines and actively contribute to the current knowledge and literature regarding the development of tree beekeeping and natural hives. The owner was a formative member of the Natural Beekeeping Trust.

Tea (area 3)

An area to the south of Handford Way is reserved for tree species and underplanting with a low-growing non-invasive bamboo which in Japan is a ground cover crop for caffeine-

free tea for which there is an existing market. In addition to seeding production the owner has a suitable commercial growing area at a farm in Scotland.

Ferns (area 3)

Propagation of fern varieties for estate use and sale is an existing activity and will physically dovetail into the other agroforestry projects. The estate owner's particular interest is that seaweeds have primordial origins and ferns probably evolved directly from them, linking marine biology and botany.

Composting (area 3)

Compost is an essential component of the estate regeneration programme and considerable preparation has been made to develop a basis for specialized woodland composting, incorporating the recycling of inherently organic material including local manure, possibly with estate grown bracken, comfrey, nettle, horsetail and other carbon-rich natural wild ingredients.