

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF HANLYE LANE, CUCKFIELD

LANDSCAPE STATEMENT

ON BEHALF OF GLENBEIGH DEVELOPMENTS LTD

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Glenbeigh Developments Limited by Pegasus Group, and forms a Landscape Appraisal for land to the south of Hanlye Lane, Cuckfield, West Sussex ('the Site').
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to determine the degree to which the landscape elements of the Site and its surroundings can accommodate the proposed development and to inform the development of the masterplan for the Site.
- 1.3 The degree of change primarily relates to the nature and character of the landscape, the visual amenity associated with the Site and the surrounding environs, as well as the environmental designations that relate to the Site and its surrounding area.
- 1.4 As a result of landscape analysis by Pegasus Group this report concludes that the Site is well suited to accommodate development and that such development could be effectively integrated and assimilated into the surrounding environment. The development proposals are for residential development in the northern half of the Site, between existing areas of housing and other development. The southern half of the Site would be retained as a substantial landscape zone, forming a new area of public open space for the benefit of the wider community.
- 1.5 The following sections of this report consider particular aspects of the environment with regard to the Site's capacity to accommodate the changes that would be brought about as a result of the development in this location.
- 1.6 The report sets out the findings of the landscape and visual analysis that has been undertaken in respect of the proposed development. In particular, it considers how the new development would have a bearing upon landscape features associated with the Site and the surrounding area. It also examines the degree to which the proposal would be visible from the surrounding landscape. In the context of both of these appraisals, the report also considers how development in this location would have a bearing upon the on the character of the area identified in the Cuckfield Landscape Character Assessment and the Key Views identified in the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.7 The Landscape Appraisal has involved a desk top study, the collation of data, and on-site investigations to determine site conditions. Subsequent assessment brings

to light key issues and design opportunities that are to be addressed through the development process.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Description of the Site

- 2.1 With reference to the **Site Location Plan** at **Appendix 1**, the Site is essentially square in form and is broadly defined by: the line of Hanlye Lane and the tall hedgerow that forms the Site's northern boundary; the development which backs on to the Site along the western boundary associated with Ardingly Road, Longacre Crescent and the recently constructed residential development at Horsefield Green; and by mature trees and vegetation along its other boundaries. Hedgerows with scattered trees that provide a robust vegetated framework to the edges of the Site form the southern and eastern boundaries, with the eastern boundary being more densely wooded.
- 2.2 The Site is formed by 2 loosely structured fields of similar shape and size, subdivided by a line of mature trees and other vegetation. The Site is currently used as grazing pasture for horses.
- 2.3 The Site is located between existing residential development on its western and north-eastern sides. Residential properties are located off Hanlye Lane, immediately adjacent to the Site's north-eastern boundary. The large property known as Horsgate House and the former Court Meadow school comprising multiple buildings are located immediately to the east of these residential properties. Both of these areas are allocated for residential re-development within the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.4 Further residential properties at Stocklands Close and a miniature rifle range to the rear of Longacre Crescent lie adjacent to the Site's north-western boundary, whilst the recently constructed residential properties at Horsefield Green lie just beyond the Site's south-western boundary.
- 2.5 The northern Site boundary is largely formed by a tall hedgerow of variable quality which runs along the line of Hanlye Lane, beyond which lies a pavement separated from the road a mixed species hedgerow.
- 2.6 The western and southern boundaries are formed by areas of tall vegetation and mature trees that form a robust vegetated framework to the Site. The eastern boundary is formed by tall and dense linear woodland which forms a robust physical and visual screen to the Site.

Topography

- 2.7 A topographic survey undertaken indicates a high of around 123m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) along the northern boundary, with levels falling to the south to around 115m along the central spine (marked by a line of trees) and falling further to a low of 110m in the south-east corner and 107m in the south-west corner.

Watercourses

- 2.8 There are no watercourses within the Site itself.
- 2.9 A pond is located beyond the north western edge of the Site, at the junction of Hanlye Lane and Ardingley Road. There is an area of vegetation associated with this water feature.

Public rights of way

- 2.10 There are three public rights of way (PRoW) (footpaths) located within the southern part of the Site: footpath 19cCU running east-west along the central spine of trees separating the northern and southern fields which comprise the Site; footpath 18dCU is roughly aligned north-south along the eastern edge of the Site; and, footpath 17CU which crosses the Site's southern field in a roughly north-west to south-east orientation. The east-west path (footpath 19cCU) provides links between Cuckfield in the west (accessing the Site via Ardingley Road) and the countryside to the east. The north-south footpath (footpath 18dCU) links the southern part of the Site with the countryside to the east and south, and then southwards to the south of Cuckfield.
- 2.11 Whilst there are no PRoW across the Site's northern field, there is the potential to provide a new pedestrian link to the PRoW (bridleway 2CU) which extends northwards from the northern side of Hanlye Lane along the edge of Gore's Wood.

Description of the surrounding area

- 2.12 To the west and south of the Site, the local landscape is formed by the settlement of Cuckfield, which is described in the Cuckfield Landscape Character Assessment (2012) as having an 'overall hour-glass shape'. The northern part of the settlement is known as Whiteman's Green whilst the remainder of Cuckfield located to the south of the 'pinch point' in the 'hour-glass'. The Site lies immediately adjacent to the wider, north-eastern edge of the 'hour-glass'.

- 2.13 To the north of the Site, beyond Hanlye Lane, the land is predominantly open countryside dissected by hedgerows, tree belts and woodlands, with the occasional scattered farm and outbuilding, and small settlements.
- 2.14 The landscape to the east is simliar, although the large settlement of Haywards Heath lies approximately 1km to the south east of the Site. The wider landscape remains well-vegetated with bands/lines of mature trees, hedgerows and wooded copses providing screening and curtailing longer distance views. There are scattered farmsteads throughout the landscape.
- 2.15 To the south of the Site, the immediate landscape is pasture with some areas used for grazing horses. Hedgerows and mature trees define the field boundaries. Further to the south lies the southern part of settlement of Cuckfield.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSALS

- 3.1 It is intended that the proposed development will form a residential extension to the settlement of Cuckfield, which would be located between existing residential development along Ardingley Road and Hanlye Lane to the west and north-west of the Site, and to the existing and allocated residential development areas around the former Court Meadow school and Horsgate House adjacent to the north-east of the Site, off Hanlye Lane.
- 3.2 Residential development would be limited to the northern field, with the southern field potentially forming an area of public open space for the benefit of the wider community. A new pedestrian route through the northern part of the Site would provide a link to the PRoW to the north of Hanlye Lane, within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 3.3 The proposals include the retention and enhancement of existing 'green links' comprising mature trees and other vegetation around the edges and through the centre of the Site. The substantial landscape zone across the whole of the southern field of the Site would incorporate the existing mature trees and hedgerows and could include surface water retention ponds and a formal play area. This broad landscape zone would form a robust buffer to the countryside to the south, as well as creating an area for informal recreation, incorporating the three existing PRoW. It is anticipated that this southern field would be managed to enhance its biodiversity to create a species-rich grassland, in line with the objectives stated in the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan. The retention of the mature trees and vegetation, along with the proposed ponds and potential enhancement of the existing horse-grazed pasture, could therefore provide a substantial enhancement to the Site's existing biodiversity whilst maintaining existing distant views southwards towards the South Downs National Park (SDNP).
- 3.4 The existing boundary trees and hedgerows would be retained and reinforced where necessary with native planting to maintain and enhance the existing landscape framework to the Site. Within the Site itself, mature trees will be retained and incorporated into landscape areas to create interest and to soften the streetscape within the proposed scheme as part of the development.

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (published July 2018 and revised in February 2019) sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. NPPF paragraph 10 advises that:

"So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development."

- 4.2 Section 12, Achieving well-designed places, paragraph 127 on page 38 states that:

"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- ...b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;**
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);**
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit..."**

- 4.3 Section 15, Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, paragraph 170 on page 49 states that:

"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);**
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland...**

- d) minimising impacts and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures...
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate."

4.4 Section 15, Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, paragraph 171 on page 49 states 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 of 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."

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031

4.5 The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 was adopted in March 2018 and replaces the Mid Sussex Local Plan and its saved policies. Policies from the adopted District Plan which are considered relevant to this assessment are reviewed below.

Policy DP12 'Protection and Enhancement of Countryside'

4.6 The policy states:

"The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

- ...
- The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess

the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character."

- 4.7 This appraisal considers the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the surrounding landscape character and visual amenity.

Policy DP13: Preventing Coalescence

- 4.8 The policy states:

"The individual towns and villages in the District each have their own unique characteristics. It is important that their separate identity is maintained. When travelling between settlements people should have a sense that they have left one before arriving at the next.

Provided it is not in conflict with Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside, development will be permitted if it does not result in the coalescence of settlements which harms the separate identity and amenity of settlements, and would not have an unacceptably urbanising effect on the area between settlements.

Local Gaps can be identified in Neighbourhood Plans or a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, produced by the District Council, where there is robust evidence that development within the Gap would individually or cumulatively result in coalescence and the loss of the separate identity and amenity of nearby settlements. Evidence must demonstrate that existing local and national policies cannot provide the necessary protection."

- 4.9 The proposals for the development of the Site would maintain the perception of a gap between Cuckfield and Hayward's Heath, such that people travelling between the settlements would continue to have a sense that they have left one behind before arriving at the next, in line with Policy DP13.

Policy DP14: High Weald AONB

- 4.10 The policy states:

"...Development on land that contributes to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where it does not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB, and in particular should not adversely affect the views into and out of the AONB by virtue of its location or design."

The High Weald AONB lies to the immediate north of Hanlye Lane. The Site is separated from the wider landscape within the High Weald AONB by Hanlye Lane to the north and the existing residential development at Hanlye Lane and Whiteman's Green to the north and north west, and Ardingly Road to the west. The development brief for the proposed development has paid particular attention to the siting and scale of the development and existing and proposed screening to ensure that the proposed development would not adversely affect views into or out of the AONB. As discussed later in this appraisal, there is only a very limited opportunity for inter-visibility between the Site and the wider AONB landscape due to its topography and the location of intervening woodland and other vegetation.

Policy DP18: Setting of the South Downs National Park

- 4.11 Policy DP18 is concerned with development proposals that are proposed within the National Park and also those that are located outside and may affect its character or perception. The SDNP lies some 8km to the south of Site and it is not anticipated that the limited residential development proposed for the Site would be readily perceptible at this substantial distance such that there would be no material effect on the National Park.

Policy DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

- 4.12 This policy aims to protect and enhance those landscape elements that may be affected by proposals, particularly ancient woodlands and aged or veteran trees. It also refers to the contribution that landscape elements may have upon the visual amenity and character of an area and encourages new planting.

Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan 2011-2031

- 4.13 The Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan was published in May 2014. It includes a range of policies relating to the Environment: **Policy CNP 1 – Design of New Development and Conservation; Policy CNP 4 – Protect and Enhance Biodiversity; and, Policy CNP 5 Protect and Enhance the Countryside.** Generally, these policies seek to maintain existing landscape character, features, views, and to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area.
- 4.14 **Policy CNP 3 – Preventing Coalescence between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath** seeks to prevent development which would result in an increased coalescence between the settlements.

- 4.15 **Policy CNP 2- Protection of Open Space within the Built Up Area** does not apply to the Site, although the accompanying text makes reference to the Cuckfield Landscape Character Assessment (April 2012) with regard to protection of the 33 defined landscape character areas (LCA) surrounding the village. It also refers to the Cuckfield Landscape: Views Assessment.
- 4.16 The Site forms part of a small part of the large Cuckfield Landscape Character Area, 13 Horsgate Farmland, which extends from Hanlye Lane in the north to Hatchgate Lane to the south. This LCA also encompasses the areas to the immediate east of the Site, at the 'Former Court Meadow School, Hanlye Lane' and 'Horsgate House, Hanlye Lane', both of which are allocated for residential development in Policy CNP 6 – Housing Allocations within the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.17 Of the 13 Principal Views identified in the Cuckfield Landscape: Views Assessment: View 5 is south from Hanlye Lane adjacent to the Site; View 6 is south from the east-west aligned PRoW within the southern field of the Site; View 10 looks north-east from the PRoW close to the Cuckfield Baptist Church; and, View 11 looks north from Hatchgate Lane. The potential for effects on these views is discussed within the Visual Assessment set out in this Appraisal.
- 4.18 Both the Cuckfield Landscape Character Assessment and the Views Assessment are discussed in more detail within this appraisal.

Landscape Designations

- 4.19 With reference to the **Environmental Designations Map at Appendix 2**, there are no landscape designations covering the Site itself. The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies to the north immediately beyond Hanlye Road at its closest point. The Site is substantially visually and physically separated from the wider AONB landscape by existing vegetation which forms the northern boundary to the Site, and Hanlye Lane beyond.
- 4.20 Development on the Site would not cause any unacceptable harm to this designated landscape.
- 4.21 The SDNP lies approximately 8km to the south. Due to the distance of this protected landscape from the Site, any long distance views from the National Park towards the Site are likely to incorporate views of Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath and Cuckfield, such that the limited development on the Site would not be

readily perceived and would not cause appreciable harm to the designated landscape. However, there are views from the Site to the south which encompass the distant elevated form of the SDNP. These views would be largely retained within the development.

- 4.22 Borde Hill, a Grade II* Registered Park and Garden (RPG) lies approximately 500m to the north east of the Site. There is no inter-visibility between the RPG and the Site due to the substantial amount of intervening vegetation, and as a result, development on the Site would not cause any unacceptable harm to the character and setting of this designated landscape.
- 4.23 There are scattered areas of Ancient Woodland throughout the landscape surrounding the Site, with the closest being Gore's Wood, some 130m to the north and two small areas within close proximity of the south-eastern corner of the Site. These areas of Ancient Woodland are located beyond the Site boundaries and separated from the proposed residential development by existing or proposed landscape buffers.
- 4.24 There are no Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings within or immediately adjacent to the Site.
- 4.25 The nearest Listed Buildings (all Grade 2) to the Site are physically and visually separated from it by existing development and intervening vegetation.
- 4.26 The two Conservation Areas within Cuckfield are similarly physically and visually separated from the Site by existing development within the settlement.

5. EFFECT ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

National Character Area 122: High Weald

5.1 Natural England has documented the character of England's landscape in a series of National Character Area (NCA) profiles. The Site and its immediate environs fall within NCA profile 122: High Weald. NCA 122 encompasses a substantial area of landscape from Hastings and Bexhill in the south-east, to Royal Tunbridge Wells in the north, and to Horsham in the west.

5.2 The Key Characteristics of the extensive NCA are set out below for reference.

- **"A faulted landform of clays, sand and soft sandstones with outcrops of fissured sandrock and ridges running east-west, deeply incised and intersected with numerous gill streams forming the headwaters of a number of the major rivers – the Rother, Brede, Ouse and Medway –which flow in broad valleys.**
- **High density of extraction pits, quarries and ponds, in part a consequence of diverse geology and highly variable soils over short distances.**
- **A dispersed settlement pattern of hamlets and scattered farmsteads and medieval ridgetop villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries, with a dominance of timber-framed buildings with steep roofs often hipped or half-hipped, and an extremely high survival rate of farm buildings dating from the 17th century or earlier.**
- **Ancient routeways in the form of ridgetop roads and a dense system of radiating droveways, often narrow, deeply sunken and edged with trees and wild flower-rich verges and boundary banks. Church towers and spires on the ridges are an important local landmark. There is a dense network of small, narrow and winding lanes, often sunken and enclosed by high hedgerows or woodland strips. The area includes several large towns such as Tunbridge Wells, Crowborough, Battle and Heathfield and is closely bordered by others such as Crawley, East Grinstead, Hastings and Horsham.**
- **An intimate, hidden and small-scale landscape with glimpses of farreaching views, giving a sense of remoteness and tranquillity yet concealing the highest density of timber-framed buildings anywhere in Europe amidst lanes and paths.**
- **Strong feeling of remoteness due to very rural, wooded character. A great extent of interconnected ancient woods, steep-sided gill**

woodlands, wooded heaths and shaws in generally small holdings with extensive archaeology and evidence of long-term management.

- Extensive broadleaved woodland cover with a very high proportion of ancient woodland with high forest, small woods and shaws, plus steep valleys with gill woodland.
- Small and medium-sized irregularly shaped fields enclosed by a network of hedgerows and wooded shaws, predominantly of medieval origin and managed historically as a mosaic of small agricultural holdings typically used for livestock grazing.
- A predominantly grassland agricultural landscape grazed mainly with sheep and some cattle.
- There is a strong influence of the Wealden iron industry which started in Roman times, until coke fuel replaced wood and charcoal. There are features such as a notably high number of small hammer ponds surviving today.
- Ashdown Forest, in contrast to the more intimate green woods and pastures elsewhere, is a high, rolling and open heathland lying on the sandstone ridges to the west of the area.
- An essentially medieval landscape reflected in the patterns of settlement, fields and woodland.
- High-quality vernacular architecture with distinct local variation using local materials. Horsham Slate is used on mainly timber structures and timber-framed barns are a particularly notable Wealden characteristic feature of the High Weald."

5.3 The proposed development would represent a change from a pastoral landscape to a developed one. This would be consistent with the local surroundings as the Site is immediately adjacent to the existing settlement of Cuckfield in the west and is bounded by existing development at Horsgate to the east.

5.4 The proposals would seek to retain the existing hedgerows and trees that form characteristic elements within the Site and within the wider character area. The key characteristics of the High Weald NCA would not be affected by the proposed development and would remain consistent with the national character area as a whole.

5.5 Being located towards the settlement edge of Cuckfield, the immediate surrounding area exhibits urban characteristics. There are several examples of development in the vicinity including the properties backing onto the Site along

Ardingly Road to the west and Hanlye Lane to the north. Properties associated with Horsgate House and the former Court Meadow School also abut the Site to the east.

- 5.6 The profile and massing of these residential areas makes them notable elements within the local landscape; as such, the development of the Site for residential dwellings would not be considered to be out of character.

Local Landscape Character (Landscape Character Assessment of West Sussex, 2003)

- 5.7 West Sussex County Council assessed the character of the county in 2003 and divided the landscape into a series of character areas. With reference to the extract of the published landscape character assessment at **Appendix 3**, the Site and immediate surroundings lie within the High Weald Fringes, character area HW4.

- 5.8 The key characteristics of this character area are set out below:

- **Wooded, often confined rural landscape of intimacy and complexity, partly within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);**
- **South and east-draining gills and broad ridges sweeping gently down to the Low Weald;**
- **Western part drained by the headwaters of the River Arun, eastern part around Staynes Hill by the River Ouse;**
- **Long views over the Low Weald to the downs;**
- **Significant woodland cover, a substantial portion of it ancient, and a dense network of shaws, hedgerows and hedgerow trees;**
- **Pattern of small, irregular-shaped assart fields and larger fields, and small pockets of remnant heathland;**
- **Orchards and horticulture on lower slopes, particularly to the west;**
- **Biodiversity concentrated in the valleys, heathland, and woodland;**

- **Network of lanes, droveways, tracks and footpaths;**
- **Dispersed historic settlement, close to Horsham, the principal settlements Cuckfield, Haywards Heath and Lindfield and a few villages and hamlets;**
- **Some busy lanes and roads including A and B roads bounding the area to the west, and other roads crossing north to south, including the A23 Trunk Road;**
- **London to Brighton Railway Line crosses the area at Haywards Heath;**
- **Mill sites, hammerponds and ornamental lakes and ponds;**
- **Varied traditional rural buildings built with diverse materials including timber-framing, Horsham stone roofing, Wealden stone and varieties of local brick and tile-hanging;**
- **Designed landscapes and exotic treescapes associated with large country houses;**
- **Major gill woodland garden and visitor attraction at Leonardslee."**

5.9 In both regional and local terms, all the characteristic elements of the landscape as identified above would remain physically unaffected. The existing vegetation would be improved through additional planting and would continue to provide a robust framework to the Site. The strengthened landscape framework would positively contribute to the character of the area by forming a robust and defensible edge to the settlement, in line with the county character assessment action priorities.

5.10 The character of the northern part of the Site would change from a pastoral landscape to residential development. The southern part of the Site would maintain a largely rural character and the vegetation would be managed in line with local biodiversity priorities. The proposals would maintain and enhance the existing strong landscape framework so that the Site overall has the capacity to accommodate development without significant detriment to the wider landscape.

5.11 The landscape grain of pastoral fields to the south and east would remain, as would the urban form of the existing settlement to the west.

Cuckfield Landscape Assessment (2012)

5.12 As noted above, the Site forms part of a small part of the large Cuckfield Landscape Character Area, 13 Horsgate Farmland, which extends from Hanlye Lane in the north to Hatchgate Lane to the south. This LCA also encompasses two areas to the immediate east of the Site, the 'Former Court Meadow School, Hanlye Lane' and 'Horsgate House, Hanlye Lane', which are both allocated for residential development in Policy CNP 6 – Housing Allocations within the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan.

5.13 With reference to the extract of the Cuckfield Landscape Character Assessment at **Appendix 4**, the Landscape Analysis of Character Area 13 Horsgate Farmland is:

- **"Undulating, but generally sloping towards Scrase Stream, from higher ground to the north.**
- **Largely detached from Built Up Area, apart from a few back garden to the northeast.**
- **Significant vegetation along Wheatsheaf Lane limits views of the adjacent Built Up Area to the south.**
- **Borders Hanlye Lane to the north.**
- **Consists of small to medium size fields of pasture and occasional farm buildings and includes a short length of Scrase Stream to the south.**
- **Contains occasional, relatively unobtrusive farmstead type buildings in the centre of the character area, plus larger group of buildings including Horsgate House and Court Meadow School at the northeast corner of the character area, which despite being located on the higher ground to the north, are assimilated into the landscape by significant surround vegetation.**
- **Well vegetated area with a network of intact field boundary hedges, hedge trees, tree groups and riparian vegetation associated with Scrase Stream. Slopes away from Cuckfield which**

sits on higher ground to the south, relatively distant from centre of the village.

- Contains a number of public rights of way which link Whiteman's Green and Cuckfield to the wider rural landscape to the east, and provide circular walks from residential areas.
- Contains short length of traditional rural sunken lane which has public right of way along it.
- Both distant views of the South Downs and filtered views of housing are possible from higher ground.
- Fairly enclosed nature, limited development and relatively minor urban influences from settlement to the west, enhance the sense of tranquillity and remoteness within the majority of the character area.
- Forms part of rural western setting to Whiteman's Green and Cuckfield, and affectively separates Cuckfield from Haywards Heath, preventing coalescence between the two settlements."

5.14 The Cuckfield Landscape Assessment states at paragraph 3.3.4 that "***landscape capacity may not be uniform across a character area, resulting in the need for more detailed assessment to ensure development proposals respond to site-specific constraints.***" The characteristics of the Site are considered in more detail in this appraisal.

5.15 With regard to the proposed development at the Site, the residential development proposed in the northern field lies between areas of existing and allocated development along Hanlye Lane. The existing tall hedgerow along the Site's northern boundary would largely be retained and enhanced to continue to limit pedestrian views of the proposed development. Views from the road itself would continue to be largely prevented by the roadside hedge which separates the pavement from Hanlye Lane. The proposed built form is set back from the roadside edge to the south of an area of public open space and this would help to further limit views of the proposed development and any potential effect on the perceived character of the area.

- 5.16 The existing development around Horsgate House and the former Court Meadow School lie closer to Haywards Heath to the east along Hanlye Lane than the proposed development. Beyond the former Court Meadow School site along Hanlye Lane, roadside hedgerows and woodland blocks provide a considerable perception of physical and visual separation between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath. It is considered that the proposed development would, therefore, not adversely affect the perception of leaving one settlement and arriving at the other.
- 5.17 With regard to Policy CNP 3 in the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan, the limited residential development on the northern part of the Site would not increase the coalescence between Haywards Heath and Cuckfield or reduce their separate identities.
- 5.18 The published Landscape Analysis of Cuckfield Character Area 13 notes the effectiveness of existing areas of mature vegetation in assimilating existing development into the surrounding landscape. It is considered that the limited extent of proposed residential development would similarly benefit from the visual and physical enclosure provided by the existing substantial landscape buffers which surround the Site. As noted above, these would be maintained and enhanced to ensure the longevity of these features within the wider landscape.
- 5.19 Having considered the published Landscape Analysis for Cuckfield Character Area 13 Horsgate Farmland, it is considered that the proposed development could be successfully accommodated within the Character Area without damaging the noted features and views of the Character Area as a whole.

Cuckfield Landscape: Views Assessment

- 5.20 Of the 13 Principal Views identified in the Cuckfield Landscape: Views Assessment: View 5 is south from Hanlye Lane adjacent to the Site; View 6 is south from the east-west aligned PRoW within the southern field of the Site; View 10 looks north-east from the PRoW close to the Cuckfield Baptist Church; and, View 11 looks north from Hatchgate Lane. The potential for effects on these views is set out within the Visual Assessment set out later in this Appraisal.
- 5.21 The Visual Assessment concludes that the existing areas of mature woodland, trees and other vegetation, both within the Site and within the intervening landscape, would prevent or at worst severely limit any visual effect of the proposed development on **Cuckfield Views 10 and 11**.

- 5.22 With regard to **Cuckfield View 6**, the view towards the SDNP from the east-west aligned PRoW across the southern field of the Site would be maintained within the proposed landscape zone across the whole field. Extending public access to the whole of the southern field would extend the area from which publicly accessible views towards the elevated land within the SDNP are available from, and this is considered to be a community benefit.
- 5.23 With regard to **Cuckfield View 5** south from Hanlye Lane, the existing tall hedgerow along the northern boundary of the Site with Hanlye Lane strongly limits views across the Site to brief glimpses between vegetation. Where gaps in the vegetation allow views, they are brief and existing development within Cuckfield forms a noticeable part of the view. Given the extent of the current view from Hanlye Lane, it is not considered that the development of the northern part of the Site would have a significant detrimental effect on the existing publicly available view.

Summary

- 5.24 The proposed development on the Site would represent a high quality design with the form and scale of the proposed development being consistent with the scale and form of the development infrastructure that already exists in the wider landscape around the Site.
- 5.25 Within the context of the landscape character in which the proposed development is to be located, the existing settlement pattern and grain of Cuckfield will remain substantially unchanged, with the residential nature of the settlement maintained.
- 5.26 The Site as it currently exists is formed by pastureland without a landscape designation. The Site is well-enclosed by hedges and trees, but is strongly influenced by settlement and existing dwellings to the north west, west, and north east.
- 5.27 All the characteristic elements of the wider landscape as quoted above would remain physically unaffected. The proposals allow for the creation of a new high quality development which will be integrated with, and sit comfortably within, the existing landscape character. The development would be consistent with the aspirations of the published character assessments, their desired enhancement of the area's landscape character without increasing the perception of coalescence between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath.

6. EFFECT ON VISUAL AMENITY

- 6.1 A broad visual appraisal of the proposal has been undertaken to determine how the proposed development would have a bearing on the visual amenity of the surrounding landscape. This assessment was undertaken in November 2019, when deciduous vegetation had partially lost its leaves. It would be reasonably expected that in the height of winter, following full leaf fall, that views towards the could be slightly more extensive, although the layering of multiple branches within stands of intervening vegetation would continue to heavily limit, if not prevent, some views of the Site.
- 6.2 **Photoviews** taken during the Site visit are set out at **Appendix 6** and their locations are shown on the **Photoview Location Plan** at **Appendix 5**.
- 6.3 Having undertaken a visual assessment, it is apparent that the potential zone of theoretical visibility associated with the proposed development would be extremely limited to close to medium distance views, with local topography, existing development and existing intervening vegetation restricting views from the majority of the surrounding area.
- 6.4 It is evident that in close proximity to the Site, roadside hedgerows and tall intervening vegetation provide dense screening to the views of the Site. The topography and layered vegetation restricts many views of the Site from both level ground and higher vantage points.
- 6.5 Users of the PRow within the Site itself would be most affected as the proposal would have the most public visibility and be seen by the greatest number of receptors from these footpaths within the southern field of the Site. Views experienced by road users in the local area would be strongly limited, oblique and well-screened glimpsed views between vegetation.
- 6.6 The proposed development would be located on land where in the immediate locality of the Site there are many signs of human activity and infrastructure which influence the visual amenity of the area. These factors would help in reducing the effect of the proposed development on visual amenity and would help relate the development to the existing built form and infrastructure.

Views from the North

Photoview 1: From bridleway north of Hanlye Lane, looking south

- 6.7 Receptors heading south along the public bridleway (2CU) to the north of the Site, within the High Weald AONB, experience a brief framed view towards the Site with Hanlye Lane in the foreground. The Site is generally well screened by the existing layered vegetation (Site boundary and roadside hedgerow).
- 6.8 The proposed development would be set back from Hanlye Road which would enable an area of open space with additional tree planting to be created adjacent to the highway. This set back would allow filtered glimpsed views of the residential properties through the Site boundary vegetation, although views would be substantially screened by this existing vegetation. There would be few receptors affected by the development from this location and the change in the view would not be a prominent one.
- 6.9 Views towards the Site from locations further north along the PRow are prevented by the orientation of the path and by the intervening vegetation, which includes evergreen tree and shrub species.

Photoview 2: From Hanlye Lane, looking south east

- 6.10 This viewpoint is located adjacent to the existing dwellings located to the north side of Hanlye Lane, looking towards the north west of the Site. The existing vegetation along the northern boundary and the roadside hedgerow help to filter clear views into the Site, although it is possible to obtain oblique glimpses through the trees.
- 6.11 The development will necessitate the removal of a section of the northern boundary vegetation to facilitate the proposed access road into the Site, resulting in a clear view into the north eastern area of the development, set back beyond an area of informal open space. The development of the Site will change the character from a partially glimpsed, pastoral area to a developed residential site with areas of open space; however, the development would be viewed in context with the adjacent development at the northern edge of Cuckfield.

Photoview 3: From footway adjacent to Hanlye Lane, looking south

- 6.12 The northern boundary vegetation of the Site encompasses brief gaps between its bare winter branches and this allows filtered views are into the Site from the adjacent footway. It is anticipated that in summer months these glimpses would be more heavily limited by leaves on the deciduous vegetation. Photoview 3 illustrates that where views are obtained into the Site these are influenced by the

built form evident around Horsgate House to the east of the Site. Longer range views to the south-east are restricted by the tall dense woodland boundary along the eastern edge of the Site. People would use this footway to travel between the settlement at Cuckfield in the west to Horsgate House and the Former Court Meadow School beyond. The viewpoint is not located within the High Weald AONB; as the designation boundary lies on the northern side of Hanlye Road.

- 6.13 Development within the Site would have the effect of changing the character of the Site from pastoral to residential and bringing the built form closer to people passing along the pavement along its northern edge. The retention and enhancement of the existing vegetation within and bordering the Site would serve to soften and filter the proposed built form. Informal green links through the Site would provide a more attractive route for pedestrians wishing to move between Cuckfield and the school and countryside to the east. In views available from the length of pavement adjacent to the Site, the development would be visible but it would be seen within the context or other development within Cuckfield and along Hanlye Lane. It would not form a defining element within the view.

Photoview 4: From footway adjacent to Hanlye Lane, looking south

- 6.14 This viewpoint is representative of the view obtained by pedestrians using the footway adjacent to the northern Site boundary and Hanlye Lane. The screening provided by the tall hedgerow along the Site boundary informs the character of the view, although there are filtered views into the Site and in places of the existing development accessed off Ardingly Road to the south west. Views into the Site would change from a largely pastoral character to one containing residential development, as the proposals would have the effect of bringing development closer to the viewer.

Views from the East

Photoview 5: from public footpath south of Horsgate, looking west

- 6.15 The dense nature of the eastern boundary vegetation effectively forms a physical and visual screen to the Site and the majority of the settlement of Cuckfield. Middle range views are available of the southern edge of Cuckfield to the south-west where Warden Park School is visible in an elevated position. To the north of the Site there are also glimpsed views of development along the Hanlye Lane. The strong boundary vegetation would be retained and would effectively screen views of the proposed development, and where glimpses of the properties might

be visible through and above the trees, the built form would be seen in context with the existing development to the north and south of the view.

Views from the South

Photoview 6: From public footpath at southern Site boundary, looking north

- 6.16 At the southern boundary of the Site a public footpath enters from the south and there are clear views northwards into the Site and the residential development associated with Longacre Crescent and the recently constructed residential development at Horsefield Green to the west of the Site's southern field. The existing mature vegetation which largely separates the northern and southern fields of the Site, strongly limits views into the northern Site field from this location.
- 6.17 With the proposed development across the northern field in place, the retained and enhanced vegetation between the fields would strongly limit views of the new housing. The new housing would be seen within the context of existing development on adjoining land. The southern field would be retained as a public open space, potentially encompassing a formal play area and water retention features which would provide the opportunity to create new habitats to enhance the biodiversity of the Site.
- 6.18 The nature of the view would change from a largely pastoral one to an area of public open space with a discreet residential area glimpsed to the rear of the retained mature vegetation. The footpath links would be retained through the Site to link with the existing settlement edge at Longacre Crescent and Ardingly Road. The mature trees within the Site would provide focal points and features within the development and help to partially filter views of the built form.

Photoview 7: From public footpath to south of Site, looking north

- 6.19 From this location, the Site is largely screened by vegetation at the southern extent of the Site and within the intervening landscape. People travelling along this footpath already have glimpsed views of various properties within Cuckfield located to the west and south-west of the Site.
- 6.20 The woodland and mature trees at the eastern extent of the Site and the intervening hedgerows and trees in the foreground of the view provide a robust vegetated framework to the Site. Development on the northern field of the Site will not be readily discernible to receptors using this public right of way, and

therefore there will be no perceptible change to the view with the proposals in place.

Photoview 8: From public footpath north of Glebe Road, looking north east

- 6.21 At the edge of the southern part of Cuckfield, this view towards the Site is largely restricted by the strong framework of intervening vegetation and the flat topography. The Site itself is not readily discernible due to the gently rising topography and the intervening screening provided by the existing built form and vegetation. This view would remain unchanged with the development in place, leading to no effect overall.

Views from the West

Viewpoint 9: From the Public Open Space at Horsefield Green off Ardingley Road, looking east

- 6.22 It is evident that views towards the Site from the west are largely restricted by the tall and dense boundary vegetation running along the western extent of the Site. From Horsefield Green located off Ardingly Road (photoview 9), glimpses into the northern field of the Site are not possible due to the robust framework of vegetation adjacent to and within the Site. The existing vegetation will continue to provide screening to the Site with the proposed development in place. The buffer planting along the western boundary will continue to have a layering effect and provide screening to the proposals and will form a robust and defensible boundary to the development. There would therefore be no material effect upon the view with the development in place.

Photoview 10: From public footpath east of Longacre Crescent, looking north-east

- 6.23 As users of this footpath head east from Ardingly Road and Longacre Crescent, views across both the northern and southern fields of the Site are obtained. Receptors entering the Site from the west along the public footpath would experience views of the development within the northern part of the Site although views are partially filtered by the mature trees that lie within the centre of the Site. These trees would be retained within the development proposals, with further planting proposed within the Site, which will create and enhance the open space. The proposed built form would be seen in context and in transition from the existing residential dwellings of Cuckfield to the west of the Site.
- 6.24 The southern field of the Site would be managed as a landscape zone for the benefit of the local community and proposals would be put in place to secure local

enhancements to the biodiversity of the Site, in line with local objectives. The publicly accessible open views from the PRoW towards the distant elevated form of the SDNP would be maintained and public access would be extended across the southern field.

Photoview 11: From Longacre Crescent, looking east

- 6.25 From Longacre Crescent looking towards the Site, the majority of the Site is screened by the existing intervening built form of the residential dwellings. There would be no discernible change to the view with the development in place.

Cuckfield Landscape: Views Assessment

- 6.26 As noted above, of the 13 Principal Views identified in the Cuckfield Landscape: Views Assessment, Cuckfield Views 5, 6, 10 and 11 are either from adjacent to the Site's boundary (Cuckfield View 5), or from one of the PRoW which traverses the Site's southern field (Cuckfield View 6), or from publicly accessible locations looking towards the wider landscape surrounding the Site (Cuckfields View 10 and 11).
- 6.27 **Cuckfield View 5** looks south from Hanlye Lane adjacent to the Site. It broadly equates to Viewpoints 2, 3 and 4 within this assessment. As noted above within the analysis of these views, the existing publicly available views largely consist of glimpses across the Site between vegetation and which frequently encompass views of existing built form. These are not open views as they are seen through the existing boundary vegetation. As noted above, the initial development concept for the Site includes the retention and strengthening of the boundary vegetation and the setting back of development from its northern boundary to allow the creation of an area of public open space. A new pedestrian link would extend from Hanlye Lane across the northern field of the Site and link with the PRoW within the proposed landscape zone within the southern field. This proposed pedestrian link would open up new publicly accessible views towards the south from within the Site.
- 6.28 **Cuckfield View 6** is south from the east-west aligned PRoW within the southern field of the Site. As noted above, with the development in place, the southern field would comprise an area of public open space which would extend the existing publicly available southerly views towards the SDNP. The design proposals for landscape zone would ensure that the quality of the existing Cuckfield Principal View from the PRoW is maintained and potentially enhanced.

- 6.29 **Cuckfield View 10** looks north-east from the PRoW close to the Cuckfield Baptist Church. It is represented by Viewpoint 13 in this assessment. The view across the horse pasture already encompasses built form, including the recently constructed development at Horsefield Green. The substantial bands of mature trees and other vegetation within the wider landscape and within the Site would ensure that the proposed development would have no effect on this Cuckfield Principal View.
- 6.30 **Cuckfield View 11** looks north from Hatchgate Lane. It is represented by Viewpoint 12 in this assessment. The view across the Scrase Stream valley already encompasses existing development, both visually isolated properties such as Horsgate House and existing development within Cuckfield. It is anticipated that the proposed development within the northern field of the Site would be substantially screened by the existing mature vegetation buffers along its boundaries and within the wider landscape. Therefore, the proposed development would have no effect on this Cuckfield Principal View.

Summary

- 6.31 It is evident from the assessment that the visual envelope associated with the proposed development, would generally be limited to glimpsed close range views of the Site. These would be available from the public rights of way within and immediately adjacent to the southern and western parts of the Site, and through gaps between vegetation along the northern boundary.
- 6.32 The Site is generally well screened by the existing development along Ardingly Road in the west and the mature vegetation to the north, south and east of the Site.
- 6.33 Where the proposed built form would be visible, the opportunity exists to create a locally distinctive development, combined with a new extensive southern landscaped buffer zone. This landscape zone would provide a benefit to the wider community and would be managed to enhance its biodiversity potential.
- 6.34 Although there would be some visual change at the local level it would not necessarily be a harmful one. The opportunity to increase and enhance the existing vegetation round the boundaries of the Site to provide a robust landscape framework to the new development would bring about a positive beneficial effect upon the landscape through additional native tree planting. The maturing vegetation would have the ability to screen and filter potential views

into the Site whilst framing the proposals and providing a robust and defensible development edge.

7. EFFECT UPON LANDSCAPE FEATURES

- 7.1 The landscape and visual **Opportunities and Constraints Plan** at **Appendix 7** identifies that the existing strong landscape features within and around the Site would be maintained and enhanced through supplementary planting.

Topography

- 7.2 There would be no changes of topography associated with the need to construct the various buildings and structures, therefore the effect of the proposed residential development would be negligible overall.

Trees and Hedges

- 7.3 Where practicable, the existing trees and hedges within the Site would be retained and incorporated within the detailed design for the proposed development. The proposals to provide an extensive landscape zone within the southern field would bring about the planting of additional trees and creation of formal and informal open spaces. This would significantly enhance the tree resource within the Site and immediate surrounding area. Given the mature nature of much of the existing vegetation, this supplementary native species planting is considered to also provide an opportunity to enhance the existing green links across and around the Site, whilst ensuring the continuity of these features within the wider landscape.

Water Features

- 7.4 Ponds are proposed within the southern buffer zone to enhance the water resource within the Site and improve the biodiversity associated with the Site.

Summary

- 7.5 It is therefore evident that the proposed development would cause beneficial effects to the landscape features associated with the Site, and would form a robust and defensible edge to the development along the southern boundary.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 This report sets out the findings of the Pegasus Landscape Visual Analysis that has been undertaken in respect of the proposed development. In particular, it considers how the new development would have a bearing upon landscape features associated with the Site and the surrounding area. It also documents the findings, with respect to a visual assessment, that examine the degree to which the proposal would be visible from the surrounding landscape. In the context of both these appraisals, the report also considers how development in this location would have a bearing upon the character of the area.
- 8.2 The Site is essentially square in form and is broadly defined by the residential development along Longacre Crescent and Horsefield Green to the west, Hanlye Lane to the north and various elements of built form to the immediate east of the Site around Horsgate House and the former school.
- 8.3 The eastern boundary is formed by dense woodland and a native hedgerow and mature hedgerow trees lies along the southern edge.
- 8.4 It is intended that the proposed development will form a residential extension to the settlement of Cuckfield, which would be located between existing residential development along Ardingley Road and Hanlye Lane to the west and north-west of the Site, and to the existing and allocated residential development areas adjacent to the north-east of the Site off Hanlye Lane. Both the 'Former Court Meadow School, Hanlye Lane' and 'Horsgate House, Hanlye Lane'. are allocated for residential development in Policy CNP 6 – Housing Allocations within the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan
- 8.5 The proposals include a substantial landscape zone encompassing the whole of the southern field of the Site. This would incorporate existing trees, hedgerows, and proposed ponds. This zone will form a robust landscape buffer between the proposed development and the countryside to the south, as well as creating an area for informal recreation and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement in line with local priorities.
- 8.6 The existing boundary trees and hedgerows would be retained and reinforced with native species planting to maintain and enhance the strong landscape framework to the Site. Within the Site itself, there are several mature parkland trees which will be retained and incorporated into landscaped areas as part of the development.

- 8.7 Being located towards the settlement edge of Cuckfield, the immediate surrounding area exhibits urban characteristics. There are several examples of development in the vicinity including the properties along Ardingly Road, Longacre Crescent and the recently constructed properties at Horsefield Green to the west, and Hanlye Lane in the north. The high profile and massing of these residential areas makes them prominent elements in the local landscape; as such, from the limited locations that the proposed development of the northern part of the Site would be visible, it would not be out of character.
- 8.8 In both regional and local terms, all the characteristic elements of the landscape as identified above would remain physically unaffected. The existing vegetation would be improved through additional planting and would continue to provide a robust framework to the Site. The strengthened landscape framework would positively contribute to the character of the area by forming a robust and defensible southern edge to the settlement which would maintain the Strategic Gap between Haywards Heath and Cuckfield.
- 8.9 The proposals would create a publicly accessible landscape along the southern field of the development to ensure a strong landscape structure at the development edge. The proposals would also incorporate green links through the Site to enable access to the surrounding countryside.
- 8.10 The development provides the opportunity to retain the existing trees, and through additional planting, bolster and increase the tree resource within the Site.
- 8.11 All the characteristic elements of the wider landscape set out above would remain physically unaffected. The proposals allow for the creation of a new high quality development which will be integrated with, and sit comfortably within, the existing landscape without causing unacceptable harm to the High Weald AONB to the north of the Site.
- 8.12 The proposed development would be located on land where in the immediate locality of the Site there are many signs of human activity and infrastructure which influence the visual amenity of the area. These factors would help in reducing the effect of the proposed development on visual amenity and would help relate the development to the existing built form and infrastructure.
- 8.13 Although there would be some visual change at the local level it would not necessarily be a harmful one. The opportunity to increase and enhance the

existing vegetation round the boundaries of the Site to provide a robust landscape framework to the new development would bring about a positive beneficial effect upon the landscape through additional native tree planting. The maturing vegetation would have the ability to screen and filter potential views into the Site whilst framing the proposals and providing a robust and defensible development edge.

- 8.14 This statement concludes that the Site to the south of Hanlye Lane, Cuckfield, would be suitable to accommodate residential development without detriment to the landscape character, features, or visual amenity of the area.

APPENDIX 1

SITE LOCATION PLAN



KEY



Application Site Boundary

Revisions:
First Issue- 13/11/2019 AJH

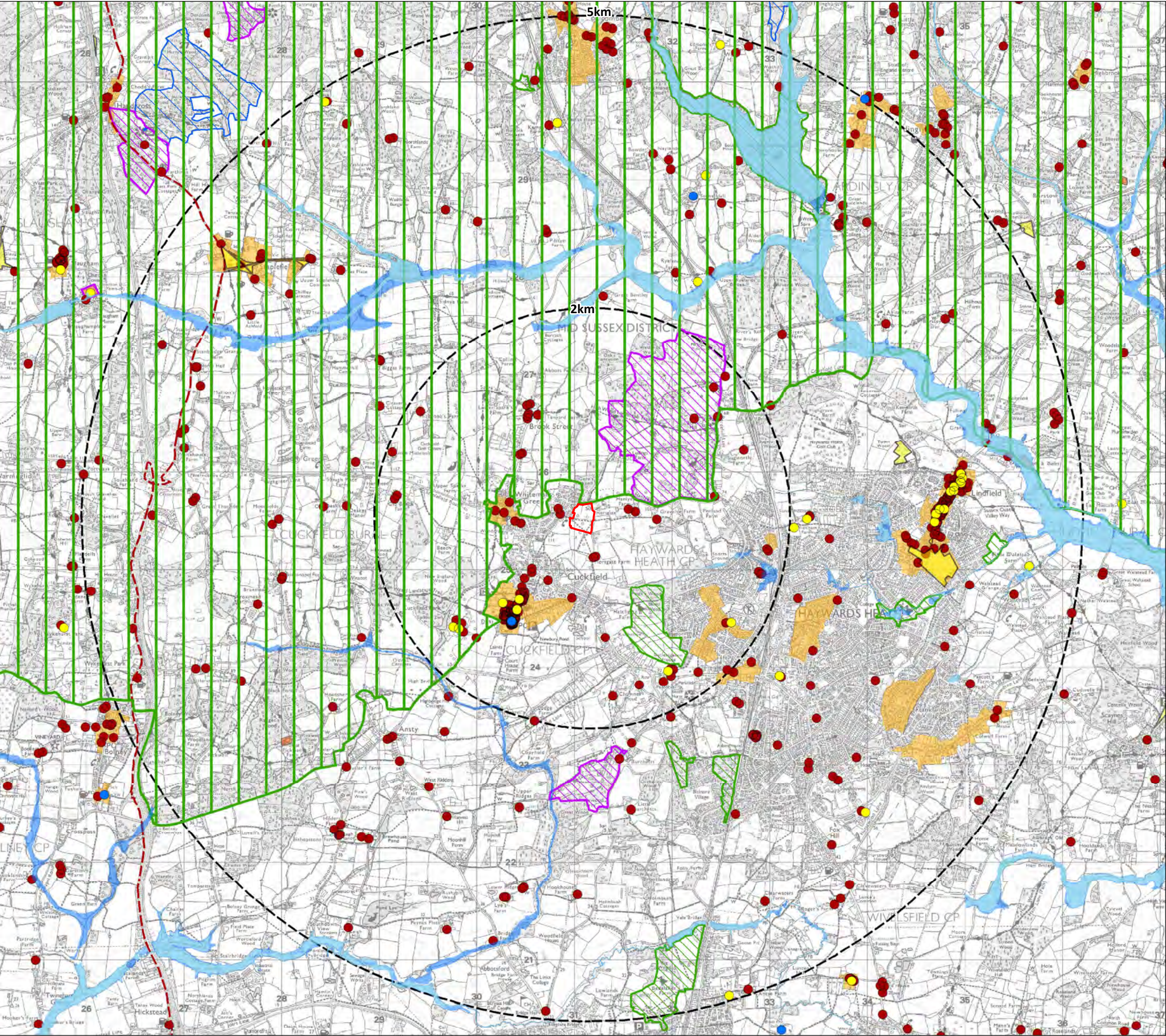
Site Location Plan
Land South of Hanlye Lane, Cuckfield

Client: Glenbeigh Developments Ltd
DRWG No: **P19-2806_02** Sheet No: - REV: -
Drawn by: AJH Approved by: HD
Date: 13/11/2019
Scale: 1:40,000 @ A3



APPENDIX 2:

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS PLAN



KEY

Application Site Boundary

EA Flood Zone 3

Revisions:
First Issue- 13/11/2019 AJH

Environmental Designations Plan

Land South of Hanlye Lane, Cuckfield

Client:

Glenbeigh Developments Ltd

DRWG No:

P19-2806_02

Sheet No:

-

REV:

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Drawn by:

AJH

Approved by:

HD

Date:

13/11/2019

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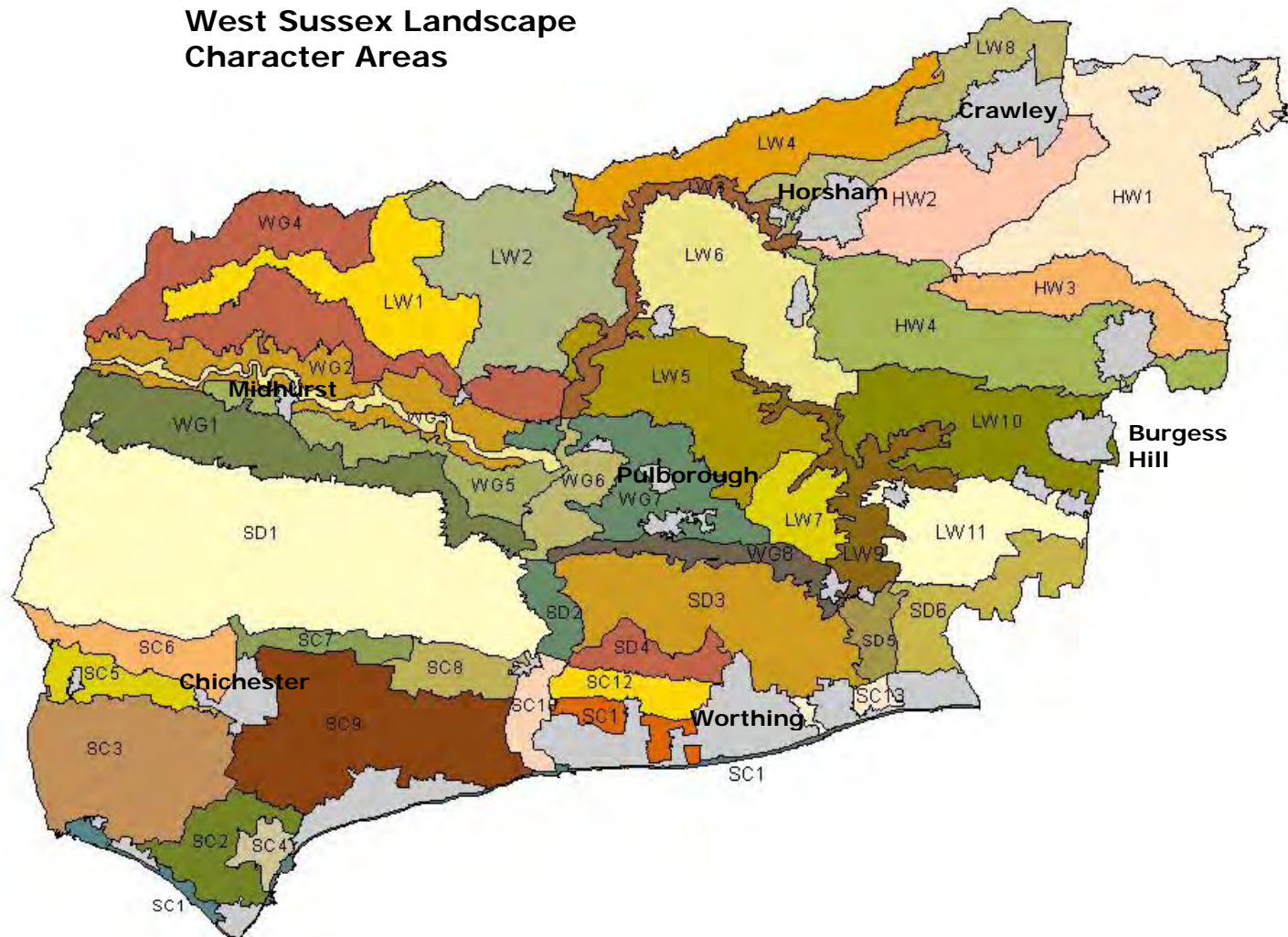
Pegasus

Environment

APPENDIX 3:

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT EXTRACT: CHARACTER AREA HW4 HIGH WEALD FRINGES

West Sussex Landscape Character Areas



SD4	Angmering Park
SC12	Angmering Upper Coastal Plain
WG6	Arun Wildbrooks
SC6	Ashlings Upper Coastal Plain
	Black Up Arun
SD3	Central Downs
LW6	Central Low Weald
WG8	Central Scarp Footslopes
SC3	Chichester Harbour
SC9	Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain
SD5	Downland Adur Valley
SD2	Downland Arun Valley
SD6	Eastern Downs
LW10	Eastern Low Weald
LW11	Eastern Scarp Footslopes
SC8	Fontwell Upper Coastal Plain
SC7	Halnaker Upper Coastal Plain
HW1	High Weald
HW2	High Weald Forests
HW4	High Weald Fringes
SC11	Littlehampton & Worthing Fringes
LW4	Low Weald Hills
SC10	Lower Arun Valley
SC2	Manhood Peninsula
LW2	North Western Low Weald
LW1	North Western Ridges
WG4	North Western Valleys
LW8	Northern Vales
HW3	Ouse Valley
SC4	Pagham Harbour
WG2	Rother Farmlands
WG3	Rother Valley
WG5	Rother Woods and Heaths
SC1	South Coast Shoreline
SC5	Southbourne Coastal Plain
LW5	Southern Low Weald
WG7	Storrington Woods & Heaths
LW9	Upper Adur Valley
LW3	Upper Arun Valley
SD1	Western Downs
WG1	Western Scarp Footslopes
LW7	Wiston Low Weald
SC13	Worthing & Adur Fringes

Overall Character

The densely-wooded southern flanks of the High Weald Forest Ridge within West Sussex, dissected by gentle gill streams draining west to the River Adur and east to the River Ouse. Includes the settlements of Cuckfield, Haywards Heath and Lindfield.

Key Characteristics

- Wooded, often confined rural landscape of intimacy and complexity partly within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- South and east-draining gills and broad ridges sweeping gently down to the Low Weald.
- Western part drained by the headwaters of the River Arun, eastern part around Scaynes Hill by the River Ouse.
- Long views over the Low Weald to the downs.
- Significant woodland cover, a substantial portion of it ancient, and a dense network of shaws, hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Pattern of small, irregular-shaped assart fields and larger fields, and small pockets of remnant heathland.
- Orchards and horticulture on lower slopes, particularly to the west.
- Biodiversity concentrated in the valleys, heathland, and woodland.
- Network of lanes, droveways, tracks and footpaths.
- Dispersed historic settlement pattern, close to Horsham, the principal settlements Cuckfield, Haywards Heath and Lindfield and a few villages and hamlets.
- Some busy lanes and roads including A and B roads bounding the area to the west, and other roads crossing north to south, including the A23 Trunk Road.
- London to Brighton Railway Line crosses the area at Haywards Heath.
- Mill sites, hammerponds and ornamental lakes and ponds.
- Varied traditional rural buildings built with diverse materials including timber-framing, Horsham Stone roofing, Wealden stone and varieties of local brick and tile-hanging.
- Designed landscapes and exotic treescapes associated with large country houses.
- Major gill woodland garden and visitor attraction at Leonardslee.

Sheet HW4

High Weald Fringes

High Weald

The area covered by the Sheet includes:

The High Weald Fringes (Area 10) Landscape Character Area in Mid Sussex District.

The Crabtree and Nuthurst Ridges and Ghylls (Area M1) and the Mannings Heath Farmlands (Area N1) Landscape Character Areas defined in the unpublished **Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment** (October 2003).



Historic Features

- Much of landscape essentially medieval in origin.
- Persistence of ancient woodland.
- Line of Roman road.
- Ancient routeways and droves.
- Remains of Sedgewick Castle.
- Historic country houses, farmsteads and parkscapes.
- Wealden iron hammerponds and mill sites.
- Cuckfield Park.

Biodiversity

- Diverse natural history.
- Species-rich gill and semi-natural woodlands.
- Geologically important rock exposures.
- Remnant hornbeam coppice.
- Remnant and dormant wet and dry acid heathland.
- Species-rich meadows and hedgerows.
- Lakes, hammerponds, field and ornamental ponds.

Change - Key Issues

- Decline in traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.
- Continuing planting of conifers in some areas.
- Spread of invasive introduced species, particularly rhododendron and neglect of some parkland landscapes.
- Reduction of heathland to a few pockets due to cessation of grazing management and subsequent woodland invasion and woodland replanting.
- Continuing amalgamation of small fields with orchard, hedgerow loss and the ageing and loss of hedgerow and field trees.
- Visual impact of new urban and rural development including modern farm buildings, horse riding centres and paddocks.
- New development on the southern edges of Haywards Heath.
- Introduction of telecommunications masts on ridges.
- Increasing pervasiveness of traffic movement throughout much of the area, especially in the vicinity of Haywards Heath.
- Increasing pressures for a wide variety of recreational activities.
- Perceived increased traffic levels on small rural lanes with consequent demands for road improvements.
- Gradual loss of locally distinctive building styles and materials.
- Gradual suburbanisation of the landscape including the widespread use of exotic tree and shrub species.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

- Woodland cover limits the visual sensitivity of the landscape and confers a sense of intimacy, seclusion and tranquillity.
- Unobtrusive settlement pattern in many parts.
- Older, small assart pastures contribute to the intimacy of the landscape.
- Important pockets of rich biodiversity are vulnerable to loss and change.
- Network of lanes, droveways, tracks and footpaths provides a rich terrain for horse-riding, cycling and walking and for the appreciation of nature.
- Long views from open ground have a high sensitivity to the impact of new urban development, modern farm buildings, masts and pylons and new roads.
- Settlement pattern currently sits well within the rural landscape although there is a danger of the cumulative visual impact of buildings and other structures, particularly on the south side of Haywards Heath.
- Legacy of designed landscapes and treescapes.



Broxmead, Bolney



Wood pasture, Cowfold

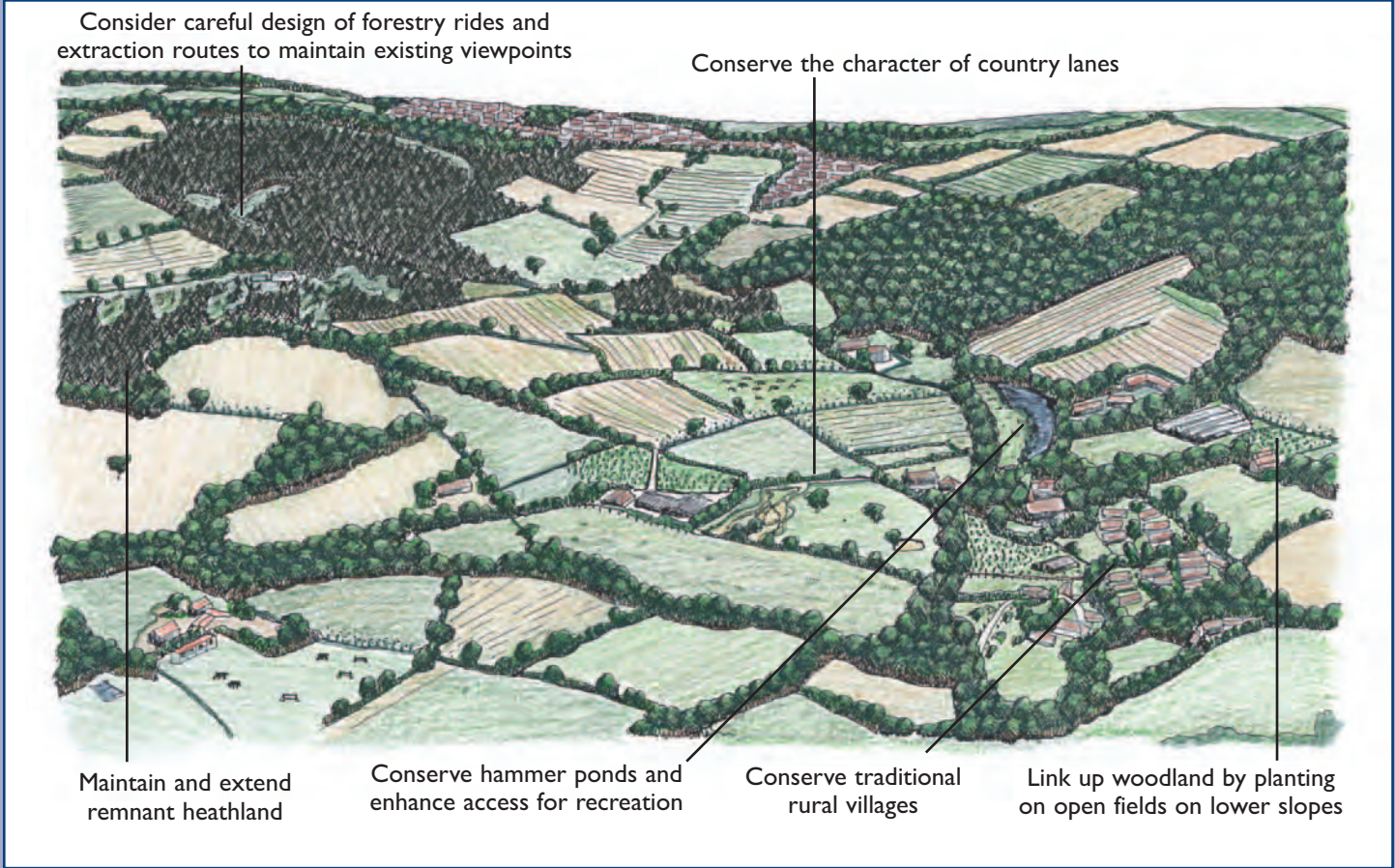


Millenium Wood, Borde Hill



Hedgerow trees, Wealden Fringe

Land Management Guidelines



Conserve the rich mosaic of woodland and other habitats and the intimate nature of the agricultural landscape, the high level of perceived naturalness of the area including its rural, tranquil qualities, and the intimate and unobtrusive settlement pattern throughout much of the area.

- Maintain and restore the historic pattern and fabric of the woodland and agricultural landscape for scenic, nature conservation and recreational purposes.
- Protect existing views from the area and avoid skyline development, paying particular attention to the siting of telecommunications masts.
- Plan for long-term woodland regeneration, the planting of new broad-leaved woodlands, appropriate management of existing woodlands, and reduce rhododendron invasion and bracken cover in woodlands and on heathland.
- Extend existing woodland areas rather than creating new woodland features, reinforcing existing, distinctive landscape patterns.
- Conserve woodland biodiversity and the landscape of the gills, including wet woodland, protecting rare and uncommon woodland plant communities associated with them.
- Reduce the impact of forestry where possible by encouraging sensitive forestry practice including small-scale felling rotation, and incorporating mixed species.
- Increase tree cover in and around villages, agricultural and other development including along the approach roads to settlements and along busy urban routes.
- Increase screening of prominent parts of new development on the southern fringes of Haywards Heath.
- Conserve and replant single oaks in hedgerows to maintain succession and replant parkland trees.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees and replant hedgerows where they have been lost.
- Maintain and manage all lakes and ponds and their margins for their landscape diversity and nature conservation value.
- Conserve and manage remnant open heathland by preventing the encroachment of scrub and create new, interconnected heathlands.
- Conserve species-rich meadows and road verges.
- Seek to protect the tranquil and historic character of rural lanes and manage road verges to enhance their nature conservation value.
- Reduce the visual impact of stabling and grazing for horses.
- Minimise the effects of adverse incremental change by seeking new development of high quality that sits well within the landscape and reflects local distinctiveness.

The guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- County-wide Landscape Guidelines set out in *A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape* (November 2005) published by West Sussex County Council.
- Objectives and actions contained in the *High Weald AONB Management Plan 2004* (Adopted March 2004) published by the High Weald AONB Joint Management Committee.

APPENDIX 4:

CUCKFIELD LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT EXTRACT: CHARACTER AREA 13 HORSGATE FARMLAND

Cuckfield Landscape Character Assessment for Cuckfield Parish Council

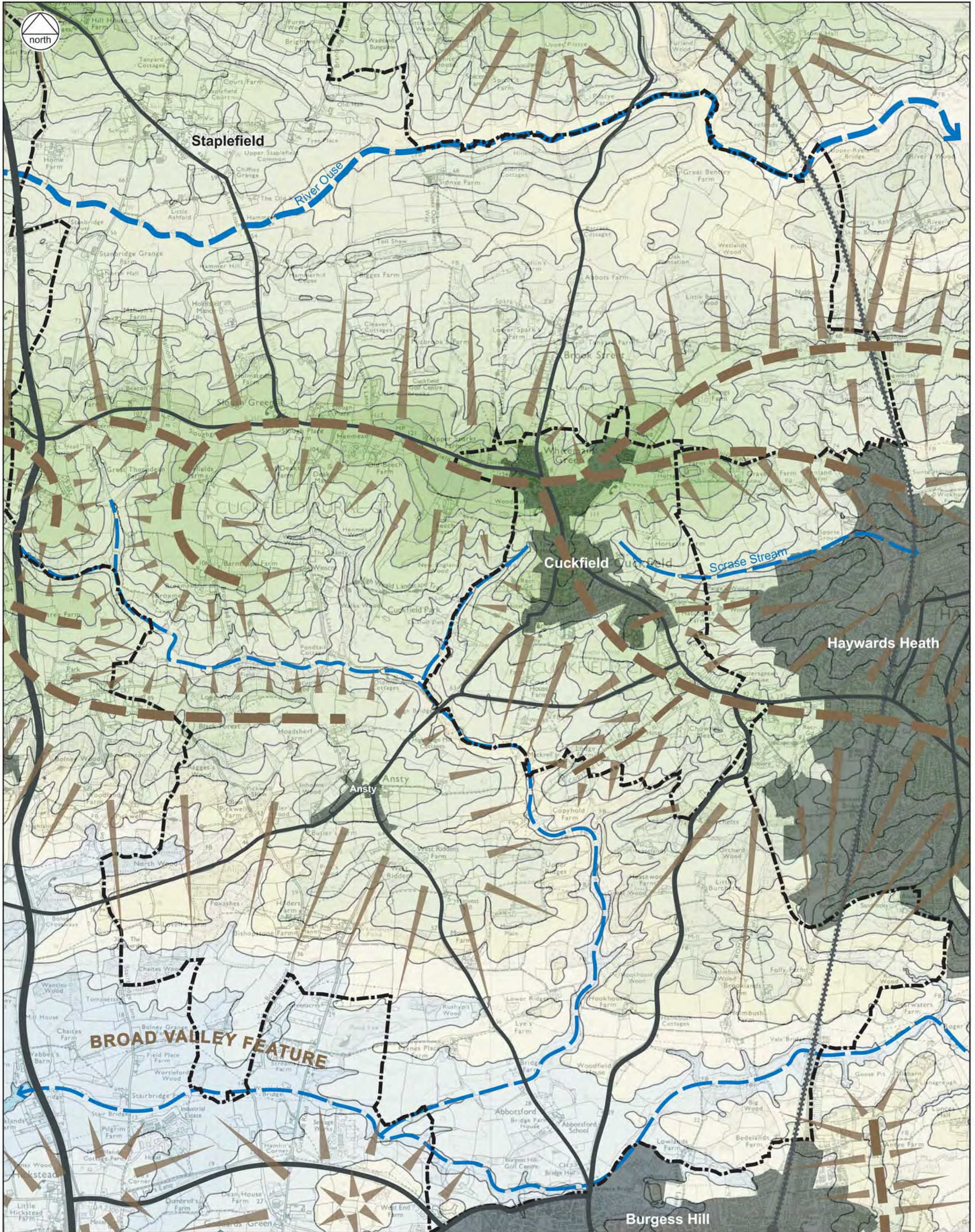


April 2012

Character Area	Designations and Policy	Historic Landscape Characterisation	Landscape Analysis	Capacity Summary
13 Horsegate Farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes Listed Building. Includes small area of Ancient Woodland. Includes SNCI. Within Gap policy area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes medieval assarts and early modern informal parkland. Low boundary loss recorded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undulating, but generally sloping towards Scrase Stream, from higher ground to the north. Largely detached from Built Up Area, apart from a few back garden to the northeast. Significant vegetation along Wheatsheaf Lane limits views of the adjacent Built Up Area to the south. Borders Hanlye Lane to the north. Consists of small to medium size fields of pasture and occasional farm buildings and includes a short length of Scrase Stream to the south. Contains occasional, relatively unobtrusive farmstead type buildings in the centre of the character area, plus larger group of buildings including Horsgate House and Court Meadow School at the northeast corner of the character area, which despite being located on the higher ground to the north, are assimilated into the landscape by significant surround vegetation. Well vegetated area with a network of intact field boundary hedges, hedge trees, tree groups and riparian vegetation associated with Scrase Stream. Slopes away from Cuckfield which sits on higher ground to the south, relatively distant from centre of the village. Contains a number of public rights of way which link Whiteman's Green and Cuckfield to the wider rural landscape to the east, and provide circular walks from residential areas. Contains short length of traditional rural sunken lane which has public right of way along it. Both distant views of the South Downs and filtered views of housing are possible from higher ground. Fairly enclosed nature, limited development and relatively minor urban influences from settlement to the west, enhance the sense of tranquillity and remoteness within the majority of the character area. Forms part of rural western setting to Whiteman's Green and Cuckfield, and affectively separates Cuckfield from Haywards Heath, preventing coalescence between the two settlements. 	Part of fairly intact rural eastern setting to Cuckfield, the majority of which is largely detached from settlement and forming significant part of separation between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath. MODERATE value SUBSTANTIAL sensitivity LOW capacity.



Looking north across **Horsegate Farmland** landscape character area, towards the filtered edge of Whiteman's Green.



KEY

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------|--|---|
| | Main ridges | | Main Roads |
| | Prominent slopes | | Settlement Built Up Areas (as labelled) |
| | Main watercourses | | Parish boundaries |
| | Railways | | |

CLIENT:
Cuckfield Parish Council

PROJECT:
Cuckfield Character Assessment

TITLE:
Settlement Context and Landscape Structure

SCALE AT A3:
1:25,000

DATE:
February 2012

533.3 / 01 C

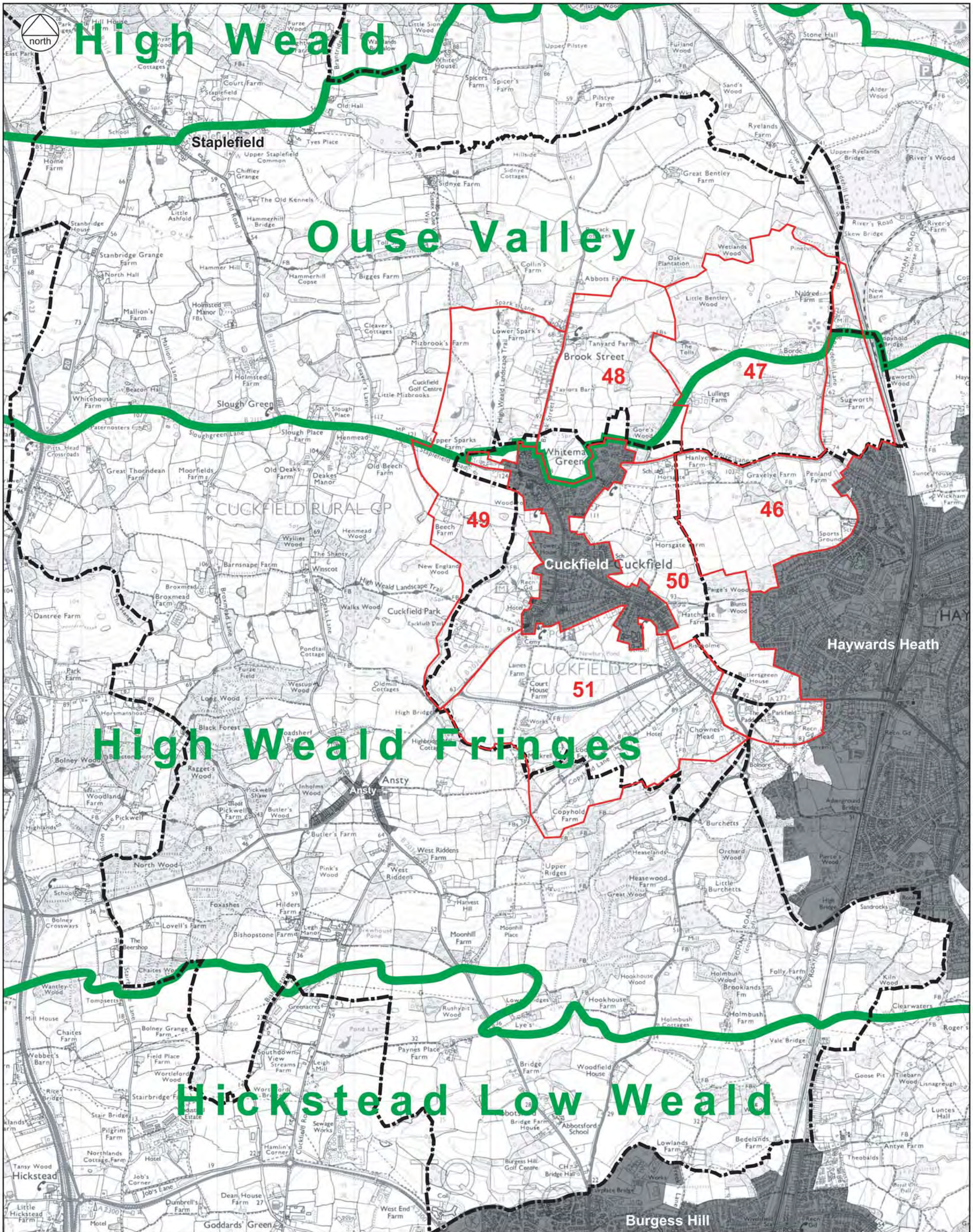
HDA 1

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Landscape Architecture
Masterplanning
Ecology





KEY

- Settlement Built Up Areas (as labelled)
- Parish boundaries
- Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment Areas (as labelled)

Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study:

- 46 Horsgate High Weald
- 47 Borde Hill Parkland
- 48 Whitemans Green High Weald
- 49 West Cuckfield Weald
- 50 Cuckfield High Weald
- 51 Copyhold High Weald Fringe

CLIENT:
Cuckfield Parish Council

PROJECT:
Cuckfield Character Assessment

TITLE:
District Landscape Character & Capacity Areas

SCALE AT A3: 1:25,000

DATE: March 2012

533.3 / 03

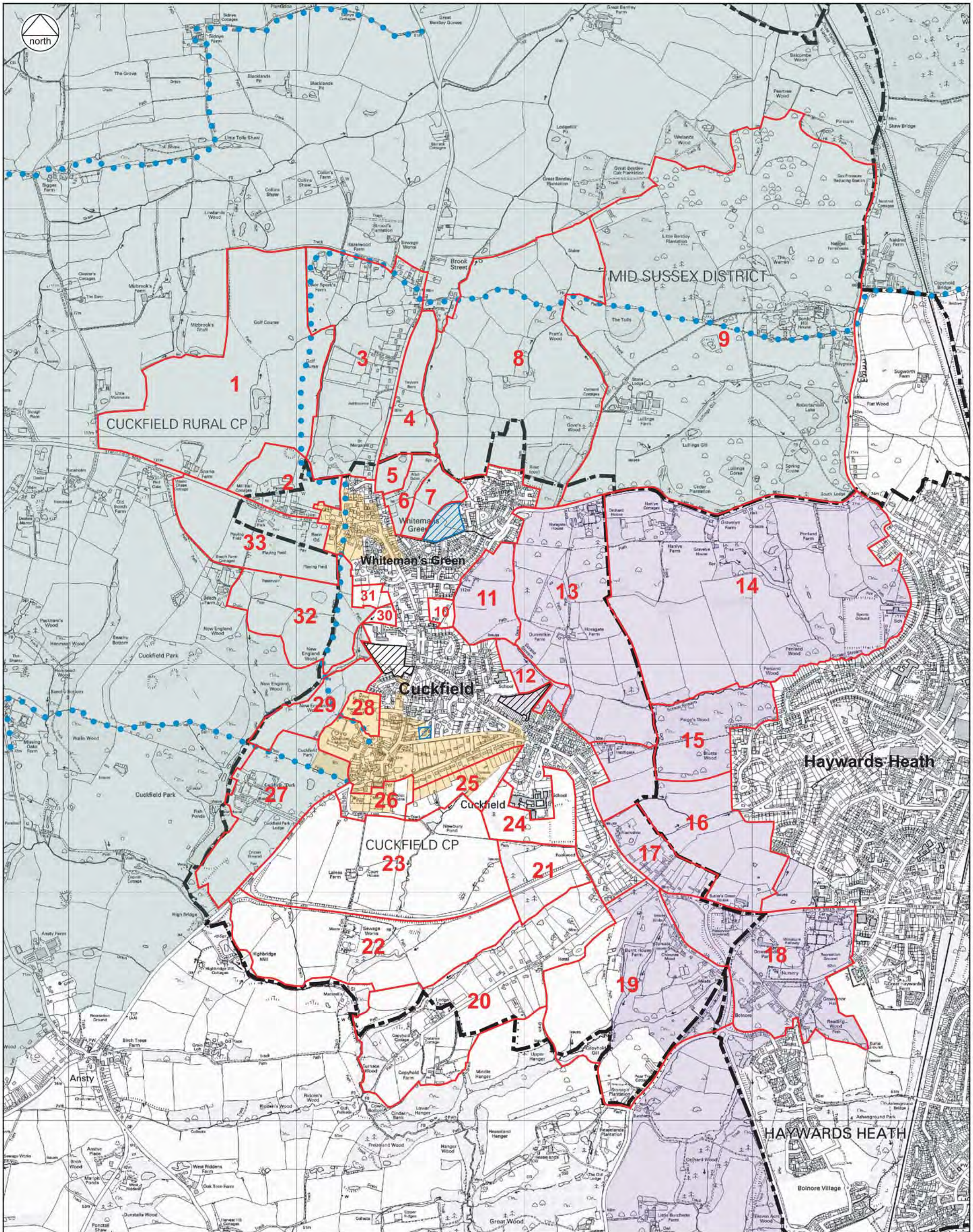
HDA 2

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KEY



Local Character Areas



Parish boundaries



Recent development / development under construction



Committed development



High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)



Sussex Ouse Valley Way & High Weald Landscape Trail



Conservation Areas



Gap Policy area

CLIENT:

Cuckfield Parish Council

PROJECT:

Cuckfield Character Assessment

TITLE:

Landscape Character Areas, Designations & Policy

SCALE AT A3:

1:15,000

DATE:

March 2012

533.3 / 02 C

HDA 3

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APPENDIX 5:

PHOTOVIEW LOCATION PLAN



KEY

- Application Site Boundary
- Viewpoint Location

Revisions:
First Issue- 13/11/2019 AJH

Viewpoint Location Plan

Land South of Hanlye Lane, Cuckfield

Client: Glenbeigh Developments Ltd
DRWG No: **P19-2806_04** Sheet No: - REV: -
Drawn by: AJH Approved by: HD
Date: 13/11/2019
Scale: 1:10,000 @ A3



APPENDIX 6:

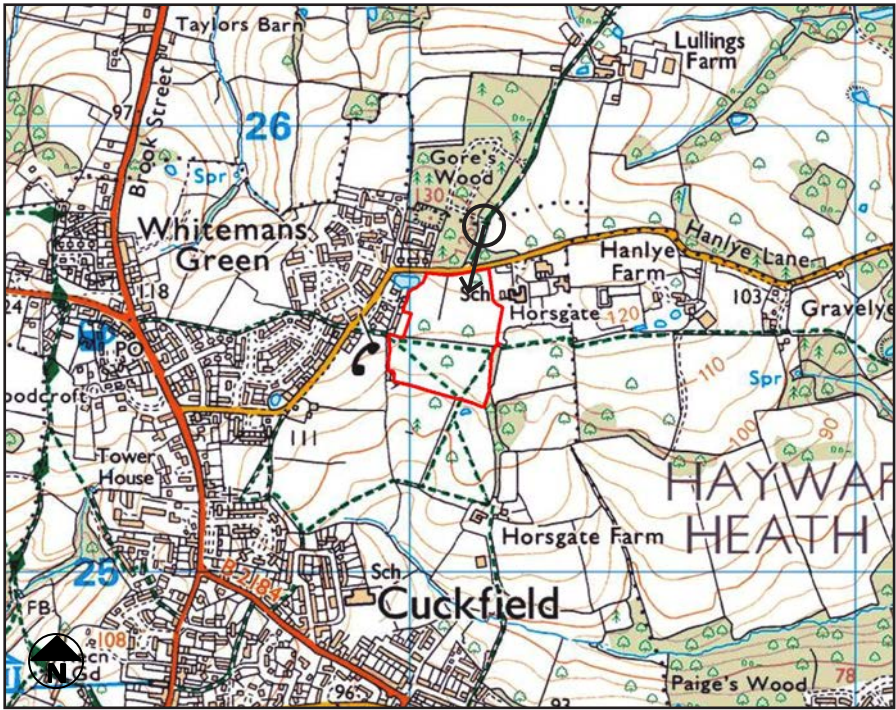
PHOTOVIEWS

Hanlye Lane



VIEWPOINT 1

View from public bridleway north of Hanlye Lane, looking south

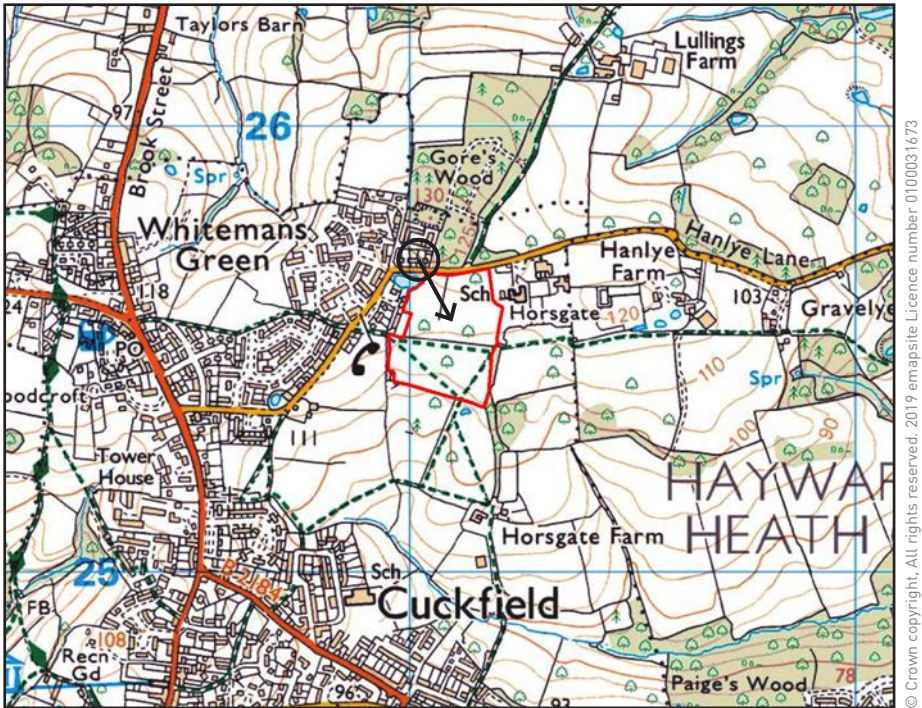


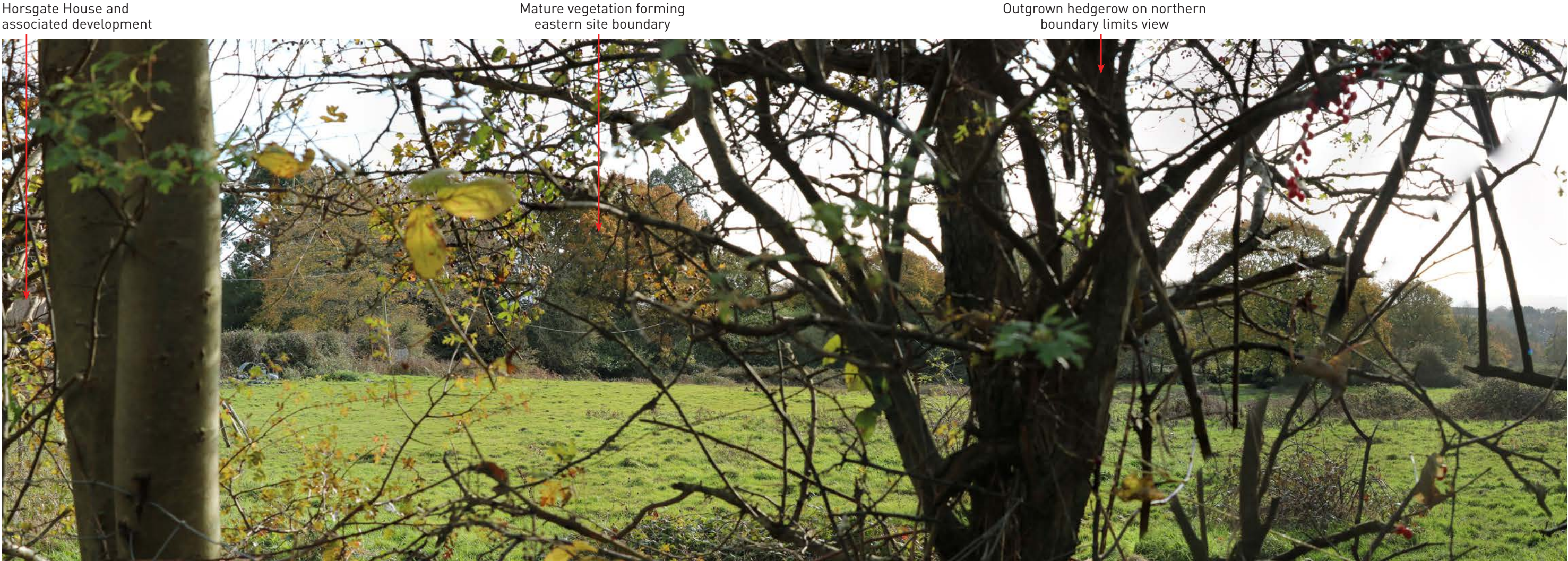
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VIEWPOINT 2

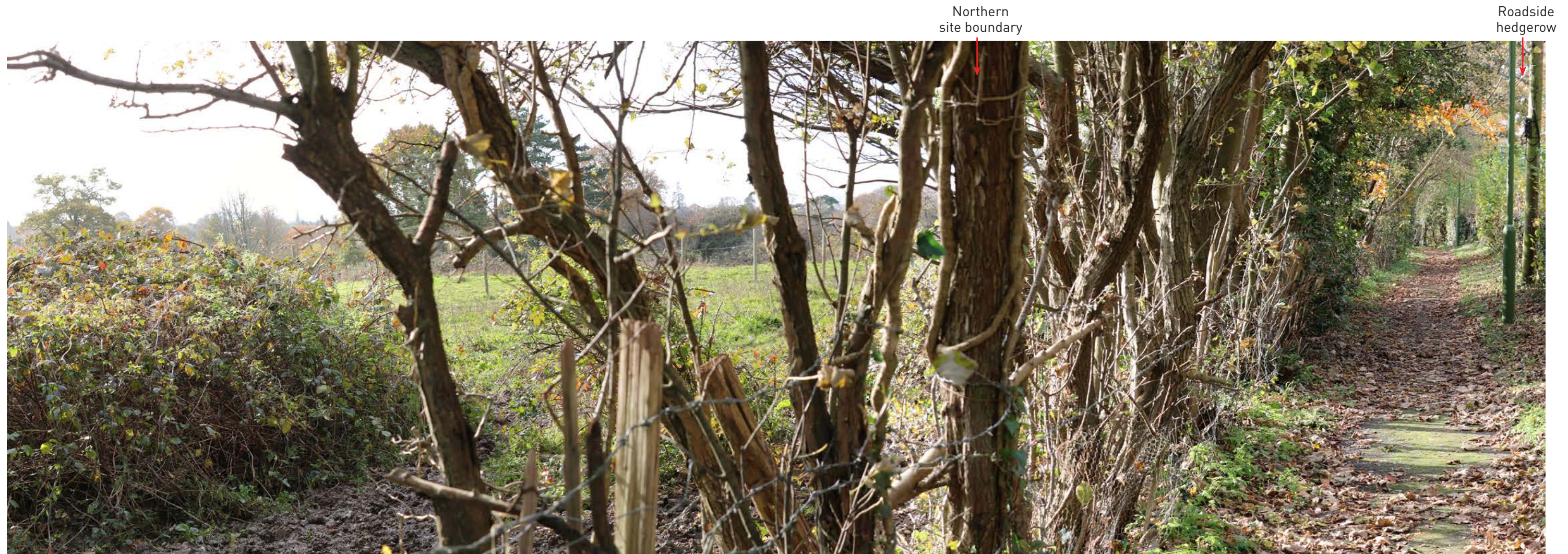
From Hanlye Lane, looking south east





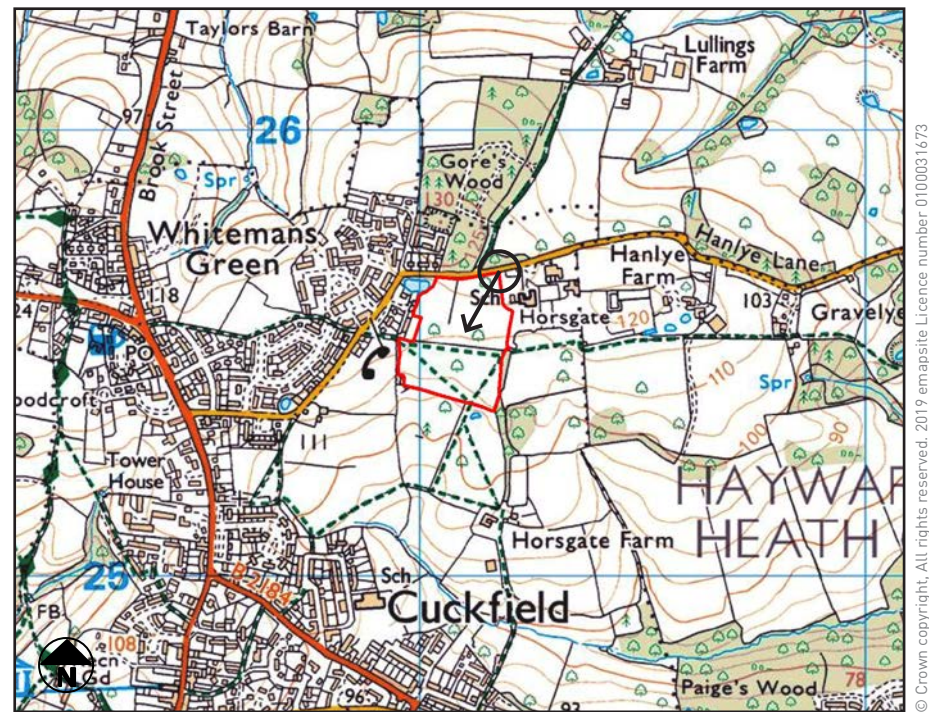
VIEWPOINT 3
From footway adjacent to Hanlye Lane, looking south





VIEWPOINT 4

From footway adjacent to Hanlye Lane, looking south west



Distant views to Warden Park School
to the southern edge of Cuckfield



Mature vegetation forming
eastern site boundary



VIEWPOINT 5A

From public footpath south of Horsgate, looking south west

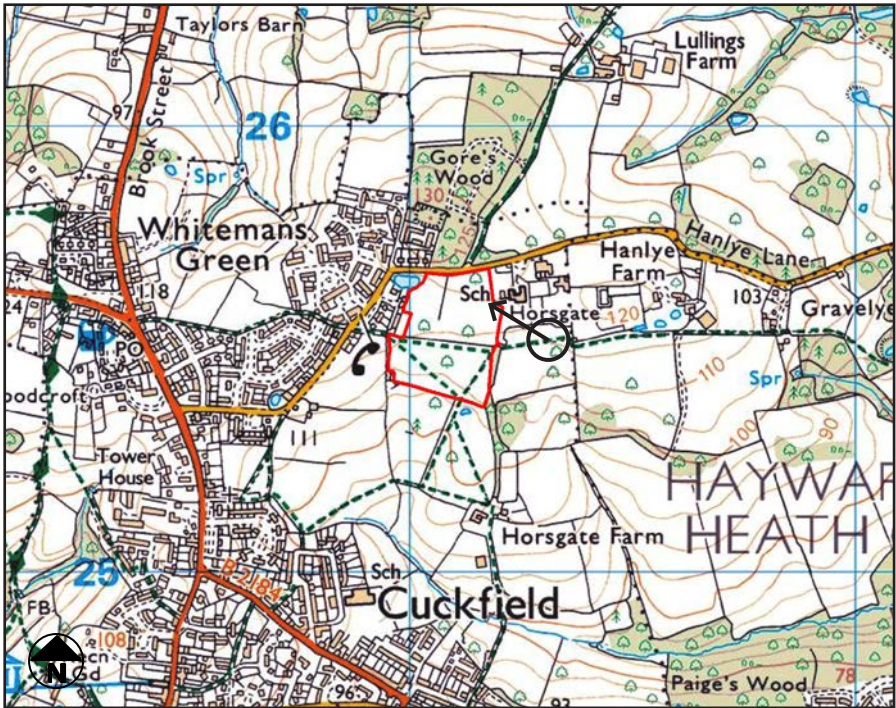


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VIEWPOINT 5B

From public footpath south of Horsgate, looking north west



Residential development at
Horsefield Green, to the west

Mature vegetation separating northern
and southern parcels of site



VIEWPOINT 6A

From public footpath at southern site boundary, looking north-west



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VIEWPOINT 6B

From public footpath at southern site boundary, looking north

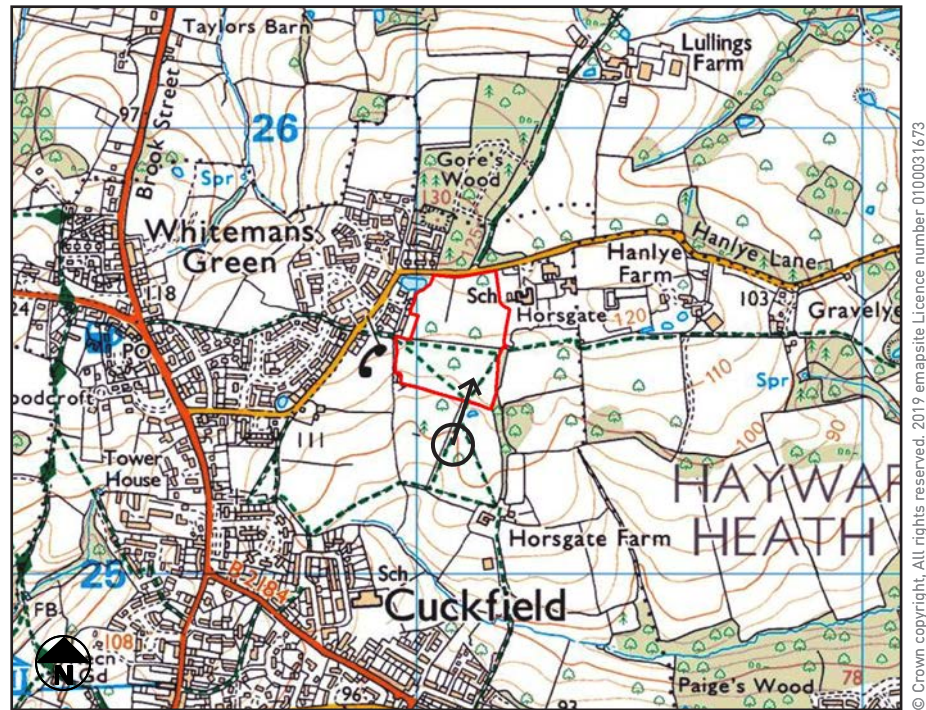


Existing footpath link at southern site boundary



VIEWPOINT 7

From public footpath to south of site, looking north



Recent residential development
at Horsefield Green



VIEWPOINT 9

From public open space at Horsefield Green, looking east

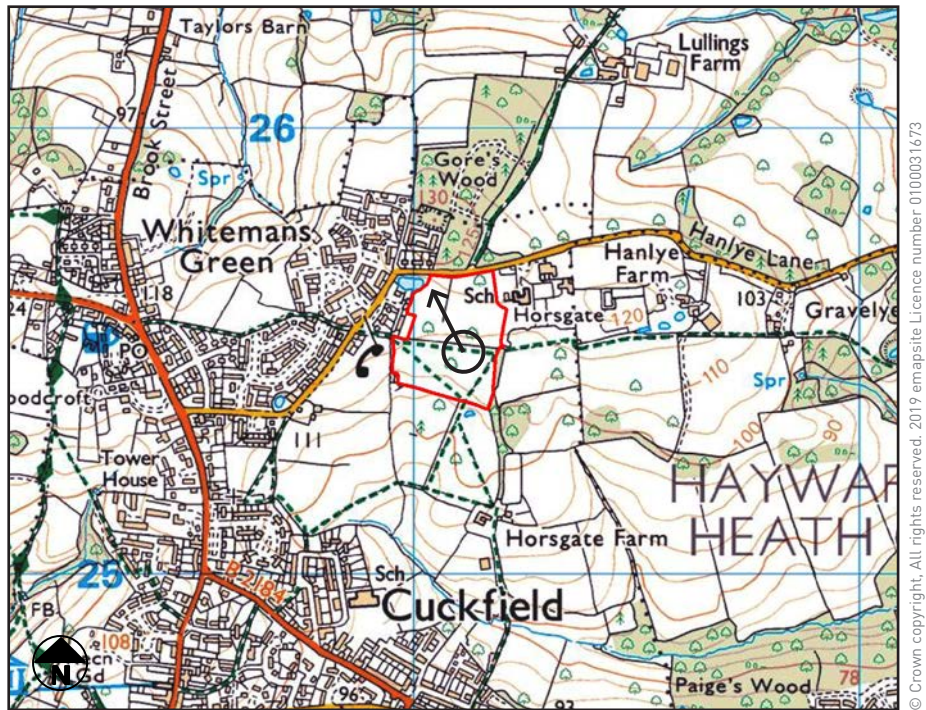


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VIEWPOINT 10A

From public footpath east of Longacre Crescent, looking north west



Mature vegetation along
Site's northern boundary

Existing development adjacent to
Site's north eastern boundary



VIEWPOINT 10B

From public footpath east of Longacre Crescent, looking north east

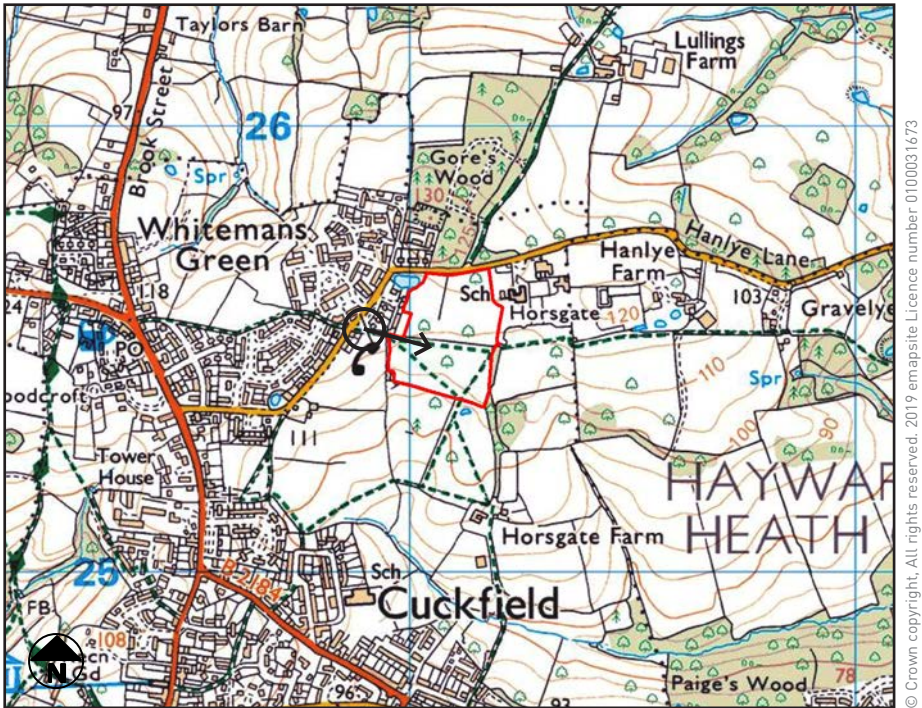


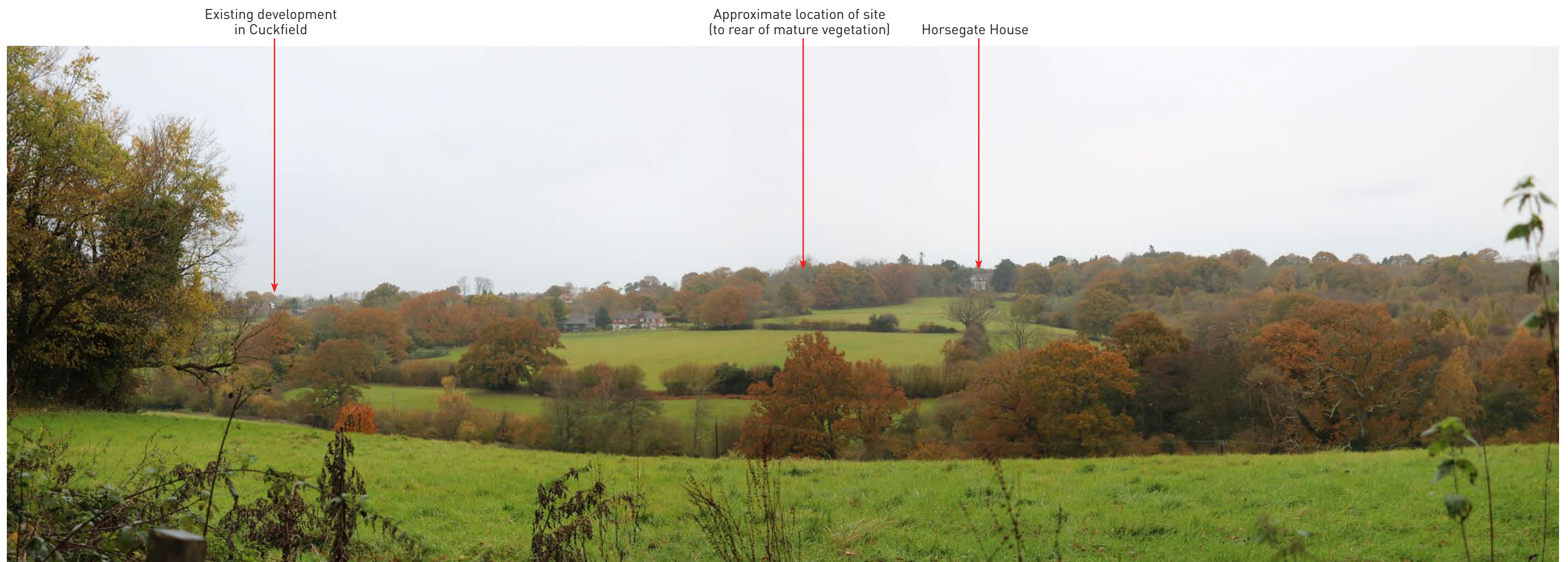
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VIEWPOINT 11

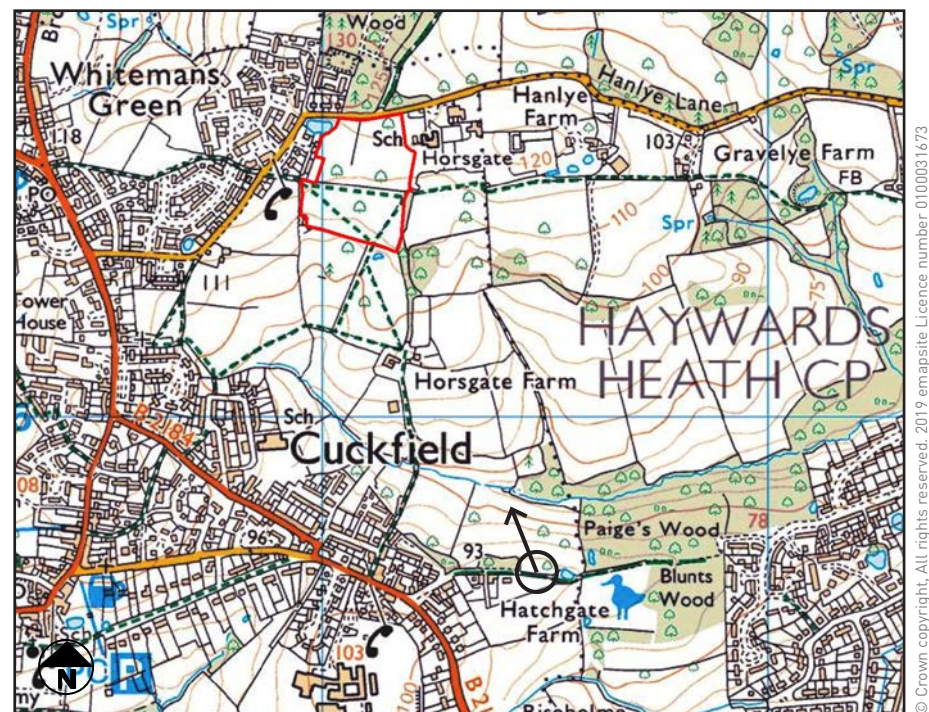
From Longacre Crescent, looking east





VIEWPOINT 12

View from Hatchgate Lane, looking north west.



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Existing residential
development in Cuckfield

Approximate location of Site
(to rear of mature vegetation)



VIEWPOINT 13

View from public right of way (footpath), close to Cuckfield Baptist Church.



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APPENDIX 7:

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS PLAN



KEY

	Site Boundary		Existing Trees
	Existing Public Right of Way		Proposed New Planting
	Proposed Link		Existing Pond
	Existing Woodland		Potential Landscape Zone/Buffer



Long distance views towards the South Downs retained and incorporated within the site

Revisions:
First Issue- 13/11/2019 JS
A - (18/11/2019 JS) Notes amended

Landscape Opportunities and Constraints Plan

Land South of Hanlye Lane, Cuckfield

Client: Glenbeigh Developments Ltd
DRWG No: **P19-2806_01** Sheet No: _ REV: **A**
Drawn by : JS Approved by: HD
Date: 18/11/2019
Scale: 1:25,000 @ A3

Pegasus
Environment



0 100m