





## 2. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ANALYSIS

## 2.1 LANDSCAPE CAPACITY OF THE SITE

Mid Sussex District Council commissioned and then published in July 2007 the 'Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study' (Hankinson Duckett Associates [HAD]). In March 2014 the Council appointed LUC to undertake another study that further examined the development growth capacity that could be accommodated in the Mid Sussex District. The 2014 study considered four topic areas: environment; infrastructure; landscape capacity; and sustainability (Fig. 24). The LUC study makes the following reference to the HDA report:

"The 2007 Study was undertaken to inform the Core Strategy that was being produced at the time, and considered the capacity of the landscape to accommodate strategic development under three broad options: concentrating development around the three towns (East Grinstead, Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill); a more dispersed pattern spreading development across the District including sites adjacent to the larger and smaller villages; and the possibility of a new settlement. The 2007 Study divided the study area into nine main zones based on a landscape structure analysis, which identified the main elements that contribute to the structure, character and setting of the settlements."

The 2007 study in appraising character driving elements, described common qualities that were grouped by HAD into 75 landscape character areas. The process of defining and assessing the physical, visual and environmental components of the landscape, that leads to the identification of constraints and opportunities for development as part of a sequential search, is an approach encouraged by Government. The Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study of 2007 does not have a particular development proposal to consider however: it is to some degree a comparative exercise that gives weighed scores to the landscape of the district. Its terms of reference are based on the analysis of the character defining attributes in the landscape of the study area as a baseline to enable the judging of potential effects of a non-defined development proposal. It cannot and does not give consideration how a scheme could best fit into the landscape of a site. The HAD study in Section 5:

Landscape Capacity Appraisal, states:

"The baseline information collated as part of the desk top study and site survey work, together with the structural analysis and landscape characterisation have all been fed into the landscape sensitivity and landscape value assessments. Each landscape character area has been evaluated using the following matrices derived from the techniques and criteria identified in Topic Paper 6 of the Countryside Agency's landscape Character Assessment Guidance."

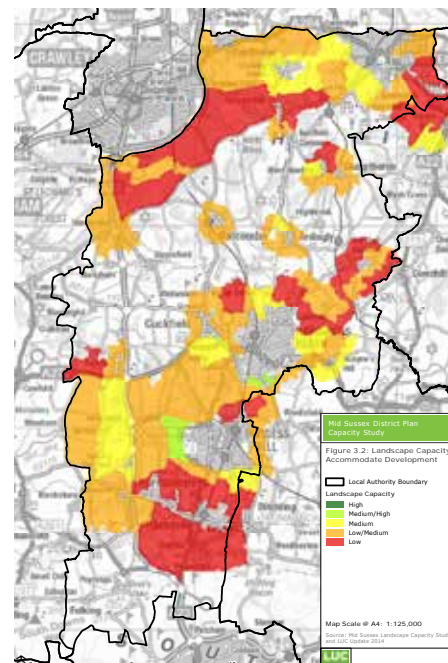
This LVA however has a focus on a specific change of use, with particular consideration of how the attributes of the Site should influence a consideration of a development proposal. The appraisal of the capacity of the Site at this refined, field scale level of study, includes the analysis of the baseline attributes in a process that looks to guide and shape the form, placement and content of the development proposal with the object of the avoidance of significant harm and to achieve a sensitive and successful fit in the landscape.

The 2007 HAD work placed the Site within LCA 08: Felbridge High Weald, and assessed a very large area that include the Site and extensive land to the west of Gullege Bridle Path as having a moderate Landscape Sensitivity and a slight Landscape Value (Fig. 26). These values when combined in the assessment matrix give a medium/high Landscape Capacity. In the study at 5.2.2 the 'Medium/High' rating that covers the Site is explained:

"Medium/High' capacity identifies a landscape character area that has a generally lower sensitivity that would accommodate significant allocations of development but which has specific considerations such as a sensitive adjacent character area, separation between settlements or setting to settlements".

This is the second highest scoring for capacity that HAD made in 2007 and is clearly helpful to the consideration of the merits that the Site has as a growth point for East Grinstead.

The LUC study in 2014 reappraised this rating with a different smaller scale, with different parameters. The 2014 study grades the Site, and as before a significant area of land to the west as: Medium capacity. Comparison between the two capacity studies is therefore not straightforward. This LVA is based within the context of these capacity predictions, but the work in the LVA is not part of a comparative test nor is it seeking to grade against a scale for all areas in the district. The reduction or avoidance of harmful effects causing particular negative impacts on sensitive and valued receptors can be made through the process that uses the LVA as a tool to guide a development proposal to avoid harm. This is the process that has been undertaken at early stages in the promotion of the Site and now recorded, in this LVA.

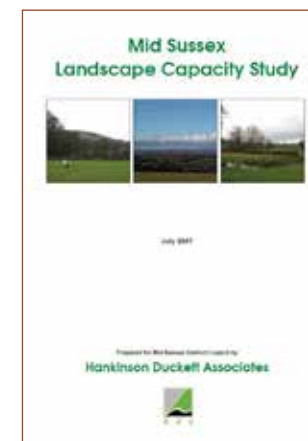
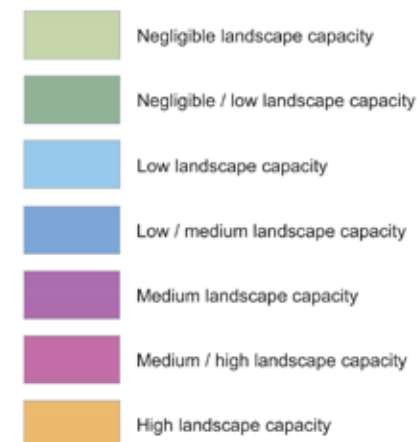
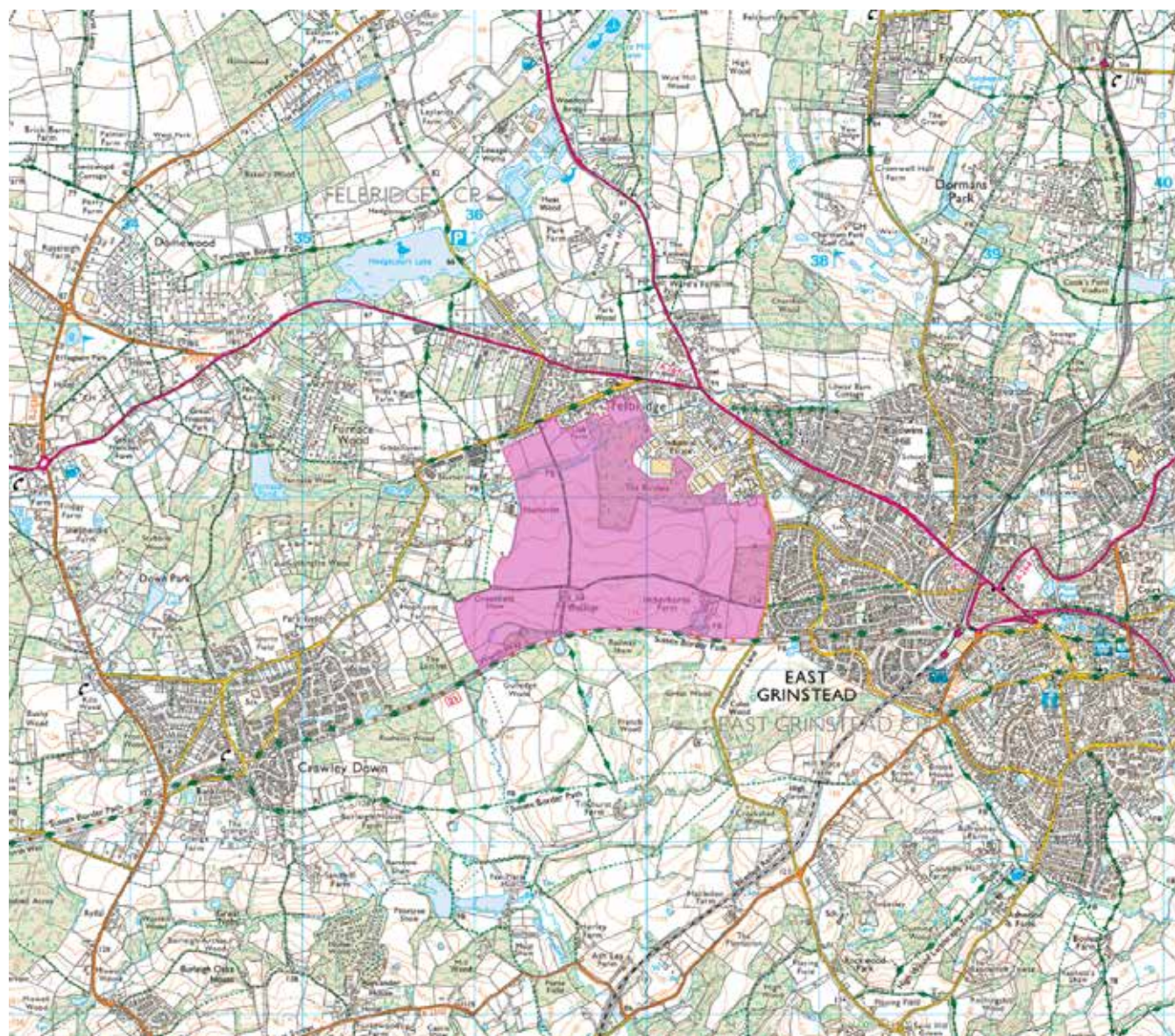


**FIGURE 24. MID SUSSEX DISTRICT PLAN CAPACITY STUDY**



**FIGURE 25. CAPACITY OF MID SUSSEX DISTRICT TO ACCOMMODATE DEVELOPMENT: MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL: 2014**





**FIGURE 27. THE MID SUSSEX LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY: HANKINSON DUCKETT ASSOCIATES 2007**

**FIGURE 26. LANDSCAPE CAPACITY MAP**



## 2.2 THE CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE SITE

The work recorded in this initial LVA has been undertaken to explore the landscape and visual matters associated with the consideration of the residential-led development of the Site and in so doing to further inform the refinement of a development concept for the Site.

The recording, description and analysis of the landscape and visual baseline, through desk and field based work, has identified key constraints and opportunities in the landscape of the Site. The Landscape and Visual Constraints and Opportunities Plan (Fig. 23), gives a map of this analysis. In part constraints to development have to be informed by a knowledge of a possible development proposal, and in part by an appreciation of the baseline components in the landscape. The process contributes to an approach that ensures that the proposal is informed by the landscape and responds directly to the character of the Site and the setting: the aim is to make a proposal that belongs to the setting and makes a successful fit in the landscape.

The early concepts for the Site have been informed by the landscape and visual analysis work recorded in this study. The LVA work has not been the only source of influence on the drafting of the Vision Plan (Fig. 30) and the Development Concept (Fig 31) but the appreciation of the landscape character of the Site, its relationship with the settlement pattern and with the host countryside are relevant considerations that have contributed to the shape and placement of the proposed land uses. The findings of this study now provide a further layer of knowledge and appraisal of the landscape and visual baselines of the Site and its setting.



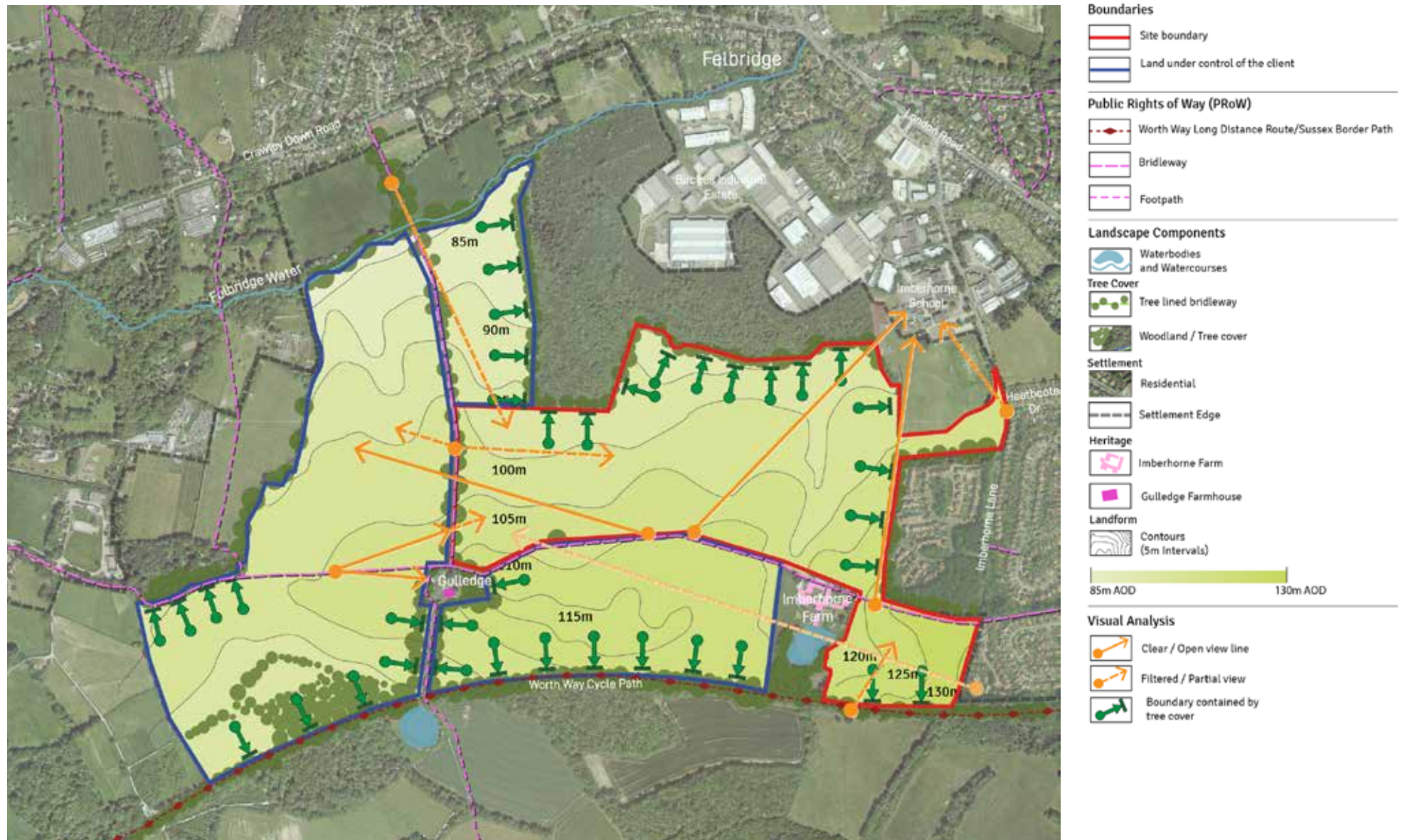


FIGURE 28. CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES PLAN



## 2.3 THE MAIN LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this LVA, the points recorded here are an overview of the main landscape and visual considerations identified at this early stage of study, to inform development proposals. Further work will be required to refine and deepen the consideration of the effects of a change of use on landscape and visual receptors, as the proposals evolve.

### The main landscape considerations:

#### The relationship of the proposed development to the settlement

The Site relates to the settlement edge where it adjoins Imberhorne Lane. The boundary is indented, complex and has land uses at the current interface with the countryside that are clearly visible from the countryside. Housing along Imberhorne Lane and at the western end of Heathcote Drive are visible from the countryside for some considerable distance into the Site. They have a character influencing effect.

The new residential development off Kingscote Drive (Photo 3) is set within boundaries that are well defined by tree cover and the housing is visible, even in winter, from the countryside to the west. This strong enclosure formed by established trees also characterises the majority of the Site's boundaries.

Imberhorne School similarly causes a change in the characterisation of the landscape of large areas of the Site (Photo 2). The school is set back from the edge of the Site, behind playing fields and this open green space makes a transition between farmland and settlement but the large buildings of the halls and teaching blocks are visually prominent and there is little sense that the layout of the school and its external spaces took much regard to this transition role at the urban/rural interface: there are no campus parkland tree lines at the boundaries for example. The change of use is quite stark. So too is the change of use between the properties along Imberhorne Lane and the countryside (Photo 4). The highway currently forms an abrupt transition between the settlement and the adjoining countryside.

The Site sits against the settlement along much of its north eastern edge. It also sits close to, but does not adjoin the settlement edge at Felbridge along Crawley Down Road, set back east of Felbridge Water. The dip in landform towards this boundary again makes an link between the Site and the settlement.

To the west and south west the settlement at East Crawly is several kilometres away and the Site has little connectively or association with the towns to the west: this edge is characterised by the landscape of farmland and woods. The strong tree lines that line Gulledege Bridlepath act, with many other strong hedgerows to the west, to partition and contain to large open fields of the Site (Photo 8 + page 17).

#### The main Landscape issues: the relationship of the proposed development to the landscape character of the countryside

The Site sits in a field pattern that has seen considerable boundary change over the last 150 years (Figs 13-16). The very large fields within the Site today are result of twentieth century hedgerow removal. This is, consequently, a more open countryside than in 1870 for example. The landscape will have been more enclosed then, and would have had a smaller pattern, grain and scale. Today the field boundaries make a broadly rectilinear pattern, reinforced by watercourses and frequent hedgerow trees, but the scale is substantial.

The extensive tree cover around the Site has however endured: evidenced by the size, prominence and age of much of the trees and also by the records of the historic OS maps. The woodland and shaws that typify the character of the landscape setting, also have a very strong influence on the landscape character of the Site. The substantial areas of tree cover produce a landscape character that is one of considerable containment in the immediate and mid distance landscape. There are views from areas of the Site to expansive areas of high ground to the north – above the tree tops but the high ground is a long way away – too far to pick out points of detail (Photo 5). The tree cover is substantial and in many case very dense, typical of the High Weald landscape character area, and it forms a clear and substantive, locally typical, containment to the majority of the Site's edges.

Landform also contributes to the definition of the landscape character of the Site and its relationship to both the settlement and to the countryside setting. The comparatively high broad ridges and secluded valleys described in the High Weald landscape character areas are present across the Site, across the settlements and across the landscape of the host countryside. The landform pattern is strong, extensive in scale and characterised by countryside and settlement.

#### The main Landscape issues: the relationship of the proposed development to the constraints and opportunities of the Site

The LVA study has identified the key landscape baseline receptors of the Site. The value of the shape of the former field pattern and also existing and remaining field pattern, the strength and intact and enclosing nature of the boundary tree cover offer considerable potential to form a framework that belongs to the Site being drawn from the Site.

The physical landscape constraints present an opportunity for a development to find a sympathetic and appropriate response to the Site and setting. The shape and definition of the Site boundaries and its proximity to the settlement are strong factors that build a good relationship with the settlement and the host countryside.

#### The main Landscape issues: the capacity of the landscape of the Site

Although considered through desk based research and primary study in the field as a main landscape issue, in this LVA study the capacity of the Site has been set out in a separate Section in 2.1 above as there has been such a weight of published material that requires separate referencing.







ON SITE (PROW 44BEG) LOOKING WEST AT IMBERHORNE FARM



## The main visual considerations:

The visual constraints are based on an initial ZTV analysis of how the Site maybe seen and how residential development may be placed to avoid harm to receptors in the visual baseline. ZTV Target Points have been modelled within the Site, at high points and low point locations and at places that explore openness and containment. The process has sought to model a representative sample of areas of the Site. Already a good understanding of the role the Site plays in the landscape and in the setting for the town has been established.

Public domain viewpoints exist along Imberhorne Lane and along the PRoV across and leading to the Site. The containment of the extensive tree cover restricts and limits many near Site views of the Site.

The Site is more visually discrete on the ground then it appears on a map. Tree cover, field divisions and the character of the rolling landform form result in only a limited number of properties having a clear and unfiltered line of sight to the Site.

The main Visual Receptor groups were identified in Section 1.12. The GLVIA 3 at 6.13 'Receptors of visual effects' explains the potential for 'differing responses to changes in views and visual amenity' that people will have depending on activity, expectation, location, time of day, season, and duration of consideration of the view. The analysis part 1 of this LVA draws some broad judgements about the Visual Receptors for the Site and describes the following groups:

### Visual Receptors

- i. Residents of properties (Photos 3,4,11);
- ii. Walkers along Public Rights of Way including Worth Way (Photos 5,7,9);
- iii. Visual Receptors at Imberhorne School (Photo 2); and
- iv. Road users (Photo 10,11);

This is an initial study and this is early analysis but these visual receptors can be described within four broad typologies:

### Local Residents at home

At this stage of work within this LVA the thrust of study is on how a proposed promotion of the Site rather than a development proposal with a specific form can be best guided by landscape and visual guidance. The GLVIA at 6.30 gives further guidance on 'Assessing the significance of visual effects' and at 6.33 gives a suggested list of visual receptors most susceptible to change in the visual amenity. It places residents at home at the top of the list. At the Site the residents of properties that front Imberhorne Lane (Photo 4) and within the Kingscote Way (Photo 3) development and at the western end of Heathcote Drive (Photo 11) have been shown to be limited in number and those that do may possibly have only limited views to the Site from first floor windows. This presumption comes from looking carefully on Site at the properties that windows visible from vantage points on site – just focusing on the obstructions and not the matter of whether the windows are within bathrooms, on stairs (as many would appear to be).

The obstructions are caused by the trees and hedgerow plants along the north eastern boundary of the Site record the extent of the considerable visual barrier created by this tree cover.

### Road users

The LVA work has considered the approaches to the Site along the adjoining roads (Photos 4, 10, 11, 12).

Views are filtered and obscured to a large degree by the boundary hedgerows and tree cover. Where the Site is open to lengths of Imberhorne Lane tree cover still frames and contains the lines of sight.

### Walkers along Public Rights of Way

Perhaps it is reasonable to suggest that leisure walkers will have a broad panorama of the Sussex countryside to see along the PRoV's that cross the Site and that a focus on views to just the Site would be unlikely. This is not a designated landscape with any national value status. The field pattern and particularly the numerous field boundary hedges, hedgerows and trees frequently interrupt views to the Site from the PRoV's in the vicinity. The Site has a high visual prominence from these public footpaths as the paths cross the Site, but once past the Site the visually containing components, common in the landscape, filter, obscure, interrupt and significantly reduce the visual prominence of the Site, even from quite nearby locations along the paths. Worth Way for example runs for much of the boundary with the Site in a cutting that restricts views to the Site to the north (Photo 9 + pages 10,11). The well-established and substantial tree cover further restricts views.





ON SITE (PROW 44BEG) LOOKING ACROSS THE SITE TO THE BIRCHES WOODLAND AND OVER FELBRIDGE TO THE HIGH GROUND OF THE NORTH  
DOWNS AT 230M AOD APPROXIMATELY 15KM TO THE NORTH



## 2.4 THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

GLVIA Edition 3 gives guidance on the use of the LVA as a 'standalone appraisal' in Chapter 3, and at 3.2 recommends that nature of the proposed change or development is described. It is important to define the development proposal in order to have a clear understanding of the terms of reference of the judgements and early assessments made by the team of Landscape Architects.

The proposal is for a mixed use scheme comprising the expansion of Imberhorne Secondary School, a new Primary School and Early Years facility, circa 550 new homes, neighbourhood centre, a Care Village and a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)/Country Park (to include infrastructure improvements, landscaping and enhanced green corridors). From the outset, the study within the LVA has been applied to inform these early concepts and to create a sympathetic response to the setting.

An initial vision for development on the Site was set out in the previous LVA (Fig. 29), and through continuing appraisal of the landscape and visual context of the Site, this has been refined further to respond to the landscape and visual issues identified.

In addition, an extensive swathe of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) is now proposed on the western edge of the development, creating a sympathetic transition between the edge of settlement and wider countryside, and reinforcing the separation of East Grinstead from the surrounding settlements.

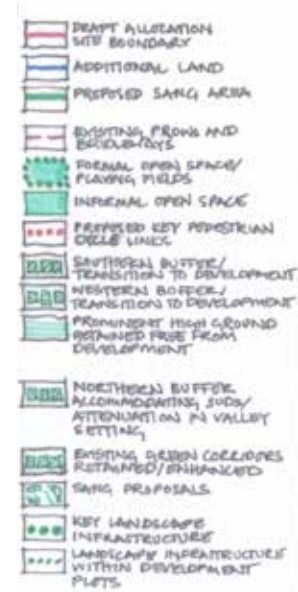
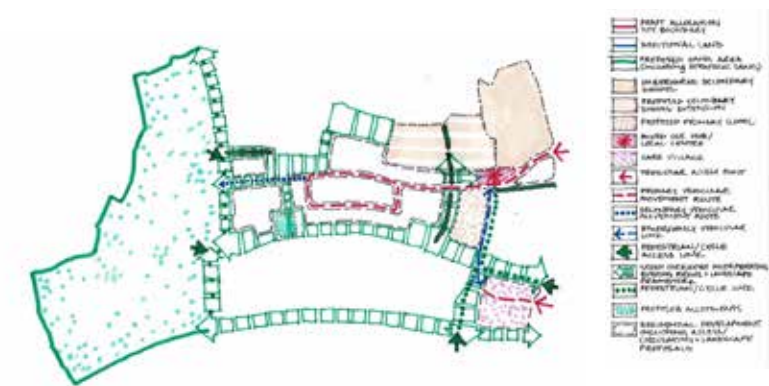


FIGURE 29. FORMER VISION PLAN



FIGURE 30. VISION PLAN





The updated and refined Vision for the Site (Fig. 30) includes:

- Development set more sympathetically within, and contained by, the existing landscape framework of fields, hedgerows and woodland
- Retention of the area of higher land within the southern part of the wider site free from development
- Setting development further back from the Worth Way/Sussex Border Long Distance Trail
- Clustering proposed schools and their associated extended facilities to relate well to the adjoining existing school uses
- Location of local centre alongside proposed schools uses to create a vibrant and active centre



FIGURE 31. CONCEPT MASTERPLAN



## Landscape Strategy

The Landscape Strategy has a clear objective: to realise to the full all the advantages already present in the landscape of the site, at the edge of the settlement and in the countryside setting. The object is to craft a new landscape that is distinctive in character and that belongs to the place and in so doing forms a strong, local and highly successful response to the place.

This over-arching objective sets out a clear requirement for the proposed landscape strategy that will deliver the opportunity for a memorable and enduring scheme. These strategies will make the most of the latent potential that is present in the landform; the extensive woodland, the Worth way cycle route, the connectivity with the countryside; and the links with the land and the history of the place.

The concept for the Landscape Strategy Plan shows the containment of the development within a profoundly green and planted framework. This protection of the countryside is important to the development. The relationship with the Sussex landscape is one of the strongest assets of the scheme. It is a relationship that will continue to be successful through the sensitive placement of building, the retention of trees and field patterns and through the creation of open spaces that increase GI connectivity and that make a good fit in the landscape.

The objective will be met as the public paths will pass through attractive, safe, locally distinctive public open spaces that present a far greater network of paths and accessibility to open green spaces than currently exists.

The finding of the LVA, in particular the comprehensive exploration and understanding of the existing landscape and visual context have shaped a Landscape Strategy, with the objective of creating a site specific, and appropriate, landscape framework within which to accommodate development, successfully assimilating residential development and the required associated components into both the edge of settlement location and the wider countryside.

### **Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) on the Natural Environment (Updated 21st July 2019), to support the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).**

#### **Building a strong, competitive economy**

Green infrastructure can drive economic growth and regeneration, helping to create high quality environments which are attractive to businesses and investors.

#### **Achieving well-designed places**

The built environment can be enhanced by features such as green roofs, street trees, proximity to woodland, public gardens and recreational and open spaces. More broadly, green infrastructure exists within a wider landscape context and can reinforce and enhance local landscape character, contributing to a sense of place and natural beauty.

#### **Promoting healthy and safe communities**

Green infrastructure can improve the wellbeing of a neighbourhood with opportunities for recreation, exercise, social interaction, experiencing and caring for nature, community food-growing and gardening, all of which can bring mental and physical health benefits. Outdoor Recreation Value (ORVal) is a useful online tool that can be used to quantify the recreational values provided by greenspace. Green infrastructure can help to reduce health inequalities in areas of socio-economic deprivation and meet the needs of families and an ageing population. It can also help to reduce air pollution and noise.

#### **Mitigating climate change, flooding and coastal change**

Green infrastructure can contribute to carbon storage, cooling and shading, opportunities for species migration to more suitable habitats and the protection of water quality and other natural resources. It can also be an integral part of multifunctional sustainable drainage and natural flood risk management.

#### **Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**

High-quality networks of multifunctional green infrastructure contribute a range of benefits, including ecological connectivity, facilitating biodiversity net gain and nature recovery networks and opportunities for communities to undertake conservation work.



FIGURE 32. LANDSCAPE STRATEGY PLAN



## Green Infrastructure

The Landscape Institute Position Statement: ‘Making it home: the power of landscaping to create good housing’, (LI, 2010) promotes a philosophy of integration between the technical and creative aspects of new housing provision with a positive response to the landscape of the setting. In the Forward of ‘Making it home’ the President of the Institute states:

***“Whether the setting is urban or rural, far too many housing developments make little reference to the landscape in which they are set. The pressure in both public and private sectors is to maximise use of available space... many housebuilders are increasingly aware that creating successful developments requires that local context, character and culture are part of the planning, design and management process.”***

This exemplar approach lies at the heart of the proposal for the mixed-use development at Imberhorne Farm. Its application is evidenced by the importance given at this early stage in the design of the development, to a successful Green Infrastructure Strategy.

### GI Network links

The linkage between the scheme and the nearby settlements at East Grinstead and Fellbridge, and importantly with the Sussex countryside, will be made through physical connections: the paths and cycle routes, and through the visual lines of sight. The site has established and well-defined boundaries – principally the extensive tree cover around many of its boundaries. Where there are views to the setting, the viewpoints will be created to take advantage of the visual links. This linkage is also made through the culture and history of the place. Our approach as designers of the new landscape is to make a respectful response to these components in the landscape.

The Green Infrastructure (GI) of the new scheme is integral to the nature and quality of the new environment. The public realm will be rich in places for people to enjoy and it will also contain and define the limits of the development. The Landscape Strategy is to craft the

green spaces in a manner that achieves a sensitive and successful fit in the Warwickshire landscape whilst also making green spaces people want to have pride in and to call home.

The Green Infrastructure Strategy is an integral part of the Development Proposal and is embedded in the concepts for the Masterplan. A central goal for the GI Strategy will be to strengthen existing links to the wider Green Infrastructure network. Through the creation of new connections, the proposed green spaces will be formed and managed to enrich and diversify habitats of value. The approach will be to balance the pressures and needs of the public for access to green spaces and countryside, with the establishment of durable plant and animal communities. It will address measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

This approach has been central to the process that establishes the concept for the masterplan. The key objective for the masterplan has been to set the future development into the host landscape in a manner that achieves a sympathetic and successful assimilation in the countryside at the settlement edge.

### Existing ‘Green Capital’

Existing components: Field pattern, hedgerows and trees – the ‘Green Capital’, in association with new green spaces will give form and structure to the new GI. The existing components in particular the landform and the extensive tree cover around the boundaries will be connected by new green areas to form a network of biodiverse planted linked spaces and habitats. UK BAP habitats in Sussex include a range from lowland farmland, woodland to coastal habitats, those of which are relevant to the Site include Hedgerows; Lowland meadows; Traditional orchards and Ponds. These habitats have been incorporated into the development proposals as part of a connected Green Infrastructure providing significant site level enhancements, and also providing increased connectivity for existing and proposed habitats, linking hedgerows, wetland habitats and the provision of a network of niches within the landscape.

### Suitable Alternative Natural Green space: the SANG land

Concept proposals for the 42.07 ha of the SANG land were worked-up in 2019. The principles for the proposals were discussed between the Project Team of Landscape Architects, Engineers and Ecologists, and Officers at MSDC. The proposals for the semi-natural land of the SANG form an important attribute and will be an environmental asset for the development. The SANG sits within well defined and easily recognisable boundaries. It is an attractive open area that is well located to serve the residents of the development as well as the existing communities.

New areas of publicly accessible open green space will be run through the entire development, creating a new connected network of spaces, corridors, and links west, to the semi-natural landscape of the SANG. It will also provide linkage to other GI assets beyond the Site. The existing components will be retained and further enhanced, and the development arranged around it, to provide strategic and meaningful space with a strong sense of place.

A high-level GI and Landscape Strategy proposes the division and softening of the development. On the gently sloping ground this will give the impression of layers of tree canopies between the blocks of development. The SANG will be visible from parts of the development and will provide benefits of greenery beyond its immediate boundaries. The visual GI linkages through the Site are important and will also create a sense of a settlement being set in between trees.

### Essential Features

The proposal for the SANG land will provide the following essential Landscape features that are required in order for the land to fulfil its purpose as a SANG:

- Natural greenspace with areas of open (non-wooded) countryside and areas of dense and scattered trees and scrubs. Land should preferably not be entirely flat.
- A range of habitats should be provided for users to experience if the SANG site is larger than 12Ha.
- Perceived as semi-natural with few buildings or artificial structures except in the immediate vicinity of car parks.
- Perceived as safe – no tree or scrub cover along parts of the walking routes.
- No unpleasant intrusions (e.g. sewage treatment smells etc)

Currently biodiversity on the Site is considered to be of limited ecological value, being limited to arable fields with arable field margins consisting of poor semi-improved grassland habitats. Both of these habitats are common and widespread.

The Green and Blue Infrastructure Proposals provide the following enhancements and benefits:

- The proposed SANGs land, proposed on the western aspect, will provide a greater diversity of habitats present within the current boundaries of the site, including meadow grassland; trees, shrub and woodland planting; a pond and wetland and an orchard.
- UK BAP habitats in Sussex include a range from lowland farmland, woodland to coastal habitats, those of which are relevant to the Site include Hedgerows; Lowland meadows; Traditional orchards and Ponds. These habitats have been incorporated into the development proposals as part of a connected Green Infrastructure providing significant site level enhancements, and also providing increased connectivity for existing and proposed habitats, linking hedgerows, wetland habitats and the provision of a network of niches within the landscape.
- A mosaic of habitats created within the boundary provides a diverse and rich landscape.
- Proposed woodland planting, and an increase in diversity of grassland, provides a significant enhancement for foraging and commuting habitats for bats.
- The creation of a nectar rich, and native landscape, will enhance the opportunities for a number of invertebrates species present.



FIGURE 33. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN



### Green Infrastructure Precedent Imagery









## Blue Infrastructure

The Green Infrastructure Strategy for the development contains a strategy for Blue Infrastructure – the management and care of the environment associated with water systems. In this LVA the objectives for Blue Infrastructure are described, in outline, in this section. The BI will comprise the aspirations for a multi-purpose approach to the green spaces in the development. It will comprise and deliver the requirement of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDs) and a water treatment train that looks at natural measures to ensure the protection of water quality. Flood prevention measures will be drafted to have an awareness and responsibility to also deliver public amenity and biodiversity gains. The Sustainable Urban Drainage system will require several basins to be created to attenuate surface water and these have been set within green spaces. The basins, swales, ditches, rills and 'Rain Gardens' will be located to serve drainage operational requirements. The modern, forward looking SuDs regime within the scheme will capture the opportunities for biodiversity enrichment through wetland habitat creation and management.

The Drainage Strategy provides a significant enhancement to the Blue Infrastructure on the Site.

The drainage proposals

- Follow, incorporate and extend the existing network of watercourses and ponds, in line with the West Sussex Policies (SuDs Policy 1 and 3) for the Management of Surface Water
- Provide management for flood risk, with attractive solutions such as connected swales, ponds and attenuation features, integrated within the layout and design of the proposals, with their management and maintenance considered from the outset, in line with SuDs Policies 2 and 6
- Include ponds and swales, located with the open space network, have been designed to complement and contribute to the multi-functional amenity of the open space for the development, such as providing a village pond as a focal point for local centre, in line with SuDs Policy 8
- Provide a network watercourses, swales and ponds that respond to the landform of the Site, dropping into the valley formed by Felbridge Water, to the north of the Site, connecting into the wider network of blue infrastructure, and reflecting and complementing the wider valley landscape in line with SuDs Policies 3 and 10
- Include permeable paving in areas such as car parking courts, private driveways and communal areas to contribute to the surface water treatment at source within the development
- Contribute to increased biodiversity across the Site, through the provision of ponds and swales, and the associated diversity of marginal/riparian habitats, in line with SuDs Policy 9

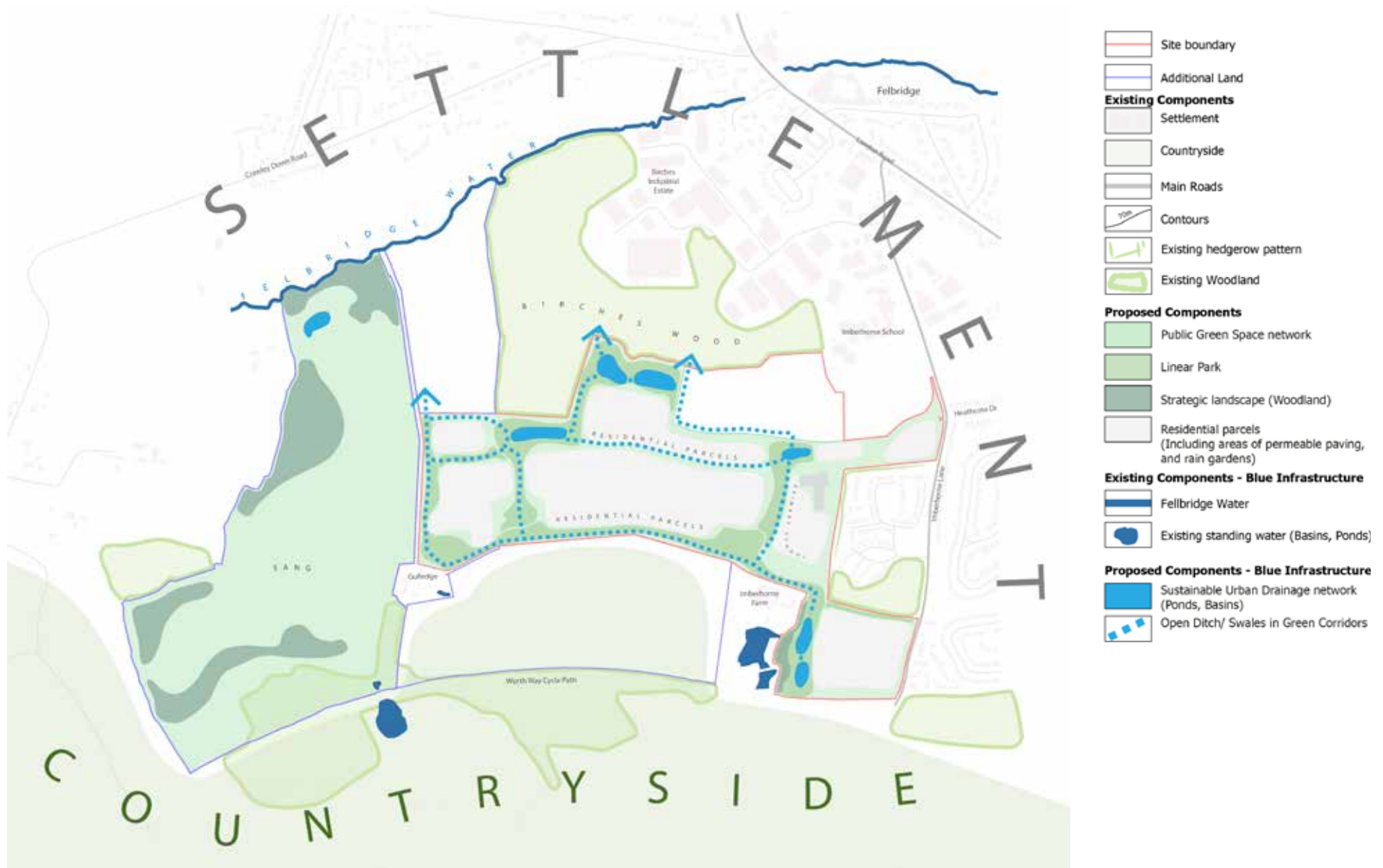


FIGURE 34. BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN



### Blue Infrastructure Precedent Imagery













### 3. SUMMARY



The allocation of the Site as residential land will change the status of the land – countryside will become settlement and the findings of the LVA work suggest how a successful development proposal could demonstrate a sympathetic and successful response to the edge of settlement and countryside setting. The Landscape Constraints and Opportunities plan gives a summary of the key considerations and it is drawn from a careful study of the landscape of the Site and its setting.

The landscape of East Grinstead and the Site sits within in the NCA 122 High Weald National Character Area. Qualities of the National Character Area are evident in the Site and its immediate setting: the gently rolling broad ridge farmland landscape with secluded small valleys. This landscape displays a strong cohesive quality – its landscape character is evident and discernible, over a considerable area. Development on the Site would not cause harm to the landscape character of the setting. The Site would change from farmland to settlement and this LVA has already set out constraints drawn from an evidence base that look to guide a development proposal to form a responsive, positive and successful fit in the host landscape, without harm to the character of the wider countryside; and to make a positive intervention that contributes to the distinctiveness of the settlement of East Grinstead, and maintaining the separate identity of other surrounding settlements, without harm.

This LVA study has modelled the hedgerows, the tree cover and the settlement of East Grinstead within a Zone of Theoretical Visibility model that has been used to inform field work. The ZTV model has ensured that an appraisal of how the Site currently sits in the landscape and how a development may result in changes to specific Visual Receptors have been adequately predicted and investigated.

The LVA work has established that the Site sits discretely in both the local and wider landscape, benefiting from strong visual and physical containment. It has well defined boundaries made by tree cover, by hedges and hedgerows with substantial trees.

The Site provides the opportunity not only to deliver residential development, also the opportunity to provide significant enhancements to the Green and Blue Infrastructure on the Site, including a substantial swathe of SANG, providing improved connectivity with the surrounding countryside and much wider benefits to not only future residents, but also the existing surrounding communities.

A future residential development of the Site, guided by landscape led principles, as set out in this LVA, could form a sympathetic and successful relationship with both countryside and the settlement, reflecting its location at the interface of rural/urban edge.

There are clear reasons, established as an evidence base and recorded within this LVA study, that have demonstrated that the Site has the capacity to accommodate residential development without significant harm to the setting – both countryside and town.



FIGURE 35. CONCEPT MASTERPLAN





PERMISSIVE PATH - P20 IMBERHORNE SCHOOL FROM IMBERHORNE LANE NEAR IMBERHORNE FARM







**BARTON  
WILLMORE**