OBSIDIAN STRATEGIC

aspect landscape planning

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, MOCKBEGGARS FARM, LONDON ROAD, UCKFIELD, WEALDEN

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment

February 2022
7397.LVIA.002.VF

COPYRIGHT

The copyright of this document
remains with Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd.
The contents of this document
therefore must not be copied or
reproduced in whole or in part
for any purpose without the
written consent of

Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd.
Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd
Hardwick Business Park
Noral Way
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX16 2AF

t 01295 276066
f 01295 265072

e info@aspect-landscape.com
w www.aspect-landscape.com

REVISION	DATE	WRITTEN	CHECKED
001	10.02.2022	SK	CJ
002	15.02.2022	CJ	CJ

CONTENTS

1	**INTRODUCTION**	**1**
2	**LANDSCAPE RELATED POLICY BACKGROUND**	**2**
3	**BASELINE ASSESSMENT**	**8**
4	**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSALS**	**24**
5	**ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS**	**26**
6	**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**	**39**

PLANS

ASPECT PLAN ASP1	SITE LOCATION PLAN
ASPECT PLAN ASP2	SITE AND SETTING PLAN
ASPECT PLAN ASP3	LANDSCAPE STRATEGY PLAN

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ASPECT LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT METHODOLOGY

APPENDIX 2 VISUAL ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX 3 EXTRACT FROM WEALDEN LANDSCAPE & SETTLEMENT CHARACTER ASSESSMENT - FIG 5.12 LANDSCAPE SETTING OF UCKFIELD PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd has been appointed by Obsidian Strategic to undertake a landscape and visual impact assessment relating to an outline application of up to 60 residential dwellings and associated works with all matters reserved except for access (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed development') on Land east of London Road, Uckfield (hereafter referred to as the 'Site'). The location and context of the Site is illustrated on **ASP1** Site Location Plan and **ASP2** Site and Setting Plan.

1.2. A detailed appraisal of the surrounding study area has been undertaken using Ordnance Survey data, historical map data, local policy, and published character assessments. This has informed the on-site field analysis to identify key viewpoints, analyse the landscape character and visual environment of the local area and determine the extent and significance of any potential landscape and visual effects.

1.3. The assessment of effects has been derived from guidance provided within GLVIA3 (Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3 Edition) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment in April 2013. The methodology is contained within Appendix 1 of this document.

1.4. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will take the following format:

- Review of landscape related policy – national and local policy context reviewed with any designations identified (Section 2);
- Baseline assessment – review of the existing landscape character and visual environment (Section 3);
- Description of the proposals – introducing the proposed development and the associated landscape proposals and associated mitigation (Section 4);
- Assessment of effects – using an established methodology based on the guidance of GLVIA3, the potential effects of the proposals upon the existing landscape character and visual environment will be assessed (Section 5);
- Conclusions will be drawn (Section 6).

1.5. This assessment should be read alongside the other supporting material which accompanies this application.

2. LANDSCAPE RELATED POLICY

2.1. The Site is located to the northern edge of the built up area of Uckfield and is covered by the policies within the Wealden District Council's adopted development plan documents consisting of the *Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan, Adopted 2013* and saved polices from the *Wealden Local Plan, Adopted 1998*. The Site consists of two small agricultural fields, approximately 3.5ha, in pastoral use, predominantly for sheep grazing and is located on the north western fringe of the settlement of Uckfield. The western boundary is bounded by London Road, a main road corridor that cuts through the centre of the main settlement area of Uckfield, travelling north towards the A272 and A22. The Site's southern, eastern and north-eastern boundary are bounded by existing residential development and northern settlement edge of Uckfield, with an Ancient Woodland (Round Wood) adjacent to the south-eastern boundary.

2.2. The Site is not covered by any qualitative landscape designations at a national or local level. There are two Conservation Area's north-west and south of the Site. South of the Site, within the built up settlement of Uckfield is the Uckfield Conservation Area, approximately 1.36km away from the Site. Similarly, north west of the Site beyond the A26 is the Maresfield Conservation Area approximately 840m from the Site, both are at a relative distance to the Site and therefore, do not relate to it. The Site is also in close proximity to Buxted Park (Grade II Listed) a Registered Park and Garden that contains a Scheduled Monument; the Medieval settlement site, situated approximately 200m directly to the east, however it is important to note that there is a strong degree of visual and physical separation from the Site due to the combination of intervening vegetation, built form and topography.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

2.3. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021. The document sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The

document places an emphasis on the promotion of sustainable growth whilst also protecting the environment.

2.4. Paragraph 7 states that: ***"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development."***

2.5. Paragraph 8 states that: ***"Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (…)"*** including ***an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."***

2.6. Paragraph 11 states that: ***"Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.***

For plan-making this means that:

a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;

b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole."

2.7. Design is dealt with in Chapter 12 which sets out the objectives for achieving "well-designed places". Para 130 states that: "***Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:***

a) Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
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;
e) Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
f) Create spaces that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder and fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."

2.8. Chapter 15 deals with the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment. In particular para 174, which 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);
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;
c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate."

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

2.9. Those categories within the NPPG that are of relevance to landscape and visual matters in relation to this site are set out below.

Design: Process and Tools

2.10. The NPPG states that well-designed places can be achieved by taking a pro-active and collaborative approach at all stages of the planning process. The guidance sets

out processes and tools that can be used through the planning system. The guidance is to be read alongside the National Design Guide.

2.11. As set out in paragraph 134 of the NPPF, permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents.

National Design Guide

2.12. The importance of design is a key focus within the guide as is the local and wider context and character of the site.

Green Infrastructure

2.13. The NPPG highlights the multifaceted benefits delivered through Green Infrastructure and recognises how it can be used to reinforce and enhance local landscape character and contribute to a sense of place.

Landscape

2.14. Finally, the NPPG refers to the NPPF and the recognition of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the provision of strategic policies to provide the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. Adverse landscape impacts are to be avoided and mitigation measures employed where necessary.

2.15. The NPPF and NPPG have been of material consideration as part of our assessment of the site and its setting, and the proposals shall take on board the overall framework guidance and principles contained within the NPPF.

Local Planning Policy

Wealden District Council Adopted Local Plan Documents

2.16. The Site and wider study area are covered by the ***Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan*** *(adopted February 2013)* and saved policies from the ***Wealden Local Plan*** *(Adopted 1998).* The Site is not located within any adopted Neighborhood Plans.

2.17. In addition to the spatial planning objectives and vision, the following policies are considered to be of some relevance to the Site and its setting, in terms of landscape character within the 'Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan (Adopted February 2013)':

- ***Policy WCS12- Biodiversity;***
- ***Policy WCS13- Green Infrastructure; and***
- ***Policy WCS14- Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development.***

2.18. The following saved policies are considered to be of some relevance to the Site and its setting, in terms of landscape character within the 'Wealden Local Plan (Adopted 1998)':

- ***Saved Policy EN8- Low Weald;***
- ***Saved Policy EN12- Trees and Woodland;***
- ***Saved Policy EN13- Ancient Woodland;***
- ***Saved Policy EN14- Landscaping within Developments; and***
- ***Saved Policy EN27- Layout and Design of Development.***

3. BASELINE ASSESSMENT

3.1. The Site is located between Ringles Cross and Budlett's Common, on the northern edge of the built up area of Uckfield and the south of Maresfield within the Wealden District of East Sussex. It consists of two small fields of pastureland that are bound by mature hedgerow, trees and woodland creating a high degree of enclosure to the Site from the adjacent land uses and surrounding local and wider landscape. The Site is also influenced by multiple urbanising features such as the London Road corridor which runs along the western Site boundary and existing residential units that are adjacent to the eastern, southern and partly northern boundary as a result of the Site directly abutting the northern east settlement fringe of Uckfield. In addition, the larger built form and areas of hardstanding associated with of a car garage and a caravan dealer lies immediately northwest of the Site with a notable complex of buildings directly east of the garage. The majority of the built form surrounding the Site comprises of residential development which dates from the late 1930's up until the early 21st century. The dwellings are generally detached and set within larger plots with mature vegetation structure, with the density increasing to the south.

3.2. The immediate and local landscape contains a notable amount of mature woodland, with areas of ancient wood, including Round Wood that lies adjacent to the south eastern Site boundary. Beyond this the combination of mature vegetation structure and undulating landform that characterises this area reduces the prominence to the existing built form, which mainly consists of large detached residential dwellings off London Road to the south and Coopers Green Road to the east.

3.3. The location and context of the Site and wider landscape is illustrated on **ASP1** Site Location Plan and **ASP2** Site and Setting Plan.

Vegetation Cover

3.4. The Site is bound by an established mature vegetation structure, consisting of outgrown hedgerow and woodland. The vegetation cover internally consists of two fields of rough pastureland that are separated by a short section of hedgerow. Overall, there is limited internal vegetation. The most notable area of woodland is Round Wood ancient and semi natural woodland, immediately south east of the Site. The western

boundary is defined by London Road corridor and a mature mixed native hedgerow which provides a degree of separation from the road corridor. The boundaries to the north, east and south consist of a variety mature vegetation structure and established trees associated with the rear curtilages of the adjacent residential properties and as a result create a high degree of visual and physical containment to the Site.

Topography

3.5. The landform within the Site and its immediate setting gently undulates between 45m and 50m AOD, beyond this the landform falls gently to the east and west. To the east the landform rises within Buxted Park to around 55m AOD. To the south of the Site the landform rises within the wider suburban area of Uckfield to a local high point of 64m AOD near Downland House, approximately 900m from the southwest of the Site.

3.6. The Site itself falls gently from a high point within the southern portion to the northwest where it meets London Road.

Public Rights of Way

3.7. The Site itself is not publicly accessible and there are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the Site or immediate vicinity, with a very limited number of routes within the local and wider landscape. The closest to the Site are PRoW BUX 57/1 east of the Site beyond Coopers Green Road approximately 380m away and PRoW UCK 1/1 west of the Site, which traverses in a north-south direction through the dense woodland and a small portion of open fields approximately 500m away. There is also a Long-Distance Trail; Wealdway that runs north-east of the Site which is approximately 900m away. All of these routes are at a relative distance to the Site, which combined with the mature vegetated boundaries to the Site and localised vegetation cover and intervening built form limits intervisiblity with the Site.

National Landscape Character

3.8. A landscape assessment of the local area has been carried out which seeks to identify broadly homogenous zones that can be categorized in terms of quality and character. Natural England have produced a countrywide landscape character assessment

resulting in the National Character Areas (NCA's). The Site lies within the southern edge of the 'High Weald' NCA 122. The map includes large tracks of countryside which have similar characteristics in terms of landform, geology, land use and other landscape elements. The summary of key characteristics of the NCA are listed as being:

- ***"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;***
- ***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;***
- ***There is a dense network of small, narrow and winding lanes, often sunken and enclosed by high hedgerows or woodland strips;***
- ***An intimate, hidden and small-scale landscape with glimpses of far reaching 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;***

- ***An essentially medieval landscape reflected in the patterns of settlement, fields and woodland; and***
- ***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."***

County Landscape Character

East Sussex County Landscape Character Assessment (2016)

3.9. The East Sussex County Landscape Character Assessment (2016) identified that the Site falls into the 'Upper Ouse Valley' Landscape Character Area 3 (LCA). The characteristic features of this LCA are considered to be (relevant characteristics are highlighted in bold):

- ***"Countryside of low ridges and wider valleys covered by an intricate pattern of streams and woods;***
- ***The catchment of the upper reaches of the River Ouse which includes Shortbridge Stream and the River Uck;***
- ***Winding, alder-lined rivers and streams;***
- ***Gently undulating terrain with broad valleys, but more pronounced relief near the northern edge where the low weald landscape rises to that of the high weald.***
- ***A heavily wooded landscape which provides areas of relative remoteness especially in the valleys and larger woods;***
- ***Significant designed landscaped parkland at Sheffield and Buxted Parks;***
- *Small village settlements with distinctive churches;*
- *Rock outcrops and incised roadways;*
- ***Historic farmhouses and large farmsteads;***
- *Chailey North and Piltdown Common provide small, fragmented but significant patches of heathland.*
- ***Abundant tree cover, with 17.5% woodland and a strong structure of woods, trees, hedges and shaws.***
- *The extensive area of woodland including Sheffield Forest, Pollardsland and Maskett woods.*

- ***Many of the woods are ancient semi-natural woodland with extensive areas replanted with chestnut coppice mixed with conifers.***
- ***Characteristic tree species are of coppiced chestnut on the sandy soils with oak in the south east on the Wadhurst clays.***
- ***Birch predominates in younger woodland and on the heaths, with some pine.***
- ***Other characteristic species are beech, wild cherry and yew with alder and willow in the river and stream valleys.***
- ***Many scattered farm ponds and large hammer ponds as relics of the iron industry which thrived in this area.***
- *A sense of tranquillity and relative remoteness away from the main settlements and roads;*
- ***A close network of winding, sunken lanes with scattered settlements and individual dwellings often strung out along them.***
- ***Traditional building materials for the area are red brick, often laid as Flemish bond with blued brick ends, red tiled roofs and tile hung upper stories are typical.***
- *Oak timber framed and sandstone houses reflect the abundance of locally sourced timber and quarried stone;*
- *Flint was used in building in the south of the area which is closer to the downs where it was sourced**;***
- ***Several main roads cross the area, the A275 across the west of the area, the A272 across the middle and the A26 across the east as the Uckfield bypass;***
- *The Uckfield to London railway runs across the eastern corner; and*
- *The historic Bluebell Railway has its very popular visitor centre at Sheffield Park Station and runs west to continue to East Grinstead.**"***

3.10. This Character Assessment also sets out guidelines for managing change and it is identified that there is a **"Pressure for expansion of Uckfield"** and this may impact the character area which borders the town and therefore***, "any new development should respect the key positive attributes in the landscape"*** such as ***"ancient woodland"***.

3.11. A number of requirements are listed in relation to the landscape change and adaption to meet the strategy requirements including the protection and enhancement of

existing vegetation, the need for maximising green infrastructure and ensuring design and layout of new development respect localised character and form.

Wealden Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2014)

3.12. At a more local level the Wealden District Council commissioned Chris Blandford Associates to undertake a Landscape and Settlement Character Study in 2014 in order to guide development with regard to the landscapes within the district.

3.13. The Site is identified to be within the Local Landscape Character Type (LLCT) of ***A: Ridges & Valleys***, and the Local Landscape Character Area (LLCA) of ***A2: Budlett's Common & Five Ash Down.***

3.14. ***The LLCA describes this as; "The south-western part of this LLCA is dominated by large areas of woodland (including Park Wood and Thirty Acre Wood), which provide a strong sense of enclosure. The strongly undulating topography of the LLCA, as a result of a narrow stream corridor which cuts through the area, dominates landscape pattern. The south-eastern edge of the area abuts the large town of Uckfield. Views to the edge of the town are generally limited by woodland at the settlement edge. However glimpsed views are characteristic in places. The main A26 road corridor runs north-south across the area, introducing a source of noise and movement and reducing overall sense of tranquillity. In the north of the area, the small linear settlement of Five Ash Down is a key feature. The village is situated on a ridge of higher land, which facilitates views across adjacent fields. Woodland is a key feature of this area, however, outside the patches of woodland, fields tend to be lined with mature hedgerows."***

3.15. The Site is also identified within the northern portion of the ***"Landscape Setting of Uckfield"*** (Landscape Setting Area 8) as identified within the assessment. The key features and characteristics of the landscape around Uckfield are described below:

- ***"Pockets of historic landscape within the setting of the town, comprising small-scale fields with intact boundaries, particularly to the northwest, west and southeast of the town. The historic field pattern is a mosaic, predominantly comprised of regular and irregular piecemeal enclosure,***

and cohesive and aggregate assarts. Historic parkland landscape, associated with Buxted Park to the northeast of the settlement and relatively large areas of Ancient Woodland, further contribute to the historic landscape within the periphery of the town";

- ***"Buxted Park Hall(hotel), a culturally important historic landmark is situated to the northeast of the settlement and other important historic landmarks include the church at Framfield and listed buildings within the historic core of the town centre";***

- ***"Several landscape detractors are present within the setting of the town, including industrial and commercial buildings at Ridgewood and Bellbrook Industrial estates";***

- ***"The town is predominantly lined by sensitive soft edges and woodland, with a few pockets of exposed or prominent urban edges within the Bellbrook Industrial Area and at the eastern edge of the town, associated with the Hospital";***

- ***"The key watercourse running northeast- southwest through the town, is the River Uck, set within its meandering valley. Several smaller tributary streams feed the main river system, including the Chalybeate Spring. There are also numerous small ponds within the setting of the town";***

- ***"Key views of the edges of the town can be gained looking north-eastwards from the A22 road corridor and northwards from the Framfield Road";***

- ***"A network of footpaths and bridleways connects Uckfield to its landscape setting";***

3.16. The distinctive characteristics that define the Landscape Setting Area 8, which the Site is located within are described below:

- ***"A gently meandering tributary of the River Ouse which is lined with mature woodland, providing a strong sense of enclosure";***

- ***"Park Wood, to the west is a key landscape feature, further contributing to the enclosed feel".***

3.17. The Site is located within the eastern perimeter of the 'Landscape Setting Area 8' which is more closely associated with the northern settlement limits of Uckfield, forming a small portion of the wider landscape area east of the Site, which makes up majority of the Landscape Setting Area 8 and comprises of multiple Ancient Woodlands and watercourses associated with the River Ouse. The assessment identifies the Landscape Setting Area 8 as having a *"Moderate Landscape Capacity"*. This is due to the *"strong pattern of mature woodland"* which is considered to be important features as well as the *"meandering Ouse Tributary".*

3.18. It is noted that all Landscape Setting Areas within vicinity of Uckfield have a "moderate landscape capacity". The definition of moderate landscape capacity as identified within the methodology is described as; ***"Subject to appropriate siting, design and landscaping mitigation, medium and small-scale new development could potentially be accommodated without eroding positive key features and characteristics which are desirable to safeguard. Taking into account site-specific constraints, there may also be potential to accommodate some largescale new development in specific locations with lower landscape sensitivity, subject to appropriate siting, design and landscaping mitigation."***

3.19. It is also noted that the Site itself occupies only a small portion of this Landscape Setting Area and is located within the least sensitive area as it sits adjacent to the northern settlement edge of Uckfield and adjacent to London Road, therefore it experiences a far greater influence by urbanising features in comparison to the wider character area which covers the landscape to the north east, east and south east, and as such it is considered to have greater capacity to accommodate residential development subject to a sensitive, landscape-led approach (Refer to **Appendix 3** Extract Plan from Wealden Landscape & Settlement Character Assessment, Fig 5.12 Landscape Setting of Uckfield Plan).

Wealden Green Infrastructure Study (May 2017)

3.20. As part of their evidence base to guide development on the implementation of GI principles and inform local plan policies, Wealden District Council have produced a Green Infrastructure Study. The Site is identified to be on the edge of the Strategic Green Blue Corridor – '5. Uck Valley' which is a priority area with key opportunities for strategi GI enhancement, linkages and creation.

3.21. The Key GI Planning Principles are described below:

- ***"1. GI should be embedded into the layout of new development alongside the design of the built environment and grey infrastructure from the start of the masterplanning process.***
- ***2. Development should retain, enhance and/or create green corridors that contribute to the GI Network and support connectivity with town centres, urban fringe areas and the wider countryside.***
- ***3. Development that will cause significant harm to the functioning of the GI Network, particularly in relation to reducing the impacts of and adapting to climate change, should be discouraged.***
- ***4. Where an adverse impact on GI is unavoidable, development should provide suitable mitigation measures to ensure the overall multi-functionality and connectivity of the GI Network is maintained.***
- ***5. Development should provide or contribute towards the provision of on- or off-site GI as appropriate in locations with identified deficiencies, including arrangements for on-going management and maintenance of green spaces.***
- ***6. The amount and quality of GI of different types that is required by a development to ensure residents have the opportunity to interact with nature, and encourage recreation, sports and healthier lifestyles, should reflect Natural England's standards for accessible natural greenspace and the standards for open space provision recommended in the Wealden Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study 2016.***
- ***7. Development should deliver a net increase in biodiversity by incorporating opportunities to enhance biodiversity and improve***

ecological connectivity, including contributing to local Biodiversity Action Plan targets.

- ***8. Development should incorporate measures for adapting to and mitigating against the effects of climate change through innovative GI design solutions, including sustainable water management/drainage systems and urban cooling measures.***
- ***9. Development involving the re-use, adaptation or conversion of existing buildings within established built environments should include opportunities for retrofitting GI measures into proposals, such as green roofs and green walls for example."***

3.22. It is identified that overall, the key aim is for developments to provide accessible natural greenspaces through the provision of connected, multifunctional and "***high quality green spaces***" that will deliver "***long-term benefits for people and nature***". The Wealden GI Study has been a key reference document used in the development of the proposals.

Aspect Landscape Character Assessment

3.23. While the NCA and more Localised Character Assessment provide a good assessment and overview of the quality and character of the landscape within which the Site is set, it is considered that they represent a broad-brush approach and do not necessarily reflect the particular qualities of the Site itself and its immediate localised setting. As such Aspect has undertaken a more localised landscape character assessment of the Site and the immediate surrounding landscape.

3.24. It is considered that the Site and immediate surrounding area are located in a gently undulating landform, with the Site set low down in the landscape and rising gradually from the southern portion towards the north-western portion. The main settlement edge of Uckfield to the south is situated on slightly higher topography than that of the Site and localised landscape. The Site is well enclosed as a result of the mature vegetation that bounds the Site boundaries and although there is some intervisibility into the Site from the western boundary, on approach from the north the Site is seen within the context of the surrounding built form associated with the garage and caravan sales immediately to the north-east of the Site and the residential properties

south of the Site and fronting London Road. The Site is further bound by the northern fringe settlement of Uckfield along the southern and eastern boundary with the northern Site boundary partly backing onto existing built form.

3.25. Another urbanising influence is the London Road corridor that runs along the Sites western boundary. Therefore, despite the immediate Ancient Woodland south-east of the Site (Round Wood) and the wider landscape setting that comprises of a variety of woodland, parkland and rural fields, contributing towards the localised rural landscape setting, the Site itself is predominantly contained and characterised by the urbanising surrounding features diminishing the rural and tranquil qualities. The field pattern of the Site is made up of two small scale, parcels, separated by a short internal hedgerow. As noted above, the Site is bounded by mature hedgerows and established trees as well as woodland. This vegetation structure creates a compartmentalised character to the Site itself and localised landscape setting.

3.26. The existing residential development within the immediate setting consists of predominantly 2 storeys detached and semi-detached residential development that extend along the Sites southern and eastern boundary and partly northern boundary and impart a settlement fringe character on the Site. A number of which are set within large plots and contain mature vegetation structure. Overall, the Site is well enclosed with the existing hedgerows, treescape and adjacent built form creating a high degree of separation from the wider landscape, and as such the urbanising influences, local landform and mature vegetation structure create a settlement fringe character that is mostly well enclosed.

3.27. In order to assess the effects on the landscape resource, the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', Third Edition, provides a number of definitions for landscape susceptibility, landscape value and finally landscape sensitivity, as follows:

- Landscape Susceptibility: *"the ability of a defined landscape to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences";*
- Landscape Value: *"the relative value that is attached to different landscape by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons";* and

- Landscape Sensitivity: *"a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor."*

3.28. In terms of landscape sensitivity, there are a number of factors that both influence and affect the value of the landscape character of the site and its setting, and their susceptibility to change. The sensitivity of a particular landscape in relation to new development can be categorised as very high, high, medium, low or negligible. This takes into account the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of development proposed and the value attached to different landscapes by society.

Landscape Susceptibility

3.29. In terms of the susceptibility of the landscape resource to accommodate change of the type proposed, it is considered that due to the presence of the existing northern settlement fringe that borders the Sites southern and eastern boundary and development that partially characterises the northern boundary as well as the larger scale garage and caravan sales to the north east of the Site and the London Road corridor that runs along the western Site boundary, reduces the susceptibility of the Site to change resulting from residential development. The established vegetation structure along the Site boundaries and extensive woodland cover within the localised landscape, creates a robust external edge to the Site and provides a sense of enclosure to the Site from the immediate and the wider rural setting. It is therefore considered that the landscape character of the Site has capacity to accommodate sensitively designed residential development subject to a landscape led approach that respects the setting of the Ancient Woodland (Round Wood) on the south-eastern boundary of the Site. The susceptibility of the landscape resource to change of the type proposed is considered to be **medium / low**.

Landscape Value

3.30. The Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact (GLVIA 3) sets out at Box 5.1 a range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes. These factors include:

- Landscape quality (condition);

- Scenic quality;
- Rarity;
- Representativeness;
- Conservation Interests;
- Recreation Value;
- Perceptual aspects; and
- Associations.

3.31. Table 1 below seeks to assess the value of the site based on the Box 5.1 criteria.

Table 1: Assessment of Landscape Value of the site

Criteria	**Assessment of Value**
Landscape quality (condition)	Low/Medium – The Site reflects that of its locality, comprising of small scale, regular fields bounded by intact hedgerows and trees, with residential dwellings characterising the majority of the Site boundaries and a road corridor to the western boundary. The internal landscape does consist of a pastoral field of rough grass, bounded by hedgerows and trees with a short internal hedgerow. The established vegetation structure along and beyond the Site boundaries are the notable landscape features and reflective of the locality. The boundary vegetation is in good condition; however, the internal components are of limited landscape note.
Scenic quality	Low / Medium – Intervisibility is highly limited between the Site, the immediate setting and local area. There are occasional and glimpsed views possible of the Site from along London Road and along a track adjacent to the northern Site boundary. Further private views are available from the rear curtilages of adjoining properties. Beyond this, views are for the most part restricted within the localised setting due to the extent of intervening vegetation structure and built form. There are no internal landscape features of value associated with the Site beyond the mature boundary vegetation and short internal hedgerow as such the Site as a whole is of limited scenic value. The Site is however currently undeveloped and greenfield land on the edge of a settlement.
Rarity	Low – The development Site comprises an area of pastoral land which is common in the localised setting and within the district and is not considered rare.
Representativeness	Low/Medium – There are no internal landscape features of note within the Site that do not exist elsewhere within the immediate setting and it is considered that it does not contribute substantially to the representativeness of the wider setting. The Site is however part of a wider network of small scale fields which is undeveloped and makes up the current agricultural land and setting to the settlement.
Conservation Interests	Medium – The existing hedgerows and mature woodland that define the southern and eastern boundaries of the Site represent some ecological interest. There is an Ancient Woodland (Round Wood) abutting the south-

	eastern Site boundary which is of value and the associated buffer extends within the Application Site.
Recreation Value	Low/Negligible – The Site is not publicly accessible, and the existing PRoW network is at a distance from the Site. The PRoW UCK 1/1 west of the Site may experience some partial / glimpsed views of the development but will be in the context of the surrounding built form and this will be from a short section only. As such the Site is of limited recreational value.
Perceptual aspects	Low – The presence of existing development beyond the southern, eastern and northern boundaries of the Site, alongside the road corridor forming the western Site boundary that acts as a main transport corridor from the north create an urban fringe context. There are a number of immediate and localised urbanising features within the landscape fabric that serve to reduce the perceived ruralness and tranquillity of the Site. The extensive woodland cover within the localised setting also creates a compartmentalised and enclosed character.
Associations	None – There are no known literary or historic associations with the Site.

3.32. In terms of value, the landscape in which the Site is immediately set is not formally designated and is not publicly accessible, although a number of PRoW exist within the wider setting. The presence of the Ancient Woodland abutting the south-eastern boundary and established treescape within the localised setting are positive characteristics. The Registered Park and Garden to the east of the Site is physically and visually detached from the Site. The Site reflects a similar topography and is more influenced by the presence of the existing residential development adjacent to the southern, eastern and partly northern boundaries as well as London Road corridor that runs along the Site's western boundary and the garage north-west of the Site which detract from the tranquillity of the immediate localised landscape. The Site does not include any landscape features of note beyond the boundaries, and it is considered that the Site and its immediate countryside setting represent an ordinary landscape. Aspect concludes that the landscape value of the Site and its immediate setting is of **medium / low**.

Landscape Sensitivity

3.33. Although the Site is set within an extensive woodland cover with Round Wood (Ancient and semi natural woodland) abutting the south-eastern boundary and a Registered Park and Garden further to the east of the Site, it is clearly located adjacent to a settlement edge location landscape, that is influenced by the existing urbanising elements and residential built form to the south, east and partly north. The Site is considered to be consistent in terms of its land use, features and elements with that

of the immediate surrounding settlement edge and is not remarkable nor does it include any features which elevate it above an ordinary landscape. The Site is not within any qualitative landscape designations and is therefore not a 'valued landscape' in relation to the NPPF. When both value and susceptibility of the landscape resource are considered together, it is considered that the Site would typically be of **medium / low** landscape sensitivity.

3.34. With regard to the localised and wider rural landscape of extensive woodland, field parcels, river corridors and Ancient Woodland, these are considered more characteristic and representative of the wider LCA qualities, with the established vegetation structure and mature treescape providing positive landscape features that help to integrate both the Site and existing settlement of Uckfield within the landscape. Within the wider landscape setting, it is considered that the landscape would be of **medium – medium high** sensitivity, being more rural and containing key landscape features and also acknowledging the increase in distance from the settlement edge and, consequently the increased perception of tranquillity that results.

Visual Baseline Assessment

3.35. A number of viewpoints have been identified in order to demonstrate the visibility of the site within the localised and wider setting. The views have been informed by a thorough desk study and a number of field assessments. The views are taken from publicly accessible viewpoints and although are not exhaustive, are considered to provide a fair representation of the visual environment within which the site is set. The visual analysis seeks to identify the views that will, potentially, experience the greatest degree of change as a result of the proposals. It is also identified that there are a number of private views into the Site from the curtilages of the adjacent residential properties immediately adjacent to the Site boundaries from Coopers Green Road and London Road, although it is noted that these are private views and there is no right to a view in planning terms.

3.36. The visual assessment is included within Appendix 2 and the baseline studies have fully considered the various factors required, as detailed in Section 6 of the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', Third Edition (GLVIA3) published in

April 2013 by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, and the Landscape Institute Technical Note 06/19.

3.37. The photographs were taken in May 2021 by Chartered Landscape Architects using a 35mm equivalent digital SLR camera at a 50mm focal length in line with LI technical Note 06/19. The weather was bright with good visibility. The full assessment of effects upon the visual environment and each viewpoint is detailed in section 5 of this report and the table below provides a summary of the viewpoint assessment. Table 2 below identifies the locations of the identified viewpoints, together with the key receptors and considered sensitivity.

Table 2: Baseline Visual Assessment

Viewpoint	Location	Distance and Direction from Application site	Receptors	Sensitivity
1	London Road	190m north-west, along western boundary	Motorists	Low/Medium
2	London Road	>15m western boundary	Motorists	Low/Medium
3	London Road	>15m western boundary	Motorists	Low/Medium
4	Track between London Road and A272	25m northern boundary	Motorists and Walkers	Medium
5	Coopers Green Road in front of Triscombe & Highdown residential properties	85m east	Motorists	Medium
6	PRoW UCK 1/1	524m west	PRoW Users	High

3.38. Overall, views of the Site are highly restricted and limited to the localised setting only due to the extent of mature vegetation and woodland structure within the localised setting, combined with the relatively flat topography and extent of intervening built form.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSALS

4.1. Full details of the proposal are provided within the Design and Access Statement and supporting material which accompanies this planning application. The layout and proposed green infrastructure is illustrated within its context on the Landscape Strategy Plan **ASP3**.

4.2. The layout has been carefully developed to complement the receiving landscape and settlement edge settings acknowledging the presence of the adjacent residential development to the eastern, southern and partly northern Site boundaries. Vehicular access is proposed from the western Site boundary off London Road. The visibility splays will require a section of the western boundary hedgerow to be removed. This has been developed to minimise impact upon the boundary treescape and vegetation structure to ensure the existing character of London Road is unaffected, through replacement mixed hedgerow planting, set back behind the visibility splays and the proposed built form set back from London Road to ensure the character of the road corridor is maintained.

4.3. The layout seeks to reflect a similar density, scale, layout and is set back from London Road as this is characteristic within the local built form. This will ensure the proposals reflect that of the locality. It is intended that any built form on the Site would incorporate a simple palette of materials that have been informed by the local setting and vernacular. A landscape buffer will be incorporated along this boundary to further soften the proposed built form the surrounding landscape and retain the character of the London Road corridor.

4.4. The proposals will retain the majority of the boundary vegetation, apart from where access is needed and reinforce the degree of enclosure provided. Further internal landscaping will soften and break up the extent of built form.

4.5. A minimum 20m landscape buffer is incorporated along the south-eastern boundary that abuts Round Wood (Ancient and semi natural woodland). This will provide a degree of separation from the Woodland and ensure the proposal has no adverse impact on the setting of this landscape feature. The buffer will contain a mosaic of native planting including species rich wildflower grassland, mixed native scrub and

new native trees that will provide localised landscape and biodiversity enhancements whilst ensuring longevity to the woodland.

4.6. A variety of POS has been incorporated throughout the Site. The south-eastern portion of the Site and south-western corner will be designated for use as a community garden to encourage health and wellbeing of individuals and the community through nature based activities. West of the south-eastern community garden will contain a children's play area with natural trim trail play equipment to further increase community enjoyment of the natural open spaces provided.

4.7. Within the northern portion of the Site a number of SUDS features with associated species rich wildflower grassland planting are proposed that will enhance biodiversity. The Site wide Green Infrastructure will include native structural planting that reflects the local character and reduces any adverse impact on residential properties to the immediate east and south as well as the overall settlement fringe character. New tree, shrub planting and wildflower rich areas will be incorporated within the landscape scheme, utilising locally native species to maximise biodiversity gains. Tree planting will include fruiting and flowering species offering wildlife interest.

4.8. The proposals have been informed by the Site constraints and opportunities, and local policy objectives as well as the relevant supporting evidence base documents and guidance from landscape character assessments to ensure that an appropriate and high-quality landscaped setting is achieved.

5. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

5.1. To assess the nature of the change as a result of the proposals, it is appropriate to appraise the impact of the proposed development upon the existing landscape character and visual environment within which the Site is situated.

5.2. In order to assess the effect of a development on the receiving environment, it is important to understand the quality and sensitivity of the landscape, the sensitivity of visual receptors, and the magnitude of change.

5.3. The assessment of effects have been derived from guidance provided within GLVIA3 (Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3 Edition) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment in April 2013. The methodology is contained within Appendix 2 of this document.

Effect upon Landscape Character

National Landscape Character Area Assessment

5.4. It is considered that the proposals can be integrated without significant adverse impact to the character or qualities of the wider landscape setting. Within the context of the national character assessment, the proposals represent a highly localised development that would not adversely affect the characteristics of the larger scale landscape character areas. The High Weald (NCA 122) is influenced by a number of different components and the proposals, given their location on the edge of the northern settlement fringe of Uckfield, would not adversely affect the overall character of the receiving landscape of the NCA.

5.5. It is considered that the proposals will give rise to a significance of effect of **None** within the context of the High Weald NCA.

County and District Wide Landscape Character Area

5.6. As set out within Section 2, the proposals are located within the *Upper Ouse Valley* LCA as part of the County assessment and the district Landscape Character Assessment, that assess *Uckfield* where the Site is within the *Landscape Setting Area*

8 within the Wealden District Landscape Character Assessment. Table 2, below, assesses the likely effects of the proposals upon the key characteristics and qualities of the identified LCA's.

Table 3: Effect upon LCA's

Key Characteristics of the Upper Ouse Valley LCA.	Key Characteristics of Uckfield and Landscape Setting Area 8.	Potential Effect of the Proposals
Countryside of low ridges and wider valleys covered by an intricate pattern of streams and woods with a gently undulating terrain but more pronounced relief near the northern edge where the low weald landscape rises to that of the high weald.		Low/Negligible Adverse – The Site is set within an undulating landscape that is characteristic of the wider LCA. The proposed development will largely retain the existing landform and orientate development to ensure the built form is complementary to the existing local and wider topography.
	Pockets of historic landscape within the setting of the town, comprising small-scale fields with intact boundaries, particularly to the northwest, west and southeast of the town. The historic field pattern is a mosaic, predominantly comprised of regular and irregular piecemeal enclosure, and cohesive and aggregate assarts.	Low Adverse – The Site contains two small fields of pastoral use that is typical of this Character Area. There will be a change in land use as the field will be converted into a residential development of scale that is compatible to the immediate context. Furthermore, the adjacent land uses are off residential built form, so the intended development will fit in with the current land use. There is no intention for intact boundary landscape features to be removed, apart from for access purposes, therefore the key characteristics of this Landscape Setting Area 8, the LLCT A: Ridges & Valleys and LLCA A2: Budlett's Common & Five Ash Down will not be substantially altered as the enclosed nature will be largely retained.
Significant designed landscaped parkland at Sheffield and Buxted Parks.	***Historic parkland landscape, associated with Buxted Park to the northeast of the settlement. A culturally important historic landmark is situated to the northeast of the settlement***	None – To the east of the Site is Buxted Park and Garden. Although this designation sits within close proximity to the Site, the Sites eastern boundary, existing wider vegetation structure, built form and

		immediate landform provides a high degree of physical and visual separation and a such the proposals have no intervisibility with and will not adversely impact the Park and Garden.
A heavily wooded landscape which provides areas of relative remoteness especially in the valleys and larger woods. Abundant tree cover, with 17.5% woodland and a strong structure of woods, trees, hedges and shaws. ***Many of the woods are ancient semi-natural woodland with extensive areas replanted with chestnut coppice mixed with conifers.*** ***Characteristic tree species are of coppiced chestnut on the sandy soils with oak in the south east on the Wadhurst clays.*** ***Birch predominates in younger woodland and on the heaths, with some pine.*** ***Other characteristic species are beech, wild cherry and yew with alder and willow in the river and stream valleys.***	***Relatively large areas of Ancient Woodland, further contribute to the historic landscape within the periphery of the town. The town is predominantly lined by sensitive soft edges and woodland.***	Low / Negligible Adverse – There are no pockets of woodland within the Site itself but there is an extensive cover of woodland beyond the Site boundaries, which characterises the localised landscape setting. The proposals do not impact the extent of woodland cover or this key characteristic of the localised landscape. Adjacent to the south-eastern Site boundary is the Ancient and semi natural Woodland; Round Wood. Although this is in close proximity to the Site, the proposed development will ensure a minimum 20m landscape buffer is included which will incorporate a mosaic of native planting that will provide an appropriate landscape buffer and wider landscape / biodiversity enhancements. This will ensure no adverse impact results from the proposed development and the characteristic landscape feature is conserved.
	Key views of the edges of the town can be gained looking north-eastwards from the A22 road corridor.	Negligible Adverse - The proposed development will form an extension to and seen as part of the existing built development along London Road and the northern portion of Uckfield. The proposals will be seen in the context of the existing built form, maintaining the character of any key views (where possible) identified in the Landscape Setting of Uckfield. It is not considered to adversely effect this key characteristic.
The catchment of the upper reaches of the River	***A gently meandering tributary of the River Ouse which is***	None - The Site sits at a distance from the River Ouse located to

Ouse which includes Shortbridge Stream and the River Uck. The winding streams are lined with alder. ***Many scattered farm ponds and large hammer ponds as relics of the iron industry which thrived in this area.***	***lined with mature woodland, providing a strong sense of enclosure***	the west of the Site and the River Uck east of the Site. Therefore, these do not relate to the Site itself and will not have an adverse impact on the setting of the local watercourses or associated vegetation structure.
A close network of winding, sunken lanes with scattered settlements and individual dwellings often strung out along them. As well as Historic Farmhouses and large farmsteads. ***Traditional building materials for the area are red brick, often laid as Flemish bond with blued brick ends, red tiled roofs and tile hung upper stories are typical.***		Negligible Adverse - The Site would not differ from the existing settlement edge and built development characteristic of this area. The proposed development will follow the pattern of the existing built form and the dwellings proposed will use a palette of materials that are characteristic of the local built form (refer Design and Access Statement). The Site is characterised by the main London Road corridor to the west rather than a network of winding sunken lanes which exist in the wider setting to the north and north west. Therefore, the proposed development will form a continuation of the existing settlement pattern forming a natural extension from the northern settlement edge of Uckfield.
	A network of footpaths and bridleways connects Uckfield to its landscape setting.	Low/Negligible adverse- The Site is not accessed by any PRoW's and the PRoW network is at a distance from the Site. Occasional glimpsed views of the proposal, mainly the upper storeys and roofline will be visible from PRoW UCK 1/1 west of the Site, but this view will be seen in the context of the surrounding built form that already characterises the view and will be for a short distance of the footpath only. Therefore, the development will not introduce a new feature that does not already exist and will not appear alien or out of context.

5.7. Having regard to the effect of the proposals upon the localised landscape character, it is considered overall that the proposals represent an appropriate landscape-led high quality development adjacent to the existing settlement edge of Uckfield and would represent a sustainable development.

5.8. It is clear that the localised topography combined with the existing developments and established vegetation structure / mature treescape which exists within the immediate and local area will integrate the proposed development into the settlement fringe and receiving landscape. The mature vegetation structure are considered positive landscape features and ensure that the proposals within the Site would not be readily perceived and as a result would not have a significant impact upon the wider landscape character. Furthermore, it is clear that the Site itself is influenced far more greatly by urbanising features associated with the adjoining landuses including the garage, caravan sales area, Mockbeggars Farm to the north-west, the London Road corridor that runs along the western Site boundary and residential development adjacent to the southern, eastern and partly northern Site boundaries.

5.9. As set out above, the Proposed Development would not give rise to any significant adverse effects upon the key characteristics and sensitivities of the *Upper Ouse Valley LCA*, the *Ridges & Valleys LLCT*, the *Budlett's Common & Five Ash Down LLCA* and the *Landscape Setting Area 8* LCA.

5.10. It is considered that the proposals would give rise to a low-negligible magnitude of change upon the character of the *Upper Ouse Valley* LCA, as identified within the East Sussex County Landscape Character Assessment and the same would be for the *Ridges & Valleys LLCT*, the *Budlett's Common & Five Ash Down LLCA* and the *Landscape Setting Area 8 LCA* as identified within the Wealden Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment. As such due to the degree of containment afforded to the Site and the barely perceptible degree of change that would result, it is concluded that the significance of effect would be **Moderate / Minor - Minor Adverse** upon the published LCA, LLCT and LLCA. This is not considered significant in landscape terms and reflects change that has little effect on a landscape that has the ability to accommodate the nature of change.

Localised Landscape Character

5.11. Having regard to the effect of the proposals upon the immediate localised landscape character, it is considered that the proposals represent a sustainable and appropriate high-quality development on the edge of Uckfield.

5.12. As set out in section 2, the Site is not subject to any qualitative landscape designations and is at distance from the north-western and southern Conservation Areas. The Registered Park and Garden, east of the Site is physically and visually separated as a result of topography, localised vegetation cover, built form and the intact eastern boundary vegetation. The Sites western boundary is bounded by London Road and existing built form is adjacent to the southern, eastern and partly northern Site boundaries. The character assessment identifies that the Site itself has been influenced by the existing northern settlement edge and immediate surrounding urbanising influences, which has reduced its susceptibility to change. Whilst it is acknowledged that the Site is greenfield and the south-eastern boundary abuts an Ancient and semi natural woodland, the proposals have ensured that the majority of the Site's key landscape features, which are limited to the boundaries, would be retained and enhanced, with additional native planting, with minor removal for access purposes. The retained existing boundary vegetation would be safeguarded through the construction phase, to ensure that a verdant setting is provided for the Proposed Development from the outset. These positive landscape features would be enhanced with additional planting. It is also important to note that the landscape proposal will provide a minimum 20m buffer along the south-eastern boundary to ensure the setting of the Ancient and semi natural woodland is not adversely impacted as a result of development.

5.13. It is acknowledged that given the greenfield nature of the Site, there would initially be a high degree of change within the Site as a result of the introduction of residential built form. As such, would change the character of the Site itself, however this would be the same for any development on greenfield land. The significance of effect is initially identified as being **Major / Moderate – Moderate Adverse** at Year 1. Beyond the Site's boundaries, it is considered that the magnitude of change would be lower and reduce further with distance. The significance of the effect upon the localised landscape context is concluded as being **Moderate / Minor Adverse**, however over

a period of time, it is considered that the development would be further integrated within the immediate landscape, resulting in a reduced, medium degree of change on the Site itself. After year ten, it is considered that the perceived magnitude of change would reduce, with the long term significance of the effect within the Site being **Moderate Adverse**, and **Minor Adverse** beyond the Site's boundaries. This ensures that the proposals would not give rise to any significant adverse effects in the long term.

5.14. In summary, it is considered that the proposals would not give rise to any significant long term adverse effects upon the key characteristics of the *High Weald* NCA 122 or *Upper Ouse Valley* LCA, the *Ridges & Valleys LLCT*, the *Budlett's Common & Five Ash Down LLCA* and the *Landscape Setting Area 8 LCA* as identified within the published assessments. It is acknowledged that the proposals would change the character of the Site itself. However, the development of the Site would not result in the loss of any important landscape features and would introduce a land use which is characteristic in this localised landscape setting. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposals can be integrated without significant adverse effects upon the localised or wider landscape setting.

Effect upon the Visual Environment

5.15. A number of viewpoints have been identified in order to demonstrate the visibility of the site within the localised and wider setting. The views have been informed by a thorough desk study and a number of field assessments. The views are taken from publicly accessible viewpoints and although are not exhaustive, are considered to provide a fair representation of the visual environment within which the site is set. The visual analysis seeks to identify those views that will, potentially, experience the greatest degree of change as a result of the proposals. It is also identified that there are a number of private views into the Site from the curtilages of the adjacent residential properties immediately adjacent to the Site boundaries from Coopers Green Road and London Road, although it is noted that these are private views and there is no right to a view in planning terms. The viewpoints are illustrated on the Viewpoint Location Plan within **Appendix 2**. Table 4 below undertakes an assessment of the effects arising from the proposals upon each of the views.

Table 4: Effect upon the Visual Environment

Viewpoint	Location	Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance of Effect
1	London Road	Motorists	Low	Low / Medium	**Moderate / Minor – Minor Adverse**
	NOTES: View taken from along London Road to the north-west, looking south eastward back towards the Site and along the road corridor. The view is from the slightly higher topography and illustrates the intervening vegetation structure along the western boundary adjacent to the road corridor and the rising topography within the southern portion of the Site, where views of a small portion of the Site are possible and the existing development of Uckfield beyond and The Old Orchard property apparent beyond the southern Site boundary. The established woodland beyond the site is apparent which creates a degree of separation from the adjoining landscape. The view also illustrates the built form associated with the garage and caravan sales to the north-west of the Site which is prominent in the streetscene and extends the built presence northwards along London Road. For the most part direct views into the majority of the Site are restricted but some partial views of the western and southern most portions are available due to the slightly elevated nature of the viewpoint. The sensitivity of the view is considered to be Low for motorists as their primary focus will be on the road ahead. It is considered that from this localised section of London Road the proposed development would be partially visible but would mostly be obscured due to the extent of the intervening vegetation structure along the road corridor and that which makes up the well vegetated field boundaries within the localised setting. The new access onto London Road will be visible in the middle distance of the view at the low point on London Road. The development will also be seen in the context of the surrounding built form that already characterises this view and the streetscene and will be perceptible but a relatively minor component in the view. Therefore, the magnitude of change is considered to be Low/Medium as the Proposals will not introduce new components which do not already exist in the view and will not form a major component. Therefore, the significance of effect is considered to be **Moderate/Minor – Minor Adverse.**				
2 & 3	London Road	Motorists	Low	Low / Medium	**Moderate / Minor Adverse**
	NOTES: Views taken from along London Road just beyond the north western (Viewpoint 2) and south western (Viewpoint 3) corners of the Site. These views illustrate the intervening vegetation structure along the western boundary of the Site that limits intervisibility into the Site, although it is noted some occasional and glimpsed views will be possible from along this road corridor, for the most part the majority of the Site is not apparent. The sensitivity of the view is considered to be Low for motorists as their primary focus will be on the road ahead. It is considered that from this section of London Road the proposed built elements within the western and southern portions of the Site will be partially visible				

	set beyond the well vegetated boundary. However, the proposed access road will be a change within both views, located mid-way along the western boundary at the low point in the streetscene. This would not be uncharacteristic within the wider streetscene and therefore will not form a major component of the views. Furthermore, the majority of the roadside vegetation structure will be retained (with the exception of the section removed to enable access and visibility splays) which will maintain the green character of the road corridor and limit views into the Site. The development will also be seen in the context of the surrounding built form that already characterises these views. Therefore, the magnitude of change is considered to be Medium as the access will be perceptible due to the proximity of the views, but the built form will form a minor component within the wider streetscene. Therefore, the significance of effect will be **Moderate/Minor Adverse.**				
4	Track between London Road and A272	Walkers and Motorists	Medium	Medium	**Moderate Adverse**
	NOTES: View is taken from a track between London Road and the A272, that runs past the garage to the north west of the Site and is looking southwards into the Site from beyond the northern boundary. The view illustrates some partial views of the north eastern portion of the Site which is characterised by sheep grazing. Beyond the southern Site boundary views of the well vegetated context including Round Wood (Ancient and semi natural woodland) are also possible. For the most part the northern boundary is heavily vegetated and this view is a single glimpsed view of the Site available from the track. It is considered that views of the Proposed Development will initially be clearly evident across the field, however the intervening vegetation does restrict views elsewhere into the Site. The proposals include a set back from the north western corner incorporating a SUDS feature and additional landscaping and as such once the proposed landscape enhancements along the northern Site boundary are established, this will visually integrate the built components. The sensitivity of the view is considered to be Medium overall for motorists / walkers / users of the track. The magnitude of change will initially be high / medium, reducing to **Medium** once the proposed vegetation has matured, resulting in a significance of effect of **Moderate Adverse** over the longer term, within a view that has the ability to accommodate the nature of change.				
5	Coopers Green Road	Motorists / Residential Receptors	Medium / High	Negligible	**Minor – Moderate / Minor Adverse**
	NOTES: Taken from Coopers Green Road, to the east beyond the existing residential development adjacent to the Site's eastern boundary. The view illustrates the intervening vegetation and built structure that restricts direct views of the Site from the publicly accessible part of the road corridor. The established vegetation structure also enables the existing development to be well integrated when viewed along Coopers Green Road and separates the Site and residential development from the wider landscape. It is considered that from this section of Coopers Green Road the Proposed Development would be restricted by the extent of intervening vegetation structure in addition to the intervening built form. During winter months only very occasional glimpsed views would be possible beyond the existing residential development. As such the composition of the existing view would remain unaltered. The sensitivity of the view is considered to be Medium for motorists as their primary focus will be on the road ahead, and High for residential receptors. Due to the highly enclosed				

	nature of the view, the magnitude of change will be at most **Negligible** with a significance of effect of **Minor – Moderate / Minor Adverse**, within a view that has the ability to accommodate the nature of change.				
6	PRoW UCK 1/1	PRoW Users	High	Negligible	**Moderate / Minor Adverse**
	NOTES: Taken from the PRoW UCK 1/1 west of the Site where the PRoW allows for open views eastwards, however for the most part the PRoW extends through a heavily wooded landscape where views are curtailed. The view illustrates the immediate open fields which enables some views towards the Site, however the internal part of the Site is not visible with the western boundary roadside vegetation structure apparent. For the most part, views into the Site are restricted by the intervening vegetation structure and the key component of the view is the wider mature woodland which makes up the localised landscape setting. It is considered that from this location, some glimpsed views of the upper storeys and roofscape associated with the Proposed Development may be available but seen against a green backdrop and at distance. The Proposed Development seeks to reflect a similar scale, size, height and density to that which currently exists along London Road and within the wider settlement fringe and as such will not appear out of context and will not be prominent. Over the distance and within the existing landscape framework the proposals will be barely perceptible in the wider panorama. The sensitivity of the view is considered to be High for PRoW users due to the recreational nature and the magnitude of change will be **Negligible**, resulting in a significance of effect of **Moderate / Minor Adverse** within a view that has the ability to accommodate the nature of change.				
N/A	Residential properties adjacent to the Site boundaries including Coopers Green Road & London Road	Occupiers of residential Properties	High	High / Medium	**Major / Moderate – Moderate Adverse**
	NOTES: It is noted that there are a number of residential properties located immediately adjacent to the Site boundaries. These include but are not limited to the Hollies, Plevna, Roslea, Hindover, Highdown, Triscombe, The Croft, Ravenscourt, Willow House, Sandhurst, The Mount and Teelings Cottage on Cooper Green Road to the east and The Old Orchard, Appletree Cottage and Warren Cottage off London Road to the immediate south. The residential built form and associated curtilages of the properties assist with creating a high degree of visual containment to the Site, limiting views from the adjoining road corridor of Coopers Green Road and adjacent landuses / wider landscape setting, however it is noted that there will be some private views into the Site from these properties. It is noted that these views are from private properties and it is well established in planning that there is no right to a view, however as residential receptors it is acknowledged that occupiers of properties with primary views over the Site will be of high sensitivity and occupiers of properties with oblique views will be of medium sensitivity, as set out in the methodology. It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development will be evident from a number of the				

	properties which bound the Site and this will result in an adverse visual impact on selected residential properties that have more clear views of the proposals although this will not impact residential amenity. The dwellings on Coopers Green Road are all set within large plots with the properties located closer to the road corridor, and many of which contain a high degree of mature vegetation structure and trees that will filter views of the Proposed Development. Furthermore, the carefully considered layout ensures that new built form has been set back from the boundaries to ensure the retention and further enhancement of the vegetation structure and to minimise impacts on the adjacent residential receptors. The density, height, bulk, scale and massing of the Proposed Development is reflective of the immediately adjoining residential areas and as such will not appear over-bearing, out of scale or out of character in terms of its appearance with existing development in the vicinity. As such it is considered the magnitude of change upon the residential receptors will initially be High - Medium, reducing to **Medium** over the longer term resulting in a significance of effect of **Major / Moderate Adverse** on occupiers of properties with primary views and **Moderate Adverse** for occupiers of properties with oblique views of the Proposed Development.

5.16. As an overview, views of the Site are limited and are restricted to the immediate setting only, and only experience glimpsed or partial views between the retained existing vegetation structure, predominantly from the immediately adjoining London Road and the track north-east of the Site, with potential glimpsed views from the PRoW UCK 1/1. The existing mature vegetation structure and built form associated with the Site and the immediate localised setting provides a strong degree of visual and physical containment to the Site.

5.17. It is noted there will be a degree of change experienced from the rear of the properties which bound the Site including those along Coopers Green Road to the east (The Hollies, Plevna, Roslea, Hindover, Highdown, Triscombe, The Croft, Ravenscourt, Willow House, Sandhurst, The Mount and Teelings Cottage) and off London Road to the south (The Old Orchard, Appletree Cottage, Warren Cottage); however, these are from private properties and there is no right to a view in planning terms. It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development will be evident from a number of the properties which bound the Site and this will result in an adverse visual impact on selected residential properties that have more clear views of the proposals, although this will not impact residential amenity. The carefully considered layout ensures that new built form has been set back from the boundaries to ensure the retention and further enhancement of the vegetation structure and to minimise impacts on the adjacent residential receptors. It is expected new landscaping is proposed on the eastern Site boundary so views will be softened. The density, height, bulk, scale and massing of the Proposed Development is reflective of the immediately adjoining

residential areas and as such will not appear over-bearing, out of scale or out of character in terms of its appearance with existing development in the vicinity.

5.18. Where there are views available, the proposals would be seen, for the most part, in the context of the existing built environment which is evident in views which will ensure the Proposed Development will not appear out of context to that which already exists. These views represent a very small section of visibility from the localised or wider setting. Furthermore, the majority of the existing vegetation is to be retained along the western boundary ensuring the existing road corridor characteristics will remain unchanged and that the proposed built elements that are set back beyond the treescape will be softened and integrated from Day 1. The Site boundaries will also be enhanced which will ensure a robust landscape setting is achieved and views from adjacent rear properties will be minimised. While the proposals would represent a degree of change within the immediately adjoining views, they would not significantly adversely impact the nature or composition of these views and will not appear out of context.

5.19. Overall, the greatest change would be experienced from the immediate boundaries and immediately adjoining land uses including a number of residential receptors. Beyond these the existing degree of intervening built form, mature woodland / vegetation structure and the nature of the proposals mean that the change to visual amenity is not considered to compromise the enjoyment of the local and wider more landscape or rights of way beyond the immediate vicinity. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development can be integrated without significant adverse impact to the receiving local and wider visual environment.

Effect upon landscape related policy

5.20. Both national and local policy guidance seeks to ensure that the Proposed Development should promote good design which responds to the character of the setting ensuring that the proposals are integrated within their context. It is considered that the proposals have been carefully designed with their context in mind and, as such, a sympathetic and appropriate development will be achieved.

5.21. The Site is not covered by any qualitative landscape designations at a national or local level.

5.22. Furthermore, as set out within Section 2 of this LVIA, it is considered that neither the Site nor its immediate setting represent a “valued landscape” with reference to para 174(a) of the NPPF. It is considered that the high quality proposals respond positively to the localised landscape and settlement edge setting and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

5.23. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development unless any harm significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits of the proposals. It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development would result in a degree of change within the immediate context of the Site. However, this is not considered so great as to significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme.

5.24. In terms of local planning policies identified in Section 2, it is considered the Proposed Development is in line with Policies WCS12 and DS3 within the Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan, which deal with Biodiversity and Green infrastructure within development. With regard to the saved policies of the Wealden Local Plan, relevant to landscape, design and setting of the local landscape, in particular the conservation of the extensive Ancient and semi natural woodland. It is considered that the Proposed Development will retain the majority of key existing landscape features on Site, protecting and enhancing the green infrastructure and will accord with these policies, further detail of which will be provided at the detailed stages and as part of appropriate planning conditions. Overall, the Proposed Development will incorporate a high standard of design and reflects the scale, layout, density and design within the immediate setting and provides opportunities for landscape enhancements.

5.25. It is therefore considered that the proposals are aligned with the national, local adopted policy and the landscape guidelines within the East Sussex County Landscape Character Assessment and the Wealden Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment as well as the guidance provided within the Wealden Green Infrastructure Study, evidence document. Therefore, it is considered that the Proposed Development can be integrated without significant adverse impact to the character or visual amenities of the receiving landscape.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd has been appointed by Obsidian Strategic to undertake a landscape and visual impact assessment relating to an outline application of up to 60 residential dwellings and associated works with all matters reserved except for access on Land east of London Road, Uckfield.

6.2. The Site is not covered by any qualitative landscape designations at a national or local level. Furthermore, as set out within Section 2 of this LVIA, it is considered that neither the Site nor its immediate setting represent a “valued landscape” with reference to para 174(a) of the NPPF.

6.3. In reviewing effects upon the landscape character, it is acknowledged that given the greenfield nature of the Site, there would initially be a high degree of change within the Site as a result of the introduction of residential built form. As such, this would change the character of the Site itself, however this would be the same for any development on greenfield land.

6.4. It is considered that whilst some change is acknowledged to the immediate landscape character of the Site itself, the change is restricted to the Site only and reduces within the immediate setting and furthermore in the wider setting. It is clear that the established vegetation structure and mature treescape which exists within the locality provides positive landscape features, which also help to integrate the existing built form and settlement edge of Uckfield within the wider landscape. This ensures that the proposals within the Site are not readily perceived and as a result would not have a significant impact upon the wider landscape character. Furthermore, it is clear that the Site itself is influenced far more greatly by a number of urbanising components associated with the existing development around the Site, than the wider rural landscape setting of the character area. The retention of the vast majority of the mature vegetation structure and treescape will ensure the character of the London Road will be maintained.

6.5. In summary, it is considered that the proposals would not give rise to any significant long term adverse effects upon the key characteristics of the *High Weald* NCA 122 or *Upper Ouse Valley* LCA, the *Ridges & Valleys LLCT*, the *Budlett’s Common & Five*

Ash Down LLCA and the *Landscape Setting Area 8 LCA* as identified within the published assessments. It is acknowledged that the proposals would change the character of the Site itself. However, the development of the Site would not result in the loss of any important landscape features and would introduce a land use which is characteristic in this localised landscape setting. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposals can be integrated without significant adverse effects upon the localised or wider landscape setting.

6.6. It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development will be evident from a number of the properties which bound the Site and this will result in an adverse visual impact on selected residential properties that have more clear views of the proposals, although this will not impact residential amenity. The carefully considered layout ensures that new built form has been set back from the boundaries to ensure the retention and further enhancement of the vegetation structure and to minimise impacts on the adjacent residential receptors. The density, height, bulk, scale and massing of the Proposed Development is reflective of the immediately adjoining residential areas and as such will not appear over-bearing, out of scale or out of character in terms of its appearance with existing development in the vicinity.

6.7. As illustrated within the visual assessment, views of the Site are limited and are restricted to the immediate setting only, and only experience glimpsed or partial views between the retained existing vegetation structure, predominantly from the immediately adjoining London Road and the track north-east of the Site, with potential glimpsed views from the PRoW UCK 1/1. The existing mature vegetation structure and built form associated with the Site and the immediate localised setting provides a strong degree of visual and physical containment to the Site. Where there are views available, the proposals would be seen, for the most part, in the context of the existing built environment which is evident in views which will ensure the Proposed Development will not appear out of context to that which already exists. These views represent a very small section of visibility from the localised or wider setting. While the proposals would represent a degree of change within the immediately adjoining views, they would not significantly adversely impact the nature or composition of these views and will not appear out of context.

6.8. Overall, the greatest change would be experienced from the immediate boundaries and immediately adjoining land uses including a number of residential receptors. Beyond these the existing degree of intervening built form, mature woodland / vegetation structure and the nature of the proposals mean that the change to visual amenity is not considered to compromise the enjoyment of the local and wider more landscape or rights of way beyond the immediate vicinity. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development can be integrated without significant adverse impact to the receiving local and wider visual environment.

6.9. It is considered that the proposals comply with the aims and objectives of the NPPF, Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan adopted February 2013 and the saved policies from the Wealden Local Plan adopted 1998. The Site is already characterised by the existing northern settlement fringe with no internal features of note. A number of design solutions have been included which ensures the high quality design of the built elements befits the localised character. The Proposed Development has also incorporated the guidance from the Wealden Green Infrastructure Study (2017) an evidence base document that further guides for a landscape-led approach to development, guiding landscape design approaches that provide ‘long term benefits for people and nature’. The proposed development has incorporated a variety of POS, SuDS and landscaping that will encourage community involvement and is reflective of the local landscape character.

6.10. It is considered that the Site and receiving environment have the capacity to accommodate the proposals. The proposals will not result in a significant change to the landscape character or visual environment over the longer term and, as such, it is considered that the proposed development can be successfully integrated in this location and is supportable from a landscape and visual perspective.

ASPECT PLANS

NOTES:
Based upon the Ordnance Survey map with permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright.
Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd, Steet Court, Henbeck Business Park, Noral Way, Banbury OX16 2AF.
Licence 100040343. Aerial map data © 2012 Google.

Copyright reserved

0m 100m 200m 400m

Key:

- Application Site Boundary
- Conservation Area
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Round Wood (Ancient Woodland)

REVISIONS

REV	DATE	NOTE	Drawn	Chk'd

aspect landscape planning

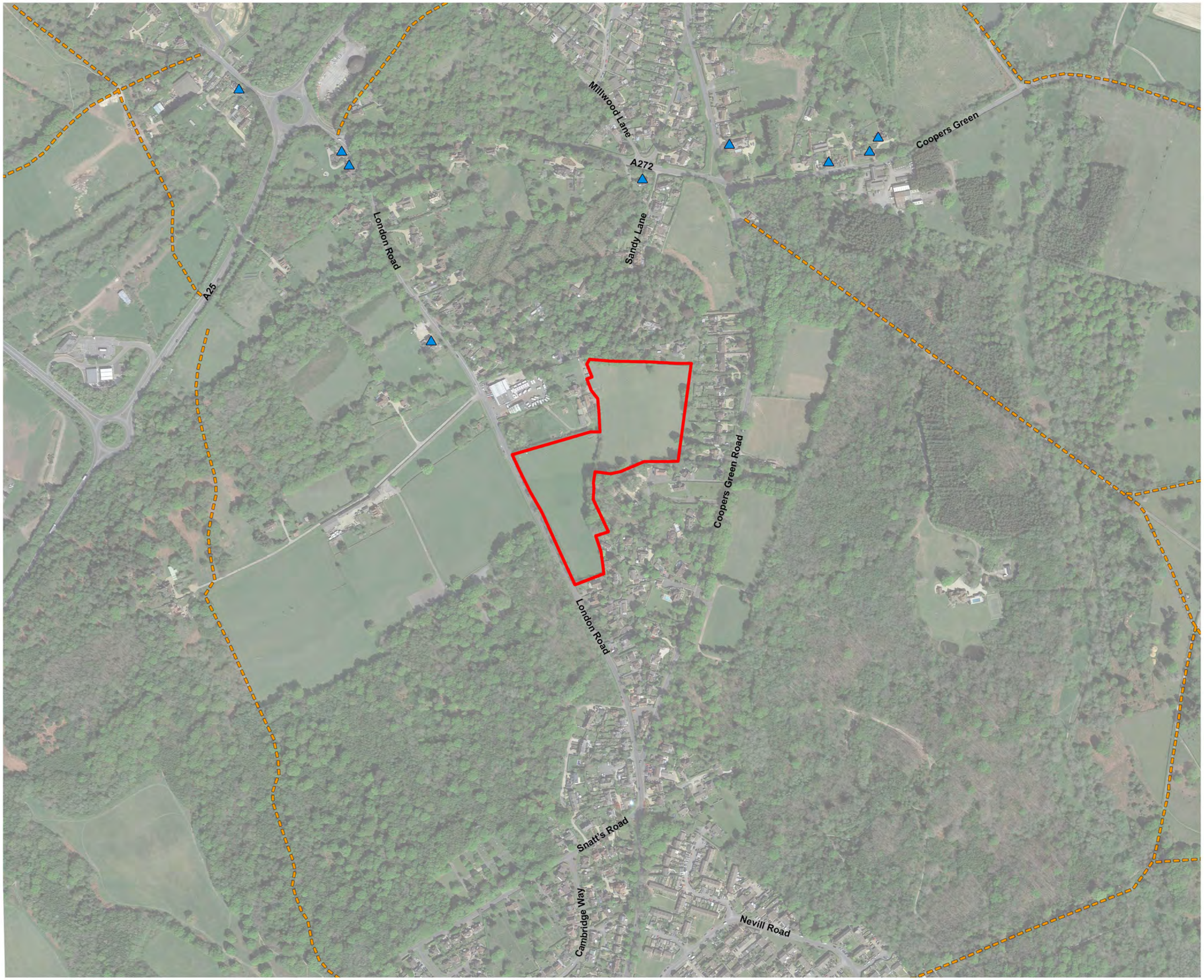
TITLE
Land East of London Rd, Uckfield, Wealden
Site Location Plan

CLIENT
Obsidian Strategic

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN	CHK'D
1:10,000@ A3	MAR 2021	SB	CJ

DRAWING NUMBER
7397 / ASP1

REVISION



NOTES:
Based upon the Ordnance Survey map with permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright.
Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd, West Court, Handwick Business Park, Noral Way, Banbury OX16 2AF
Licence 100045345 Aerial map data © 2012 Google

Copyright reserved

0m 50m 100m 200m

Key:

- Application Site Boundary
- Public Rights of Way
- Listed Buildings

REV	DATE	NOTE	DRAWN	CHK'D
A	24.5.21	Update to red line boundary	EL	MF

REVISIONS

aspect landscape planning

TITLE

Land East of London Rd, Uckfield, Wealden
Site & Setting Plan

CLIENT

Obsidian Strategic

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN	CHK'D
1:5,000@ A3	MAR 2021	SB	CJ

DRAWING NUMBER	REVISION
7397 / ASP2 / SS	A

Example of natural play equipment:







Species rich wildflower meadow:
EM2 General Purpose Meadow Mix, EH1 Hedgerow Mix & EM10 Tussock Mix



SUDS basins to incorporate species rich wildflower grassland providing localised biodiversity enhancements.

Children's play area to be incorporated within the public open space and surrounded by new planting that adds to the localised green infrastructure.

Proposed site access and associated visibility splays will require a section of the western boundary hedgerow to be removed. Replacement mixed native hedgerow planting is proposed set back behind the visibility splays and the proposed built form set back from London Road to ensure the character of the road corridor is maintained.

Ornamental Shrub Planting:
Hebe rakaiensis, Potentilla fruticosa 'Tangerine', Lonicera nitida, Genista lydia & Lavandula angustifolia 'Hidcote'



A buffer to the Ancient Woodland will include the retention and enhancement of the existing grassland and incorporate a mosaic of native planting including species rich wildflower grassland, mixed native scrub and new native trees that will provide localised landscape and biodiversity enhancements.

Internally ornamental tree, hedge and shrub planting included to create a high quality landscape setting for the new properties and will include fruiting and flowering species offering wildlife interest.

Round Wood Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland

Area of open space designated for use as a community garden to encourage health and wellbeing of individuals and the community through nature based activities.

Proposed Street Trees:









Street and Ornamental Trees:
Corylus colurna 'Te-Terra Red'
Betula albosinensis
Magnolia x loebneri 'Leonard Messel'
Tilia cordata 'Green Spire'
Acer campestre 'Streetwise'
Malus trilobata

Example Images of Community Gardens:



NOTES:
Based upon the Ordnance Survey map with permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright.
Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd, West Court, Handwick Business Park, Noral Way, Banbury OX16 2AF Licence 100045345 Aerial map data © 2012 Google

Copyright reserved

0m 10m 20m 50m

Key:

- Proposed Tree Planting
- Proposed Shrub Planting
- Proposed Wildflower Grass Mix
- Proposed Play Area
- Proposed Marginal Planting
- Proposed Community Garden
- Proposed Native Scrub Planting
- Proposed Hedge Planting
- Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland
- 15m Ancient Woodland Buffer

N.B. Native species of local provenance to be included within Ancient Woodland buffer zone and throughout open spaces to provide landscape and biodiversity enhancements.

REV	DATE	NOTE	DRAWN	CHK'D
B	01.02.22	Updated Layout	EL	CJ
A	15.12.21	Updated to ecologists comments	EL	CJ

REVISIONS

aspect landscape planning

TITLE
Land East of London Rd, Uckfield, Wealden
Landscape Strategy Plan

CLIENT
Obsidian Strategic

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN	CHK'D
1:1,250@ A3	NOV 2021	SB	CJ

DRAWING NUMBER	REVISION
7397 / ASP3 / LSP	B

APPENDIX 1

ASPECT LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT METHODOLOGY

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

1.1. The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment have jointly published Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition 2013 (GLVIA3) that gives guidance on carrying out a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), either as a standalone appraisal or part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This methodology takes on board the above guidance.

1.2. When assessing character within an urban context, this methodology can be applied to Townscape Assessments and how the development will affect the elements that make up the townscape and its distinctive character.

1.3. The main stages of the LVIA process are outlined below. This process will identify and assess the potential effects of a development on the landscape resource and the visual environment.

1. Baseline study

Landscape

- Define the scope of the assessment.
- Outline the planning policy context, including any landscape designations.
- Establish the landscape baseline through a site visit and an assessment of published Landscape Character Assessments to identify the value and susceptibility of the landscape resource (receptor), at community, local, national or international levels where appropriate.

Visual

- Define the scope of the assessment.
- Identify the extent of visual receptors within the study area, with the use of Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) where appropriate, and establish the number and sensitivity of the representative viewpoint and/or groups of people (receptors) within the study area whose views may be altered as a result of the proposals.

2. Project description

   The baseline study highlights clear opportunities and constraints for the integration of the proposals into the receiving environment. The aspects of the scheme at each phase that will potentially give rise to effects on the landscape and visual amenity will need identifying. At this time, the proposals can be modified to ensure that further mitigation measures are incorporated into the design as a response to the local landscape and visual environment.

3. Description of Effects

   The level of effect on both landscape and visual receptors should be identified in respect of the different components of the proposed development. In order to assess the significance of the effect on the receiving environment, it is necessary to consider the **magnitude**, i.e. the degree of change, together with the **sensitivity** of the receptor.

   This will identify whether the effects are:

   Adverse or Beneficial - beneficial effects would typically occur where a development could positively contribute to the landscape character or view. Neutral effects would include changes that neither add nor detract from the quality and character of an area or view. Adverse effects would typically occur where there is loss of landscape elements, or the proposal detracts from the landscape quality and character of an area or view.

   Direct or Indirect – A direct effect will be one where a development will affect a view or the character of an area, either beneficially or adversely. An indirect effect will occur as a result of associated development i.e. a development may result in an increase of traffic on a particular route.

   Short, Medium or Long Term – this relates to the expected duration and magnitude of a development. Within this assessment the potential effects are assessed during the Construction Phase, then at Years 1 and 10, following completion of the development.

   Reversible or Irreversible – can the resulting effect of a development be mitigated or not, and whether the result of the mitigation is beneficial or adverse.

4. Significance of Effects (EIA only)

   A final judgment on whether the effect is likely to be significant, as required by the Regulations. The summary should draw out the key issues and outline the scope for reducing any negative / adverse effects. Mitigation measures need to be identified that may reduce the final judgement on the significance of any residual negative effects in the long term.

Assessing effects

Landscape Sensitivity

1.4. The sensitivity of a particular landscape in relation to new development is categorised as high, medium, low or negligible. This takes into account the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of development proposed and the value attached to different landscapes by society. The following table explains each threshold and the factors that make up the degree of sensitivity.

Table 1: Landscape Sensitivity Thresholds

Sensitivity	Definition
High	Landscape resource where there is a high susceptibility to change. Landscapes would be considered of high value, have a high degree of intimacy, strong landscape structure, relatively intact and contain features worthy of protection. Townscapes may include a high proportion of historic assets. Typical examples may be of National or County importance e.g. within the setting of National Parks, AONB's, Conservation Areas etc.
Medium	Landscape resource where there is a medium susceptibility to change. Landscapes would be considered of medium value, good landscape structure, with some detracting features or evidence of recent change. Townscapes may include a proportion of historic assets or of cultural value locally. Typical examples may be designated for their value at District level.
Low	Landscape resource where there is a low susceptibility to change. Landscapes would be considered of low value, and contain evidence of previous landscape change.
Negligible	Landscape resource where there is little or no susceptibility to change. Typical landscapes are likely to be degraded, of weak landscape structure, intensive land uses, and require landscape restoration.

Visual Sensitivity

1.5. The sensitivity of the visual receptor will be assessed against the magnitude of visual change, and is categorised as high, medium, low or negligible. Each receptor should be assessed in terms of both their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity and also the value attached to particular views.

Table 2: Visual Sensitivity Thresholds

Sensitivity	Definition
High	Viewers on public rights of way whose prime focus is on the landscape around and are often very aware of its value. Occupiers of residential properties with primary views affected by the development. Examples include users of National Trails, Long Distance Routes or Sustrans cycle routes, or within the setting of a listed building.
Medium	Viewers engaged in outdoor recreation with some appreciation of the landscape, occupiers of residential properties with oblique views affected by the development, and users of rural lanes and roads. Examples include viewers within moderate quality landscapes, local recreation grounds, and outdoor pursuits.
Low	Viewers engaged in outdoor sport or recreation whose prime focus is on their activity, or those passing through the area on main transport routes whose attention is focused away from an appreciation of the landscape.
Negligible	Viewers whose attention is focused on their work or activity, and not susceptible to changes in the surrounding landscape.

Effect Magnitude

1.6. The magnitude of change relates to the degree in which proposed development alters the fabric of the landscape character or view. This change is categorised as high, medium, low, or negligible.

Table 3: Magnitude of Change

Magnitude	Effect Definition
High	Change resulting in a high degree of deterioration or improvement, or introduction of prominent new elements that are considered to make a major alteration to a landscape or view.
Medium	Change resulting in a moderate degree of deterioration or improvement, or constitutes a perceptible change within a landscape or view.
Low	Change resulting in a low degree of deterioration or improvement to a landscape or view, or constitutes only a minor component within a landscape or view.
Negligible	Change resulting in a barely perceptible degree of deterioration or improvement to a landscape or view.
No Change	It is also possible for a landscape or view to experience no change due to being totally compatible with the local character or not visible due to intervening structures or vegetation.

Significance Threshold

1.7. The magnitude of change is then considered against the sensitivity of the landscape resource as a receptor or the existing character of the panorama / view. In formulating the significance of effect, reasoned professional judgement is required which is explained within the assessment. This is carried out both in terms of the predicted effects on landscape character or on visual amenities. The significance thresholds are predicted as Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible and None, and can be either beneficial or adverse. Unless otherwise stated, all effects are predicted in the winter months. The extent of mitigation measures should be clearly stated, and in the case of planting proposals, the contribution to reducing adverse effects should be demonstrated at different stages (construction stage, operational stage year 0, and year 10).

Table 4: Significance of Effect

Significance	Threshold Definition
Major	A high magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view, that has little or no ability to accommodate change. Positive effects will typically occur in a damaged landscape or view.
Moderate	A medium magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view that may have the ability to accommodate change. Positive effects will typically occur in a lower quality landscape or view.
Minor	A low magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view that has the ability to accommodate change. Positive effects will typically occur in a lower quality landscape or view.
Negligible	A negligible magnitude of change that has little effect on a landscape or view that has the ability to accommodate change.
None	It is also possible for a magnitude of change to occur that results in a neutral effect significance due to the change being compatible with local character or not visible.

1.8. The significance of the effect is measured on the ability of a landscape or view to accommodate the change. In assessing the significance of effects, the following matrix will be used to determine the significance thresholds, through determining the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of change.

1.9. In terms of assessing whether the effects are significant or otherwise, it is noted that para 5.56 of GLVIA3 states that there are no “hard and fast rules” about what makes a significant effect. For the purposes of this assessment significant landscape or visual effects are those effects considered to be greater than moderate.

Table 5: Measuring Significance of Effect

		Sensitivity of Receptors			
Magnitude of Change		**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
	High	Major	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor
	Medium	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor
	Low	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Negligible
	Negligible	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible/ None

1.10. It should be noted that where there is no perceptible change in terms of the effect magnitude regardless of the sensitivity of the receptor, the significance of the effect on a landscape or view will be none.

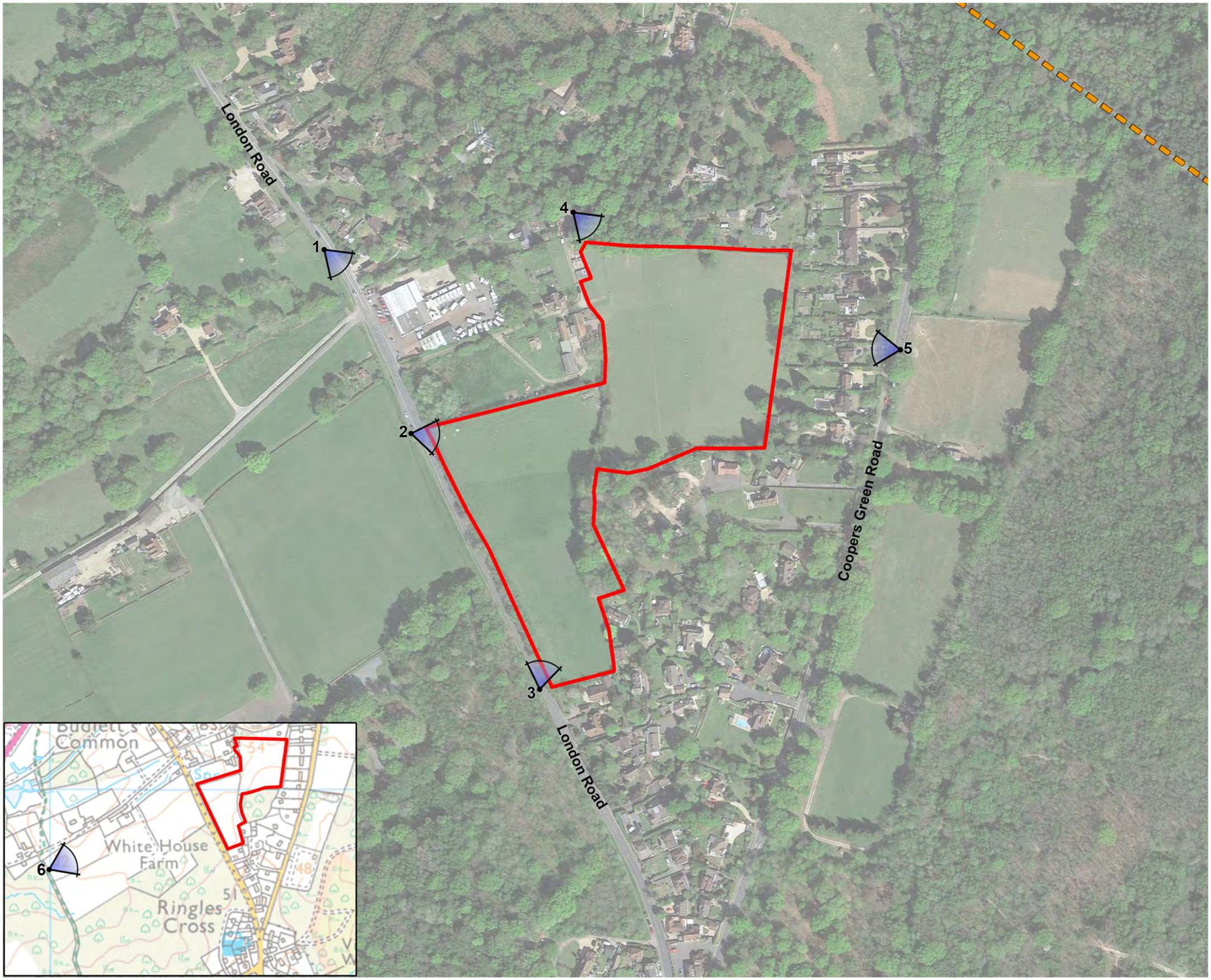
1.11. A written statement summarising the significance of effects is provided, assisted by the tables and matrices. The final judgement relies on professional judgement that is reasonable, based on clear and transparent methods, suitable training and experience, and a detached and dispassionate view of the development in the final assessment.

Assessing cumulative effects

1.12. Cumulative effects are additional effects caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other similar developments. This can be cumulative landscape effects on the physical fabric or character of the landscape, or cumulative visual effects caused by two or more developments being visible from one viewpoint and/or sequence of views. The scope of cumulative effects should be agreed at the outset to establish what schemes are relevant to the assessment, and what planning stage is appropriate. It is generally considered that existing and consented developments and those for which planning applications have been submitted but not yet determined should be included.

APPENDIX 2

VISUAL ASSESSMENT



NOTES:
Based upon the Ordnance Survey map with permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright.
Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd, West Court, Handwick Business Park, Noral Way, Banbury OX16
Licence 100045345 Aerial map data © 2012 Google

Copyright reserved

0m 20m 40m 100m

Key:

- Application Site Boundary
- Viewpoint Location (2)
- Public Rights of Way

REV	DATE	NOTE	Drawn	CHK'd
A	24.5.21	Update to red line boundary	EL	MF

REVISIONS

aspect landscape planning

TITLE
Land East of London Rd, Uckfield, Wealden
Viewpoint Location Plan

CLIENT
Obsidian Strategic

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN	CHK'D
1:2,500 @ A3	MAY 2021	EL	CJ

DRAWING NUMBER	REVISION
7397 / VLP	A



Viewpoint Coordinates: E 547340, N 123153 Date & time of photograph: 11/05/2021 11:21 AOD & Viewing height: c. 40m AOD 1.6m Weather conditions: Clear, good visibility.

Viewpoint 1



Viewpoint Coordinates: E 547410, N 123016 Date & time of photograph: 11/05/2021 11:18 AOD & Viewing height: c. 35m AOD 1.6m Weather conditions: Clear, good visibility.

Viewpoint 2

aspect landscape planning

Equipment & Focal Length: Nikon D3200 DSLR 35mm equivalent camera using a 50mm lens
Viewing Distance at A3: 330mm
Horizontal Field of View: 68°
Vertical Field of View: 23°

N.B. IMAGES TO ILLUSTRATE THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT ONLY. Panoramas are created from multiple photographs taken using a digital equivalent of a 35mm camera with 50mm lens in line with best practice and current guidance. Images illustrate a horizontal field of view of 68° and when printed at A3, should be viewed at a distance of 330mm curved through the same radius in order to correctly illustrate the existing landscape context. To ensure considered judgements are accurately assessed, images should not be substituted for visiting the viewpoint.



Viewpoint Coordinates: E 547499, N 122831 Date & time of photograph: 11/05/2021 10:50 AOD & Viewing height: c. 50m AOD 1.6m Weather conditions: Clear, good visibility.

Viewpoint 3



Viewpoint Coordinates: E 547524, N 123172 Date & time of photograph: 11/05/2021 11:30 AOD & Viewing height: c. 46m AOD 1.6m Weather conditions: Clear, good visibility.

Viewpoint 4

aspect landscape planning

Equipment & Focal Length: Nikon D3200 DSLR 35mm equivalent camera using a 50mm lens
Viewing Distance at A3: 330mm
Horizontal Field of View: 68°
Vertical Field of View: 23°

N.B. IMAGES TO ILLUSTRATE THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT ONLY. Panoramas are created from multiple photographs taken using a digital equivalent of a 35mm camera with 50mm lens in line with best practice and current guidance. Images illustrate a horizontal field of view of 68° and when printed at A3, should be viewed at a distance of 330mm curved through the same radius in order to correctly illustrate the existing landscape context. To ensure considered judgements are accurately assessed, images should not be substituted for visiting the viewpoint.



Viewpoint Coordinates: E 547767, N 123078 Date & time of photograph: 11/05/2021 10:09 AOD & Viewing height: c. 42m AOD 1.6m Weather conditions: Clear, good visibility.

Viewpoint 5



Viewpoint Coordinates: E 546985, N 122770 Date & time of photograph: 11/05/2021 11:05 AOD & Viewing height: c. 33m AOD 1.6m Weather conditions: Clear, good visibility.

Viewpoint 6

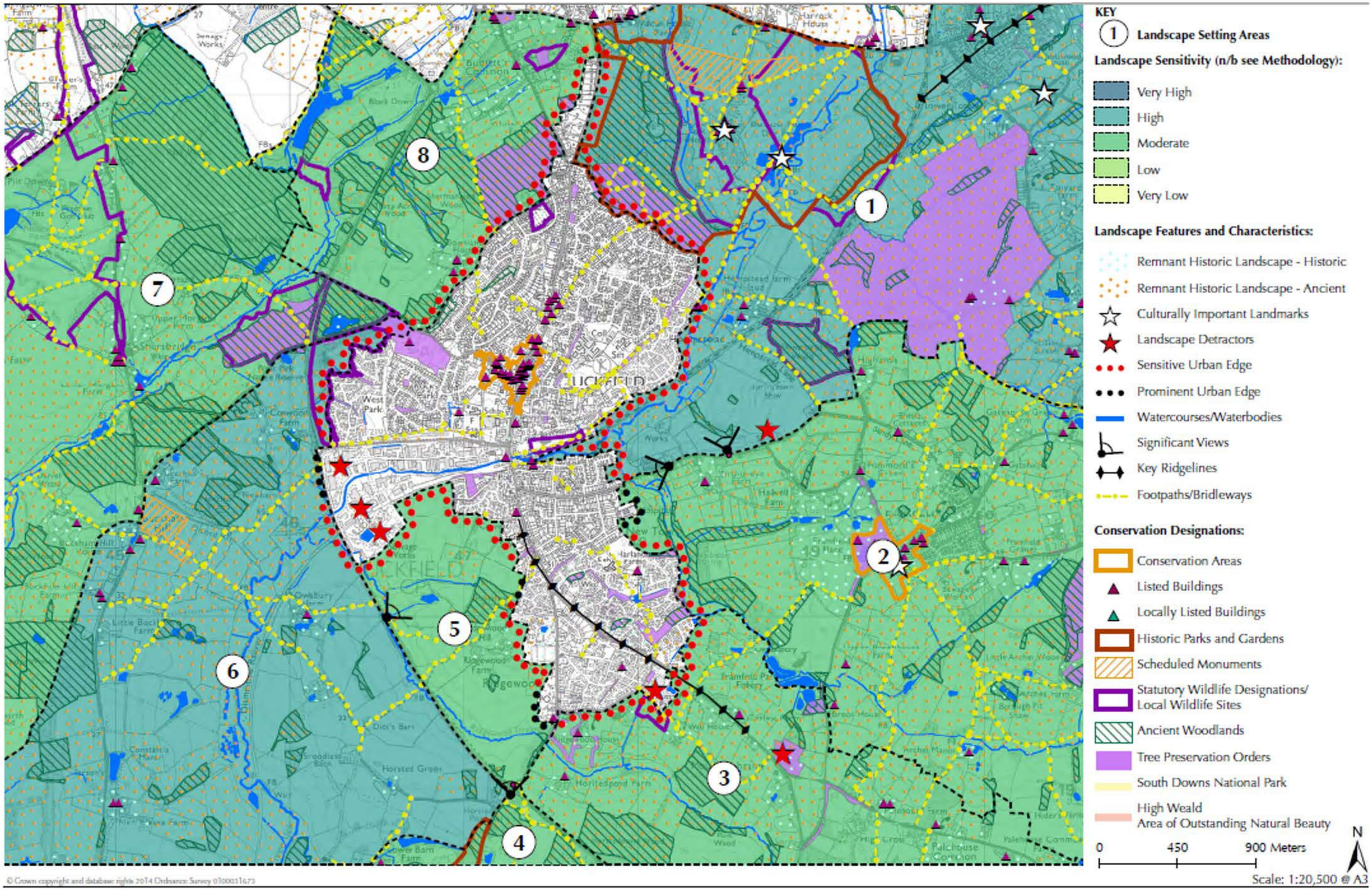
aspect landscape planning

Equipment & Focal Length: Nikon D3200 DSLR 35mm equivalent camera using a 50mm lens
Viewing Distance at A3: 330mm
Horizontal Field of View: 68°
Vertical Field of View: 23°

N.B. IMAGES TO ILLUSTRATE THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT ONLY. Panoramas are created from multiple photographs taken using a digital equivalent of a 35mm camera with 50mm lens in line with best practice and current guidance. Images illustrate a horizontal field of view of 68° and when printed at A3, should be viewed at a distance of 330mm curved through the same radius in order to correctly illustrate the existing landscape context. To ensure considered judgements are accurately assessed, images should not be substituted for visiting the viewpoint.

APPENDIX 3

LANDSCAPE SETTING OF UCKFIELD PLAN



© Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 0100031673

CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES
landscape | environment | heritage

WEALDEN LANDSCAPE & SETTLEMENT CHARACTER ASSESSMENT
WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

FIGURE 5.12
LANDSCAPE SETTING OF UCKFIELD

October 2014
11119501_Completed maps_10-14.indd

landscape planning • ecology • arboriculture

aspect

Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd
West Court
Hardwick Business Park
Noral Way
Banbury
Oxfordshire OX16 2AF

T: 01295 276066
F: 01295 265072
E: info@aspect-landscape.com
W: www.aspect-landscape.com