



The Thomas Family & Bloor Homes Ltd
Land at Newlands Farm, Old Wokingham Road, Wokingham

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

December 2023

FPCR Environment and Design Ltd

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been carried out for the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) development at Land at Newlands Farm, Old Wokingham Road by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd (FPCR). The purpose of this LVA is to provide an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposals detailed in the planning application (10930-FPCR-ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-0001, SANG Framework and 10930-FPCR-ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-0005 - SANG General Arrangement).
- 1.2 FPCR is a multi-disciplinary environmental and design consultancy established over 60 years, with expertise in architecture, landscape, ecology, arboriculture, urban design, masterplanning and environmental impact assessment. The practice is a member of the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and is frequently called upon to provide expert evidence on landscape and visual issues at Public and Local Plan Inquiries.

Site Location

- 1.3 Figures 1 and 2 show the location and context of the Site. The Site is approximately 16.37 hectares (ha) in total and located between Bracknell and Wokingham in Berkshire. The Site is surrounded by a mixture of pine woods, grazing pasture, golf courses and fruit farms. The Site encompasses a number of grazing pasture field parcels and areas of woodland.

Proposed Development

- 1.4 The proposed development is for a SANG, located in the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). The SANG will provide a circular walking route of 2.3km along with secondary routes across the Site. The Green Infrastructure (GI) of the SANG will comprise of existing woodland, wet woodland, trees & vegetation across the Site along with proposed areas of flowering grassland, trees, scrub, proposed deciduous woodland, wet woodland and wetlands. Site access and a car park with interpretation boards and signage will be provided off Old Wokingham Road.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 This LVA has been prepared based upon the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, in 2013. The assessment of Landscape Value also takes account of guidance in Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02-21 “Assessing landscape value outside national designations”.

2.2 In summary, the GLVIA3 states:

“Landscape and Visual impact assessment (LVIA), is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity.” (GLVIA3 paragraph 1.1.)

2.3 There are two components of LVIA:

- *“Assessment of landscape effects; assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;*
- *Assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 2.21.)

2.4 The GLVIA3 states:

“LVIA can be carried out either as part of a broader EIA, or as a standalone ‘appraisal’ of the likely landscape and visual effects of a proposed development...”

- *As a standalone ‘appraisal’ the process is informal and there is more flexibility, but the essence of the approach – specifying the nature of the proposed change or development; describing the existing landscape and the views and visual amenity of the area that may be affected; predicting the effects, although not their likely significance; and considering how those effects might be mitigated – still applies”.* (GLVIA paragraph 3.2)

2.5 The components of this report include: baseline studies; description and details of the landscape proposals and mitigation measures to be adopted as part of the scheme; and identification and description of likely effects arising from the proposed development.

2.6 In terms of baseline studies, the assessment provides an understanding of the landscape that may be affected, its constituent elements, character, condition and value. For the visual baseline, this includes an understanding of the area in which the development may be visible, the people who may experience views, and the nature of views.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

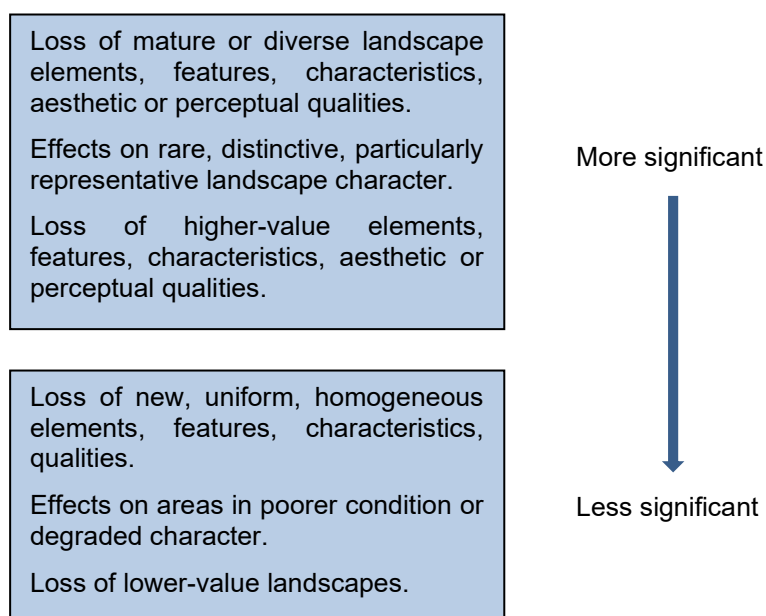
2.7 GLVIA3 states that *“An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 5.1).

2.8 The baseline landscape is described by reference to existing published Landscape Character Assessments and by a description of the site and its context.

2.9 A range of landscape effects can arise through development. These can include:

- Change or loss of elements, features, aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;

- Addition of new elements that influence character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
 - Combined effects of these changes.
- 2.10 The characteristics of the existing landscape resource are considered in respect of the susceptibility of the landscape resource to the change arising from this development. The value of the existing landscape is also considered.
- 2.11 Each effect on landscape receptors is assessed in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. In terms of size or scale of change, the judgement takes account of the extent of the existing landscape elements that will be lost or changed, and the degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects or key characteristics of the landscape will be altered by removal or addition of new elements. Geographical extent is considered by reference to the extent of the area over which there will be a change. Duration is considered for the landscape effects, with short term effects being defined as those lasting less than 5 years, medium term effects lasting between 5 and 10 years and long-term effects being defined as anything over 10 years in duration.
- 2.12 The level of effect is determined by considering the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of effect on the landscape. Final conclusions on the overall landscape effects are drawn from the assessment components described. This appraisal describes the nature of the landscape effects, and whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 1) and longer term (year 15).
- 2.13 GLVIA3 sets out some guidance on the underlying principles, which are used in this appraisal. This includes Figure 5.10, Scale of significance. Whilst this scheme is not EIA development, and judgements on significance are not therefore required, the Figure does provide useful guidance on reaching an overall judgement on the level of effects. This is repeated below (note this includes the correction of a typo, from the published document).



- 2.14 The criteria used in the appraisal are set out in Appendix A.

Assessment of Visual Effects

- 2.15 An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. This appraisal describes the nature of the visual effects and, whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 1 Winter) and longer term (year 15 Summer).
- 2.16 The first stage in the assessment is to identify approximate visibility/ visibility mapping. This is done by either a computerised Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)¹, or by manual methods using map study and field evaluation. A series of viewpoints are included within the assessment that are representative of views towards the site from surrounding visual receptors. Other views of the site are included where it supports the description and understanding of the site's landscape and visual characteristics.
- 2.17 The views also typically represent what can be seen from a variety of distances from the development and different viewing experiences.
- 2.18 It is important to remember that visual receptors are all people. For each affected viewpoint, the assessment considers both the susceptibility to change in views and the value attached to views.
- “The visual receptors most susceptible to change are generally likely to include:*
- *Residents at home;*
 - *People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views;*
 - *Visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;*
 - *Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area;*
- Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes tend to fall into an intermediate category of moderate susceptibility to change. Where travel involves recognised scenic routes awareness of views is likely to be particularly high.” (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.33.)*
- “Visual receptors likely to be less sensitive to change include:*
- *People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape;*
 - *People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life (although there may on occasion be cases where views are an important contributor to the setting and to the quality of working life).” (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.34.)*
- 2.19 Each of the visual effects is evaluated in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration or reversibility.
- 2.20 In terms of size or scale, the magnitude of visual effects takes account of:

¹ Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV): A map usually digitally produced, showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible. [GLVIA3]

- “The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development;
- The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line height, colour and texture;
- The nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses” (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.39).

2.21 The geographical extent of the visual effect in each viewpoint is likely to reflect:

- The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
- The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development;
- The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.

2.22 As with landscape effects, the duration of the effect could be short to long term or permanent and the same definitions apply.

2.23 GLVIA3 states that there are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and context and with the type of proposal, but the following points should be noted;

- *Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant*
- *Effects on people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant*
- *Large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features already present within the view.* (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.44)

2.24 The criteria used in this appraisal are set out in Appendix A.

Overall Landscape and Visual Effects

2.25 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects. This overall judgement is formed from a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the assessment criteria.

2.26 GLVIA3 notes, at paragraphs 5.56 and 6.44, that there are no hard and fast rules with regard to the level of effects, therefore the following terms have been used for this appraisal:

- **Major**
- **Moderate**
- **Minor**
- **Negligible**

- 2.27 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as, for example, Major/ Moderate or Moderate/ Minor. This indicates that the effect is assessed to lie between the respective definitions or to encompass aspects of both.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2023)

- 3.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policy and in combination these policies give the Government's vision of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need for well-designed places, promoting healthy and safe communities and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 3.2 Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for the countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives include protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
- 3.3 Paragraph 180 states at part a) that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes and goes on to clarify that this should be in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan. Part b) states that planning policies and decisions should recognise *"the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside"*.
- 3.4 Paragraph 181 advises that:
"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries".
- 3.5 Paragraph 182 goes on to add:
"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues". And
"The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas."
- 3.6 The Site is within an undesignated landscape with no special protected status and is not in the setting of a nationally designated landscape, however the Site is located within the Thames Basin Heaths SPA which is related to protected areas of land classified for the Conservation of Wild Birds. The character of the Site and its immediate context is assessed within this report to help inform decisions regarding *"the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside"*. The potential to enhance green infrastructure networks is also considered.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 3.7 The PPG was first published on 6th March 2014 and is a regularly updated online planning resource which provides guidance on the NPPF and the planning system. The NPPF continues to be the primary document for decision making.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.8 The proposed SANG lies within Wokingham Borough Council. This policy summary will therefore focus on Wokingham's planning policies. However, the eastern edge of the Site lies on the boundary with Bracknell Forest Borough and some policies from the emerging and adopted Bracknell Forest may be of relevance and will be summarised at the end of this section.

Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan Update (2020, Ongoing)

- 3.9 The Local Plan Update (LPU) is currently being prepared. A full draft Local Plan was prepared in 2020, however subsequent changes in legislation redetermined emergency planning arrangements around AWE Burghfield, which resulted in the strategy proposed by the Draft Local Plan (2020) no longer being achievable. The Local Plan Update will supersede the Core Strategy and the Managing Development Delivery Plans. Progress is documented in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2021-2024, and an update to the current LDS will be published in due course.

Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted January 2010)

- 3.10 The Core Strategy sets out the vision for how the borough will develop in the period to 2026. This Core Strategy includes a number of high-level policies applying to the whole borough as well as a number of policies relating to specific strategic proposals.
- 3.11 The following 'saved' policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development:

Policy CP1 – Sustainable Development

- 3.12 The key landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that:

- *Maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment;*
- *Provide attractive, functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable schemes;*

General development considerations:

'As is recognised in both the Community Strategy and the Spatial Objectives, the community values the high quality of the environment within the borough. It is therefore important that any proposals for development do not harm this...

Proposals that enhance the quality of the environment of the borough could include those that improve the openness of the areas outside of development limits...'

Policy CP3 – General Principles for development:

- 3.13 The key landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Planning permission will be granted for proposals that:

- *Are of an appropriate scale of mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life;*
- *Provide a functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable scheme;*
- *Have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape (including river valleys) or geological features or water courses.*

- *Contribute to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings (especially existing buildings) including the use of appropriate landscaping;*
- *Do not lead to a loss of community or recreational facilities/land or infrastructure unless suitable alternative provision is available.*

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they have responded to the above criteria through the submission of Design and Access Statements, clear and informative plan, elevations and streetschemes and where required Masterplans, Development Briefs, Concept Statements and Design Codes.

...The provision of public and private amenity space contributes to the character of the area. All development can impact on the overall character of the area. Consequently, it is vital that the Council minimises any adverse impacts. Each town and village, together with the areas in between them has their own unique character which is illustrated in the Village Design Statements. Proposals for development must acknowledge this to ensure that the distinctiveness of different parts of the borough is maintained in line with PPS1. [...] Proposals should also take account of the results of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment and the Vegetation in the area. Areas that are important to the Borough's landscape include Areas of Special Landscape Importance and Sites of Urban Landscape Value. [...] Development proposals in line with PPS9 should demonstrate how they can address the needs of existing wildlife in the area, including the protection and enhancement of existing wildlife corridors.

The Open Space audit indicates that the borough provides the sites for open recreational activities to both the boroughs of Bracknell Forest and Reading [...]. It is important that proposals recognize and enhance the value of open spaces to contribute to the needs of Boroughs' of Bracknell Forest, Reading and Wokingham. [...] The Council's Open Space Standards are summarized in appendix 4 and cover quality, quantity and accessibility. This policy will also aid the delivery of green infrastructure within the borough as encouraged in the SEP (Policy CC8) and PPS12. The delivery of green infrastructure (including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) also contributes towards the delivery of healthy communities, including safe access to facilities and opportunities for exercise/recreation. Open Space is to be delivered in perpetuity.'

Policy CP7 – Biodiversity

3.14 The key landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Development

- *Which may harm habitats or species of principle importance in England for nature conservation, veteran trees or features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna (including wildlife and river corridors) whether directly or indirectly, or*
- *That compromises the implementation of the national, regional, county and local biodiversity action plans will only be permitted if it has been clearly demonstrated that the need for the proposal outweighs the need to safeguard the nature conservation importance...*

The need for a development that affects [...] ancient woodland, veteran trees or features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna will be deemed to outweigh the

need to safeguard the nature conservation interest where the development has clear social or economic benefits of regional or national importance.'

3.15 Policy CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area:

3.16 The key landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Development which alone or in combination is likely to have a significant effect on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered.

The Appropriate Assessment indicates that to ensure that development avoids its likely significant impact upon the SPA, the following principles will apply:

- *SANG to be provided and maintained in perpetuity in line with the quality and quantity standards advocated by Natural England. The size and location of the SANG contributes towards the delivery of healthy communities in line with advice from the Department of Health and NICE. In order to ensure access to avoidance sites in perpetuity the Council's preference is for the authority to own any SANG. Where SANG also meets the definition of open space, it can also count towards this provision i.e. at least 1 ha/1,000 of the SANG could also contribute towards the Natural Greenspace requirement and vice versa;'*

3.17 Policy CP21 – South Wokingham Strategic Development Location

3.18 The key landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Within the area identified at South Wokingham, a sustainable, well designed mixed-use development will be delivered by 2026 including

- *Necessary measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development upon the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area in line with policy CP8 to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations and in accordance with Natural England's latest standards. This will include sufficient Alternative Natural Greenspace (subject to monitoring of the quality and quantity standards)'*

Appendix 7 – Additional Guidance for the Development of Strategic Development Locations.

3.19 The Core Strategy outlines several policies specific to each of the SDLs defined within the strategy. The proposed SANG is within the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SDL).

3.20 The following policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development;

South Wokingham Concept Statement

3.21 The key landscape related components of this policy are:

- *'A continuous open space network should be planned along the course of the Emm Brook, incorporating the flood plain, and giving access to the waterside for recreation. The linear form of this corridor should be opened up in places to provide playing fields and formal open space.*
- *SANGS provision should be made in the immediate vicinity of the SDL.*
- *A network of green spaces should be created including;*

- *Formal playing fields and children's play facilities to Wokingham Borough Council Standards*
- *Informal parks and recreational areas*
- *Community gardens, orchards, allotments and cemetery.'*

Infrastructure Requirements

3.22 The key landscape related components of this policy are:

Access and Movement;

- *'Cycle and pedestrian movement should be supported by an internal network of Greenways to extend beyond the site to public green space, and footpaths leading to Gorrick Plantation and Queen's Mere. In addition wayfaring signage should be provided and should be identifiably linked to the Wokingham Greenway Network.'*

Physical:

- *'Any development scheme should accommodate sufficient SANG in line with Policy CP8 to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations and in accordance with Natural England's adopted standards. SANG can be delivered in phases provided each one meets the requirements below:*
- *The provision of SANGs within any proposed development scheme for South Wokingham will need to reflect Natural England's quality standards and requirements for size, access, character, availability and function.*

Planning Obligations:

Developers will be expected to enter into a legal agreement to ensure provision of necessary infrastructure and facilities detailed in this Statement in order to make the development acceptable. These will include:

- *Necessary measure to avoid and mitigate the impact of development upon the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.'*

3.23 Further information on the SDL and landscape and visual related policies and guidelines can be found in section 3.30 (**Other Relevant Strategies, Guidelines or Documents**)

Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Adopted 2014

3.24 The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD) adds extra detail to the policies within the Core Strategy. Together, these two documents set out how the Borough will develop up until 2026. The objectives of the MDD relating to landscape and visual matters are to:

- *'Ensure good design which is in keeping with the area*
- *Protect the most important areas of biodiversity, landscape and heritage from development;*
- *The policies in the MDD also help in taking forward the Council's public health role by promoting health and wellbeing, including through the design of developments and accessibility to green infrastructure and open spaces'.*

Policy CC03: Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping

Development proposals should demonstrate how they have considered and achieved the following criteria within scheme proposals:

- *Provide new or protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure networks, including the need to mitigate potential impacts of new development*
- *Promote accessibility, linkages and permeability between and within existing green corridors including public rights of way such as footpaths, cycleways and bridleways*
- *Promote the integration of the scheme with any adjoining public open space or countryside*
- *Protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features*
- *Incorporate high quality, ideally, native planting and landscaping as an integral part of the scheme.*

Development proposals which would result in the loss, fragmentation or isolation of areas of green infrastructure will not be acceptable.

- *Development proposals within the River Valley areas shall improve or contribute toward:*
- *Opportunities for improvements to green infrastructure to help minimise flood risk*

Green infrastructure networks include the natural and managed green areas in urban and rural settings. Green infrastructure networks include countryside; open spaces; river valleys, corridors and wetlands; Sites of Urban Landscape Value (SULVs); Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS); landscape features; 'green' corridors, including ecological corridors; Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG); allotments; amenity areas within developments; green routes and green route enhancement areas; country parks and public rights of way, including footpaths, cycleways and bridleways.

Green infrastructure can achieve a number of objectives, including:

- *Contributing significantly to the quality of life by creating a sense of place and wellbeing*
- *Providing health benefits by enabling access to opportunities for recreation*
- *Providing opportunities for sustainable transport and access, such as through the provision of public rights of way*
- *Combatting climate change*
- *Minimising flood risk, as recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework*
- *Creating an ecological network that encourages the movement of wildlife along green corridors.*

Proposals improving accessibility to existing green corridors must be considered in the layout of proposals. Proposals shall be consistent with the Borough's Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) that identifies ways to improve access on public rights of way for all, especially those with visual and mobility impairments and to extend the accessibility of the network.

Landscaping, tree planting, hedges and the protection of trees, woodlands and hedges in both the short and long term will be promoted and secured through the planning process and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

Proposals must be supported by a landscaping scheme. This must demonstrate which features are to be retained and how they will be retained. The landscaping scheme must also provide

information on the additional landscaping required to enhance the visual quality of the development and to integrate it into the locality.

A landscape and visual impact study will be required where the site is located on or adjacent to the development limits or where the proposal may have an impact on the townscape around it. This helps to assess the impact of the proposals on the surrounding landscape features and other land uses such as residential properties, roads and public rights of way. The landscape and visual impact study shall include:

- *Baseline information – what is on site already, i.e. topography; site context; vegetation; land use; landscape features and site character*
- *Description of the proposals*
- *Visual assessment of the proposals including impact on surrounding landscape features and other land uses*
- *Landscape assessment of the proposals and how the proposals will affect the landscape features within and outside of the site, including landscape character.*
- *Conditions and/or planning obligations will be used to secure implementation of landscaping schemes and the replacement and protection of trees, hedgerows, or other natural features.'*

Wokingham Borough Council Right Homes, Right Place, Draft Local Plan Public Consultation (February 2020 – March 2020)

3.25 Once finalised The Local Plan Update will supersede the Core Strategy and the Managing Development Delivery Plan and the policies within the Local Plan Update will guide development in the borough to 2036.

3.26 The following emerging policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development:

Policy C8: Green and Blue Infrastructure and Public Rights of Way

3.27 The key landscape-related components of this policy are:

'The existing areas of green and blue infrastructure of Wokingham Borough will be protected and enhanced for the biodiversity, recreational, amenity, health and townscape and landscape value, and contribution towards mitigating and adapting to climate change. Development proposals should contribute to enhancing the network of habitats, open spaces and waterscapes.

The provision and enhancement of a network of publicly accessible green and blue infrastructure should be considered by developers from the outset and form an integral component of the planning and design of development proposals.

3.28 *Development proposals should:*

- *Provide opportunities for, or contribute towards, improvements and enhancements to the quality and quantity of the wider multi-functional green and blue infrastructure network and other open spaces (for example extending spaces and connections and/or better management), in particular by integrating existing green infrastructure assets into development through high-quality design.*

- *Promote accessibility, linkages and permeability between and within existing green corridors (including river corridors), for people and wildlife by strengthening ecological networks and connecting settlements to the countryside via a network of Greenways, green routes, public open spaces, footpaths, riverside paths, bridleways and cycle routes. This includes connections to local services and facilities, public transport and green spaces.'*

Policy DH1: Place Making and Quality Design

3.29 The key landscape-related components of this policy are:

'All development will contribute to a strong sense of place through high quality design which should endure over the lifetime of the development. Development is required to:

- *Reinforce or create a positive sense of place and local distinctiveness through design that respects the local natural and historic character of the area, paying particular attention to urban grain, layout, rhythm, density, scale, bulk, massing, proportions, detailing and trees;*
- *Retain and protect existing trees, hedgerows and other vegetation worthy of retention;*
- *Integrate appropriate new landscaping and green infrastructure as an integral part of the scheme, which is consistent with achieving net biodiversity gain in accordance with Policy NE1: Biodiversity and Nature Conservation;*
- *Minimise the visual impact of parking arrangements.'*

Policy NE2: Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

3.30 The key landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Development, which following a Habitat Regulations Assessment, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is considered to have likely significant effects on the ecological integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered.'

3.31 **SANG Provision**

Within the five kilometre zone, a minimum of eight hectares of SANG land (after discounting to account for current access and capacity) should be provided per 1,000 new occupants. SANG must be secured or provided, in addition to being maintained in perpetuity, in accordance with the quality and quantity standards advocated by Natural England. SANG capacity should be based on an average occupancy of 2.4 persons per dwelling. The quantity and capacity of SANG to be provided for development proposals outside the five kilometre zone will be assessed individually on a case-by-case basis in consultation with Natural England.'

Policy NE3: Trees, woodland and hedgerows

3.32 The key landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Trees, woodland and hedgerows are important visual and ecological assets in towns, villages and the countryside. To retain and provide local character and distinctiveness in the landscape, trees (including ancient or veteran trees), woodland, ancient woodland and hedgerows are of particular significance. Development proposals should:

- *Ensure existing trees, hedgerows and other landscape features are protected, and where possible enhanced, as an integral part of the development,*

- Retain the existing pattern of fields, hedgerows, woodlands, trees, watercourses, water bodies, underlying topography and other landscape features,
- Provide appropriate buffer zones around woodlands, including semi-natural ancient woodlands, planted ancient woodland sites, orchards, hedgerows and individual trees.

3.33 The loss, threat or damage to any tree, woodland or hedgerow of visual, heritage or nature conservation value will only be acceptable where:

- Development proposals have sought to avoid, reduce or minimise impact,
- Mitigation measures, such as structural tree planting are incorporated as part of the development proposals providing equivalent scale, canopy cover, habitat connectivity and character.

3.34 Development proposals that would result in the loss or deterioration of woodland, ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees will only be permitted if there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.'

Policy NE5: Landscape and Design

3.35 The key landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Development proposals will respect, conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the local landscape by adopting a landscape led approach, using the most up-to-date landscape studies, including the borough-wide Landscape Character Assessment, as part of making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the development site and the quality of the borough's landscape. Development proposals should:

- Reflect local character and distinctiveness, including the scale and pattern of the surrounding landscape and existing settlement form;
- Incorporate a landscape assessment ensuring development is informed by local landscape character;
- Promote landscape spaces, public realm and green infrastructure with associated planting to improve ecological connectivity, create a sense of place, mitigate and adapt to climate change and improve health and wellbeing;
- For land on the rural urban interface, design effective landscape transitions, consisting of native tree and hedgerow planting consistent with local landscape character.'

Policy NE6: Landscape Character, Value and Green Routes

3.36 The key landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Development proposals must take into account key characteristics, sensitivities and strategies, including key issues and guidelines of the landscape, in order to safeguard intrinsic character, scenic beauty and perceptual qualities, for example tranquillity and dark skies, as set out in the Landscape Character Assessment.

Valued landscapes are identified on the Policies Map. Development proposals will only be permitted where they protect and enhance features that contribute to the character, quality and interpretation of valued landscapes and specifically the criteria set out in the Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) Box 5.1:

- *Landscape quality (condition)*
- *Scenic quality*
- *Rarity*
- *Representativeness*
- *Conservation interests*
- *Recreation value*
- *Perceptual aspects*
- *Associations*

Development proposals on or in proximity to Green Routes will only be permitted where existing trees are retained and should contribute to the improvement of Green Routes through landscape schemes, including tree and hedge planting.'

Other Relevant Strategies, Guidelines or Documents

Wokingham Borough Design Guide (2012)

3.37 The Borough Design Guide brings together, updates and extends previous guidance in line with the Adopted Core Strategy. The Guide has been prepared to help deliver the vision and objectives of the Borough.

3.38 The following principles are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development:

General Guidelines: Context and Character;

3.39 *G1 - Development must respond positively to its site and local context, including;*

- *'Topography and orientation of the site;*
- *Existing natural and landscape features of value, including the countryside, the Green Belt, mature trees, hedges and field patterns, ponds, rivers and wetlands etc;*
- *The local settlement pattern and network of routes*

G2 – Development must create a sense of place that responds positively to the character of the local area in terms of [...] landscape and public realm qualities.'

General Guidelines: Connection and Accessibility

- *'G4 – Development proposals should connect places together, in particular providing safe pedestrian and cycle links between residential areas, community facilities and services, and open spaces.'*

Rural and Settlement Edge General Principles:

3.40 *'RD1 – New development and associated landscape should retain, incorporate and enhance features that contribute towards the landscape character and biodiversity of the area.*

This includes elements such as:

- *field patterns and lanes;*
- *landscape features, such as trees and*

- *hedgerows;*
- *wetlands and watercourses;*
- *typical species of vegetation; and*
- *characteristic local habitats.'*

Spaces and Landscape

- 3.41 *'RD8 – The relationship between public and private space and the transition between them in new developments should relate to the existing character of the village.'*

South Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document Adopted 2011

- 3.42 The Supplementary Planning Document has been produced by Wokingham Borough Council as a guide for future development of the Strategic Development Land and to establish the Borough Council's expectations about masterplanning and design quality that will be forthcoming in future planning applications and subsequent approved developments. [...] It builds on the Adopted Core strategy, in particular Policy CP21 and appendix 7 (both outlined in preceding sections of this document).
- 3.43 The following principles are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development;

Design Principle 1a:

- 3.44 'The key landscape related components of this principle are:

The landscape design should draw on the existing landscape context which is a unique and distinctive element of the SDL and will lend a strong character.

- *The landscape framework should seek to retain all existing landscape features, including the local topography, hedgerows, the existing trees, watercourses, (including the Emm Brook), ponds, wetland areas, grassland, footpaths and bridleways.*
- *The existing landscape character zones across the SDL and beyond its boundaries should inform the landscape framework, and in turn the landscape treatment within the new residential neighbourhoods.'*

Design Principle 1c:

- 3.45 The key landscape related components of this principle are;

'Landscape design at the SDL should relate to place-making at both the strategic and local level, in order to create a living and engaging landscape.

- *Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) should be provided in accordance with the requirements of the CS. [...] it should take full account of the design criteria and specification of Natural England, in addition to the requirement for maintenance and management costs and their quality and quantity standards for management and maintenance. This should be located in the southern and eastern parts of the SDL, with good connections between any separate components north and south of the railway to ensure continuity of access. Its functional role SANG should remain in perpetuity and should play a key role in retaining the separation between settlements.'*

Design Principle 1e

3.46 The key landscape related components of this principle are;

'The landscape framework should include high levels of physical and visual continuity between areas of open space, green infrastructure, sports and play areas in order to ensure good levels of access and use.

- *A system of local recreational routes should cross the SDL and make provision for walking and cycling. Where possible, these routes should seek to enhance existing SuSTRANS routes and connect to existing and new public rights of way so as to afford access beyond the SDL boundaries*
- *These routes should be regarded as green corridors*
- *Particular attention should be given to providing good connections between and within the proposed SANG and the residential neighbourhoods.*
- *Public art should feature as an integral component of the landscape framework.*
- *Particular attention should be had to the retention of views from public places such as footpaths to the surrounding countryside.'*

Thames Valley Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Guideline for the Creation of Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace (SANGS) (2008)

3.47 This document is a supplementary planning document produced to provide guidance on the creation of SANGS to divert visitors from visiting the Thames basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). The following guidelines on individual SANGS are relevant:

Essential features:

- *'For all sites larger than 4ha there must be adequate parking for visitors, unless the site is intended for local use, i.e. within easy walking distance (400m) of the developments linked to it. The amount of car parking space should be determined by the anticipated use of the site and reflect the visitor catchment of both the SANGS and the SPA.*
- *It should be possible to complete a circular walk of 2.3-2.5km around the SANGS.*
- *Car parks must be easily and safely accessible by car and should be clearly sign posted.*
- *The accessibility of the site must include access points appropriate for the particular visitor use the SANGS is intended to cater for.*
- *The SANGS must have a safe route of access on foot from the nearest car park and/or footpath/s*
- *All SANGS with car parks must have a circular walk which starts and finishes at the car park.*
- *SANGS must be designed so that they are perceived to be safe by users; they must not have tree and scrub cover along parts of the walking routes*
- *Paths must be easily used and well maintained but most should remain unsurfaced to avoid the site becoming to urban in feel.*

- *SANGS must be perceived as semi-natural spaces with little intrusion of artificial structures, except in the immediate vicinity of car parks. Visually-sensitive way-markers and some benches are acceptable.*
- *All SANGS larger than 12 ha must aim to provide a variety of habitats for users to experience.*
- *Access within the SANGS must be largely unrestricted with plenty of space provided where it is possible for dogs to exercise freely and safely off lead.*
- *SANGS must be free from unpleasant intrusions (e.g. sewage treatment works smells etc).'*

Desirable features:

- *'Where possible it is desirable to choose sites with a gently undulating topography for SANGS'*
- *'It is desirable that SANGS provide a naturalistic space with areas of open (non-wooded) countryside and areas of dense and scattered trees and shrubs. The provision of open water on part, but not the majority of sites is desirable.'*

Bracknell Forest Borough Adopted Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008)

3.48 The following policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development:

Policy CS1: Sustainable Development Principles

3.49 The Key Landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Development will be permitted which protects and enhances;

- *The quality of natural resources including water, air, land and biodiversity; and*
- *The character and quality of local landscapes and the wider countryside.'*

Policy CS7: Design

3.50 The Key Landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Development proposals will be permitted which;

- *Build on the urban, suburban and rural local character, respecting local patterns of development and the historic environment*
- *Enhance the landscape and promote biodiversity*
- *Aid movement and accessibility, connectivity, permeability and legibility*
- *Enable a mix of uses*
- *Provide high quality usable open spaces and public realm*
- *Provide well designed and integrated public art.'*

Policy CS14: Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

3.51 The Key Landscape-related components of this policy are:

- *'The Council will not permit development which, either alone or in combination with other development, has an adverse effect upon the integrity of the SPA.'*

- *The effective avoidance and/or mitigation of any identified adverse effects must be demonstrated and secured prior to approval of the development.'*

Policy CS24: Transport and New Development

3.52 The Key Landscape-related components of this policy are:

'Development proposals will be permitted where mitigation against the transport impacts which may arise from that development or cumulatively with other proposals is provided. This shall be achieved through the submission of a transport assessment, and where appropriate:

- *Contributions toward local public transport and strategic transport improvements*
- *The implementation of works to the highway*
- *The provision of new and the improvement of existing pedestrian and cycle routes.'*

4.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS

Landscape Character

National Character

- 4.1 National Character Area (NCA) profiles have been prepared by Natural England for the 159 NCAs defined across England. These NCA profiles include a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area's characteristics. Figure 3 illustrates the NCAs and other defined character areas within the context of the Site.
- 4.2 At this very broad landscape scale, the Site lies within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 129 'Thames Basin Heaths'. This NCA extends towards the southern boundary of the M4 to the south of Reading and the southern boundary of Bracknell to the north, with the eastern boundary extending towards Egham, Weybridge and Wisley. The A3 broadly defines the extent of the NCA to the south east with Aldershot and Basingstoke located along the southern boundary of the NCA. The NCA also extends towards Newbury, the A34, A4 and Hungerford to the west and Streatley to the north west and therefore covers a very extensive landscape area. The Key Characteristics for the NCA are:
- *'Plateaux of Tertiary sands and gravels in the London Basin, with intervening river valleys floored by London Clay. In the far west, Chalk forms the Hampshire Downs escarpment and the river beds of the Kennet and Pang.*
 - *High woodland cover, offering an array of colour in the autumn. Conifers and large plantations on former heathland are dominant features in the east, while the west is scattered with small, semi-natural woodlands on ancient sites.*
 - *Acid, leached soils mean that farming on the plateaux is limited to rough pasture, and that alternative land uses (such as forestry, golf courses and horse paddocks) have emerged. Heather, gorse, oak and birch all thrive here. Arable land and improved pasture are found in the valleys, on alluvium.*
 - *Beyond the large areas of heathland and woodland, there is a patchwork of small to medium-sized fields with woods. The legacy of historic hunting forests includes veteran trees, ancient woods, ancient hedgerows and parklands. Historic meadows remain as fragments along watercourses.*
 - *Prehistoric earthworks such as barrows and hill forts mark promontories on the plateaux. Archaeology is well preserved on historic heathland. Mosaics of open heathland and grassland with scrub, secondary woodland and plantation. Valley bogs, ponds and streams enhance diversity. Large, continuous mosaics are found in the east: they include Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and Chobham Common National Nature Reserve (NNR).*
 - *Historic commons offer tranquillity and unenclosed views, while other rights of access are enjoyed across farmland, canals and downland. Ministry of Defence ownership restricts (but does not entirely prevent) public enjoyment.*

- *'Churring' nightjars, dragonflies and purple heather are all readily identified with heathland. The Thames Basin Heaths SPA protects internationally important populations of woodlark, nightjar and Dartford warbler.*
- *Valley floors are wet with ditches, numerous watercourses, ponds, waterfilled gravel pits, reedbeds and carr. Historic features include mills, relict water meadows, and canals such as the River Wey Navigations.*
- *20th-century conurbations, including Camberley, sprawl along the Blackwater Valley, with associated roads (including the M3) dissecting heathland and woodland into blocks. Elsewhere, there are winding lanes and historic dispersed villages and farmsteads of traditional, locally-made brick and tile.'*

4.3 The description also states:

SEO 2: Maximise the variety of ecosystem services delivered by wooded features – from wet woodlands in the Kennet Valley to the large conifer plantations around Camberley and new woodlands. Conserve soils, water, biodiversity and the sense of place and history; enhance timber and biomass production; and provide for recreation and tranquillity as appropriate.

Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2004)

4.4 The Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment has been undertaken at a regional level. It subdivides the landscape into 14 Landscape Character Types (LCTs), further divided into 29 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs).

4.5 The Site lies primarily within *'LCA M1 – Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands'* with a small portion of the northeastern corner extending into *'LCA N1 - Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland'*. Under Key Landscape Characteristics for *LCA M1: Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands* the following are of relevance:

- *'An elevated landscape comprising a shelving plateau, underlain by acidic sands strongly influencing land cover and ecological character.*
- *A landscape dominated by interconnected forestry and woodland.*
- *Large areas for public recreation space including California Park, Forestry Commission land and golf courses.*
- *A predominant absence of farmland.*
- *A strong sense of enclosure and disorientation afforded by the often continuous swathes of large coniferous woodland mass.*
- *Underlying, heathland character often typifying areas of woodland clearing such as at California Park.*
- *A landscape of good public accessibility.*
- *Long straight roads i.e. Nine Mile Ride projecting strong linear character to the landscape. Linear rides and private roads are also a feature.*
- *Strong settlement character – with residential properties of post war and modern suburban character in a variety of styles, largely aligning the long linear rides.*

- *Rich wildlife habitats associated with the acid soils including numerous large lakes and bogs – containing notable and regionally restricted species.*

A landscape offering a sense of remoteness and solitude.'

Relationship to Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment

'The Forested and Settled Sands corresponds to 'Type 1: Forested Sands' of the Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment, largely following the boundaries of 12 Crowthorne Forested Sand' of that assessment. The main distinction is that in this assessment the boundaries are drawn tight to the edge of the forested area, this excludes the areas of sandy pastoral landscapes to the south and north, which are classified here as Pastoral Sandy Lowland. In the Berkshire Assessment a limited amount of the pastoral sands were included as the setting and context of the Forested Sand, which is bordered by Type K: Settled Farmlands. It is therefore noted that the boundaries between these areas are not absolute and an extension of or clearance of woodland plantation could influence the perception of the boundary between these related zones.'

- 4.6 The 2004 Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment evaluates the landscape quality and sensitivity and defines an overall landscape strategy for the LCA *Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands*. The following elements are of relevance to the proposed SANG:

Landscape Quality

- *'The strong character relates to the fact that despite the fact that much of this landscape has 'suburban' character it does have a very strong sense of place and distinctive pattern of elements, namely, continuous interconnected forestry and woodland, acidic wildlife habitats including larger lakes and bogs, recreational areas and the settlement patterns of post-war properties along straight rides.'*

Landscape Strategy

- *'The key aspects to be conserved and actively managed are the forestry and woodland, important wildlife habitats, and recreational use'*

Landscape Sensitivity

- *'The Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands (M1) is considered to be of moderate sensitivity due to the largely regional degree of importance for most components. [...] there are some aspects of character that would be highly sensitive to change, particularly [...] the forest, and the perceptual qualities, which are unique within Wokingham District.'*

- 4.7 The 2004 Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment also defines guidelines for development responding to key issues affecting or with potential to affect the character of the *Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands* of which the following are relevant:

- *'Aim to continue to increase the extent of native deciduous woodland using natural regeneration or locally occurring native species to enhance the wooded character of the landscape. The aim should be to link existing sites without loss of significant views.*
- *Ensure that new woodland planting follows the existing pattern of wooded ridges and interconnecting valleys. The aim should be to create a more mixed woodland character in areas which have been converted to coniferous monoculture plantation.*
- *Seek sympathetic integration of new recreational features and seek to locate such activities in areas of low tranquillity. Encourage the use of this landscape for informal*

recreation but ensure appropriate management, particularly in relation to the Rights of Way network.'

4.8 Under key characteristics for Landscape Type N1 – *Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland* the following are of relevance:

- *'Shelving to gently undulating landform underlain by a sandy geology.*
- *An agricultural landscape defined predominantly by pastoral farming contained within medium-sized and geometrically shaped fields and largely divided by post and wire and rough timber fencing.*
- *Small scale 'hobby' farming including a number of equestrian paddocks and exercising areas bound by often unkempt fencing and supported by temporary-looking facilities such as caravans and sheds.*
- *Scrubby vegetation including wooded tributaries, shelterbelts with gorse, bramble and bracken.*
- *Dispersed settlement including large manors being used as educational establishments and hamlets.*
- *Recreational value in the form of a golf course and numerous footpaths and bridleways.*
- *A landscape evoking a generally peaceful character.*
- *Views of the southern fringes of Wokingham with some areas of land providing an important break between Finchampstead and Wokingham.*
- *Pine clumps are a locally distinctive feature forming the approach to Wokingham.'*

Relationship to Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment

'The Pastoral Sandy Lowland falls almost entirely within Landscape Type K: Settled Farmlands of the Berkshire assessment. Type K is described as being a transitional landscape grading from the Open Clay Lowlands to the north and the Forested Sands to the south/east. Therefore, it can be considered that the Pastoral Sandy Lowland represents one of the subdivisions in that type which becomes evident at the more-detailed level of a district study. As described for Landscape Type M: Forested and Settled Sands there have been some small boundary adjustments around the perimeters of Type M because the boundary in this assessment has been drawn more tightly to the current edge of the wooded area.'

4.9 The 2004 Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment evaluates the landscape quality and sensitivity and defines an overall landscape strategy for the LCA *Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland*. The following elements are of relevance to the proposed SANG:

Landscape Quality

- *'The moderate character relates to the combination of different characteristics with the strongest element being the undulating landform, peaceful character and the open pastoral farmland and paddocks. Weaker elements are the historic field patterns which have virtually disappeared (except for some areas close to Wokingham) and urban fringe influences.'*

Landscape Strategy

- *'The overall strategy for Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland is to enhance the existing character. The key opportunities for enhancement relate to historic field patterns and hedgerows – with potential for replanting and management of boundaries, and enhancement of ecological character.'*

Landscape Sensitivity

- *'The Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland is a landscape of overall moderate sensitivity [...]. The most sensitive components are the perceptual characteristics of the landscape including the sense of openness and the generally peaceful character. Other characteristics with some sensitivity are the small areas with ecological value (which include the wooded tributaries and shelterbelts with gorse, bramble and bracken), the rural land use pattern and the rural views and setting to the edge of Wokingham.'*

4.10 The 2004 Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment also defines guidelines for development responding to key issues affecting or with potential to affect the character of the *Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland*, of which the following are relevant:

- *'Conserve remaining hedgerows as important wildlife habitats and landscape features [...]. Consider opportunities for reinstatement of hedges.'*
- *'Aim to continue to increase the extent of native deciduous woodland using natural regeneration or locally occurring native species to enhance the wooded character of the landscape. The aim should be to link existing sites without loss of significant views and retain woodland associated with the tributaries.'*
- *'Design areas of coppice sympathetic to landscape character and seek to integrate other uses such as recreation and nature conservation to enhance their value.'*
- *'Consider possibilities for woodland creation in urban fringe areas such as South Wokingham where these could enhance landscape character and quality, provide recreational potential, and assist in the positive integration of the urban and rural landscape while conserving significant views to landmark features.'*

Bracknell Forest Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2015)

4.11 The Bracknell Forest Borough Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken in 2015 and characterises the landscapes of the borough into 8 Landscape Character Types, (LCTs) further divided into 11 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). While the Site does not lie within Bracknell Forest Borough, the eastern Site boundary is adjacent to LCA A1 – *Bracknell Forest*, and in very close proximity to LCA G1 – *Easthampstead Wooded Estate*. Under Key Landscape Characteristics for the LCA Bracknell Forest the following are of relevance:

- *'Large areas of forestry plantation interspersed with broadleaf woodland and limited areas of open heath, giving a sense of enclosure and remoteness.'*
- *'Typically short views, contained by trees, with occasional long views along historic, straight rides (such as the Devils' Highway) and glimpsed views from more elevated areas.'*
- *'A very low settlement density and few transport corridors. Suburban settlement and development related to light-industry occur at its peripheries, but these are mostly well screened by trees and not discernible from the interior.'*

- *Well-used recreation areas valued by the local community, including provisions for a range of formal recreational uses.*
- *Despite the non-native land cover and presence of forestry operations the area has a sense of remoteness; a sense of removal from the surrounding urban settlements and a connection to the history of Windsor Forest.*
- *Archaeologically important sites including Caesar's Camp Fort, numerous Redoubts, the Devil's Highway (formerly a Roman Road) and historic rides are discernible landscape features.'*

4.12 Valued features and characteristic of LCA A1- *Bracknell Forest* are also defined in the assessment, of which the following are relevant:

- *'The extensive areas of forest and woodland where an undeveloped character predominates, providing opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of the landscape as well as a wooded setting to the surrounding settlements and forming a physical and visual separation between Crowthorne and Bracknell.[...]. The woodland and undeveloped areas are key to Bracknell Forest borough's character as a whole.*
- *Mosaics of broadleaf and mixed woodland, remnant heathland and grasslands which provide important habitats as well as contribute to the visual diversity of the area (a variety of colours and textures and changing seasonal interest).*
- *Remnant heathland, mature trees and semi-natural broadleaf woodland provide a particularly strong sense of place and scenic beauty, as well as provide an environment for flora and fauna and sense of naturalness.*
- *The undeveloped character, sense of naturalness and remoteness provided by the lack of built development and the remaining deciduous and mixed woodlands and heathlands. This sense of remoteness and escape is highly valued so close to dense urban parts of the borough.*
- *Heavily enclosed character with distinctive long but framed views opening out along historic, straight rides (including the Devil's Highway and from Roman Star Post and Lower Star Post) through the trees.*
- *Recreational areas of open access land (although this is in part controlled due to the Thames Basins Heath SPA), [...] The recreational function of the landscape is of particular value for the local communities of Bracknell, Crowthorne, Sandhurst and Camberley.'*

4.13 A Landscape Strategy for LCA A1- *Bracknell Forest* is defined within the character assessment. The following guidelines are relevant to the proposed SANG:

- *'Protect areas of semi-natural woodland and mature trees which provide a sense of history.*
- *Protect the undeveloped wooded character of the area between Crowthorne and Bracknell which provides a physical and visual separation or 'gap' between settlements.*
- *Balance the need for recreation and enjoyment of the landscape (and the need to provide associated facilities such as car parking) with the conservation of habitats for flora and fauna.*
- *Plan for the future replacement of monocultures of coniferous tree species within forested areas and seek to extend and enhance areas of broad-leaf woodland, wet woodland and*

open heathland to increase the quality and diversity of habitats. There may be opportunity for developments within the area to contribute to this aim.'

4.14 Under Key Landscape Characteristics for the LCA G1 – Easthampstead Wooded Estate the following are of relevance:

- *'A gently undulating landscape centred on the historic Easthampstead Park, now a conference centre, with remnant parkland features including avenues, a lake and woodland.*
- *The land rises to 80m AOD where a Victorian red brick Jacobean style mansion, is set within dense woodland.*
- *The area forms part of the extensive Medieval Windsor Forest and has a well wooded character, including areas of ancient woodland. Formerly the site of a Royal hunting lodge.*
- *The area is influenced by underlying clays and sands, providing references to the forested sands to the south and the undulating clay farmlands to the north of Bracknell.*
- *Mixed land uses of former parkland, mixed agricultural fields bounded by hedgerows with hedgerow trees, paddocks, woodland, grassland (including semi-improved and amenity) and a golf course, giving rise to a rather fragmented character.*
- *Despite proximity to built development within Bracknell, the area retains a sense of relative tranquillity largely as a result of the park and woodland elements.*
- *Tree cover restricts views. However, there are some notable views include the framed views along the avenue of mature trees to the Victorian mansion (now the conference centre).'*

4.15 Valued features and characteristic of LCA G1 – Easthampstead Wooded Estate are also defined in the assessment, of which the following are relevant:

- *'The mature woodland blocks, copses and woodland belts, which form a network of valuable habitats for flora and fauna, provide a reminder of its location in the former Windsor Forest, provide opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of the landscape and help to visually integrate development at the edge of Bracknell with the surrounding rural countryside.*
- *The sense of naturalness and tranquillity provided by features such as woodlands, which is highly valued so close to dense urban areas.*
- *Semi-improved grassland including meadows and marshy grassland, fields, hedgerows and hedgerow trees which provide visual diversity (particularly changing seasonal interest) and diversity of habitats.*
- *Remnant parkland features of Easthampstead Park, which provide a sense of place and scenic interest, a setting to the mansion, and a cultural reference of the history and former use of the area.*
- *Historic buildings such as the red brick Jacobean style mansion at the centre of Easthampstead Park and gate lodge which provides a cultural reference to the past as well as aesthetic enjoyment of the landscape. Views along the avenue to the house are notable.*

- *The tranquil and undeveloped character of the area that contrasts with the urban centre of Bracknell and provides a separation or 'gap' between Bracknell and Wokingham.*
- *The network of public footpaths which provide opportunities for informal recreation within close proximity to the edge of Bracknell as well as providing a break within development at the edge of Bracknell.'*

4.16 A Landscape Strategy for LCA G1 – *Easthampstead Wooded Estate* is defined within the character assessment. The following guidelines are relevant to the proposed SANG:

- *'Protect remaining areas of woodland from loss or damage and avoid further fragmentation.*
- *Protect the relative tranquillity of the area which contrasts with, and provides a valuable respite from, the adjacent developed areas as well as providing separation from Wokingham.*
- *Protect designed views associated with the estate, such as the view of the Mansion along the avenue.*
- *Manage the remaining woodland habitats to ensure their survival, including check of invasive species.*
- *Consider the restoration of field boundaries where these have been lost, to restore the historic field pattern and enhance visual amenity.*
- *Plan for an improved network of woodland, hedgerows and trees and plan for the next generation of hedgerow trees.*
- *Improve cohesion of the area by enhancing parkland features, planning for management and reinstatement of features such as parkland trees and avenues.*
- *Plan for continued positive conservation and enhancement of the valuable woodland habitats, balancing this with commercial operations and provision of recreation and enjoyment of the landscape.*
- *...enhance sense of place through careful design (including siting, scale, materials and lighting), and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place.*
- *Seek to extend and enhance areas of broad-leaf woodland and open grasslands to increase the quality and diversity of habitats. Plan to enhance and integrate the open space at the urban edge through further native or parkland style planting.'*

Designations

4.17 This section considers only the relevant designations in the context of landscape and visual issues of the Site and the proposed development as shown at **Figure 4**.

4.18 The Site is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory landscape designations such as AONBs or National Parks.

Heritage Designations

4.19 There are no Scheduled Monuments within or adjacent to the wider context of the Site.

- 4.20 There are no listed buildings within or adjacent to the Site. Within the wider context there are some listed buildings including the following:
- Grade II Listed Barn and Stables at Sutton Court Farm located approximately 150m to the north.
 - Grade II Listed The Crooked Billet, located off Redlake Lane approximately 180m to the south west.
 - Grade II Listed Holme Grange School located off Easthampstead Road approximately 500m to the north west.

Ecology Designations

- 4.21 The Site lies within the Thames Heath Special Protection Area. There are no SSSI within the Site boundary. Within the study area, Heath Lake Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and SSSI is located approximately 750m to the south west and south of Nine Mile Ride.

4.22 Ancient Woodland

- 4.23 Watley's Copse Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland and forms the boundary with Honey Hill road further to the west.

- 4.24 There are a number of Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland within the wider context including;

- An unnamed area of Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland to the west of Watley's Copse, located north of Gorrick Plantation;
- An unnamed area of Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland on the Emm Brook, located just north of Ludgrove School and in the northwestern edge of the mapping extents;
- An unnamed area of Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland located north of the Site, to the west of Lock's House, at the junction with Waterloo Road;
- Easthampstead Park (Long Meadow Coppice) Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland situated along Old Wokingham Road to the north of the Site, Southeast of Lock's House;
- Easthampstead Park Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland at Oakwood, lying off Old Wokingham Road to the northeast of Lock's House;
- Big Wood Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland located to the north of Oakwood;
- Easthampstead Park: West Garden Copse Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland, situated to the northeast of the Site on the fringe of Bracknell urban extents.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 4.25 The following public right of way is located within the application Site boundary as shown at **Figure 2:**

- The PRoW WOKW8 is located through the Site connecting Easthampstead Road to Honey Hill on a north to south axis.

- 4.26 The following public rights of way are located within the vicinity of the application Site as shown at **Figure 2:**

- PRoW footpath WOKW6 is located to the north of the Site, connecting Old Wokingham Road to Easthampstead Road on a north east to south west axis. From here connections can be made to the Bracknell Forest Borough public right of way network.

- PRow footpath BRA FP15 is located to the north east of the Site, connecting Old Wokingham Road on a north east to south west axis
- PRow footpath WOKW7 is located to the north of the Site, connecting Easthampstead Road to Redlake Lane on a north to west axis.

Topography

4.27 The following should be read in conjunction with Figure 5.

Context – Landform

- 4.28 The topography of the Site's context is gently rolling, located at approximately 65m AOD along Old Wokingham Road and Newlands Farm to the east and gradually falling to approximately 55-60m AOD to the west. There are a number of watercourses that are located through and adjacent to the Site and these feed into Water Hill, Emm Brook and several minor watercourses that cross through the surrounding context of the Site.
- 4.29 The Site sits low within the landscape with the topography gradually sloping down towards Ludgrove School and Wokingham to the west. High points within the local topography rise to approximately 70-75m AOD to the North, East, South and South west. The highest point in the wider topography is Easthampstead Park located approximately 1.1km to the north east, located at approximately 80m AOD.
- 4.30 Old Wokingham Road is located on a north to south axis to the east of the Site and follows the boundary between Bracknell Forest and Wokingham Borough. To the north it passes in close proximity to Oakwood and West Garden Copse which form local high points in the landscape to the north east at approximately 70-75m AOD. At the junction of Easthampstead Road, Old Wokingham Road and towards Brookfield Farm and the Site the topography is at broadly 65m AOD. To the south of the Site the topography rises around Pine Wood and the Pine Wood Centre to approximately 70m AOD before the topography rises to the junction with Nine Mile Ride at circa 74m AOD.
- 4.31 Easthampstead Road is located on a southwest to northeast axis from Old Wokingham Road to Wokingham, with the vehicular route running roughly parallel with the northern Site boundary. The junction of the two roads is located at approximately 66m AOD. From this location the topography of the vehicular route gradually falls across the landscape, towards Six Oaks and Ham Bridge (55m AOD) before rising slightly around Holme Green (65m AOD) before steadily falling towards Wokingham at circa 55m AOD.
- 4.32 Nine Mile Road (B3430) is located on an east to west axis to the south of the Site, connecting Finchampstead to the eastern edges of Bracknell. To the south of the Site the topography gradually rises towards Nine Mile Ride which is located at approximately 70m AOD. The topography of Nine Mile Road is undulating with areas along the route where the topography dips to approximately 65m AOD. Further to the south east the topography continues to rise to approximately 90m AOD at Buckler's Park.
- 4.33 Directly to the west of the Site Redlake Lane is located at approximately 55m AOD as it crosses Gardeners Green Ford, before the topography rises towards Gardeners Green at circa 60m AOD. To the south west of Gardeners Green the topography gradually rises towards Nine Mile Ride at broadly 70m AOD, while to the west the topography is low lying at approximately 55m AOD.

Site – Landform

- 4.34 Within the Site boundary, the topography is located between 66-67m AOD at the eastern edge of the Site where it meets Old Wokingham Road and around 55m AOD to the western boundary in close proximity to Gardeners Green Ford. The land slopes gently and gradually between these points, and generally follows the direction of the minor water courses and ditches that flow through or adjacent to the Site towards Gardeners Green Ford.

Site and Immediate Context

- 4.35 An assessment of landscape character of the Site and its immediate context has been carried out, providing a finer level of assessment than the published studies.
- 4.36 The Site is situated between Bracknell to the east and Wokingham to the west and located off Old Wokingham Road to the east. The Site comprises a number of grazing pasture field parcels and two small areas of woodland along with a series of ditches and streams across the Site. A number of individual mature trees are located across the central field parcels with mature woodland and understorey scrub planting located along the Site boundaries to the north and south of the Site. The mature woodland of Pine Wood and the Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland of Watley's Copse are located adjacent to the Site to the south and south west. The PRoW WOKW8 is located through the site on a north to south axis, connecting to Easthampstead Road to the north and Honey Hill road to the south.
- 4.37 The PRoW WOKW7 is located approximately 60m to the north of the Site at its closest point, with the PRoW WOKW7 located on a north to west axis connecting Easthampstead Road to the north of the Site to Redlake Lane to the west. Directly to the north of the Site lies an area of open arable land located around Sutton Court Farm, with the field boundaries bordered by a mix of timber post and rail fencing and hedgerow boundaries. Brookland Farm and the Newlands Farm Industrial Estate are located in close proximity and adjacent to the Site to the north east, with Brookfields Farm bordered by an area of dense woodland approximately 70m in depth that is located within the Site. In the wider context Easthampstead Road is located approximately 280m to the north of the Site connecting to Old Wokingham Road to the east and Redlake Lane, Holme Green Lane and further afield to Heathlands Road to the west. Easthampstead Road and Redlake Lane are bordered on either side by dense mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees (VP1, VP2 and VP3). Six Oaks and Prior's Farm are located to the north of Easthampstead Road with wider areas of agricultural land located further to the north.
- 4.38 Newlands Farm is located to the east with the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses located beyond, with access provided off Old Wokingham Road to the east. Old Wokingham Road connects to Easthampstead Road, West Road and Peacock Lane to the north and Nine Mile Road to the south. A number of small businesses, industrial estates and residential properties are located off Old Wokingham Road to the east of the Site, with the Downshire Golf Complex located to the north east. The Pinewood Centre and Pinewood Caravan Park are located off Old Wokingham Road to the south east.
- 4.39 The dense woodland of Pine Wood and the Pine Wood campus are located adjacent and in close proximity to the Site to the south, with areas of irregular shaped arable fields and mature treed hedgerows located in the wider area to the south west. The mature field hedgerows link into the surrounding tree and hedgerow network that surrounds Honey Hill to the south west and west before linking to the woodland that surrounds Honey Hill Cottage and the adjacent Ancient & Semi-

Natural Woodland of Watley's Copse located to the south west of the Site. To the west of Honey Hill the area is dominated by the polytunnels, buildings and properties associated with Squire's Garden Centre, Wyevale Garden Centre, Heathlands Farm and Gardener's Green.

Landscape Value

- 4.40 In terms of "landscape value" it is appropriate to examine the role of the Site and its immediate context in terms of the range of local factors set out in LI TGN 02-21, and summarised in the methodology. This considers the landscape in terms of a range of factors as set out below. As a starting point, landscape designations have been considered.
- 4.41 Landscape Designations: The Site and its wider landscape context (including its approximate Visual Envelope (VE) (Figure 6) are not subject to any national, local or other landscape designations.
- 4.42 Natural Heritage: The Site does have some indicators of natural heritage with the Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland of Watley's Copse located adjacent to the Site to the south west. Dense areas of woodland surround the eastern, southern, western and northern boundaries of the Site with a number of individual trees are scattered across the Site.
- 4.43 Cultural Heritage: There is a general lack of historic features within the Site and its immediate context with the nearest listed buildings of the Grade II Listed Barn and Stables at Sutton Court Farm located approximately 150m to the north.
- 4.44 Landscape Condition: The Site is not covered by any landscape quality designations. The existing trees and tree groups present on the Site are in good to fair condition. Overall, the landscape of the Site is judged to be of moderate condition.
- 4.45 Associations: The Site and its immediate context has no known associations with well-known literature, poetry, art, TV/film and music; associations with science or other technical achievements; links to a notable historical event; or associations with a famous person or people that contribute to perceptions of the landscape of the Site.
- 4.46 Distinctiveness: The Site is visually very well contained with landscape features within the Site and its immediate context including existing trees and hedgerows along the Site boundaries and areas of arable farmland relatively common features of the local landscape. It is not considered to be special or unusual in terms of landscape character, but to be typical of the local rural landscape.
- 4.47 Recreational Value: The Site is in private ownership and the majority of the Site is not currently publicly accessible, however the PRoW WOKW8 crosses through the Site on a north to south axis.
- 4.48 Perceptual (Scenic): The Site is a managed working landscape which is part of Newlands Farm and adjacent to the Newlands Farm Industrial Estate to the east. Landscape features which contribute to the functioning of the landscape within the Site and its immediate context are generally restricted to existing vegetation surrounding the Site.
- 4.49 Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity): The Site is a managed working landscape, while the PRoW route across the Site is fairly tranquil and enclosed from the wider landscape by the woodland surrounding the Site.

- 4.50 Functional aspects: Landscape features which contribute to the functioning of the landscape within the Site and its immediate context are generally restricted to existing vegetation surrounding the Site.
- 4.51 In conclusion and having appraised the above factors it is judged that the Site and the immediate landscape is of **medium** landscape value.

Visual Baseline

- 4.52 A visual appraisal has been undertaken for the Site. This has explored the nature of the existing visual amenity of the area and sought to establish the approximate visibility of the Site from surrounding locations and receptors. A series of photo viewpoints have been selected which support this analysis.
- 4.53 Photographs have been taken to illustrate a view from a specific vantage point, or to demonstrate a representative view for those receptors that are moving through the landscape, e.g. rights of way users. The photographs may demonstrate varying degrees of visibility and include both short and long-range views. The photographs were taken on the 19th July 2023 and seasonal differences have been taken into account when determining the visual effects on these receptors.
- 4.54 'Photo Viewpoints', as referred to in this report are 'Type 1 Visualisations' or 'Annotated Viewpoint Photographs', as referred to in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note on 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' (TGN 06/19).

Photo Viewpoints

- 4.55 An assessment of the likely visual effects of the proposed development upon surrounding receptors is detailed in the subsequent section. Figure 6 details the location of the Photo Viewpoints and Figures 7-26 illustrates the photo viewpoints. They are briefly described below.

Viewpoint 1

- 4.56 Photo viewpoint 1 represents the vehicular receptors of Redlake Lane at the junction with Easthampstead Road, located to the north west of the Site. Foreground and middle ground views are narrow and confined along the vehicular routes which are bordered by mature tree lined hedgerows on either side of the route. Middle ground and distant views towards the Site beyond the immediate hedgerow and tree boundaries are none with views confined to the vehicular route.

Viewpoints 2, 2a, 2b and 2c

- 4.57 Photo viewpoints 2 and 2a are located at the entrance to the PRoW - Footpath route WOKW7 located along Redlake Lane. Immediate foreground views along Redlake Lane are focussed on Gardeners Green Ford and the adjacent raised footpath access with areas of dense hedgerows and trees bordering the narrow vehicular route. A single storey farm building can be glimpsed beyond the vegetation in the centre of the view, with the route of the PRoW WOKW7 accessed along a narrow track bordered by dense vegetation.
- 4.58 Photo viewpoint 2b is located along the PRoW WOKW7 on a track that provides access to horse stables. For much of the PRoW route the path is bordered by dense hedgerows, before foreground and middle ground views open out along this section of the PRoW across an area of open fields associated with the horse stables located beyond a timber post and rail fence. Beyond the

immediate fields, middle ground views can be gained towards the dense tree cover located along the north western boundary of the Site, these views continue with distant views along the length of the northern boundary. Photo viewpoint 2c is located adjacent to the boundary of Easthampstead Road located adjacent to an area of farm buildings, viewing south towards the Site. Immediate foreground views from this location along the PRoW are across an area grassland surrounding the farm buildings and arable land. Middle ground views extend across the arable fields towards the dense tree cover along the length of the northern Site boundary. Views towards the Site from this location are hemmed in by the dense boundary vegetation with the Site also enclosed from the wider landscape.

Viewpoints 3, 3a, 3b

- 4.59 Photo viewpoint 3 represents the vehicular receptors of Easthampstead Road at the junction with the PRoW WOKW6 to the north of the Site. Foreground and middle ground views are narrow and confined along the vehicular route of Easthampstead Road, bordered by mature tree lined hedgerows on either side of the route on an east to west axis. Middle ground and distant views beyond the immediate hedgerow and tree boundaries are glimpsed only with views focussed on the vehicular route. Photo viewpoint 3a represents the PRoW WOKW6 users located to the north of the Site and north of Easthampstead Road. Immediate foreground views are across an area of open grassland, with middle ground views towards the hedgerows and trees bordering Easthampstead Road. Glimpsed views can be gained beyond the tree line of Easthampstead Road towards the side elevation of farm buildings at Prior's Farm, views towards the wider landscape from this location are not possible due to intervening vegetation. Photo viewpoint 3b represents the users of PRoW BRA FP15 located to the north east of Old Wokingham Road. The PRoW is located along an elevated location to the north east of the Site at approximately 70-75m AOD. Immediate foreground views from this location are across a farm access track and the adjacent arable fields, with views to the south towards the Site dominated by mature tree lined hedgerow boundaries which border Old Wokingham Road and the boundary of the Downshire Golf Complex.

Viewpoints 4, 5 and 5a

- 4.60 Photo viewpoints 4 represents Old Wokingham Road and Easthampstead Road vehicular receptors along with a small number of residential receptors located at the road junction. Narrow and glimpsed views can be gained along the tree lined route of Old Wokingham Road, with foreground views focussed on the road network and the associated junction. Mature trees and understorey scrub are located along the length of Old Wokingham Road and Easthampstead Road, except for a short break in the tree cover at the entrance to Easthampstead Road. Views beyond the boundary trees are glimpsed across an area of arable land with distant views towards the line of mature trees located along the northern boundary of the Site. Photo viewpoints 5 and 5a represent the vehicular receptors of Old Wokingham Road located adjacent to the Site to the east. Foreground views from this location are focussed on the vehicular route which is bordered on either side by mature scrub, hedgerow and tree planting along the length of the route.

Viewpoints 6, 6a

- 4.61 Viewpoints 6 and 6a represent the view available from the informal footpath receptors located within Pine Wood located adjacent to the Site boundary and boundary of Newlands Farm to the south. A number of footpath routes cross through Pine Wood, with one footpath route located in

close proximity to the boundary of the woodland to the north. The route of the footpaths are set amongst a dense wooded corridor of existing mature trees and understorey scrub planting on either side of the route. Where the occasional break in the tree and understorey scrub cover appears, glimpsed and partial views can be gained beyond the boundary woodland cover towards the Site and the existing arable crops of Newlands Farm. Photo viewpoint 6a is located along the boundary of Pine Wood with Newlands Farm, where a break in the boundary vegetation appears. Immediate foreground views are across an area of grassland and arable crops of Newlands Farm with full and partial views towards the centre of the Site. In the middle ground of the view the post and wire fence and mature trees to the left of the view demarcate the southern Site boundary with the outbuildings of Newlands Farm located to the right of the view.

Viewpoint 7

- 4.62 Viewpoint 7 represents the vehicular users of Honey Hill located to the west of the Site, with views along the vehicular route primarily focussed on the narrow road bordered on either side by mature scrub, hedgerow and tree planting. Where there is a short break in tree cover along the road a glimpsed view of the woodland planting along the southern Site boundary can be gained beyond the boundary scrub planting along Honey Hill Road. Except for this short section of road where the tree cover is limited, there are no views of the Site due to distance, orientation of the vehicular route and dense intervening vegetation.

Viewpoints 8, 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d and 8e

- 4.63 Viewpoints 8 to 8e represent the views available from the PRoW receptor WOKW8, located to the north, adjacent, through the Site and to the south. Viewpoint 8 is located along the PRoW footpath located adjacent to the boundary of the Site with Honey Hill Cottage, located off Honey Hill Road. Views from viewpoint 8 are focussed on foreground views of the grounds of Honey Hill Cottage, with garden boundary timber palisade fencing and the canopies of mature trees located along the Site boundary dominating the view. The route of the PRoW and the Site boundary is located in the centre of the view between the timber palisade fencing, with glimpsed views towards the Site possible along the footpath route and below the tree canopy.
- 4.64 Photo viewpoint 8a is located along the PRoW WOKW8, located within the Site and adjacent to the southern Site boundary. From this location foreground views are across the centre of the Site which is dominated by an area of open grassland, with the route of the PRoW WOKW8 across the centre of the view. The mature line of trees located in the middle ground of the view from the northern boundary of the Site with glimpsed views beyond towards the arable fields to the north of the Site where breaks in the tree cover appear in the centre of the view. From this location distant and glimpsed views can be gained towards Newlands Farm and an area planted with an arable crop, a number of individual trees located in the middle of the fields along with views of the wooded southern and northern Site boundaries.
- 4.65 Photo viewpoint 8b is located along the PRoW WOKW8, located within the Site and adjacent to the northern boundary. From this location foreground views are focussed on the open area of grassland within the centre of the Site, with views towards the wider extents of the Site possible to the east and west. Located beyond the grassland views are dominated by the mature tree planting located along the length of the southern Site boundary, with the route of the PRoW located across the centre of the view. Photo viewpoint 8c is located adjacent to the Site boundary to the north, with immediate foreground views dominated by the arable crops in the field and the mature trees

and understorey scrub located along the length of the northern Site boundary. In the centre of the view there is a break in the tree cover along the boundary that allows for partial views across the centre of the Site and views towards the mature tree planting along the southern boundary of the Site. These views are narrow and confined to a short gap in the tree cover, with views towards the wider Site obscured by intervening boundary planting.

- 4.66 Photo viewpoints 8d and 8e are located across an area of arable land to the north of the Site with foreground views along the PRoW route focussed on the immediate arable fields and crop. Views across the arable crop are towards the mature tree cover along the length of the northern boundary.

Viewpoint 9

- 4.67 Photo viewpoint 9 represents the vehicular users of Redlake Lane, located in close proximity to Gardeners Green Ford located to the west of the Site. Foreground views are focussed on the narrow vehicular route which is bordered by dense vegetation on either side of the road. The eastern boundary of the road is bordered by a timber post and rail fence with glimpsed views beyond towards an area of low-lying scrub planting and mature trees located beyond. Middle ground views along Redlake Lane are focussed on Gardeners Green Ford and the adjacent raised footpath access with areas of dense hedgerows and trees bordering the narrow vehicular route. There are no views towards the Site from these locations due to distance, orientation of the vehicular routes and dense intervening vegetation.

Summary of Visual Baseline

- 4.68 The baseline analysis results in a number of reasoned conclusions which are summarised below:
- Existing mature, hedgerows, trees and woodland surround the Site, enclosing the Site from the wider landscape context;
 - Receptors are limited to Residential, PRoW and Vehicular receptors within the Site, adjacent and in close proximity to the Site;
 - Views are possible for the PRoW footpath WOKW8 when passing through the Site and viewing towards the wooded boundary of the Site from the north;
 - Views from the PRoW footpath WOKW8 located to the south of the Site will be limited with views only possible when located in close proximity to the south of the Site;
 - Views will be possible for the users of PRoW footpath WOKW7 located to the north and north west towards the wooded northern boundary of the Site;
 - To the south, views from receptors are limited to those located in close proximity or adjacent to the Site boundary, such as users of the Pinewood Campus and footpath routes through Pine Wood; and
 - Views from Residential, PRoW, Road and other receptors in the wider context are not possible due to distance, topography and intervening vegetation.

5.0 LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Introduction

- 5.1 The development proposals are described in the information accompanying the planning application. The existing landscape resource and the visual receptors and amenity of the Site have been considered by the planning and design process and have informed the resultant scheme. This approach has entailed collaboration between landscape, ecological and other professionals.

Landscape Design and GI Objectives

- 5.2 The key objectives of the landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are as follows:
- The SANG will provide for a primary circular route of 2.3km around the Site and a secondary circular route of 1.5km.
 - The SANG will create a strong green framework which draws upon and enhances what currently exists, to maximise recreational and wildlife value.
 - The SANG will be designed so that it is perceived to be safe by users, areas of the SANG will be open and will not have tree and scrub cover along parts of the walking routes.
 - The SANG will provide paths across the Site that can be easily used and well maintained;
 - The SANG will be a semi-natural space with little intrusion of artificial structures, except in the immediate vicinity of the car park. Some visually-sensitive way-markers and benches will be provided across the Site.
 - An access point and a new access road and associated footpath route to the Site will be provided off Old Wokingham Road with provision for twenty seven parking spaces located to the west of Newlands Farm;
 - The SANG will be free from unpleasant intrusions (e.g. sewage treatment works smells etc).
 - Conserve all of the Site's trees, hedgerows and woodland cover where possible;
 - Retain existing habitats wherever possible and complement with new landscaping and planting; and
 - Retain the existing PRoW (PRoW – Footpath - WOKW8) route across the Site;

Landscape and Green Infrastructure (GI) Proposals

- 5.3 The landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are detailed in the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application. In summary these proposals include:
- Interpretation boards and signage will be provided at the entrance and the proposed car park to the SANG;
 - The SANG will provide a naturalistic space with areas of open (non-wooded) countryside and areas of dense and scattered trees and shrubs. The provision of wetland areas will be located across the Site;
 - The retention of the majority of the Site's existing vegetation with removal limited to a number of trees located to provide Site access from Old Wokingham Road to the east;

- The existing PRow (PRow – Footpath - WOKW8) route across the Site will be enhanced with new footbridge crossing to replace the existing degraded bridges. for year-round use and allowing the new routes to tie into surrounding network;
- Footpath routes across the Site will be either gravel paths, across boardwalks or mown grass routes;
- Existing low lying central areas of the Site prone to flooding are to be designed as open wetland; and
- The existing wet woodland across the Site is to be extended across low lying areas of the Site.

Landscape Management

- 5.4 All of the landscape areas and public open space features will be managed and maintained. This would be achieved through the implementation of a comprehensive Landscape Management Plan (LMP), to ensure the successful establishment and continued thriving of the landscape proposals.

6.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

6.1 The following section outlines the likely landscape and visual effects that would arise from proposed development on the Site. Schedules detailing these likely landscape and visual effects for the receptors are included in Appendices B and C respectively. Please refer to these in conjunction with the following descriptions.

Landscape Effects

Construction

6.2 During the construction phase, some short-term effects upon the landscape would occur. Anticipated effects would primarily be caused by:

- Clearance and set up of the compound area;
- Construction of access road into the Site from the eastern boundary in order to facilitate Site access via Old Wokingham Road;
- Building of new access road, footpath route and associated car parking area providing for twenty-seven parking spaces located to the west of Newlands Farm;
- Construction of the proposed wetland areas across the Site;
- Construction of the proposed boardwalk routes and self-binding gravel footpath routes across the Site; and
- Construction traffic, including HGVs and staff cars travelling to and from the Site;

6.3 All construction work would be carried out in full accordance with best practice procedures to minimise and protect, as far as practicable, potentially adverse effects upon the local landscape character. Appropriate methods will be adopted to protect and retain trees and vegetation based upon BS5837.

6.4 The landscape effects during construction are assessed as being of a temporary nature and given that the timescales involved would be relatively short, this is considered to be of limited significance overall. Inevitably there would be some disruption to the Site landscape character and its immediate surroundings during the construction phase, however it would be localised and limited in extent. The landscape effects during construction are considered to be no greater than **moderate adverse** for the Site and **minor adverse or negligible** for wider landscape areas.

Operation (following Completion)

National Character Area, 129 Thames Basin Heaths

6.5 The Site is located within the NCA 129 'Thames Basin Heaths' which covers an extensive area. The proposed development gives opportunities to achieve some of the strategic opportunities identified in the NCA including SE02. *"Maximise the variety of ecosystem services delivered by wooded features – from wet woodlands in the Kennet Valley to the large conifer plantations around Camberley and new woodlands. Conserve soils, water, biodiversity and the sense of place and history; enhance timber and biomass production; and provide for recreation and tranquillity as appropriate."*

- 6.6 This will be achieved by the retention of the existing woodland and wet woodland across the Site along with the provision of the proposed wet woodland and wetland and a range of integrated multi-functional green spaces which will reinforce the existing landscape features of value within the Site, while the proposed development will not result in any changes to the overall key characteristics of the NCA.
- 6.7 The susceptibility to change, value and overall sensitivity of the landscape will vary across this large character area. At this scale the magnitude of landscape change arising from the construction of the SANG located to the west of Old Wokingham Road set within an existing robust GI framework would be **negligible/none**. There would be no material change to the key characteristics that define the NCA.
- 6.8 The Site occupies a very small area of this large NCA, landscape effects are considered to be **negligible/none** on completion and the landscape effect at year 15 is assessed to be **negligible/none**.

Borough Landscape Character Assessment, Wokingham District Council Landscape Character Assessment (2004)

Type M - Forested and Settled Sands, M1 - Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands

- 6.9 At a borough wide level the Site lies within the 'M1 - Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands' LCA, located to the south east of the LCA. The proposed SANG development is of a relatively modest scale and nature in the context of the broader LCA, with the SANG located in close proximity to Old Wokingham Road to the east, Pine Wood to the South, Gardeners Green to the west and Hampstead Road to the north.
- 6.10 Under the heading Key Characteristics the LCA states: '*A landscape dominated by interconnected forestry and woodland*', '*A strong sense of enclosure and disorientation afforded by the often continuous swathes of large coniferous woodland mass.*' and '*Rich wildlife habitats associated with the acidic soils including numerous large lakes and bogs –containing notable and regionally restricted species.*' The proposals will retain and enhance the existing network of vegetation, trees, woodland and wet woodland located across the Site and adjacent to the Site.
- 6.11 The LCA description includes the following heading '*The Changing Landscape: Key Issues*' a number of sub headings are outlined including '*Forestry and Woodland Management*' where the report states; '*Aim to continue to increase the extent of native deciduous woodland using natural regeneration or locally occurring native species to enhance the wooded character of the landscape. The aim should be to link existing sites without loss of significant views.*' Under the heading '*Habitat/Natural Features*' the report states '*Conserve remaining important wetland habitats through appropriate management.*' And under the '*Recreation*' heading '*Seek sympathetic integration of new recreational features and seek to locate such activities in areas of low tranquillity. Encourage the use of this landscape for informal recreation but ensure appropriate management, particularly in relation to the Rights of Way network.*'
- 6.12 The proposals will respond to the "The Changing Landscape: Key Issues' by increasing the extent of native deciduous woodland or locally occurring native species across the SANG to enhance the wooded character of the landscape, conserve the existing wetland habitats on Site and create and encourage the use of the Site for informal recreation.

- 6.13 The landscape effects on the LCA at completion and at year 15 are considered to be **minor beneficial** as the existing and proposed GI within and adjacent to the Site helps to integrate the SANG into its surrounding context.

Type N - Pastoral Sandy Lowland, N1 - Holme Green Pastoral Sandy

- 6.14 At a borough wide level the Site is located adjacent to the south eastern boundary of 'N1: Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland' LCA, located to the south east of the LCA. The proposed SANG development is of a relatively modest scale and nature in the context of the broader LCA, with the SANG located in close proximity to Old Wokingham Road to the east, adjacent to the Site to the south, Gardeners Green to the west and Hampstead Road to the north.
- 6.15 Under the description the LCA states: *'The rural area is sparsely settled. However, the edges of Wokingham are visible. There are a few clusters of settlement at Home Green and Gardeners Green and the area is also characterised by the presence of large manor houses which have been converted into education establishments.'*
- 6.16 Under the heading Key Characteristics the LCA states: *'An agricultural landscape defined predominantly by pastoral farming contained within medium-sized and geometrically shaped fields and largely divided by post and wire and rough timber fencing'* and *'A landscape evoking a generally peaceful character.'* The proposals will retain and enhance the existing network of vegetation, trees, woodland and wet woodland located within the Site and adjacent to the Site, while also evoking a peaceful character.
- 6.17 The LCA description includes the following heading *'The Changing Landscape: Key Issues'* a number of and sub headings are outlined including *'Forestry and Woodland Management'* where the report states; *'Aim to continue to increase the extent of native deciduous woodland using natural regeneration or locally occurring native species to enhance the wooded character of the Landscape.'*
- 6.18 The proposals will respond to the *'The Changing Landscape: Key issues'* by increasing the extent of native deciduous woodland and native species across the SANG to enhance the wooded character of the landscape.
- 6.19 The landscape effects on the LCA at completion and at year 15 are considered to be **minor beneficial** as the existing and proposed GI within and adjacent to the Site helps to integrate the SANG into its surrounding context.

Type N - Pastoral Sandy Lowland, Urban Area

- 6.20 The landscape effects on the Type N - Pastoral Sandy Lowland, Urban Area at completion and at year 15 are considered to be **none** due to distance from the Site.

Bracknell Forest Landscape Character Assessment (2015)

- 6.21 The landscape effects on the *'Type A - Forested Sands, A1 - Bracknell Forest'* and *'Type A - Wooded Estates G1 - Easthampstead Wooded Estate'* at completion and at year 15 are considered to be **none**.

Site and Immediate Context

- 6.22 The primary change would arise as a direct result of the replacement of fields with the SANG and associated infrastructure, with access provided off Old Wokingham Road. The SANG will inevitably alter the physical fabric and character of the Site, while the proposals will introduce new extensive areas of green infrastructure across the Site.
- 6.23 The proposals will retain and enhance existing landscape features where feasible, with existing hedgerows and woodland along the boundaries of the Site and existing trees and hedgerows through the Site retained. Watley's Copse Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland located adjacent to the Site to the west will also be retained.
- 6.24 The PRoW WOKW8 footpath located through the Site on a north to south axis will be incorporated along its existing alignment passing through the centre area of the SANG. The PRoW will provide links to the footpath network across the wider Site which will include the primary 2.3km circular walking route and a secondary circular route of 1.5km. These footpath routes across the Site will be across boardwalks for year-round use or self binding gravel paths or mown grass routes.
- 6.25 The proposed GI of the SANG will provide a naturalistic space with areas of open (non-wooded) flower rich grassland scattered with tree and scrub planting across the centre of the Site. The existing wet woodland within the Site is to be extended across the low lying areas of the Site with new areas of wet woodland and proposed wetland which will serve to enhance the overall biodiversity and habitat value across the Site.
- 6.26 Areas of proposed woodland planting will be located along the Site boundaries to reinforce the existing woodland network and provide an area of separation and enclosure from the wider landscape along an open section of the southern boundary of the Site. The majority of the Site's existing vegetation will be retained with removal limited to a number of trees to provide Site access from Old Wokingham Road to the east;
- 6.27 The proposals would not erode the wider landscape setting, with the SANG in keeping with the scale and context of the surrounding GI located across the Site. The Site is already separated from the wider landscape context by the existing GI through and surrounding the Site and the SANG will be successfully integrated into the surrounding context. Overall, the proposals have responded to the constraints of the Site including topography, views and existing landscape features and retains and enhances the vast majority of existing GI across the Site where feasible.
- 6.28 Overall, the proposals have responded to the constraints of the Site including topography and views, while retaining the existing landscape features such as existing trees, hedgerows and woodland across the vast majority of the Site where feasible. Effects upon the Site and its immediate context are considered to be **moderate / minor beneficial** at completion and **moderate beneficial** at year 15.

Visual Effects

Visual Envelope (VE)

- 6.29 The VE (Figure 6) of the proposed development identifies the surrounding land from within which views towards any part of the proposed development are likely to be possible. The VE is not however, an indicator of the effect of the proposed development on the view but simply, its visible extent in the surrounding landscape.

- 6.30 A hand drawn VE for the proposed development was initially prepared based upon the local topography context and proposed building heights. This has then been reviewed on Site and refined to take account of the visual 'screening' provided by buildings, trees and other features.
- 6.31 These effects are predicted to affect a number of the visual receptors identified in **Figure 6** and are discussed further in the report.
- 6.32 The visual envelope is extremely localised in its extent with the existing layers of hedgerow, tree and woodland along the boundary of the Site, through the adjacent field network and along, Redlake Lane and Easthampstead Road limiting the extent of the VE to the north. The Newlands Farm Industrial Estate and Newlands Farm located adjacent to the Site to the east together with the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses enclose the Site to the east. Views towards the proposed Site from Old Wokingham Road will be possible adjacent to the proposed Site access.
- 6.33 Pine Wood, the Pinewood Campus and the Pinewood Centre are located within the immediate context adjacent to the Site to the south. The Pinewood Campus and Centre are both set back from the Site boundary located beyond mature woodland and trees along the boundary with Newlands Farm and the Site, with existing mature trees restricting the extent of the VE. The VE does extend to a number of footpaths within the northern extent of Pine Wood with views towards Newlands Farm and the Site where breaks in the boundary woodland cover appear. Areas of existing mature hedgerows and woodland such as the Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland of Watley's Copse located to the north east of Honey Hill Road restrict visibility towards the Site from the south west.
- 6.34 There could be some limited locations (beyond the extent of the VE shown) that could have a very limited view to a part of the development. Equally, there could be some locations shown within the VE that would not experience any views to the resultant development.

Construction

- 6.35 During the construction phase, there will be some short term reversible adverse visual effects.
- 6.36 Anticipated effects will primarily be caused by:
- Clearance and set up of compound area;
 - New Site access located off Old Wokingham Road;
 - New highway works;
 - New earthworks associated with the creation of the proposed Wetland Areas
 - Building works including the proposed boardwalks and footpath routes across the Site;
 - Construction traffic including HGVs and staff cars travelling to and from the Site.
- 6.37 All construction works will be carried out in full accordance with best practice procedures to minimise, as far as practicable, potentially adverse effects; and the visual effects during construction are assessed as being of a transient nature and, given that the timescales involved will be relatively short, this is considered to be of limited significance overall.
- 6.38 Inevitably there will be some disruption to the Site and its immediate surroundings during this phase of works. However, the effects will be limited to the local area. Construction effects for sensitive receptors such as the PROW WOKW8 located within the Site and footpaths located close to the Site boundary within Pine Wood are considered to result in **moderate / minor adverse** visual

effects, however, for less sensitive receptors and those at a distance from the Site, effects will range from **minor adverse / negligible** to **negligible**.

Operation (following Completion)

- 6.39 The following provides a summary of the visual effects assessment included at Appendix C.
- 6.40 Include also details of the longer term effects arising as the landscape/planting matures under the headings below
- 6.41 Residential Properties and Settlement

Old Wokingham Road (Receptor A):

- 6.42 Residential receptors of Old Wokingham Road located adjacent and in close proximity to the Site (approximately 4 dwellings) and approximately 0.1km to the north east (approximately 4 dwellings). Properties front on to Old Wokingham Road, while set back beyond private driveways, boundary walls and gardens. For the residential property located to the north of the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses the proposed site access is located adjacent to the north, existing views of the farm track will be replaced with views of the new SANG access road. Glimpsed views of the access road will be located beyond the proposed closed boarded fence that will provide screening along the Site boundary. For properties located in close proximity to the Site where the Site access is proposed off Old Wokingham Road, there will be glimpsed oblique views beyond the boundary of the property towards the proposed access road where there is a break in the boundary planting. Properties located further afield along Old Wokingham Road will experience glimpsed to no views towards the Site due to the intervening vegetation located along the boundary of Old Wokingham Road and the Site that forms a dominant feature along the road.
- 6.43 Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for residential receptors located off Old Wokingham Road. The overall visual effect for these residential receptors are assessed as **negligible / none** at completion and at year 15.

Newlands Farm (B)

- 6.44 The residential receptor of Newlands Farm is located adjacent to the Site to the east. The property is two storeys in height and sides and back onto the Site. View from this receptor will comprise of full, partial to glimpsed views of the proposals from either ground floor, upper floor and views from gardens. Views from Newlands Farm will change from views over existing arable land to close range views of proposed tree and hedgerow planting along the Site boundary, with the proposed Site access and car park located beyond to the north and the proposed SANG with associated GI located to the west.
- 6.45 Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for residential receptors located of Newlands Farm. Visual effects on these residential receptors are assessed as **negligible** at completion and at year 15 as planting proposed to the Site boundaries matures.

Honey Hill and residents in wider context(Receptor C):

- 6.46 Visual effects for residential receptors of Honey Hill road and other residents located in the wider landscape would be **negligible / none** at completion and at year 15 due to intervening vegetation and built form in the surrounding context that restrict views towards the Site.

Public Rights of Way (PROW) and Other Footpaths etcPRoW - Footpath - WOKW8 (Receptor D):

- 6.47 Views from the PRoW WOKW8 vary along the route from full, partial, glimpsed to no views. Located approximately 0.3km to the north of the Site the PRoW WOKW8 is accessed off Easthampstead Road, where it passes a number of farm buildings to the south of Easthampstead Road and through a number of arable fields on the approach towards the Site. Full, partial to glimpsed views beyond the arable fields are possible towards the woodland located along the northern boundary of the Site along this section of the route. Views beyond the existing woodland boundary to areas in the wider context are not possible from this location. In closer proximity to the Site where breaks in the boundary woodland cover appear, glimpsed views are possible of the existing grassland within the centre of the Site beyond the boundary vegetation. Existing glimpsed views of the existing grassland will be replaced, with views towards areas of new deciduous woodland planting located along the boundary that will reinforce the existing woodland. Where glimpsed views beyond the woodland planting do occur, views will be towards the central area of proposed scrub and tree planting and associated wetland areas. As the proposed GI within the Site matures, this will further reinforce the existing woodland and planting located along the boundary of the Site.
- 6.48 Where the PRoW WOKW8 passes through the Site existing full to partial views across the central area of grassland will be replaced with full to partial views of the proposed SANG and associated GI. The PRoW WOKW8 located through the Site, will be incorporated along its existing alignment passing through the central area of the SANG which will incorporate areas of proposed scrub, tree, woodland planting and associated wetland areas. There will also be footpath connections to the PRoW WOKW8 which will provide for continuous circular walking routes and other connections across the wider SANG Site. These footpath routes across the Site will be across boardwalks for year-round use or self binding gravel paths or mown grass routes. As the proposed planting matures through the Site this will help to integrate the development into the surrounding context.
- 6.49 To the South the PRoW WOKW8 passes through the grounds of Honey Hill Cottage located off Honey Hill road. When located immediately adjacent to the boundary of the Site to the South views towards the Site are confined by the high timber palisade fencing to the garden boundaries of Honey Hill Cottage, with views beyond towards the canopies of mature trees located along the southern boundary of the Site. Glimpsed and narrow views can be gained along the path of the PRoW WOKW8 and through the tree canopy towards the Site. Glimpsed views are only possible when located adjacent to the Site boundary along the PRoW WOKW8, views towards the Site further to the south are none.
- 6.50 Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for views from this PRoW. The overall visual effects for this receptor are assessed as **moderate / minor beneficial** at completion and at year 15.

PRoW - Footpath - WOKW7 (Receptor E):

- 6.51 Views from the PRoW WOKW7 vary along the route from full, partial, glimpsed to no views. Located approximately 0.1km to the north west of the Site the PRoW WOKW7 is accessed off Easthampstead Road to the north east and Redlake Lane to the north west. The eastern section of the PRoW is located through an area of arable fields with the western extent of the PRoW located along an access track that provides access to some horse stables and paddocks. Full, partial to

glimpsed views beyond the arable fields and horse paddocks are possible towards the woodland located along the northern boundary of the Site along the length of the route. Views beyond the existing woodland boundary to areas in the wider context are not possible from this location.

- 6.52 Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for views from this PRoW. The overall visual effect for these residential receptors are assessed as **negligible / none** at completion and at year 15.

Roads & Transport Users

Old Wokingham Road (Receptor F)

- 6.53 Views towards the Site from this road receptor on the approach and adjacent to the Site will be glimpsed to none. Located adjacent to the Site along Old Wokingham Road the extent of any views will focussed on the existing mature tree and boundary scrub vegetation located along the boundary of the Site. Views towards the Site would primarily be none with vehicles travelling at speed, any glimpsed views would be short, transient, fleeting and side beyond intervening vegetation. Where the Site access is proposed off Old Wokingham Road short, transient, oblique and partial views will be possible into the Site along the primary access road where there is a break in the boundary planting. Views towards the Site from the wider extents of Old Wokingham Road would be none, due to intervening built form and existing vegetation along the vehicular route.
- 6.54 Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for vehicular receptors of Old Wokingham Road. The overall visual effect for these residential receptors are assessed as **negligible / none** at completion and at year 15.

Other Visual Receptors

Easthampstead Road (Receptor G), Newlands Farm Industrial Estate (Receptor H) and Pine Wood Campus and Pinewood Centre (Receptor I)

- 6.55 Views from this group of receptors consist primarily of people at their place of work located in close proximity to the Site to the north, east and south. For the receptors of Easthampstead Road and the Pine Wood Campus and Pinewood Centre located in close proximity to the north and adjacent to the Site to the south the boundaries are bordered by hedgerows, scrub and mature trees.
- 6.56 For receptors of Easthampstead Road to the north views towards the Site will be partial, glimpsed to none. Existing views out from the southern extent of the area are focussed on the adjacent arable land with the existing mature trees located along the northern boundary of the Site located beyond. Views into the Site and further afield are prevented by the mature tree planting along the northern boundary of the Site.
- 6.57 For users of Newlands Farm Industrial Estate partial to glimpsed views of arable land will change to views beyond the existing boundary to close range views of the proposed GI located across the SANG to the west. Views to the south from the Newlands Farm Industrial Estate will change from views over an existing farm track to close range views of the proposed Site access road located, with glimpsed views of the the proposed car park located beyond to the south west.
- 6.58 For the receptors of the Pinewood Campus and the Pinewood Centre located adjacent to the Site to the south, views towards the Site will be partial, glimpsed to none. Views out from the northern

extent of the Pinewood Campus and the Pinewood Centre are focussed on the adjacent mature trees of Pine Wood and mature trees located along the Site boundary.

- 6.59 Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for users of this receptor. The overall visual effect for these residential receptors are assessed as **negligible / none** at completion and at year 15.

Pine Wood (Receptor J)

- 6.60 Adjacent to the south of the Site the footpath network located within Pine Wood passes through dense woodland cover with views from the majority of the footpath routes confined along wooded corridors. Full, partial to glimpsed views towards the Site are only possible when located adjacent to the northern boundary of Pine Wood and where breaks in the woodland cover appear. Where the footpath passes in close proximity to the Site existing full, partial to glimpsed views across an area of arable land will be replaced with views towards the proposed GI located within the Site along with a future connection to the SANG path network from within Pine Wood.
- 6.61 Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for views from these footpaths. The overall visual effects for this receptor are assessed as **moderate / minor beneficial** at completion and at year 15.

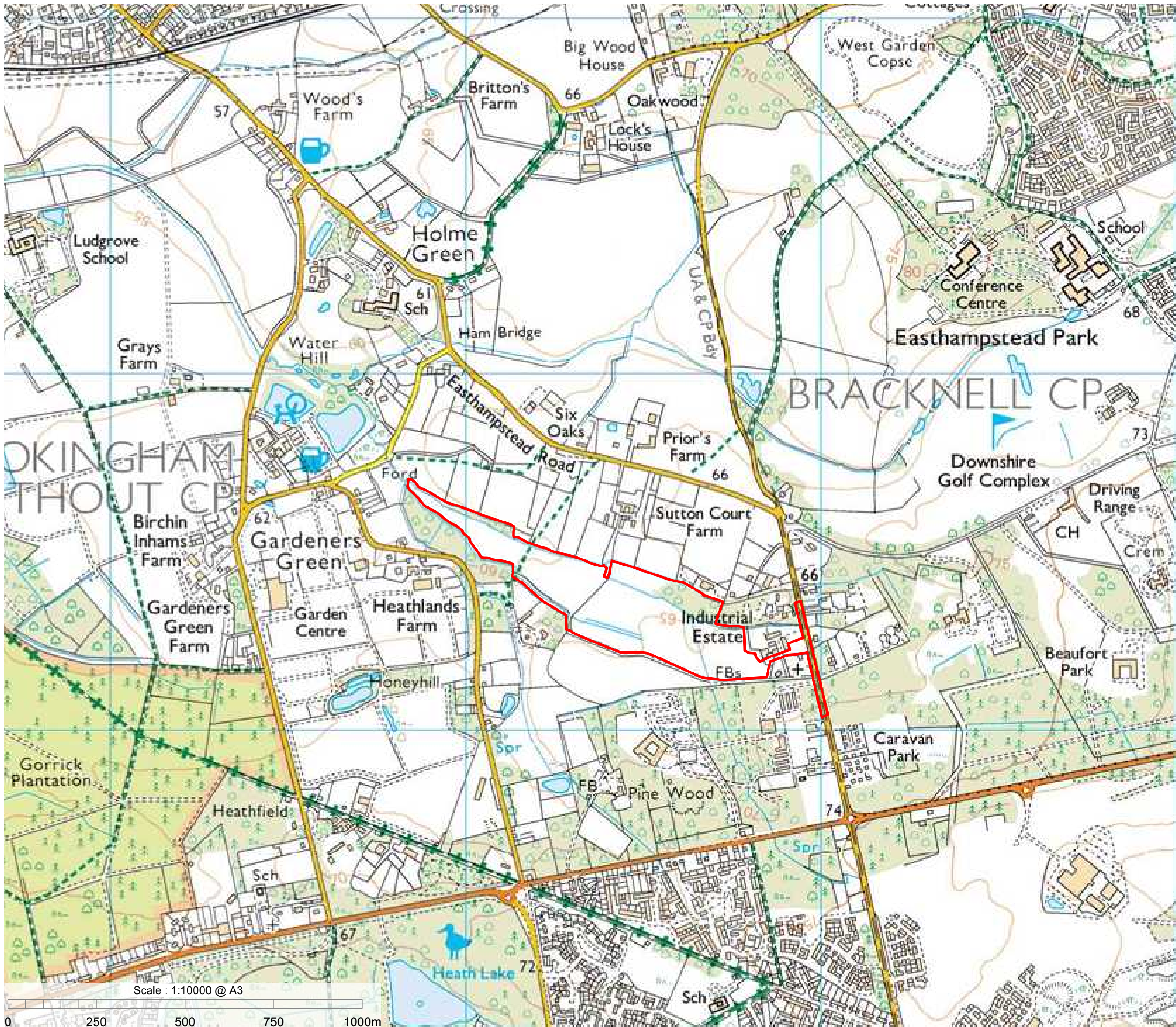
Night-time Visual Effects

- 6.62 The project will follow the latest best practice guidance on lighting installations to minimise lighting emissions and pollution on the surrounding landscape and on the night time skies. The Site is located in close proximity to Bracknell to the east with lighting proposals limited to the new access road located off Old Wokingham Road and the proposed car parking area providing twenty seven parking spaces located to the west of Newlands Farm.


7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The Site is approximately 16.37 hectares (ha) in total and located between Bracknell and Wokingham in Berkshire. The Site is surrounded by a mixture of pine woods, grazing pasture, golf courses and fruit farms. The Site encompasses a number of grazing pasture field parcels and areas of woodland.
- 7.2 The proposed development is for a SANG, located in the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). The SANG will provide a circular walking route of 2.3km along with secondary routes across the Site. The Green Infrastructure (GI) of the SANG will comprise of existing woodland, wet woodland, trees & vegetation across the Site along with proposed areas of flowering grassland, trees, scrub, proposed deciduous woodland, wet woodland and wetlands. Site access and a car park with interpretation boards and signage will be provided off Old Wokingham Road.
- 7.3 The Site and its wider landscape context including its approximate VE are not subject to any national, local or other landscape designations. The Site is located within the Thames Heath SPA and the Ancient & Semi- Natural Woodland of Watley's Copse is located adjacent to the Site to the south west. The Site is in private ownership and the majority of the Site is not currently publicly accessible, however the PRow WOKW8 crosses through the Site on a north to south axis.
- 7.4 Having considered relevant designations, natural and cultural heritage, landscape condition, associations, distinctiveness, recreation, perceptual and functional aspect, it is judged that the Site and its immediate landscape context are of **medium** landscape value.
- 7.5 At a national level the Site is located within the 129 'Thames Basin Heaths' which covers an extensive area, landscape effects are considered to be **negligible/none** on completion and at year 15. At a borough wide level the Site lies within the LCA 'M1 - Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands', landscape effects on the LCA at completion and at year 15 are considered to be **minor beneficial**. At a borough wide level the Site is located adjacent to the south eastern boundary of 'N1: Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland' LCA, landscape effects on the LCA at completion and at year 15 are considered to be **minor beneficial**. Effects upon the Site and its Immediate Context are considered to be **moderate / minor beneficial** at completion and **moderate beneficial** at year 15.
- 7.6 Residential receptors of Old Wokingham Road are located in close proximity to the Site and approximately 0.1km to the north east. The overall visual effect for these residential receptors are assessed as **negligible / none** at completion and at year 15. For the residential receptor of Newlands Farm located adjacent to the Site to the east the overall visual effects on these residential receptors are assessed as **negligible** at completion and at year 15. For residential receptors of Honey Hill road and other residents located in the wider landscape would be **negligible / none** at completion and at year 15.
- 7.7 For PRow receptors of PRow WOKW8 located to the north, through the Site and to the south the overall visual effects for this receptor are assessed as **moderate / minor beneficial** at completion and at year 15. For PRow receptors of PRow WOKW7 located to the north west and north the overall visual effect for these residential receptors are assessed as **negligible / none** at completion and at year 15.

- 7.8 For vehicular receptors views of the proposals will be restricted to users travelling along the local road network adjacent to the Site along Old Wokingham Road to the east. The overall visual effect for these residential receptors are assessed as **negligible / none** at completion and at year 15.
- 7.9 For the other receptors of Easthampstead Road, Newlands Farm Industrial Estate and Pine Wood Campus and Pinewood Centre the overall visual effect for these residential receptors are assessed as **negligible / none** at completion and at year 15. For the receptors of the footpaths within Pine Wood the overall visual effects for this receptor are assessed as **moderate / minor beneficial** at completion and at year 15.
- 7.10 Overall, it is considered the development proposals demonstrate a well-considered approach to the landscape and context of the Site and appropriate development of the Site has the potential to successfully integrate into the local surroundings without any unacceptable landscape or visual effects.



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KEY
 Site Boundary

client
 The Thomas Family & Bloor
 Homes Limited
 project
 Land at Newlands Farm
 Old Wokingham Road

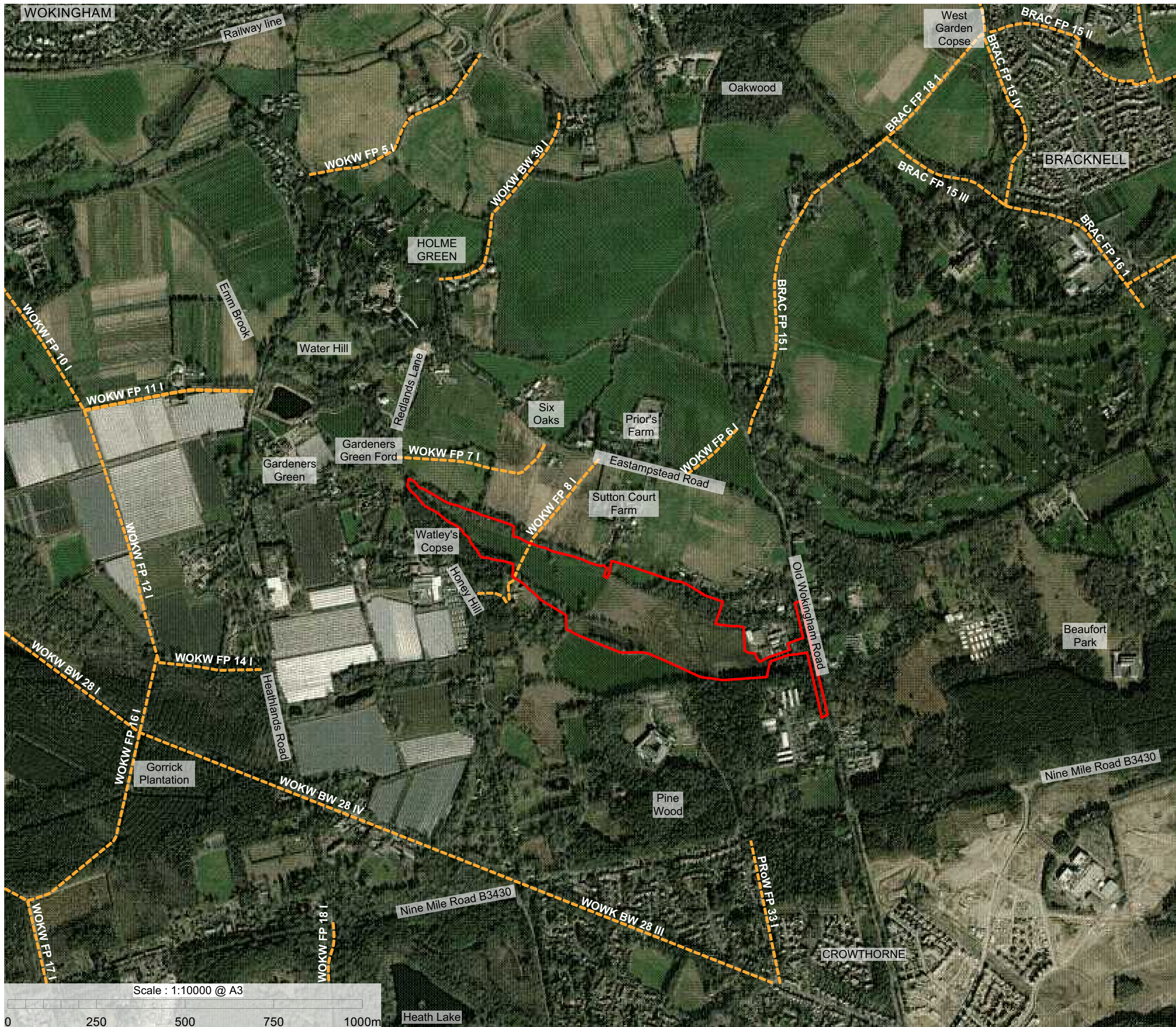
fpcr

drawing title
SITE LOCATION

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drawing/figure number
Figure 1 issue B

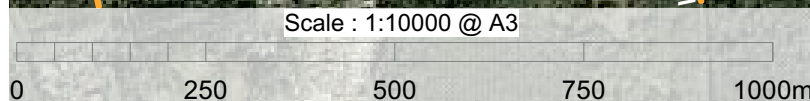
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KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Public Right of Way

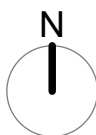


fpcr client
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 Homes Limited
 project
 Land at Newlands Farm
 Old Wokingham Road

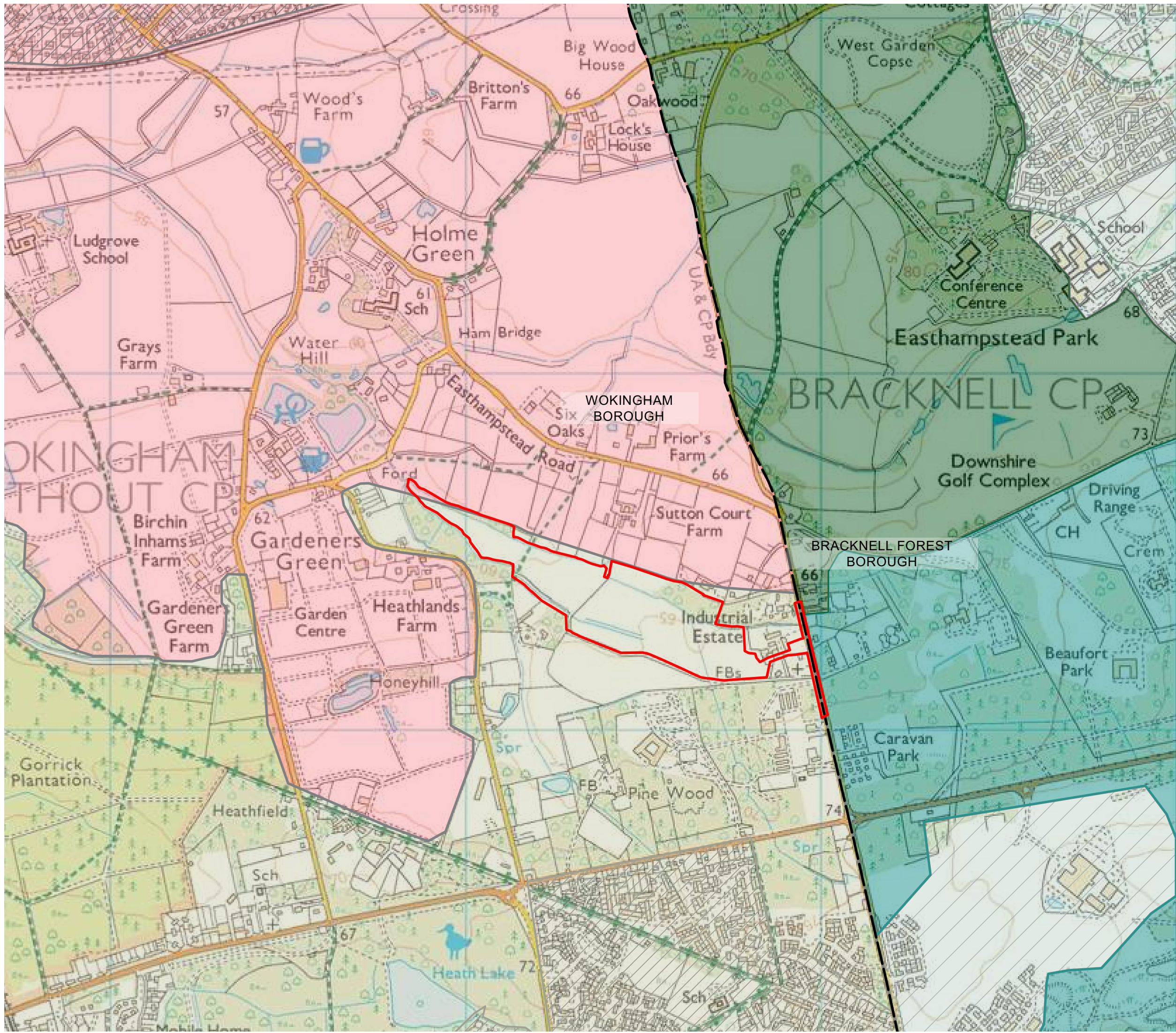
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KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Local Authority District Boundary

The study area lies within National Character Area (NCA) 129 - Thames Basin Heaths

Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2019) Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)

Type M - Forested and Settled Sands

-  M1 - Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands

Type N - Pastoral Sandy Lowland


-  N1 - Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland
-  Urban Areas

Bracknell Forest Landscape Character Assessment (2015) Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)

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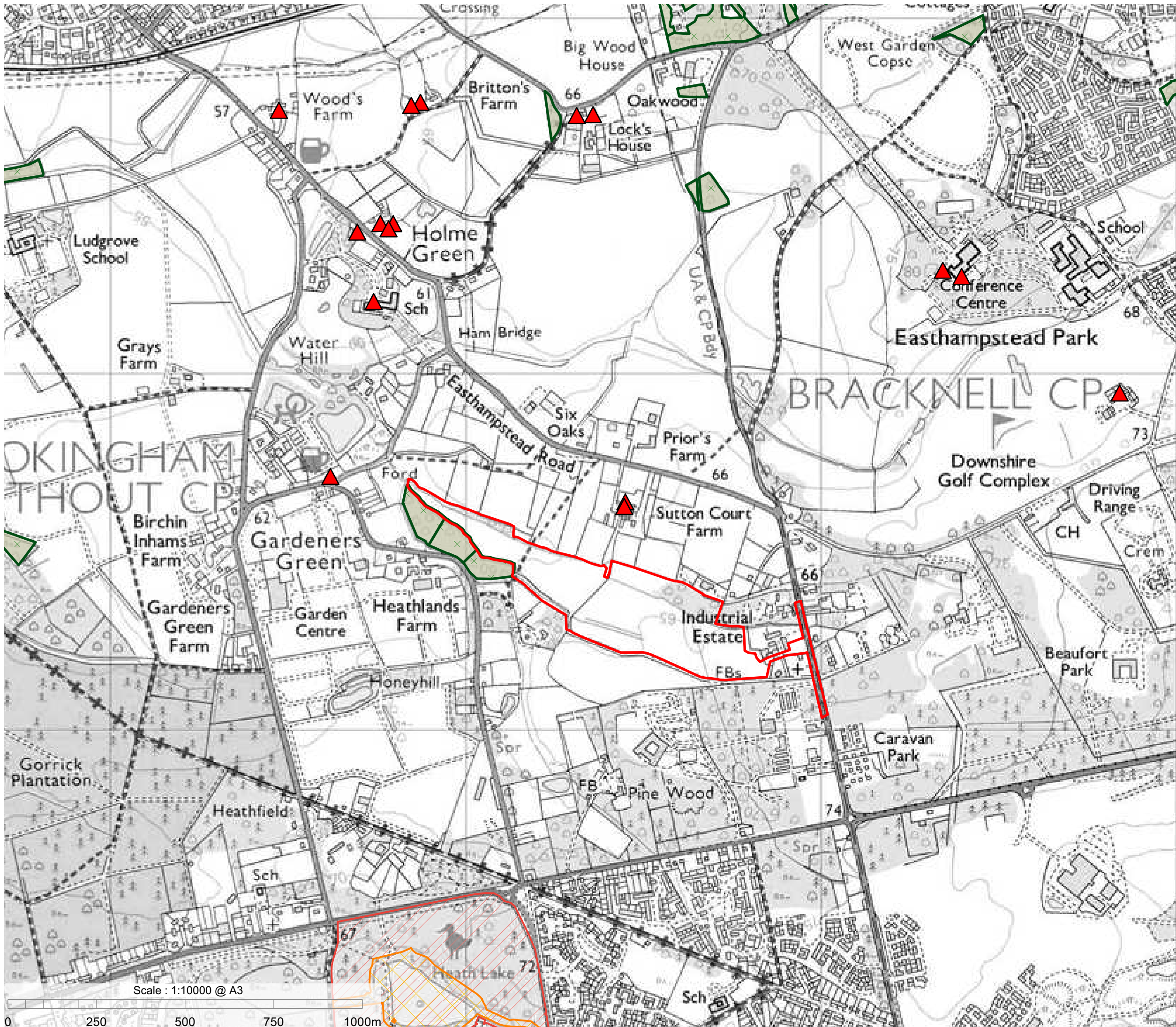
-  A1 - Bracknell Forest

Type A - Wooded Estates






-  G1 - Easthampstead Wooded Estate
-  Urban Areas

client
 The Thomas Family & Bloor Homes Limited
 project
 Land at Newlands Farm
 Old Wokingham Road
 drawing title
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

scale
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 date created
 21 December 2023
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Figure 3
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- KEY**
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 -  Listed Buildings
 -  Ancient Woodland
 -  Local Nature Reserves
 -  SSSI

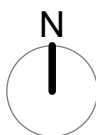
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 project
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 Old Wokingham Road

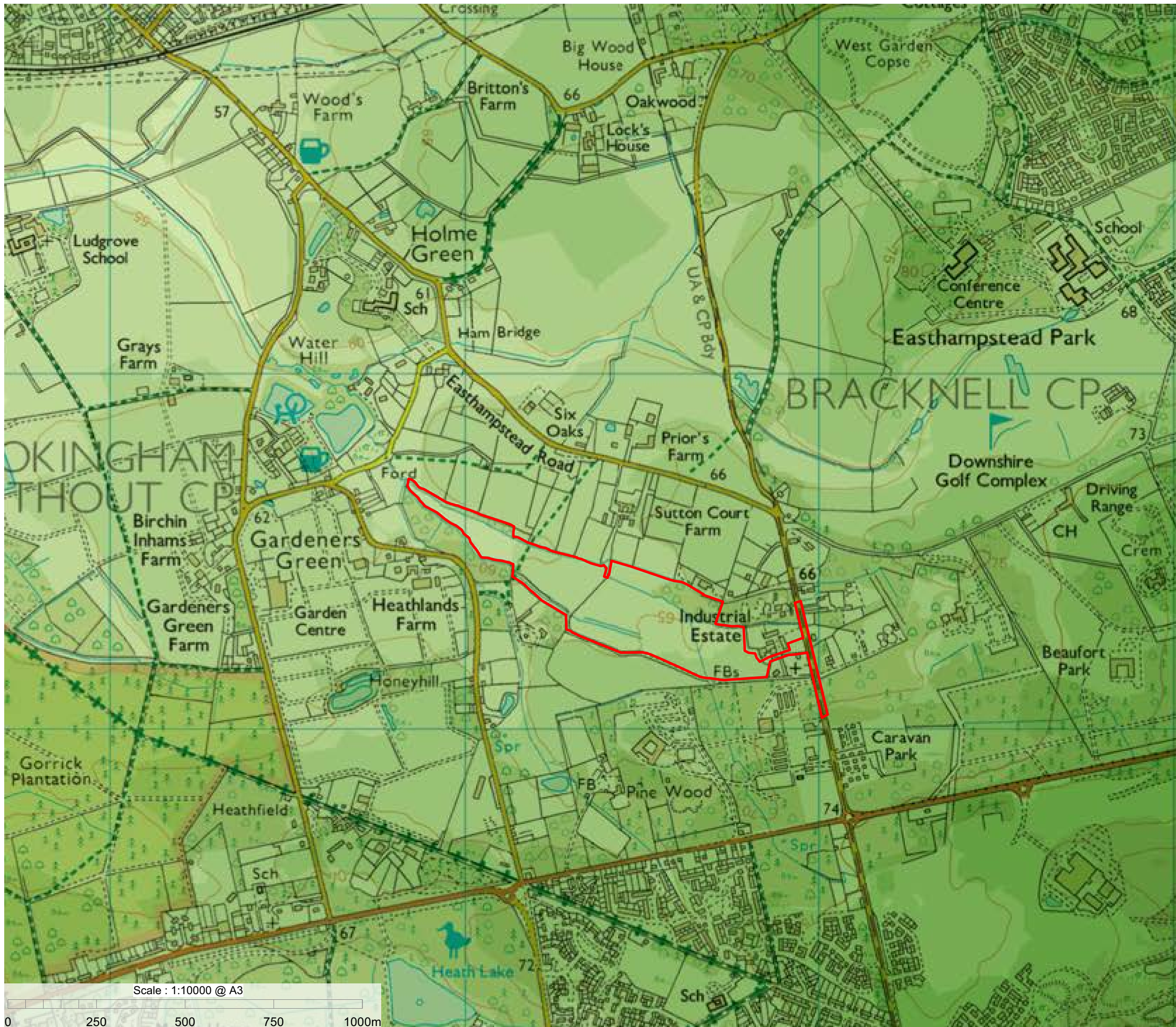
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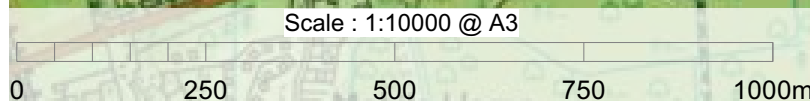


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- KEY**
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 -  45-50m AOD
 -  50-55m AOD
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 -  65-70m AOD
 -  70-75m AOD
 -  75-80m AOD



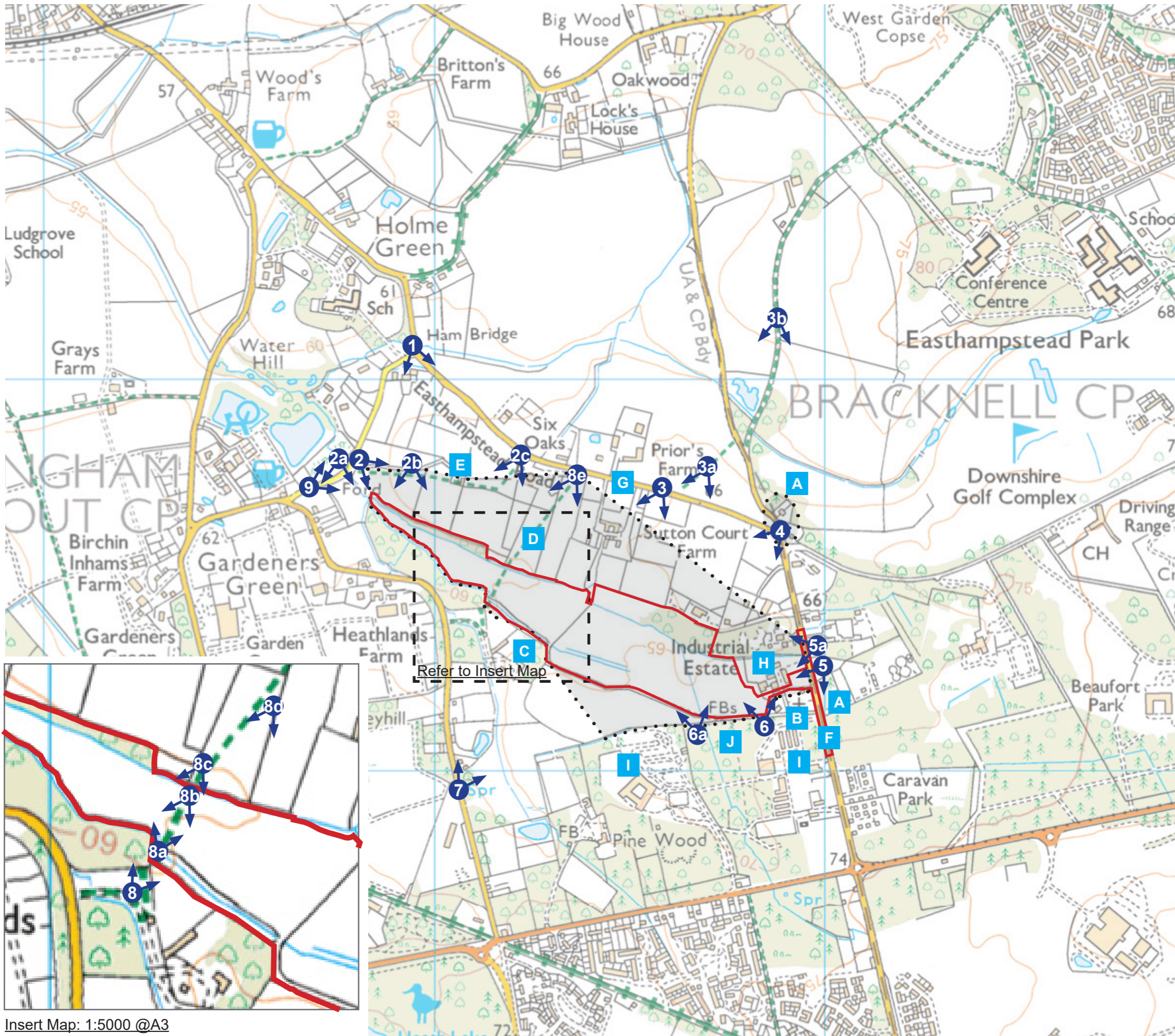
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 Land at Newlands Farm
 Old Wokingham Road

drawing title
TOPOGRAPHY

scale 1:10000 @ A3 drn EMA chk MPS date created 21 December 2023





drawing/figure number **Figure 5** issue -

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-  Site Boundary
-  Photo Viewpoint Location
-  Visual Receptors
-  Approximate Extent of Visual Envelope

*Note:-
The Visual Envelope provides a representative boundary and representative area of visual influence. Within the envelope, existing landscape and / or physical features such as woodland planting and topography, provide localised screening effects. Further distant views may occur outside the Envelope boundary, although the significance of these views is considered to be negligible as a result of the distance and intervening screening effects.

Visual Receptor List

- Residential**
 - A - Old Wokingham Road (East)
 - B - Newlands Farm (East)
 - C - Honey Hill (Adjacent South West, West)
- PRoWs**
 - D - PRoW - Footpath - WOKW8 (North, Adjacent, through Site and South)
 - E - PRoW - Footpath - WOKW7 (North West)
- Road**
 - F - Old Wokingham Road (North East, East, South East)
- Other**
 - G - Easthampstead Road - Places of Work (North)
 - H - Newlands Farm Industrial Estate (East)
 - I - Pine Wood Campus and Pinewood Centre (East and South)
 - J - Pine Wood (Adjacent South)

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client
Bloor Homes

project
Land at Newlands Farm,
Old Wokingham Road

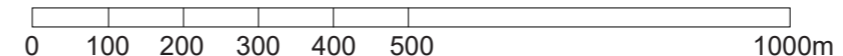
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MPS

issue date
December 2023

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Appendix A

Appendix A

Landscape and Visual Appraisal – Methodology and Assessment Criteria

Introduction

- 1.0 The methodology for the Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) undertaken for the proposed development is detailed in the LVA report. The following information should be read in conjunction with this methodology.
- 1.1 As advised in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) (GLVIA3), the judgements made in respect of both landscape and visual effects are a combination of an assessment of the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the landscape or visual effect. The following details the definitions and criteria used in assessing sensitivity and magnitude for landscape and visual receptors.
- 1.2 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as High/ Medium or Moderate/ Minor etc. This indicates that the assessment lies between the respective definitions or encompasses aspects of both.

Landscape

Landscape Sensitivity

- 1.3 Landscape receptors are assessed in terms of their 'Landscape Sensitivity'. This combines judgements on the value to be attached to the landscape and the susceptibility to change of the landscape from the type of change or development proposed. The definition and criteria adopted for these contributory factors is detailed below.
- 1.4 There can be complex relationships between the value attached to landscape receptors and their susceptibility to change which can be especially important when considering change within or close to designated landscapes. For example, an internationally, nationally or locally valued landscape does not automatically or by definition have a high susceptibility to all types of change. The type of change or development proposed may not compromise the specific basis for the value attached to the landscape.

Landscape Value

- 1.5 Value can apply to a landscape area as a whole, or to the individual elements, features and aesthetic or perceptual dimensions which contribute to the character of the landscape. The following criteria have been used to categorise landscape value. Where there is no clear existing evidence on landscape value, an assessment is made based on the criteria/ factors identified below (based on the guidance in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21 "Assessing landscape value outside national designations", (which provides more up to date guidance than Box 5.1 of GLVIA3).

- Natural Heritage
- Cultural Heritage
- Landscape Condition
- Associations
- Distinctiveness
- Recreational
- Perceptual (scenic)
- Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)
- Functional

Landscape Value	Definition
High	Landscape receptors of high importance based upon factors of natural and cultural heritage, condition, distinctiveness, recreational value, perceptual qualities associations and functional aspects.
Medium	Landscape receptors of medium importance based upon factors of natural and cultural heritage, condition, distinctiveness, recreational value, perceptual qualities and quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreational value, perceptual qualities, associations and functional aspects.
Low	Landscape receptors of low importance based upon factors of natural and cultural heritage, condition, distinctiveness, recreational value, perceptual qualities and quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreational value, perceptual qualities, associations and functional aspects.

Landscape Susceptibility to Change

- 1.6 This means the ability of the landscape receptor (overall character type/ area or individual element/ feature) to accommodate the change (i.e. the proposed development) without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline position and/ or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies. The definition and criteria for the assessment of Landscape Susceptibility to Change is as follows:

Landscape Susceptibility to Change	Definition
High	A highly distinctive and cohesive landscape receptor, with positive characteristics and features with no or very few detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features intact and in very good condition and/ or rare. Limited capacity to accept the type of change/ development proposed.
Medium	Distinctive and more commonplace landscape receptor, with some positive characteristics/ features and some detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features in moderate condition. Capacity to accept well planned and designed change/ development of the type proposed.
Low	Landscape receptor of mixed character with a lack of coherence and including detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features that may be in poor or improving condition and few that could not be replaced. Greater capacity to accept the type of change/ development proposed.

Magnitude of Landscape Effects

- 1.7 The magnitude of landscape effects is the degree of change to the landscape receptor in terms of its size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. The table below sets out the categories and criteria adopted in respect of the separate considerations of Scale or Size of the Degree of Change, Reversibility the geographical extent and duration of change are described where relevant in the appraisal.

Scale or Size of the Degree of Landscape Change

Scale or Size of the Degree of Landscape Change	Definition
High	Total loss of or substantial alteration to key characteristics / features and the introduction of new elements totally uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be fundamentally changed.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key characteristics / features and the introduction of new elements that would be evident but not necessarily uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be obviously changed.
Low	Limited loss of, or alteration to one or more key characteristics/ features and the introduction of new elements evident and/ or characteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be perceptibly changed.
Negligible	Very minor alteration to one or more key characteristics/ features and the introduction of new elements characteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be minimally changed.
None	No loss or alteration to the key characteristics/ features, representing 'no change'.

Geographical Extent

Geographical extent	Definition
Extensive	Notable change to an extensive proportion of the geographic area.
Moderate	Notable change to part of the geographic area,
Minimal	Change over a limited part of the geographic area.
Negligible	Change over a very limited part of the geographical area

Duration

Duration	Definition
Short term	The change will occur for up to 5 years.
Medium Term	The change will occur for between 5 and 10 years.
Long term	The change will occur for over 10 years

Reversibility

Reversibility	Definition
Irreversible	The development would be permanent and the assessment site could not be returned to its current/ former use.

Reversible	The development could be deconstructed/ demolished and the assessment site could be returned to broadly its current/ historic use (although that may be subject to qualification depending on the nature of the development).
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Visual

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 1.8 Visual sensitivity assesses each visual receptor in terms of their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity and also the value attached to particular views. The definition and criteria adopted for these contributory factors is detailed below.

Visual Susceptibility to Change

- 1.9 The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of; firstly, the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and secondly, the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focussed on the views and visual amenity they experience.

Visual Susceptibility to Change	Definition
High	Residents at home with primary views from ground floor/garden and upper floors. Public rights of way/ footways where attention is primarily focussed on the landscape and on particular views. Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape and/ or on particular views. Communities where views make an important contribution to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents. Travellers on recognised scenic routes.
Medium	Residents at home with secondary views (primarily from first floor level). Public rights of way/ footways where attention is not primarily focussed on the landscape and/ or particular views. Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes.
Low	Users of outdoor recreational facilities where the view is less important to the activities (e.g. sports pitches). Travellers on road, rail or other transport where views are primarily focussed on the transport route. People at their place of work where views of the landscape are not important to the quality of the working life.

Value of Views

- 1.10 The value attached to a view takes account of any recognition attached to a particular view and/ or any indicators of the value attached to views, for example through guidebooks or defined viewpoints or references in literature or art.

Value of Views	Definition
High	A unique or identified view (e.g. shown as such on Ordnance Survey map, guidebook or tourist map) or one noted in literature or art. A view where a heritage asset makes an important contribution to the view.
Medium	A typical and/ or representative view from a particular receptor.
Low	An undistinguished or unremarkable view from a particular receptor.

Magnitude of Visual Effects

- 1.11 Magnitude of Visual Effects evaluates each of the visual effects in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. The table below sets out the categories and criteria adopted in respect of the Scale or Size (including the degree of contrast) of Visual Change. The distance and nature of the view and whether the receptor's view will be stationary or moving are also detailed in the Visual Effects Table.

Scale or Size of the Degree of Visual Change	Definition
High	The proposal will result in a large and immediately apparent change in the view, being a dominant and new and/ or incongruous feature in the landscape.
Medium	The proposal will result in an obvious and recognisable change in the view and will be readily noticed by the viewer.
Low	The proposal will constitute a minor component of the wider view or a more recognisable component that reflects those apparent in the existing view. Awareness of the proposals will not have a marked effect on the overall nature of the view.
Negligible/ None	Only a very small part of the proposal will be discernible and it will have very little or no effect on the nature of the view.

Level of Effect

- 1.12 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects. This overall judgement is formed from a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the assessment criteria.
- 1.13 GLVIA3 notes, at paragraphs 5.56 and 6.44, that there are no hard and fast rules with regard to the level of effects, therefore the following descriptive thresholds have been used for this appraisal:
- **Major**
 - **Moderate**
 - **Minor**
 - **Negligible**

- 1.14 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as, for example, Major/ Moderate or Moderate/ Minor. This indicates that the effect is assessed to lie between the respective definitions or to encompass aspects of both.

Appendix B

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
National Landscape Character									
Natural England, National Character Area Profile (NCA) National Character Area 129 - Thames Basin Heaths	There will be variation in susceptibility to change across the NCA. It is considered to be Medium at a local scale as there are no landscape designations on the site itself.	There will be variations in landscape value across the NCA but it is considered to be Medium at the local scale.	Medium	Construction: Negligible / None Completion: Negligible / None Year 15: Negligible / None	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Site is located within the NCA 129 'Thames Basin Heaths' which covers an extensive area. The proposed development gives opportunities to achieve some of the strategic opportunities identified in the NCA including SE02. "Maximise the variety of ecosystem services delivered by wooded features – from wet woodlands in the Kennet Valley to the large conifer plantations around Camberley and new woodlands. Conserve soils, water, biodiversity and the sense of place and history; enhance timber and biomass production; and provide for recreation and tranquillity as appropriate." This will be achieved by the retention of the existing woodland and wet woodland across the Site along with the provision of the proposed wet woodland and wetland and a range of integrated multi-functional green spaces which will reinforce the existing landscape character of the Site, while the proposed development will not result in any changes to the overall key characteristics of the NCA. 	Negligible / None	Negligible / None	Negligible / None

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	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
Landscape Character Assessment (LCA): County/District									
Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2019) <u>Type M - Forested and Settled Sands</u> M1 - Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands	There is variation in susceptibility to change across this broad area. Predominantly Medium	There is variation in value across this broad area. Predominantly Medium	Medium	Construction: Low Completion: Low Year 15: Low	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a borough wide level the Site lies within the 'M1 - Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands' LCA, located to the south east of the LCA. The proposed SANG development is of a relatively modest scale and nature in the context of the broader LCA, with the SANG located in close proximity to Old Wokingham Road to the east, Pine Wood to the South, Gardeners Green to the west and Hampstead Road to the north. Under the heading Key Characteristics the LCA states: 'A landscape dominated by interconnected forestry and woodland', 'A strong sense of enclosure and disorientation afforded by the often continuous swathes of large coniferous woodland mass.' and 'Rich wildlife habitats associated with the acidic soils including numerous large lakes and bogs –containing notable and regionally restricted species.' The proposals will retain and enhance the existing network of vegetation, trees, woodland and wet woodland located across the Site and adjacent to the Site. The LCA description includes the following heading 'The Changing Landscape: Key Issues' a number of sub headings are outlined including 'Forestry and Woodland Management' where the report states; 'Aim to continue to increase the extent of native deciduous woodland using natural regeneration or locally occurring native species to enhance the wooded character of the landscape. The aim should be to link existing sites without loss of significant views.' Under the heading 'Habitat/Natural Features' the report states 'Conserve remaining important wetland habitats through appropriate management.' And under the 'Recreation' heading 'Seek sympathetic integration of new recreational features and seek to locate such activities in areas of low tranquillity. Encourage the use of this landscape for informal recreation but ensure appropriate management, particularly in relation to the Rights of Way network.' 	Minor Adverse	Minor Beneficial	Minor Beneficial

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Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposals will respond to the "The Changing Landscape: Key Issues" by increasing the extent of native deciduous woodland or locally occurring native species across the SANG to enhance the wooded character of the landscape, conserve the existing wetland habitats on Site and create and encourage the use of the Site for informal recreation. 			
<p>Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2019)</p> <p><u>Type N - Pastoral Sandy Lowland</u></p> <p>N1 - Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland</p>	There is variation in susceptibility to change across this broad area. Predominantly Medium	There is variation in value across this broad area. Predominantly Medium	Medium	Construction: Low Completion: Low / Negligible Year 15: Low / Negligible	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a borough wide level the Site is located adjacent to the south eastern boundary of 'N1: Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland' LCA, located to the south east of the LCA. The proposed SANG development is of a relatively modest scale and nature in the context of the broader LCA, with the SANG located in close proximity to Old Wokingham Road to the east, adjacent to the Site to the south, gardeners Green to the west and Hampstead Road to the north. Under the description the LCA states: <i>'The rural area is sparsely settled. However, the edges of Wokingham are visible. There are a few clusters of settlement at Home Green and Gardeners Green and the area is also characterised by the presence of large manor houses which have been converted into education establishments.'</i> Under the heading Key Characteristics the LCA states: <i>'An agricultural landscape defined predominantly by pastoral farming contained within medium-sized and geometrically shaped fields and largely divided by post and wire and rough timber fencing' and 'A landscape evoking a generally peaceful character.'</i> The proposals will retain and enhance the existing network of vegetation, trees, woodland and wet woodland located within the Site and adjacent to the Site, while also evoking a peaceful character. The LCA description includes the following heading <i>'The Changing Landscape: Key Issues'</i> a number of and sub headings are outlined including <i>'Forestry and Woodland Management'</i> where the report states; <i>'Aim to continue to increase the extent of native deciduous woodland using natural regeneration or locally occurring native species to enhance the wooded character of the Landscape.'</i> 	Minor Adverse	Minor Beneficial	Minor Beneficial

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposals will respond to the 'The Changing Landscape: Key issues' by increasing the extent of native deciduous woodland and native species across the SANG to enhance the wooded character of the landscape. 			
Landscape Character: Site and Immediate Context									
Site and Immediate Context	Medium	Medium	Medium	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Medium		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary change would arise as a direct result of the replacement of fields with the SANG and associated infrastructure, with access provided off Old Wokingham Road. The SANG will inevitably alter the physical fabric and character of the Site, while the proposals will introduce new extensive areas of green infrastructure across the Site. The proposals will retain and enhance existing landscape features where feasible, with existing hedgerows and woodland along the boundaries of the Site and existing trees and hedgerows through the Site retained. Watley's Copse Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland located adjacent to the Site to the west will also be retained. The PRoW WOKW8 footpath located through the Site on a north to south axis will be incorporated along its existing alignment passing through the centre area of the SANG. The PRoW will provide links to the footpath network across the wider Site which will include the primary 2.3km circular walking route and a secondary circular route of 1.5km. These footpath routes across the Site will be across boardwalks for year-round use or self binding gravel paths or mown grass routes. The proposed GI of the SANG will provide a naturalistic space with areas of open (non-wooded) flower rich grassland scattered with tree and scrub planting across the centre of the Site. The existing wet woodland within the Site is to be extended across the low lying areas of the Site with new areas of wet woodland and proposed wetland which will serve to enhance the overall biodiversity and habitat value across the Site. 	Moderate Adverse	Moderate / Minor Beneficial	Moderate Beneficial

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas of proposed woodland planting will be located along the Site boundaries to reinforce the existing woodland network and provide an area of separation and enclosure from the wider landscape along an open section of the southern boundary of the Site. The majority of the Site's existing vegetation will be retained with removal limited to a number of trees to provide Site access from Old Wokingham Road to the east; The proposals would not erode the wider landscape setting, with the SANG in keeping with the scale and context of the surrounding GI located across the Site. The Site is already separated from the wider landscape context by the existing GI through and surrounding the Site and the SANG will be successfully integrated into the surrounding context. Overall, the proposals have responded to the constraints of the Site including topography, views and existing landscape features and retains and enhances the vast majority of existing GI across the Site where feasible. 			

Appendix C

APPENDIX C: VISUAL EFFECTS TABLE (VET)												
Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs (including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) (approx. m/km)	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
A	Residential Old Wokingham Road	High	Medium	High / Medium	Approx 0.1km – Adjacent (North East, East)	Glimpse / None	Permanent	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible / None Year 15: Negligible / None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential receptors of Old Wokingham Road located adjacent and in close proximity to the Site (approximately 4 dwellings) and approximately 0.1km to the north east (approximately 4 dwellings). Properties front on to Old Wokingham Road, while set back beyond private driveways, boundary walls and gardens. For the residential property located to the north of the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses the proposed site access is located adjacent to the north, existing views of the farm track will be replaced with views of the new SANG access road. Glimpsed views of the access road will be located beyond the proposed closed boarded fence that will provide screening along the Site boundary. For properties located in close proximity to the Site where the Site access is proposed off Old Wokingham Road, there will be glimpsed oblique views beyond the boundary of the property towards the proposed access road where there is a break in the boundary planting. Properties located further afield along Old Wokingham Road will experience glimpsed to no views towards the Site due to the intervening vegetation located along the boundary of Old Wokingham Road and the Site that forms a dominant feature along the road. 	Negligible	Negligible / None	Negligible / None

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Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs (including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) (approx. m/km)	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None Adverse or Beneficial	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None Adverse or Beneficial	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None Adverse or Beneficial
									• Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for residential receptors located off Old Wokingham Road.			
B	Residential Newlands Farm	High	Medium	High / Medium	Adjacent (East)	Full/ Partial / Glimpse / None	Permanent	Construction: Low / Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The residential receptor of Newlands Farm is located adjacent to the Site to the east. • The property is two storeys in height and sides and back onto the Site. View from this receptor will comprise of full, partial to glimpsed views of the proposals from either ground floor, upper floor and views from gardens. • Views from Newlands Farm will change from views over existing arable land to close range views of proposed tree and hedgerow planting along the Site boundary, with the proposed Site access and car park located beyond to the north and the proposed SANG with associated GI located to the west. • Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for views from this PRow. 	Minor Adverse / Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
C	Residential Honey Hill and residents in wider context	High / Medium	Medium	High / Medium	Approx Adjacent - 0.07km (West, North West)	Partial / Glimpse / None	Permanent	Construction: Negligible Completion: None Year 15: None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual effects for residential receptors of Honey Hill road and other residents located in the wider landscape would be negligible / none at completion and at year 15 due to intervening vegetation and built form in the surrounding context that restrict views towards the Site. 	Negligible	Negligible / None	Negligible / None

APPENDIX C: VISUAL EFFECTS TABLE (VET)												
Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs (including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) (approx. m/km)	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
D	PRoW PRoW - Footpath - WOKW8	High	Medium	High / Medium	Approx 0.3km – 0.13km (North, Adjacent, through Site and South)	Full / Partial / Glimpse	Permanent	Construction: Medium / Low Completion: Medium / Low Year 15: Medium / Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views from the PRoW WOKW8 vary along the route from full, partial, glimpsed to no views. Located approximately 0.3km to the north of the Site the PRoW WOKW8 is accessed off Easthampstead Road, where it passes a number of farm buildings to the south of Easthampstead Road and through a number of arable fields on the approach towards the Site. Full, partial to glimpsed views beyond the arable fields are possible towards the woodland located along the northern boundary of the Site along this section of the route. Views beyond the existing woodland boundary to areas in the wider context are not possible from this location. In closer proximity to the Site where breaks in the boundary woodland cover appear, glimpsed views are possible of the existing grassland within the centre of the Site beyond the boundary vegetation. Existing glimpsed views of the existing grassland will be replaced, with views towards area of new deciduous woodland planting located along the boundary that will reinforce the existing woodland. Where glimpsed views beyond the woodland planting do occur, views will be towards the proposed the 	Moderate / Minor Adverse	Moderate / Minor Beneficial	Moderate / Minor Beneficial

APPENDIX C: VISUAL EFFECTS TABLE (VET)												
Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs <small>(including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)</small>	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) <small>(approx. m/km)</small>	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
									central area of proposed scrub and tree planting and associated wetland areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the proposed GI within the Site matures, this will further reinforce the existing woodland and planting located along the boundary of the Site. Where the PRoW WOKW8 passes through the Site existing full to partial views across the central area of grassland will be replaced with full to partial views of the proposed SANG and associated GI. The PRoW WOKW8 located through the Site, will be incorporated along its existing alignment passing through the central area of the SANG which will incorporate areas of proposed scrub, tree, woodland planting and associated wetland areas. There will also be footpath connections to the PRoW WOKW8 which will provide for continuous circular walking routes and other connections across the wider SANG Site. These footpath routes across the Site will be across boardwalks for year-round use or self binding gravel paths or mown grass routes. As the proposed planting matures through the Site this will help to integrate the development into the surrounding context. 			

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Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs (including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) (approx. m/km)	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
									<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To the South the PRow WOKW8 passes through the grounds of Honey Hill Cottage located off Honey Hill road. When located immediately adjacent to the boundary of the Site to the South views towards the Site are confined by the high timber palisade fencing to the garden boundaries of Honey Hill Cottage, with views beyond towards the canopies of mature trees located along the southern boundary of the Site. Glimpsed and narrow views can be gained along the path of the PRow WOKW8 and through the tree canopy towards the Site. Glimpsed views are only possible when located adjacent to the Site boundary along the PRow WOKW8, views towards the Site further to the south are none. Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for views from this PRow. 			
E	PRow PRow - Footpath - WOKW7	High	Medium	High / Medium	Approx 0.1km – 0.26km (North West, North)	Full / Partial / Glimpse	Permanent	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible / None Year 15: Negligible / None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views from the PRow WOKW7 vary along the route from full, partial, glimpsed to no views. Located approximately 0.1km to the north west of the Site the PRow WOKW7 is accessed off Easthampstead Road to the north east and Redlake Lane to the north west. 	Negligible	Negligible/None	Negligible/None

APPENDIX C: VISUAL EFFECTS TABLE (VET)												
Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs <small>(including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)</small>	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) <small>(approx. m/km)</small>	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
									<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The eastern section of the PRow is located through an area of arable fields with the western extent of the PRow located along an access track that provides access to some horse stables and paddocks. Full, partial to glimpsed views beyond the arable fields and horse paddocks are possible towards the woodland located along the northern boundary of the Site along the length of the route. Views beyond the existing woodland boundary to areas in the wider context are not possible from this location. Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for views from this PRow. 			
F	Road Old Wokingham Road	Medium	Medium	Medium	Approx 0.28km – 0.46km (North East, South East)	Glimpse / None	Permanent	Construction: Negligible Completion: None Year 15: None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views towards the Site from this road receptor on the approach and adjacent to the Site will be glimpsed to none. Located adjacent to the Site along Old Wokingham Road the extent of any views will focussed on the existing mature tree and boundary scrub vegetation located along the boundary of the Site. Views towards the Site would primarily be none with vehicles travelling at speed, any glimpsed views would be short, transient, fleeting and side beyond intervening vegetation. 	Negligible	Negligible / None	Negligible / None

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		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) (approx. m/km)	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
									<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the Site access is proposed off Old Wokingham Road short, transient, oblique and partial views will be possible into the Site along the primary access road where there is a break in the boundary planting. Views towards the Site from the wider extents of Old Wokingham Road would be none, due to intervening built form and existing vegetation along the vehicular route. Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for vehicular receptors of Old Wokingham Road. 			
G	Other Easthampstead Road (Places of Work)	Low	Medium	Low / Medium	Adjacent - Approx 0.29km (Adjacent, North)	Partial / Glimpse / None	Permanent	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible / None Year 15: Negligible / None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views from this group of receptors consist primarily of people at their place of work located in close proximity to the Site to the north, east and south. For the receptors of Easthampstead Road and the Pine Wood Campus and Pinewood Centre located in close proximity to the north and adjacent to the Site to the south the boundaries are bordered by hedgerows, scrub and mature trees. 	Negligible	Negligible / None	Negligible / None
H	Other Newlands Farm Industrial Estate (Places of Work)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Adjacent (East)	Partial / Glimpse / None	Permanent	Construction:Low / Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For receptors of Easthampstead Road to the north views towards the Site will be partial, glimpsed to none. Existing views out from the southern extent of the area are focussed on the adjacent arable land with the existing mature trees located along the northern 	Minor Adverse / Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
I	Other Pine Wood Campus and	Medium	Medium	Medium	Approx.	Partial / Glimpse / None	Permanent	Construction: Negligible		Negligible	Negligible / None	Negligible / None

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		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) (approx. m/km)	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
	Pinewood Centre (Places of Work)				Adjacent – 0.8km (East and South)			Completion: None Year 15: None	boundary of the Site located beyond. Views into the Site and further afield are prevented by the mature tree planting along the northern boundary of the Site. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For users of Newlands Farm Industrial Estate partial to glimpsed views of arable land will change to views beyond the existing boundary to close range views of the proposed GI located across the SANG to the west. Views to the south from the Newlands Farm Industrial Estate will change from views over an existing farm track to close range views of the proposed Site access road located, with glimpsed views of the the proposed car park located beyond to the south west. For the receptors of the Pinewood Campus and the Pinewood Centre located adjacent to the Site to the south, views towards the Site will be partial, glimpsed to none. Views out from the northern extent of the Pinewood Campus and the Pinewood Centre are focussed on the adjacent mature trees of Pine Wood and mature trees located along the Site boundary. Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for users of this receptor. 			
J	Other Pine Wood	High	Medium	High / Medium	Adjacent (South West)	Full/ Partial / Glimpse / None	Permanent	Construction: Medium / Low Completion: Medium / Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjacent to the South the footpath network located within Pine Wood passes through dense woodland 	Moderate / Minor Adverse	Moderate / Minor Beneficial	Moderate / Minor Beneficial

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		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) <small>(approx. m/km)</small>	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
								Year 15: Medium / Low	cover with views from the majority of the footpath routes confined along wooded corridors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full, partial to glimpsed views towards the Site are only possible when located adjacent to the northern boundary of Pine Wood and where breaks in the woodland cover appear. • Where the footpath passes in close proximity to the Site existing full, partial to glimpsed views across an area of arable land will be replaced with views towards the proposed GI located within the Site along with a future connection to the SANG path network from within Pine Wood. • Visibility of the proposed development will alter across seasons as leaf cover varies for views from these footpaths. 			