

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

Land at Hornbrook Farm, Brighton Road, Horsham

On behalf of Jaynic Properties Limited

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1

INTRODUCTION

1.1.1

Liz Lake Associates has been commissioned by Jaynic Properties Limited to prepare a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) for Hornbrook Farm, Horsham, to be referred to hereafter as 'the Site'. The report is in consideration of an,

"...Outline planning application for up to 180 dwellings, open space and associated works and infrastructure with all matters reserved apart from access".

1.1.2

This report has been prepared on the benefit of the Client and the contents should not be relied upon by others without the express written authority of Liz Lake Associates. If any unauthorised third party makes use of this report they do so at their own risk and Liz Lake Associates owe them no duty of care or skill.

1.1.3

The report considers the existing baseline conditions and seeks to identify the relevant landscape and visual issues applicable to the Site. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken to assess the likely effects upon the landscape resource, specific views and visual amenity.

1.1.4

Site visits were undertaken between March 2024 and November 2025 to appraise the character and condition of the Site and the landscape context, and to identify the key visual receptors. Once the scheme had been sufficiently developed, the assessment was undertaken by an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect. The weather was overcast yet bright and with good visibility for the duration of the visits.

1.1.5

All photographs were taken with a digital camera, a Canon EOS 6D (a Full Frame Sensor camera) with a 50mm Focal Length prime lens in accordance with the guidance contained within LI Technical Guidance Note 06/19.

1.1.6

Liz Lake Associates is a multi-disciplinary environmental and design consultancy with over 30 years' experience of master planning, landscape, ecology, urban design, heritage and environmental impact assessment. The company is a registered practice of the Landscape Institute.

1.1.7

The Site forms a draft allocation for housing (Strategic Policy HA10 HOR1) in the emerging Local Plan 2023-2040 which has been stalled for a while due to the Inspector having soundness concerns, but at the time of writing the examination stage may be resuming during 2026.

2

METHODOLOGY

2.1.1

An LVIA of the Site and the development proposals has been prepared encompassing the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA), 3rd edition (published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013), and 'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland' (published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish National Heritage 2002, and the updated 'Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (published by Natural England, 2014). and the LI Technical Note (TGN) 02/21 'Assessing value outside national designations'. In summary, the approach combines information and desktop reviews with on-site surveys and appraisal.

2.1.2

The Site based assessment involves the recording of both objective description and subjective impressions of the landscape, as well as details of the existing landscape condition. It includes an assessment of the extent and nature of views to and from the Site and they type of receptors that experience these views.

2.1.3

The following relevant studies and documents have been considered as part of the desk-based review and subsequent assessment:

- Natural England – National Character Areas (2014)
- West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (2003)
- Horsham District Council Landscape Character Assessment (2003)
- Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessment (2014)
- High Weald National Landscape Management Plan (2024-2029)

2.1.4

The LVIA of the proposed development has been based upon the proposals illustrated on parameter plans and design strategies informed by the consultant team, including a Landscape Strategy Plan prepared by Liz Lake Associates.

3

EXISTING SITUATION**3.1****Context**

3.1.1

Horsham is a market town lying on western edge of the High Weald in West Sussex, positioned almost midway between Leatherhead (in Surrey) and Worthing on the south coast. It is approximately 18 miles north west of Brighton and only a few miles south west of Crawley. Its position as a commuter town, serves London, Gatwick Airport and the south coast.

3.1.2

The edge of St Leonard's Forest (within the High Weald National Landscape (HWNL)) comprises a series of wooded ghylls and ponds, which feed tributaries such as Horn Brook, that wraps around the eastern fringes of the Horsham (and which skirts the Site's northern and western edge) and flows into the River Arun south of the town, before heading south to the English Channel, close to Littlehampton (via Arundal).

3.1.3

The Site lies at the south eastern edge of the town, along the Brighton Road (A281), in a well contained location at the fringes of the St Leonards Forest LCA (alongside Doomsday Lane), which is an area bordered to the south by built development, including garden centre, other commercial buildings, and housing extending east to Sedgwick Lane. Both the Site and the south east edge of the town (to the south of St Leonard's Rd and Hammerpond Road, along Ghyll Crescent and Dickens Way), overlook the well wooded winding course of the Horn Brook, which runs across Brighton Road and into the River Arun south of the settlement near Kerves Lane. The wider landscape context to the south comprises an undulating patchwork of small scale fields and woodland blocks associated with the attractive rural valley side of the River Arun and featuring a well wooded backdrop.

3.2**Published Landscape Character Assessments**

3.2.1

A brief summary of the published landscape character assessments in the context of the Site is detailed below.

National: Character Area Profile, Natural England, 2014

3.2.2 The Site is situated within National Character Area (NCA) Profile 122: High Weald, which is described as:

“The High Weald National Character Area (NCA) encompasses the ridged and faulted sandstone core of the Kent and Sussex Weald. It is an area of ancient countryside and one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in northern Europe. The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers 78 per cent of the NCA. The High Weald consists of a mixture of fields, small woodlands and farmsteads connected by historic routeways, tracks and paths. Wild flower meadows are now rare but prominent medieval patterns of small pasture fields enclosed by thick hedgerows and shaws (narrow woodlands) remain fundamental to the character of the landscape.”¹

3.2.3 The Key Characteristics NCA 122 of relevance to the Site include:

- *“A dispersed settlement pattern of hamlets and scattered farmsteads and medieval ridgetop villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries, with a dominance of timber- framed buildings with steep roofs often hipped or half-hipped, and an extremely high survival rate of farm buildings dating from the 17th century or earlier.*
- *Ancient routeways in the form of ridgetop roads and a dense system of radiating droveways, often narrow, deeply sunken and edged with trees and wild flower-rich verges and boundary banks. Church towers and spires on the ridges are an important local landmark. There is a dense network of small, narrow and winding lanes, often sunken and enclosed by high hedgerows or woodland strips. The area includes several large towns such as Tunbridge Wells, Crowborough, Battle and Heathfield and is closely bordered by others such as Crawley, East Grinstead, Hastings and Horsham.*

¹ National Character Area (NCA) 122: High Weald, Pg.3

- *An intimate, hidden and small-scale landscape with glimpses of far reaching views, giving a sense of remoteness and tranquillity yet concealing the highest density of timber-framed buildings anywhere in Europe amidst lanes and paths.*
- *Strong feeling of remoteness due to very rural, wooded character. A great extent of interconnected ancient woods, steep-sided gill woodlands, wooded heaths and shaws in generally small holdings with extensive archaeology and evidence of long-term management.*
- *Extensive broadleaved woodland cover with a very high proportion of ancient woodland with high forest, small woods and shaws, plus steep valleys with gill woodland.*
- *Small and medium-sized irregularly shaped fields enclosed by a network of hedgerows and wooded shaws, predominantly of medieval origin and managed historically as a mosaic of small agricultural holdings typically used for livestock grazing.*
- *A predominantly grassland agricultural landscape grazed mainly with sheep and some cattle.*
- *There is a strong influence of the Wealden iron industry which started in Roman times, until coke fuel replaced wood and charcoal. There are features such as a notably high number of small hammer ponds surviving today.*
- *An essentially medieval landscape reflected in the patterns of settlement, fields and woodland.*
- *High-quality vernacular architecture with distinct local variation using local materials. Horsham Slate is used on mainly timber structures and timber-framed barns are a particularly notable Wealden characteristic feature of the High Weald.”²*

² National Character Area (NCA) 122: High Weald, Pg.8

West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (2003)³

3.2.4 The Site lies within the Landscape Character Area (LCA) HW2: High Weald Forests. The overall character of the area is summarised as

“Heavily-afforested, dissected plateau landscape enclosing a post-medieval rural landscape cut from the forest. Includes the western end of the High Weald Forest Ridge within West Sussex and the ridge and valley landscape of St Leonards Forest. Adjoins Crawley, Horsham and the M23 Motorway.”

3.2.5 The Key Characteristics of LCA HW2 of relevance to the Site include:

- *“Densely wooded, confined, dissected plateau landscape with extensive coniferous and mixed afforestation within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).*
- *Drained by the River Arun, St Leonards Forest is a unique High Wealden wooded and pastoral landscape of long, parallel ridges and steep-sided narrow valleys.*
- *Long views over the Low Weald to the downs but fewer long views north.*
- *Large, regularly-enclosed and some smaller, irregular, assart fields within a woodland setting comprising an arable and pastoral landscape enclosed by shaws, hedgerows (including tall hedges) and fencing.*
- *Despite the closeness of large towns and roads, a secluded, tranquil nature exists in many parts of the forests.*
- *Clearance and re-planting of large tracts of ancient woodland.*
- *Heathland remnants and significant areas of rich woodland biodiversity.*
- *Network of ridge-top roads and lanes, droveways, tracks and footpaths.*

³ West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment, HW2: High Weald Forests

- *Sparse, dispersed settlement pattern of hamlets, farmsteads and ridgetop development, mainly in St Leonards Forest.*
- *Adjoins Crawley to the north and Horsham to the east.*
- *Secluded mill sites, sizeable hammerponds and ornamental lakes and ponds.*
- *Varied traditional rural buildings built with diverse materials including timber-framing, Horsham Stone roofing, Wealden stone and varieties of local brick and tile-hanging.*
- *Designated landscape and exotic treescapes including rhododendron hedgerows"*

3.2.6

Key Issues for Change are set out for HW2: High Weald Forests, which include:

- *"Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.*
- *Extensive planting of coniferous forest on former ancient woodland.*
- *Spread of invasive introduced species, particularly rhododendron.*
- *Reduction of heathland to a few pockets due to cessation of grazing management and subsequent woodland invasion and woodland replanting.*
- *Continuing field amalgamation with hedgerow loss and the ageing and loss of hedgerow and field trees.*
- *Continuing pressures for urban development on the northern fringes of the area and an attendant increase in the pervasiveness of traffic movement and noise.*
- *Visual impact of pylon lines and development including ridgetop properties, modern farm buildings, horse riding centres and paddocks.*
- *Increasing pressures for a variety of recreational activities.*
- *Perceived increased traffic levels on small rural lanes with consequent demands for road improvements.*
- *Gradual loss of locally distinctive building styles and materials.*
- *Gradual suburbanisation of the landscape including the widespread use of exotic tree and shrub species."*

3.2.7 Landscape and visual sensitivities for the LCA are also set out, those of relevance to the Site include:

- *“Woodland and forest cover limits the visual sensitivity of the landscape and confers a sense of intimacy, seclusion and tranquillity.*
- *Unobtrusive settlement pattern in most parts.*
- *Large blocks of assart pastures on the ridges and valley sides impart breadth and depth to the scenic quality to the landscape.*
- *Heathland remnants and significant areas of rich woodland biodiversity are vulnerable to loss and change.*
- *Network of lanes, droveways, tracks and footpaths provides a rich terrain for horse-riding, cycling and walking and for the appreciation of nature.*
- *The few long views from open ground have a high sensitivity to the impact of new urban development, modern farm buildings, masts and pylons and new roads.*
- *Settlement pattern currently sits well within the rural landscape although there is a danger of the cumulative visual impact of buildings and other structures.”*

3.2.8 Landscape Management Guidelines for LCA HW2 are set out with the key aim to:

“Conserve and enhance the secluded, tranquil nature of the forests and the agricultural landscape, and the unobtrusive settlement pattern throughout the area.

- *Conserve the forests and their seclusion for scenic, nature conservation and recreational purposes, plan for long-term woodland regeneration, and promote a diverse mosaic of woodland types.*
- *Reduce the impact of forestry where possible by encouraging sensitive forestry practice including small-scale felling rotation, and incorporating mixed species.*
- *Maintain and restore the historic pattern and fabric of the agricultural landscape.*

- *Protect existing views and resist further infill within, and extension of, roadside development patterns, paying particular attention to the siting of telecommunications masts.*
- *Increase tree cover around agricultural, ridgetop and other development and maintain and extend woodland cover on the rural urban fringe including within the Horsham-Crawley corridor.*
- *Conserve and replant single oaks in fields and hedgerows to maintain succession.*
- *Conserve, strengthen and manage existing hedgerows (including tall hedges) and hedgerow trees and replant hedgerows where they have been lost.*
- *Conserve woodland biodiversity and the landscape of the gills including wet woodland, protecting rare and uncommon woodland plant communities associated with them.*
- *Enhance the biodiversity of woodland rides and glades and reduce rhododendron invasion and bracken cover.*
- *Conserve and manage remnant open heathland by preventing the encroachment of scrub and create new, interconnected heathlands.*
- *Maintain and manage all lakes and ponds and their margins for their landscape diversity and nature conservation value.*
- *Protect the tranquil and historic character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their nature conservation value.*
- *Reduce the visual impact of golf courses, and stabling and grazing for horses.*
- *Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.”*

Horsham Landscape Character Assessment (2003)

3.2.9

The Site lies within the Landscape Character Area (LCA) L1: St Leonard’s Forest, which is described as:

“A very densely wooded area, with a landform of flat top ridges and steep sided ghylls, which cuts into the underlying Tunbridge Wells Sand. The combination of forest cover and ghylls creates a strongly enclosed landscape with confined views. However, a medium scale field pattern of regular arable fields divides the woodlands. Much suburban modern development has spread along the ridgetop roads. However, a sense of isolation and remoteness prevails in much of the area.”⁴

3.2.10

The key characteristic of LCA L1 in relevance to the Site is characterised as:

- *“Narrow flat-topped ridges and steep ghylls.*
- *Heathland concentrated along woodland rides (open avenues through woodland areas).*
- *Regular pasture and arable fields.*
- *Confined views.*
- *Steep sided wooded ghylls, with occasional waterfalls and sandstone outcrops.*
- *A few isolated farmsteads.*
- *Traditional local building materials of sandstone, tile hanging and brick.”⁵*

3.2.11

Key Issues for the LCA are also noted:

- *“Continuing loss of heathland through development pressure or poor management.*
- *Widespread conifer plantations on ancient woodland / heathland.*
- *Rhododendron invasion along roads.*
- *Expansion of horse paddocks.*
- *Urban fringe development along ridgetop roads, e.g. ribbon development.*

⁴ Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment, L1: St Leonard’s Forest, Pg.124

⁵ Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment, L1: St Leonard’s Forest, Pg.123

- *Suburbanisation along roads, e.g. pastiche architecture, inappropriate fences, boundaries, gates.*
- *Localised erosion of lanes from car parking, associated with fishing at hammer pond.”⁶*

3.2.12 The Landscape Condition for L1 St Leonard’s Forest is noted as **declining**.”⁷

3.2.13 The LCA Sensitivity to Change is described as:

*“The overall sensitivity to change is **High**. Key sensitivities include*

- *Suburbanisation /urban edge development*
- *Small scale incremental changes to roads*
- *Changes in farmland management, expansion of horse paddocks.”⁸*

3.2.14 The planning and land management guidelines for the LCA are also set out. Those of relevance to the Site include:

- *“Conserve the traditional dispersed settlement pattern. Any further infill and extension of ribbon development along roads, or building of new large dwellings on existing plots, would further erode this pattern and therefore damage character.*
- *Screen visually intrusive urban fringe development along ridgetop roads with selective tree planting.*
- *Conserve the strongly wooded character of the area.*
- *Conserve and manage ancient semi-natural woodland and pollarded trees.*
- *Take opportunities to restore heathland.*

⁶ Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment, L1: St Leonard’s Forest, Pg. 124

⁷ Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment, L1: St Leonard’s Forest, Pg. 124

⁸ Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment, L1: St Leonard’s Forest, Pg. 125

- *Conserve existing native tall hedgerows and plant new ones around paddock boundaries.”⁹*

Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessment (2014)

3.2.15 The Site lies within a large strategic area of land, which is Zone 2: South Horsham-Southwater, which is described as

“This zone extends from the southern boundary of Horsham town and continues southwards to encompass the settlements of Tower Hill, Christ’s Hospital and Southwater. The land falls within Low Weald National Landscape Character Area and at a District Level is covered by Landscape character areas P1, M1, H1 and G4. The land includes the narrow river valley of the River Arun to the south of Horsham. In the west and south of the zone the landscape is well wooded, and includes a number of ridges and ghylls. The landscape also contains irregular to regular pasture fields. The north east of this landscape Zone is more open in nature with views to Christ’s Hospital School. There are some urban influences in this area, particularly around the settlement edges and also from the A24. The location of Zone 2 and the results of the Capacity Assessment can be viewed on Maps 4a (Housing) and 4b (Employment)”.¹⁰

3.2.16 More specifically, this large zone contains Local Landscape Character Area (LLCA) 19: Land South East of Horsham, which includes the Site and areas of wider landscape including National Landscape to the east of Doomsday Lane with no differentiation between different portions of the broad LLCA.

⁹ Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment, L1: St Leonard’s Forest, Pg.125

¹⁰ Horsham Capacity Study, p.36

3.2.17 The Landscape Character Sensitivity of Area 19 is noted as:

- *“This area contains a rounded ridge with small wooded stream valleys on both the northern and southern sides*
- *The area has a small to medium scale field pattern of pasture with some parkland. There is a wooded character to the river banks*
- *Landscape condition is generally good*
- *There is a well defined urban edge due to the presence of a wooded shaw along the edge of Horsham.”¹¹*

3.2.18 Visual Sensitivity is also noted:

“The visual sensitivity to housing development is moderate due to relatively open character and the moderately elevated landform. The greater scale and height of employment development would be more intrusive.”¹²

3.2.19 Landscape Value of Area 19 is also considered, and takes into account large areas of the LLCA that are within the National Landscape (formerly AONB):

- *“Most of the area is within the High Weald AONB*
- *Some historic parkland is present*
- *Low-moderate tranquillity due the presence of the A281 running through the area.”¹³*

3.2.20 Landscape Capacity is also noted:

“Due to the areas predominantly attractive, rural landscape character which arises from the pasture and parkland character with woodland fringes, together with the moderately elevated landform are highly sensitive to development, and the area it has no/low

¹¹ Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessment, 2014, Pg.37

¹² Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessment, 2014, Pg.37

¹³ Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessment, 2014, Pg.37

capacity to absorb large scale development. To extend large scale development beyond the existing well defined boundary to the town would be perceived as intrusion into the wider countryside.”¹⁴

3.2.21 Although it is noted that the summary for Area 19: Land South East of Horsham appears to limit future housing (No/Low score for Medium and Large Scale Housing), this is based on the large analysis area comprising a significant proportion of designated land (east of Doomsday Lane), part of the National Landscape, which elevated the overall score accordingly. The Site is not within the National Landscape and falls within an area to the west of Doomsday Lane, where there is no designation and therefore the sensitivities of the land differ and are more confined to localised circumstances, including containment as opposed to areas within the more sensitive National Landscape. As a result, the Council has considered the Site suitable for allocation (Strategic Policy HA10) as part of the emerging Local Plan 2023-2040, which is at Reg19 Submission stage.

3.2.22 The Strategic Policy HA10 identifies HOR1¹⁵ as supporting development, where the following are considered:

“a) Have appropriate regard to the setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Grade II Listed Falcon Lodge Hillier Cottage;

b) Undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment to inform site layout, capacity and identify and safeguard key views to and from the High Weald AONB;

c) Provide safe pedestrian and cycling crossing points over the A281 (Brighton Road) from the site;

d) Create an extended Riverside Walk along Hornbrook Stream;

¹⁴ Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessment, 2014, Pg.37

¹⁵ Horsham District Local Plan Reg 19 Submission, p.180

e) Take advantage of opportunities to improve pedestrian connectivity and active travel in the area, including to Public Rights of Way north of the site; and

f) Seek to protect and maintain existing hedgerows and mature trees”.

High Weald National Landscape (HWNL) Management Plan (2024-2029)

3.2.23 The Site itself is not covered by the National Landscape designation; however, north of the Site the western edge of the High Weald National Landscape runs directly up to the built edge of Horsham, extending to the town’s eastern fringes around Forestfield, Bens Acre and Grebe Crescent. In relation the Site, the HWNL boundary extends to the east edge of Doomsday Lane, where the edge of St Leonards Forest forms a wooded and enclosed backdrop.

3.2.24 East of Horsham, the edge of St Leonard’s Forest comprises a series of wooded ghylls and ponds, which feed tributaries such as Horn Brook, that wraps around the eastern fringes of the Horsham (and which skirts the Site’s northern and western edge) and flows into the River Arun south of the town.

3.2.25 As such, the Council’s screening response¹⁶ stated that,

“The site is not designated as being of particular landscape importance in that it is not designated National Landscape or National Park. However, its proximity to the adjacent High Weald National Landscape (HWNL) to the east is to be noted. The site is therefore within the setting of the HWNL and any proposal must take into account the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives”.

The HWNL AONB Management Plan outlines the key attributes of the landscape including,

“Woodland still covers nearly a third of the area in an intricate network of farm woods, wooded shaws, pits and gills, and larger wooded estates. Medieval forests and deer

¹⁶ HDC Screening Assessment (EIA/26/0001)

*parks were extensive, with significant remnants surviving in Ashdown Forest, Worth Forest, Waterdown (Broadwater) Forest, St Leonard's Forest and Dallington Forests. Most of the woodland is ancient, managed in the past as coppice and swept with magnificent carpets of bluebells and wood anemones in the spring. Of the mature oaks for which the Weald was once famous, few remain. The drier sandy soils favour pine and birch within a patchwork of lowland heath"*¹⁷.

3.2.26 The key components that make up the HWNL are identified as follows together with their Objectives as follows,

Core Character Components of the HWNL	Objectives associated with the character components
Natural systems (geology, soils, water and climate) – a deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform of clays and sandstone with highly variable, relatively undisturbed soils and numerous headwaters (gill streams) functioning under an oceanic climate	G1: To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies. G2: To protect landform and geological features including sandstone outcrops. G3: To pursue net zero across the High Weald without compromising its characteristic landscape beauty. G4: To restore soil health across the High Weald
Settlement – dispersed historic settlement including high densities of isolated farmsteads, hamlets and late-medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries.	S1: To protect the historic pattern and character of settlements. S2: To enhance the architectural quality of the high Weald and ensure new development reflects the character of the High Weald in its siting, scale, layout and design. S3: To conserve the distinct built heritage of the High Weald
Routeways – a dense network of historic routeways (now roads, tracks and paths).	R1: To maintain the historic pattern, morphology and features of routeways. R2: To protect and enhance the ecological function of routeways.
Woodland – an abundance of ancient woodland mostly in small holdings,	W1: To maintain and restore the existing extent and pattern of woodland cover and particularly ancient woodland.

¹⁷ High Weald National Landscape Management Plan, p.13

Core Character Components of the HWNL	Objectives associated with the character components
highly interconnected with hedges and shaws.	W2: To protect and restore the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale. W3: To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands. W4: To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets.
Fieldscapes and heath – small, irregular and productive fields, bound by hedgerows and woods, and typically used for livestock grazing; with distinctive zones of lowland heaths and inned river valleys (reclaimed marshland).	FH1: To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management. FH2: To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands. FH3: To protect and enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats. FH4: To protect individual archaeological features as well as historic assets and pattern of fields and heath
Dark night skies – intrinsically dark at night with our own galaxy (the Milky Way) visible.	DS1: To preserve the dark skies of the High Weald AONB by minimising light pollution, obtrusive external lighting and internal light spill from domestic, commercial and public premises in both existing and new developments within the High Weald, and from highways lighting. DS2: To protect wildlife and habitats from light pollution across the High Weald
Aesthetic and perceptual qualities – arising from the interaction of people with the landscape, including the notion of a quintessential English pastoral landscape, intimacy of scale, a sense of history and timelessness; rurality and tranquillity; glimpsed long views; freedom to explore and make connections with the natural world, and a rich legacy of features and ideas left by writers, poets and gardeners inspired by the landscape	PQ1: To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the High Weald's character and aesthetic qualities, and to promote and facilitate contributions by communities and individuals to the conservation and enhancement of the High Weald. PQ2: To protect the unspoilt rural landscape with its intrinsic sense of naturalness, valued views, and the extent of green space which foster experiences of rurality and tranquillity. PQ3: To foster and promote equitable access and informal enjoyment of the High Weald landscape and the integrated management of its resources for the enjoyment of natural beauty by all.
Land-based economy and rural living – with roots extending deep into history,	LBE1: To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty.

Core Character Components of the HWNL	Objectives associated with the character components
and which has visibly and culturally shaped the landscape	LBE2: To reconnect settlements and residents with the surrounding countryside, and maintain and improve rural amenities and services that support communities within the context of the rural settlement pattern. LBE3: To improve agricultural and forestry infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing and workspaces for land-based workers), along with skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty.

3.2.27

The HWNL document also refers to setting and states,

“It is not only development within the boundary of the High Weald AONB that needs to be informed by consideration of the Management Plan; national planning policy and guidance make clear that land within the setting of AONBs often makes an important contribution to maintaining their natural beauty, and here poorly located or designed development can do harm. This is especially the case where long views from or to the designated landscape are identified as important, or where the landscape character of land within and adjoining the designated area is complementary. Development within the settings of these areas will therefore need sensitive handling that takes these potential impacts into account”¹⁸.

3.2.28

The documents outlined above, together with the Site appraisal, have been utilised to establish the baseline conditions for the Site and its surroundings in order to help inform this assessment.

¹⁸ HWNL Management Plan 2024-2029

3.3 Statutory Designations

- 3.3.1 The Site is not covered by, or within 3km of any RAMSAR, Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), or National Nature Reserve (NNR).
- 3.3.2 **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):** The Site is not covered by a SSSI. The closest SSSI is *St. Leonard's Park Pond SSSI*, which is located c.0.8km north east of the Site. Other SSSI include *St Leonard's Forest SSSI*, which is split into two parts. One of which is located c.1.25km to the east of the Site along Hammerpond Road, the other is located c.2.5km west of the Site, which covers the southern part of the forest. (Refer **Figure 2: Statutory Designations**).
- 3.3.3 **Local Nature Reserves (LNR):** The Site is not covered by any LNR. The closest LNR is the *Warnham LNR*, which is located c.2.9km north west of the Site. (Refer **Figure 2: Statutory Designations**).
- 3.3.4 **National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)):** The Site itself is not covered by a National Landscape; however, north of the Site the western edge of the *High Weald National Landscape* runs directly up to the built edge of Horsham, extending to the town's eastern fringes around Forestfield, Bens Acre and Grebe Crescent. The designation also runs along the edge of Doomsday Lane, to the eastern edge of the Site (Refer **Figure 2: Statutory Designations**).
- 3.3.5 **Listed Buildings:** There are no Listed Buildings within the Site. The closest Listed Buildings are Grade II *Magpie House*, (List Entry Number: 1354145), located to the immediate south of the of the Site, Grade II *62, St Leonard's Road*, (List Entry Number: 1353960), located approximately 0.1km to the north west of the Site, Grade II *Old Timbers*, (List Entry Number: 1192083), located approximately 0.2km to the north west of the Site, Grade II *Gates, gate piers and stone wall of St John's College*, to the south west of the house, (List Entry Number: 1027056), located approximately 0.2km to the south east of the Site, and Grade II* *St John's College*, (List Entry Number: 1027055), located approximately 0.4km to the east of the Site. There are a number of other Grade I, II* and II Listed Buildings located within 2km of the Site to the west, the majority of which are located within the Horsham Conservation Area. (Refer to **Figure 3: Environment and Cultural Context with Public Rights of Way**).

- 3.3.6 **Scheduled Monuments:** There are no scheduled monuments within the Site. The closest Scheduled Monument is the *Moated site and fishponds 15m south of Chesworth House* (List Entry Number: 1021446), located c.1.04km south west of the Site. (Refer to **Figure 3: Environment and Cultural Context with Public Rights of Way**).
- 3.3.7 **Registered Parks and Gardens:** The Site is not covered by any Registered Parks or Gardens. Grade II *Sedgwick Park Registered Park and Garden*, (List Entry Number: 1001279) is located c.2.1km to the Site. (Refer to **Figure 3: Environment and Cultural Context with Public Rights of Way**).
- 3.3.8 **Conservation Areas:** The Site is not located within a Conservation Area, however *Horsham Conservation Area* is located c.1.38km to the west of the Site. Another Conservation Area that is in close proximity to the Site is *Richmond Road Conservation Area* which is located c.2.12km north west of the Site (Refer to **Figure 3: Environment and Cultural Context with Public Rights of Way**).
- 3.3.9 **Environmental Designations:** There are no Environmental Designations across the Site, although there are a number of Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland and Ancient Replanted Woodland blocks within 2km of the Site, including within St. Leonard's Forest. (Refer to **Figure 3: Environment and Cultural Context with Public Rights of Way**).
- 3.3.10 **Public Rights of Way:** There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) that cross the Site; however, there are a number within the vicinity of the Site. These include HOR/1691/1 to the north and HOR/1690/1 to the west of the Site. Both of these routes connect into the Horsham Riverside Walk, which otherwise follows the Horn Brook to the north and west of the Site and is a circular walk that wraps around the settlement edge of Horsham, along accessible chalk stream corridors. (Refer to **Figure 3: Environment and Cultural Context with Public Rights of Way**).
- 3.3.11 **Local Cycle Routes:** There are several local cycle routes, including the *Horsham/Okewood Hill/Newdigate/Colgate* route, the *Horsham/St Leonard's Forest/Wimland* route, and the *Horsham/St Leonard's Forest* route, located to the north of the Site. They run along St. Leonards Road, Hammerpond Road and part of the A281. (Refer to **Figure 3: Environment and Cultural Context with Public Rights of Way**).

3.4 Landscape Resource and Contribution of the Site to Landscape Character

- 3.4.1 The edge of St Leonard's Forest comprises a series of wooded ghylls and ponds, which feed tributaries such as Horn Brook, that wraps around the eastern fringes of the Horsham (and which skirts the Site's northern and western edge) and flows into the River Arun south of the town. The Site lies to the south eastern edge of the settlement and forms a relatively well contained parcel of land that is situated between the existing residential development to the north and west, whilst existing commercial / industrial development runs along the A281 Brighton Road to the south and Doomsday Lane frames the Site's eastern boundary at the edge of the forest.
- 3.4.2 As a result of the Site's interface with the settlement, it displays a number of urban fringe influences with built development at the settlement edges on three sides (north, south and west), together with the landform that falls inwards towards the settlement (and the Horn Brook), from approximately 65m AOD at Doomsday Lane to 45m along the edge with the river in the north west. Combined with the wooded forest to the east of the Site (St Leonards Forest) this provides containment, helping to strengthen the Site's relationship and interface with the settlement. By contrast, the south eastern part of the Site is flatter, more elevated and forms part of a local plateau that marks a transition across Doomsday Lane to the adjacent parkland and south towards the edges of the Arun valley.
- 3.4.3 The Site itself is not covered by any designations for landscape character or quality, although it does form part of the setting of the HWNL. It is number of open field parcels comprising agricultural grassland which is strongly contained by a combination of well-established wooded boundary features, mature field boundary hedgerows and settlement. Structural vegetation is predominantly located to the Site boundaries providing strong containment, in the form of woodland blocks / tree belts of mixed trees to the north and west and field boundary hedgerows / scrub to the east and south, both of which border local roads. The mature backdrop continues along the A281 and throughout the local area, forming limited views into the Site.
- 3.4.4 The Site is well contained and has a somewhat diminished relationship with the wider open agricultural landscape, which is as a result of being well surrounded by residential

development to the north and east, commercial development to the south and woodland / tree belts to the Site boundaries, which all contribute to isolate the parcel from the wider area. Incorporating the Site, this part of the St Leonards Forest has a generally well treed character which provides a contained feel; which is in contrast to the open, panoramic attributes of the wider farmlands and ridges.

3.4.5 Overall, the Site is considered to makes a positive contribution to the local landscape character, since the land exhibits a number of attributes or characteristics that are representative of the local landscape, although it is recognised as being a location that adjoins the settlement edge, where it is influenced by the south east edge of Horsham (the settlement edge) and aspects of built development (land to the north of the Horn Brook and to the south of Brighton Road).

3.4.6 The Site contains no features or attributes of rarity and there appear to be no associations connecting the Site with notable people, historical events or the arts. The Site is not remote or tranquil being sited in a settlement edge location where it adjoins active residential and commercial edges along Sandeman Way, Dickins Way, Ghyll Crescent, Doomsday Lane and the land uses A281 Brighton Road, although, Doomsday Lane (which lies to the east of the Site) does adjoin the nearby National Landscape, forming part of its setting. The Site itself has some landscape value overall, which is considered to be medium. The Site does not form part of a valued landscape for the purposes of NPPF, taking into account the value attributes of the Site features on the land.

3.5 Visual Resource

3.5.1 The visual amenity experience by people (visual receptors) in the locality of the Site differs according to many factors. Visual receptors of higher sensitivity with a greater susceptibility to change include residents at home (private viewpoints), people engaged in outdoor recreation (including the use of PROWs), visitors to heritage assets and other attractions, travellers on recognised scenic routes (public viewpoints) and people at their workplace where views are an important contributor to the setting and quality of their working life. Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes are considered less sensitive to changes in visual amenity.

3.5.2 A number of specific, representative and illustrative photographs selected for inclusion in the report and to illustrate the visual effects of the proposed scheme range from receptors including, local roads, public rights of way and representative private views are shown on **Figure 7: Photo Location Plan - On Site / Close Proximity**, **Figure 8: Photo Location Plan Middle to Long Distance** and photographs are shown at **Figure 9: Photographic Sheets**. The visual receptors are considered to illustrate a fair representation of receptor groups with varying sensitivity/ susceptibility to change in their visual amenity.

3.5.3 A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV model) was prepared to help inform the visual sphere of the proposed scheme and aid viewpoint selection. Initial consideration of the study area, via desk research, covered a broad sphere of up to 3km given the potential setting of the Site and the surrounding landform; however, this has been refined through field survey to review and appraise the overall extent of visibility of the Site in the landscape as follows;

- To the north of the Site, visibility is largely filtered by existing woodland and tree canopy cover associated with the Horn Brook, resulting in a high degree of containment locally; however, the ZTV suggests glimpses may percolate into the fringes of the town's south eastern edge.
- To the east of the Site, visibility is limited by the layers of well-established tree cover in the immediate vicinity of the Site along part of Doomsday Lane, the wooded parkland around Coolhurst Grange, and connecting belts of woodland of the St Leonards Forest, including Coolhurst Wood. . Otherwise, the well treed context limits views from the east.
- To the south of the Site, visibility is largely contained by land uses along Brighton Road, including the Hornbrook Garden Centre and associated businesses, plus a few dwellings that extend to Sedgwick Lane. In addition, the presence of layers of mature trees belts associated with both the Horn Brook and River Arun provide a well treed context in the immediate area; however, the ZTV suggests that visibility may extend out to provide limited glimpses from the elevated wooded backdrop near to Bulls Farm.

- To the west largely filtered by existing woodland and tree canopy cover associated with the Horn Brook, resulting in a high degree of containment locally; however, the ZTV suggests very limited glimpses may extend out towards the elevated wooded hills to the west, close to Muggeridge Field and the fringes of Denne Park.

3.5.4

As part of the process, the Council were consulted (during autumn 2025) as part of the pre-app process, and this included email exchanges with the Council's Landscape Officer, to review the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and agree the winter and summer views, prior to carrying out the assessment.

4

THE PROPOSALS**4.1****Proposed Development**

4.1.1

The proposed development comprises,

“....up to 180 dwellings including affordable housing, open space, ancillary works and the detailed means of access with all other matters reserved”.

4.2**General Principles**

4.2.1

This section of the report considers the results of the initial baseline work in the context of future residential development at the Site.

4.2.2

The design of the proposed development should be well-integrated into the fabric of the St Leonard's Forest. To assist the design process, the following landscape guidelines could be applied to the emerging landscape scheme based upon site investigations, landscape character assessment and visual effects considerations. The Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment provides guidelines for LCA L1 St Leonard's Forest. Those relevant to the Site are:

- *“Conserve the traditional dispersed settlement pattern. Any further infill and extension of ribbon development along roads, or building of new large dwellings on existing plots, would further erode this pattern and therefore damage character.*
- *Screen visually intrusive urban fringe development along ridgetop roads with selective tree planting.*
- *Conserve the strongly wooded character of the area.*
- *Conserve and manage ancient semi-natural woodland and pollarded trees.*
- *Take opportunities to restore heathland.*

- *Conserve existing native tall hedgerows and plant new ones around paddock boundaries.”¹⁹*

4.2.3

To assist the design process, the following general opportunities have been applied to the emerging proposals. These are based upon Site investigations, published landscape character assessments and visual effects considerations. The proposals are shown on the plan and drawings prepared by the consultant team and comprise the following main elements;

- The proposed scheme is framed by development at the south east edge of Horsham (including Sandeman Way, Dickins Way, Ghyll Crescent), and along the A281 Brighton Road and Doomsday Lane, which has a well wooded backdrop. The proposed scheme is focussed on the river corridor with homes following the landform and facing inwards (north and north west) towards the town, whilst the south eastern edge on higher ground remains undeveloped and open (with offsets of up to approximately 115m).
- The more elevated south eastern portion of the Site has been set well back from Doomsday Lane in order to protect the setting of the National Landscape (to its east), by providing a large area of open space and landscape, as a buffer including new tree canopy cover and mosaic of wood pasture attributes, species rich grassland (including heathland characteristics) in line with the LCA and so that it reflects the qualities and character of the forest, the HWNL (and its Management Plan Objectives) to the east of Doomsday Lane, surrounding Coolhurst Grange).
- The south eastern edge open space will become a more enclosed feature, replicating the structure, pattern and scale of the historic Wealden landscape, with a framework of linear woodland and tree cover, wrapping around an open, species rich, diverse area of pasture, wooded heath and grassland mosaic, which contains large scale isolated trees (including the retained oak feature tree) and comprising new native

¹⁹ Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment, L1: St Leonard’s Forest, Pg.125

tree cover to enhance the diversity and longevity of the wooded edge to the forest, and meets the Objectives of the HWNL for its landscape and habitat qualities.

- The south eastern open space will remain unlit, in order to protect the setting of the HWNL and to help meet the Objectives of the Management Plan (to preserve dark skies and protect landscape and habitats from light pollution). The layout will need to consider details of lighting details in due course; however, it is important that the eastern fringe of the development in particular utilises appropriate techniques and minimises lighting elements in order to maintain the areas quality of dark skies as far as possible. (Where external lighting is considered necessary at a later detailed stage or by new residents individually in future it should be targeted, discreet, low level, minimal, soft (warm white) of low illuminance and use appropriate design (down lights), LED and other technology to minimise any impact and be compliant with guidance. Zero upward lighting is essential).
- In addition, the (lower lying) south eastern edge of the proposed scheme will be composed of lower density and height bungalows (single storey), using more local vernacular / traditional materials in order to mark the transition in character as a 'parkland edge' fronting onto the open space. This will also comprise a private gravel tertiary street and traditional park railings, coupled with strong parkland edge plantings to evoke a more parkland style character fronting the open space, that create a well-considered interface to the National Landscape (which is in line with the HWNL Objectives).
- The eastern edges of the Site will be planted with structural planting along Doomsday Lane and Brighton Road, forming a well-considered edge around the new parkland, but also helping to ensure that the well treed landscape and parkland forms an attractive visual gateway along the key approaches to the town, including when heading west along Brighton Road.
- An existing standalone oak will be retained as a feature tree with the open space, but will be incorporated into the open space to reflect its isolated position as part of the landscape pattern (and associated with the 19th century mapped fields), and the

design allows for the creation of new views out towards the oak tree along a green corridor, the street pattern and from within the new area of parkland.

- The proposed scheme has been designed to allow outward views to the key features of the local landscape. There are a series of outward views towards the well wooded Horn Brook that are formed by vistas along green corridors or key streets within the layout, as well as a series of views east towards the wooded backdrop formed by the tree canopy at the edge of St Leonards Forest (the edge of the National Landscape), and both help maintain permeability and a visual connection (aesthetic and perceptual appreciation) associated with the landscape's key features, its views and the skyline at the rural edge, in line with the Objectives of the HWNL Management Plan.
- Although there will be some hedgerow loss, elements of the historic field pattern will be retained and where this occurs it will be enhanced as part of the proposed framework with new trees, species rich grassland fringes and additional native planting helping to contribute to the visual amenity of prospective residents, as well as allowing landscape features to permeate into the street pattern from the Site's edges and allow views towards the wooded backdrop, a feature in numerous views. Although it is acknowledged that part of H3 will be replaced elsewhere on Site to facilitate development.
- The approach to open space on the eastern portion of the Site addresses the existing rural transition between the larger scale uses associated with the garden centre and associated buildings (on the south side of Brighton Road) eastwards towards the residential cottages closer to Sedgwick Lane and the parkland east of Doomsday Lane.
- The proposed scheme includes a long view corridor to the spire of St Mary's Church (approx. 2km away to the west) along the combination of an open space corridor and well orientated street pattern towards the centre of Horsham, towards the feature which is glimpsed among the tree canopy cover.
- The northern edge of the proposed scheme will be retained and enhanced as a well treed river corridor softening the new dwellings overlooking the Horn Brook, in a

similar way that it already does from Sandeman Way, Dickens Way and Gyll Crescent. The river corridor as a habitat zone will be widened and enhanced with a wet meadow grassland that enriches the character and quality of the river corridor, as well as its function in line with the Objectives of the HWNL.

- The proposed scheme includes a new riverside walk (routeway) which provides greater access along the enhanced Horn Brook corridor (on what is currently private land) for recreational use, health and well-being, and is connected via other routes along green corridors that provide permeability through the Site.
- There is acknowledged to be some minor removal of hedgerow along the Brighton Road frontage to facilitate car and pedestrian access (and their associated visibility splays) (refer to Arboricultural Implications Assessment (AIA)), otherwise the street frontage will consist of new dwellings set back behind private drives and an allowance for reinforced hedgerow and new buffer planting, including trees to soften and integrate them into the street scene opposite the garden centre.
- Opportunities for new landscaping, open space and recreation area for use by the local community; incorporating dedicated space and features for teenage girls (incorporating the guidance and resources of www.makespaceforgirls.co.uk), features along the Horn Brook that could comprise 'play on the way' and/or trim trail elements, as well as a larger central play area in the heart of the scheme.
- Opportunities for new native tree planting throughout the scheme, providing an increase in canopy cover across the Site. Trees shall be planted at varying sizes and species (of local provenance) to allow for a range in height and diversity in tree stock and to conserve and enhance the wooded canopy cover;

4.2.4

In consideration of the landscape and visual issues relevant to the Site, an approach to the mitigation of the proposed scheme has been considered, incorporating the principles outlined above and as reflected on the outline Landscape Strategy Plan prepared by Liz Lake Associates. The landscape strategy will be developed in further detail as part of the planning conditions and will successfully ensure that the identified landscape and visual effects are minimised.

5 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

5.1 Identifying the Landscape Effects

5.1.1 This section of the report considers the results of the initial baseline work in the context of future potential development at the Site. The landscape effects are the changes to the Site, quantitative or qualitative, compared with a scenario without the Proposals. Effects can be adverse or beneficial, direct, indirect, or cumulative.

5.1.2 The following assessment of landscape effect should be read in conjunction with the approach to mitigation (refer Chapter 4). The effect of the proposed changes to the Site, specifically on the identifies landscape receptors (attributes) has been reviews including consideration of changes to the existing landscape resource, the introduction of new elements within the landscape and changes to local perceptions of the Site.

5.2 Sensitivity and Susceptibility

5.2.1 An important element in identifying the effects of a proposal is to assess the ability (the susceptibility) of the existing landscape to accommodate the specific proposed changes with regard to the consequences on the local landscape character.

5.2.2 The Site (landscape resource) has been deemed to be of Medium Susceptibility to accommodate the proposed development, since it is a landscape where well considered changes of an appropriate nature could be absorbed without the undue loss of key characteristics, individual elements or features and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects or, overall landscape character.

5.2.3 Accordingly, the sensitivity of the Site is considered to be **medium** when value (**medium**) and susceptibility (**medium**) are combined.

5.3 Significance of Landscape Effects

5.3.1 Effects can be adverse or beneficial. Where the Proposals are judged to cause deterioration to the landscape resource / local landscape character this is described as

an adverse effect. Where the Proposals are judged to increase the value of the Site to the landscape resource / local landscape character this is described as a beneficial effect.

- 5.3.2 The proposed scheme will result in some noticeable effects during the construction period, which include the presence of (for example) construction vehicles, materials, stockpiles, offices and parking/ welfare facilities and associated safety fencing, as well as the activities such as levelling and constructing the proposed scheme, which are acknowledged to be short term temporary effects during the construction phase(s).
- 5.3.3 There will be some direct and permanent changes to the resource of the land in the proposed changes across the Site to one of residential development. It is acknowledged that the proposed development brings new built elements and features into an area of the Site that is undeveloped and currently open, albeit influenced by surrounding development and contained by an existing road structure (Brighton Road and Doomsday Lane), and a well wooded context to the east. There will be an inevitable change to the open character of the agricultural field and the use of the land (for agriculture), although existing boundary features including hedges and wooded features will largely retain their structural integrity and composition as part of the local landscape framework, although it is acknowledged that there will be a minor loss of hedgerow on the Brighton Road frontage to facilitate access. Furthermore, it is recognised that the proposals to accommodate the new dwellings will be placed in an existing context of settlement fringe, at the south east edge of Horsham on an inward facing landform. The development of the Site will however represent a noticeable degree of change on the Site itself (Substantial Adverse Effect), but only a limited change to the St Leonards Forest LCA locally. Accordingly, the overall significance of the landscape effect with regard to the proposed scheme is considered to represent a **Moderate Adverse Effect**.
- 5.3.4 The landscape resource of the Site itself will be improved through planting of new features, including new buffer planting, including trees, hedgerows, street trees as well as the creation of species rich grassland / meadow. These new elements will provide a positive contribution to character and have a beneficial effect on the resource of the Site itself.

- 5.3.5 Once an appropriate landscape management scheme has established, the significance of the landscape effects in the long term will change and is considered to represent a **Moderate to Slight Adverse Effect** (Yr15) on landscape character, as the proposed development will be assimilated into its contained setting in the longer term.

5.4 Setting of the High Weald National Landscape

- 5.4.1 The proposed scheme does not lie with the National Landscape; however, the edge of the (High Weald) National Landscape forms a strong wooded backdrop (being the edge of St Leonards Forest) to the town, and runs directly up to the built edge of Horsham, extending to the town's eastern fringes along, including around Forestfield, Bens Acre and Grebe Crescent. The designation also runs along the edge of Doomsday Lane, to the eastern edge of the Site. As the Site lies outside the designated landscape, there will be No Effect on the fabric of the National Landscape itself.
- 5.4.2 There is likely to be some deterioration to the setting of the National Landscape which accompanies new development in this edge of settlement location, considering the change in land use to built development, the domestication of the landscape at the edge of Horsham and introduction of new lighting as a result of development extending into the setting. However, it is acknowledged that existing uses along Brighton Road already influence the setting to some degree and there are no views identified from public rights of way or public open space within St Leonards Forest towards the proposed scheme that will have views of new dwellings and be affected. However, there is likely to be some intervisibility with the land associated with the private dwelling at Coolhurst Grange, in addition to their views of the existing garden centre and associated uses extending along Brighton Road. As a result, there will be an effect associated with the outer fringes of the setting of the High Weald National Landscape in Yr1, representing a Moderate Adverse Effect.
- 5.4.3 Notwithstanding the above, the proposed scheme includes positive reinforcement of the internal hedgerow structure of the Site, together with the reinstatement of hedgerow on the eastern part of the Site to reinforce the field pattern, as well as the offsetting of developable area allowing for the creation of a strong, meaningful green infrastructure, with a large area of open space, comprising a parkland character

incorporating new tree canopy cover and structural planting as a buffer to Doomsday Lane. This will reflect and build on the character of the St Leonards Forest edge, with a well wooded tree canopy, species rich grassland, wood pasture and heath, in line with HWNL Management Plan Objectives. The approach taken will enhance the landscape framework and structure of planting lying between the developable part of the Site and Doomsday Lane, resulting in a **Slight Adverse Effect** in Year 15.

6 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

6.1 Identifying the Visual Effects

6.1.1 The visual effects are the changes to the Site, quantitative or qualitative, compared with a scenario without the Proposals. Effects can be adverse or beneficial, direct, indirect or cumulative. The assessment involves a systematic identification and description of the visual effects, supported by plans and photographs. The following assessment of visual effects should be read in conjunction with the approach to mitigation (refer to Chapter 4).

6.1.2 The likely value places upon views by people, or the visual amenity if the locality is evaluated to help assess the effects of the proposed development.

6.1.3 The assessment has been carried out to make informed judgements applicable to visual amenity throughout the year, including the winter months as it is recognised that deciduous planting may increase the degree of visibility in some locations.

6.1.4 An important element in identifying the visual effects of a Proposal is to assess the existing visual receptors (people who see the view) and their susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity. The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of:

- *“The occupation of activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and*
- *The extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations.”²⁰*

²⁰ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition, Para 6.32 (2013)

6.2 Significance of Visual Effects

6.2.1 Assessment of the significance of visual effects relating to the proposed development is considered with regard to the sensitivity of the visual receptor, the value attached to the views or visual amenity and the magnitude of change in view. The magnitude of change in view is considered in light of:

- The sensitivity of the visual receptor (the viewer);
- The value attached to the views or visual amenity;
- The size and scale of the development;
- The geographical extent of the area influenced;
- Duration; and
- Reversibility.

6.2.2 For the identified viewpoints the degree of change which the Proposals will engender is described and assessed. The following section identifies the primary viewpoints and people or visual receptors within the area that are likely to be affected by the change in views and visual amenity resulting from the proposed scheme. The significance of the visual effect has been assessed upon completion of the scheme and once established (i.e. 15 years plus), although it is acknowledged that new woodland and tree planting will continue growing to maturity over a longer period of time beyond the establishment period.

6.3 Identification of Visual Effects

6.3.1 The following section identifies a range of typical receptors within the area which are likely to be affected by the change in views and visual amenity resulting from the proposed development.

6.3.2 It should be noted that for some views the effects are considered to be short lived, largely because they occur on transient routes – e.g. local roads– in these locations, views are often short lived or periodic glimpses whilst moving along a route.

Private Receptors

Views from properties at Sandeman Way / Dickins Way / Ghyll Crescent (private dwellings no photo) - High Sensitivity

6.3.3

For residents, there will be a mixture of clear and filtered views of the proposed new dwellings from both the houses and garden spaces, which will be views through gaps between existing houses from within the settlement edges or in gaps between vegetation. Views will be most apparent during the winter months when deciduous vegetation has no leaves, resulting in clearer open views across the fields being filled by a backdrop of new dwellings on the sloping landform overlooking the Horn Brook. New planting will help filter views across the brook and add to the tree lined character of the river corridor, although filtered views are likely to remain in winter months. .

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Substantial to Moderate Adverse Effect
- Established scheme (+15 years summer): Moderate to Slight Adverse Effect

Views from properties at Sedgwick Lane/Brighton Road junction (private dwellings no photo) - High Sensitivity

6.3.4

For residents, there will be a mixture of clear and filtered views of the proposed new dwellings from houses and garden spaces, including gaps in vegetation across Brighton Road. Views will be most apparent during the winter months when deciduous vegetation has no leaves, resulting in views across the newly created open space parkland and trees, but including views of the new dwellings on the eastern edge of the Site. Visibility will become more filtered over time as the planting takes effect.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Moderate Adverse Effect
- Established scheme (+15 years summer): Moderate to Slight Adverse Effect

Views from properties at Hornbrook Farmhouse, Hornbrook House, Old Byre, Holbrook Barn, The Granary (private dwellings no photo) - High Sensitivity

6.3.5

For residents, clear views of the open fields from houses and garden spaces will be enclosed by views of the proposed new dwellings, wrapping around three sides of the

cluster of buildings that make up the converted farmstead, and in the foreground of views. Open views of the Horn Brook will be replaced with new dwellings, although the retention of existing hedges and green corridors will still enable an appreciation of the well treed river valley via a long vista between new housing from certain positions (eg Hornbrook House). Visibility will become more filtered over time as the planting takes effect around the perimeter of the Site.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Substantial Adverse Effect
- Established scheme (+15 years summer): Substantial to Moderate Adverse Effect

Views from properties in and around Coolhurst Grange, West Lodge and Coolhurst House (private dwellings no photo) - High Sensitivity

6.3.6

For residents, there will be a mixture of clear and filtered views of the proposed new dwellings from houses and garden spaces, including gaps in vegetation across Doomsday Lane. Views will be most apparent during the winter months when deciduous vegetation has no leaves, resulting in views across the newly created open space parkland and trees, but including views of the new dwellings on the eastern edge of the Site. Visibility will become more filtered over time as the planting takes effect.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Moderate to Slight Adverse Effect
- Established scheme (+15 years summer): Slight Adverse Effect

Views from The Hornbrook Inn and dwellings on Hornbrook Copse (example photograph 11) - High Sensitivity

6.3.7

Views of upper portions of the proposed dwellings will be visible from The Hornbrook Inn and nearby dwellings on Hornbrook Copse, although they will be filtered by existing boundary vegetation on Brighton Road frontage. The proposed development will be set back from the road frontage and supplemented with additional planting to help soften and provide additional filtering of the proposed scheme.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Moderate to Slight Adverse Effect
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Slight Adverse Effect

Public Viewpoints

Views from Hornbrook Garden Centre (example photograph 1) - Medium Sensitivity

- 6.3.8 Views of the proposed dwellings will be visible from various parts of the Hornbrook Garden Centre as well as the associated retail and commercial businesses on Brighton Road from within the adjacent land, although they will be filtered by existing boundary vegetation on Brighton Road frontage and seen in context with existing built development. The proposed development will be set back from the road frontage and supplemented with additional planting to help soften and provide additional filtering of the proposed scheme.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Moderate Adverse Effect
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Moderate to Slight Adverse Effect

Views from PRow Bridleway HOR 1691_1/1 (example photograph 15) - High Sensitivity

- 6.3.9 Glimpsed views of upper portions of the proposed scheme may be visible between existing residential properties along the Bridleway HOR 1691_1/1 running up the narrow wooded slope from the Horn Brook between Brambling Close and Hammerpond Road; however, they will be heavily filtered by vegetation within the intervening residential gardens and the river corridor for most of the year, although there may be filtered glimpses in winter months

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Negligible Effect
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Negligible Effect

Views from PRow Bridleway HOR 1670/1 (example photograph 21) - High Sensitivity

- 6.3.10 From the open elevated piece of land behind Muggeridge Field (and close to Horsham Hill west of the Site), views of the proposed scheme are unlikely to be seen from Bridleway HOR 1670/1, due to intervening tree cover and settlement lying either side of Brighton Road (for example beside Kerves Lane and Sandeman Way), limiting views of the Site across the town edge and beyond the Horn Brook corridor.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Negligible Effect

- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Negligible Effect

Views from PRow Footpath SOW 2955/1 and 1675/1 (example photographs 22 and 23) - High Sensitivity

6.3.11 Long views from the elevated routes close to the fringes of the Denne Estate (photo 22) and open grazing farmland leading to Bourne Hill (photo 21) on the valley side of the River Arun are unlikely to result in views of the proposed scheme from local footpaths, due to intervening vegetation, landform and settlement associated with the southern fringes of Horsham, across the upper edges of the northern valley side of the River Arun.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Negligible Effect
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Negligible Effect

Views from PRow Footpath NUT 1692/2 and NUT/1694/1 (example photographs 24 and 25) - High Sensitivity

6.3.12 Long views from these elevated routes on the well wooded valley side of the River Arun are unlikely to result in clear, legible views of the proposed scheme from local footpaths, due to intervening vegetation, in the form of established hedgerows, wooded shaws and small blocks of woodland lying beyond the southern fringes of Horsham. Where gaps occur in the vegetation structure, views towards Horsham are difficult to distinguish at long distances. .

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Negligible Effect
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Negligible Effect

Views from PRow Bridleway COL 1697_2/4 (within National Landscape) (example photographs 26 and 27) - High Sensitivity

6.3.13 From within the National Landscape and St Leonards Forest, the well wooded landscape provides a well contained structure and limits outward views, including towards Horsham. Where gaps in the vegetation structure occur at the edge of woodland belts or field entrances (photo 26), views towards the proposed scheme from from bridleway COL 1697_2/4 are screened by the layers of intervening woodland, comprising the edge

of the forest structure and the well wooded Horn Brook valley, and are limited to short range views towards nearby elements, such as Horsham Rugby Club and its associated pitch lighting columns..

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Negligible Effect
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Negligible Effect

Views from High Weald Landscape Trail Footpath COL 1698/2 (within National Landscape) (example photographs 28) - High Sensitivity

6.3.14

From within the National Landscape and St Leonards Forest, the well wooded landscape provides a well contained structure and limits outward views, including towards Horsham. Where gaps in the vegetation structure occur at the edge of woodland belts or open sections of the trail (photo 28), views towards the proposed scheme from the High Weald Landscape Trail Footpath COL 1698/2 are screened by the layers of intervening woodland belts, which merge to provide a well wooded context and a range of shorter field views.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Negligible Effect
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Negligible Effect

Transport Viewpoints

Views from A281 Brighton Road (example photographs 1, 2, 9 11 and 12) - Medium Sensitivity

6.3.15

Views of the proposed scheme from the A281 Brighton Road will be most visible from the entrance to the proposed scheme, and on adjacent sections of road opposite the Horn Brook Garden Centre, in particular in the vicinity where hedgerow removal will take place to form new access into the development (photo 12). The proposed development will be set back from the road frontage and establishment of new planting within the Site help partially filter the views of the proposed new dwellings over time. West of the garden centre views will become more oblique and partially filtered, for example beyond the Hornbrook Inn (photo 9). From the east views of development will be apparent but diminish with distance as the eastern part of the Site becomes an area

of open space beyond the development, although the upper portions of the new bungalow dwellings will still be visible on the approach road to Horsham, from the junction with Doomsday Lane albeit filtered by new planting (photo 2).

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Substantial Adverse Effect
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Moderate Adverse Effect

Views from Doomsday Lane (example photographs 3) - Medium Sensitivity

6.3.16

Views of the proposed development will be visible along the central section of Doomsday Lane, due to the open nature of the Site boundary (opposite West Lodge/ Coolhurst Grange). However, the foreground will comprise open space with new trees and planting buffer along much of the eastern boundary, as well as the establishment of new planting within the Site which will filter the views of the proposed bungalows, forming the outer edge of development.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Substantial to Moderate Adverse Effect
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Moderate Adverse Effect

Views from settlement edge (for example Ghyll Crescent, Dickin's Way, Sandeman Way, Heron Way (example photographs 5, 8, 13, 14, 18 and 19) - Medium Sensitivity

6.3.17

Glimpsed views of upper portions and roofs of the proposed scheme may be visible between existing residential properties, through gaps in the street frontages or above single storey elements and across gardens from within the settlement edge; however, they will be seen in context with and from within the existing settlement alongside existing houses and in some instances will be filtered by existing mature garden vegetation as well as well-established trees following the the Horn Brook. The establishment of new tree planting within the Site will help to filter views of the proposed development in the longer term.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Slight Adverse Effect
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Slight Adverse to Negligible Effect

Views from St Leonard's Road (example photographs 6, 16 and 17) - Medium Sensitivity

6.3.18 From further within the settlement from St Leonard's Road, views of the proposed scheme are unlikely to be clearly visible; given the layers of intervening built form at the settlement edge; however, longer views are generally across a well treed backdrop and within a residential context.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Negligible Effect
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): Negligible Effect

Views from Comptons Lane (example photographs 29 and 30) - Medium Sensitivity

6.3.19 From further within the settlement from the vicinity of Comptons Lane across more open school land towards the Site, views of the proposed scheme are unlikely to be clearly visible; given the layers of intervening built form at the settlement edge; however, longer views are generally across a well treed backdrop and within a residential context.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Negligible Effect
 - Established scheme (year 15 summer): Negligible Effect
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7

CONCLUSION

7.1.1

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has reviewed the existing landscape and visual resource of the land at Hornbrook Farm, Horsham (the Site) in consideration of an,

“...Outline planning application for up to 180 dwellings, open space and associated works and infrastructure with all matters reserved apart from access.”

7.1.2

The proposed scheme does not lie within the National Landscape; however, the edge of the (High Weald) National Landscape forms a strong wooded backdrop (being the edge of St Leonards Forest) to the town, and runs directly up to the built edge of Horsham, extending to the town's eastern fringes along, including around Forestfield, Bens Acre and Grebe Crescent. The designation also runs along the edge of Doomsday Lane, to the eastern edge of the Site. As the Site lies outside the designated landscape, there will be No Effect on the fabric of the National Landscape itself.

7.1.3

The edge of St Leonard's Forest comprises a series of wooded ghylls and ponds, which feed tributaries such as Horn Brook, that wraps around the eastern fringes of the Horsham (and which skirts the Site's northern and western edge) and flows into the River Arun south of the town. The Site lies to the south eastern edge of the settlement and forms a relatively well contained parcel of land that is situated between the existing residential development to the north and west, whilst existing commercial / industrial development runs along the A281 Brighton Road to the south and Doomsday Lane frames the Site's eastern boundary at the edge of the forest.

7.1.4

As a result of the Site's interface with the settlement, it displays a number of urban fringe influences with built development at the settlement edges on three sides (north, south and west), together with the landform that faces inwards towards the settlement (and Horn Brook), falling from a relatively flat plateau close to Doomsday Lane at 65m AOD to approximately 45m along the edge with the river in the north west, which combined with the wooded forest to the east of the Site (St Leonards Forest) and provides containment, helps to strengthen the Site's relationship with the settlement.

- 7.1.5 The Site is well contained and has a somewhat diminished relationship with the wider open agricultural landscape, which is as a result of being well surrounded by residential development to the north and east, commercial development to the south and woodland / tree belts to the Site boundaries, which all contribute to isolate the parcel from the wider area. Incorporating the Site, this part of the St Leonards Forest has a generally well treed character which provides a contained feel; which is in contrast to the open, panoramic attributes of the wider farmlands and ridges.
- 7.1.6 There will be some direct and permanent changes to the resource of the land in the proposed changes across the Site to one of residential development. It is acknowledged that the proposed development brings new built elements and features into an area of the Site that is undeveloped and currently open, albeit influenced by surrounding development and contained by an existing road structure (Brighton Road and Doomsday Lane), and a well wooded context to the east. The development of the Site will however represent a noticeable degree of change on the Site itself (**Substantial Adverse Effect**), but only a limited change to the St Leonards Forest LCA locally. Accordingly, the overall significance of the landscape effect with regard to the proposed scheme is considered to represent a **Moderate Adverse Effect**. Once an appropriate landscape management scheme has established, the significance of the landscape effects in the long term will change and is considered to represent a **Moderate to Slight Adverse Effect (Yr15)** on landscape character, as the proposed development will be assimilated into its contained setting in the longer term.
- 7.1.7 Overall, the visual effects range from between **Substantial Adverse to Negligible Effects (Yr1)**, reducing mostly to between **Moderate Adverse to Negligible Effects (by Yr15)**, and it has been identified that receptors located on the edges of the Site will experience the most apparent effect on views and visual amenity both during construction and following implementation.
- 7.1.8 There is likely to be some deterioration to the setting of the National Landscape which accompanies new development in this edge of settlement location, considering the change in land use to built development, the domestication of the landscape at the edge of Horsham and introduction of new lighting as a result of development extending into

the setting. However, it is acknowledged that existing uses along Brighton Road already influence the setting to some degree.

7.1.9 The LVIA concludes that there are no views identified from public rights of way or open space or accessible routes within St Leonards Forest (HWNL) towards the proposed scheme that will have views of the proposed scheme. However, there is likely to be some intervisibility with the land associated with the private dwelling at Coolhurst Grange, in addition to their visibility of existing garden centre and its associated uses extending along Brighton Road.

7.1.10 The parkland proposals for the south eastern portion of the Site reflect and build on the character of the St Leonards Forest edge, with a well wooded tree canopy, species rich grassland, wood pasture and heath. The careful approach taken will enhance the landscape framework and structure of planting lying between the developable part of the Site and Doomsday Lane, resulting in a **Slight Adverse Effect** in Year 15. Furthermore, the proposals respond to the HWNL Management Plan and the approach to the scheme builds on a number of its key objectives.
