

Planning Inspectorate Ref: 6002030

Mid Sussex District Council Ref: DM/23/2866

Land East of Ansty, Cuckfield Bypass

Landscape and Visual Proof of Evidence
Volume 2: Plans and Appendices

Prepared by Mrs. Clare Brockhurst FLI, BSc (Hons), Dip LA

on behalf of

Fairfax Acquisitions Limited and The Norris Family

R003_2519 Appellant's landscape and visual proof of evidence 050526



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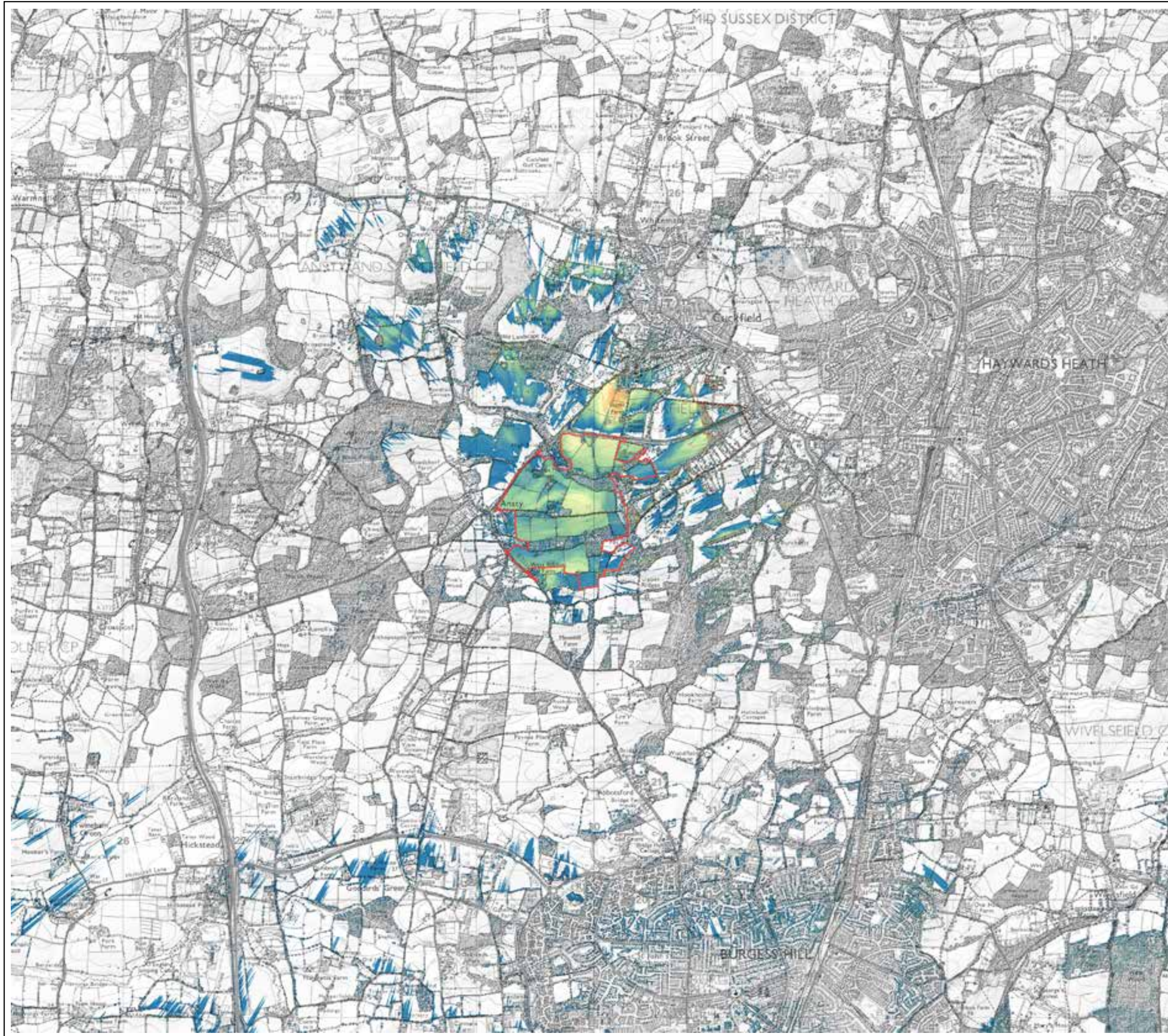
Appendix LP5: Article regarding Cambourne


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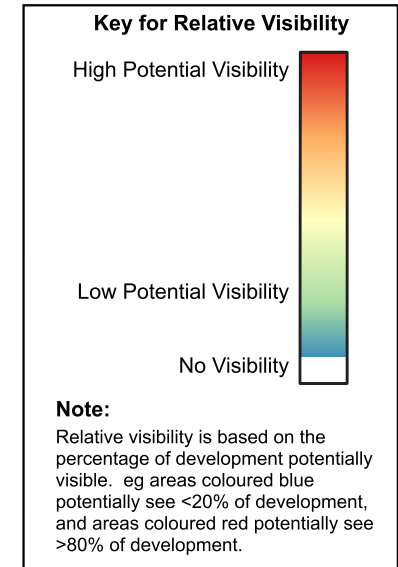
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Appendix LP1: Zone of Theoretical Visibility mapping – site wide



 Application Site Boundary



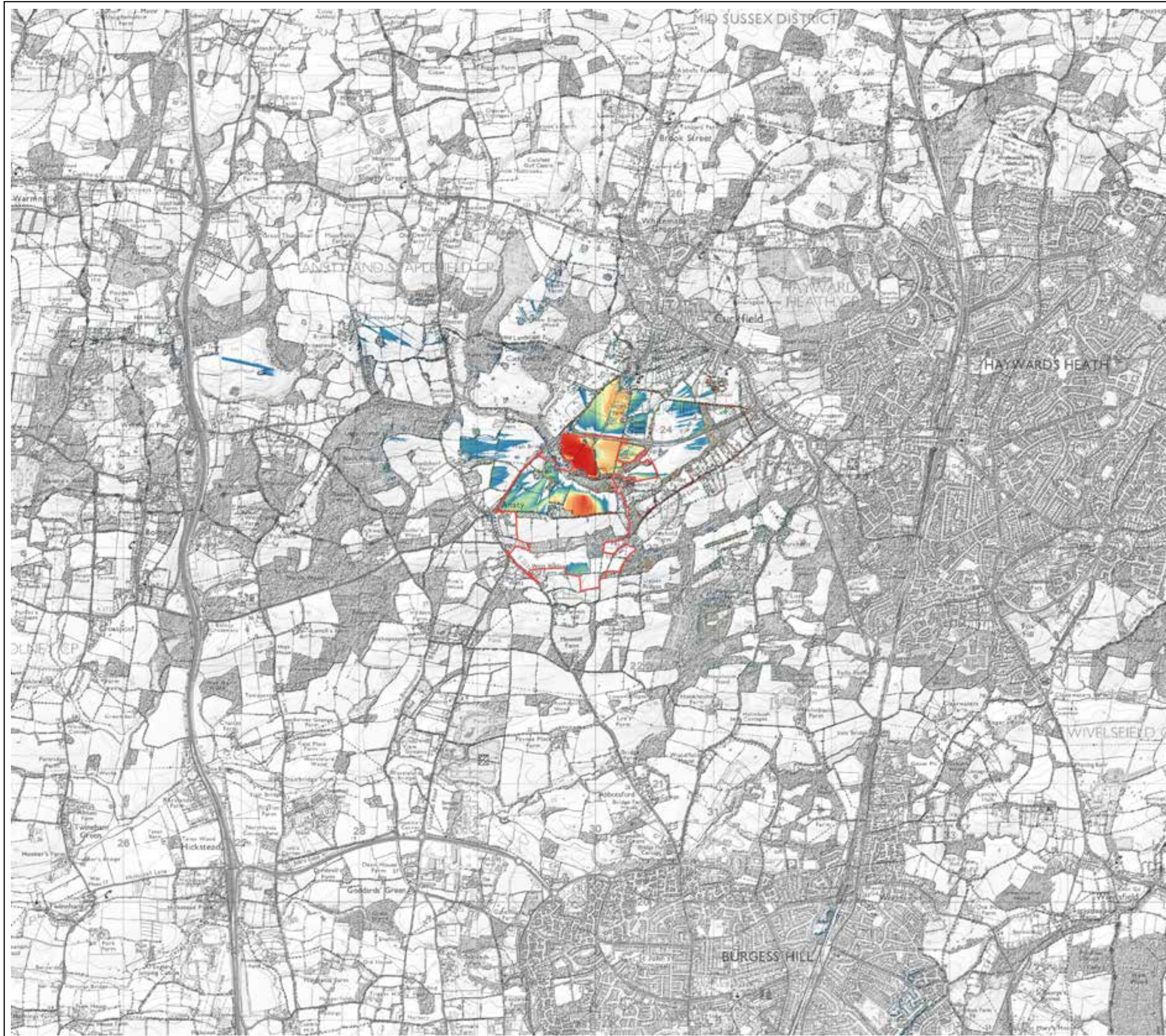
Source:
The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) illustrates the extent to which the development as a whole is potentially visible from the surrounding area (1.6m high receptor).
The plan has been prepared using GIS computer software (MapInfo) and Environment Agency LiDAR DSM data, and as such takes into account built form and vegetation. Field verification is required to refine the accuracy of the ZTV.




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Scale	1:33 000 @A3
Drawing Ref	THL/02
Date	April 2026
Checked	AP


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Appendix LP2: ZTV mapping for development parcels




 Application Site Boundary

Key for Relative Visibility

High Potential Visibility 

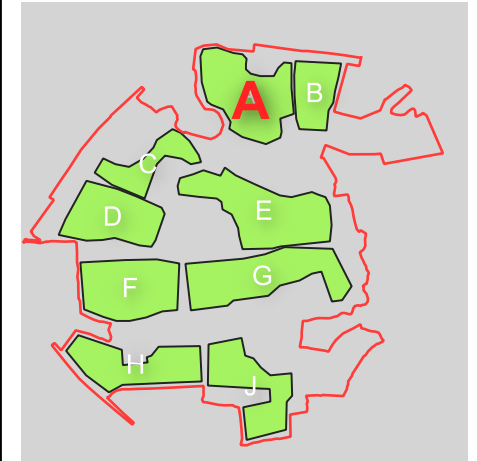
Low Potential Visibility 

No Visibility 

Note:
Relative visibility is based on the percentage of development potentially visible. eg areas coloured blue potentially see <20% of development, and areas coloured red potentially see >80% of development.

Note:
This ZTV mapping is based on the layout shown on the Updated Concept Masterplan and maximum height parameters for the development as recorded on the updated Heights Parameter Plan.


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Project Details	ZTV mapping of Concept Masterplan 1 of 9
Title	Area A - ZTV Analysis
Scale	1:33 000 @A3
Drawing Ref	THL/03
Date	April 2026
Checked	AP

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 Application Site Boundary

Key for Relative Visibility

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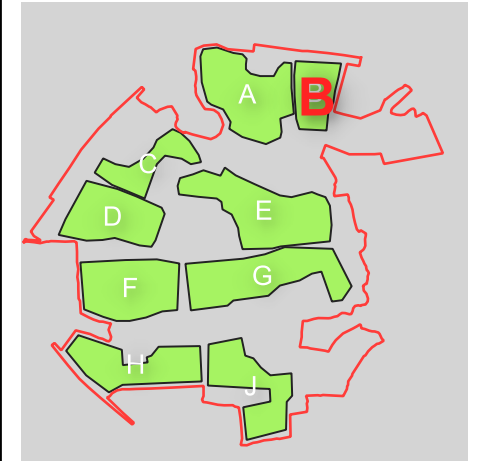
Low Potential Visibility

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Note:
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Project Details	ZTV mapping of Concept Masterplan 2 of 9
Title	Area B - ZTV Analysis
Scale	1:33 000 @A3
Drawing Ref	THL/04
Date	April 2026
Checked	AP


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 Application Site Boundary

Key for Relative Visibility

High Potential Visibility 

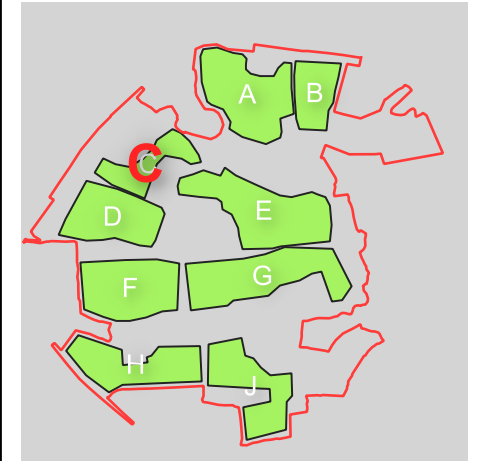
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Note:
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
Note:
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Source:
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Project Details	ZTV mapping of Concept Masterplan 3 of 9
Title	Area C - ZTV Analysis
Scale	1:33 000 @A3
Drawing Ref	THL/05
Date	April 2026
Checked	AP




 Application Site Boundary

Key for Relative Visibility

High Potential Visibility 

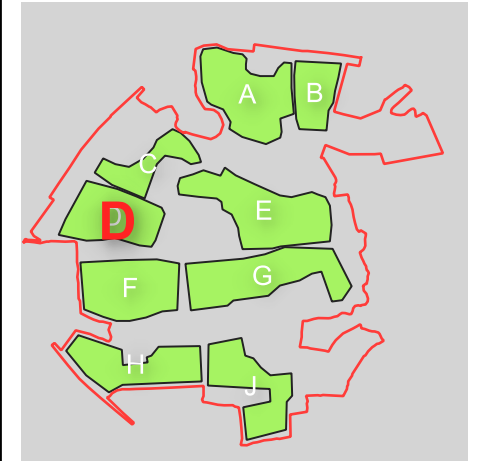
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Note:
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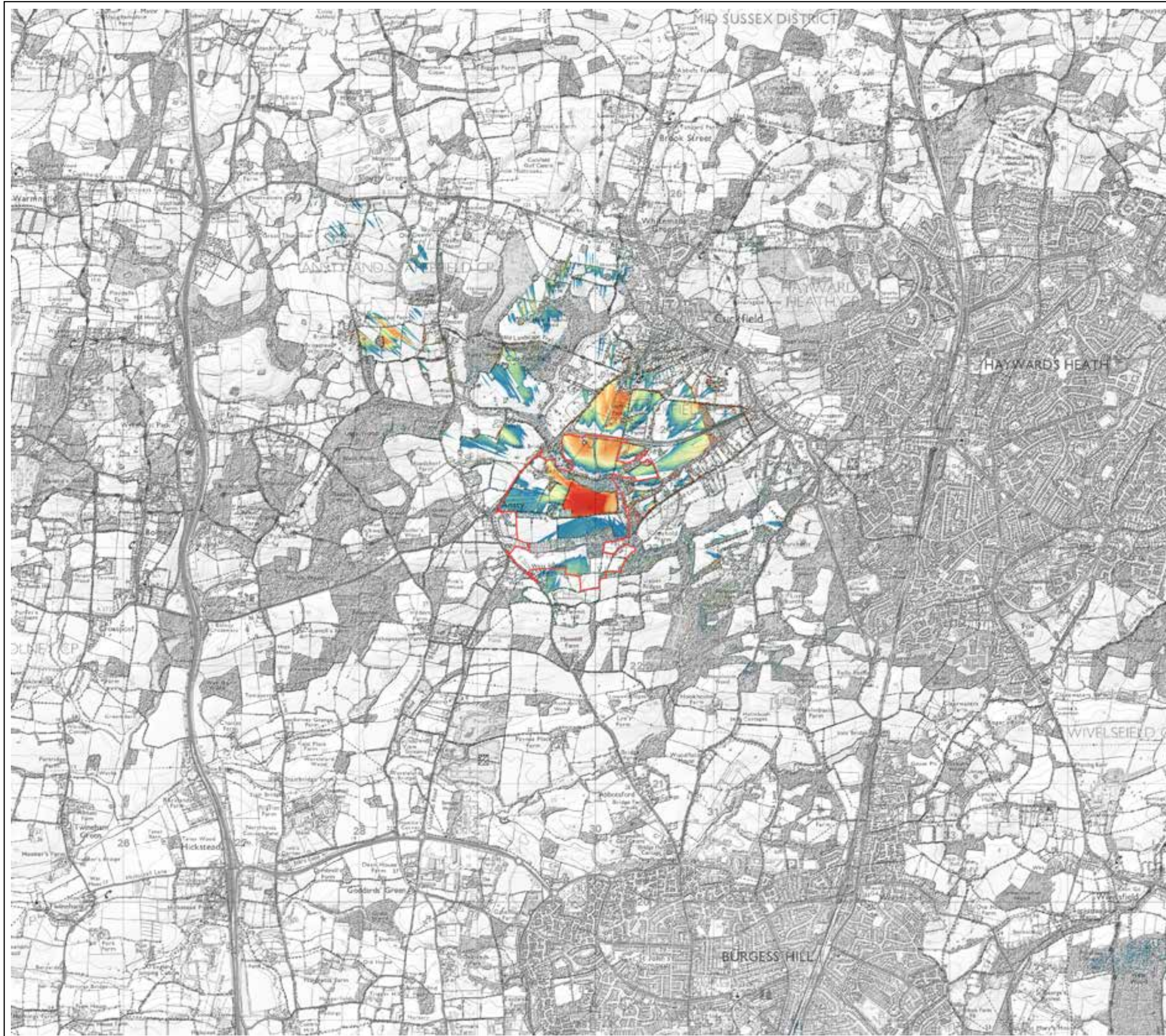
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Project Details	ZTV mapping of Concept Masterplan 4 of 9
Title	Area D - ZTV Analysis
Scale	1:33 000 @A3
Drawing Ref	THL/06
Date	April 2026
Checked	AP

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 Application Site Boundary

Key for Relative Visibility

High Potential Visibility 

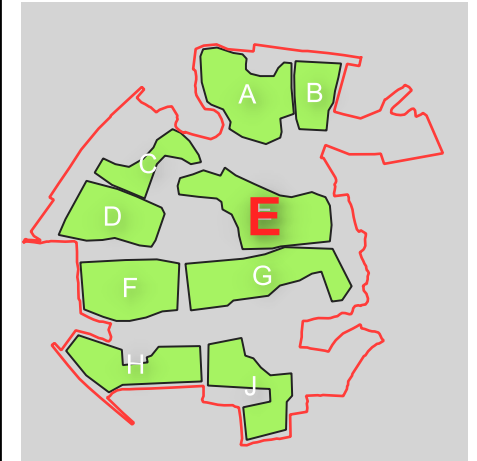
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Note:
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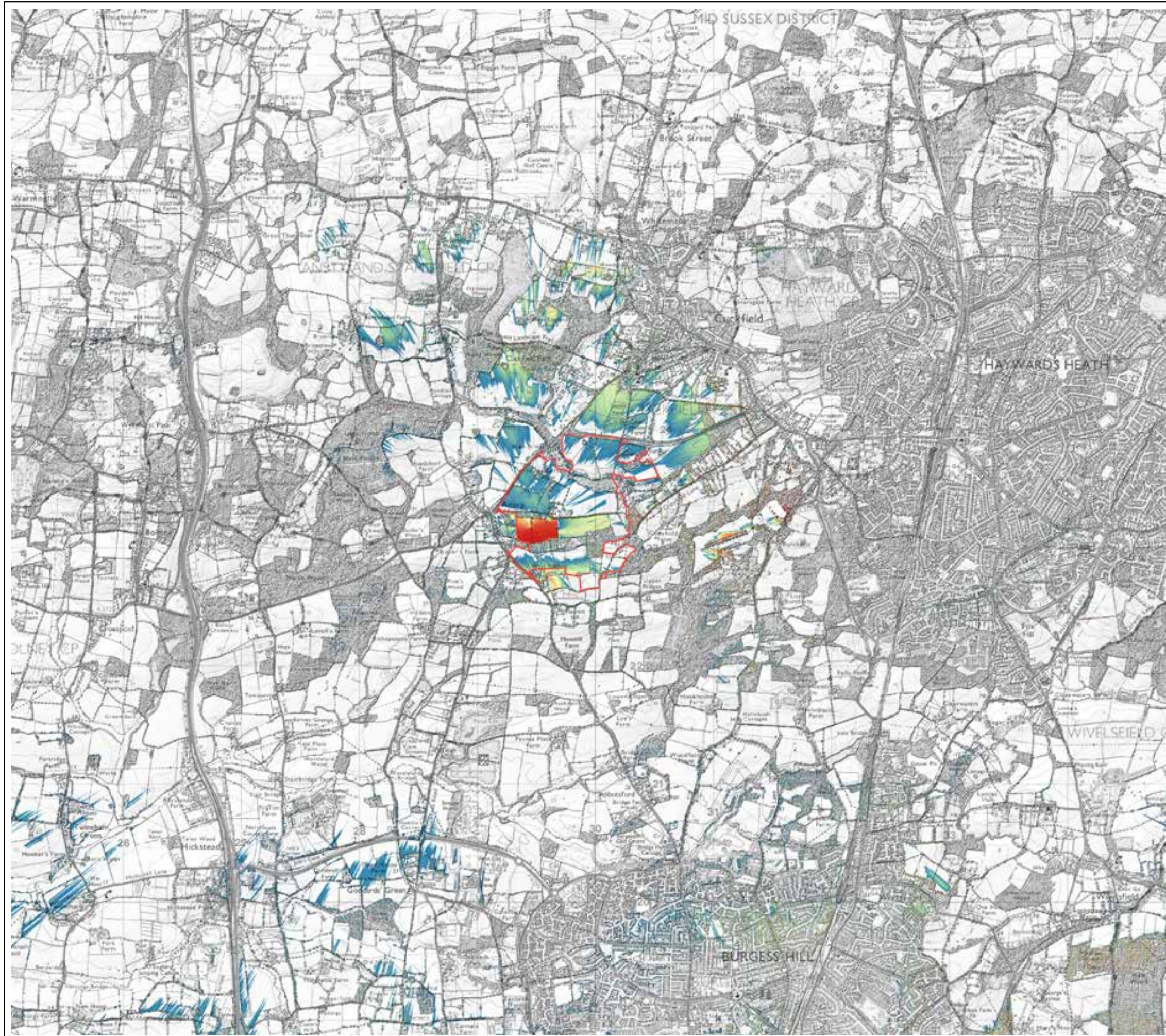
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Project Details	ZTV mapping of Concept Masterplan 5 of 9
Title	Area E - ZTV Analysis
Scale	1:33 000 @A3
Drawing Ref	THL/07
Date	April 2026
Checked	AP


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 Application Site Boundary

Key for Relative Visibility

High Potential Visibility 

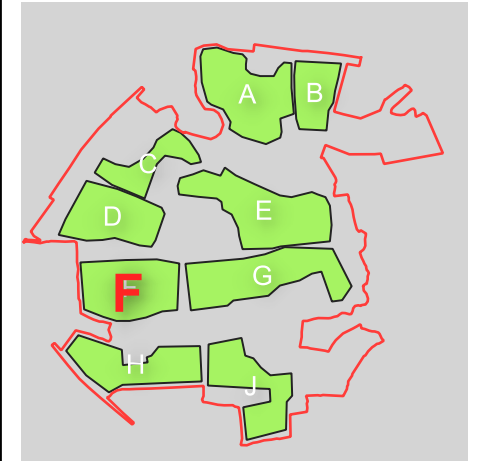
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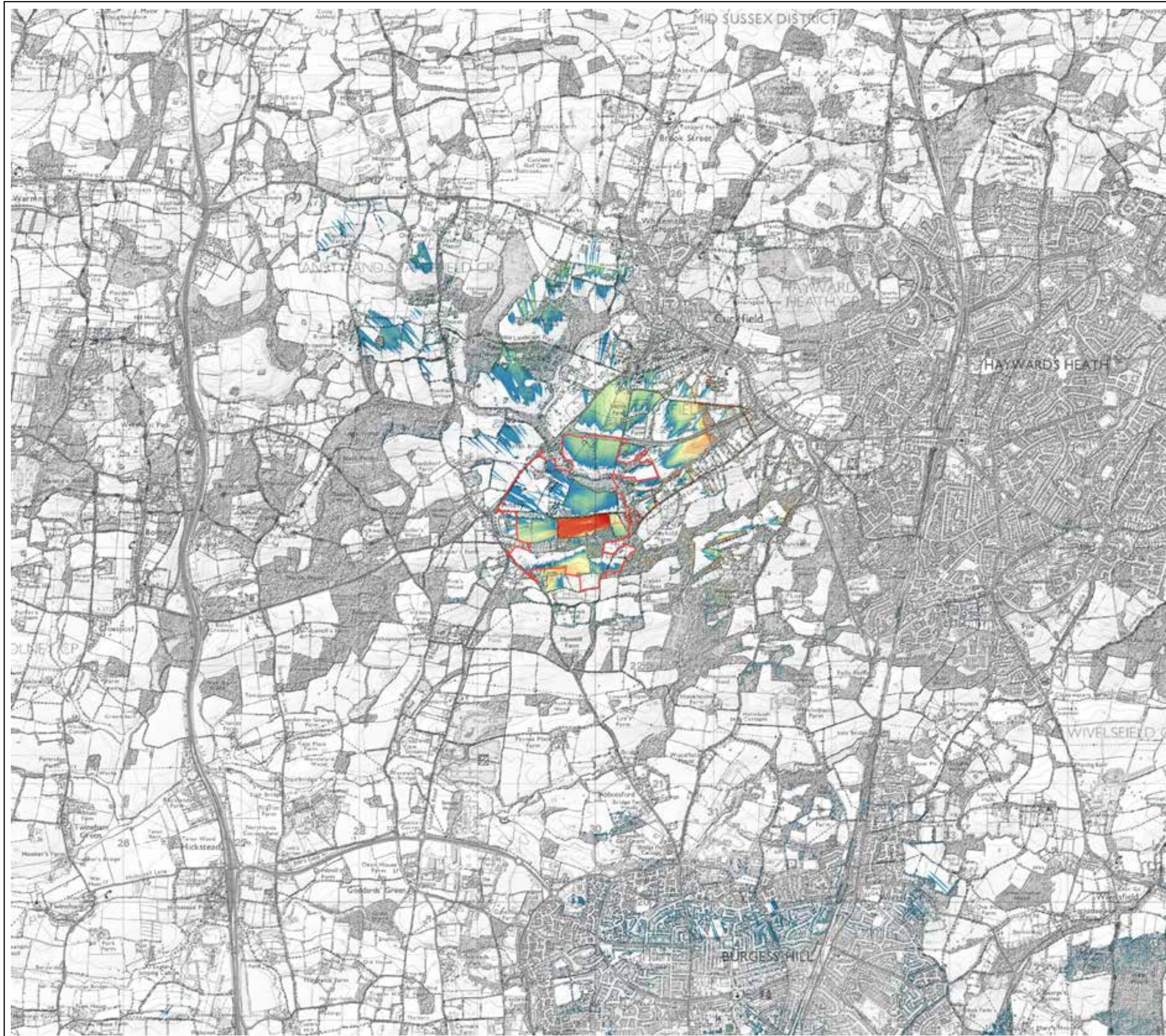
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
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Project Details	ZTV mapping of Concept Masterplan 6 of 9
Title	Area F - ZTV Analysis
Scale	1:33 000 @A3
Drawing Ref	THL/08
Date	April 2026
Checked	AP

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 Application Site Boundary

Key for Relative Visibility

High Potential Visibility 

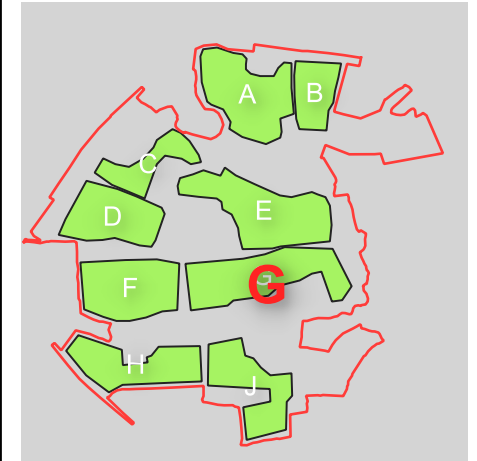
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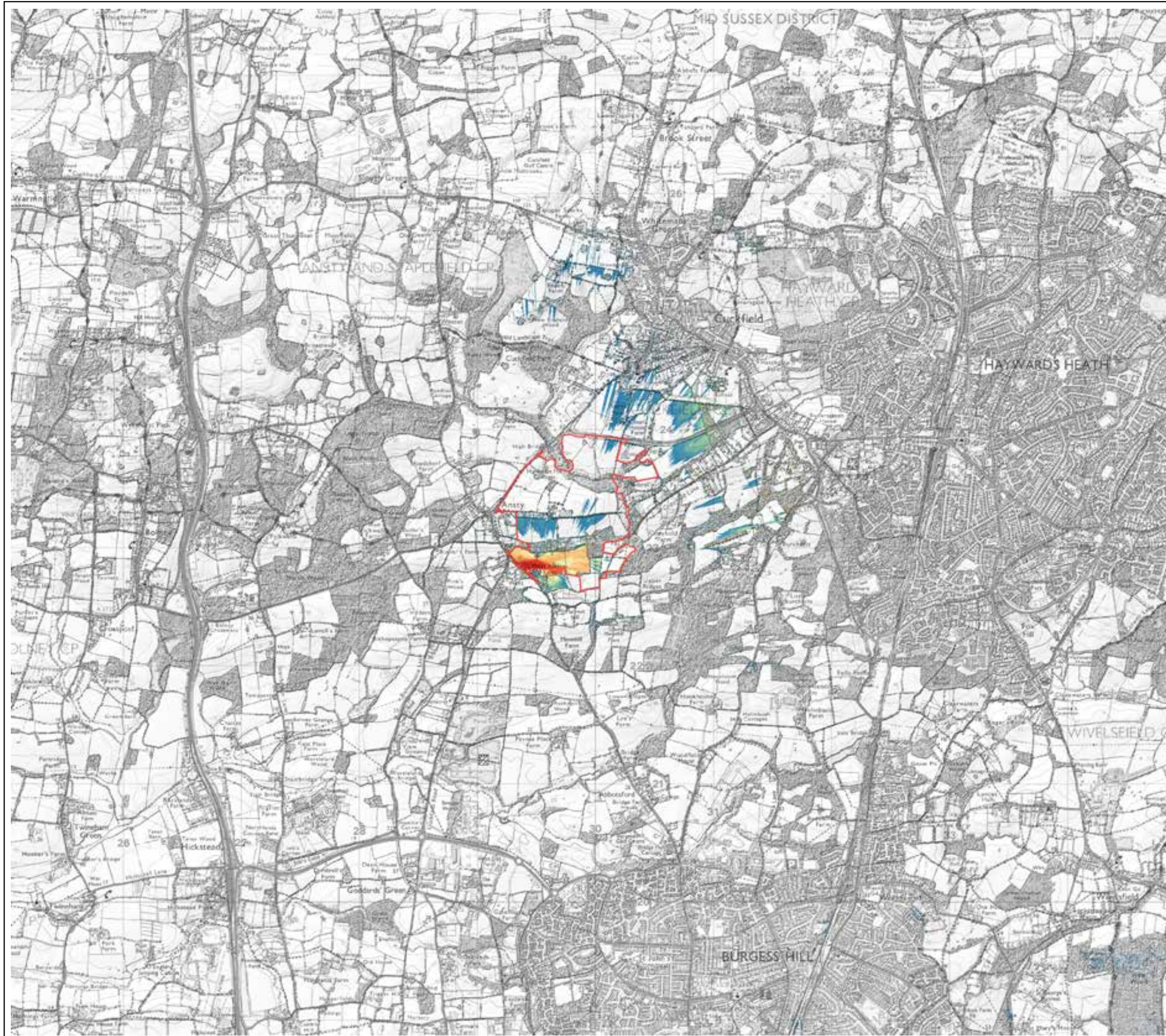
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
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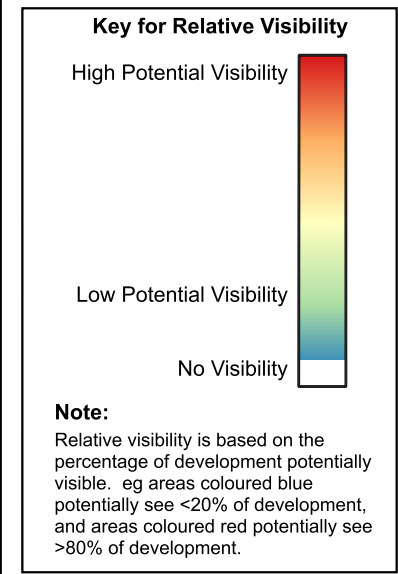


Project Details	ZTV mapping of Concept Masterplan 7 of 9
Title	Area G - ZTV Analysis
Scale	1:33 000 @A3
Drawing Ref	THL/09
Date	April 2026
Checked	AP

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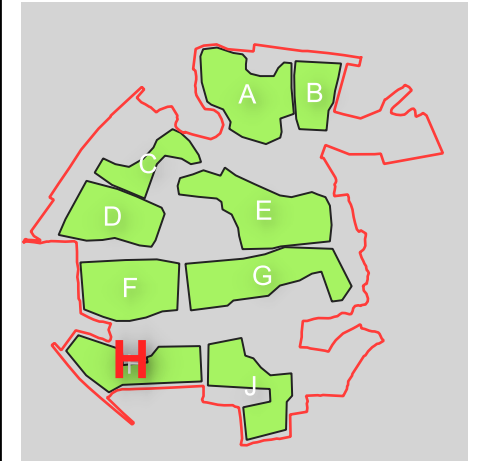


 Application Site Boundary



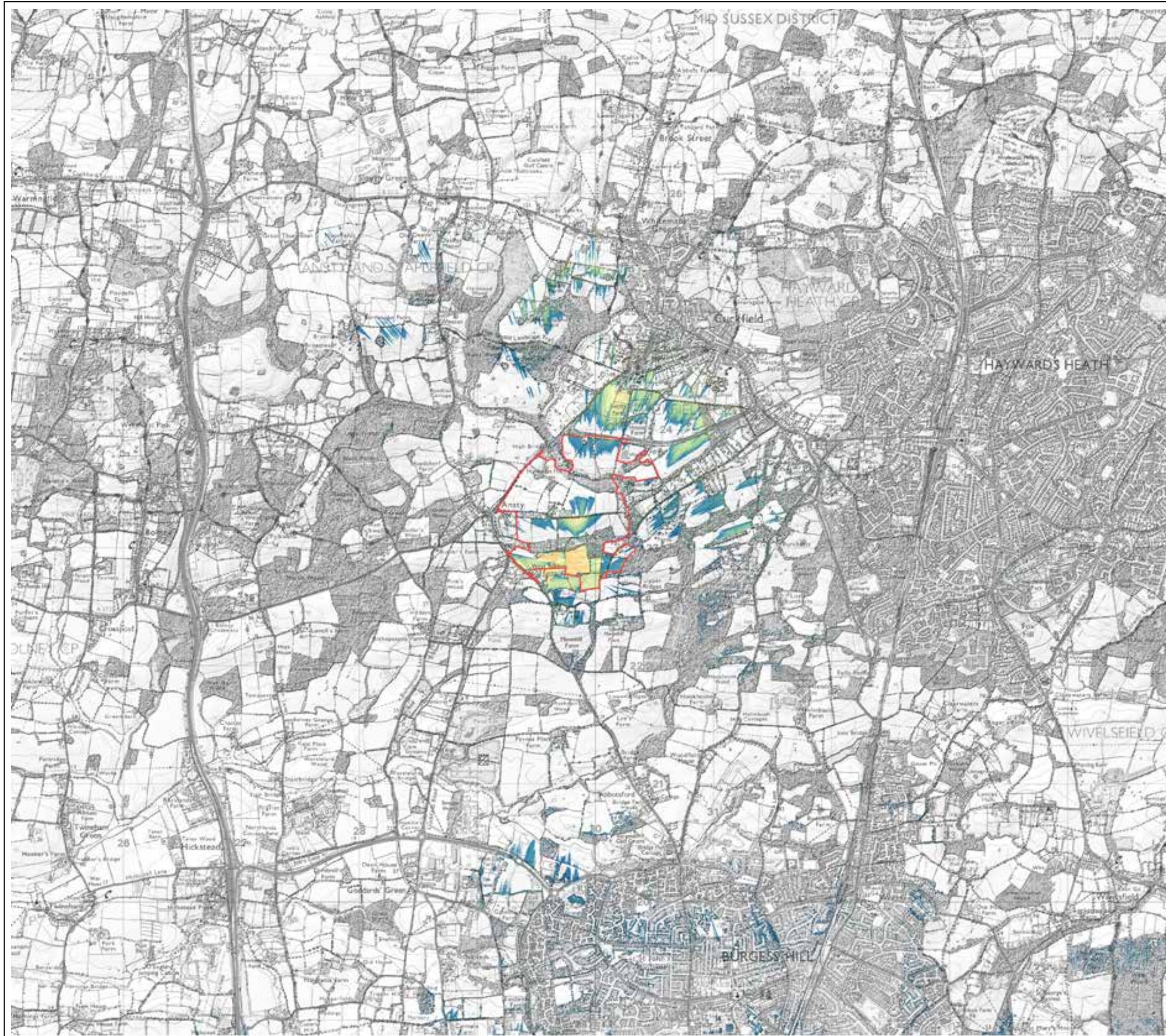
Note:
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
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Project Details	ZTV mapping of Concept Masterplan 8 of 9
Title	Area H - ZTV Analysis
Scale	1:33 000 @A3
Drawing Ref	THL/10
Date	April 2026
Checked	AP


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 Application Site Boundary

Key for Relative Visibility

High Potential Visibility 

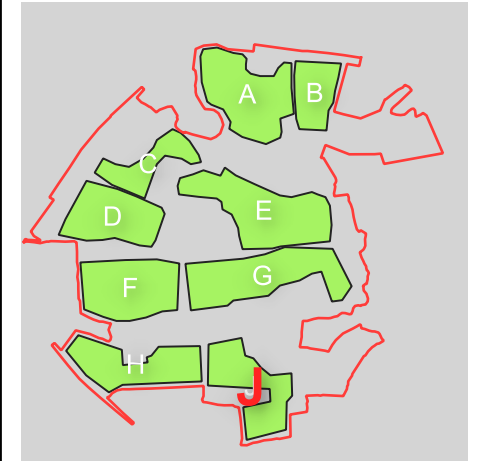
Low Potential Visibility 

No Visibility 

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Project Details	ZTV mapping of Concept Masterplan 9 of 9
Title	Area J - ZTV Analysis
Scale	1:33 000 @A3
Drawing Ref	THL/11
Date	April 2026
Checked	AP

Appendix LP3: Urban Design – technical note

Appendix LP4: Mid Sussex representation to extend AONB boundary

Mackrells Farm Cottage
RH17 5ED

MID SUSSEX DC
26 SEP 2025

Ref: Dm/23/2866

25.09.2025

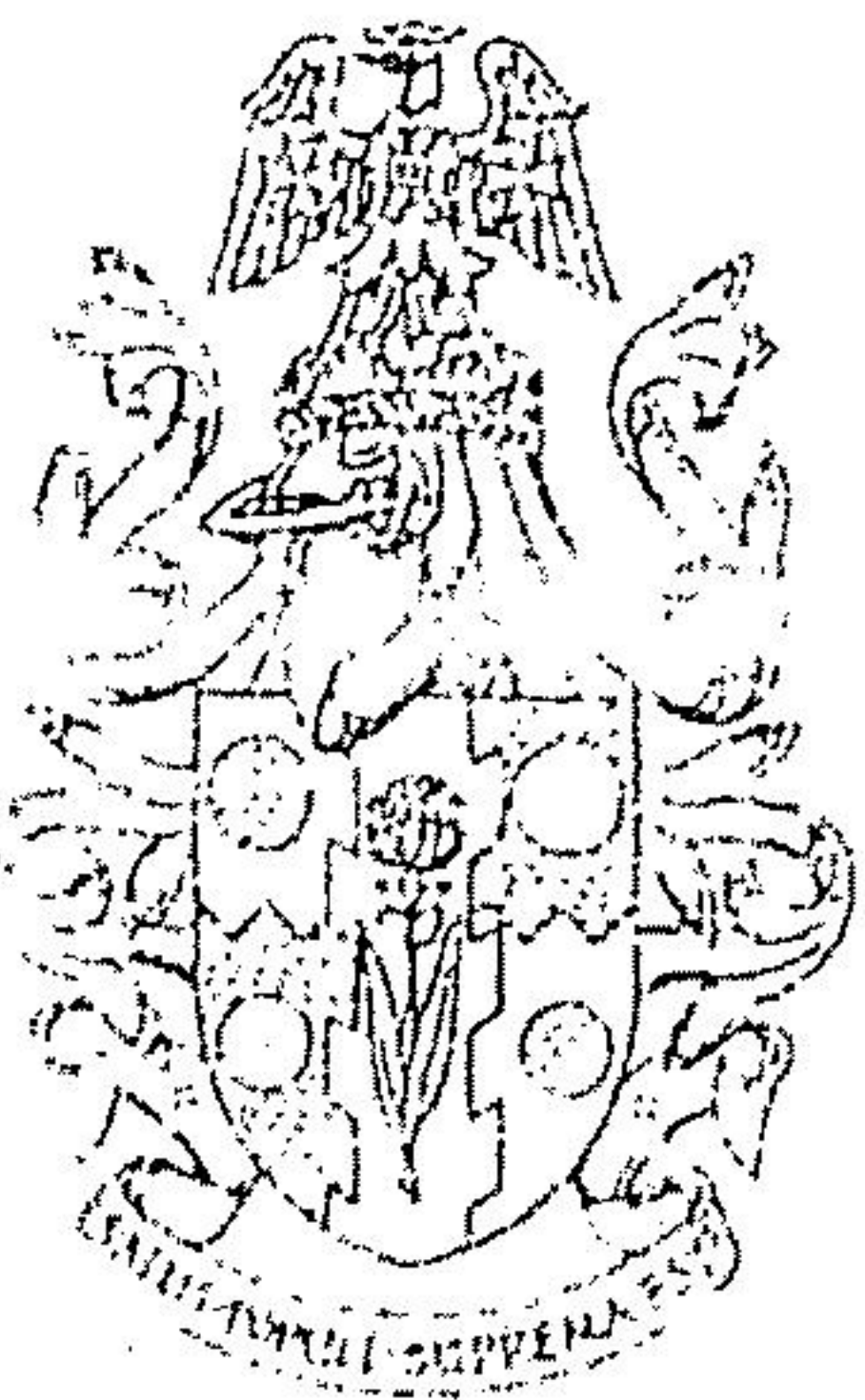
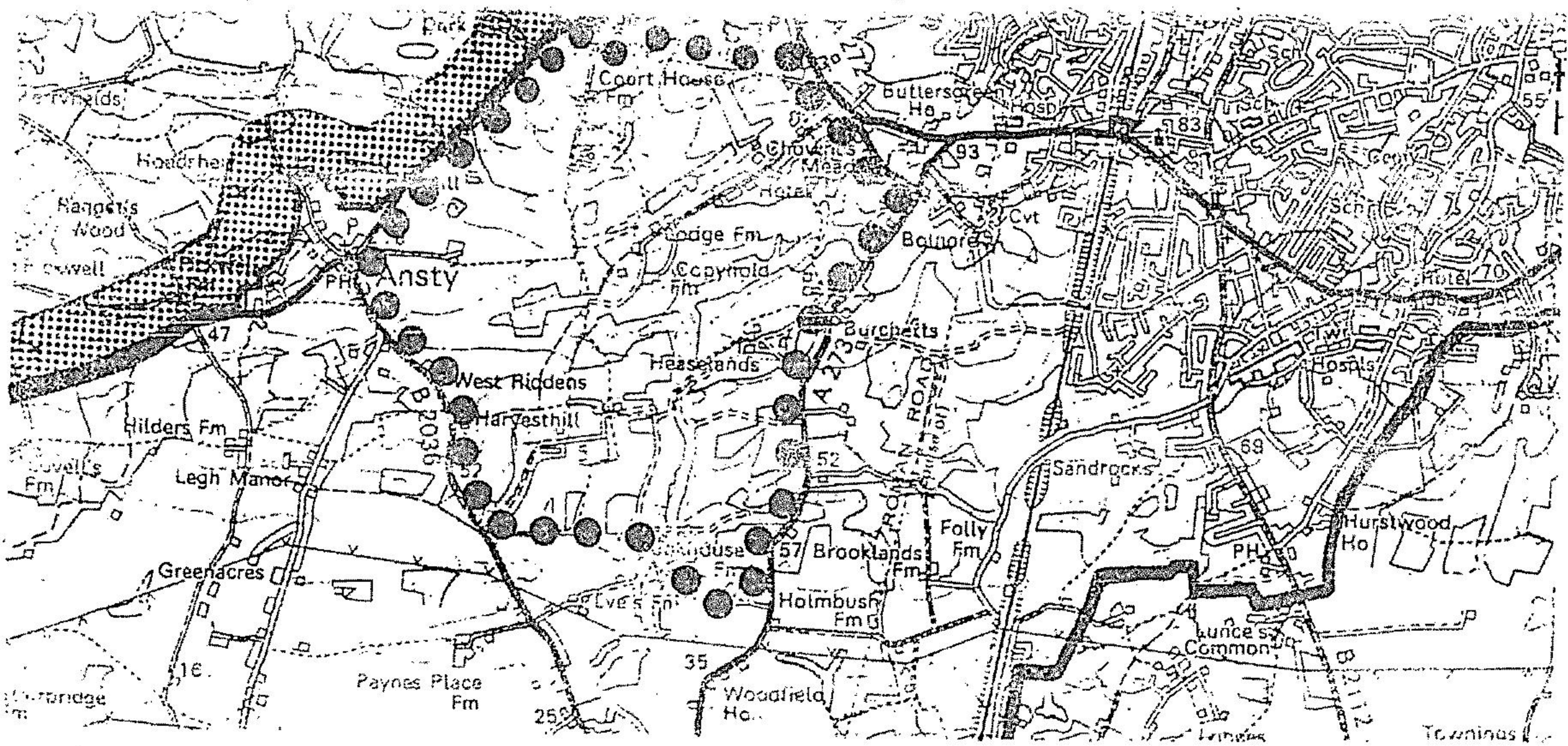
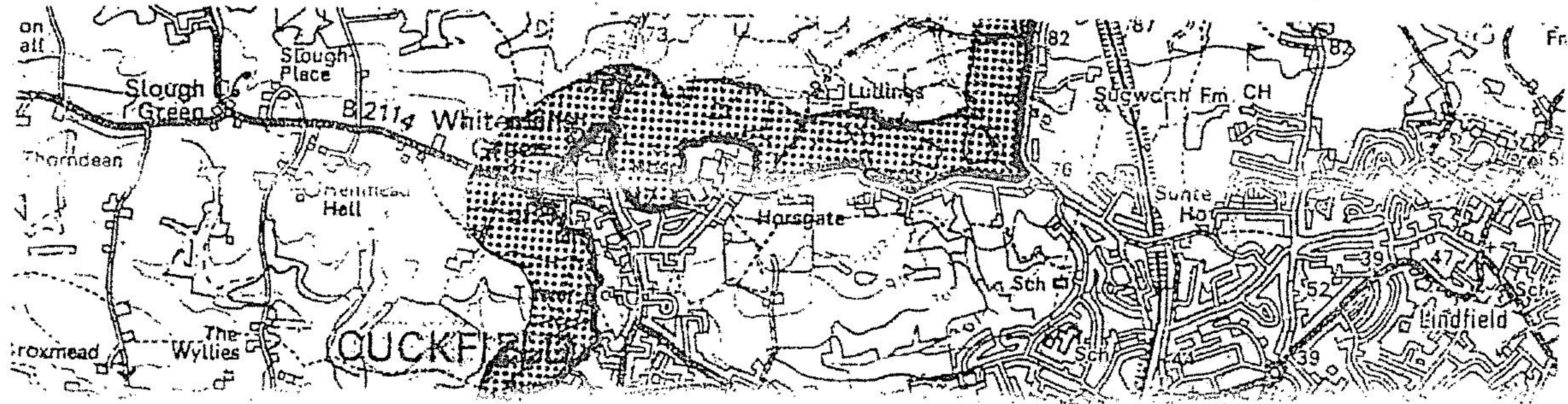
Please find attached an important document relating to the proposed development of lands south of Cuckfield.

It includes the recommendation by Mid Sussex District Council who seek the inclusion of an area of land of some four kilometres to the South of Cuckfield within the designated High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). *'It incorporates land which is wholly of a landscape quality of national importance and no part is of an essentially different landscape type to the existing AONB'*.



PROPOSALS FOR EXTENSION TO HIGH WEALD A.O.N.B. TO SOUTH OF CUCKFIELD

BY
MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL



W.J.H. HATTON. B.A. M.R.T.P.I.
DISTRICT PLANNING OFFICER
MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

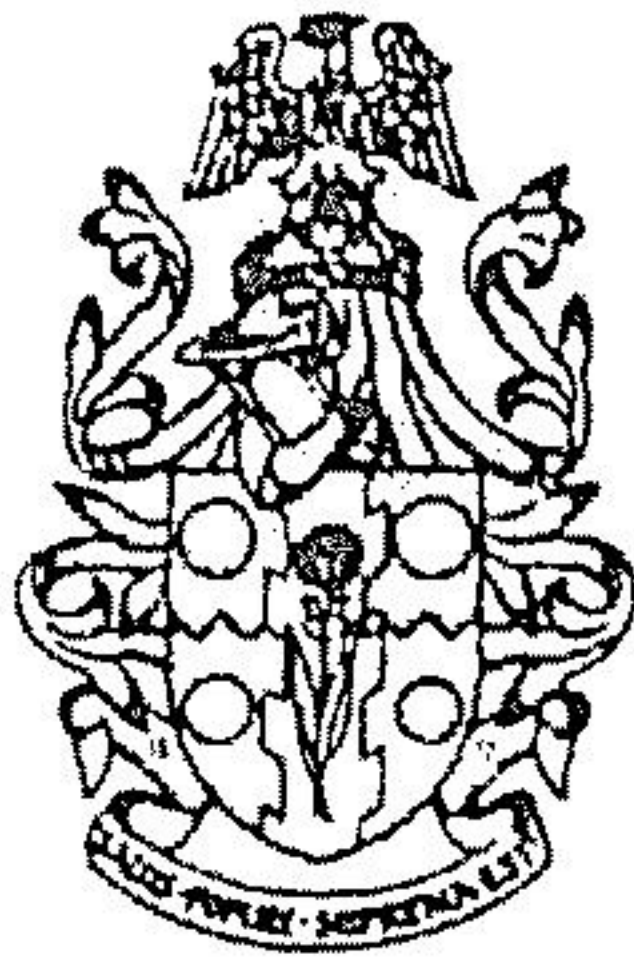
MID SUSSEX DC

26 SEP 2025

FEBRUARY 1987

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

"Oaklands", Oaklands Road,
Haywards Heath, West Sussex.
RH16 1SS
Telephone 458166
DX.300320
HAYWARDS HEATH 1



DISTRICT PLANNING OFFICER

W. J. H. Hatton B.A., M.R.T.P.I.

If calling or telephoning, please ask for	Tel. Ext.	My ref.	Your ref.	Date
Mr. N. Eveleigh	2394	NE/JG E91/1		5th March 1987

Mrs. B.H. Ingram,
Secretary,
Cuckfield Parish Council,
Trants,
Foxhill Close,
Haywards Heath,
West Sussex.

Dear Mrs. Ingram,

HIGH WEALD AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY - PROPOSED EXTENSION

Further to our recent discussions, I enclose 2 copies of our final submission for the Countryside Commission, which was made today. Many thanks for your help in the project.

Yours sincerely,


for District Planning Officer

PROPOSALS FOR EXTENSION TO HIGH WEALD A.O.N.B.

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6. Boundaries.
7. Historic Features.
8. Photographs.
9. Conclusion.

PLANS

- PLAN 1 Area of proposed extension.
- PLAN 2 Geological Sketch Map.
- PLAN 3 Landscape Appraisal Survey.
- PLAN 4 West Sussex Aerial Survey, 1981.
- PLAN 5 West Sussex Ecological Appraisal.
- PLAN 6 Historic Features.
- PLAN 7 Direction of Photographs.

APPENDICES

- A. Letter from Cuckfield Parish Council, 20th May 1986.
- B. Letter from Cuckfield Society, 24th December 1986.

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 1987.

PROPOSAL FOR EXTENSION TO HIGH WEALD AONB

1. Introduction

Mid Sussex District Council seeks the inclusion of an area of land of some four square kilometres to the south of Cuckfield within the designated High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The area is contained within a clear, easily-identified boundary. It incorporates land which is wholly of a landscape quality of national importance and no part is of an essentially different landscape type to the existing AONB. The purpose of this report is to justify the area's inclusion in terms of its landscape quality and illustrate the features within it which are characteristic of the High Weald.

2. Consideration by Mid Sussex District Council Committees

Due consideration has been given to the proposal by the Council's Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath Local Plan Working Parties and by the Council's Development and Transport Committee over the course of the last 18 months. Cuckfield Parish Council, in a letter of 20th May 1986 declared its support for the District Council's proposal.

"As far as geology is concerned, the area under question still stands on the Hastings beds, sandstone with clay overlays here and there, in fact an area adjacent to Cuckfield Churchyard is specifically mentioned in Mantell's "Geology of Sussex" and as such is in no way different from the land lying west of the A272, Cuckfield-Ansty road which is designated "High Weald".

The view of the South Downs from the vicinity of Cuckfield Churchard is famous and can hardly be equalled. The variety of trees within the area provide a most interesting colour variation, especially in spring and autumn."

Liaison has continued and this report is fully endorsed by the Cuckfield Parish Council and the Cuckfield Society. Copies of letters from these organisations are attached as appendices.

The matter was considered at the following formal meetings of Mid Sussex District Council:

Burgess Hill Local Plan Sub-Committee	- 23rd May 1985.
Haywards Heath Local Plan Sub-Committee	- 20th June 1985
Burgess Hill Local Plan Sub-Committee	- 6th January 1986
Haywards Heath Local Plan Sub-Committee	- 24th March 1986
Development and Transport Committee	- 17th June 1986

The proposal to seek the inclusion of the additional area was ratified by the full District Council on 22nd July 1986. The proposed extension is shown on PLAN 1.

3. Criteria for Designation

The main purpose of AONB designation, as set out in Section 87 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949 is to conserve and enhance natural beauty, which includes protecting flora, fauna and geological as well as landscape features.

The area of the High Weald AONB is based largely on geology and broadly coincides with the Hasting Beds, the raised older sandy areas which are separated from the chalk Downs to the north and south by a clay lowland. In spite of its varied landscape, the area is a cohesive one, its distinctive ridged countryside and pattern of hedged fields, scattered shaws and large blocks of woodland distinguishing it from the clays of the surrounding low weald.

The area of the proposed extension meets these requirements and is situated on Tunbridge Wells sand and Ardingly sandstone, part of the Hastings Bed of the Cretaceous period. This is illustrated in PLAN 2, a simplified sketch map of the Geological Survey.

4. Landscape Appraisal

The AONB was derived broadly from a Landscape Appraisal that was undertaken by West Sussex County Council in the early 1970's for the whole of West Sussex as part of the Structure Plan studies.

A technique was devised which, by using certain carefully selected criteria, enabled an objective and comparative assessment to be made of landscape quality across the county. The method that was used took account of features such as surface cover, undulation, trees in mass, single trees, water, artifacts and views. A score was given to each kilometre grid square for each component of the landscape and a composite map produced. Having identified the boundary in terms of kilometre squares, a surveyor from the Countryside Commission then identified on site an appropriate strong physical boundary such as road, river, railway or farm track.

The extract from the Landscape Appraisal Survey (PLAN 3) shows that the landscape quality scores for the proposed extension are of a similar value to those within the AONB.

The Landscape Appraisal indicates a marked change in landscape quality south of an east-west line drawn midway between Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill. This corresponds with the change from Sandstone to Weald Clay. Here the land is flatter and more open, the fields being divided by hedgerows with fewer trees and areas of woodland. Similarly the area to the west, towards Bolney is more characteristic of the low Weald. The area between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath, although characteristic of the High Weald in terms of its landscape quality is thought to be too greatly influenced by the vicinity of the urban areas to be suitable for inclusion. There are also no well defined boundaries in this area.

5. Description of Proposed Extension

The main characteristic of the landscape is undulating countryside comprising small irregular fields divided by tree belts and areas of woodland. This is illustrated in PLAN 4, an extract from the West Sussex Aerial Survey carried out in August 1981. Small streams cut steeply into the sandstone creating narrow valleys or ghylls. Outcrops of sandstone can be seen in places above the stream beds, and ponds, some originating from the medieval iron industry are found in many places. The ridged landscape allows distant views to the South Downs and landmarks such as Cuckfield Church spire. Indeed the view from Cuckfield churchyard towards the Downs is well known as being one of the finest in the area and this proposal will take account of the special character of Cuckfield.

The woodland consists mainly of oak with an understorey of hazel, but ash and beech are also present and alder is dominant in the wettest areas and along the streams. In the older undisturbed woodland the ground flora is rich and species such as enchanters nightshade, yellow archangel and bluebells are abundant. Close to the streams there are a variety of ferns, in particular broad buckler fern and male fern, but also lady fern, Borrer's fern, common polypody and hard fern. These are typical of neutral to acid soils and damp microclimates. There is a local nature reserve at Newbury Pond, on Newbury Lane. The site is leased by the Sussex Trust for Nature Conservation and contains a wide range of aquatic flora and fauna. High Grade Habitats are shown in PLAN 5, an extract from the Ecological Appraisal by West Sussex County Council, January 1976.

Most of the agricultural land is pasture, but there is some arable. A few fragments of unimproved grassland remain and these have a variety of wild flowers and grasses. Some, such as pepper saxifrage, burnet saxifrage and knapweed are characteristic of old meadows. Natural regeneration of oak is evident on ungrazed grassland.

Animals seen in this area include barking deer, roe deer, munt jack deer, foxes and badgers. The extensive deciduous tree cover, together with grassland, ponds and streams provide varied habitats for numerous species of birds and insects. Butterflies include the peacock, skipper, red admiral and brimstone.

6. Boundaries

The District Council acknowledges the importance of a clear, well defined boundary for the AONB.

To the west, north and east, the proposed boundary will follow the Cuckfield Road, Newbury Lane, including Newbury Pond and the field to the east, the footpath to the south of Warden Park School, Chownes Mead Lane and Isaacs Lane. To the south the boundary is defined by a bridleway which lies in a wide grassy avenue bounded by hedgerows and a long line of oaks. This marks a strong boundary between the undulating landscape to the north and the flatter, more open landscape of the low weald to the south.

7. Historic Features

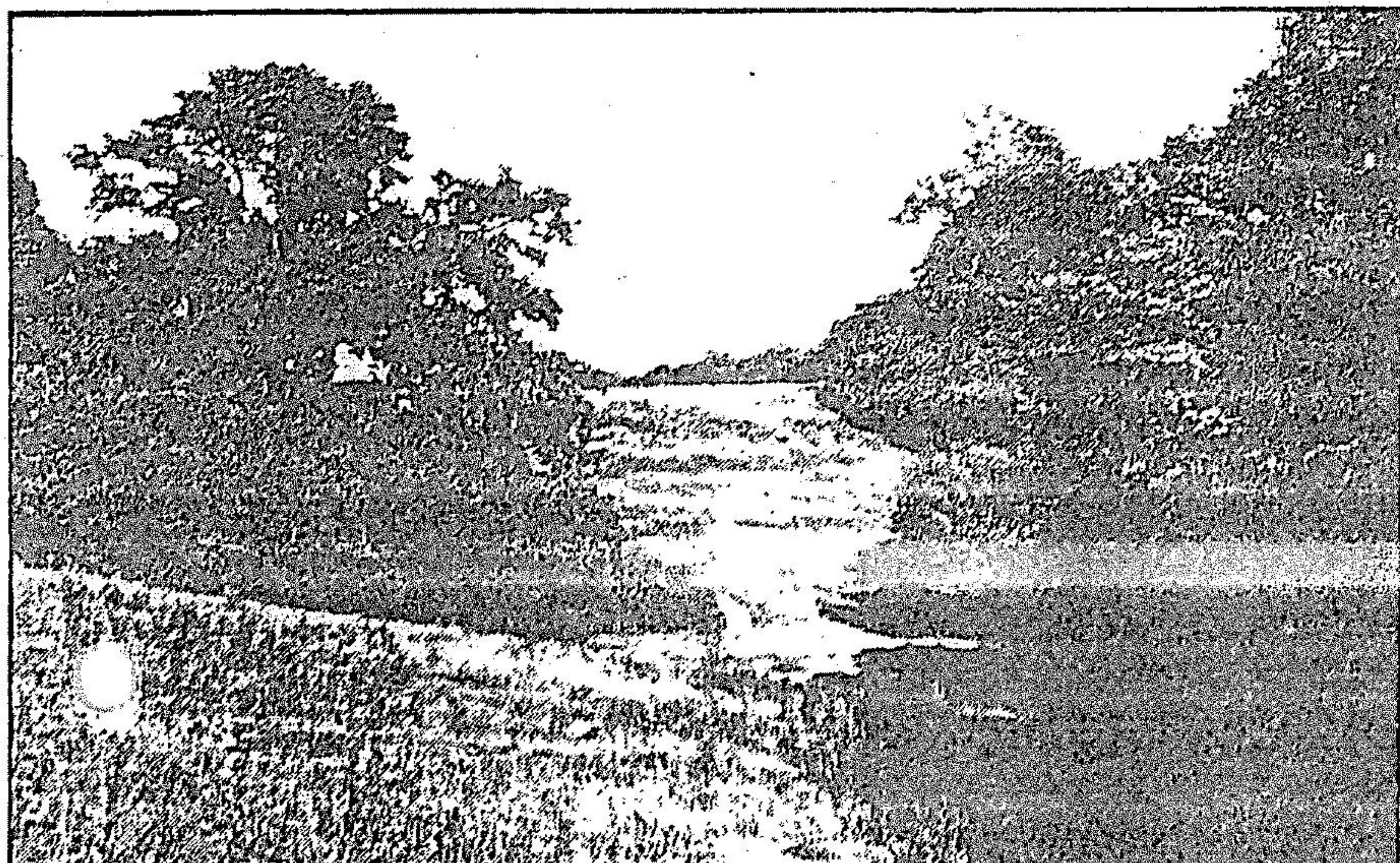
The area includes the country house and landscaped gardens of Heaselands and a second garden of historic interest at Chownes Mead. There are four other sites of archaeological interest and a number of listed buildings, which are shown on PLAN 6. A rich network of footpaths crosses the area, some sunken between high hedges, suggesting their longstanding usage.

In a book on the Cuckfield area by Maisie Wright, entitled 'Cuckfield - An Old Sussex Town', she describes the legacy of iron workings in the area. Sites of ironworks south of Cuckfield can be identified by names like "Old Furnace", "Furnace Wood", and "Cinder Bank", at the end of Copyhold Lane. The sites of three hammer ponds can be traced in this area. These were formed by making clay and cinder dams, called 'bays' across the valley of a stream. On the Laine Brook a series of ponds fed a local forge and furnace. In that area there are quantities of bloomery slag which was the waste product derived from pre medieval iron making processes. There is also evidence of stone age occupation, and examples of mesolithic arrow heads, hide scrapers and other implements have been found in the area.

8. Photographs

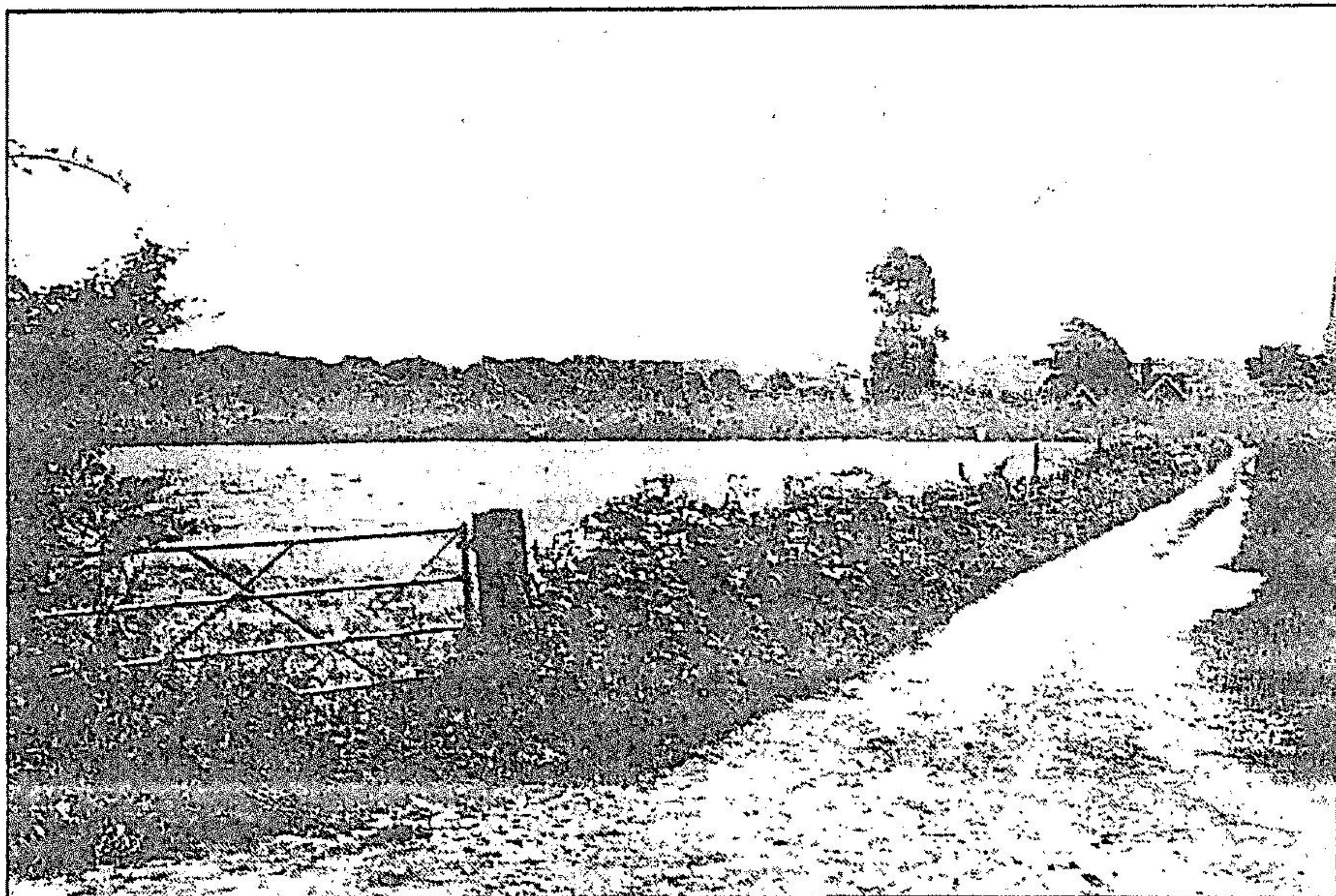
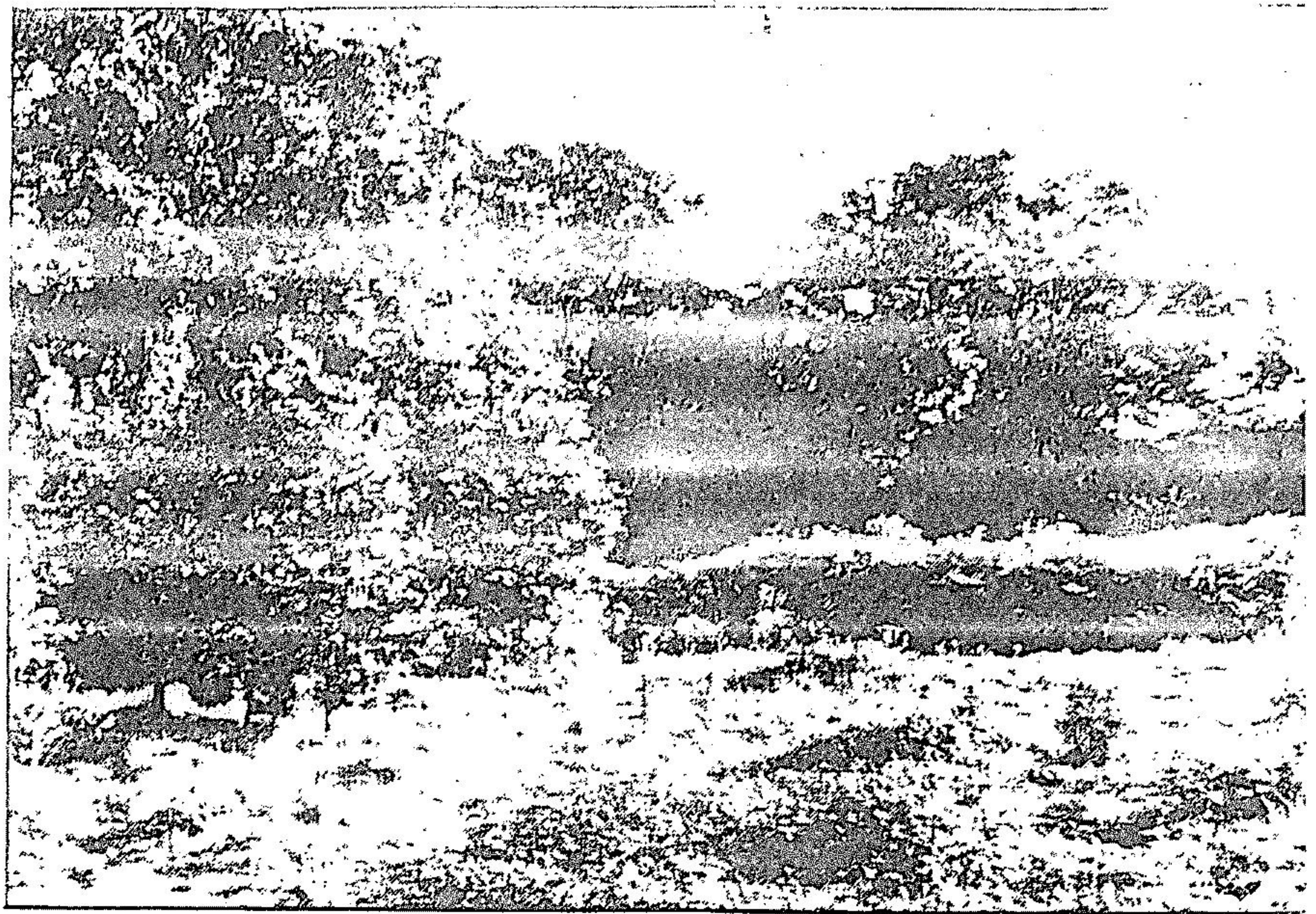
The direction of the views illustrated in the following photographs are shown in PLAN 7.

1 View looking north towards Cuckfield Church.



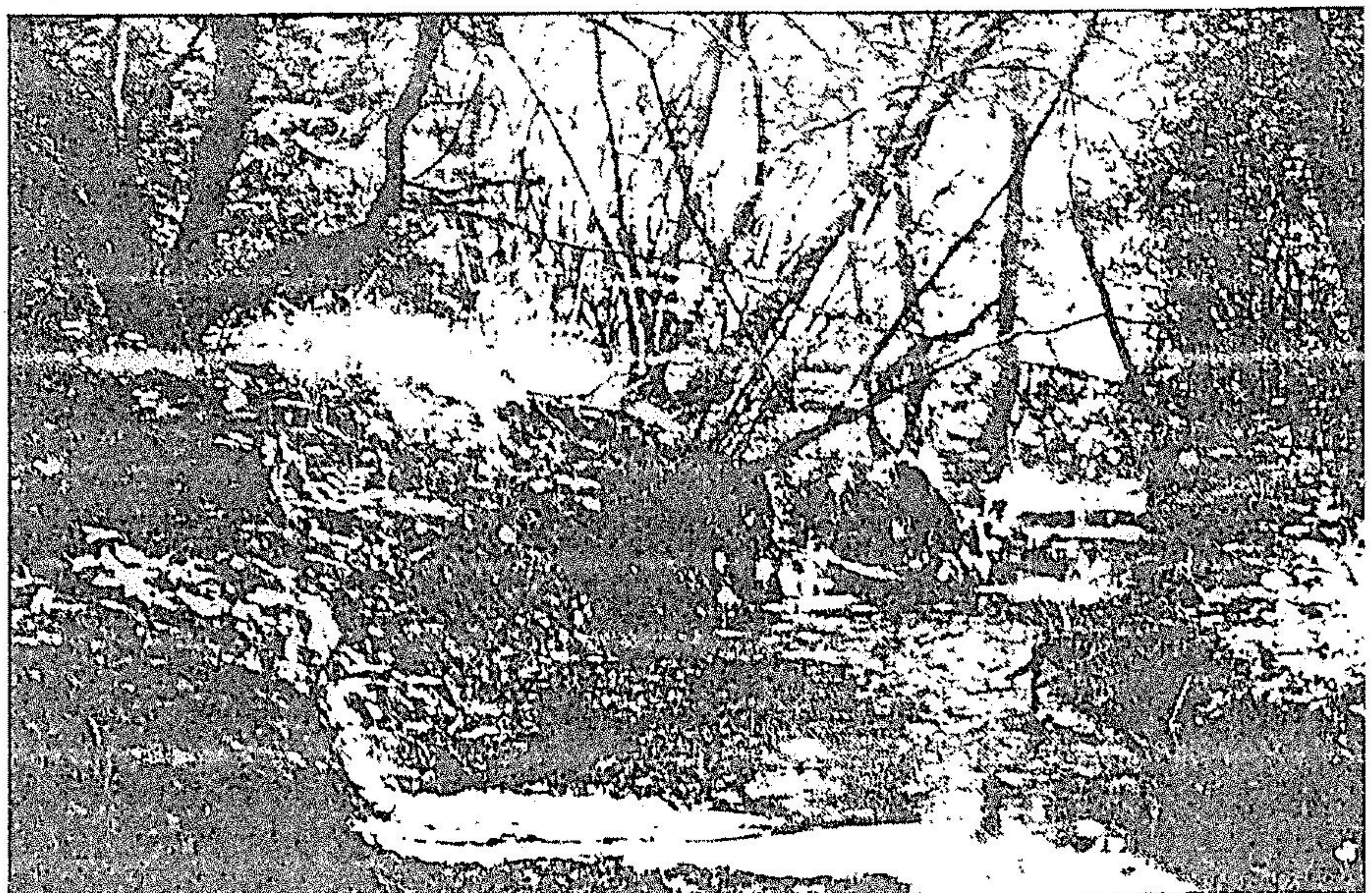
2 The undulating landscape which is typical of the area, with oak woodland and unimproved grassland.

3 Natural regeneration
of oaks.



4 View from the edge of
Cuckfield Churchyard,
looking across the area
of the proposed
extension towards the
South Downs.

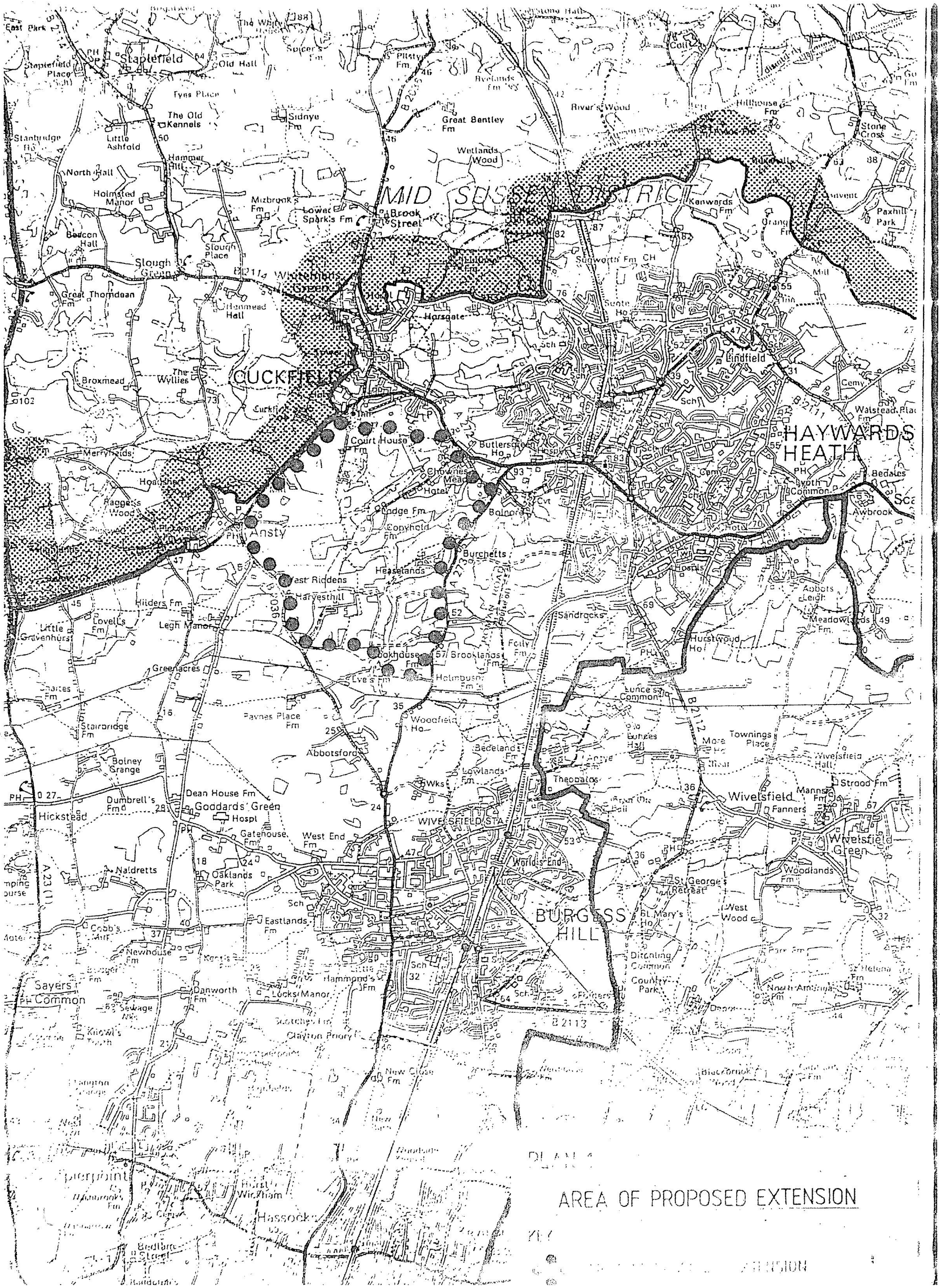
5 One of the many small
streams in the area
which have cut steeply
into the sandstone.
The cool damp
microclimate encourages
the growth of a wide
variety of ferns.



9. Conclusion

It can thus be seen that the area to the south of Cuckfield is characteristic of the High Weald and forms part of its homogeneous tract of landscape. The landscape quality is of national importance, having the same standard and the same attractive landscape qualities as within similar areas already designated. It is unspoilt by development, and has many features of landscape, ecological and archaeological interest which contribute to its variety and richness.

Mid Sussex District Council requests the Countryside Commission to make a Variation Order under Section 87 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 in respect of an area of some four square kilometres to the south of Cuckfield shown on attached plan number 'PLAN 1' to be included within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



MID SEAS DISTRICT

CUCKFIELD

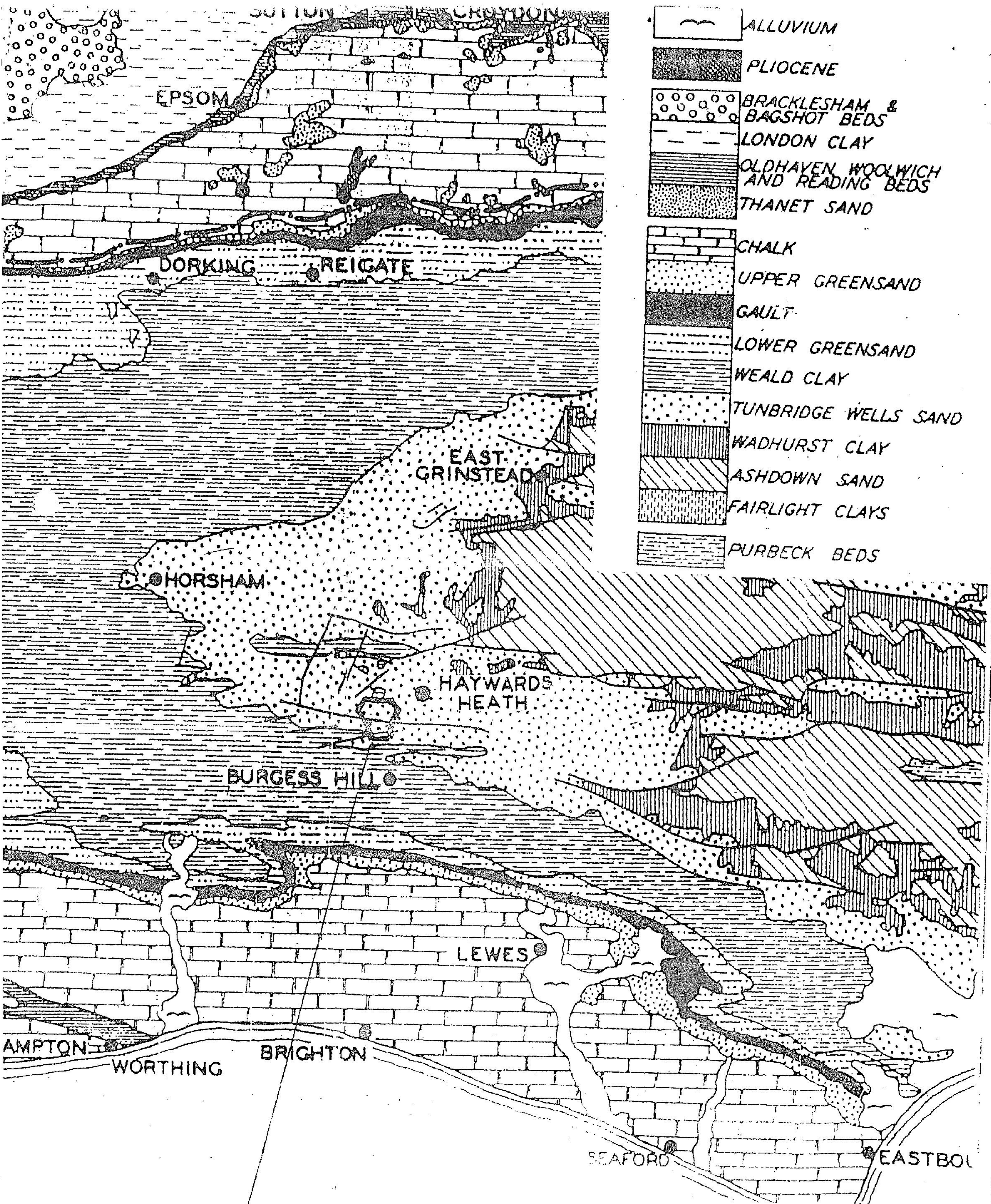
HAYWARDS HEATH

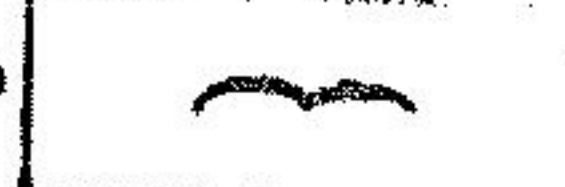




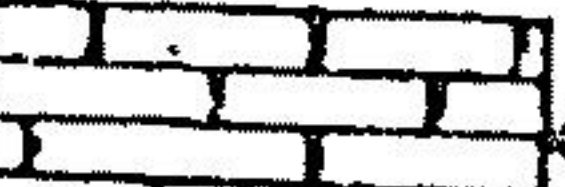






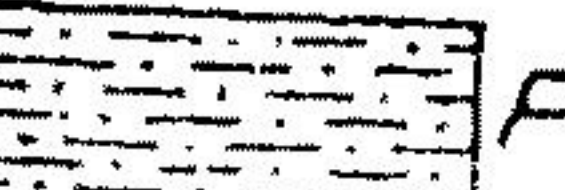
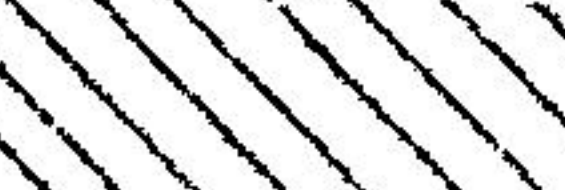


BURGESS HILL

AREA OF PROPOSED EXTENSION

PLAN 4

SECTION



-  ALLUVIUM
-  PLIOCENE
-  BRACKLESHAM & BAGSHOT BEDS
-  LONDON CLAY
-  OLDHAVEN, WOOLWICH AND READING BEDS
-  THANET SAND
-  CHALK
-  UPPER GREENSAND
-  GAULT
-  LOWER GREENSAND
-  WEALD CLAY
-  TUNBRIDGE WELLS SAND
-  WADHURST CLAY
-  ASHDOWN SAND
-  FAIRLIGHT CLAYS
-  PURBECK BEDS

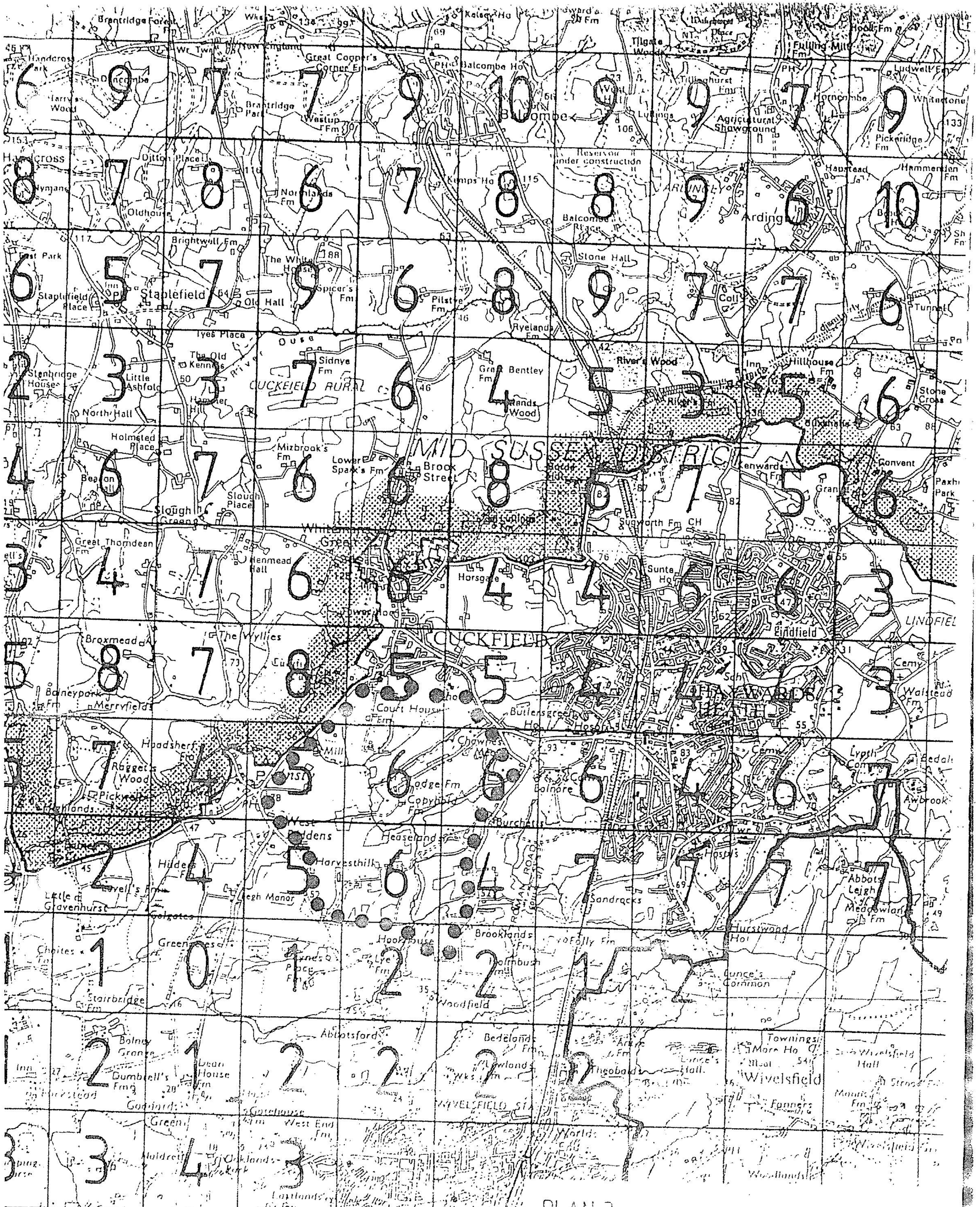
PLAN 2

AREA OF PROPOSED EXTENSION

GEOLOGICAL SKETCH MAP

KEY

AREA OF PROPOSED EXTENSION



PLAN 2

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL
LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL SURVEY

Cuckfield
Churchyard

Copyhold
Lane

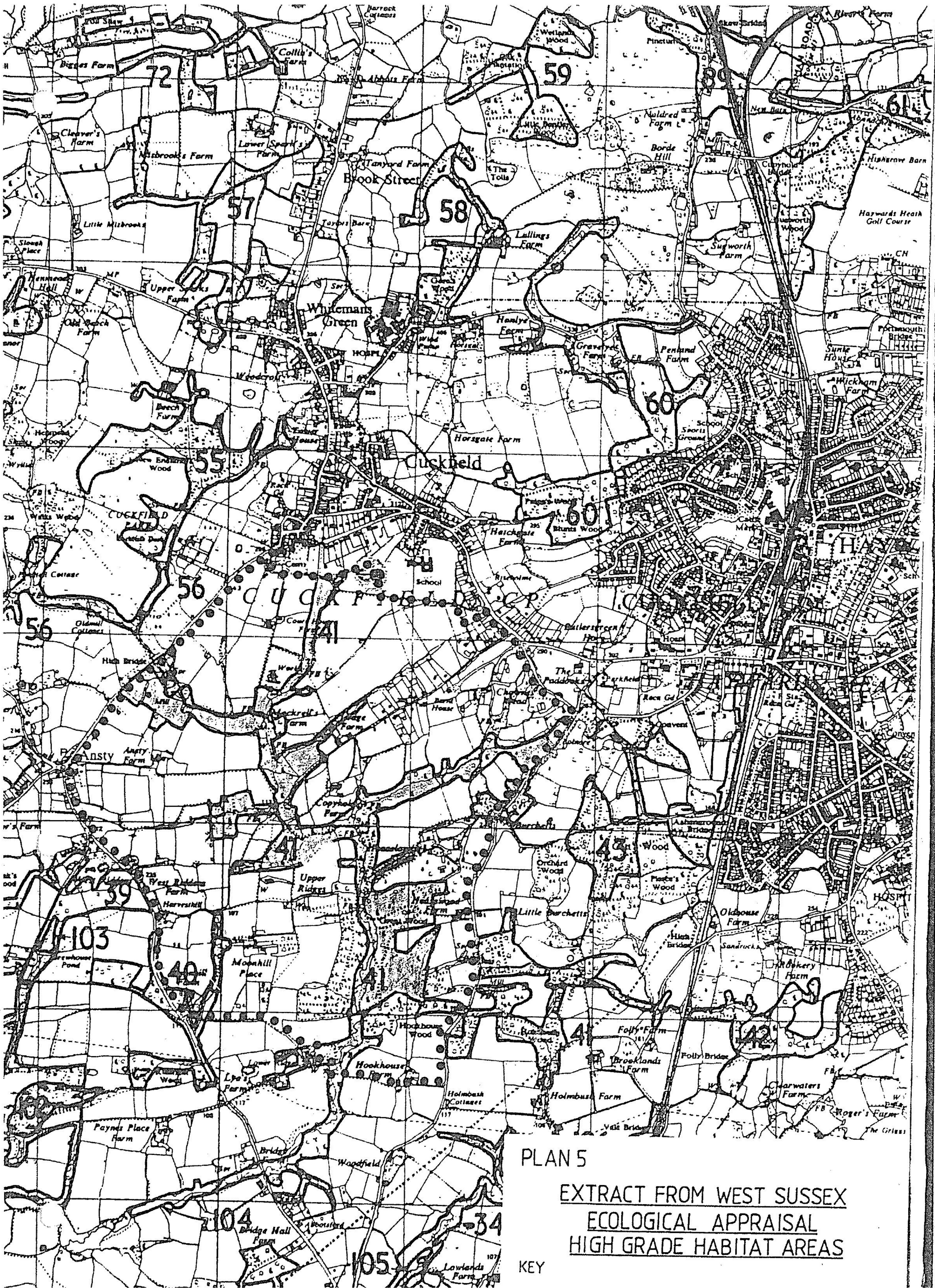
Ans. y



Issacs
Lane

PI AN 4

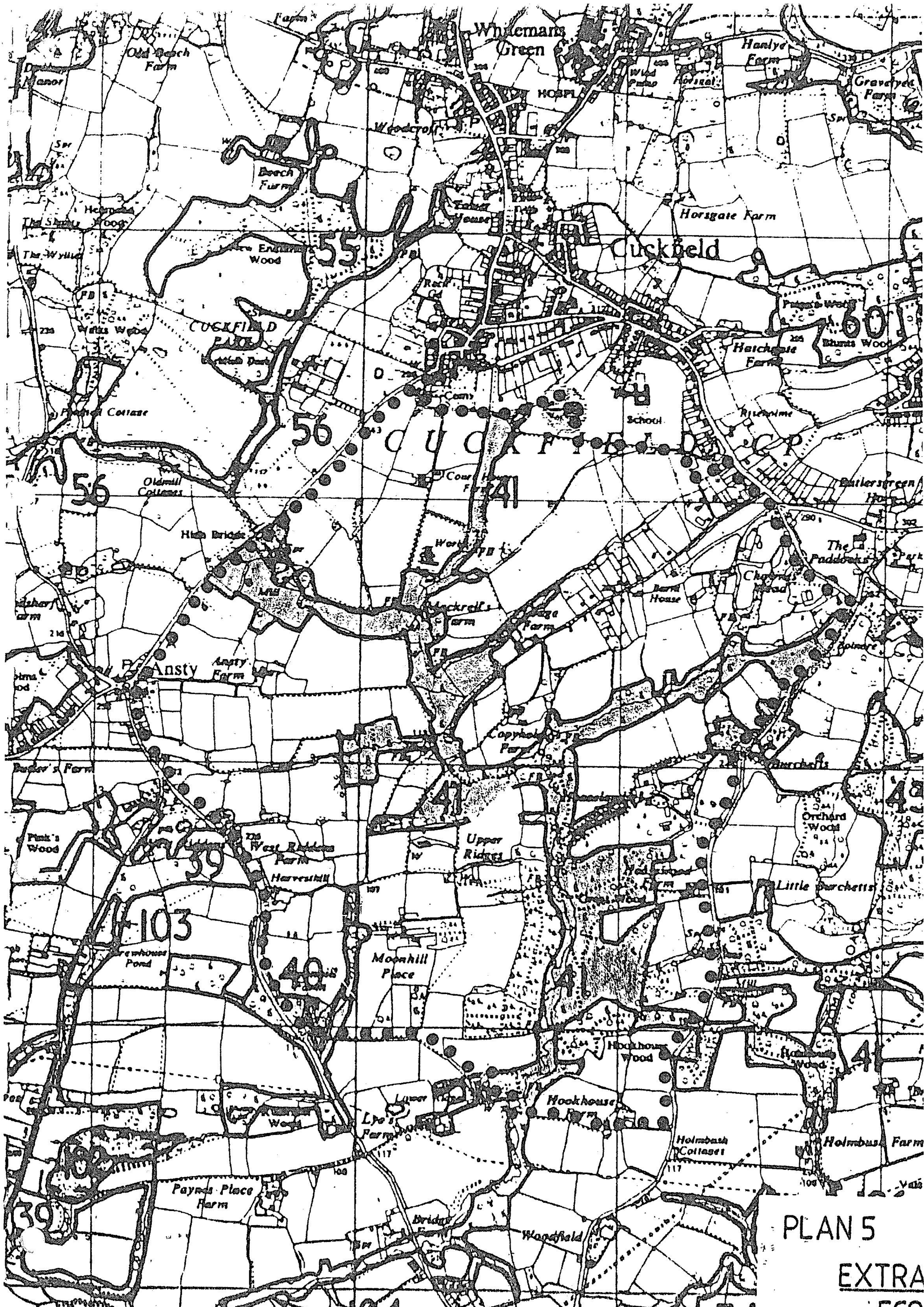
EXTRACT FROM WEST SUSSEX
AERIAL SURVEY, AUGUST 1981.



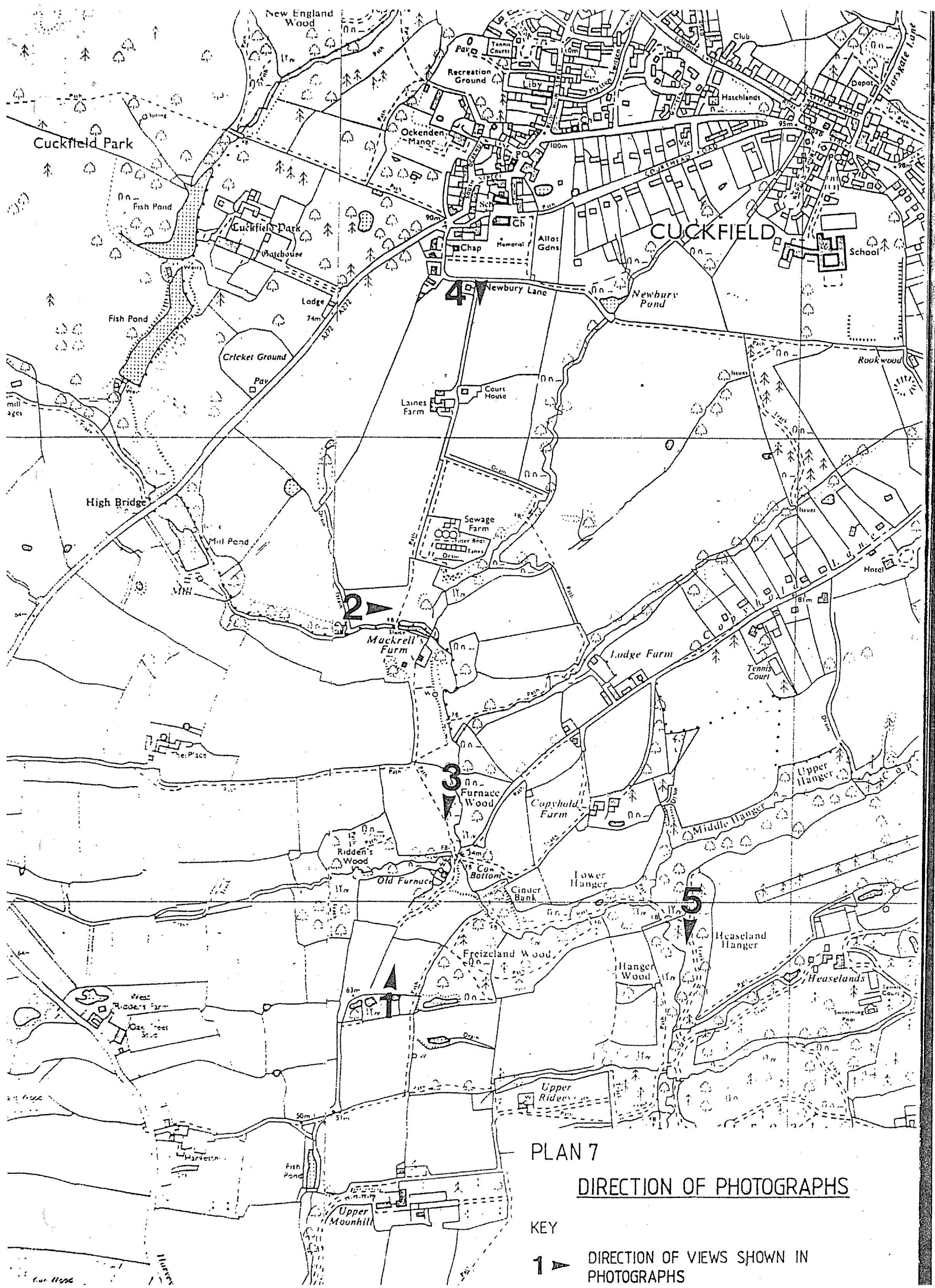
PLAN 5

EXTRACT FROM WEST SUSSEX
ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL
HIGH GRADE HABITAT AREAS

KEY




PLAN 5
EXTRA
ECO



PLAN 7

DIRECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS

KEY

1  DIRECTION OF VIEWS SHOWN IN PHOTOGRAPHS

Cuckfield Parish Council

Secretary:
B. H. Ingram, (Mrs.)

Your Ref: NE/BL
E91/1

MID SUSSEX DC PLANNING DEPT		Trants Foxhill Close
recvd 27 MAY 1986	file no	Haywards Heath West Sussex Tel. Haywards Heath 413275
ack	date	
[Redacted]		20 May 1986
<i>used. return for DT office the same report here.</i>		

Dear Mr Eveleigh

Extension of High Weald Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty

I thank you for your letter dated the 8th of May.

Further to our request that the area of land east of the A272 and south of Cuckfield should be upgraded to be included in the High Weald AONB. Having read the copy of the report enclosed and after our meeting with yourself and Mr Hatton, I should like to make the following comments:-

Definition of Boundary

As far as geology is concerned, the area under question still stands on the Hastings beds, sandstone with clay overlays here and there, in fact an area adjacent to Cuckfield Churchyard is specifically mentioned in Martell's "Geology of Sussex" and as such is in no way different from the land lying west of the A272, Cuckfield-Ansty road which is designated 'High Weald'. I agree that the proposed site can clearly be designated by the A272 road Cuckfield-Ansty to the west. The ridge along which the Ansty-Burgess Hill road runs and Copyhold Lane to the East.

The view of the South Downs from the vicinity of Cuckfield Churchyard is famous and can hardly be equalled. The variety of trees within the area provide a most interesting colour variation, especially in spring and autumn.

This Council would be only too happy to be able to join with you in making the necessary representations.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

PP
Vice-Chairman

Mr N Eveleigh
Planning Department
Mid-Sussex District Council
Oaklands



Chairman Nicholas Rowe RIBA
 Hempstead, Whitemans Green,
 Cuckfield

Vice Chairman Bryan Cox
 5 Bylanes Crescent
 Cuckfield

Hon. Secretary Sue Kirk-Bell
 Tanyard Farm House, Brook Street
 Cuckfield

Hon. Treasurer Audrey Cowan
 23 Barrowfield
 Cuckfield

24th December, 1986.

The District Planning Officer,
 Mid Sussex District Council,
 Oaklands,
 Oaklands Road,
 Haywards Heath,
 West Sussex.
For the attention of Miss Chapman.

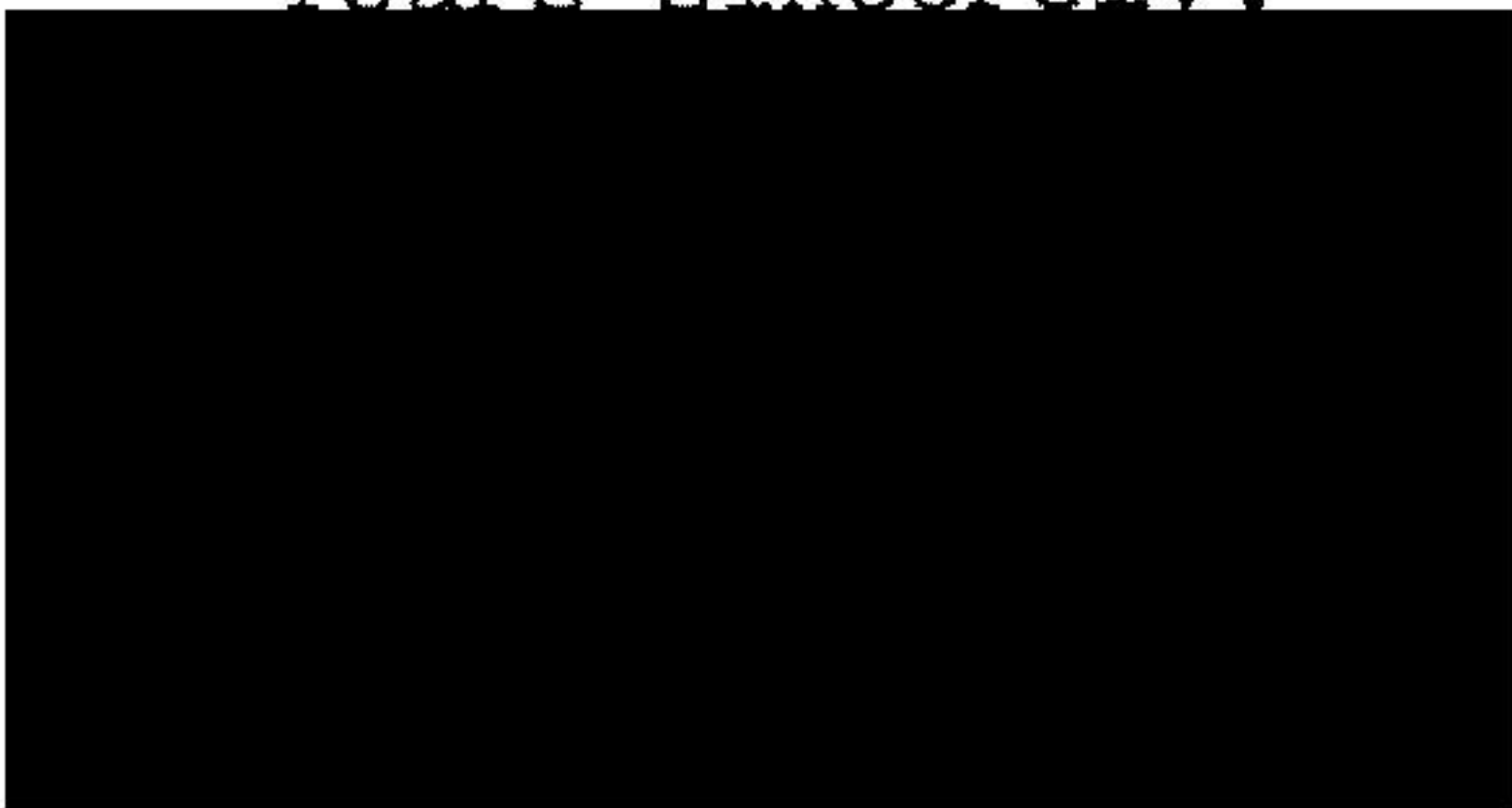
Dear Sir,

Proposal for Extension to High Weald A.O.N.B.

We have been passed a copy of your Draft submission to the County Commissioner for the above.

This Society supports your report, but also the Parish Council's observation about the northern boundary. We would also strongly argue that this boundary should follow the edge of the built up area as the existing A.O.N.B. does around the west and north of Cuckfield. Otherwise an odd parcel of land is left, which naturally forms part of the valley, and if excluded looks like an open invitation to infil development which would negate the whole object of the exercise.

Yours sincerely,



N.A. Rowe
 Chairman

cc Cuckfield Parish Council.

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

recd 30 DEC 1986

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Sarah P. Thompson & send them a copy of submission when finished. Peter

Appendix LP5: Article regarding Cambourne

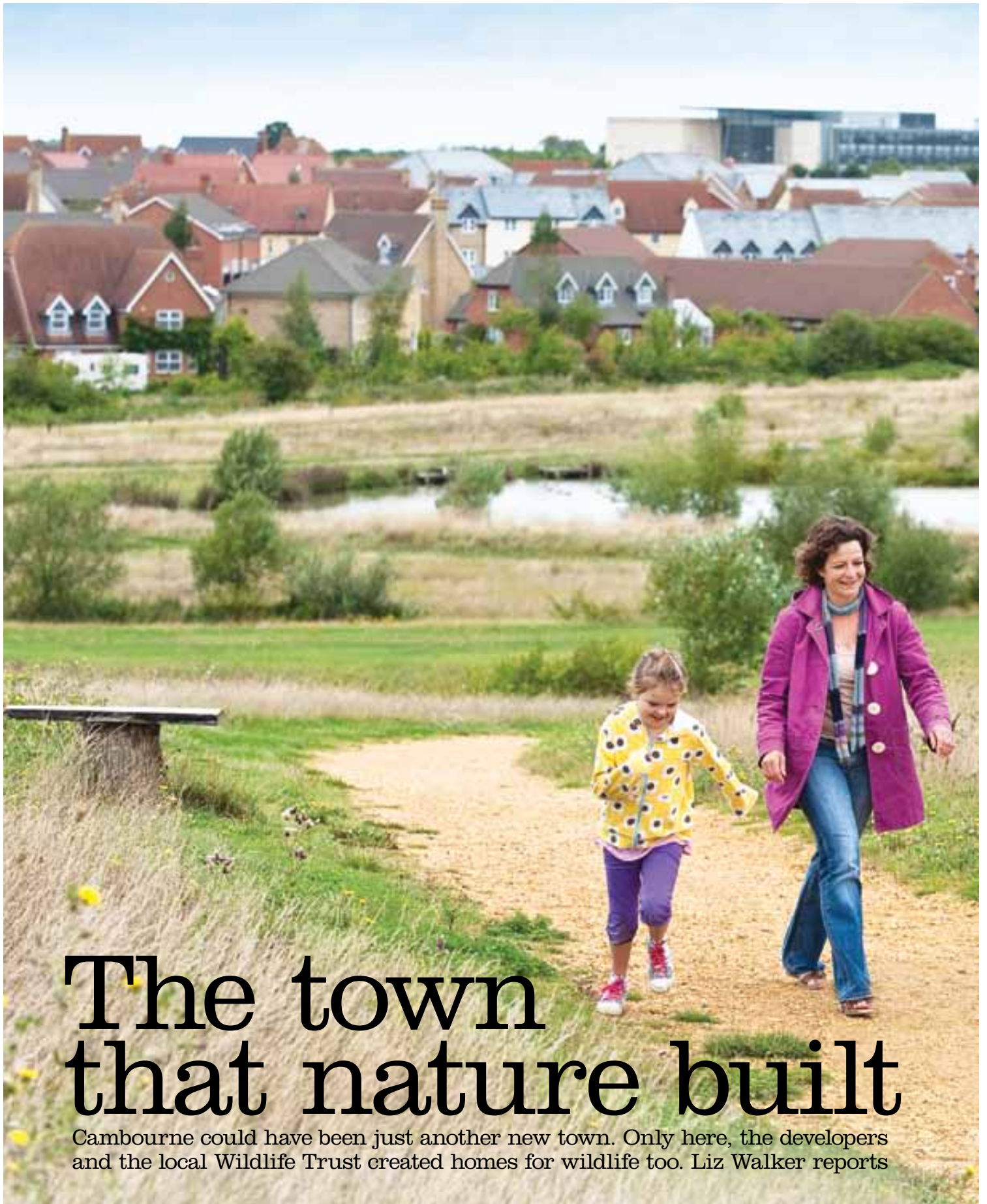
Natural World Winter 2010

The town that nature built



Cambourne: a multi-award winning development by Taylor Wimpey and Bovis

RANDALL THORP Canada House, 3 Chepstow Street, Manchester, M1 5FW. T: 0161 228 7721 E: mail@randallthorp.co.uk
MASTERPLANNING LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE URBAN DESIGN ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING



The town that nature built

Cambourne could have been just another new town. Only here, the developers and the local Wildlife Trust created homes for wildlife too. Liz Walker reports



Nine miles west of Cambridge, Cambourne could be anywhere in modern Britain. Homes rise up in a proliferation of styles and colours: cream render, pink bricks, blue pantiles, black weatherboards. Property isn't cheap, but at least here young families get more bedrooms for their buck. By 2012, the developers hope to have built at least 4,250 houses here, providing homes for 11,000 people.

And yet Cambourne is extraordinary. Built on former farmland, it's the UK's first new town where wildlife has been encouraged to make its home alongside people. Among and around the new houses are mature woodlands and hedgerows, new lakes and meadows, restored ditches and 'greenway' wildlife corridors. In fact, 60 per cent of the 417ha site has been left as 'green infrastructure' for people to enjoy, and for wildlife to move into. What was once an agricultural prairie is now rich in wildlife, with new species still pouring in. And that is down to close cooperation between the developers, the landscape architects and the Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs, Northants and Peterborough.

"We became involved in the Cambourne development very early on," explains chief executive Brian Eversham. "We always scrutinise large planning applications carefully, and offer advice if relevant. In the end, we were pleased to see that the master plan aimed to keep the best habitats – three blocks of old woodland, six farm ponds, a few stretches of hedgerow and patches of grassland – and then to link them together with wildlife corridors and an eco-park."

The Trust then worked with the developers to optimise the town's wildlife potential. "We worked very closely with Randall Thorp, the landscape architects," says Brian, "advising on planting schemes and making sure that management was tailored to the needs of wildlife. They were very receptive and imaginative, even creating a modern version of ridge-and-furrow in the meadows, using old Cambridgeshire varieties of fruit trees in the community orchard, and even agreeing to have sheep grazing some of the grasslands."



Built on former farmland, Cambourne retained and expanded all the wildlife habitats that were still there – ponds, woodland, grassland and ancient hedgerow

Main pic: Matthew Roberts; inset: Randall Thorp

A few of Cambourne's other residents



Adam Cormack

WASP SPIDER (*Argiope bruennichi*)

Originally a Mediterranean species, this spider has been spreading north since the 1970s, perhaps in response to climate change. A female's body can be the size of a 2p piece. The much smaller brown males are sometimes eaten while they're mating. Wasp spiders live in the long grass on Cambourne's eco-park, and in the Trust HQ's wildlife garden.



Robert Camis/FLPA

CORN BUNTING (*Emberiza calandra*)

Despite its dramatic decline across the UK, this Red List species has apparently rallied in Cambourne, with birds nesting on Crow Hill, where the long grasses (cut in late August) are perfect for protection and camouflage. Most arable crops and highway verges are cut in July, wiping out any nests in the process. Cambourne has meadow pipits and skylarks too.



Matt Cole

RED-EYED DAMSELFLY (*Erythromma najas*)

A good many dragon and damselfly species have made a home in Cambourne's ponds and wet ditches. It's especially good to see the distinctive red-eyed damselfly, whose body is predominantly black, but with iridescent blue markings and large red eyes. The males often sit on water lily leaves, defending their territory against all-comers.



David Chapman

WATER VOLE (*Arvicola amphibius*)

You can see water voles at Cambourne in the Crow Dene Valley, in the ditches between the lakes. They probably arrived from the nearby Bourn Valley, working their way up through the village's storm-water system. You can tell them from rats by their rounder noses, deep brown fur, chubby faces and short fuzzy ears. Their tails, paws and ears are furry too.

“The site had so few natural landscape features to work with,” says Randall Thorp's Dick Longdin. “It was an arable farmland with isolated pockets of woodland, overgrown ditches and straggly hedges, some flailed almost to the ground. One field was 300 acres of wheat. We were determined to retain and restore these features, keeping them in the public realm, to build character.”

“Here children grow up with nature. We're undoing some of the damage of the previous century.”

The four new lakes were a wildlife-friendly solution to flood alleviation. “We extended the existing ditches to link up with the new lakes and reedbeds,” explains Dick. “These were designed to take excess storm water, slowly releasing it through a controlled outlet – quite pioneering for 1995. It was so new that Anglian Water insisted we laid huge concrete pipes underground as well, but of course we've never needed them.”

To reduce lorry trips, no spoil was removed from the site. Instead, it became Crow Hill in the new country park – a grassland now buzzing with meadow insects, ground-nesting birds and butterflies. Allotments next door benefit from the ready supply of pollinators.



David Slater

GREAT CRESTED NEWT (*Triturus cristatus*)

The new lakes are good for these protected amphibians, which need open water for displaying and suitable egg-laying plants at the water margins. But, in fact, the newts are in all the ponds in Cambourne. They've probably come from the old farmland ponds which have been retained, and seem to thrive in the new network of wet ditches and watercourses.



Alan Williams

SNIPE (*Gallinago gallinago*)

Many wildfowl and wading birds use Cambourne's marsh and lakes for overwintering, attracted by the new stretches of open water and areas of lowland wet grassland. They're likely to come from the Ouse Washes, a large wetland site 30 miles to the northeast. The newer lakes are the best place to see snipe, using their long bills to hunt for worms and insects.



David Slater

BADGER (*Meles meles*)

Pre-build surveys show that several setts were here before Cambourne was developed. Encouragingly, the badgers have stayed, frequenting the main open and woodland areas and using the tunnels under the roads. During building they simply shifted their foraging territories, and final landscaping has been done sensitively to accommodate them.



Derek Smith

PIPISTRELLE BAT (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)

The newer houses on Cambourne don't have eaves and crannies, so the pipistrelles roost in the bat boxes instead. They're the smallest European bats, and prefer a varied habitat of open woodland, parks, marshes, farmland and urban areas. Cambourne has plenty of each. The lakes also attract Daubenton's bats (which hunt over water) and far-flying noctules.

The neighbouring eco-park is another wildlife magnet. Grassland, woodland, ponds, reedbeds and marshes accommodate all manner of bird, mammal and amphibious wildlife, extant and incoming. It's a godsend for Cambourne's many young families, although it wasn't strictly built as an educational resource.

BCNP Wildlife Trust manages these wild spaces in exchange for an office HQ and garden. As soon as the builders have gone, the Trust will take over the freehold of the wild areas too. Within a couple of decades, Brian Eversham reckons, their wildlife value could be up to the standard of a decent nature reserve. "Walking to work is always interesting. I never know what I might

see," he says. "I'd never have guessed that Cambourne would have been home to Cambridgeshire's first wasp spiders, or that the buzzing in our office window would turn out to be a hornet hoverfly – and the following week, the fluttering of a rare red-tipped clearwing moth – both stunning beasts. Most important, perhaps, is the influence of the wildlife and exciting green spaces on the people: children growing up with trees and flowers, birds and badgers as a part of everyday life. I'm always cheered to see children cycling through the woods to school, or a family walking in the meadows on their way to the shops. We're undoing some of the damage of the previous century."

VITAL STATS

- Population: **7,600**
- Existing woodlands: **7ha**
- New woodlands: **45ha**
- New lakes: **6ha**
- New grassland: **23ha**
- Parks: **44.5ha**
- Sports fields: **17ha**
- Trees, shrubs: **c. 250,000**
- New hedges: **10+ miles**
- New paths: **12+ miles**

Figures courtesy Randall Thorp 2010

“We have instant access to green space to relax in”



SIMON GIBSON, 42, SELF-EMPLOYED

“Perhaps it’s because I work outdoors that I see a lot of the wildlife here in Cambourne. Our house lies on a greenway near a run of ancient hedge offering food and shelter for birds all year round. It’s a shame the greenways are mown regularly. Even so, they’re used by foxes. And we’ve got a hedgehog living in our greenhouse. Sparrows breed locally too, and last winter redwings were flocking up and down the greenway. I’ve seen greenfinches and goldfinches bringing their young into the garden to feed, plus starlings, rock doves and a number of small toads.”

FRAN PANRUCKER, 63, RETIRED

“People have instant access to green spaces to relax in, not just to see wildlife, but to run, walk the dogs and push baby buggies. The whole atmosphere is good for the soul. My house is called Skylark Cottage, because that’s what we heard right from the minute we got here. I’m chair of the Garden Club, Cambourne Arts and the WI. I’d like to see Cambourne work more as a community; it still has that ‘dormitory’ feel. This is a very special place, but weird, too. My daughter said it’s a bit like the town on *The Truman Show* – too good to be true! But I love it to bits.”

SONIA LEEDER, 35, MUM

“All this outdoor space is great for the kids – especially in the summer holidays. You can find things to do without having to travel or spend money. The ponds at Oakwood are full of tadpoles and great crested newts. With shallow edges it’s completely safe for the children. We also go on the evening bat watch events. I’ve seen muntjac deer and foxes, and I once saw a water vole. People either love Cambourne or hate it because it’s so quiet and remote. The walks are fantastic – up to 10 miles every day. For us, it’s just about right.”

What Cambourne can teach other developments

In July 2010, we met with Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP (the new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government) and encouraged him to visit Cambourne.

We emphasised the need for future developments to go truly ‘eco’ by building in green infrastructure, as well as being carbon and water efficient. Cambourne is a great example of how green infrastructure can be an integral part of new development and provide benefits for people and wildlife alike.

The Wildlife Trusts believe that an ‘eco home’ should be defined by its impact on nature, as well as resources like carbon.



The houses could have been eco-homes, but the Laurie Lee countryside is great for people and wildlife

Matthew Roberts