

LAND WEST OF CHAPEL LANE, BARNES GREEN

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT APPRAISAL

31 March 2026 | DD715_LVIA | REVISION B





Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal

**Land West of Chapel Road,
Barns Green**

Date: 31/03/2026

Ref: DD715_LVIA

**19.09.2025 Revision A – text
updates**

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following LPA (Place Services)
comments**

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Deacon Design Ltd has been commissioned by Miller Homes to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) of the proposed development at land west of Chapel Road in West Barns (further referred to as 'the Site'), to accompany a planning application (ref. DC/25/2057) for the Site.
- 1.2 The proposed development comprises the construction of 68 dwellings including affordable housing, public open space incorporating doorstep play, hard and soft landscaping, boundary treatments, and sustainable urban drainage systems.
- 1.3 The location and context of the Site are shown in Figure **PL01**.

Revisions

- 1.4 Revision A with minor narrative updates was issued on 19 September 2025.
- 1.5 Revision B (this document) was prepared on 31 March 2026 to address comments made by Place Services on behalf of Horsham District Council as part of their review of the information submitted with the planning application (ref. DC/25/2057).
- 1.6 The key updates included within Revision B of the LVIA are as follow:
- Narrative updates throughout the report to reflect recent design changes and improve clarity.
 - Inclusion of winter viewpoint photography from all agreed viewpoints, following an additional visual survey undertaken in March 2026.
 - Enhanced viewpoint sheets, with added annotations and contextual information to aid interpretation of view locations and Site context.
 - Updated Section 3 to include reference to the Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan, formally made on 08 October 2025 (subsequent to the previous LVIA iteration).
 - Expanded guidance list (Appendix 2, Paragraph 1.3) to include all relevant current documents, including TGN 02-21: Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations.
 - Revised Section 6, providing clearer explanation of the likely impacts that informed the design and embedded mitigation, and distinguishing more explicitly between primary and secondary mitigation measures.
 - Full update of Section 6 to reflect the revised design layout and landscape strategy.
 - Updates to Sections 7 and 8 to ensure consistency with the revised design and mitigation proposals.
 - Clarification of the appraisal of landscape features' value, explaining how this informed the design process and protection of key features. The assessment of effects

on physical features within and along Site boundaries has been clearly separated from the assessment of effects on landscape character.

- Introduction of a dual temporal assessment for operational effects, with impacts now assessed at both Year 1 (post-planting, pre-maturity) and Year 15 (established planting), rather than Year 15 only.
- Provision of summary tables for both landscape and visual effects appraisals in **Appendix 3**.
- Revised report summary (Section 9), updated to reflect all amendments introduced in Revision B.

2 LVIA Methodology

Guidance and approach

- 2.1 The LVIA follows the methodology of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA3) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment in 2013. Whilst the GLVIA3 provides the general principles of the assessment of landscape and visual effects, the detailed assessment criteria are prepared by an assessor and are tailored to the development's nature and type.
- 2.2 A glossary of LVIA terms is provided for reference in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.3 The detailed methodology used in this LVIA, including the criteria for assessing the sensitivity and magnitude of landscape and visual impacts and the degree of effects' significance, is provided in **Appendix 2**.
- 2.4 In accordance with the GLVIA3, the LVIA focuses only on those effects which are material for the planning application. As such, areas of the surrounding landscape which may provide views of the Site but are located too far away to receive any substantial change in views are discounted and not assessed in the LVIA.

LVIA Process

- 2.5 In the LVIA, the overall approach to the identification and assessment of landscape and visual effects is set out as follows:
- Determine the scope of the assessment;
 - Collate baseline information for landscape and visual receptors, including completing desk study research and undertaking field-based survey work;
 - Review the proposed development and identify the likely impacts of the proposed development (enabling specific judgments to be made on sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors);
 - Establish the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors (balancing judgments on susceptibility and value);
 - Determine the magnitude of impacts (balancing judgments on size/scale, duration and reversibility); and
 - The appraisal of landscape and visual effects through a balanced approach and clear description of judgments on sensitivity and magnitude.

Site Visits

- 2.6 Photographs were taken in 'summer' conditions (views with foliage, when vegetation provides most screening) and 'winter' conditions (reflecting the worst case scenario in terms of visibility across the landscape).
- 2.7 The first Site visit focusing on the LVIA issues was undertaken on 14 July 2025 when all baseline views were recorded in good weather conditions with excellent visibility. The second Site visit to record winter views from the agreed viewpoints was carried out on 11 March 2026.

Scope of the Assessment and Study Area

- 2.8 The preliminary study area was initially set at approximately 5km from the Site, including the surrounding countryside and hamlets.
- 2.9 The 5km study area was used to generate a Zone of Visual Influence based on 9.6m maximum ridge heights and LIDAR data reflecting terrain and taking into account the screening effects of building and vegetation in the study area. The full ZTV calculation document is included in **Appendix 4**.
- 2.10 The ZTV, alongside a desk study of landscape designations and verification on Site, allowed us to refine the study area to an area approximately 2km from the Site boundary, beyond which any impacts from the proposed development would be imperceptible.
- 2.11 The final study area is defined by map extents in Figures **PL02** (designations) and **PL04** (landscape character).

Assumptions and Limitations

- 2.12 It is assumed that the construction phase of the proposed development on Site would take up to 2 years (very short-term).
- 2.13 The assessment of operational effects is undertaken at Year 1 and Year 15 of the completed scheme to reflect the likely growth of proposed vegetation. Year 1 is assessed with the assumption that the scheme is complete and while all soft landscaping has been implemented, it has not matured yet, therefore not reaching its amenity/screening potential.
- 2.14 Year 15 effects are assessed with the assumption that all proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature. It is also assumed that the proposed soft landscape would be implemented and managed according to standard, best practice and a Landscape Management Plan to be agreed as part of detailed proposals.

3 Landscape Planning Context

Introduction

- 3.1 The Site is situated in West Sussex and lies within Horsham District. It is approximately 8.5km away from the boundary to the South Downs National Park at its closest point (to the west of the village) and the distinctive escarpment forms part of the distant skyline from long views south within the study area, such as south of Christs' Hospital School.
- 3.2 **Figure PLO2** shows the designations relevant to this appraisal, which are discussed in detail in the landscape baseline.
- 3.3 The proposed development including built environment and landscape proposals should be prepared in line with the relevant planning policy. The following legislation, planning policy and guidance provide the legislative and planning framework for the proposed development within the Site, where there is relevance to landscape and visual matters.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in February 2025 and it sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.
- 3.5 Section 12 of the NPPF, **Achieving well-designed and beautiful places**, states in paragraph 131 that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve, that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that good design creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 3.6 Paragraph 135 goes on to explain how planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
- 'a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the Site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁵¹; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.¹

- 3.7 It goes on to say in paragraph 136 that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined (unless, in specific cases, there are clear, justifiable and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate), that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees.
- 3.8 Paragraph 140 also states that local planning authorities should ensure that relevant planning conditions refer to clear and accurate plans and drawings which provide visual clarity about the design of the development.
- 3.9 Section 15 on the NPPF, **Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment**, states at in paragraph 187 that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Paragraph 188 of the NPPF states:
- 'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (MN note: now referred to as National Landscapes) which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues'.²*
- 3.10 The emphasis in this policy is, therefore, for protection to be commensurate with status, with protection focused on landscapes of an elevated status.

¹ NPPF (2025), pp. 39-40

² Ibid., p. 54

National Planning Policy Guidance

- 3.11 The revised National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) supports the NPPF and the key section relevant to the LVIA is Landscape. This section sets out the importance of strategic policies for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes and the need to identify special characteristics of local landscapes supported by proportionate evidence. Where appropriate, landscape character appraisals can be prepared to complement Natural England's National Character Area profiles and a Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal can be used to demonstrate the likely effects of a proposed development on the landscape.

Local Planning

- 3.12 The Site is subject to policies within the adopted Horsham District Planning Framework 2015. The District is also developing a new Local Plan 2023 - 2040 which at the time of writing this report has not been adopted yet.
- 3.13 The Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan 2025 covers the parish of Itchingfield which includes the village of Barns Green and the hamlet of Itchingfield.

Local Plan Policy

- 3.14 The summary of key policies within the District Planning Framework 2015 relevant to the landscape and visual considerations in this LVIA are set out below.
- 3.15 Strategic policy 3: Development Hierarchy – this policy states that new development should *'will be permitted within towns and villages which have defined built-up areas. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale to maintain characteristics and function of the settlement in accordance with the settlement hierarchy'*. Barns Green is classified as a Medium Village in the Local Plan. This is described as a settlement with *'a moderate level of services and facilities and community networks, together with some access to public transport. These settlements provide some day-to-day needs for residents, but rely on small market towns and larger settlements to meet a number of their requirements.'*
- 3.16 Strategic policy 4: Settlement Expansion – this policy contains the following relevant elements:
'The/.. expansion of settlements will be supported where the development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape and townscape character features are maintained and enhanced.'
- 3.17 Strategic Policy 25: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character. This policy is concerned with the *'Natural Environment and landscape character of the District, including the landscape, landform and development pattern'* The policy states that:
The Council will support development proposals which:

- *Protects, conserves and enhances the landscape and townscape character, taking into account areas identified as being of landscape importance, the individual settlement characteristics, and maintains settlement separation.*
- *Maintain and enhances the Green Infrastructure Network and addresses any identified deficiencies in the District.*
- *Maintains and enhances the existing network of geological Sites and biodiversity, including safeguarding existing designated Sites and species, and ensures no net loss of wider biodiversity and provides net gains in biodiversity where possible.*
- *Conserve and where possible enhance the setting of the South Downs National Park.*

3.18 Policy 31: Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity. This policy states that:

- *Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure.*
- *Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity, and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate. The Council will/.. support development which makes a positive contribution to biodiversity through the creation of green spaces, and linkages between habitats to create local and regional ecological networks.*

3.19 Strategic policy 32, The quality of new development– this policy sets out general criteria for new development, requiring development to:

- Provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe and adaptable environment;
- Complement locally distinctive characters and heritage of the district;
- Contribute a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings and the historic landscape in which they sit;
- Optimise the potential of the Site to accommodate development and contribute to the support for suitable complementary facilities and uses; and
- Help secure a framework of high-quality open spaces which meets the identified needs of the community.
- Policy DM11, Nature conservation – this policy sets out EBC requirements regarding nature conservation. Since no national designations are located within the study area, only the General Approach and relevant sections related to Local Designations are quoted.

3.20 Policy 33 – Development Principles – this policy sets out key principles for new development, based in the requirement to ‘*conserve and enhance the natural and built environment*’. Of particular relevance to landscape and visual consideration is point 6:

'Presume in favour of the retention of existing important landscape and natural features, for example trees, hedges, banks and watercourses. Development must relate sympathetically to the local landscape and justify and mitigate against any losses that may occur through the development;'

- 3.21 Strategic Policy 35 – Climate Change – this policy sets out a framework to guide the mitigation of and adaption to climate change, for new development. This consideration will be important in the Site design however is not directly a landscape and visual assessment concern, other than the requirement to ensure all land-based proposals fit in with the landscape character and take the opportunity to contribute to the provision of appropriate green and blue infrastructure, for example in the design of naturalistic SuDS systems. This is reflected in the following part of the policy wording:

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

- 3.22 There are no adopted SPDs that directly relate to the design and planning of new development at Barns Green. However, the documents listed below provide guidance on relevant topics as outlined.

Shaping Development in Horsham District Planning Advice Note

- 3.23 The purpose of this Planning Advice Note (PAN) is to provide clarity as to its approach and guidance to those who engage with the planning system in Horsham District. This PAN supersedes the October 2022 Facilitating Appropriate Development (FAD) document.
- 3.24 As HDC acknowledges that it is currently unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply and that in accordance with the NPPF, as part of its commitment to act in a positive way to ensure that local housing needs are met the PAN sets advice to guide applicants in submitting applications that would deliver sustainable and appropriate development.

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Planning Advice Note

- 3.25 This Planning Advice Note was endorsed at Full Council on 19 October 2022. This document was developed in advance of the production of a new Local Plan and prior to the statutory biodiversity net gain requirements coming into force November 2023. The Planning Advice Note is a material consideration when determining planning applications and sets out expectations regarding how applicants are to demonstrate compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requirement for 'measurable net gains for biodiversity' and promotes the provision of 10% biodiversity net gain within development.

Horsham Landscape Character Assessment 2003

- 3.26 This document is categorised as Planning Policy Background Evidence rather than as an adopted SPD, nevertheless is a key document relevant to this Landscape and Visual Appraisal.

The Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan 2025

- 3.27 A neighbourhood plan is a community-led framework that is used to help determine future planning applications in a particular area. They are usually created by a parish council or a Neighbourhood Forum. Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area.
- 3.28 The Itchingfield Neighbourhood Plan was formally made on 08 October 2025. Chapter 4 of the Plan contains policies related to Environment and Heritage matters, which aim:
- To protect our rural location and environment and to maintain the gaps between the parish and other parishes which surround it;
 - To improve and enhance the infrastructure of the parish;
 - To conserve and maintain the heritage assets of the parish and the rural environment in which they sit.
 - To conserve and maintain the biodiversity of the parish.
- 3.29 The key policy related to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development is Policy 1 Green Infrastructure Conservation, which requires developments to protect, enhance, and expand green infrastructure, improve walking and cycling access, and avoid losing existing green spaces unless they provide clear compensating benefits and achieve a net environmental gain.
- 3.30 As part of the process of building their neighbourhood plan, Itchingfield Parish commissioned its own Landscape Character Assessment in 2017 to understand their own area in a finer grain of detail. Whilst not in itself a formally adopted document, this will provide a useful resource in the understanding and appreciation of the landscape character in and around the proposed development Site.

4 Landscape Baseline

Introduction

- 4.1 This section of the LVIA establishes the landscape baseline for the proposed development.
- 4.2 The GLVIA3 recommends that LVIAs are 'proportionate' and focus on those impacts that are likely to be material in planning terms.
- 4.3 During our initial research and following field work we have found that most of the landscape within the study area will not be directly or indirectly impacted upon by the proposed development. Therefore, a further 'sifting' of landscape receptors that have the potential to be affected by the development was necessary. Landscape receptors that will not be impacted by the proposed development or are likely to experience a barely perceptible impact will not be brought forward to the appraisal of sensitivity or significance of effects.
- 4.4 The landscape baseline section is structured as follows:
- Analysis of landscape and other designations that may have impact on the value of the landscape;
 - Analysis of Landscape Character Areas and/or Types with reference to existing landscape character appraisal studies;
 - Description of the landscape within the Site;
 - Appraisal of the landscape value of the receptors that have the potential to be affected by the proposed development and will be brought forward to the effects appraisal stage.

Designations

- 4.5 The landscape planning context within the study area is shown in Figure PL02.
- 4.6 All landscape, heritage, nature conservation and other designations relevant to landscape and visual considerations are set out below.
- 4.7 It is not the objective of this LVIA to specifically assess the effects on the setting of Listed Buildings, ecological and/or heritage assets, as this is undertaken in separate reports. Nonetheless, the presence of these designations/features can add to the value of the landscape as well as having value in their own right. This baseline appraisal seeks to obtain an understanding of heritage features only insofar as they contribute, or give an insight into, the character and value of the landscape of the Site and its context.

Landscape designations

- 4.8 There are no landscape designations within the study area.

Heritage designations

- 4.9 There are a number of Listed Buildings within the wider study area, however many of these are at too remote a distance from the Site for there to be any significant relationship between them. These are illustrated on **Plan PLO3** to provide a contextual understanding.
- 4.10 The Listed Buildings below are all on Chapel Lane and within the vicinity of the Site, with potential intervisibility between some of these assets and the Site.
- 'Bennetts' – Grade II (List Entry No. 1286000)
 - 'Blacksmith's Cottage' - Grade II (List Entry No. 1354176)
 - 'The Queen's Head Public House' - Grade II (List Entry No. 1193788)
 - Barns Green Village Store - Grade II (List Entry No. 1027044)
 - 'Old Home' - Grade II (List Entry No. 1027043)
 - 'Little Slaughterford Farmhouse' – Grade II (List Entry No. 1193795)

Nature conservation designations

- 4.11 Ancient & Semi Natural Woodland is the only notable designation within the study area and is found scattered throughout. An area of Ancient & Semi Natural Woodland is situated to the south-west of the Site boundary and extends along the western boundary of the Site itself.

Other Designations

- 4.12 There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) crossing the Site. A network of PRoWs criss-cross the agricultural landscape around Barns Green and link the surrounding villages, hamlets and farmstead. These often follow the edges of field boundaries and therefore form a grid-like configuration across the local landscape. The Site itself has a PRoW just outside the northern and western edges. To the north lies PRoW no. ITC-1600 (Bridleway) Smugglers Lane; to the west lies PRoW ITC-1596-1 (footpath). This forms part of the long-distance recreational route, the West Sussex Literary Trail, which links Horsham with Chichester Cathedral along a 87km route.

Existing Landscape Character Appraisals

Introduction

- 4.13 The LVIA draws information on landscape character predominantly from field appraisal but also existing landscape character appraisal studies. The following documents have been considered:
- National Character Area Profiles;
 - Landscape Character assessment of West Sussex 2003; and
 - Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment 2003.
- 4.14 In addition to this, Ichingfield Parish commissioned a Landscape Character Assessment in 2017 as part of the process of developing their Neighbourhood Plan. Whilst not an officially recognised document in terms of local planning, it has been professionally carried out by Huskisson Brown Associates, a Landscape Institute Registered Practice; therefore, the contents are a reliable and useful resource in understanding the finer grain of the contextual landscape character.
- 4.15 The NCA Profiles are undertaken at the national level and provide guidance for communities regarding landscape character to help inform decision-making. They are integrated studies providing information on a broad range of factors. Due to the large scale of the NCAs and the local context of the proposed development, the information on NCAs is mainly contextual.
- 4.16 For this reason, the LVIA focuses on the county and local landscape character studies which provide far greater level of detail and are more relevant in relation to the scale of the proposed development.

National Character

- 4.17 The Site and the study area are located within the National Character Area (NCA) 121 Low Weald. This NCA is *'a broad, low-lying clay vale which largely wraps around the northern, western and southern edges of the High Weald. It is predominantly agricultural, supporting mainly pastoral farming owing to heavy clay soils, with horticulture and some arable on lighter soils in the east, and has many densely wooded areas with a high proportion of ancient woodland.'*
- 4.18 The key characteristics of the NCA 121 are:
- *Broad, low-lying, gently undulating clay vales with outcrops of limestone or sandstone providing local variation.*
 - *The underlying geology has provided materials for industries including iron working, brick and glass making, leaving pits, lime kilns and quarries. Many of the resulting exposures are critical to our understanding of the Wealden environment.*

- *A generally pastoral landscape with arable farming associated with lighter soils on higher ground and areas of fruit cultivation in Kent. Land use is predominantly agricultural but with urban influences, particularly around Gatwick, Horley and Crawley.*
- *Field boundaries of hedgerows and shaws (remnant strips of cleared woodland) enclosing small, irregular fields and linking into small and scattered linear settlements along roadsides or centred on greens or commons. Rural lanes and tracks with wide grass verges and ditches.*
- *Small towns and villages are scattered among areas of woodland, permanent grassland and hedgerows on the heavy clay soils where larger 20th-century villages have grown around major transport routes.*
- *Fast-flowing chalk rivers in wide, open valleys with watermeadows and riparian vegetation that provide valuable wildlife habitats for species such as breeding and overwintering birds, otter, water vole, Atlantic salmon, brown trout and the endangered, native whiteclawed crayfish.*
- *Frequent north–south routeways and lanes, many originating as drove roads, along which livestock were moved to downland grazing or to forests to feed on acorns.*
- *Small areas of heathland particularly associated with commons such as Ditchling and Chailey. Also significant historic houses often in parkland or other designed landscapes.*
- *The Low Weald boasts an intricate mix of woodlands, much of it ancient, including extensive broadleaved oak over hazel and hornbeam coppice, shaws, small field copses and tree groups, and lines of riparian trees along watercourses. Veteran trees are a feature of hedgerows and in fields.*
- *Many small rivers, streams and watercourses with associated watermeadows and wet woodland.*
- *Abundance of ponds, some from brick making and quarrying, and hammer and furnace ponds, legacies of the Wealden iron industry.*
- *Traditional rural vernacular of local brick, weatherboard and tile-hung buildings plus local use of distinctive Horsham slabs as a roofing material. Weatherboard barns are a feature. Oast houses occur in the east and use of flint is notable in the south towards the South Downs.*

County Character

- 4.19 On the County level, the Site is located within the LCA LW6: Central Low Weald.
- 4.20 The LCA LW6 Central Low Weald has the following key characteristics:
- *Gently undulating landform.*
 - *Predominantly small to medium-sized pasture fields, enclosed by woodlands, shaws and hedgerows.*

- *Small stream valleys draining to the Adur and the Arun.*
- *Some large country houses and parkland.*
- *Green lanes and droveways.*
- *Many scattered, traditional Wealden farmsteads and cottages and a few linear villages.*
- *Crossed by major transport links north south, both road and rail.*

Local Character

- 4.21 Local landscape character, as defined by the Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment is shown in Figure **PL04**.
- 4.22 On the local level, the Site is located within Landscape Character Type G Wooded Small Scale Farmlands; LCA G2: Itchingfield & Barns Green Wooded Farmlands.
- 4.23 LCT Plateau Farmlands/LCA H1: Southwater & Christs Hospital Farmlands lies to the north-east of Barns Green village edge; and LCA G4: Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands lies to the south-east of Barns Green. These neighbouring landscape character areas form the context to the settlement of Barns Green.
- 4.24 The **LCA G2: Itchingfield & Barns Green Wooded Farmlands** has the following key characteristics:
- *Undulating ridges and valleys.*
 - *Strong linear field and woodland pattern.*
 - *Strong sense of enclosure.*
 - *Mainly horse grazed and set aside fields.*
 - *Narrow country lanes with wide grass verges.*
 - *Varied settlement pattern of dispersed medieval historic farmsteads/hamlets, and some modern suburban development.*
 - *Local mix of traditional building materials, including timber framing, weatherboarding, brick and tile hanging.*
- 4.25 The area has the following description:
- This relatively hilly, low Weald landform is wholly underlain by Weald Clay. The linear field patterns and woodland blocks in the valleys are particularly distinctive. The lanes, many of which trace ancient droveways follow the ridgetops linking dispersed small medieval farmsteads. There is a strong sense of enclosure in the landscape, although occasionally long views open up southwards towards the scarp of the Downs. Modern suburban influences are noticeable in the north.*
- 4.26 The key sensitivities to change in this landscape character area identified as:
- *Large scale development;*

- *Incremental erosion of character, e.g. introduction of suburban features.*
- 4.27 The following relevant planning and land management guidelines are identified as follows:
- *Ensure any appropriate new development responds to the dispersed historic settlement pattern and local design and mix of building materials. Also it should be well integrated into the surrounding landscape with new hedgerows and woodlands as appropriate.*
 - *Conserve and manage woodlands.*
 - *Restore lost hedgerows.*
- 4.28 The **LCT Plateau Farmlands/LCA H1: Southwater & Christs Hospital Farmlands** has the following key characteristics:
- *Low ridge and plateau, with prominent rounded knoll of Sharpenhurst Hill.*
 - *Largely open character.*
 - *Relatively few woodlands and hedgerows.*
 - *Lanes with wide grass verges.*
 - *Extensive open views.*
 - *Imposing brick building of Christ's Hospital School set in parkland surroundings.*
- 4.29 The key issues and sensitivities relevant to the Site context are the pressure for urban development and incremental change to historic settlement patterns and also decline in traditional land management and loss of hedgerows.
- 4.30 **LCT G/LCA G4: Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands** has the following key characteristics:
- *Gently undulating, strongly wooded landscape.*
 - *Many small to medium size woodland blocks enclosing an irregular pattern of pasture fields.*
 - *Small hamlets and isolated farms.*
 - *Local mix of traditional building materials, brick, tile hanging and Horsham stone slabs.*
 - *Large historic parklands of Knepp Castle and West Grinstead Park.*
 - *Visual and noise intrusion from the A24/A272.*
- 4.31 The overall character is a gently undulating landform which is well-wooded and therefore views are confined. Sensitivity to change is in regard to the pressure for development and changes in woodland and hedgerow management.

Application Site and Site-Specific Landscape

- 4.32 The Site is located within Barns Green, a rural village. The landform is predominantly flat, with slopes rising to the north and west. A railway line divides the land to the south

- diagonally south west to south east and forms a distinct boundary to the settlement edge at this location.
- 4.33 The Site is located west of Chapel Lane in the core area of the village of Barns Green, opposite the village pub and shop. The Itchingfield Parish Landscape Character Assessment for this area focusses on the leisure and tourism aspect of the landscape to the south of the proposed development Site, where camping and fishing grounds form the land use.
- 4.34 The Site is bounded by Smugglers Lane PRoV to the north, which is a fairly narrow but well-used footpath, lined with trees and a hedgerow with occasional gaps but otherwise high and dense. This PRoV is part of the West Sussex Literary Trail long distance walking route. The western boundary is formed by a designated ancient woodland strip forming a field boundary and connecting to a larger woodland block to the south-west. The woodland strip itself forms the boundaries to a wide PRoV running north to south and which links at either end into the West Sussex Literary Trail.
- 4.35 The southern boundary is also hedge and tree lined. Directly south of the boundary lies Sumners Ponds Fishery and Campsite, a Grade II listed building, Little Slaughterford Farmhouse, set within extensive gardens with dense wooded boundaries; and directly to the south of this lies a new development at Sumners Fields, still under construction at the time of the site visit, comprising 32 new build homes.
- 4.36 The Site itself comprises 3.28ha of grazing grassland, with no particular features of note save the boundary vegetation.
- 4.37 The Site has a gently sloping landform, from +40 AOD in the north western corner falling to +32 AOD in the south western corner.
- 4.38 There are three field gate access points. One from Chapel Road at the north-eastern corner; and two from the PRoV to the west of the Site, one next to the northern boundary and one next to the southern boundary. A drainage ditch runs the length of the western boundary, close to the tree line.
- 4.39 In terms of the adjacent roads and connections, the Site has highway access from Chapel Road, which provides a local link through scattered farmsteads and hamlets, to indirectly reach Horsham via the A264 or A24, approximately 4km to the north east. The A272 is accessible at Billingshurst approximately 3km to the south-west, which links to Midhurst and Petersfield to the west; and to Haywards Heath to the east.
- 4.40 Overall, intervisibility between the Site and its context is limited. This is due to the generally flat and low-lying nature of the Site, and the presence of wooded/tree-lined field boundaries, both to the Site and within the contextual landscape. The presence of woodland blocks in the surrounding landscape, which in combination with gently rising slopes to the north and the south-east creates a generally contained landscape. There is a limited degree of intervisibility between neighbouring land uses, seen either over hedge

boundaries or through gaps in hedges and tree lines. From within the Site itself, the land is experienced as being within the village setting.

- 4.41 The village edge on Chapel Lane is clearly seen, alongside residential roof lines to the southern boundary, with structures and a communications mast at the camping ground also visible above and glimpsed through the hedgerow.

Plate 1 Hedge boundary to the south, with development, campsite and telecom mast beyond.



Plate 2 Designated Ancient Woodland to the western boundary.



Plate 3 Field boundary to Smugglers Lane PRoW and the village edge on Chapel Road



Assessment of Landscape Value

- 4.42 The assessment of landscape value is made with reference to the criteria set out in the Appendix 2 Methodology, paragraph 1.14-1.17.

Landscape features within the Site and along its boundaries

- 4.43 The Site is located in undesignated, ordinary landscape on agricultural land at the edge of Barns Green village and contains no detractors. It is in good condition, and its most valuable features are located on the boundaries, these being hedgerows and trees, including designated Ancient Woodland along the western boundary. These landscape features contribute to the local landscape character.
- 4.44 Although the Site lies within undesignated countryside and is bordered by existing development on three sides, the higher value of the individual landscape features and elements along its boundaries elevates its overall landscape value. On this basis, the Site is assessed as having **medium-high** landscape value.

LCA G2: Ichingfield & Barns Green Wooded Farmland

- 4.45 The landscape value of this LCA within the study area is assessed as **medium**. Whilst there are no landscape designations in this area, there are areas of Ancient Woodland in the vicinity of the Site. There are also a number of listed buildings present. The LCA is also used for recreation thanks to a well-developed network of PRow. This landscape is in good condition and whilst the character area has a fairly rural perceptual/scenic quality, the scenic quality of the area around the Site is reduced by its proximity to suburbanising features and visual clutter such as the communications mast to the southern boundary.

LCA H1: Southwater & Christs Hospital Farmlands

- 4.46 The LCA is not designated for its landscape value but it is in good condition and has good perceptual/scenic quality. Within the study area, there are areas of Ancient Woodland alongside Listed buildings a well-developed network of PRow including a locally notable viewpoint at Sharpenhurst Hill, allowing long views on the landscape including Christs Hospital School and the North Downs to the north and the South Downs escarpment to the south. Overall, the landscape value of this LCA within the study area is assessed as **medium-high**.

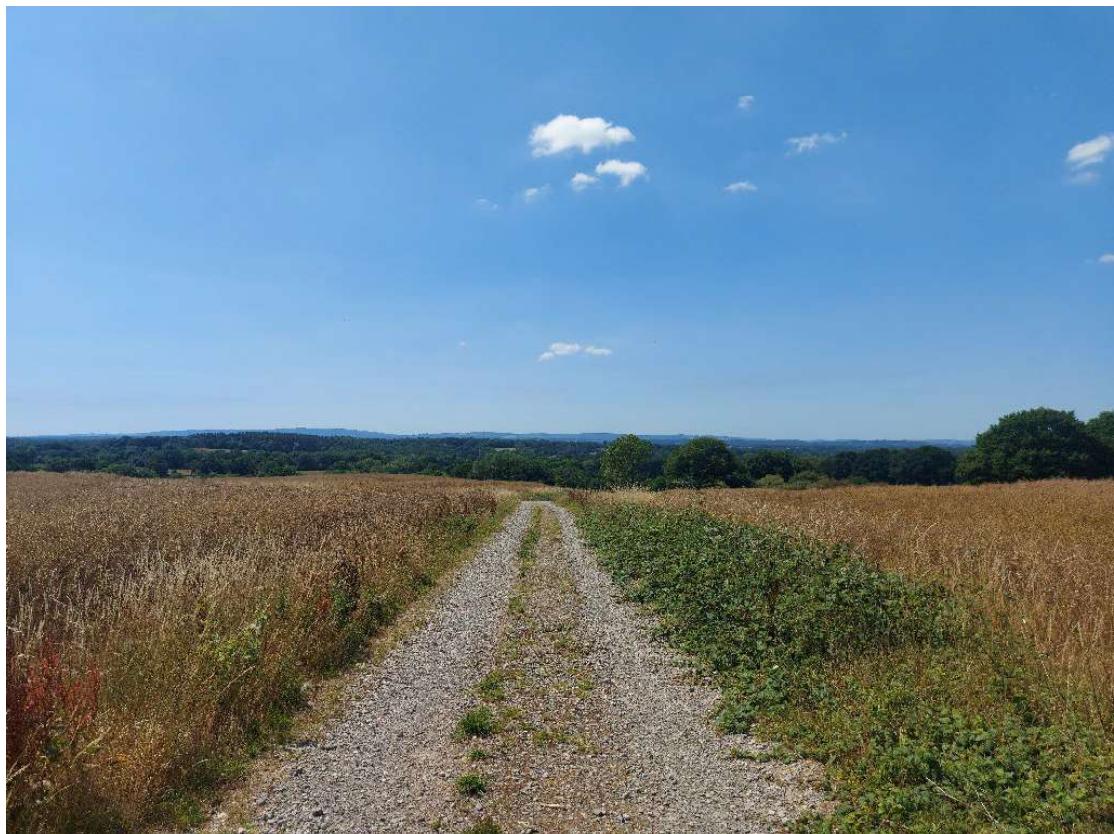
Plate 4 View north-east from Sharpenhurst Hill, LCA H1 over Christs Hospital School



LCA G4: Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands

- 4.47 This LCA is separated from Barns Green by the railway line, and despite proximity has more of a rural and remote character than the village, due to few suburbanising influences being present and the dominance of woodland and farmland, with small settlements and farmsteads scattered within a contained undulating landscape. The presence of listed buildings adds to the time-depth of the landscape character in this area.
- 4.48 The LCA is not designated for its landscape value but it is in good condition and has good perceptual/scenic quality. Within the study area, there are areas of Ancient Woodland and well-developed network of PRoW allowing access to the rural landscape. Overall, the landscape value of this LCA within the study area is assessed as medium to high.

Plate 5 View south from Sharpenhurst Hill, LCA H1 towards South Downs Escarpment



5 Visual Baseline

Introduction

- 5.1 The visual baseline seeks to establish the extent of the Site's visual envelope and to identify the visual receptors (groups of people) that may be affected by the proposed development. It analyses the nature of existing views experienced by visual receptors, the location from which they experience views and their value.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and Viewpoints

- 5.2 A ZTV using LiDAR data was carried out for the Site to inform the visual environment and selection of photographic viewpoints. This document is included as Appendix 3 to this report. The ZTV was followed up by a field survey in which the final selection of representative viewpoints was made.
- 5.3 The field survey and viewpoint photography was carried out on Friday 11 July 2025 in good weather conditions and general visibility appropriate for the type of the assessed views. It is noted that potential visibility was reduced due to leaf cover. Winter views were recorded in good visibility on 11 March 2026.
- 5.4 Several representative and illustrative viewpoints have been selected to aid the appraisal of landscape and visual effects. The viewpoints have generally been selected to be representative of the visual receptors within the study area and locations in the general vicinity of the viewpoint from which clear views of the proposed development may be obtained.
- 5.5 The viewpoints therefore generally represent specific locations from which the maximum effect on landscape and visual receptors will be experienced. However, due to the very limited visibility of the Site, some viewpoints have been chosen to illustrate the restricted nature of visibility towards the Site (or no visibility in some cases).
- 5.6 Based on the foregoing broad visual appraisal, 13 viewpoints have been selected which will be used to aid the appraisal. All viewpoints were taken from public vantage points.

Visibility

- 5.7 The Site topography study (page 2 of the Calculation of Theoretical Visibility **Appendix 4**) demonstrates the low-lying nature of the Site, with land rising to the north and north-east of the Site up to 90 AOD; and to the south-west and south-east to a lesser extent up to 60 AOD.
- 5.8 The ZTV was generated to reflect an expected building ridgeline of 9.5 metres maximum; and viewer height of 1.6m. The Bare Earth Calculation (Page 4 **Appendix 4**) discounts

views from much of the higher land to the north-west; and this is further refined by the application of the screening effect of buildings, woodland and hedgerows within the study area.

- 5.9 The ZVI indicates that the majority of views would be found in a highly localised proximity to the Site, from PRoV surrounding the Site and from the settlement edge at Barns Green, including the campsite to the south. Outlying views are indicated on the southern slopes of Sharpenhurst Hill, east of Plumtree Cross Lane; and from occasional locations to the south of the railway line. These coincide with a PRoV north of Brooks Green and west of Trout Lane near Madgeland Farm.
- 5.10 The ZTV was used to scope out potential viewpoints for review and final selection in the field.

Viewpoints

- 5.11 The following section sets out the baseline descriptions of views from the 13 selected viewpoints:

Viewpoints 1 and 2

- 5.12 Viewpoints 1 and 2 are located on rising ground to the northeast of the Site along a PRoV no. ITC-1615 west of Plumtree Cross Lane. Viewpoint 1 is taken from the path adjacent to the southern boundary of 'Marlands', while Viewpoint 2 is positioned further west at a junction of two PRoV routes. The paths in this area appear well used, being open, clearly signposted, and well maintained.
- 5.13 Viewpoint 1 provides a broad panorama across a well-wooded landscape, with the South Downs escarpment forming the distant skyline. The middle distance comprises a sequence of agricultural and grazing fields enclosed by mature hedgerows and woodland blocks, which screen and filter views. The scene is predominantly rural and pastoral, with pylons occasionally breaking the skyline and indicating nearby settlement. Glimpsed rooflines appear intermittently but are minor elements within the view. Viewpoint 2 offers a similar outlook, though the presence of visible development slightly reduces the sense of remoteness.

Viewpoint 3

- 5.14 Viewpoint 3 is located on a PRoV no. ITC-1605 running through a recreation field to the north of the Site. The view includes the buildings of Barns Green Sports & Social Club and the village hall, set against a backdrop of field boundary vegetation and woodland to the south and west of the Site. Only limited glimpses of the Site are available during the winter months.

Viewpoints 4 and 5

- 5.15 Viewpoints 4 (PRoW no. ITC-1605) and 5 (bridleway no.1600) are located to the northwest of the Site on a PRoW south of Muntham House School. From Viewpoint 4, views towards the Site are fully enclosed by linear woodland along the eastern side of the path, and the mature vegetation prevents any visibility of the Site. Viewpoint 5 offers only very limited, glimpsed views through occasional gaps in the field hedge on the southern side of the PRoW and small openings within the Ancient Woodland along the Site's western boundary.

Viewpoints 6 and 7

- 5.16 Viewpoints 6 and 7 are located on the PRoW no. ITC 1596-1 along the western boundary of the Site and are generally enclosed by vegetation, with views of the Site available through field access gates. Views along the PRoW are predominantly channelled; however, the Site and existing buildings to the east and south (including glimpsed views of Little Slaughterhouse Farmhouse) are still perceptible in places and provide visual relationship with Barns Green.

Viewpoint 8

- 5.17 This viewpoint is located on the PRoW ITC 1604 that runs through Sumners Pond Campsite, approximately 250m from the Site boundary. Receptors at Viewpoint 8 include visitors to the campsite and fishing lakes, as well as walkers using the PRoW. Views from this location are fully screened by the high, dense hedges that enclose the footpath. The experience illustrated in the representative viewpoint remains consistent along this section of the route as it passes through the campsite.

Viewpoint 9

- 5.18 This viewpoint is located on the PRoW no. ITC 1604 that runs through Sumners Pond Campsite, approximately 140 m from the Site boundary. Receptors at Viewpoint 8 include visitors to the campsite and fishing lakes, as well as walkers using the PRoW. Views towards the Site are currently possible from this location; however, they occur within the context of an already developed vista, characterised by significant visual clutter at the campsite entrance and the presence of holiday cabins near the Site boundary.

Viewpoints 10 and 11

- 5.19 These viewpoints, located along Chapel Road to the east of the Site, represent views experienced by pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists using Chapel Road, as well as being indicative of views available to local residents. Both viewpoints provide visibility of the Site over the managed hedgerow along the eastern Site boundary, with the wider rural landscape beyond. They are situated on the current settlement edge, where the context

includes residential dwellings on the eastern side of Chapel Road, some of which are set back behind 1.8-metre-high close-boarded fences. Only the Grade II Listed residential properties opposite Smugglers Lane (at the Village Store) and the Queens Head public house directly face onto the road opposite the Site.

Viewpoints 12

- 5.20 This viewpoint is located north of the Site on the Smugglers Lane PRow. Views into the Site are largely screened by the adjacent hedgerow and trees, which provide a strong vegetative enclosure. Limited, occasional glimpses of the Site are available through small gaps in the boundary vegetation.

Viewpoints 13

- 5.21 This viewpoint is located on a PRow no. PRow SHI-1904 to the south-east of the Site. The view is dominated by woodland and a large grazing field in the distance. All development within Barns Green village is screened by vegetation, including during the winter months, due to the density of the surrounding woodland.
- 5.22 Potential views west of Trout Lane in the vicinity of Madgeland Farm were scoped out in the field. This area is well wooded, with copses and mature hedgerows containing views. The land is on a similar elevation to the Site, and at a distance of over 1.5km between this area and the Site, along with the railway and Barns Green Village separating the areas, the likelihood of even the very glimpsed views indicated by the ZVI is minimal.
- 5.23 Overall, the Site is very well contained in the surrounding landscape and the main viewpoints are highly localised, despite the extensive network of PRow.

Visual Receptor Groups

- 5.24 As part of the wider visual survey, it was found that, due to the topography of the area and other screening factors (predominantly vegetation around the Site), any material changes in views of the proposed development beyond the extents identified are unlikely. The appraisal therefore focuses on likely effects rather than unnecessarily assessing all visual receptors in the local area.
- 5.25 For the purpose of the baseline study, the following receptors were included as they were considered likely to be materially affected by the proposed development:
- Users of PRow (VP 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12 & 13);
 - Motorists and cyclists on local roads (VP 10 & 11);
 - Pedestrians on local roads (VP 9,10 & 11);
 - Local residents (VP 9, 10 & 11);
 - Visitors to the village centre (shop and pub) (VP 10 & 11).

- Visitors staying at Sumners Ponds campsite (VP8 & 9)

Value of assessed views

- 5.26 With reference to the criteria for the assessment of value (see Appendix 2 Methodology, paragraph 1.33-1.34), most views identified in the study area have been assessed as having medium value, as they are not in a designated landscape, nor have outstanding condition or scenic quality to justify the highest value rating.
- 5.27 Whilst most views from Public Rights of Ways have average value typical of the surrounding countryside, views from the West Sussex Literary Trail have slightly higher value than others to reflect the fact that it is documented long distance recreational route, and in relation to the Site, passes through the adjacent campsite, a recreational destination.

6 Proposed Development and Mitigation Measures

- 6.1 This section outlines the proposed development and identifies the appropriate additional mitigation measures aimed at preventing, reducing or off-setting potential adverse impacts.

Likely landscape and visual impacts

- 6.2 As explained in the LVIA methodology (Appendix 2, paragraph 1.5), the likely impacts associated with the development are:
- Adverse effects on physical landscape features including potential damage to Ancient Woodland along the western Site boundary and loss of or damage to hedgerows along Site boundaries;
 - Loss of grassland within the Site;
 - Adverse changes to local landscape character due to the potential loss of valuable landscape features along Site boundaries, introduction of built form within the Site to replace an agricultural field and changes to perceptual aspects of the local landscape character;
 - Potential adverse visual effects due to changes in views and visual amenity.
- 6.3 The identification of the above likely impacts does include an appraisal of the level of effects before mitigation and is used to inform the design of the scheme in order to avoid, reduce or off-set any potential negative effects during the design process.

Primary vs Additional Mitigation

- 6.4 The proposed development has been designed using an iterative process. The location, footprint and height of the proposals reflect the initial discussions about the project's landscape and visual impact and the need for its adjustments to prevent, reduce or off-set those potential impacts. This is called primary (embedded) mitigation.
- 6.5 In addition to the primary mitigation (overall development design), additional mitigation measures can be proposed to further prevent, reduce or off-set the potential landscape and visual impacts. These may include, for example, additional boundary or screen planting which is not necessary from the planning or urban design perspective but can help mitigate potential adverse visual impact on certain visual receptors identified in the baseline.
- 6.6 In general, the proposed development does not require secondary mitigation measures that would be provided 'in addition' to the basic scheme (such are areas of strategic screen planting, which are often provided in much larger schemes). The 'primary mitigation' is embedded in the proposed design. The only additional specific landscape mitigation measure is the new hedgerow planting within the Site to replace (off-set) the loss of the hedgerow along Chapel Road.

Design Evolution and Proposed Development

- 6.7 The proposed development comprises 68 dwellings with associated vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access off Chapel Road, associated infrastructure, public open space in the form of a community green space with integrated natural play area; hard and soft landscaping, boundary treatments, sustainable urban drainage systems and provision for biodiversity net gain.
- 6.8 The housing mix includes 2, 3, and 4-bedroom houses, and a low rise block of flats.
- 6.9 The proposed development has been designed in an iterative process since its inception in up to the completion of this LVIA report in September 2025.
- 6.10 Each step in the design process was preceded by an analysis of Site constraints and opportunities, including input from landscape architects, ecologists, drainage specialists, arborists, urban designers and planners, and followed by team discussion about the Site parameters and design.
- 6.11 The final design has taken account of the following key constraints and opportunities related to the potential landscape and visual impact:
- Presence of hedgerows with mature trees adjacent to the western, southern and northern Site boundaries, including designated Ancient Woodland on the western Site boundary. The importance of the protection of these assets was agreed at the early stages of the project.
 - Core village assets located to the east of the Site; namely the village shop and pub; both thriving, well-used features but currently with slightly constrained access due to the relatively busy nature of Chapel Road.
 - Views in and out of the development Site – we have considered both the potential adverse impact on local landscape character and impact on visual amenity (predominantly users of PRoVW and local roads). The required de-culverting works to the watercourse necessitate the removal of the existing hedgerow to Chapel Road. The proposals for the Site take a positive approach to this change by designing in an appropriate extension to the village edge. The proposed new community green space ensures the new development would be well set back within the landscape and views of development filtered by new tree and hedgerow planting that frames the new open space. Through this design, the rural village form is intended to be respected and enhanced. The Site design thereby avoiding a suburbanising effect, the extensive green frontage instead creates a new asset for the village core, adding an open space feature to compliment the local services. The development proposals also take the opportunity to soften the transition and visual clutter that has developed at the campsite (for example the communications mast) by providing a strong village edge that helps to rationalise the slightly loose and cluttered form inherent in the structures associated with the leisure activities to the south.

- The proposed layout includes mitigation and protection of the Ancient Woodland designation, which also contributes to the protection of views from the local PRoV through extensive additional biodiversity planting to the woodland buffer.
- 6.12 The above list of constraints and the resulting design decisions was discussed and incorporated into the final design. Its key elements relevant to landscape and visual considerations include:
- A maximum 2.5 storey height of the proposed built form.
 - A planted buffer between the designated Ancient Woodland and the proposed development.
 - A designed response to the Ancient Woodland: the orientation of the buildings are laid out to avoid negative physical and visual impacts on the woodland edge and making it a positive feature in the setting of the development.
 - A new mixed native hedgerow to replace the removed hedgerow on Chapel Road is proposed, separating the developed edge from the open space.
 - A new community green space has been designed as the setting to the development, and as an integrated landscape mitigation and enhancement feature. It is designed to protect and enhance the landscape and village character.
 - An existing watercourse has been de-culverted and formed into a naturalistic swale with a bridge crossing, adding character and distinctiveness to the interface with Chapel Road.
- 6.13 Following the review of the submitted proposals the following changes to the proposed development were made in March 2026:
- Addition of a car park to the east of the entrance;
 - Changes to tree sizes within the Public Open Space (POS), with a greater proportion of medium to large trees replacing a higher number of smaller specimens;
 - Omission of the avenue of trees along the entrance road;
 - Reshaping of the car park behind the terrace housing;
 - Introduction of rain gardens;
 - Reduction of the north-east hedge, alongside the addition of four clumps of coppice planting to create a stronger woodland edge. The hedge is required to make up the remaining replacement hedge provision (**secondary mitigation measure**);
 - Change in length of the hedgerow to the south-east along the entrance road;
 - Minor relocation of the Locally Equipped Area for Play (LAP) to the north-east;
 - Addition of a pavement on the west side of the entrance road;
 - Amendments to most plots, including the addition and removal of garages; however, overall building heights are understood to remain unchanged.

Additional Mitigation of Construction Impacts

- 6.14 The following standard mitigation measures (reflecting best practice and tree protection standards) are proposed during construction of the scheme:
- Where possible, recycling as much soil on Site as possible to minimise the impact associated with construction vehicle traffic, including the movement of lorries in and out of the Site;
 - Where possible, retaining and securing topsoil excavated during construction to re-use it during Site restoration (subject to its quality – to be confirmed during further Site investigations);
 - Where possible, stockpiling of materials would be kept in visually discreet locations, such as areas screened by existing vegetation or built form;
 - To safeguard the existing retained vegetation, tree protection zones would be created and fenced off to ensure that development would not encroach onto the root protection areas. Existing trees and hedges would be protected in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction;
 - Construction and security lighting would be shielded, where possible, and directed downwards to minimise light pollution.

Additional Mitigation of Operational Impacts

- 6.15 New hedgerow planting within the Site (+10% length BNG gain, as per ecological requirements to replace (off-set) the loss of the hedgerow along Chapel Road is considered a secondary landscape mitigation measure.
- 6.16 The remaining proposed landscape and visual mitigation measures (see paragraph 6.13, above) are considered to be primary mitigation, as they are embedded in the design proposal. The proposed landscape strategy has been carefully designed to reflect the character of the Site but also its surroundings, presence of vegetation and location on the edge of an existing settlement. This primary mitigation also takes account of ecological and arboricultural input.
- 6.17 For all design details please see the Design and Access Statement (DAS) and design drawings.

7 Assessment of Landscape Effects

- 7.1 This section of the report assesses landscape effects after implementation of all mitigation measures.

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

Landscape susceptibility to change

- 7.2 While the proposed development will lead to the loss of the managed hedgerow along Chapel Road and grassland, the remaining, higher value boundary features, such as Ancient Woodland to the west, will be protected during both construction and operation using standard construction practices and design measures, including physical buffers. Those most valuable features are not likely to be physically affected by the development. The overall susceptibility of the landscape features within the Site and along its boundaries to the proposed development is assessed as **medium**.
- 7.3 The susceptibility to change of the LCA G2: Itchingfield & Barns Green Wooded Farmlands within the study area is assessed as **medium**, as the proposed development type (residential housing) is already present within the surrounding landscape, including new residential development under construction at Sumners Fields in Barns Green, at the time of writing this report. This LCA is of good scenic quality, however, it is also an evolving landscape and within the context of the existing land uses, has some capacity to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the overall maintenance of the baseline situation.
- 7.4 Whilst the development would introduce built form in a currently open field, the location is visually contained within the existing character of the village settlement due to existing development to the south of the Site; across the road and also to the north of the Site, albeit separated by a small area of agricultural land, surrounding the crossroads between Chapel Road, Muntham Drive, Two Mile Ash Road and Sandhills Road. The development is proposed on grazing land, which is not a rare feature in this landscape area, and the important boundaries to the west, north and to the south will be retained; with a significant enhancement proposed to the village character via the community green space landscaped area proposed to front Chapel Road.
- 7.5 The susceptibility to change of the LCA H1 Southwater & Christs Hospital Farmlands a character area to the north-east of the Site is assessed as **medium**. The character is rural farmland with scattered hamlets and farmstead, however, the presence of minor yet fairly busy roads and visible development from many areas means that this is not an un-touched or remote landscape, rather a working and evolving landscape. There is no potential for any physical change to this landscape area as the Site is located outside its boundary and

there is limited potential for intervisibility even in winter. The LCA has high capacity to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation.

- 7.6 The LCA G4: Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands has a more remote and rural character, with an absence of defined villages and instead a dispersed settlement pattern of linear rural development at Brooks Green, and scattered hamlets and farmsteads, separated by woodland blocks and farmland. A mobile home park at Brooks Green is prominent in aerial views, however, is fully concealed by woodland from the surrounding lanes, demonstrating some capacity for change. While there is limited amount of the proposed development type present in this landscape, there is also no potential for any physical change to this landscape area due to the proposed development, as the Site is located outside its boundary and with negligible intervisibility. Therefore, this LCA has high capacity to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation. The susceptibility to change of the LCA G4: Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands, a character area to the south-east of the Site, beyond the railway line is assessed as **medium**,

Sensitivity of landscape receptors

- 7.7 Table 1 summarises the relevant landscape receptors within and around the Site that have the potential to be materially affected by the proposed development.

Table 1 Landscape receptors and sensitivity

Receptor	Sensitivity
Landscape features within the Site and along its boundaries	High
LCA G2: Ichingfield & Barns Green Wooded Farmland	Medium
LCA H1: Southwater & Christs Hospital Farmlands	Medium
LCA G4: Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands	Medium

Construction Effects

Landscape features within the Site and along its boundaries

- 7.8 During construction, the grassland within the Site and the hedgerow along Chapel Road boundary will be removed, while the most valuable features along the remaining boundaries will be retained and protected during construction.
- 7.9 The magnitude of construction impact on landscape features within the Site and along its boundaries is assessed as **high** due to the loss of grassland within the Site and a hedge along the eastern boundary. However, the key landscape features along Site boundaries to the south, west and north, will be protected. The overall construction effect on landscape

features within the Site and along its boundaries is assessed as **major/moderate adverse (temporary, very short-term)**.

LCA G2: Ichingfield & Barns Green Wooded Farmland

- 7.10 The proposed development would cause both physical and perceptual impact on the Ichingfield & Barns Green Wooded Farmland LCA, which covers the Application Site.
- 7.11 During construction, the Site will undergo change whilst it is predominantly entirely occupied by construction, except for the Ancient Woodland buffer and the retained hedgerows to the north and south, which will be protected. Whilst the key landscape features will be retained and protected, the proposed additional construction mitigation measures cannot meaningfully limit the transformation of the existing development into a construction zone with all the associated equipment, materials storage and construction of buildings or earthworks.
- 7.12 However, in the wider landscape of the LCA G2, the construction impact will be relatively limited, as it will not affect the area's most valuable landscape features and intervisibility between adjacent areas will be limited, even during winter, with the exception of adjacent land including Chapel Road. The visibility of construction activities from this LCA would therefore be localised.
- 7.13 The magnitude of construction impact on the character of the LCA G2 is assessed as **medium**. This is due to the addition of urbanising features and large construction machinery to the village landscape but also temporary nature of this effect and its limited geographical area) and the construction effect is assessed as **moderate adverse (temporary, very short-term)**.

LCA H1 Southwater & Christs Hospital Farmlands

- 7.14 The construction of the proposed development would cause no physical impact on the Southwater & Christs Hospital. This LCA has barely perceptible intervisibility with the Site.
- 7.15 During construction, the application Site will be completely transformed into a construction zone. Its visibility from this character area would be barely perceptible and limited to a very small geographical area, depending on the nature of the construction plant used. There may be potential for some minor and occasional visual intrusion seen from Sandhills Roads.
- 7.16 The magnitude of construction impact on the character of the LCAH1 is assessed as **negligible**, due to no physical impact on this landscape, barely perceptible change in views from this area and the temporary nature of this effect; and the construction effect is assessed as **negligible (temporary, very short-term)**.

LCA G4 Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands

- 7.17 The construction of the proposed development would cause no physical impact on the Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands. This has limited (if any) intervisibility with the Site.
- 7.18 During construction, the application Site will be completely transformed into a construction zone. Whilst its visibility from this character area would be low, depending on the nature of the construction plant used, there may be some limited potential for some minor and occasional visual intrusion from private land directly south of the railway line.
- 7.19 The magnitude of construction impact on the character of the LCAH1 is assessed as **negligible**, due to no physical impact on this landscape, barely perceptible change in views from this area and the temporary nature of this effect; and the construction effect is assessed as **negligible (temporary, very short-term)**.

Operational Effects

Landscape features within the Site and along its boundaries

- 7.20 Following the implementation of the secondary mitigation measures (planting of new hedgerow within the Site to replace the hedgerow along Chapel Road, and the implementation of tree and shrub planting within the Site, there will be a net increase in tree in hedgerow planting within the Site, however, most of the grassland within the Site will be lost.
- 7.21 At Year 1 of the operational phase, the magnitude of impact is assessed as **low** and the operational effect before the proposed soft landscape has matured is assessed as **minor adverse (temporary, long-term)**.
- 7.22 Once the proposed development is operational and the proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature (Year 15 of the operational phase), the magnitude of change is assessed as **low**, and the overall significance of effect is assessed as **minor adverse (permanent, very long-term)**.

LCA G2: Ichingfield & Barns Green Wooded Farmland

- 7.23 Once the development is operational, the application Site will be transformed from agricultural land to development. Whilst the nature of this change is adverse due to a localised urbanising effect of the development, the proposed development is designed to mitigate this adverse effect by setting its parameters within acceptable limits and by proposing a landscaped-led layout with significant benefits to the village character and amenity, to create a high quality contribution to the village, providing with recreational opportunities and biodiversity enhancements.

- 7.24 In particular, the proposed development would not materially affect the surrounding woodlands and farmlands, which form an important part of the local landscape, and proposes to protect and enhance the setting to the Ancient Woodland, by changing the existing grazing land to a protected woodland edge ecotone, set aside for habitat creation. The retained hedgerows to the north and south maintain green infrastructure integrity, and the poorer quality hedgerow to Chapel Road would be replaced (within the western part of the Site) whilst creating the opportunity for a new public open space, formed as a community green space.
- 7.25 Similarly to the construction phase, the operational development's visibility from this LCA would be generally localised due to landform and trees, hedgerows and woodland in the surrounding landscape. At the local level, the proposed development would be visible, but not out of keeping with its context, and the proposals would be well accommodated within the existing village form.
- 7.26 At Year 1 of the operational phase, the magnitude of impact is assessed as **low** and the operational effect before the proposed soft landscape has matured is assessed as **minor adverse (temporary, long-term)**.
- 7.27 Once the proposed development is operational and the proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature (Year 15 of the operational phase), the magnitude of change is assessed as **low**, and the overall significance of effect is assessed as **minor adverse (permanent, very long-term)**.

LCA H1 Southwater & Christs Hospital Farmlands

- 7.28 Once the development is operational, the application Site will be transformed from agricultural land to development, however, it would cause no physical impact on the Southwater & Christs Hospital Farmlands LCA. It will also not cause any perceptible impact on this landscape character area due to barely perceptible changes in views over a very limited geographical area.
- 7.29 At Year 1 of the operational phase, the magnitude of impact is assessed as **negligible** and the operational effect before the proposed soft landscape has matured is assessed as **negligible adverse (temporary, long-term)**.
- 7.30 Once the proposed development is operational and the proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature (Year 15 of the operational phase), the magnitude of change is assessed as **negligible**, and the overall significance of effect is assessed as **negligible adverse (permanent, very long-term)**.

LCA G4 Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands

- 7.31 Once the development is operational, the application Site will be transformed from agricultural land to development, however, it would cause no physical impact on the

Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands LCA. It will also not cause any perceptible impact on this landscape character area due to barely perceptible changes in views over a very limited geographical area.

- 7.32 At Year 1 of the operational phase, the magnitude of impact is assessed as **negligible** and the operational effect before the proposed soft landscape has matured is assessed as **negligible adverse (temporary, long-term)**.
- 7.33 Once the proposed development is operational and the proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature (Year 15 of the operational phase), the magnitude of change is assessed as **negligible**, and the overall significance of effect is assessed as **negligible adverse (permanent, very long-term)**.

8 Assessment of Visual Effects

- 8.1 This section of the report assesses landscape effects after implementation of all mitigation measures.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Susceptibility to change

- 8.2 Due to differing responses to changes in views and visual amenity depending on the context and purpose for being in a particular place, the susceptibility of each receptor group to change is assessed separately.
- 8.3 The assessment of susceptibility of visual receptors to the proposed development takes account of the nature of the proposed development (residential housing).
- 8.4 Users of PRoW have generally a strong relationship with their surroundings and their attention is well focussed on the views and visual amenity, particularly in case of recreational walkers who enjoy views at a walking pace. Their overall susceptibility to change in views is assessed as **high**.
- 8.5 Whilst some road users, such as motorists and cyclists, have generally **low** susceptibility to change in views as their views have transient nature and their activity (driving at speed) which does not allow for full appreciation of the surrounding landscape, other road users (pedestrians) have slightly more elevated (**medium**) susceptibility due to walking pace and more possibilities of enjoying their surroundings.
- 8.6 Local residents adjacent to the Site have **high** susceptibility due to their likely appreciation of the rural village setting.
- 8.7 People using the local amenities are assessed as **medium** due to the presence of seating outside the shop and pub, demonstrating the amenity enjoyed at these services which will likely include an appreciation of the village setting.
- 8.8 Visitors to Sumners Ponds are assessed as having **high** susceptibility due to a high interest in the surrounding landscape; although it is taken into account that the recreational fishing on Site is also a key attractor for staying in this location.

Sensitivity of visual receptors

- 8.9 Table 3 summarises the relevant visual receptors within the detailed study area that were considered to have the potential to be materially affected by the proposed development.

Table 2 Visual receptors and sensitivity

Receptor	Viewpoints	Sensitivity
Users of PRoV	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,12,13	High
Motorists and cyclists on local roads	10,11	Low
Pedestrians on local roads	10,11	Medium
Local residents	10	High
Users of Local amenities	10	Medium
Visitors Sumners Ponds Camping & Fishing	8,9	High

Predicted Visibility and Changes to Views

- 8.10 As described in the baseline sections, most of the landscape within the wider context of the Site would be unlikely to receive any material views of the proposed development, either during the construction, or during the operation of the scheme.
- 8.11 Views are concentrated locally to the Site. The views included in this report are not intended to be exhaustive and instead provide an overview of the typical views to be expected, with greater focus on the recreational routes outside of the developed settlement edge as the receptors of the highest sensitivity. The following publicly accessible areas would receive views of the Site and experience material changes to visual amenity due to the construction or operation of the proposed development:
- Viewpoints 6 and 7, from PRoV west of Site, where the gate access currently allows clear views into the Site.
 - Viewpoint 9, from PRoV, view through existing campsite infrastructure and in the context of new development as currently under construction at Sumners Fields.
 - Viewpoint 10 and 11 will have a definite change in the nature of the view from this location, which will see development set behind a new community green space supported by significant green infrastructure.

Viewpoints

- 8.12 The following section sets out the potential for views, or otherwise at each Viewpoint location. Where sensible to do so, for example due to proximity or similarity of view, descriptions are grouped.

Viewpoints 1 and 2

- 8.13 Although the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) indicates potential intervisibility between the Site and the area represented by Viewpoints 1 and 2, the substantial extent of intervening trees and woodland is likely to significantly limit actual visibility. While occasional glimpses of rooflines cannot be entirely excluded, any such views would be

filtered through mature woodland and perceived at a considerable distance. As a result, they would not materially influence the overall visual experience from either viewpoint, even during the winter months.

Viewpoint 3

- 8.14 Receptors at Viewpoint 3 are anticipated to experience a low level of change during both the construction and operational phases. Views towards the Site are largely screened by the Sports and Social Club and Village Hall buildings, supplemented by mature trees and hedgerows along Muntham Drive and the field boundaries to the south. Although occasional, glimpsed winter views of building close to the northern Site boundary may be possible, these would be limited in extent and filtered by vegetation. Overall, the development would be perceived only weakly from this viewpoint, resulting in a low level of change to visual amenity.

Viewpoints 4 and 5

- 8.15 The proposals include new planting within the Ancient Woodland buffer, which will further reduce visibility of the built form from Viewpoints 4 and 5. However, during the winter months, some views are still likely to remain, although these would be heavily filtered by intervening vegetation.

Viewpoints 6 and 7

- 8.16 Receptors at Viewpoints 6 and 7 would experience a moderate magnitude of visual change during both the construction and operational phases. Existing woodland, together with the proposed woodland-edge planting along the western Site boundary, would filter views of the proposed development (and construction activity). However, some filtered visibility would remain, particularly in winter months and from access points that will remain open as part of the retained routes.

Viewpoint 8

- 8.17 Receptors at Viewpoint 8 would not experience any perceptible change to their visual amenity. Although occasional glimpses of rooflines cannot be entirely ruled out, the majority of the proposed development would remain screened by the mature hedgerow that encloses the footpath.

Viewpoint 9

- 8.18 Receptors at Viewpoint 9 would experience views of the proposed development's ridgelines, although gaps within the hedgerow are proposed to be infilled to help mitigate any direct visibility. Given the already disturbed and developed nature of the existing view from this location, the resulting change is not considered to be of material significance..

Viewpoints 10 and 11

- 8.19 The proposed design will open up views to create a more open yet wooded outlook across the new community green space, with dwellings set back from Chapel Road behind a substantial hedgerow with tree planting. This will establish a high-quality village core and enhance the setting of the Village Store, Queens Head Pub, and nearby listed buildings. However, it will also alter the character of the Site from a rural field to a developed area. Although the rural visual amenity would be lost, it would be replaced with publicly accessible open space incorporating new tree and shrub planting.

Viewpoints 12

- 8.20 It will be possible to see the development through and above the hedgerow during both construction and operation. However, the proposals include additional hedgerow planting within the Site boundary to help reduce this visibility and further filter views over time.

Viewpoints 13 south east of the Site on PRow

- 8.21 Although the ZTV indicates that views could be available from this footpath, there are currently no perceptible glimpses of Barns Green from this location. Given the extent of intervening woodland, it is unlikely that the proposed development would be visible from this viewpoint.

Visual Effects on Receptor Groups

- 8.22 Following the appraisal of visual baseline, the following receptor groups have been brought forward to the appraisal of visual effects:
- Users of PRow
 - Motorists and cyclists on local roads
 - Pedestrians on local roads
 - Local residents
 - Users of local amenities
 - Visitors to Sumners Ponds Camping & Fishing.
- 8.23 There are no other receptors likely to be materially affected by the proposed development.
- 8.24 The appraisal of visual effects on visual receptor groups is presented below.

Users of PRow

- 8.25 The magnitude of construction-stage effects on users of the PRow is assessed as **medium**, reflecting the limited spatial extent of the works and their very short-term, temporary duration. In combination with the sensitivity of the receptor, the resulting construction phase visual effect is judged to be **moderate adverse** and **temporary (very short-term)**.

- 8.26 At Year 1 of the operational phase, the magnitude of impact is assessed as **low** and the operational effect before the proposed soft landscape has matured is assessed as **moderate/minor adverse (temporary, long-term)**. Once the proposed development is operational and the proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature (Year 15 of the operational phase), the magnitude of change is assessed as **low**, and the overall significance of effect is assessed as **minor adverse (permanent, very long-term)**. This is due to the landscape mitigation and enhancements providing visual amenity to the quality of the village edge, once mature, and the improvements to the Ancient Woodland buffer, which balance against the change in very limited geographical area, few receptors affected, and the small scale of the changes in views.

Motorists and cyclists on local roads

- 8.27 The magnitude of construction-stage effects on motorists and cyclists on local roads is assessed as **low**, reflecting the limited spatial extent of the works and their very short-term, temporary duration. In combination with the sensitivity of the receptor, the resulting construction phase visual effect is judged to be **minor/negligible adverse** and **temporary (very short-term)**.
- 8.28 At Year 1 of the operational phase, the magnitude of impact is assessed as **low** and the operational effect before the proposed soft landscape has matured is assessed as **minor/negligible adverse (temporary, long-term)**. Once the proposed development is operational and the proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature (Year 15 of the operational phase), the magnitude of change is assessed as **negligible**, and the overall significance of effect is assessed as **negligible (permanent, very long-term)**. Although the development proposals include a change in terms of the hedgerow being removed, the overall perception of the character of the village by motorists and cyclists is not expected to be meaningful. This is because the proposals, including the proposed green space, tree and hedgerow planting, is designed to be in keeping with the existing landscape character to mitigate harm to local distinctiveness and provide a positive landscape setting to the heart of the village. The area from which views will change for this receptor group are highly localised to the Site.

Pedestrians on local roads

- 8.29 The magnitude of construction-stage effects on pedestrians on local roads is assessed as **low**, reflecting the limited spatial extent of the works and their very short-term, temporary duration. In combination with the sensitivity of the receptor, the resulting construction phase visual effect is judged to be **moderate/minor adverse** and **temporary (very short-term)**.
- 8.30 At Year 1 of the operational phase, the magnitude of impact is assessed as **low** and the operational effect before the proposed soft landscape has matured is assessed as **minor adverse (temporary, long-term)**.

- 8.31 Once the proposed development is operational and the proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature (Year 15 of the operational phase), the magnitude of change is assessed as **low**, and the overall significance of effects on pedestrians on local roads is assessed as **minor/negligible adverse (permanent, long-term)**.
- 8.32 As discussed above, whilst the development proposals include a change in terms of the hedgerow to Chapel Road being removed, the proposals are designed to be in keeping with the existing landscape character and thereby to mitigate harm to local distinctiveness and provide a positive landscape setting to the heart of the village.
- 8.33 It is also worth noting that the area from which views will change for this receptor group are highly localised to the Site.

Local residents

- 8.34 The magnitude of construction-stage effects on local residents is assessed as **low**, reflecting the limited spatial extent of the works and their very short-term, temporary duration. In combination with the sensitivity of the receptor, the resulting construction phase visual effect is judged to be **moderate/minor adverse and temporary (very short-term)**.
- 8.35 At Year 1 of the operational phase, the magnitude of impact is assessed as **low** and the operational effect before the proposed soft landscape has matured is assessed as **moderate/minor adverse (temporary, long-term)**.
- 8.36 Once the proposed development is operational and the proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature (Year 15 of the operational phase), the magnitude of change is assessed as **low**, and the overall significance of effect is assessed as **minor adverse (permanent, long-term)**. This is due to a very limited geographical area being affected and the enhancements and additional public open space created by the development balanced against the localised changes to views.

Users of local amenities

- 8.37 The magnitude of construction-stage effects on users of local amenities is assessed as **low**, reflecting the limited spatial extent of the works and their very short-term, temporary duration. In combination with the sensitivity of the receptor, the resulting construction phase visual effect is judged to be **minor adverse and temporary (very short-term)**.
- 8.38 At Year 1 of the operational phase, the magnitude of impact is assessed as **low** and the operational effect before the proposed soft landscape has matured is assessed as **minor adverse (temporary, long-term)**.
- 8.39 Once the proposed development is operational and the proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature (Year 15 of the operational phase), the magnitude of change is assessed as **low**, and the overall significance of effect is assessed as **minor/negligible adverse (permanent, long-term)**. This is due to the character of the

village being maintained and enhanced, and the resulting views over additional public open space created by the development balanced against the increase in visible development.

Visitors to Sumners Ponds Camping and Fishing

- 8.40 The magnitude of construction impact on visitors to the campsite and fishing ponds is assessed as **low** due to a very limited views of the Site being available from this location, and the scale and duration of the temporary impact. The overall construction effect is assessed as **minor adverse (temporary, very short-term)**.
- 8.41 At Year 1 of the operational phase, the magnitude of impact is assessed as **low** and the operational effect before the proposed soft landscape has matured is assessed as **minor/negligible adverse (temporary, long-term)**.
- 8.42 Once the proposed development is operational and the proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature (Year 1.5 of the operational phase), the magnitude of change is assessed as **negligible**, and the overall significance of effect is assessed as **negligible (permanent, long-term)**. This is due to the character of the village being maintained and enhanced, and the nature of the views from the camping Site and amenities remaining in character with the existing setting.

9 Summary and Conclusions

- 9.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal considers the effects of the proposed development on landscape character, including physical landscape features and elements within the Site, and effects on views and visual amenity.
- 9.2 The visibility of the Site in the surround landscape is limited by landform, woodland and hedgerows, both locally and in the wider landscape. Views from public vantage points are predominantly filtered or screened by these features, although inevitably greater change is likely to be seen from the PRowV which lie directly on the western and northern boundaries.
- 9.3 The greatest change will be from Chapel Road where the existing hedge is proposed to be replaced by a de-culverted watercourse and the creation of a sweeping open space, setting the development into the contextual landscape. The changes are intended to be positive contributions to the village character and amenity.
- 9.4 Views into the Site are limited geographically to very localised PRowV, Chapel Road and local residents and amenities in the direct vicinity. Due to the enhancement of existing mature boundaries and proposed design of the development which takes account of Site constraints and opportunities to makes positive landscape improvements to the village the overall result is expected to be a limited level of landscape and visual effects from the proposed development.
- 9.5 The summary of key landscape and visual effects is provided below. The summary tables for all effects are provided in **Appendix 3**.

Landscape Effects

Construction phase

- 9.6 During construction, the Site will undergo notable landscape change, with the removal of grassland and the hedgerow along Chapel Road, although the key boundary features to the north, south and west, including the Ancient Woodland, will be retained and protected. The resulting impact on landscape features is assessed as high in magnitude, leading to a **major/moderate adverse** effect, though this will be temporary and very short-term.
- 9.7 Within LCA G2: Itchingfield & Barns Green Wooded Farmland, the Site will be largely occupied by construction activity, introducing temporary urbanising elements such as plant, materials storage and earthworks. Although key features are retained, the transformation of the Site during this period cannot be fully mitigated. Visibility of construction operations will be localised due to landform and vegetation. The magnitude of impact is assessed as medium, resulting in a **moderate adverse, very short-term effect**.

- 9.8 For LCA H1: Southwater & Christs Hospital Farmlands, construction will cause no physical change and only barely perceptible visual influence across a very limited area, with occasional glimpses possible from Sandhills Road. Effects are therefore assessed as **negligible (temporary, very short-term)**.
- 9.9 Similarly, in LCA G4: Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands, construction will have no physical effect and extremely limited visibility, with only minor, occasional glimpses possible from private land south of the railway. The magnitude of impact is consequently negligible, and effects are assessed as **negligible adverse (temporary, very short-term)**.

Operational phase

- 9.10 Once operational mitigation is in place, including primary (embedded) mitigation and additional mitigation planting (new replacement hedgerow), the scheme will result in a net increase in tree cover across the Site, although the majority of the existing grassland will be permanently lost.
- 9.11 At both Year 1 and Year 15, the magnitude of change is assessed as low, resulting in **minor adverse effects** (temporary, long-term at Year 1; permanent, very long-term at Year 15).
- 9.12 Within LCA G2: Itchingfield & Barns Green Wooded Farmland, the change from agricultural land to residential development represents a localised urbanising influence. However, the landscaped design, including retention and enhancement of woodland edges, reinforcement of green infrastructure and creation of new community green space, helps integrate the scheme into the existing village form and protects the area's key characteristics. Visibility remains localised, and the development is not out of keeping with its context.
- 9.13 At both Year 1 and Year 15, the magnitude of change is assessed as low, resulting in **minor adverse effects** (temporary, long-term at Year 1; permanent, very long-term at Year 15).
- 9.14 Across LCA H1: Southwater & Christs Hospital Farmlands, the development introduces no physical impact and only barely perceptible change in limited views. The magnitude of operational impact at both Year 1 and Year 15 is assessed as negligible, leading to **negligible adverse effects** (long-term and very long-term respectively).
- 9.15 The same applies to LCA G4: Southwater & Shipley Wooded Farmlands, with no physical impact and minimal perceptibility in views. Operational impacts remain negligible at both assessment years, with corresponding **negligible adverse effects**.

Visual Effects

- 9.16 In visual amenity terms, while the proposed development would introduce built form onto currently undeveloped agricultural field, the scheme has been designed to integrate

sympathetically with the surrounding village and wider landscape. Beyond close-range views along Chapel Road and from the adjoining PRow, where glimpsed visibility may occur through occasional gaps in boundary hedgerows, views of the Site are substantially restricted by the local landform and established vegetation.

- 9.17 Although some hedgerow removal is required, the overall perception of village character is not anticipated to be meaningfully altered. This is due to the design approach, which incorporates a new area of community green space at the development frontage along Chael Road together with tree and hedgerow planting. Once established, this planting will mitigate visual change and provide a positive landscape setting at this edge of the village.
- 9.18 Construction-stage visual effects are generally limited across all visual receptor groups due to the small spatial extent of works, temporary character, and their very short-term duration. Construction effects range from minor to moderate adverse, with the highest effects experienced by users of nearby PRow and local residents, and lower effects for road users, local amenity users and visitors to Sumners Ponds.
- 9.19 At Year 1 of operation, before the proposed landscape planting has matured, visual effects range from minor to moderate/minor adverse across most receptors. These effects remain localised and are influenced primarily by initial views of the new built form prior to the establishment of mitigation planting.
- 9.20 By Year 15, once planting has matured, visual effects decrease further across all receptor groups. The overall significance of effects ranges from minor adverse to negligible, reflecting the successful integration of the development into the existing village character, the provision of new public open space, new planting, and the enhancement of the Ancient Woodland buffer. For most receptor groups, particularly motorists, cyclists, amenity users, and visitors to Sumners Ponds, effects become negligible in the long term as views remain consistent with the prevailing landscape character.
- 9.21 Overall, long-term effects are limited in magnitude, highly localised, and mitigated effectively through the proposed landscape strategy, resulting in a low level of permanent adverse visual impact.

10 References

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