

Greatham Barns, Greatham Manor Farm, Nr Pulborough RH20 2ES

A LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

January 2021

(February 2018 report is still current)



RMA
Heritage

Greatham Barns, Greatham Manor Farm, Nr. Pulborough, RH20 2ES

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Convert redundant Granary barn and outbuildings buildings to one dwelling

February 2018

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(BAHons, DipLA, MAUD, CMLI)



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INTRODUCTION

- 1.0 RMA Heritage have been commissioned by Stad Developments Ltd. to prepare a Landscape Character and Visual Assessment for Greatham Manor Farm, Nr. Pulborough, West Sussex. The site survey was undertaken , by Melissa Newton (BAHons, DipLA, MAUD, CMLI).
- 1.1 The objective of the assessment is to provide detailed information on the character, nature and visual form of the site and its near surroundings. The report comprises a summary of the physical and visual constraints surrounding the proposed site and the statutory designations and policies that are applicable and seeks to appraise the impact of the proposals on the local and wider landscape context.
- 1.2 The proposals involve the removal of the modern structures and the conversion of the main barn and its ancillary buildings into one dwelling, with a new link.
- 1.3 This report concludes that the site is not intrusive or particularly visible within the wider landscape, and that any proposals for the site should include landscape treatment which conforms with the recommendations set out in English Heritage Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings – A Guide to Good Practice’, requires a light touch and an understanding of what features characterise the setting and their relationship to the landscape to ensure that any new build can to be successfully and respectfully assimilated into the landscape, with the use of indigenous trees and hedging to define residential cartilage; avoiding domestication of garden areas; and reinforcing the local landscape character and enhancing the Conservation Area.
- 1.4 The report is intended for information and discussion. It is neither definite nor exhaustive, but sets out the context for discussion through the analysis of existing conditions and constraints, in order to inform the design process.

LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.0 Location

Grid Reference: TQ 043 016

The site is located in West Sussex, within the south west corner of the district of Horsham. It lies just over two kilometres to the south of the village of Pulborough. Greatham is a hamlet including Greatham church, Manor House and Farm and a few cottages, along Brook Lane to the east of Coldwaltham. The hamlet is situated in close proximity to the River Arun.

Desk top studies:

South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (Updated 2011)

Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment (2003)

Landform

The site is situated on low lying land on the southern edge of the River Arun floodplain, as the very base of the valley slope, between the 5m and 10m contour lines. Directly to the north lies the river, beyond which are the floodplain grazing marshes and the slope of the valley side rising very gently to 10m before falling again to further meanders and the wider river valley just to the south of Pulborough where the valley sides rise more steeply to a prominent ridge.

Similarly to the south the valley slope continues to rise to a high point of 26m, before the land falls to the river valley and the floodplain of Amberley Wild Brooks, beyond which the skyline is marked by the ridge of Amberley Mount and the South Downs.

To the East the land form rises to about 35m but is dominated by tree cover. To the West the river flows south through a narrower well tree'd valley where the river is less obvious within the landscape.

Vegetation

There is very little tree cover on the site, none worthy of retention. There is a belt of mature trees (cedar, beech, lime) along the boundary between the farmyard and Greatham Manor (refer Photograph 10 in Appendix B), which effectively screen any inter-visibility between the two in summer, (n.b. in winter there may be some inter-visibility), provides a well tree'd backdrop to views from the west and screens the site from views to the east. There are also a number of visually important parkland trees within and surrounding the Manor House.

Along Brook Lane there is a substantial indigenous (mainly hawthorn and elder) hedge which screens the sight from the Lane, allowing views to the site only at the entrance to the access road. The western side of the grazing field; within which the site sits; is bounded by a native copse (oak, ash, beech, horse chestnut) which visually encloses the site and screens views to the west.

The landscape to the north, towards Pulborough, is characterised by the wide open, largely grazed, river valley and gentle tree'd slopes. In contrast the landscape to the south and east is dominated by woodland and more steeply rising slopes up to the South Downs. Visually significant vegetation is shown on drawing No. RMA.022.02.

Character and Quality

Agricultural Land classification 3. The character of the areas is described in Landscape Character Assessments which relate to the area:

National Landscape Character Areas

The site lies within 'Wealden Green Sand'. The Wealden Greensand in Hampshire and West Sussex comprises areas of high ground supporting a mosaic of open heath, beech/ash or oak/hazel/ash wooded hangers – or pine forest in Sussex – and rough grazing. There are broad river valley plains which support arable farming on light soils with large geometric fields.

South Downs National Park Landscape Character Assessment

The site lies within the Landscape Character Area F4: ARUN AND LOWER ROTHER FLOODPLAINS, which are described as being "located on the flat valley floors of the Arun and its tributary - the lower

Rother. The floodplain extends from the National Park boundary at Pallingham Manor in the north to Arundel in the south. The eastern and western boundaries of the floodplain are clearly defined by the break of slope between the flat floodplain and surrounding land - these boundaries also coincide with the extent of underlying river alluvium.”

Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment

The site lies within the Amberley and Pulborough Brooks Landscape Character Area. The Key Characteristics are described as:

- Middle reaches of the River Arun with broad alluvial floodplain
- Pastoral landscape with cattle grazing
- Small rectilinear and irregular pasture fields subject to seasonal flooding, divided by reedy drainage ditches
- Few trees or hedges
- Widely dispersed patches of floodplain woodland.
- Sweeping river meanders.
- Gentle valley sides of mixed farmland. Distinctive curving strips of woodland adjacent to the valley sides.
- Scattered manor houses, farmsteads and linear villages with a varied mix of building materials of tile, brick, flint, half timber and sandstone.
- Distinctive stone bridges.
- Local landmark of Amberley Castle.
- Mostly tranquil unspoilt rural character.

Key Issues relating to the site area

- Potential loss of species rich grassland through intensive grassland management
- Potential loss of wet woodland and other wetland features as a result of drainage schemes for agriculture
- Potential introduction of new flood defence structures
- Loss of valley side hedgerows
- Locally visually intrusive farm buildings

Landscape Condition

Overall condition is considered to be good with only very limited erosion of visual, ecological and historic character.

Sensitivity to Change

Overall sensitivity to change is high, reflecting the openness and many intrinsic landscape qualities of the area. Key sensitivities are to:

- Any built development in the floodplain
- Any large scale, high density built development on valley sides
- Infrastructure developments which would be visually prominent on the valley sides, or affect the integrity of the floodplain.
- Unsympathetic flood defences

LANDSCAPE PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

3.0 South Downs National Park

Planning and Land Management Guidelines relating to the site:

- Conserve the remote, tranquil undeveloped character of the area

- Ensure any small scale development on valley sides is sited and designed to respond to the historic settlement pattern of small isolated farmsteads and small linear villages as well as their scale/form, design and materials. It should also not result in the loss of key landscape features such as valley side woodlands.
- Conserve historic farm and manor buildings and stone bridges
- Conserve existing small scale patterns of pastures
- Encourage traditional management of flood meadows and ditches
- Conserve and manage ditches to maximise floristic diversity
- Conserve and manage wet woodlands and valley side woodlands

Greatham Conservation Area

The hamlet of Greatham has been designated a Conservation Area by Horsham District Council. The boundary is shown on Drawing No. RMA.022.02 and includes the Manor and its grounds, the Church, the farmyard, Manor Farm and Manor Lodge. The Conservation status provides protection for the trees within it; however there are few trees of any stature within the site boundary. The only tree to note is an Ash tree to the north of the Parlour House (just visible in Photograph 8), which has obvious signs of dieback and would not be worthy of retention. The Greatham Barns proposals should take into account inter-visibility between the site and the surrounding properties, which form the Conservation Area, and respond with sensitive design and appropriate landscape proposals.

Listed buildings

Greatham Manor is a Grade 2 Listed C17 or earlier house refaced in C18 with Roman cement, with a Horsham slab roof. Greatham Church is a Grade 1 listed C12-13 flint church with a small slate hung spirelet, and the main barn at Greatham Farm, due to be converted as part of the proposals is Grade 2 Listed.

Public Rights of Way

Public rights of way are typically located along the top of the artificial flood banks that border the river and streams and these provide good access up and down the valley. Footpaths local to the site are marked on drawing No. RMA.022.01. Views to the site from local footpaths have been assessed and described below in the analysis.

Historic Parks and Gardens

Parham Park, shown on drawing no. RMA.022.01, is listed on English Heritage register of Historic Parks and Gardens as Grade 2*. It is described as an C18 pleasure ground and walled garden, with additional mid C19 features, which was further developed in the C20 by the Hon Clive Pearson with the architect Victor Heal, set in a park established in the mid C17 but largely planted in the C18 and early C19. The site is not visible from the Park due to dense tree cover.

Ecological Constraints

There are no ecological constraints relating directly to the site, however some important ecological sites are within relatively close proximity and form an important part of the setting of the site.

The floodplains of major rivers and their associated alluvial soils support a rich and varied range of wetland habitats including riverine habitat, permanent pasture, water meadows, ditch systems and wet woodland. The river channels themselves also often support fringing willow and alders. Of particular note, are the extensive areas of the floodplain grazing marsh, which together with the ecologically rich ditch systems are of international value.

Pulborough Brooks SSSI

Pulborough Brooks SSSI to the north east of the site (refer drawing no. RMA.022.01) is an important site and is part of the Arun Valley RAMSAR and is also a 'Special Protection Area' and 'Special Area of Conservation'.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This site consists of a series of wet meadows on the floodplain of the River Arun between Pulborough and Greatham. The fields, which are subject to winter, and occasional summer flooding, are dissected by a network of wet ditches, several of which support a rich aquatic flora and invertebrate fauna. The area is of outstanding ornithological importance notably for wintering wildfowl and breeding waders, (including Bewicks swan and ruff, as well as large numbers of teal, shoveler, wigeon, pintail, lapwing and mute swan).

Pulborough Brooks has been managed for centuries as flood meadows which are cattle grazed and cut for hay during the summer. In recent years, drainage improvements and intensification of agricultural use have reduced the wildlife value of much of the Arun valley, but at Pulborough Brooks these trends are being reversed since much of the site is managed as a nature reserve.

The floodplain grasslands and marshes also support a number of notable plant species, for example cut grass *Leersia oryzoides*, a plant that is restricted to ten UK locations, and the nationally vulnerable true fox sedge *Carex vulpina*. The ditches also support an important aquatic flora and are rich in invertebrate species.

Purham Park SSSI

Purham Park lies to the south east of the site within a large wooded area which contributes to the diverse setting of the site.

Description and reasons for Notification:

Parham Park is a medieval deer park situated on Folkestone Sands at the foot of the South Downs. It has one of the richest epiphytic lichen floras in south east England. In the north east there is a relict lowland raised bog with adjacent alder carr. The site also contains a number of artificial ponds and ditches with marginal plant communities which add to its interest. This site is a locality for two rare beetles, and contains one of the largest heronries in Sussex.

Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat – Coastal floodplain Grazing Marsh

The fields on the other side of the river directly to the north of the site have been identified in the BAP as a priority habitat. Grazing Marsh is

found around estuaries and along floodplains of rivers. It is defined as periodically inundated pasture or meadow, with ditches which maintain the water levels, and contain standing, brackish or fresh water. Almost all of these areas are grazed and some are cut for hay or silage. Sites may contain seasonal water-filled hollows and permanent ponds with emergent swamp communities, but not extensive areas of tall fen species like reeds, although they may abut with these types of habitats forming a wetland mosaic.

Although not protected they have a high nature conservation value and support a wide range of plant, bird and invertebrate species, many of which are rare and / or declining. The ditches of floodplain grasslands are also important to otters and water voles which use drainage channels close to suitable rivers and floodplain grasslands provide prey-rich feeding areas for bats, notably pipistrelles and noctules, especially when associated with other habitats such as woodland edges and open water.

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Generally river valley landscape in which the site lies is an expansive landscape, open and large scale, as a result of the flat landform, lack of vertical elements and far-reaching open views. Views are contained and channelled by the rising valley sides and wooded fringe of the floodplain. It is a simple and uniform landscape type as a result of the consistency in pasture land use.

The floodplain has a strong sense of tranquillity as a result of the low noise levels, pasture land use, infrequent crossing points, and absence of settlement or artificial lighting.

There are typically few roads across the floodplain although roads and car parks along the adjacent valley sides (A29 and the A283) provide access to the edges of the floodplain.

4.0 Views from public vantage points (refer photographs in Appendix B, Section A)

At first glance the site appears open and lacking in structure planting and more importantly open to views from the surrounding landscape and in particular to the north across the river valley floodplain. However due to the tree cover present at the floodplain margins and valley sides and the limited public access to this section of the river valley landscape, views to the site are limited.

The closest public view points are from Brook Road, from the access road to the site (Photograph 1/View Point B) and from Footpath 1 (Existing site conditions plan RMA.022.02) (Photograph 2/View Point A). The view from the access road, though only a glimpse if one were driving past, is the most open view and shows clearly the more intrusive modern barns and silo. The view from Footpath 1 shows how the roofs of the barns are visible above the hedgerow where there is a break in the tree line.

The main longer distance view is from Public Footpath 2, the Wey-south path near Coldwaltham (Dwg No. RMA.022.01). One or two glimpses (refer Photograph 3 and 4) towards the site are visible through the vegetation which lines the whole length of the footpath. These views are

set against the backdrop of woodland on rising valley slopes. In winter these views would become more open as the vegetation is deciduous. However, the distance is about 1.3km, the proposals involve the removal of the more prominent silo as well as the modern structures, the new stable building may be visible but as the photograph illustrates, though the red tile of the existing barn roofs are visible, the barns are nestled into the landscape with a tree'd backdrop and are not intrusive in nature.

The third notable view to the site is from Footpath 3 (Dwg no. RMA.022.01, Landscape Planning Constraints Plan), Photographs 5 and 6. The site is not visible from the top section of this footpath as it leaves Pulborough, due to the intervening landform and tree cover. It is only the lower section near View Point N from where the tops of the ornamental trees within the grounds of Greatham Manor are just visible amongst the well tree'd backdrop, however neither the site nor the buildings within it are visible, due to the screening provided by the tree cover.

As part of the visual analysis of the site it was noted that a large barn to the north of the site is particularly noticeable within the landscape due to its pale colour which jars with the natural hues of the landscape.

4.1 Visual appraisal of views within local landscape and surrounding properties (refer to photographs in Appendix B, Section B)

There are views of the site from Manor Farm and Greatham Manor Lodge, both of which are within the Conservation Area. The view is filtered by the presence of the vegetation around the perimeter of the paddock between these dwellings and the farm, including a row of pollarded limes which line the driveway. The view towards the Main Barn dwelling would appear much the same and the view towards the Parlour dwelling would be enhanced due to the removal of the modern structures. How the domestic garden area is delineated needs careful consideration in the landscape proposals.

Photograph 8 illustrates how there is inter-visibility between Manor Cottage and the northern elevations of the site. It would be fair to say that the removal of the modern farm building and the sensitive restoration of the existing barns to be retained, together with appropriate structure planting to define the proposed residential curtilage would provide the opportunity to improve the view from Manor Cottage.

The view from Dora Cottages, situated along Brook Lane (Photograph 9), is similar to the view from View Point A (Photograph 2), where the barn roof lines are visible through a gap in the belt of mature parkland trees which mark the boundary between the site and the Manor House. The proposals are unlikely to alter this view.

Photographs 10 and 11 illustrate how the landform and the trees to the south and west enclose the visual envelope from these directions and the landscape is in tact and unspoilt and free from signs of built development. The tree belt screens view of the site from the direction Greatham Bridge and Coldwaltham.

Photograph 12 shows the view north from the site showing the open, rural and undeveloped nature of the floodplain landscape, with the outskirts of Pulborough just visible on the rising valley slopes in the distance. Other than the view points previously highlighted public access within this riverine landscape is limited, however the landscape treatment of the proposed paddock needs to be respectful of its setting within the conservation area, enclosed for example by a simple wooden post and rail fence. Strategically placed indigenous structure planting in the north-west corner of the paddock would help integrate any new build into this view and the view from the Wey-south path.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

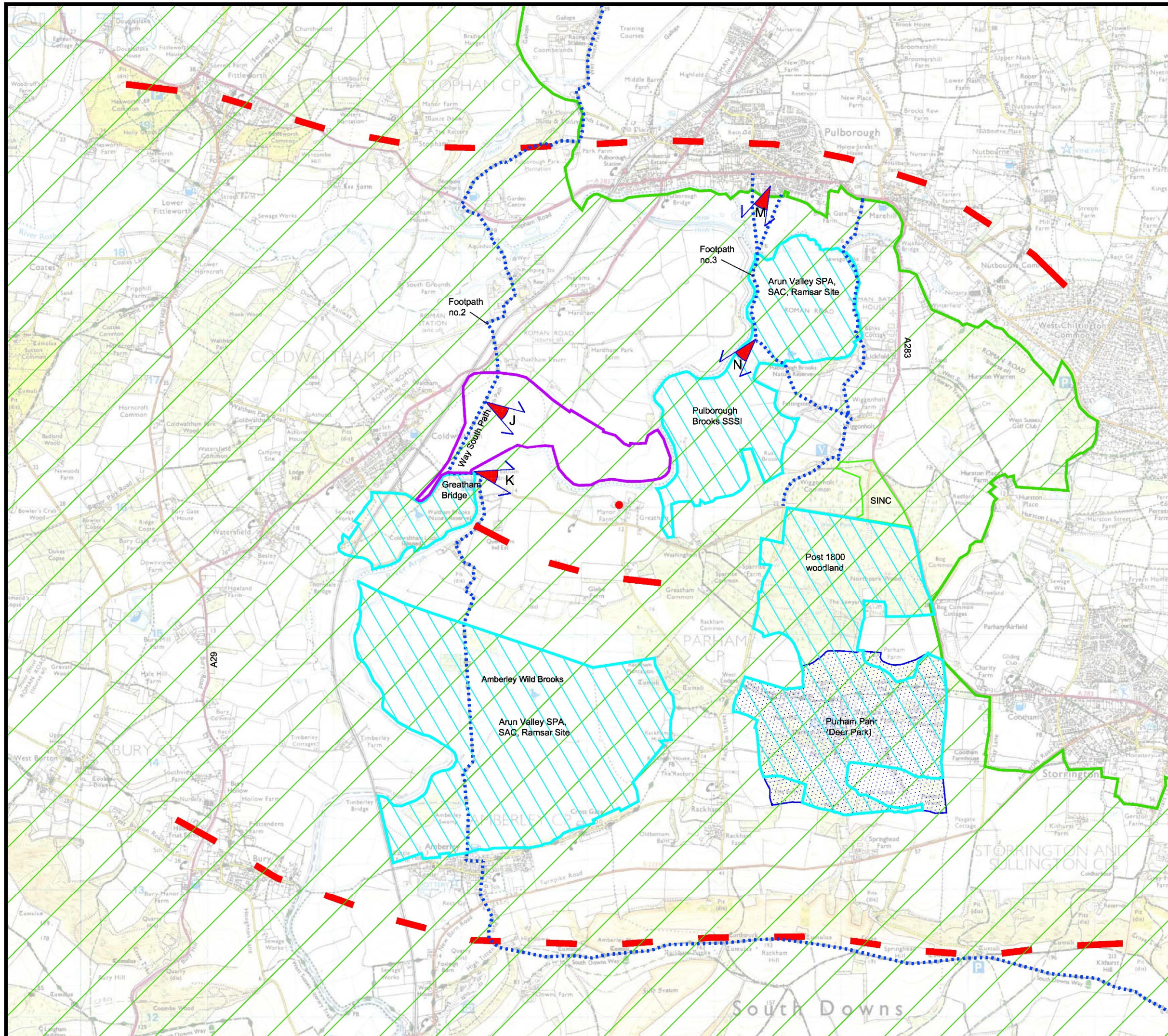
The site as it is is not intrusive or particularly visible within the wider landscape, the most intrusive elements being the modern structures which are to be removed.

Therefore as the new build elements of the proposals are remaining within the existing farm yard cartilage and range of height and form; respecting the rural and historic nature of the existing buildings; the proposals would not be intrusive within the landscape and should not require planting to screen it from long views. Notwithstanding that due to the glimpses of the site which are gained from the Wey-south path and the views from the surrounding properties as described above, any proposals for the site should include suitable structure planting to the north west corner of the site, to ensure that any new build can to be successfully and respectfully assimilated into the landscape, with the use of indigenous trees and hedging where appropriate to define residential curtilage, reinforcing the local landscape character and enhancing the Conservation Area.

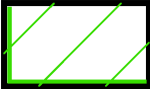







Landscape proposals should not be too 'fussy' or domestic in appearance, with grass extending up to the buildings where possible and materials for the driveways and courtyards remaining simple. Landscape proposals for the site should include landscape treatment which conforms with the recommendations set out in English Heritage Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings – A Guide to Good Practice', which states that "a sensitive conversion respects the ties the building has with its landscape setting and avoids imposing alien features. This often requires a light touch and an understanding of what features characterise the setting and their relationship to the landscape. Attention to detail is a key aspect and a consideration of public views of the farmstead is particularly important in areas of high landscape value."

Appendix A – Drawings:

- RMA.022.01 Landscape planning constraints and visual analysis
- RMA.022.02 Existing site conditions and Photograph Location points



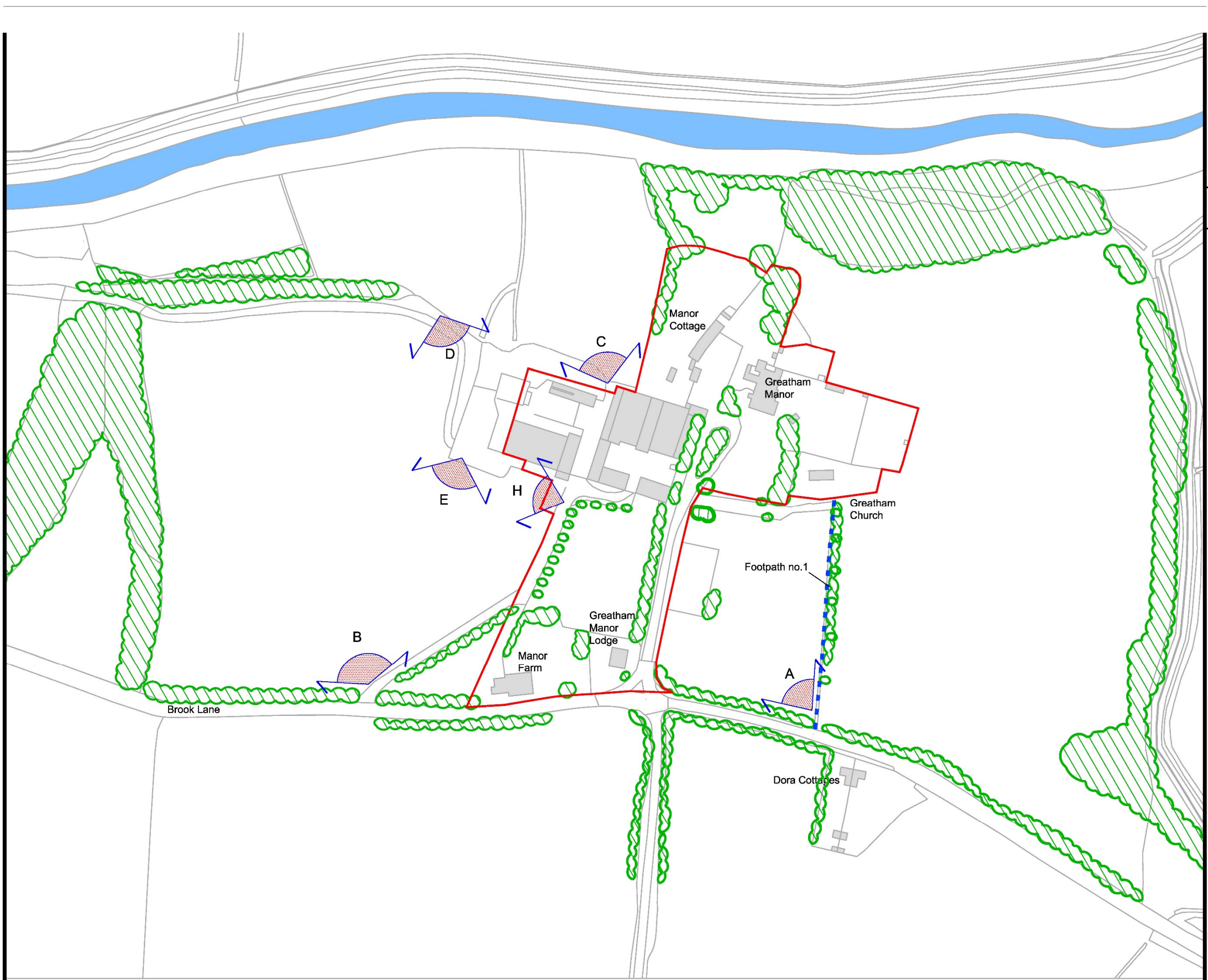
Legend



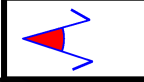

-  South Downs National Park
-  Historic Parks and Gardens
-  SINC
-  SSS
-  Statutory Rights of Way
-  Prominent Ridge Line
-  Photo Location Points
-  BAP Priority Habitat - coastal floodplain grazing marsh



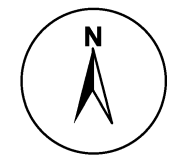
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Project: Gratham Barns
 Title: Landscape Planning Constraints & Visual Analysis
 Date: Aug. '12 Scale: 1,200 @A1 Original Paper Size: A1
 Drawn: MJNe wt on Job Ref: MNRMA/Gratham/022
 Figure Number: RMA.022.1 Rev: -
 Status: PLANNING



- Legend**
-  Conservation Area Boundary
 -  Existing significant vegetation
 -  Photo Location Points
 -  Statutory Rights of Way

B



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Project: Greatham Barns
 Title: Existing Site Conditions and Photo Location Points
 Date: Aug. '12 Scale: 1,200 @ A1 Original Paper Size: A1
 Drawn: MJN/ewt on Job Ref: MNRMA/Greatham/022
 Figure Number: RMA.022.2 Rev: -
 Status: PLANNING

Appendix B – Photographs:

RMA.022.03 Photograph Section A – Views from public vantage points

Views to the site from public vantage points



Photograph 1 - Greatham Barns from access road (View Point B)



Photograph 2 - View to Greatham Barns from View Point A along Footpath 1



Photograph 3 - View of site from Wey – South path (Footpath 2, View Point J). The site is just visible against the backdrop of woodland.



Photograph 4 - View from Wey – South path, zoomed in (Footpath 2, View Point J).



Photograph 5 - View south towards the site from footpath 3 at the edge of Pulborough – site screened from view by the intermediate vegetation.



Photograph 6 - Zoomed in view from footpath 3, View point N. The site lies behind the belt of mixed ornamental trees with the grounds of Greatham Manor.

RMA.022.04 Photograph Section B – Visual appraisal of views within local landscape and surrounding properties

Visual appraisal of views within local landscape and surrounding properties



Photograph 7 - View point E Site visible from Manor Farm House



Photograph 8 - View point D showing view from north west corner of site to Manor Cottage



Photograph 9 - View from Dora cottages similar to View point A (see photographs sheet 1)



Photograph 10 - View Point H – showing how the landform and trees to the south and west enclose the visual envelope



Photograph 11 - View West from View Point H showing vegetation screening views of the site from the West and the direction of Greatham Bridge.



Photograph 12 (View point C) - View north from the site showing open, rural and undeveloped nature of the landscape, with the outskirts of Pulborough just visible on the ridge in the distance.