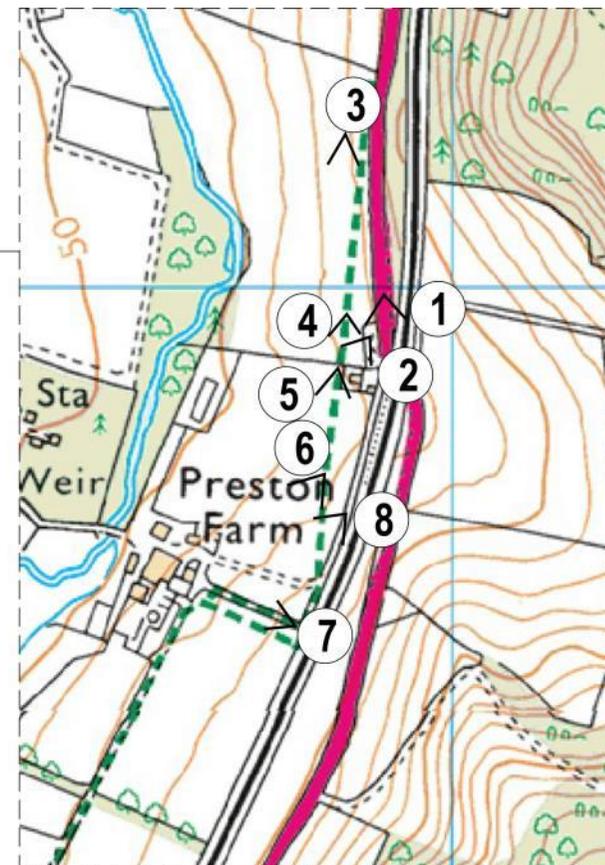
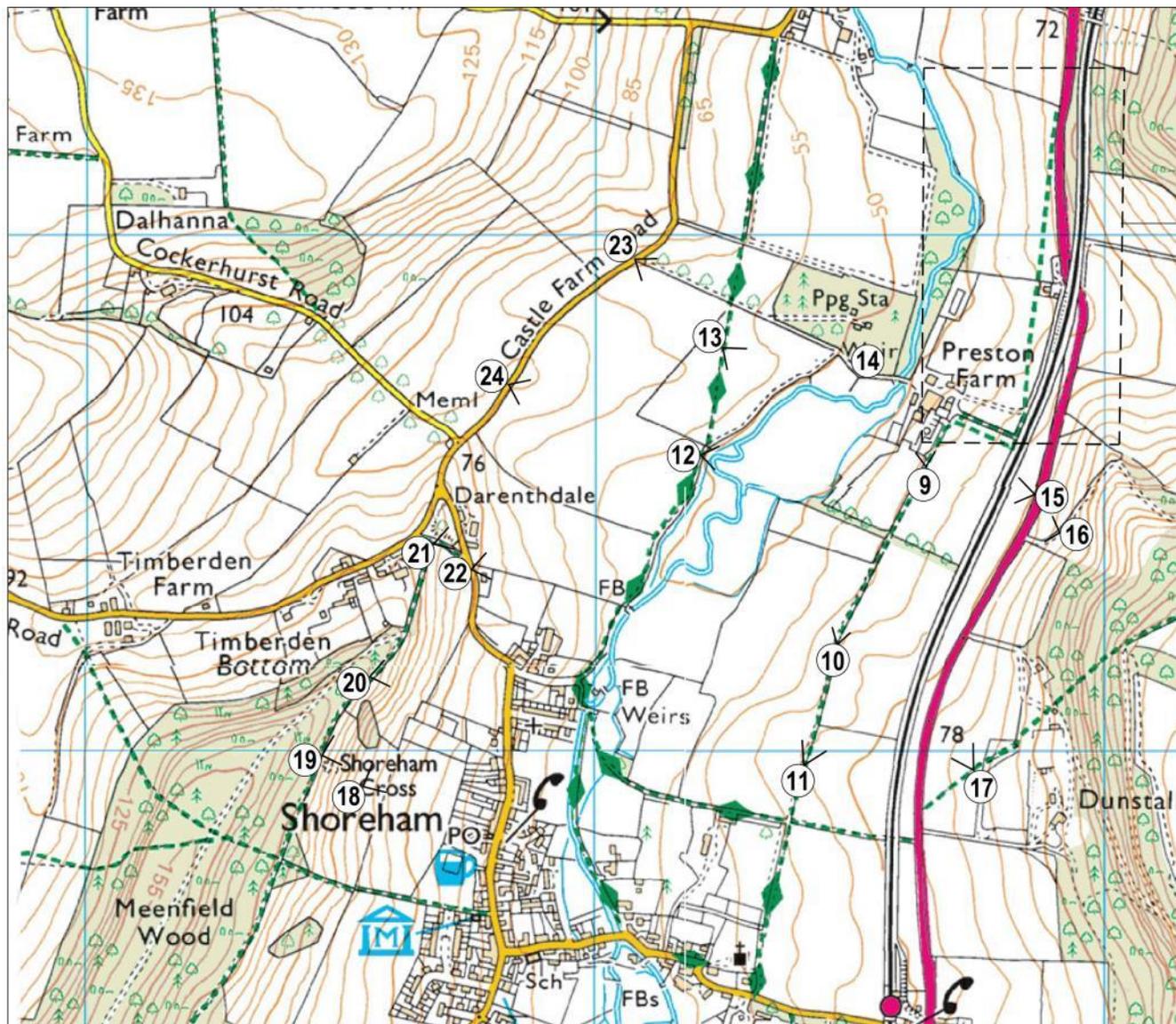


Hatchery at Preston Farm



Landscape and Visual Appraisal
Appendix A: Representative Viewpoints
December 2020



PRESTON FARM VIEWPOINT PLAN



Viewpoint 1:

Near view south from A225 on approach to Preston Farm access. A far reaching view down the Darent Valley towards Shoreham. Farmland, including arable crops and pasture, woodland and the western slope of the valley offer a largely rural/agricultural landscape, although the macadam road is a detracting influence. Woodland and poplars on the valley floor mark the course of the river.

The Buildings at Preston Farm can be seen as a cluster right of centre. These sit within the landscape, allowing uninterrupted views across existing rooflines to countryside beyond. Trees to the south form a backdrop to the Farm buildings which helps to recess them into the view. The sloping topography of the site is such that the ridgelines of Dairy House and the Farmhouse are higher than the other neighbouring structures, which sit on lower ground. The more visible elements include the Dutch Barn and the former oast house. The residential and agricultural buildings are not untypical within this farmed landscape. Parked cars and the horse manege right of the Dutch barn are detractors and interfere with views towards the river. The roof of Preston Farm Cottage at the Farm entrance is visible to the left of the image. This is a transient view seen chiefly by motorists from the A225, which is a relatively busy road linking Sevenoaks and Otford with the M20 at Farningham. In summer, roadside vegetation screens all views of built form on the Farm.

This view is more open in winter months.

Hatchery

There would be little change to the character of this view. The more solid mass of the existing built form will have a slightly more open character with the removal of the Dutch Barn and oast house. The proposed Office building would be visible in this view, but largely contained within the existing extent of built form. Car parking would be visible in the early years but would be screened as planting matures on the northern site boundary.

**Viewpoint 2:**

Near view south west to Farm from A225 access. Similar to viewpoint 1, offering long views down the Darent Valley. The Farm buildings are partially screened by shrubs and vegetation in the foreground in this winter view. The existing parking on the Thames Water land is prominent in this existing view. Summer views would be likely to screen most of the Farm buildings, but the manege and car parking area would remain visible, forming detracting elements in this otherwise largely rural view. The tarmac access area off the A225 is a further detracting element. A transient view likely to be seen briefly by motorists on the A225 or visitors to the Farm.

Hatchery

This view is similar to Viewpoint 1 and the anticipated change in layout and visibility of built form would be similar. The viewer is slightly more elevated above the proposed car park, so cars would be marginally more visible in the early years. The proposed hedge planting as part of the A225 access improvements would help screen views to the parking. The proposals would also break out much of the tarmac at the entrance to be replaced with meadow, tree and hedge planting.



Viewpoint 3:

Middle distance view south to Farm from Footpath SR19, approximately 600m to north. Preston Farm sits at the centre of this rural view comprising a lavender crop, grass headlands, hedgerow and woodland in the foreground, farmland, woodland shaws and hedgerows forming the Farm landholding and in the far distance, continuing areas of farmland and the western Darent Valley slopes. Trees to the right of the image mark the course of the river. The railway line follows the wooded embankment to the left of the image. The railway line is largely screened from view but passing trains are distinctly audible. The hedgerow in the middle distance partially screens the Farm buildings and offers a greater level of screening in summer. As in viewpoints 1 and 2, the Farm buildings sit within the landscape and do not detract from the overall perception of the landscape topography. The, converted oast house is prominent and, painted white, is something of a detractor. The footpath broadly follows the line of the hedgerow to the left, so that there are similar views of the Farm for some 600m along its route (see also viewpoints 4, 5 and 6), which would be experienced by walkers.

Hatchery

The existing Farm buildings are seen as a fairly solid mass of built form. The oast house and Dutch Barn would be demolished (the oast house is more prominent in the winter view). The proposed buildings would be to a more open layout potentially allowing views through the site from this location. The Office and retained Maker Space building would be visible. From this location car parking would be almost completely screened from the outset by the intervening hedges and proposed planting. Hatchery would retain the scale and recessed character of the farm, but with a more open structure.



**Viewpoint 4:**

Near view south to Farm from Footpath SR19, approximately 400m north of Farm buildings. Similar to viewpoint 3, but the Farm buildings are more visible and occupy a larger part of the view. The valley topography and field pattern, Preston Hill to the east and the western valley slopes toward Shoreham are clearly evident. The line of the river is not obvious, largely hidden by woodland. As in all the views south along the valley the wooded backdrop aids the integration of the Farm as part of this rural scene in both summer and winter views. Dairy House, the oast house and Dutch Barn are the most prominent structures, but as in Viewpoint 3 built form appears largely as a single mass. Vegetation and the existing hedge around the yard used by Down to Earth Trees largely screen the yard and parked vehicles.

**Hatchery**

Very similar anticipated effects to Viewpoint 3. The oast house and Dutch barn would be demolished. The retained Maker Space and new Office building would be visible in this view. There would be a more open layout to the buildings within the farmyard, which currently appears as a single mass of built form. Car parking would be largely screened by the boundary planting from the early years. Hatchery would be seen against the backdrop of the retained wooded setting.

**Viewpoint 5:**

Near view south to Farm from Footpath SR19 by Preston Farm Cottages. This view illustrates the change in the view for users of footpath SR19 as the path descends towards the Farm. The long views down the valley are more limited, although the western valley slope is clearly visible. Trees forming the woodland shaw at the Farm's southern boundary, and the single horse chestnut east of the Farmhouse, are prominent landscape features. The Farm buildings are more visible in this near view than in viewpoints 3 and 4, but remain set within the landscape. Parked cars on the Thames Water land are a detractor, but the hedge screens views into the yard used by Down to Earth Trees. Again, Dairy House, the oast house and Dutch Barn are the most obviously visible structures.

**Hatchery**

The visually prominent oast house and the Dutch Barn would be demolished. The retained Maker Space and the proposed Office building would be visible. There would be little change to the massing of built form in this view with the Maker Space building viewed against the backdrop of the Office building. Both would be seen against the existing wooded backdrop. The proposed car parking would potentially be visible in early years until screening matures.



Viewpoint 6:

Near view west to Farm from Footpath SR19, approximately 150m from the Farm buildings. From this viewpoint the Farmhouse and Dairy House are the most prominent buildings. The roof of the Dutch Barn, and a second barn, are partially visible. In summer, trees largely screen all Farm buildings other than the Farmhouse and Dairy House. The single horse chestnut east of the Farmhouse is a notable landscape feature. The foreground is dominated by pasture and fencing associated with horse grazing. The views west towards the valley slopes offer a sense of scale and illustrate the position of the Farm in the wide valley landscape. Land immediately south of the Farmhouse is largely screened by the access road hedges and overall topography. The course of the river is largely hidden by woodland but there are glimpses of the riverside wetland area through gaps in the tree cover to the right of Dairy House.

Hatchery

The retained Maker Space and proposed Office buildings would be glimpsed through the gap between the Farmhouse and Dairy House. The two storey Office building would increase the height of built form seen beyond the Farmhouse but this would remain well below the skyline set against the wooded backdrop. The Site Hub would also be glimpsed to the south of the Farmhouse, in particular in winter. It is also anticipated that car parking would be visible until screen planting matures beyond Dairy House.

**Viewpoint 7:**

Near view west along access track to Dairy House and Yard (public footpath SR19) and the proposed access to Hatchery. A fairly typical view of a farm approach. Horse grazing and associated fencing is evident to the right of the image. Dairy House and the Farmhouse are the most visible structures. To the rear of Dairy House, the oast house and a barn roof are partially visible in the winter view. Barn ends and a glimpse of the roof of the Dutch barn are glimpsed beyond the Farmhouse. To the left of the Farmhouse, the parked vehicles associated with the livery stables are a major detractor in this view in winter, interrupting long views across the water meadow to the river and compromising the tranquillity and rural character of the view. In summer this part of the Farm is screened by the hedgerow in the foreground.

**Hatchery**

The proposals will enable the removal of the livery parking and storage which detract from the character of the view. The removal of the outbuildings and oast house would also allow more open views between the buildings. The Office building would be seen beyond the Farmhouse and the Site Hub would be visible to the south (left) of the Farmhouse, mainly in winter. The proposed car park enclosed by screen planting would be glimpsed in this view. There would be an increase in the built form in this view but the proposals would enable the removal of many of the elements which detract from the rural character and quality of the existing view.



Viewpoint 8:

Near view south from Farm access road (not a PRow). The fencing along the eastern boundary, which borders the railway embankment, compromises the character of the view. The Farm buildings sit within the landscape and do not interrupt appreciation of the views of the western valley slopes and Shoreham Cross beyond. The Farmhouse and Dairy House have the highest visible ridgelines. Barn roofs are partially visible between the Dairy House and Farmhouse, but these are less visible in summer, largely hidden by vegetation along the access road. Other existing scattered development is visible on the far side of the valley. The hedgerow in the foreground has many gaps and has lost its overall structure, allowing relatively open winter views but more glimpsed views in summer.



Hatchery

There would be little change to the massing and extent of built form in this view. The Hub would just be glimpsed beyond the Farmhouse and the Office building would be glimpsed either side of Dairy House. The prominent oast house would be demolished. Car parking would be largely set below the hedge line and screened. Gaps in the hedge along the access road are proposed to be replanted in winter 2020/21.

**Viewpoint 9:**

Near view from Footpath SR19 to the south of the farmyard. Parked vehicles associated with the livery stables, the horse manege to the left of the image, temporary fencing associated with horse grazing and the cluster of unremarkable barn structures at the centre are the most prominent features in this view and detract from overall character. The route of the footpath draws the eye toward the Farmhouse and longer views north up the valley. The poplars and adjacent woodland mark the course of the river and are a prominent landscape feature in this view, with the western valley slopes visible beyond. The hedgerow lining the western side of the footpath offers open views of the farmyard in the winter view, but in summer vegetation allows only glimpses of a barn roof and the Farmhouse.

**Hatchery**

The Site Hub Building would be located closer to the viewer than the existing buildings and would be prominent in this view, in particular in winter. The Office building would also be visible beyond the Site Hub. The scale of built form would increase in this view, and would change the character with the introduction of the more contemporary style buildings, although the use of traditional and recessive materials on the southern elevations will aid the setting of the proposed buildings into the landscape. The landscape setting to Hatchery would, however, greatly enhance the existing setting with the removal of the livery parking, containers and the maneges.

**Viewpoint 10:**

Near view from Footpath SR19, approximately 400m south of the Farm. At this distance, the experience for users of the footpath is very different from that in viewpoint 9 (immediately south of the farmyard). Much of the existing built form on the Farm is screened by vegetation. Visible elements include the livery vehicles, manege and Dutch Barn, but these form a small part of the view. Summer vegetation offers additional screening, allowing only glimpses of a manege and stable block through a gap in the trees. This is a dramatic far reaching view along the valley of arable fields and hedges and downland in the distance, with no evidence of built form other than the Farm. The topography of the valley is evident. The straight line of the footpath, as in viewpoint 9, draws the eye towards long views northward.

**Hatchery**

The scale of built form would increase slightly in this view with the introduction of the Office building, on the western edge of the existing farmyard. The Site Hub would be set against the retained Maker Space building and from this distance would be largely indistinguishable. The existing tree belt would continue to filter these views to the buildings, such that there would be very little change to the character of this view.

**Viewpoint 11:**

Middle distance view from Footpath SR19, approximately 600m south of Farm. A far reaching view illustrating the scale and topography of the valley, with a distant tree lined horizon visible above the woodland canopy in the valley floor. This is an overwhelmingly rural/agricultural, tranquil view extending westward across the water meadows, partially visible through hedgerows and tree cover, towards the line of the river, marked by a line of riparian trees. From this distance, the Farm forms a very small part of the view and has little impact on overall character, but lively vehicles, a white striped barn end, barn roofs and the Farmhouse can just be discerned in the winter view. In summer the Farm is barely discernible.

**Hatchery**

This view is similar in character but more distant than Viewpoint 10. Any change to the built form on the Farm would be barely discernible at this distance. The Office Building would probably be glimpsed through the tree cover in winter, but would be screened in summer.



Viewpoint 12:

Glimpsed near view through vegetation from Darent Valley Path, approximately 400m south west of Farm. Edge of site ownership. Gaps in riparian vegetation allow partial views across the Darent into the water meadows. Farm buildings are largely screened, but the parked vehicles associated with the livery stables are visible and are a detractor from the otherwise rural character of the view. Summer vegetation screens views of the Farm.

Hatchery

This location is not on the PRoW. The livery parking and storage containers would be removed and the Hub building would be glimpsed through the vegetation in winter months.

**Viewpoint 13:**

Near view from the Darent Valley Path approximately 400m west of the Farm. The arable field in the foreground and the wooded slopes of Preston Hill in the distance create a largely tranquil rural/agricultural view, typical of the valley. The line of trees in the middle distance contains a number of semi mature trees which are an important landscape feature and mark the course of the river. Grazing fields forming the south eastern part of the Farm landholding are visible beyond the river, but the wet meadows adjacent to the river are screened by bankside vegetation. The Dutch Barn is a prominent element of built form through a gap in the bankside vegetation. The upper part of the Farmhouse is visible to the rear of the Dutch Barn. Existing barn structures located between the Farmhouse and the Dutch barn are not visible except for the glimpsed ridgeline. Other buildings to the north, including Dairy House and the oast house, are screened by trees. Livery vehicles are partially visible through the riverside tree canopy. There are glimpses of scattered residential development further south along the valley slope, but this is barely discernible. In summer, the Farm is screened except for a gap in riverside vegetation which allows views of a section of the Dutch barn and Farmhouse to the rear.

Hatchery

The principal change in this view would be the replacement of the view of the Dutch Barn with the Office building. The roofscape to the Office building might also be glimpsed through the trees in winter. The glass central space to the Office building would be visible through this break in the trees, introducing a contemporary and potentially more reflective element to this view.

**Viewpoint 14:**

Near view from Thames Water access track (not a PRoW), approximately 200m west of Farm buildings. A view across wet meadows and the river towards the Farm and Preston Hill beyond. The river is not obvious but follows a course broadly parallel with the fencing in the middle distance and the bankside trees to the right of the image. The Dutch Barn, a second barn and parked livery vehicles are prominent features which contribute little to the character of the view. To the left, the eastern elevation of Dairy House and the oast house are partially visible. Parked vehicles and the yard used by Down to Earth suggest commercial use and detract from views along the track towards the Farm. Summer vegetation partially screens and softens the visible built form but the larger Farm buildings remain clearly visible.

**Hatchery**

This is not a publicly accessible viewpoint. The massing and scale of built form would be largely unchanged in this view. The main change would be the removal of the Dutch Barn and construction of the Office building which would be central in this view. As in Viewpoint 13 the main change would be introduction of built form of a more contemporary style, replacing the functional agricultural buildings.

Viewpoint 15:

Near view from A225 immediately east of the Farm. The character of this far reaching view, transient and experienced predominantly by motorists, is largely rural, with distant views across a farmed landscape towards the wet meadows of Preston Farm, the course of the river and the western slopes of the valley as it stretches northward. The view is interrupted by the railway line and associated fencing and infrastructure, which crosses the land from north to south, all of which detract from the overall character of the view. The Farm buildings sit on lower ground and are largely hidden within the landscape by topography and vegetation, even in this winter view, although views of the barn roofs remain and there are glimpses of the parked livery vehicles. The Farmhouse is screened behind railside trees in the middle distance. Dairy House is partially glimpsed to the right of these. In summer the roadside vegetation in the foreground screens views of the Farm.

**Hatchery**

This is a transient view from the A225 and therefore of low sensitivity. There would be very little change to the extent of built form glimpsed in the winter view. The overall character and quality of this transient, glimpsed view would be unchanged.

Viewpoint 16:

Near view from lower slopes of Preston Hill (land currently not open to public access), approximately 300m east of the Farm buildings. A far reaching view of the western valley slopes stretching northward. The line of trees in the middle distance marks the course of the A225. These filter views of the railway line and into the Farm, but the form and layout of the valley bottom, including the course of the river and Farm landholding are discernible. Grazing pasture and the extent of built form on the Farm landholding are discernible. The Dutch Barn and roofs of adjacent barns are visible through a gap in the tree canopy. The oast house and Dairy House are also visible. Summer vegetation would screen all but glimpses of the Farm.

Hatchery

This Viewpoint is currently not accessible to the public. Similar in character and extent to Viewpoint 15. There would be little change to the extent of built form glimpsed in the winter view. The main visible change would be the removal of the Dutch Barn and construction of the Office building, but this would not affect the scale and extent of built form visible. The overall character and quality of this glimpsed view would be unchanged.





Viewpoint 17:

Middle distance view from Footpath SR22 on lower slopes of Preston Hill north of Dunstall Priory, approximately 700m south of the Farm buildings. A far reaching view across the northward sweep of the valley. The character of this view is highly rural, including farmland, woodland and hedgerows extending to a tree-lined horizon. There are glimpses of scattered residential development on the western valley slopes which suggest a sparsely populated rural area. Intervening vegetation in the middle distance, even in this winter view, screens all views to Preston Farm.

Hatchery

Hatchery would remain screened in this view.

**Viewpoint 18:**

Long distance view north from the slopes below Shoreham Cross (public footpath SR747), 1km south west of the Farm. The view extends down the western side of the valley, across Shoreham to the eastern valley slopes and Preston Hill. This is a dramatic and beautiful rural view; a defining feature of the Kent Downs AONB. Preston Farm is seen partially visible to the north of Shoreham as a relatively isolated farm removed from the main settlement. Views to the Farm are filtered by existing trees along the southern boundary. At this distance, the Farm occupies a small part of the view, but it is an important element at the heart of this rural view. The built form is discernible as a single mass of buildings. Livery parking, containers and maneges are visible in winter and detract from the view.

Hatchery

Hatchery would enable the removal of the detracting elements of the livery parking, containers and maneges. Built form would extend slightly further south and west, but this would barely be evident at this distance and would only extend to the area of livery parking. The more contemporary style to the buildings would again barely be evident at this distance and the existing tree cover and proposed tree planting would break up the more visible elements in the proposed buildings such as the larger area of glass.



**Viewpoint 19:**

Long distance view north to the Farm from Shoreham Cross (footpath SR747), approximately 1km south west of the Farm. Similar to viewpoint 18 in character and content, but in this view both the Farm and the village are seen from a slightly higher vantage point overlooking Shoreham Cross. As in viewpoint 18, the linear form of the village is evident, and the eye is drawn northward toward the Farm. Individual elements of the built form within the Farm, and the arrangement of surrounding fields and wet meadows are more discernible in both the winter and summer views. The managed hedgerow adjacent to this viewpoint allows open winter views of the landscape, but in summer riverside vegetation largely screens the farmyard. This is a view of similar high sensitivity to Viewpoint 18.

**Hatchery**

As in Viewpoint 18, Hatchery would enable the removal of the detracting elements of the livery parking, containers and maneges. The built form would extend slightly further south and west, but as in Viewpoint 18, this would barely be evident at this distance and would only extend to the area of livery parking. The more contemporary style to the buildings would again barely be evident at this distance and the existing tree cover and proposed tree planting would break up the more visible elements in the proposed buildings such as the larger area of glass.

**Viewpoint 20:**

Long distance view from Footpath SR20 to the north of Shoreham Cross, just before path drops into woodland (approximately 1km south west of the Farm). Similar to viewpoints 18 and 19 in character and content. However, in this view, the separation between the Farm and the main settlement is more evident. As in the other viewpoints, the built form, landscape elements and overall arrangement of the Farm landholding are fairly easy to discern. Seen as a relatively isolated farmstead removed from the main settlement, the Farm in this view has perhaps a greater influence on the overall character of the view. The course of the river and the extent of the wet meadows east of the river, both within the Farm landholding and on neighbouring land, are clearly discernible.

Hatchery

The change to the layout of the built form at Hatchery will be more evident in this view, as more of the farmyard and existing buildings are visible in both the summer and winter views. The contemporary style to the buildings and the overall layout would be just discernible in this view, but as in Viewpoints 18 and 19 the existing tree cover and proposed tree planting would break up the more visible elements in the proposed buildings such as the larger area of glass.





Viewpoint 21:

Long distance view towards the Farm from Footpath SR20 as it descends northward from Shoreham Cross (approximately 1km south west of the Farm). As the path descends, tree belts screen views northwards up the valley. In the winter view the presence of the Farm buildings is visible, but individual elements of built form are barely discernible. A section of the wet river meadow is also visible. The south eastern part of the landholding and southern boundary tree belt are visible above the tree canopy as it descends into the valley. In summer, views of the built form on the Farm and wet meadow are likely to be entirely screened by the tree belt in the foreground. The Farm is screened in the summer view.

Hatchery

It is not anticipated that the proposed changes to the built form and layout would be visible in this view.





Viewpoint 22:

Long distance glimpsed view of the Farm from Footpath SR746 on the lower slopes above Shoreham Village, approximately 1km south west of the Farm. The existing residential development in the foreground and rural valley backdrop suggest a sparsely populated rural area. Most of Preston Farm is hidden behind woodland associated with the course of the river in the central part of the image. A horse manege and livery vehicles towards the south of the Farm site are partially visible through the winter tree canopy above the roof of the house in the foreground. However, these are barely discernible and have no real influence on the overall character of the view. In summer the Farm is screened entirely.

Hatchery

It is not anticipated that the proposed changes to the built form and layout would be visible in this view.

**Viewpoint 23:**

View east from Castle Farm Road at the entrance to the pumping station. Although there are far reaching views towards Preston Hill, this view is dominated by the intrusive security fencing and concrete road. The Dutch Barn is glimpsed above the entrance gates but has very little influence on the character of the view. The gates and security fencing detract significantly from the character and quality of this view.

Hatchery

The main change to this view would be the removal of the Dutch Barn and the construction of the Office building which would be glimpsed in this view. However the change to the character and quality of this view would be marginal due to the substantial detracting elements of the gates and fence.



Viewpoint 24:

View east from Castle Farm Road. An extensive, far reaching rural view across the valley base towards Preston Hill. Riverside trees effectively screen the farm in this summer view. Only the railside paddocks are partially visible above the tree canopy. The view demonstrates the importance of the riparian trees and vegetation along the Darent in screening the lower valley slopes.

Hatchery

It is not anticipated that the proposed changes to the built form and layout would be visible in this view, even in winter.

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