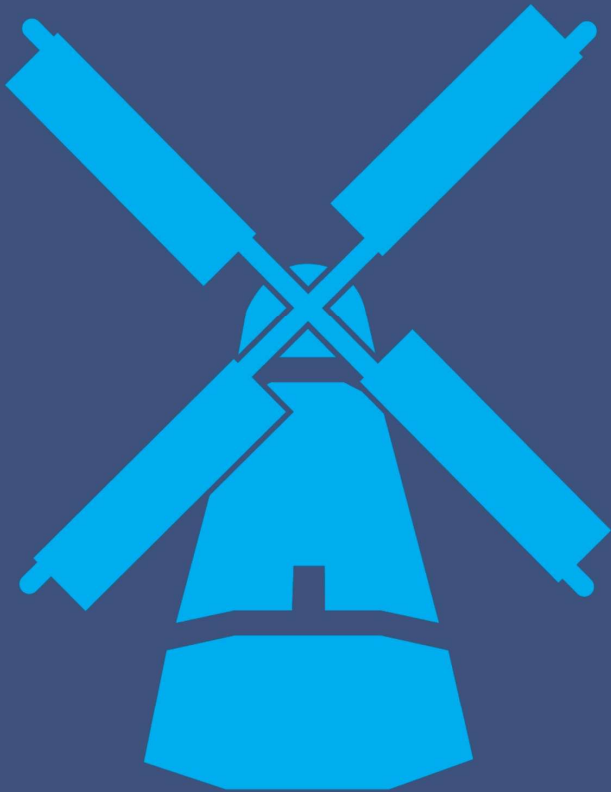




**Hindsland, Eastbourne Road
Willingdon, East Sussex**
Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal



Danescroft (FREOF V Willingdon) LLP

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1.0 Non-Technical Summary

- 1.1 ACD Environmental has been commissioned to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to inform planning proposals and accompany the planning application for a residential development on the site.
- 1.2 The proposals are for a medical centre and 180 residential units comprising flats and houses in private ownership, rented and shared ownership. Vehicular access will be from Eastbourne Road with a potential link to future development on the adjacent Mornings Mill Farm. Existing trees around the boundaries will be retained and supplemented with additional planting.
- 1.3 The parameter plan provided separately in support of this application forms the basis of the outline planning application. The parameter plan establishes the access and the land uses of the Proposed Development and the LVIA has been assessed against these parameters. To assist the evolution of the proposals and the LVIA, an illustrative masterplan has been prepared and is shown in **Figure 7**.
- 1.4 In compiling the baseline information for this report, ACD have undertaken a desktop study including reviews of aerial photography, web searches, Local Planning Authority (LPA) publications, local landscape character assessments and National Character Assessment (NCA) information. ACD then undertook a field assessment which includes a photographic survey of the landscape, using photography from a number of representative viewpoints.
- 1.5 The site does not lie within a Conservation Area or areas protected by landscape designation. The South Downs National Park is situated to the west beyond the settlements of Willingdon and Wannock, with the nearest part of the National Park, Wannock Copse, 750m from the site boundary.
- 1.6 Due to the change in baseline characteristics (i.e. introduction of new dwellings and a medical centre into a playing field and the change of use to residential and clinical) a change in the landscape character will be appreciated.

- 1.7 The proposed site has a visual and physical relationship with key infrastructure patterns to the northern, southern and western sides of the site. Furthermore, while the proposed site lies beyond the current settlement edge, it will sit on the edge of the settlement pattern in the future baseline and within the emerging pattern of housing growth along Eastbourne Road. As such the proposed site is not considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.
- 1.8 Some major adverse visual effects have been identified in the assessment, however these are limited to viewpoints within 200m of the site along Eastbourne Road and from Spurway Park. The visual effects from viewpoints at a distance of more than 300m from the site are assessed as being small to negligible.
- 1.9 During the construction phase the site will be surrounded with solid hoardings to reduce close views into the site, but additional noise will be evident from machinery, and lorry movements will increase as the site is developed. Temporary cabins, cranes and spoil heaps may be visible from the road depending on their height and location and are likely to be visible from the elevated viewpoints discussed below in the South Downs National Park. These construction elements and activities are considered temporary and will occur over a relatively short period of time.
- 1.10 Following the implementation of the landscape strategy and mitigation planting, the residual overall visual effects of the proposed development will remain (albeit at a lower level as the planting becomes more established), for viewpoints along Eastbourne Road and from within the South Downs National Park.
- 1.11 The farmland to the east, known as Mornings Mill Farm, is subject to a large planning application for 700 homes. Still further east the land formerly known as Brodricklands Farm and Hamlands Farm has been granted permission for 390 dwellings and an application for an additional 50 homes has recently been approved. When considered together, these three schemes would alter the existing character of the farmland and former playing field land to that of new

residential development, with small houses, gardens and parking areas closely spaced around curving roads, interspersed with open green spaces and trees. The Mornings Mill proposals will have a larger impact than the Proposed Development due to the larger overall scale of development and the central location within the extent of open space.

- 1.12 The Proposed Development site and the other proposal sites along Eastbourne Road form a component of the view from east-facing elevated viewpoints on the South Downs such as Butts Brow. The Proposed Development alone is considered to have a **minor** effect, however when considered with Mornings Mill Farm and the approved scheme at Brodricklands Farm, the effect is considered to be **moderate**. This is because the additional development will occupy a greater proportion of open green space in middle distance views such as those illustrated in Viewpoints 11 and 12. These developments will also have a larger effect on views from the public rights of way to the north.



Image A - Photographic image taken from a drone illustrating the settlements and main features within the locality

2.0 Introduction, Purpose and Methodology

Introduction

- 2.1 ACD Environmental has been commissioned by Danescroft (FREOF V Willingdon) LLP to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) for the Proposed Development at Eastbourne Road, Willingdon ('the site') to inform planning proposals and accompany the planning application for the site, reference WD/2020/6514/SCO.
- 2.2 The development proposals are for a medical centre and 180 residential units comprising flats and houses in private ownership, rented and shared ownership. The parameter plan forms the basis of the outline planning application and is submitted for approval as part of the planning application. The parameter plan establishes the access and illustrates the land uses of the Proposed Development and the LVIA has been assessed against these parameters. Vehicular access will be from Eastbourne Road with a potential link to future development on the adjacent Mornings Mill Farm. Existing trees around the boundaries will be retained and supplemented with additional planting. An illustrative landscape masterplan has been prepared (see **Figure 7**) to assist with the assessment and to ensure that future landscape strategies will be successful.
- 2.3 The entrance to the site is located on Eastbourne Road, and the centre of the site is at N50°48'54", W00°14'51", grid reference TQ 584041. An ordnance survey plan showing the site location is included in the appendices of this report and is shown on **Figure 1**.
- 2.4 The photograph above (**Image A**) was taken by drone above the site looking south. The sea is visible in the distance. The site is outlined in orange and the surrounding settlements of Willingdon and Polegate are labelled. The Lewes to Eastbourne railway line cuts across the landscape, separating the lower lying land of the Open Levels from the area proposed for development under a series of planning applications which will be assessed for their cumulative effects.

- 2.5 The site is broadly rectangular in shape and was formerly used as playing fields, a usage which ceased when the site was sold to the University of Brighton. Since falling out of use areas of scrub are starting to establish. A line of trees and shrubs marks the eastern boundary and is comprised mainly of oak and field maple. There are small groups of trees within the site notably Lombardy Poplars which due to their height provide a convenient landmark to enable identification of the site from distant viewpoints.
- 2.6 The land has been terraced to create level areas to accommodate sports pitches and embankments associated with the levelling are visible along Eastbourne Road and within the site. Desire lines are visible on the aerial photograph indicating that members of the public are informally crossing the site although notices are visible stating that the land is private and no right of way exists over it. An uninhabited house is situated in the south corner with a driveway and locked gate onto the site. Beyond the gate is an area of hard standing and derelict sheds. An aerial photograph of the site is included in the appendices of this report and is shown on **Figure 2**.
- 2.7 Eastbourne Road lies to the south-west of the site, dropping in level from the brow of the hill approximately 150m to the north-west of the proposed site entrance. There is no footway on the side adjacent to the site, but opposite there is a double footway and a line of detached houses and bungalows set 25 to 30 metres back from the road edge, with driveways cutting across a wide grass verge.
- 2.8 To the north of the site is a residential district along Brightling Road with cul-de-sacs Spurway Park and Courtland Road backing onto the site. A parcel of land approximately 1.75 hectares in size to the west, which is not included in the proposals, comprises rough ground with establishing scrub.
- 2.9 To the south east is Mornings Mill Farm, as well as Willingdon and Jevington Footpath 5 which passes between the farm buildings and lines of mature trees. A previous planning application to develop housing, a medical centre, community centre and primary school on the Former Playing Fields and the Mornings Mill Farm site together was refused permission on appeal in

December 2019 on the grounds of unacceptable vehicular access. Further east is a site known as Brodricksland and Hamlands Farm which has been granted outline permission for up to 440 dwellings under application reference WD/2016/0986. Consideration will be made of the cumulative impacts of the Proposed Development alongside these other proposals using information in the public domain to determine the proposed balance of massing and open space.

- 2.10 Within the wider geographic extent, the site is loosely enclosed by the residential districts of Wannock to the west, Polegate to the north, and Lower Willingdon to the south. The railway lines between Lewes and Eastbourne, and between Eastbourne and Hastings creates physical barriers in the landscape, with infrequent crossing points. The East Coast link which used to provide the third side of the triangle of railway lines between Polegate and Stone Cross was closed in the 1960s and is now a popular walking and cycling path. The area enclosed within the triangle has a distinct wetland character, with drainage channels and detention ponds surrounded by tussocky grass and scrub.
- 2.11 North of the railways is the A27 Polegate Bypass, constructed between the late 1980s and early 1990s. This is a section of dual carriageway road without road connections between two major roundabouts. Public rights of way are carried over the road on footbridges at two locations used as viewpoints for this study.
- 2.12 The site is visible from the edge of the South Downs National Park at the scarp of Butts Brow, an extensive area of public access land with far-reaching views across the Open Levels to the sea. This area marks the transition between the chalk hills of the South Downs and the clay soils of the valley, and a distinct difference is seen in the landscape character along the border between the two, at the western edge of Willingdon village.
- 2.13 The South Downs is designated as a National Park as it is a landscape of national importance. It is valued for its natural beauty, wildlife, recreational opportunities and its contribution to ecosystem services. In 2016 it became an International Dark Sky Reserve and parts of the South Downs National Park are

considered to have a high level of tranquillity. A Landscape Designations Plan is included in the appendices of this report and is shown on **Figure 5**.

- 2.14 The Proposed Development has considered the relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Wealden District Council Core Strategy, the relevant policies of which can be found within **Appendix G**.

Purpose

- 2.15 LVIA's can be defined as a mechanism by which the landscape can be assessed against its capacity to accommodate change.
- 2.16 The aim of this report is to provide a full assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects of a Proposed Development upon the receiving landscape, in line with current legislation and guidance.
- 2.17 In compiling this baseline information for this report, ACD have undertaken the following:
- A desktop study of relevant background documents, maps and databases. The desktop study included reviews of aerial photography, web searches, Local Planning Authority (LPA) publications and landscape character assessments and National Character Assessment (NCA) information;
 - A field assessment which includes a photographic survey of the landscape, using photography from a number of representative viewpoints. The field assessment was undertaken by a qualified landscape architect on 10th January 2021 with a subsequent visit to obtain photographs from viewpoint 6 on 19th February 2021; and
 - The baseline conditions have been provided with respect to landscape character and receptors visual amenity.

Methodology

- 2.18 This LVIA has been undertaken in accordance with 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Third Edition), published by the Landscape Institute and the IEMA (2013) (GLVIA). Reference was also made to 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (Second Edition), published by Natural England (2018).
- 2.19 Potential receptors were identified within the study area and the assessment identifies the sensitivity of receptors, the magnitude of change and the level of effect. The methodology of assessment and the criteria for deciding levels of receptor sensitivity, magnitude and the resulting level of effect significance is included within **Appendix A**.

Study Area

- 2.20 The study area was set to a radius of approximately 2.5km from the centre of the site (N50°48'54", W00°14'51") on the basis that, at this distance, this form of development, when seen by the human eye, would be hardly discernible or not legible. The study area was assessed to determine the extent of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility and this is shown in **Figures 3 and 4** within the appendices of this report. A plan of the designations within the study area is shown in **Figure 5**.
- 2.21 The baseline information focused on identifying national and local landscape and other associated designation within 2.5km of the site and providing a general understanding of the site, its location within the landscape and context.

3.0 Policy

Landscape Planning Policies

- 3.1 Guidelines, legislation and planning policy documents provide the framework for the protection and conservation of landscape within the study area, the most relevant of which are outlined below.
- 3.2 Of these, statutes exist to ensure both direct and indirect protection of our most valued and important landscapes, their intrinsic visual qualities and the individual elements and components that constitute their appeal. Those with direct relevance to the assessment comprise the following:
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
 - Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
 - Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
 - Hedgerow Regulations 1997;
 - Environment Act 1995;
 - Countryside Act 1968; and
 - The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

National Planning Policy

- 3.3 At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a presumption in favour of sustainable development running through both plan-making and decision-taking. For landscape, this means recognising the intrinsic beauty of the countryside and balancing any harm to the land resource with the benefits of the scheme in other respects. This balance is to be undertaken by the decision makers and falls outside the remit of this report. The benefits of the scheme are to be weighed against the effects on the landscape character and visual amenity as set out in this report and as detailed in the Planning Statement

accompanying this application. The policy framework is supported by the National Planning Guidance (NPPG) where relevant.

Local Planning Policy

3.4 Wealden District Council are the local planning authority and approved the Local Development Scheme 2020 to 2023. This document lists the documents which currently comprise Wealden Districts Council's development plan, including those relevant to the Willingdon area:

- Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan, February 2013
- Affordable Housing Delivery Local Plan, May 2016;
- Saved policies contained in the Wealden District Local Plan 1998.
- Wealden Design Guide SPD, November 2008

3.5 Wealden District Council has started work on a new Local Plan which has recently been through a period of initial consultation, "Direction of Travel". According to the indicative timetable provided within the Local Development Scheme 2020 to 2023, the Draft Plan will be out for consultation in Spring 2022, to be adopted in Winter 2023.

3.6 The relevant current Wealden District Council planning policies are listed below:

Saved policies from the Local Plan 1998:

- EN8 Low Weald
- EN12 Protection of trees and woodlands
- EN14 Landscaping within developments
- EN27 Layout and design of development
- LR5 Informal amenity space in new residential developments

- 3.7 The site does not fall within The South Downs National Park, however its Local Plan 2014 – 2033 (adopted in July 2019) (SDNPA) has been consulted in the preparation of this report since the site is visible from viewpoints on the South Downs and its policies have an influence over development in areas close to the National Park boundary.
- 3.8 The key SDNPA policies relating to landscape are:
- SD5: Landscape Character
 - SD6: Safeguarding Views
- 3.9 The site falls on the edge of Willingdon and Jevington Parish. The community has not yet initiated a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.10 The Polegate Town Council Masterplan (February 2012) has been consulted since the boundary of the site covered by the masterplan coincides with the north and west boundaries of the site.
- 3.11 A full list of relevant policies are included in **Appendix G**.

4.0 Baseline Information: Character

4.1 This section identifies potential receptors within the study area and provides a description of the site, study area and landscape context. Desktop and field analysis has been used to scope out sensitive receptors within the 2.5km study area.

4.2 Landscape related designations are shown in the appendices of this report and are shown on **Figure 5**.

South Downs National Park

4.3 The eastern end of the South Downs National Park is within one kilometre of the development site; at its closest point, the northern corner of Wannock Coppice, the South Downs National Park is approximately 750m away. The more prominent and publicly accessible parts of the National Park are at Butt's Brow and Crane Down to the south west of the site, where the land rises steeply to heights of over 100m above sea level, providing extensive views over the Levels and out to sea.

National Trails

4.4 The 1066 Country Walk is a long-distance trail from the Roman Fort at Pevensey to Rye, passing across the Levels in a south-easterly direction. It crosses Eastbourne Road approximately 750m south of the proposed site entrance.

4.5 The Cuckoo Trail is a 14 mile long surfaced path for cycles and walkers following the route of an old railway line between Heathfield to Shinewater Park on the edge of Langney, a settlement north of Eastbourne.

4.6 The two trails intersect east of the site adjacent to the A22. Viewpoints 07 and 13 represent the views across this part of the study area and show the rich habitat and low lying marsh characteristics of the Levels.

Public Rights of Way

- 4.7 The closest Public Right of Way (PRoW) to the development site is Footpath 5 which passes in a northeast to south west direction approximately 400m south east of the site. The route is unsurfaced and where it passes the old farm buildings of Mornings Mill Farm it is a wide road lined with mature oaks, with ditches and banks to either side.
- 4.8 Other rights of way within the study area are shown on the Ordnance Survey Plan which is included in the appendices of this report and is shown on **Figure 1**. There are PRoW's north of the site crossing, and parallel to the A27 Polegate bypass including the forementioned Cuckoo Trail, but views towards the site are limited by housing estates, vegetation and topography. Photographs from viewpoints 1, 2 and 3 are taken from PRoWs north of the site and indicate the location of the site with an arrow.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

- 4.9 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) are located within the study area. Folkington Reservoir is located 2km west of the site; Willingdon Down SSSI is within 2 to 2.5km distance of the site and a small portion of Wilmington Down SSSI is also within the study area. All of these SSSIs are designated for their rich chalk grassland flora.

Heritage Designations

- 4.10 Within the study area there is a Scheduled Monument, The Chapel at Otteham Court, located north of the A27 Polegate bypass. The chapel is in the vicinity of Otteham Court, a Grade II listed building. The heavily wooded road verges and topography preclude any visibility of the development site from this point.
- 4.11 Polegate Windmill is a Grade II listed building located approximately 200m from the proposed site entrance. According to its Historic England listing it was moved from its original location in Willingdon and is now located in the middle of a housing estate.

- 4.12 There are a number of other Listed Buildings within the study area but they are further than 500m from the site and their settings are not considered to be impacted by development at this distance.
- 4.13 To the south-west, on the summit of Combe Hill are four Neolithic Scheduled Monuments. The Zone of Theoretical Visibility has identified that the site is not visible from these due to the topography.

Landscape Character

- 4.14 A review of site and local landscape character has been undertaken as part of this report and includes a review of the National Character Assessment, Landscape Character Assessments and site assessment. The Local Character Areas referred to in this report are mapped in **Figure 6**.

National Character Assessment

- 4.15 Natural England has published a study entitled 'Countryside Character Initiative'. This initiative is concerned with the management of England's countryside through an understanding of its character. It aims to guide policy developments, national decision making, and give a context to local planning, action and development.
- 4.16 The site lies within the Pevensey Levels National Character Area (124). While the description is broadly representative of the wider rural landscape, a large number of characteristics are exhibited in the site and study area, including:
- Low-lying marshy land with drainage channels and grazed wet meadows
 - Level valley landscape framed by the scarp of the South Downs
 - A transition between the Low Weald to the north-west and the English Channel, draining the higher landscapes of the High and Low Weald.

Local Landscape Character Assessment

4.17 A number of Landscape Character Studies have been carried out over the past decade:

- Wealden Design Guide, Supplementary Planning Document (Wealden District Council, 2008);
- Wealden Landscape Study: a Landscape Character Assessment and Development Option Evaluation Study to inform the preparation of the Core Strategy (East Sussex County Council, February 2009);
- East Sussex County Landscape Assessment (East Sussex County Council, 2010);
- Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation (Dr. Nicola Bannister, 2010);
- Wealden Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates, 2014);
- Wealden Green Infrastructure Study (Chris Blandford Associates, 2016);
- South Wealden Growth Area, Landscape and Ecology Studies, Section 6.0 Polegate and Willingdon (The Landscape Partnership, April 2017).

Site Assessment

- 4.18 **Figure 1:** Ordnance Survey Plan within the appendices of this report show the topographical information of the site and study area. The landscape is varied across the study area and comprises elevated hillsides, low-lying marshy coastal flats, extensive housing estates. The study area is traversed by roads, railways, public rights of way and electricity infrastructure.
- 4.19 The key characteristics of the site are its openness and topography, derived from its previous use as playing fields. The site is broadly divided in two, with the area nearer the road forming a flat area 120m by 100m with a cross-fall of 1:110 with banks around the sides, indicating that cut-and-fill was carried out in the past. The rear half of the site forms a larger levelled area. Historic aerial photographs from Google Earth indicate that this was used as an athletics field with an oval running track. There is a difference in height of between 1.40m and 0.95m between the two halves, with a slope of 1:23 to one side, and evidence of a former pavilion and car park.



Image B - Photograph showing the central part of the site with 4 Lombardy poplars. The levelled former playing field is in the foreground



Image C - Photograph showing the southern frontage of the site with the verge sloping down to Eastbourne Road

- 4.20 The site currently consists of a derelict two-storey house and some areas of hard standing, and two separate former playing fields with a small embankment between. The site is located to the east of the A2270 Eastbourne Road and forms part of a large green open space between the settlements of Polegate and Willingdon, the former railway line now known as the Cuckoo Trail, and the north-south section of the A22.
- 4.21 The landform of the site is generally flat with embankments of 1-2m in height, within the setting of a lowland river valley, with wide open skies. The scarp slopes of the South Downs rise steeply to the west, framing the local area and forming a distinctive feature in the landscape.
- 4.22 The character of the site is that of a wide, open overgrown field, with areas of flat ground surrounded by patches of rough tussocky ground with bramble and scrub developing. The eastern boundary is marked with the rounded silhouettes of mature oak trees which add considerably to the rural character of the site.

There are few trees on the site, the most distinctive being the upright columnar shapes of Lombardy poplar. A drainage ditch has been dug around the northern side, where the mainly single-storey housing within Courtland Road and Spurway Park forms the edge of the urban development of Polegate.

- 4.23 The immediate land use to the east is a roughly triangular parcel of farmland, currently under pasture, including a collection of farm buildings along a wide tree-lined unsurfaced PRow. The field boundaries are evident as tree and hedge-lines, often with drainage ditches.
- 4.24 The built elements include twentieth century housing along the west side of Eastbourne Road and estates beyond. Those fronting Eastbourne Road are set back allowing for a wide green verge which contributes to the open appearance of the setting. The road is wide at this point, with cycle lanes painted onto the carriageway on both sides, and has a 40mph speed limit. There is a constant stream of traffic. Residential roads on the opposite side of Eastbourne Road to the site are laid out in a grid pattern indicating pre-second world war development. Wannock has a large proportion of post war housing, typically 1950s style red brick semi-detached houses with large front gardens and wide roads with grassed road verges. The housing in the Brightling Road area also appears to date from this period and is mainly single storey.
- 4.25 The site is set just below the brow of a hill on Eastbourne Road. Travelling over the brow in a northerly direction away from the site, the road is hemmed in by tall trees on both sides, restricting visibility for approximately 150m. As the view opens out again on the other side of the brow a service station provides a jarring element, and the built form, consisting of repeating elements of wide grass verges and side roads, with houses set back behind trees and hedges, becomes evident on both sides of the road.
- 4.26 The relationship between the Levels and the farmland and playing fields area can be understood by walking or cycling along traffic-free PRow's which link through and around the two character areas. The Cuckoo Trail which includes part of the former railway line provides extensive views across the levels and the opportunity to appreciate the wetland character with grazed fields, drainage

channels, ponds and associated wildlife. Electricity pylons cross the Levels providing vertical elements in the landscape, and the working railway line cuts across, physically and visually separating the Levels from the farmland.

- 4.27 In general the field boundaries across the farmland and playing field area are defined with narrow uniform hedgerows. Strong lines of trees are evident around the long rectangular parcel of land to the east of the site, reaching up to the railway, but further east towards the sea the numbers of trees within hedgerows reduces. Copses and woodlands are relatively small and infrequent in the area.
- 4.28 The baseline condition has been considered in terms of night-time illumination, although assumptions have been made as a night time assessment was not undertaken. At present the dwelling on the site is unoccupied, and there is no public access, therefore it is assumed that there is no light being emitted within the site. On the adjacent Mornings Mill land the farmhouse appears to be occupied, and the barns and other farm buildings are in use therefore there is likely to be a low level of visible light at certain times.
- 4.29 The South Downs National Park is recognised for its Dark Skies, the core Dark Night Sky Zone, where the Sky Quality Measurement (SQM) exceeds 20.5 commences over 50km away near Storrington. The part of the South Downs nearest to the Proposed Development site is described as a Transition Zone, where the SQM ranges between 15 and 20. It is considered likely that receptors who wish to view the night skies from the hills visible from the site would be more likely to choose a viewpoint on the west side of the hill where the existing built-up areas and their associated light would be less visible.

5.0 Baseline Conditions: Visual

Introduction

- 5.1 From the results of the initial desk study and site appraisal it is clear that the Proposed Development will be visible from a limited number of locations, at varying distances, and from both public and private areas.
- 5.2 A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was prepared and included in the appendices of this report and is shown in **Figure 3**. Viewpoints at varying distances from the site were selected to represent the typical views of the site. In determining the viewpoints, whether in the immediate locality or further away, the main public highways, sections of public footpaths, and some of the publicly available spaces within the study area were visited. It is acknowledged that from public places, more viewers are likely to be affected thereby adding to the overall impact upon receptors in those locations.
- 5.3 It was evident from a desktop study of aerial photographs that there would be no views into the site from Eastbourne Road north of either entrance to The Thatchings, owing to the dense belt of mature trees on either side of the road at the top of the hill. This conclusion was verified during the site survey. There is a patch of land between the service station and the site which is becoming overgrown with scrub. Since there is no public access to this land it was not possible to take photographs. During the survey the potential viewpoint at the end of Courtland Road was visited, and it was noted that a tall wire fence backed with vegetation obscured views into the site.
- 5.4 Viewpoints are included within **Appendix D** of this report and locations are shown on **Figure 4**, within the report appendices.
- 5.5 This section identifies those visual receptors that have the potential to view the site, their distribution, character and sensitivity to change.
- 5.6 The following viewpoints in **Table 1** were selected as being representative of the potential visual issues associated with the proposed development.

Table 1: Viewpoint Details

No	Location	Distance (km) and direction of view	Northing	Westing	Rationale for selection
1	Footbridge over A27 Polegate bypass	1.65km, S	50°49'46"	00°14'39"	Footbridge is elevated above surrounding landscape and carries bridleway Polegate 18 and footpath Polegate 6
2	Footbridge over A27 Polegate bypass	1.61km, SW	50°49'36"2	00°15'42"	Footbridge is elevated above surrounding landscape and carries bridleway Polegate 32a
3	Junction of B2104 Hailsham Road with PROW	2.64km, SW	50°49'43"	00°16'42"	View from north through wind turbines on PROW Westham 19a
4	Eastbourne Road	0.10km, E	50°48'53"	00°14'46"	Close view from roadside verge into site
5	Opposite side of Eastbourne Road – shown as 2 panoramas	0.11km, NE	50°48'51"	00°14'47"	Close views across site representing viewpoint from nearby dwellings
6	Spurway Park	0.20km, SW	50°48'59"	00°14'58"	View from adjacent residential road north of site
7	Cuckoo Trail, section along disused railway	1.84km, W	50°49'01"	00°16'25"	View from popular cycle and walking route across the Open Levels
8	PROW through Mornings Mill Farm	0.34km, NW	50°48'48"	00°15'05"	Footpath Willingdon and Jevington 5. Other developments will have a cumulative effect on this view.
9	Eastbourne Road south of Mornings Mill Farm	0.23km, N	50°48'47"	00°14'54"	To test cumulative effects from other developments
10	Footpath Eastbourne 1a	1.28km, N	50°48'14"	00°14'38"	View across open field at the foot of the South Downs scarp
11	PROW on descent from Butts Brow, South Downs National Park	1.78km, NE	50°48'00"	00°14'20"	This section of the footpath heads straight towards the site
12	View from Footpath Eastbourne 6b within South Downs NP	1.98km, N	50°47'51"	00°14'36"	Public access land on Butts Brow in the South Downs National Park
13	Cuckoo Trail alongside A22 close to where road crosses railway	2.07km, W	50°48'47"	00°16'37"	Long distance trail

- 5.7 The findings of the site appraisal show that there are direct and open views into the site from locations to the south west and east. Close range views are afforded along Eastbourne Road and from a small part of Spurway Park where the road passes close to the site boundary. Clear long range views are afforded from the edge of the South Downs where the land is elevated. There are mid range views from public rights of way through Mornings Mill Farm to the east.
- 5.8 Much of the land within a kilometre radius circle of the site is relatively level, between the 10m and 20m contours, and mid-range views within this geographical extent are limited by housing and interceding vegetation. As the land rises above about 35m, the site becomes visible as seen in the photograph taken at VP10.

Visual Receptors

Public Rights of Way Users

- 5.9 Users of PRow, bridleway and National Trails are considered to have a high sensitivity and so the visual assessment included a comprehensive analysis on the visual effects of this user group.

Residential Properties and Users

- 5.10 Views from private residential properties, although likely to have a high sensitivity to any changes in a view, are not protected planning regulations, policies or guidance. There are limited adjacent residential properties, many of which are however set within a strong landscape framework and have limited visibility of the site.

Road Users

- 5.11 Road users are less sensitive than residential receptors or users of PRow due to the speed in which they experience and perceive the landscape, however road users are notable receptors. Users of Eastbourne Road along the southern boundary are the most important receptors of this type.

- 5.12 Users of the other roads in the area, such as the residential roads off Eastbourne Road do not have good views of the site due to the intervening built form and vegetation.

Users of Public Open Spaces

- 5.13 Users of public open spaces are considered to have a high sensitivity to changes in the landscape since they are enjoying recreational time and more likely to be aware of their surroundings and enjoying views. Wealden District Council has published a detailed study of the public open spaces within each parish. The map for Willingdon, Jevington and Polegate identifies parks and recreation grounds at Brightling Road (0.62km to the NE), Wannock Road (0.56km to the NW), Tott Yew Road (0.5km to the south) and Huggetts Lane, (1.08km to the south). All of these recreation areas however are surrounded by housing and / mature trees when looking in the direction of the site, rendering it non-visible.
- 5.14 There is accessible natural green space at Paragon Fields for dog walking. This land is slightly elevated but the intervening housing blocks views towards the site.

6.0 Proposals and Mitigation

The Proposed Development

6.1 The development proposals are laid out in full in The Design and Access Statement in support of this application. The parameter plan forms the basis of the outline planning application and is submitted for approval as part of the planning application. The parameter plan establishes the access and the land uses of the Proposed Development and the LVIA has been assessed against these parameters. To assist the evolution of the proposals and the LVIA, an illustrative masterplan has been prepared and is shown in **Figure 7**.

6.2 The proposals include the following:

- A three-storey Medical Centre or Care Home with space for future expansion and a car park
- Up to 180 homes, to be varying heights from single storey to 2.5 storeys.
- Access road onto the A2270 Eastbourne Road
- Public open space
- Landscaping
- Play areas and trim trails
- Swales and an infiltration basin as part of a sustainable urban drainage

Landscape Mitigation

6.3 The mitigation of effects on the landscape and visual amenity has been carefully considered and incorporated into the landscape strategy. This pays attention to the setting of the site, the presence of key characteristics in the surrounding landscape and considers the nature of views from key locations around the site. It also gives some consideration to the changing nature of the baseline with the future approved development layouts, specifically to the east along Eastbourne Road. The proposals have been influenced by the landscape strategy which highlights the need to provide space for tree planting along the Eastbourne Road boundary, therefore the strategy already includes a degree of mitigation to avoid or reduce the potential effects. Mitigation measures that will reduce the landscape and visual effects include:

- Providing a buffer of vegetation around the northern boundary of the site where it borders Spurway Park and Courtland Road. The long views from the curve of Spurway Park will be lost, however the new built form will be softened by vegetation;
- Locating the medical centre to allow space for tree planting between it and the road.
- Retaining the existing site boundary vegetation and including additional native species which are prevalent in the local area, to provide dense vegetative features along all of the site boundaries, where there is some level of vegetation;
- Retaining the few mature existing trees that are located within the site, to enhance the landscape setting of the residential development;
- Planting numerous semi-mature trees along the roads and around the medical centre car park to provide visual barriers and to break up larger areas of hard standing, and to secure early establishment of the landscape;

- Providing a separate landscape framework around the new dwellings to enhance and strengthen the visual barriers of these properties;
 - Limiting the heights of new buildings to continue the same scale of development demonstrated in adjacent residential areas;
 - Incorporate materials which reflect the surrounding site context, both within the soft and hard landscape design;
 - Ensuring that the lighting scheme minimises the impact on the surrounding landscape.
 - Materials that form the external envelope and roof of the proposed buildings to match the surrounding existing palette, for example, brick and white-painted brick, metal and timber with slate roof tiles. These colours will also have a more subtle impact on the landscape.
- 6.4 Proposed planting species should be partly reflective of those already found within the context of the site. A native species palette should be utilised throughout in order to visually blend with the surrounding landscape.
- 6.5 In adopting the above measures, the proposals will reduce the magnitude of potential landscape and visual effects on the identified receptors.
- 6.6 The visual assessment has been undertaken to assess the sketch site layout, as shown in **Figure 7**.
- 6.7 After a period of 10-15 years the above mitigation measures will have weathered and planting will have become established to further reduce the visual impact.
- 6.8 The impact of lighting within the site can be mitigated through sensitive design as described in the Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance Note 01/20,

7.0 Assessment of Effects

Introduction

- 7.1 Predicted effects on receptors are assessed at operation. The assessment of landscape and visual effects considers the site in its current baseline condition and judges the type and level of effects of the proposals. The site layout is shown in **Figure 7**.
- 7.2 The landscape strategy is to provide a high-quality, mixed-use development set within a site that has a strong, mature landscape framework. This includes the retention of the existing vegetation, to maintain a similar visual baseline. New planting will provide visual barriers to the new parking areas. The new access road with wide verges incorporating swales and tree planting is designed to provide a green corridor through the site. The landscape strategy is illustrated within the Landscape Masterplan which will accompany the Planning Application. The strategy would help to visually blend the proposals into the receiving landscape and soften the look of the built form over time. The assessment of effects is outlined in **Appendix C** (character) and **Appendix D** (visual).
- 7.3 It is considered that there is the potential for effects on the following receptors:

Landscape

- The South Downs National Park
- Landscape elements such as the trees and open grassed slopes;
- The landscape character of the site and the local area surrounding the site.

Visual

- Public Rights of Way in the local area;
- Roads adjacent to and surrounding the site.

- Residential receptors adjacent to site boundaries

7.4 The sensitivity of the visual receptors in the viewpoints are outlined in **Table G** within **Appendix A** of this report.

Effects of the Completed Scheme upon the Receiving Landscape

7.5 The effects on the landscape are considered as a multi stage process:

1. Effects on the character of the site, that includes the direct effects on the different elements that make up the site character;
2. The receiving landscape character, as defined in the Landscape Character Assessments; and
3. Effects on the local landscape context which includes the indirect effects on the defined landscape character that surrounds the site.
4. Temporary effects during the construction process.
5. Cumulative effects deriving from other development proposals within the locality (Section 8).

7.6 The importance of the landscape of the South Downs has been considered in the judgements about the quality, the value and the sensitivity of the landscape. The South Downs has been designated as a National Park because of its natural beauty, vernacular buildings, archaeological assets, interesting topography and tranquillity. Many of these features are at their best within the park, but views outwards are also important, especially since the edges may be more accessible to people living beyond the boundaries. The character of the South Downs is very different to that of the site and the Eastbourne Levels in terms of topography, tranquillity and geology, creating a challenge in assessing how much weight to assign to the presence of the National Park within the study area. On balance it is judged that the change of landscape character of the site would have only a small impact on the South Downs due to its location surrounded by existing residential

areas. The impacts on views are considered to be more important and are covered within the Visual Impacts section below.

- 7.7 The night-time illumination levels within the site will increase from the current baseline of negligible to the levels of light associated with a suburban development due to street lighting, cars moving within the development, and light spilling from houses.
- 7.8 The quality of the landscape, which includes the site and study area, has been assessed as having a **medium** landscape quality. This assessment has been reached as most landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Most buildings are in styles which reflect their period of construction and are well maintained. Due to the existence of detracting elements in the form of a prominent railway line to the north of the site, the service station and a number of electricity pylons the quality is downgraded from High to Medium. This is defined in **Table A** in **Appendix A** of this report.
- 7.9 The value of the existing landscape has been assessed as **medium**. Areas primarily of valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition with low levels of disruptive visual detractors, exhibiting a recognisable landscape structure. The area does not have statutory designations but relates to the setting of the South Downs National Park. This is defined in **Table B** in **Appendix A** of this report.
- 7.10 The character sensitivity of the landscape has been defined as **medium**, as it includes important elements of moderate susceptibility to change and the playing field and farmland setting provides a semi- enclosed scale. Eastbourne Road and the railway line are man-made elements which introduce noise and movement and reduce the level of tranquility, but human activity and development is not dominant. This is outlined in **Table C** in **Appendix A** of this report.
- 7.11 As defined in **Table D** the landscape visual sensitivity has been defined as **medium**. The topography in the immediate surroundings is flat with frequent

vegetation features, features recreational routes with a degree of focus on the landscape, and includes a moderate density of population.

- 7.12 The overall weighted assessment of landscape sensitivity has been assessed as **medium**.
- 7.13 Due to the change in baseline characteristics (i.e. introduction of new dwellings and a medical centre into a farmland and playing field landscape and the change of use to residential) a change in the landscape character will be appreciated. A large proportion of the flat green space will be replaced with buildings and roads, and the rest will be divided into smaller units such as gardens, verges and play areas, with a large number of new trees and a greater diversity of plant species being introduced.
- 7.14 Considering the available plans for the proposed development in conjunction with the other proposals which have been granted planning permission at Brodricklands and Hamlands Farms and the application under consideration at Mornings Mill Farm, it is noted that there is a reasonable allocation of open green space across the board, including a school playing field and extensive replacement public playing fields in a more central location.
- 7.15 At this location the proposed site has a visual and physical relationship with key infrastructure patterns to the northern, southern and western sides of the site. Furthermore, while the proposed site lies beyond the current settlement edge, it will sit on the edge of the settlement pattern in the future baseline and within the emerging pattern of housing growth along Eastbourne Road.
- 7.16 In this context the proposed site will be seen as a modest addition to the emerging pattern of approved development stretching along Eastbourne Road with the natural boundary of this growth area being the existing housing along Lower Willingdon (the roads leading to the north and west off Hazelwood Avenue). As such the proposed site is not considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.

- 7.17 The magnitude of landscape impacts, as outlined in **Table E** in **Appendix A**, has been assessed as **small** as there is likely to be a minor alteration to the site's baseline characteristics. The introduction of new residential development may be prominent but is not considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape, when considering the existing residential dwellings. The scale of the development may be considered at odds with the immediate landscape, impacting on an area of recognised landscape quality.
- 7.18 Using the matrix in Table F the overall landscape character effect is assessed as **minor**.

Temporary Effects on the Receiving Landscape

- 7.19 During the construction phase the site will be surrounded with solid hoardings to reduce close views into the site, but additional noise and dust generation will be evident from machinery, and lorry movements will increase as the site is prepared. Temporary cabins and spoil heaps may be visible from the road depending on their height and location. These construction elements and activities are considered temporary and will occur over a relatively short period of time. In terms of their impact on the landscape they are considered to be of equal magnitude to the completed development, apart from for residents close to the site, for which the construction impacts may be more disruptive due to the more drastic change from the baseline condition and the impact of temporary traffic management schemes and contractors' vehicles being parked in the neighbourhood.
- 7.20 The construction works would cause a change of medium magnitude to medium sensitivity receptors, creating a **moderate** adverse temporary landscape character effect.

Visual Impacts

- 7.21 Visual impact assessment considers the sensitivity to change of visual receptors within the study area, and the magnitude of change associated with the introduction of the proposed development into the existing visual context.
- 7.22 A summary of the visual effects of the completed scheme at each viewpoint location is shown in **Table 2**.

Residential Receptors

- 7.23 Residential receptors are considered high, even though in planning terms there is no right to view from a residential property. This report does not specifically assess any viewpoints from residential receptors, however houses along Eastbourne Road opposite the development will have clear views of it, as illustrated by the photographs from Viewpoint 5 taken from the verge outside number 205.
- 7.24 Viewpoint 6 can be considered to be representative of the view experienced by residents in Spurway Park. From this point within the close there is an extensive view across the former playing fields which will change to a close view of the housing and gardens within the development. The design includes a landscape buffer around the site boundary which will filter views of the built form.

Table 2: Summary and comparison of Overall Residual Visual Effects

No	Viewpoints	Receptor Type	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Visual Effects	Magnitude of Change	Overall Visual Effects
				Proposed Development only		Cumulative proposals (see Viewpoint notes for details of which proposals have been considered)	
1	Footbridge over A27 Polegate bypass	Users of National Cycle Network route 21, cyclists and walkers	High	Negligible	Negligible	Medium	Moderate
2	Footbridge over A27 Polegate bypass	Users of PROW Polegate 32a	High	Negligible	Negligible	Small	Moderate
3	Junction of B2104 Hailsham Road with PROW	Road users	Medium	Negligible	Negligible	Very small	Minor
4	Eastbourne Road	Road users	Medium	Large	Major / moderate	Small	Moderate / minor
5	Opposite side of Eastbourne Road – shown as 2 panoramas	Road users and residents	High	Large	Major	Large	Major
6	Spurway Park	Residents	High	Very large	Major	Very large	Major
7	Cuckoo Trail, section along disused railway	Users of the recreational route	High	Negligible	Negligible	Small	Moderate
8	PROW through Mornings Mill Farm	Users of PROW	High	Medium	Moderate	Very large	Major
9	Eastbourne Road south of Mornings Mill Farm	Road users and residents	Medium	Small	Moderate	Large	Major / moderate

No	Viewpoints	Receptor Type	Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Overall Visual Effects	Magnitude of Change	Overall Visual Effects
10	Footpath Eastbourne 1a	Users of the PROW	High	Very small	Minor	Very small	Minor
11	PROW on descent from Butts Brow, South Downs National Park	Walkers within the South Downs National Park	High	Small	Minor	Medium	Major / moderate
12	View from Footpath Eastbourne 6b within South Downs NP	Walkers within the South Downs National Park	High	Very small	Minor	Small	Moderate
13	Cuckoo Trail alongside A22 close to where road crosses railway	Users of the recreational route	High	Negligible	Negligible	Very small	Minor

Visual Impacts on Receptors within the National Park

- 7.25 Within the study area there are two prominent locations on the edge of the South Downs which provide elevated views of the site, namely Coombe Hill, in particular Butts Brow on the east facing side, and Crane Down. Viewpoints 11 and 12 are on PRow on Butts Brow and were selected to be representative of views from the South Downs. In both of these views the site forms part of a patch of green space in the middle distance, set within a larger area of existing, largely residential, development.
- 7.26 The Proposed Development would have the effect of filling in a small part of the green space which is visible from the South Downs with housing. The larger developments at Mornings Mill Farm and Brodricklands and Hamlands Farms will be also be visible to a greater extent as they are larger and closer to the viewpoint. Since the South Downs is a sensitive receptor the cumulative visual effect is judged to be moderate.
- 7.27 It is noted that the Mornings Mill and Brodricklands proposals include open spaces on the south western side which is most visible from the elevated viewpoints on the South Downs. This theme has been extended to the Proposed scheme by locating the open space associated with the attenuation basin on the southern part of the site. Dense groups of trees can be planted here and in lines across the site to filter views of housing.

Users of Long Distance Path – 1066 Country Walk

- 7.28 Users of Long Distance Paths would be considered high in that receptors attention is often focused on the landscape through which they are travelling. The landscape associated with Long Distance Paths is considered an important component to their overall experience and in this instance involves the Pevensey Levels and South Downs National Park. This path also has a historical aspect, as it traces the route thought to have been taken by the invading army of William the Conqueror in 1066.

- 7.29 The section of the 1066 Country Walk from the Cuckoo Trail to the railway crossing was overgrown and very wet underfoot at the time of the survey, and it was not possible to travel far enough along it to obtain clear photographs towards the site. Viewpoint 13 is however only 0.35km from the Walk and provides a representative view of the landscape being traversed.

Users of Walking and Cycling Trail – Cuckoo Trail

- 7.30 Viewpoints 7 and 13 have been taken to represent views from the Cuckoo Trail, which forms part of the National Cycle Network. In both cases the Proposed Development site would be barely visible across the open space of the Levels, although the additional developments will cumulatively be noticeable. The overall visual effect has been considered negligible. Once the replacement planting has matured, the residual overall visual effect would be minor.
- 7.31 Viewpoint 1 tests the visibility of the site from the footbridge which carries the Cuckoo Trail over the A27 Polegate bypass. The site is not visible from here due to interceding vegetation along the A27, however it is likely that one of the developments which has been requested for consideration in terms of cumulative effects, Greenleaf Gardens, would be visible.

Users of Other Public Rights of Way

- 7.32 Users of Public Rights of Way are also considered high. Receptors often use Public Rights of Way for recreational purposes and the landscape is considered an important component to their overall experience. In addition to the 1066 Country Walk and the Cuckoo Trail, Footpath 5 has been assessed.
- 7.33 Viewpoint 8, east of the site, represents a location on footpath 5. Along most of this section of the route the view is blocked by hedging and mature trees, but at this point there is a good view through the field boundary to the fields beyond. If the Mornings Mill development proceeds, a dramatic change in this view will be appreciated, since the new school and housing estate will dominate the foreground and obscure views of the Proposed Development site.

- 7.34 Viewpoint 10 is located on another public right of way, Footpath Eastbourne 1a which runs along the 35m contour to the south of Gorrings Valley Road in Lower Willingdon, setting it high enough to have a view over the rooftops of the settlement. The site can be distinguished by the two groups of Lombardy Poplars in the photograph, indicating that development here would be visible. However being in the background of this view the additional housing will not appear to encroach further onto open space and tree planting at the boundaries and within the site will have a worthwhile effect at this distance by breaking up the straight outlines of the dwellings and the more prominent medical centre.
- 7.35 The view from a second footbridge over the A27 was tested at Viewpoint 2. This bridge is close to the recently built and proposed residential developments at Shepham Lane and is part of a well-used PRow. The site is not visible from this location due to existing vegetation.

Road Users

- 7.36 Road users are typically less sensitive than users of PRow or residential receptors due to the speed through which they travel through the landscape. Road users' attention may also not be focused on the landscape. The following viewpoints are representative of views from surrounding roads:
- 7.37 Viewpoints 4, 5 and 9 are situated on Eastbourne Road, along the south western boundary of the site. A post and rail fence marks the boundary with some self-seeded trees and a medium sized oak tree along the fence line. The development represents a major change in the landscape along the road, and therefore there will be a major visual impact evident to road users, in particular where there is a break in the boundary at the vehicular entrance to the site. Strengthening of the landscaping along the road boundary will go some way to mitigating the visual impact, and when it has matured, the residual overall visual effect would be moderate.

- 7.38 Viewpoint 3 is situated on the B2104 Hailsham Road, at the junction with footpath Westham 19a. Although there is a good long view across open fields towards the site, there are visual barriers in front of it including the trees along the bypass obscuring views of the site. Other roads within the study area were visited, as they were indicated as having potential views on the ZTV, but no change could be appreciated.

Temporary Visual Effects

- 7.39 The visual effects of the construction phase have been considered and are described in 7.15 above. While the site is undergoing development the visual impact of the development on the immediate geographical area is likely to be more noticeable than the completed scheme due to solid hoardings close to the boundary with the road. The construction works would cause a change of medium magnitude to high sensitivity receptors, creating a **moderate** adverse temporary landscape visual effect.

Summary of Landscape Character and Visual Impacts

- 7.40 The site is located on shallowly terraced former playing fields with farmland to the east, and generally single storey housing to the north. A vacant plot of land to the west is turning into scrub and is not publicly accessible although there is evidence that people are taking routes across it and the proposal site since paths worn in the vegetation can clearly be seen on aerial photographs. Eastbourne Road is a busy single carriageway road and bus route with cycleways marked on each side linking Polegate and Willingdon to Eastbourne and the A27 trunk road. There is a large volume of mainly twentieth century housing along this road, with the site and the adjacent farmland forming a gap in development at the present time.
- 7.41 Further to the north is an open space identified in local character assessments as the Eastbourne Levels, which is flat and open and characterised by drainage channels and water bodies collecting run-off from surrounding higher land and

draining into the sea near Eastbourne. To the south west the hills of the South Downs National Park rise steeply forming a backdrop to views over a wide area.

- 7.42 The proposals for the site include a 3 storey building on the Eastbourne Road frontage which will function as a medical centre with associated car parking to the rear. A belt of green space will wrap around the east boundary and open into an attenuation basin in the south corner, providing opportunities for tree planting to mitigate the impact of views from the South Downs. The remainder of the site will be developed as housing, gardens, footpaths, play areas and roads with trees set along wide grass verges.
- 7.43 The boundary along the east side of the site contains attractive and distinctive oak trees which impart a rural character to the site and these will obviously be retained, and will provide visual barriers to views from future housing to the east and from the public rights of way and trails to the north east.
- 7.44 The planting along the other boundaries will be strengthened using native tree and shrub species seen within adjacent field boundaries to create further visual barriers and filter views from the road and from local housing.
- 7.45 Further tree planting will be undertaken within the site to break up the hard lines of built form. Semi mature tree planting will be specified to increase the impact of the trees in the early life of the development.
- 7.46 The construction phase effects of the development can be mitigated by careful consideration of the site layout to reduce noise and visual impacts of site cabins, concrete mixers and other tall structures and machinery which can be seen over the site hoardings. Additional measures to reduce inconvenience to local residents and regular users of Eastbourne Road, such as traffic management and contractor parking arrangements should be considered.

8.0 Cumulative Effects Summary

- 8.1 The purpose of any cumulative assessment is to consider the potential effects upon the landscape and visual environments in relation to existing developments and other known consented and proposed developments in the area. It raises questions over thresholds of acceptable change (spatial and temporal) and the landscape's capacity to accept change. GLVIA advises that "cumulative landscape and visual effects result from additional changes to the landscape or visual amenity caused by the proposed development in conjunction with other developments (associated with or separate to it), or actions that occurred in the past, present or are likely to occur in the foreseeable future"

Scope of the Cumulative Assessment for this LVIA

- 8.2 This section does not consider the magnitude or significance of the effects arising from the individual cumulative developments, but looks at the additional landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed development in combination with one or more of the identified developments, on the identified study area.
- 8.3 This section considers the application site in the context of other developments in the vicinity considered significant enough to lead to potential cumulative effects. This could include specific factors which can influence the extent of cumulative landscape and visual effects such as effects on sense of scale; sense of distance; existing focal points and/or effects on the skyline.
- 8.4 The local planning authority have suggested that the following list of proposed developments be considered in the context of cumulative development:
- Brodricklands WD/2016/0986 for 390 dwellings, sports fields, and allotments.
 - Greenleaf Gardens WD/2016/0644/MAO up to 40 residential units
 - Little Shepham Lane WD/2016/3047 up to 108 dwellings.
 - Brodricklands WD/2020/2379 – additional 50 units on the above site.

- Mornings Mill WD/2021/0174 up to 700 units, a primary school, a community centre, a medical centre, 8,600 sqm of employment floorspace, allotments, playing fields, play space.
- Shepham Lane - 255 units
- Taylor Wimpey site – 175 units
- Sharnfold Farm – 400 units

8.5 A map showing the locations of the first 5 of these proposed developments (i.e. those for which information is available at the time of writing) is provided in Figure 3.

Cumulative Landscape Character Effects

8.6 The Proposed Development occupies a small parcel of land compared to the Mornings Mill and consented Brodricklands schemes. The latter includes a large area of open space on the south west side, i.e. closest to the National Park boundary.

8.7 Collectively, the cumulative developments along Eastbourne Road will form a key extension to the settlement of Willingdon. The theoretical cumulative exposure of these developments will be widespread within the immediate farmland setting to the east of Eastbourne Road, and will extend the influence of settlement areas within the Open Levels Local Landscape Character Area.

8.8 The magnitude of cumulative landscape impacts, as outlined in **Table E** in **Appendix A**, has been assessed as **medium** as there is likely to be an alteration to the site's baseline characteristics, including the loss of a large open green space visible from the South Downs National Park. The introduction of new residential development is likely to be prominent but is not considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. The scale of the development may be considered at odds with the existing landscape, impacting on an area of recognised landscape quality.

- 8.9 The sensitivity of the receiving landscape is the same as that discussed above in Section 7 for the Proposed Development alone and is considered to be **medium**. The overall landscape character effect of the cumulative schemes combined with the Proposed Development, as determined by reference to Table F, is assessed as **moderate**.

Cumulative Visual Effects

- 8.10 In terms of close views, the cumulative effects of Mornings Mill Farm and the Proposed Development are likely to be most noticeable by users of Eastbourne Road. Those travelling in a southerly direction will experience changes to the view due to the two in roughly equal measure since the site frontages measure similar distances along the road. Conversely, the Mornings Mill site will have a greater impact on the view experienced by travellers going north due to its location just after a bend in the road. The Brodricklands development will be set between Mornings Mill and the existing residential areas off Hazelwood Avenue, and has no frontage on Eastbourne Road.
- 8.11 There is potential for cumulative visual effects between the proposed site and the public rights of way to the east, namely footpaths 5 and 6 (1066 Country Walk). These will be incorporated into the Mornings Mill development, and it is likely that the Proposed Development will no longer be visible as a result.
- 8.12 From the public rights of way further to the east beyond the railway line, namely the Cuckoo Trail and footpath 6 (1066 Country Walk), the Mornings Mill and Brodricklands developments will have a far greater impact on views than the Proposed Development due to their greater extent.
- 8.13 From the South Downs the cumulative effect on views will follow the same narrative. From Viewpoint 11, for example, the three sites are currently experienced as green open space occupying the middle distance, providing contrast to the built-up areas of Polegate and Willingdon. The Brodricklands and Mornings Mill sites occupy a greater proportion of that space and therefore

development will have a proportionally greater impact on elevated views from the South Downs.

- 8.14 With regard to more distant views and potential 'in combination' cumulative visual effects from the north beyond the A27, there will be potential for some perceptible combined views principally from higher viewpoints such as Viewpoint 03. However, the visual assessment above noted that Viewpoint 03 resulted in a **minor** overall effect to the proposed site in the future baseline combined with the sites to the east along Eastbourne Road. It is not expected that with the addition of the cumulative development in planning that in combination effects would increase significantly as a result of the proposed site. While the separate developments would be perceptible, they would be filtered through layers of vegetation and the contribution of the proposed site would remain as a partially visible perceptible change in the existing view and form a small element in the wider landscape.
- 8.15 Two of the developments under consideration in terms of cumulative effects are those at Greenleaf Gardens and Shepham Lane. These are relatively small and close to the A27 Polegate bypass, somewhat removed from the Proposed Development site. They are located in areas which are surrounded by existing vegetation providing visual barriers, and the potential for combined views will be limited and no notable effect is anticipated. Where these developments in isolation are expected to have an impact on views from the viewpoints used in the study (VP01 and VP02), this is explained in the accompanying text.

Design and Mitigation Principles for Potential Cumulative Effects

- 8.16 As noted above, the potential for cumulative effect will be most noticeable from the nearest points on Eastbourne Road, the PRoW to the east, and from viewpoints on the South Downs. As such the following key principles for design and mitigation will help to avoid and minimise impacts on landscape and visual receptors:
- The scale of the development should be limited in height to retain the same scale of development that exists in the surrounding residential areas and

which forms part of the nearest sections of the approved neighbouring development to the east of the site;

- Open space should be provided within the site to enhance the setting and provide continuance of surrounding features across the site while enhancing connectivity and with the surrounding countryside; and
- A landscape framework should be provided as part of the proposed development with sufficient space to allow the proposed trees to establish and grow to maturity. This is illustrated in the illustrative landscape masterplan (**Figure 7**), and will be detailed and secured through landscape proposals and a landscape management plan provided as part of the planning conditions. This should relate to and consider the cumulative open space strategies and provision within the adjacent developments to the east.

9.0 Conclusions and Discussions

- 9.1 This report provides a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the residential and medical centre proposals to inform planning proposals and accompany the planning application for the site.
- 9.2 In compiling the baseline information for this report, ACD have undertaken a desktop study including reviews of aerial photography, web searches, Local Planning Authority (LPA) publications and landscape character assessments and National Character Assessment (NCA) information. ACD then undertook field assessments which includes a photographic survey of the landscape and using photography from a number of representative viewpoints.
- 9.3 The site falls within 750m of the boundary of the South Downs National Park at Wannock Copse and there are a number of other designations throughout the study area. There are also a number of routes (PRoW, cycling and walking routes), with a degree of focus on the landscape.
- 9.4 When considering the landscape quality, value, character and visual sensitivity, the overall weighted assessment of landscape sensitivity has been assessed as **medium**.
- 9.5 Due to the change in baseline characteristics (i.e. introduction of new dwellings and a medical centre) a change in the landscape character will be appreciated.
- 9.6 The magnitude of landscape impacts due to the Proposed Development has been assessed as **small** as there is likely to be a minor alteration to the site's baseline characteristics. The introduction of new residential development may be locally prominent but is not considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape, when considering adjacent residential dwellings. The scale of the development would have a small impact on an area of recognised landscape quality.

- 9.7 The farmland to the east, known as Mornings Mill Farm, is subject to a large planning application for 700 homes. Still further east the land formerly known as Brodricklands Farm and Hamlands Farm has been granted permission for 440 dwellings. When considered together, these three schemes would alter the existing character of the farmland and former playing field land to that of new residential development, with small houses, gardens and parking areas closely spaced around curving roads, interspersed with open green spaces and trees. When the cumulative landscape impacts of the other proposals along Eastbourne Road are considered, the magnitude has been assessed as **medium** due to the larger overall scale of development.
- 9.8 The overall landscape character effect is therefore assessed as **minor** for the Proposed Development and **moderate** for the cumulative proposals. This is outlined in **Table F** in **Appendix A** of this report.
- 9.9 In terms of visual amenity the site is visually open from the north, west and south, with views from the east filtered through vegetation. The magnitude of visual impact has been assessed as **large** on close views due to the openness of the site. The major visual effects are limited to viewpoints within 200m of the site along Eastbourne Road and from Spurway Park, and this can be mitigated through tree planting and the strengthening of landscape along the boundaries.
- 9.10 Views from housing other than those immediately surrounding the site, and from public rights of way situated at a similar level are minimal due to the topography and interceding built form and vegetation forming visual barriers. The visual effects from viewpoints at a distance of more than 300m from the site are assessed as being minor to negligible.
- 9.11 The Proposed Development site and the other proposal sites along Eastbourne Road form a component of the view from elevated viewpoints on the South Downs such as Butts Brow. The Proposed Development alone is considered to have a **minor** effect, however when considered with Mornings Mill Farm and the approved scheme at Brodricklands Farm, the effect is considered to be **moderate**. This is

because the additional developments will occupy most of the portion of open green space in middle distance views such as those illustrated in Viewpoints 11 and 12. They will also have a larger effect on views from the public rights of way to the north. Following the implementation of the landscape strategy and mitigation planting, the residual overall visual effects of the proposed development will remain (albeit at a lower level as the planting becomes established over a couple of decades), for viewpoints along Eastbourne Road and from within the South Downs National Park.

10.0 Appendices

Appendix A – Methodology

Appendix B- Zone of Theoretical Visibility Methodology

Appendix C- Landscape Effects

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Figure 1- Ordnance Survey Map

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Figure 3- Zone of Theoretical Visibility including locations of other proposals

Figure 4- Viewpoint Locations

Figure 5- Statutory Designation Plan

Figure 6- Landscape Character Areas

Figure 7- Site Layout

Appendix A- Methodology

Quality

- 10.1 Quality or condition relates to the physical state of the landscape and its intactness from the visual, functional and ecological perspectives, together with the state of repair of its constituent features or elements (e.g. hedgerows, woodlands, field pattern etc.). Local landscape quality within the study area has been considered based on the criteria described in the following table.

Table A. Landscape Quality (or Condition)

Landscape Quality (or Condition)	Typical Indicators
Very High	All landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are in local vernacular and materials. No detracting elements are evident
High	Most landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Most buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Few detracting elements are evident
Medium	Some landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Some buildings are in local vernacular and materials and some detracting elements are evident
Low	Few landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Few buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Many detracting or incongruous elements are evident
Very Low	No landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are not in local vernacular and materials. Detracting or incongruous elements are much in evidence

Value

- 10.2 The value attributed to an area of landscape reflects communal perception at a local, regional, national or, occasionally, international scale. It is informed by a number of factors including scenic beauty, wildness, tranquillity and particular cultural associations. Cultural associations may be widely held at a national scale or more local in nature. Landscapes considered to be of the highest value would generally be formally designated at the national level, whereas those considered of lowest value would generally be undesignated, degraded landscapes, perhaps identified as being in poor condition and requiring either restoration or re-creation. Although value is largely determined by reference to statutory and planning policy designations, an absence of such designation does not necessarily imply the absence of value, as other factors such as

scarcity or cultural associations can establish an area of otherwise unremarkable landscape as a valued local resource. The value of landscape character areas and designations has been determined using the criteria described in the following table.

Table B. Landscape Value

Landscape Value	Typical Indicators
Very High	Areas comprising a clear composition of valued landscape components in robust form and health, free of disruptive visual detractors and with a strong sense of place. Areas containing a strong, balanced structure with distinct features worthy of conservation. Such areas would generally be internationally or nationally recognised designations, e.g. National Parks
High	Areas primarily containing valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition and lacking prominent disruptive visual detractors. Areas containing a strong structure with noteworthy features or elements, exhibiting a sense of place. Such areas would generally be national statutorily designated areas, such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Such areas may also relate to the setting of internationally or nationally statutory designated areas, e.g. National Parks.
Medium	Areas primarily of valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition with low levels of disruptive visual detractors, exhibiting a recognisable landscape structure. Such areas would generally be non-statutory locally designated areas such as Areas of Great Landscape Value. Such areas may also relate to the setting of national statutorily designated areas, such as AONB.
Low	Areas containing some features of landscape value but lacking a coherent and aesthetically pleasing composition with frequent detracting visual elements, exhibiting a distinguishable structure often concealed by mixed land uses or development. Such areas would be commonplace at the local level and would generally be undesignated, offering scope for improvement.
Very Low	Areas lacking valued landscape components or comprising degraded, disturbed or derelict features, lacking any aesthetically pleasing composition with a dominance of visually detracting elements, exhibiting mixed land uses which conceal the baseline structure. Such areas would generally be restricted to the local level and identified as requiring recovery.

Character sensitivity

- 10.3 Each landscape character area or designation is assessed for the sensitivity of its character to the introduction of the proposed development, taking into account its key characteristics, landscape elements, composition and cultural associations. Certain aspects of landscape character are particularly important indicators of the degree to which a landscape is likely to be able to successfully accommodate development. These include the general scale and complexity of its landforms and elements; the degree of enclosure or openness; the degree and nature of manmade influences upon it; and whether it offers particular experiences such as remoteness or tranquillity. The criteria used to determine the sensitivity of landscape character are set out in the following table.

Table C. Character Sensitivity

Character Sensitivity	Typical Indicators
Very High	Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape susceptible to change and of high quality and condition. Scale and Enclosure: Small-scale landform/land cover/ development, human scale indicators, fine grained, enclosed with narrow views, sheltered. Manmade influence: Absence of manmade elements, traditional or historic settlements, natural features and 'natural' forms of amenity parkland, perceived as natural 'wild land' lacking in man-made features, land use elements and detractors Remoteness and Tranquillity: Sense of peace, isolation or wildness, remote and empty, no evident movement.
High	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium
Medium	Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape of moderate susceptibility to change and of medium quality and condition. Scale and Enclosure: Medium-scale landform/land cover/ development, textured, semi-enclosed with middle distance views. Manmade influence: Some presence of man-made elements, which may be partially out of scale with the landscape and be of only partially consistent with vernacular styles. Remoteness and Tranquillity: some noise, evident, but not dominant human activity and development, noticeable movement.
Low	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low.
Very Low	Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape insusceptible to change and of low quality and condition. Scale and Enclosure: Large-scale landform/land cover/ development, Featureless, coarse grained, open with broad views. Manmade influence: Frequent presence of utility, infrastructure or industrial elements, contemporary structures e.g. masts, pylons, cranes, silos, industrial sheds with vertical emphasis, functional man-made land-use patterns and engineered aspects. Remoteness and Tranquillity: Busy and noisy, human activity and development, prominent movement.

Visual Sensitivity of Landscape Areas:

- 10.4 The visual sensitivity of an area of landscape relates to its general level of openness, the nature and number of visual receptors present within a landscape, and the probability of change in visual amenity due to the development being visible. It should be noted that landscape visual sensitivity refers to the visual sensitivity of the entire landscape that is being assessed, rather than an assessment of the visual effects of a specific, individual development.
- 10.5 The following table provides an overview of the typical indicators of visual sensitivity, which can be used to give a transparent, reasoned judgement regarding landscape visual sensitivity.

Table D. Landscape Visual Sensitivity

Landscape Sensitivity	Visual	Typical Indicators
Very High		Visual interruption: Flat or gently undulating topography, few if any vegetative or built features. Nature of views: Densely populated, dispersed pattern of small settlements, outward looking settlement, landscape focused recreation routes and/or visitor facilities, distinctive settings, gateways or public viewpoints.
High		Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium.
Medium		Visual interruption: Undulating or gently rolling topography, some vegetative and built features. Nature of views: Moderate density of population, settlements of moderate size with some views outwards, routes with some degree of focus on the landscape.
Low		Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low.
Very Low		Visual interruption: Rolling topography, frequent vegetative or built features. Nature of views: Unpopulated or sparsely populated, concentrated pattern of large settlements, introspective settlement, inaccessible, indistinctive or industrial settings.

- 10.6 The overall landscape sensitivity is derived by combining the assessed values attributed to landscape condition, landscape value, character sensitivity and effects on landscape elements and landscape visual sensitivity, to define an overall value within the range of Very High, High, Medium and Low.

- 10.7 Since each criterion has a varying weight in its contribution to sensitivity the overall value is determined by professional judgement.
- 10.8 For the purposes of this assessment greater weight is attributed to Landscape Value and Landscape Character Sensitivity since these factors have greater defining criteria in the description of the landscape characterisation.

Magnitude of Change

- 10.9 Magnitude of change has been predicted by considering the anticipated loss or disruption to character forming landscape elements (e.g. tree planting, landform, buildings, and watercourses etc.), which would arise through introduction of the proposed scheme.

Table E: Definition of Magnitude of Landscape Impacts

Magnitude	Description
Large	Total loss of or major alteration to key valued elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements considered being prominent and totally uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be at a considerable variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. Would cause a high quality landscape to be permanently changed and its quality diminished.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be out of scale with the landscape, and at odds with the local pattern and landform. Will leave an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality.
Small	Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. May not quite fit into the landform and scale of the landscape. Affect an area of recognised landscape character
Negligible	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Maintain existing landscape quality, and maybe slightly at odds to the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape.

Overall Landscape Character Effect

10.10 The overall landscape character effect is determined by the assessment of landscape sensitivity set against the magnitude of change as indicated by the matrix in the table below.

Table F: Overall Landscape Character Effects

Magnitude	Sensitivity			
	Very High	High	Medium	Low
Large	Major	Major	Major/moderate	Moderate
Medium	Major	Major/moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ minor
Small	Moderate	Moderate/minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Minor/moderate	Minor	Minor/ Negligible	Negligible

10.11 The prediction and extent of effect cannot always be absolute. It is for each assessment to determine the assessment criteria and the thresholds, using informed and well-reasoned professional judgement supported by thorough justification for their selection, and explanation as to how the conclusions for each effect assessed have been derived, as noted in GLVIA 3rd edition para 2.23-2.26 and 3.32-36.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

- 10.12 The locations from which the proposed development will be visible are known as visual receptors. The assessment of visual sensitivity considers both the category of visual receptor and the nature of their existing view. It takes account of the location of the receptor or viewpoint; the expectations, occupation or activity of the people present; the quality of the existing visual context; and the importance or value likely to be attributed by them to the available view. It is therefore the case that not all receptors within a given category are deemed to display equal sensitivity.
- 10.13 In accordance with the GLVIA, for the purposes of the visual assessment, the visual receptors have been graded according to their sensitivity to change against criteria set out in the table below.

Table G: Visual Receptor sensitivity

Receptor Sensitivity	Description
High	Occupiers of residential properties. Users of outdoor recreational facilities, including public rights of way, whose attention or interest may be focused on the landscape Communities where the development results in changes in the landscape setting or valued views enjoyed by the community.
Medium	People travelling through or past the affected landscape in cars, on trains or other transport routes where higher speeds are involved and views sporadic and short-lived. People engaged in outdoor recreation where enjoyment of the landscape is incidental rather than the main interest.
Low	People at their place of work, Industrial facilities.

- 10.14 The number of people likely to be present and the duration of time that a view is likely to be experienced may also influence the visual sensitivity of a particular location.
- 10.15 It is sometimes the case that different categories of visual receptor might be present at a selected representative viewpoint (e.g. a selected location may include both residential properties and workplaces suggesting different levels of sensitivity). In such cases the primary receptor category is identified (usually the more sensitive).

Visual Magnitude of Change

10.16 The visibility of the proposals and the magnitude of their change upon a view and the resulting effect of visual effect are dependent on the range of factors already outlined, together with, the angle of the sun, the time of year and weather conditions. Of equal importance will be whether the site is seen completely, or in part; whether the site appears on the skyline; whether it is viewed with a backcloth of land or vegetation; or with a complex foreground; and whether the site forms part of an expansive landscape or is visible within a restricted view. The aspect of dwellings and whether the view is from a main window or a secondary window, which may be used less frequently, is also a consideration. From highways, the direction and speed of travel are also a consideration. In the assessment magnitude of change is ranked in accordance with the follow table.

Table H: Definition of Magnitude of Visual Impact

Magnitude	Examples
Very Large	The development would result in a dramatic change in the existing view and/or would cause a dramatic change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would appear large scale and/or form the dominant elements within the overall view and/or may be in full view the observer or receptor. Commanding, controlling the view.
Large	The development would result in a prominent change in the existing view and/or would cause a prominent change in the quality and /or character of the view. The development would form prominent elements within the overall view and/or may be easily noticed by the observer or receptor. Standing out, striking, sharp, unmistakeable, easily seen.
Medium	The development would result in a noticeable change in the existing view and/or would cause a noticeable change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would form a conspicuous element within the overall view and/or may be readily noticed by the observer or receptor. Noticeable, distinct, catching the eye or attention, clearly visible, well defined.
Small	The development would result in a perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or character of the view. The development would form an apparent small element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Visible, evident, obvious.
Very Small	The development would result in a barely perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or would form an inconspicuous minor element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Lacking sharpness of definition, not obvious, indistinct, not clear, obscure, blurred, and indefinite.
Negligible	Only a small part of the development would be discernible and/or it is at such a distance that no change to the existing view can be appreciated. Weak, not legible, near limit of acuity of human eye.

Overall Visual Effect

10.17 The overall visual effects are determined by the assessment of receptor sensitivity set against the magnitude of change, as indicated by the matrix in **Table I**.

Table I: Overall Visual Effects

Magnitude	Sensitivity		
	High	Medium	Low
Very large	Major	Major	Major/moderate
Large	Major	Major/moderate	Moderate
Medium	Major/moderate	Moderate	Moderate/minor
Small	Moderate	Moderate/minor	Minor
Very Small	Minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Visual Assessment Parameters

10.18 In order to evaluate what the visual impact of the development will be and, if appropriate, what can be done, to ameliorate the impact, it is necessary to describe the existing situation to provide a basis against which any change can be assessed. The assessment of visual impact from any one location takes into account the:

- Sensitivity of the views and viewers (visual receptor) affected;
- Nature, scale or magnitude and duration of the change
- Extent of the proposed development that will be visible;
- Degree of visual intrusion or obstruction that will occur;
- Distance of the view;
- Change in character or quality of the view compared to the existing.

10.19 A range of fixed visual receptors was initially considered, with emphasis placed on identification and selection of locations with a clear relationship to the proposed scheme where potential visual implications were deemed to be greatest. The key visual receptors normally include statutory and non-statutory designated or protected areas, cultural heritage resources, residential properties and farmsteads, recreational/tourist resources, panoramic hilltop views, focused or directed views, and cumulative views. Viewpoints were selected to be representative of these visual receptor types.

10.20 These preliminary viewpoints locations were assessed in terms of visibility during field investigation resulting in some preliminary viewpoints either being repositioned to locations offering improved visual representation or discounted as not offering any views. In addition, field investigation identified a number of other closer viewpoints.

- 10.21 For the field assessment, a Canon EOS 600D camera with an 18-55mm lens was used, set at 35mm focal length. This is in line with best practice as shown in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals.
- 10.22 Field investigation from the preliminary viewpoints was used to assess the actual visibility of the proposed development within the study area, taking into account the visual barrier effect of vegetation and buildings.

Site Appraisal/ Photographic Studies

- 10.23 The photographic study was undertaken in January 2021. Viewpoints at varying close distance from the site were selected to represent the typical views of the site. **Figure 4** shows the location of these viewpoints. In determining the viewpoints, whether in the immediate locality or further away, the main public highways, sections of public footpaths, and some of the publicly available spaces within the study area were visited. It is acknowledged that from public places, more viewers are likely to be affected thereby adding to the overall impact upon receptors in those locations.
- 10.24 The locations from which the proposed development will be visible are known as visual receptors. In accordance with the “Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition”, for the purposes of the visual assessment the visual receptors have been graded according to their sensitivity to change.
- 10.25 From the results of the initial desk study and site appraisal it is clear that the proposed development will be visible from a limited number of locations, at varying but close distances, and from both public and private areas.
- 10.26 In order to evaluate what the visual impact of the development will be and, if appropriate, what can be done to ameliorate the impact, it is necessary to describe the existing situation to provide a basis against which any change can be assessed. Each assessment of visual impact has therefore been made taking into consideration the character and quality of the existing view.

Limitations of Assessment

- 10.27 The field study and photographic appraisal was undertaken during January 2021 at a time when views benefit from vegetation which has completely lost its foliage. Views of the landscape are therefore potentially more extensive than they would be in the summer months when the existing vegetation will form stronger visual barriers. Photographs of each viewpoint indicate the general outlook for receptors.
- 10.28 In determining the viewpoints, whether in the immediate locality or further away, the main public highways, sections of public footpaths, and some of the publicly available spaces within the study area were visited. It is acknowledged that from public places, more viewers are likely to be affected, thereby adding to the overall impact upon receptors in those locations.
- 10.29 For the purposes of this report, the assessment has been based on development proposals illustrated in the planning application. The proposals include a series of elevations and sections for the various heights of buildings and a series of detailed development plans.

Methodology relating to Cumulative Effects

- 10.30 Wealden District Council has put forward a list of developments in the area, both consented and approved, which are to be considered in terms of their cumulative effects. The locations of these developments have been identified and are plotted in Figure 3. Two are considered to be more likely to intensify the landscape and visual effects since they are situated on land further south along the Eastbourne Road, and will have the effect of “filling in” a greater proportion of the triangle of green open space between the existing housing, the railway line and Eastbourne Road. Brodricklands Farm has planning permission and work has commenced; an application has recently been submitted for Mornings Mill Farm.
- 10.31 The other sites at Little Shepham Lane and Greenleaf Gardens are not considered likely to have an impact on the landscape character or on views of

the Proposed Development site as they are some distance away and vegetation and buildings form visual barriers. Where these two schemes are likely to be visible from a particular viewpoint (and the Proposed Development is not) this is described in the notes.

- 10.32 The cumulative effects assessment presented here focusses primarily on the combined effects of the past, present and future proposals together with the Proposed Development. Where it is considered that the visual impact would be affected by the cumulative proposals this has been noted in the annotations accompanying the viewpoint photographs. The magnitude of the impact and the overall visual effects have been assessed against Tables H and I above for a) the current proposals only and b) the cumulative impact of the Proposed Development in combination with the Mornings Mill Farm and/or Brodricklands Farm proposals.

APPENDIX B – Zone of Theoretical Visibility Methodology

- 10.33 Following an initial desk based assessment of aerial photography, Ordnance Survey mapping a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was prepared.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 10.34 In order to assist in the assessment of the potential visual effects of any development, a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) is normally modelled. The computer ZTV is used as a working tool to inform the assessment team of the extent of the zone within which the proposed development may have an influence or effect on landscape character and visual amenity and the areas within which the study area together with site survey work should be concentrated. It should be noted that this is a topographical information based exercise with no account being taken of the visual barrier effects of vegetation or buildings.
- 10.35 A computer generated ZTV was established and a study area together with a number of representative viewpoints determined. All these viewpoints are at various distances from the scheme and cover all main points of the compass.
- 10.36 The extent of study area and viewpoints were selected as being representative and having the potential to offer a degree of landscape and visual effects.

APPENDIX C - Landscape Assessment

LOCAL CHARACTER AREA

- 10.37 The following extracts from published landscape character assessments describe the local character areas.
- 10.38 The site falls within Natural England's National Character Area 124: Pevensey Levels, (2013).

"The Levels are dominated by the siltstone, mudstone and sandstone of the Early Cretaceous Hastings Beds, and of Weald Clay, which were raised and exposed in the Tertiary Alpine Orogeny (mountain-building-episode). Small areas of Greensand, Gault, and Chalk can be found in the west of the NCA at the boundary with the South Downs."

"The area is framed by the steep scarp of the South Downs in the west and the higher ground of the High Weald in the north, with views of the English Channel to the south. Much of the Pevensey Levels was under water until the medieval period and the whole area is low lying and vulnerable to the effects of climate change, particularly coastal flooding."

The Pevensey Levels National Character Area (NCA) forms the transition between the Low Weald NCA to the north-west and the English Channel. It is bounded on the north and east by the higher ground of the High Weald NCA, while to the south-west the steep scarp slope of the South Downs NCA dominates the backdrop. This area of alluvial marshland drains the elevated landscapes of both the High and Low Weald, its main river (Waller's Haven) draining into the sea."

10.39 Key characteristics of the landscape character area which are exhibited in the locality of the site are:

- *Low-lying tract of largely reclaimed wetland, actively maintained by purpose-built drainage systems and river flood plain improvements, with long views to the dramatic and distinctive backdrop of the South Downs and out over the sea. A predominantly open landscape with extensive grazed wet meadows and some arable fields with characteristic dykes, wetlands and wide skies. The open, windswept feel is further enhanced by the scarcity of trees and hedges in the landscape.*
- *Local landscape diversity is added by ‘eyes’ – islands of higher ground, many with farmsteads – and also by reed-fringed ditches, scattered willows and patches of standing water with adjacent rushy pasture. Ditches of high biodiversity value, particularly for invertebrates and aquatic plants, typically fringed with reeds, and with patches of standing water and rushy pasture reinforcing the wetland character.*

10.40 The South Wealden Landscape and Ecological Assessment Study (April 2017), was undertaken to assess the suitability of potential development sites. Chapter 6 “Polegate and Willingdon”, describes the Levels area as follows:

“The Open Levels Local Landscape Character Type covers the area between Polegate and Willingdon together with a belt of land which extends out north-eastwards from the northern edge of Polegate (around Ottenham Court). Within the LLCT the strong pattern of ancient drainage ditches on low lying open landscapes and open views northwards to the southern slopes of the High Weald all contribute to the very strong sense of place. The absence of tree cover and the low lying open landform results in the area’s very high visibility. The presence of nationally important ecological habitats together with a strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness contribute to the value of the landscape.”

10.41 Local Landscape Character Area (LLCA) F4 East Polegate Levels is surrounded on all sides by Polegate, Willingdon and Langney. The LLCA comprises predominantly pastoral fields with playing fields and recreation grounds closer to the urban edges.

10.42 The key characteristics of this LLCA are detailed below with those characteristics which are particularly evident in the Polegate and Willingdon area underlined for emphasis:

- *The LLCA is surrounded on all sides by the settlements of Polegate, Willingdon and Langney*
- *Views from the LLCA are dominated by the predominantly residential urban edges of the urban areas*
- *The eastern part of the LLCA comprises predominantly small pastoral fields and rough grassland, crossed by a network of reed-fringed drainage ditches*
- *The western part of the LLCA comprises further pastoral fields and, in closer proximity to the urban edge, a series of playing fields and recreation grounds. Mature trees are a key feature*
- *The overall sense of remoteness and tranquillity within the LLCA is diminished as a result of the presence of the railway corridor, the A27 road corridor in the east and the proximity to urban edges*

“The western edge of Polegate is clearly contained by the A27 and railway line and the northern edge is also contained by the A27, although there is currently a belt of undeveloped landscape separating the urban edge from the A27. Twentieth century expansion of Eastbourne, Polegate and Willingdon has seen the gradual coalescence of the three settlements and has resulted in a continuous urban area extending from Eastbourne in the south to Polegate in the north, which encircles a central area of open undeveloped landscape (described above as the Eastbourne Levels) much of which lies within flood zones 2 and 3.

Generally, the northern and western settlement edges of Polegate are well integrated with existing mature vegetation (particularly along the A27 road

corridor) and there are few open views of the settlement edge from the wider landscape in this area. Embankments and existing mature vegetation generally screen views of Polegate from the A27 as it passes around the west and north of the settlement. However, there are clearer views of the urban edge from the A22 as it passes across the floodplain.”

- 10.43 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment updated in 2016 identifies the site as part of the Eastbourne Levels Character Area (24):

“Small tract of flat open levels separated from the Pevensey Levels by the low Polegate - Stone Cross ridge.

- Some sense of tranquillity in the heart of the area with big skies and cries of wetland birds.*
- Evidence of many centuries of human intervention to reclaim the lowland marsh as grazing land.*
- An intricate pattern of manmade ditches as historic field enclosures and drainage systems.*
- The hard urban edges of Willingdon, Langney, Sovereign Harbour and Eastbourne surround the area.*
- The hard urban edges are softened in places by trees notably at Hampden Park. Eastbourne Park: A Green Infrastructure of multifunctional green spaces and lakes including Shinewater, Southbourne and West Langney created to provide flood compensation for the A22 New Route or Golden Jubilee Way and new schools and housing development in the town.*
- Internationally significant archaeological discovery of an important Bronze Age settlement and causeway designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.*
- Few trees and hedges but typically wind sculpted scattered willow and thorn scrub,*
- The principle tree species are willows, field maple, alder, ash, poplar and oak.*

- *The main A22 new route crosses the area, as does the A2290 and mainline railway. “*

10.44 The following assessment considers the site as part of the local character area comprising the farmland, ex-playing fields and wetlands / levels between Willingdon and Polegate.

Assessed Landscape Sensitivity of Local Character Area		
Criteria	Indicator Description	Assessed Result
Quality	Most landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Most buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Due to the existence of detracting elements in the form of a prominent railway line to the north of the site, and a number of electricity pylons the quality is downgraded from High to Medium	Medium
Value	Areas primarily of valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition with low levels of disruptive visual detractors, exhibiting a recognisable landscape structure. The area does not have statutory designations but relates to the setting of the South Downs National Park.	Medium
Character sensitivity	Some important elements of moderate susceptibility to change with a semi- enclosed scale, there is some evidence of man-made elements with some noise, but human activity and development is not dominant.	Medium
Landscape visual sensitivity	Flat topography with frequent vegetation features, recreational routes with a degree of focus on the landscape, moderate density of population.	Medium
	Overall, Weighted Landscape Sensitivity.	Medium

APPENDIX D- Visual Assessment

Viewpoint 1: View from footbridge over the A27 Polegate Bypass, carrying the Cuckoo Trail cycle route.



Vp1	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 1.65km looking south)	
Baseline Description	This is a view from the footbridge over the A27, a dual carriageway running east-west approximately 1.6km north of the site. Although the footbridge provides an elevated viewpoint of the surrounding landscape, the dense banks of vegetation to each side of the road obscure views towards the site. Tall pylons are visible in the background and the ridge of the South Downs can be seen on the distant horizon.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint the proposals will be set beyond the network of vegetation which exists between the site and this location. No change in the view is likely to be due to the Proposed Development, however another development, at Greenleaf Gardens which is being assessed for cumulative effects, is close to this viewpoint.	
Type of effect	None	
Magnitude of Change	The development would result in no change in the existing view and would not be legible to the observer.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude due to the Proposed Development: Cumulative magnitude including Greenleaf proposals:	Users of the footbridge including cyclists on NCN21 - High Negligible Medium
Overall Visual Effects a) Proposed Development only b) Greenleaf		
a) Negligible b) Moderate		

Viewpoint 2: View from Shepham Lane Footbridge over A27 Polegate bypass



VP2	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 1.61km looking south west)	
Baseline Description	This is a view from another footbridge further east of viewpoint 1. Again the thick belt of vegetation obscures views towards the site. A distinctive line of mature oak trees is visible on the left which forms part of the screening vegetation around a large property named Little Shepham. The dual carriageway, constructed in the 1980s / 1990s, has only one slip road along this section (leading to the wind turbines) and road users have no views into the surrounding landscape to the south.	
Predicted change	A residential development has been granted planning approval at Little Shepham. Plans indicate that some of the units would be located on a triangle of land between the road and the line of oak trees, suggesting that they would be partially visible from this viewpoint. However, the Shepham Lane development is unlikely to be visible from the Proposed Development as the former is lower than the viewpoint illustrated here and vegetation and existing built form intervene.	
Type of Effect	The proposals at another site are likely to have an impact on this view, introducing the roofs of small housing units on the left of the image. However, the Proposed Development would not have an effect.	
Magnitude of Change	Negligible change in the existing view as a result of the proposals under consideration here.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude due to the Proposed Development: Cumulative magnitude from Shepham Lane proposals:	Users of the footbridge / PRow – High Negligible Small
Overall Visual Effects a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect a) Negligible b) Moderate		

Viewpoint 3: View from the B2104 Hailsham Road at the junction with PROW Westham 19a



VP3	Type 1: Panoramic View	(Distance 2.64km looking south west)	
Baseline Description	This is a view across the Eastbourne Levels area from the north east. A group of three wind turbines makes a distinct feature in the agricultural landscape, with neat hedgerows and lines of mature trees forming field boundaries in the mid-view. The track is a public right of way which leads to Polegate over the footbridge identified as VP02. The A27 Polegate bypass can be seen passing across the middle of the photograph, with the recent housing development off Shepham Lane just discernible beyond. The distinctive scarp slopes on the edge of the South Downs can clearly be seen in the background.		
Predicted change	The Proposed Development will not be visible from this location due to interceding vegetation along the south side of the A27, and existing residential areas in Polegate.		
Type of Effect	The additional housing proposed at Shepham Lane will have a minor impact on this view, extending the volume of built form beyond the A27, however the development under consideration in this report will have a negligible impact.		
Magnitude of Change	Negligible change in the existing view as a result of the Proposed Development.		
Assessment	Sensitivity	Users of the PRoW – High, Road users - medium	
	Magnitude due to the Proposed Development proposals:	Negligible	
	Cumulative magnitude from Shepham Lane proposals:	Very small	
Overall Visual Effects a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect		a) Negligible b) Minor	

Viewpoint 4: View from grass verge where the site adjoins Eastbourne Road



VP4	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 0.10km (to centre of site) looking east)	
Baseline Description	This is a close view of the site taken from the western corner alongside Eastbourne Road. A post and rail fence marks the boundary with some self-seeded trees and a medium sized oak tree along the fence line. The tussocky grass and poplar trees are visible, with low level housing of Spurway Park in the distance to the left of the photograph. The mature trees along the field boundary with Mornings Mill Farm are visible in the background.	
Predicted change	The proposed development in this corner of the site includes a group of 9 plots, comprising detached and semi-detached houses and garages. The main site entrance is proposed close to the point where the oak tree is located.	
Type of Effect	The open field will be converted to housing, with gardens, streetlighting and garages visible from this spot. Boundary planting is proposed along the roadside and will thicken with good management over the first five to ten years to provide a visual barrier.	
Magnitude of Change	The development will have a major impact on this view.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude due to the Proposed Development: Cumulative magnitude from all Eastbourne Rd proposals:	Road users – medium (see VP5 and VP6 for sensitivity of residents) Large Small
Overall Visual Effects a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect a) Major/Moderate b) Moderate/minor		

Viewpoint 5: *View from Eastbourne Road into the site*

Panorama below looking northwards along the road



Panorama below looking southwards along the road



VP5	Type 1: Panoramic View	(Distance 0.11km to centre of site looking north east)	
Baseline Description	These two panoramic shots show the views into the site from the grass verge on the opposite side of Eastbourne Road. The road is marked with cycle lanes on both sides and there is a bus stop in the foreground of the south view. The site boundary is marked by a dilapidated post and rail fence hung with advertising banners and backed by a hedge and scrub. The bank resulting from the terracing of the playing field rises above the road level and is particularly visible behind the Hailsham Sixth Form college banner.		
Predicted change	The proposed medical centre will be located along this section of the site frontage, comprising a three storey building set back just a few metres from the road. The existing boundary hedge will be strengthened and trees will be added to add visual barriers and break up views of the built form in future years, contributing more as they mature.		
Type of Effect	The open field will be converted to housing, with the medical centre and the site access visible from this position. Boundary planting is proposed along the roadside and will thicken with good management over the first five to ten years to provide a visual barrier.		
Magnitude of Change	The development will have a major impact on this view.		
Assessment	Sensitivity	Residents and road users - high	
	Magnitude due to the Proposed Development:	Large	
	Cumulative effects from all Eastbourne Rd proposals:	Large	
Overall Visual Effects a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect			
a) Major b) Major			

Viewpoint 6: View from Spurway Park into the site



VP6	Type 1: Panoramic View	(Distance 0.20km to centre of site, looking south)	
Baseline Description	This is a close view into the site from the open corner of Spurway Park, a small development of mainly single storey dwellings on the north side of the site. This is representative of the view enjoyed by residents within this close. The hills of the South Downs form an attractive and dramatic backdrop to the open aspect of the site. The photograph was taken looking over a rustic chestnut fence along the boundary with the Site which at present is in need of repair, but which enhances the rural character of the landscape. The housing along Eastbourne Road forms only a small portion of the view. The poplar trees are prominent vertical elements adding interest to the scene.		
Predicted change	The Proposed Development will dominate the view from this perspective. During the construction phase it is likely that the view will be screened with solid hoardings, and the construction is likely to generate noise and dust especially when the wind blows from the south or south-east. Houses and gardens will fill the view in the medium term, becoming less evident as the boundary planting gradually matures over the first decade. The cumulative schemes will not be visible beyond the Proposed Development.		
Type of Effect	The additional housing and boundary planting will have the effect of reducing the extent of green space visible from this location and is likely to form a visual barrier to views of the South Downs hills.		
Magnitude of Change	The Proposed Development will result in a very large change in the existing view. There will be negligible effects from the other proposals along Eastbourne Road. The cumulative effect however will remain very large.		
Assessment	Sensitivity	Residents – High	
	Magnitude due to the Proposed Development:	Very large	
	Cumulative effects from all Eastbourne Rd proposals:	Very large	
Overall Visual Effects – a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect			
a) Major b) Major			

Viewpoint 7: View from the Cuckoo Trail along the edge of the Eastbourne Levels



VP7	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 1.84km looking west)	
Baseline Description	This is a view across the Eastbourne Levels area from the west. The path, which links Polegate with a new supermarket and other services within Chaucer Business Park, follows the route of a former railway line and is well-used by walkers and cyclists. The photograph illustrates the wetlands which form a landscape of shallow slopes and waterlogged land surrounded by scrub and trees. The slopes of the South Downs create an attractive backdrop to the scene. The industrial units within Chaucer Business Park are visible on the right with vertical pylons tracking across the landscape in the middle distance. The small patch of green with a pylon in front of it is a visible part of the Mornings Mill site, which is the subject of a recent planning application. The Proposed Development site is beyond the row of mature oak trees behind Mornings Mill Farm and is not visible from this position. The poplar trees visible on the left hand side of the photograph are just in front of the railway line and beyond these is the site of the approved housing development at Brodricklands and Hamlands Farms, which is being considered in terms of cumulative effects.	
Predicted change	The cumulative schemes at Mornings Mill Farm and Brodricklands and Hamlands Farms will be partially visible where the land rises in the middle distance from this location. The shades of green visible in winter through the bare trees will be replaced with the outlines of houses.	
Type of Effect	The additional housing will have the effect of reducing the extent of green space visible from this location and other viewpoints further along the Cuckoo Trail towards Polegate.	
Magnitude of Change	Negligible change in the existing view as a result of the Proposed Development, but a small effect due to the other proposals along Eastbourne Road.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude due to the Proposed Development: Cumulative effects from all Eastbourne Rd proposals:	Users of the PRoW – High Negligible Small
Overall Visual Effects – a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect b) Minor b) Moderate		

Viewpoint 8: View from the PROW Willingdon and Jevington 5, between the house on the north side of the path and the barns on the south side of the track.



VP8	Type 1: Panoramic View	(Distance 0.34km to centre of site, looking north west)	
Baseline Description	Along most of this section of the route the view is blocked by hedging and mature trees, but at this point there is a good view through the field boundary to the fields beyond. The housing on Eastbourne Road can be seen on the left, and the derelict house on the corner of the Proposed Development site is just visible beyond a pair of oak trees. In the centre of the image a succession of field boundaries can be discerned across the grazing land of Mornings Mill Farm, and beyond that the rough grass of the site. The lines of oak trees along the field boundaries are an important feature in this view.		
Predicted change	Considering just the Proposed Development alone, the proposals would be set beyond the furthest visible field boundary beyond the second line of mature oak trees. The ridgelines of the closest new dwellings are likely to be comparable in height with the two conifers visible behind the large group of oaks in the centre of the frame.		
Type of Effect	The playing field land is slightly higher than the land in the foreground and the outlines of housing will form a conspicuous element visible beyond the oak trees. The trees will filter views and the impact will be reduced in the summer months. Additional boundary planting forms part of the proposals to mitigate the impacts. If the Mornings Mill development proceeds, for which plans are not yet available, a dramatic change in this view will be appreciated, since the new housing estate will dominate the foreground and obscure views of the Proposed Development site.		
Magnitude of Change	The Proposed Development will have a medium impact on the view from this location, however if the Mornings Mill development proceeds the baseline will alter considerably and the site is likely to be obscured from view.		
Assessment	Sensitivity	Users of the PRow – High	
	Magnitude due to the Proposed Development:	Medium	
	Cumulative effects from all Eastbourne Rd proposals:	Very large	
Overall Visual Effects – a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect		a) Moderate b) Major	

Viewpoint 9: View from Eastbourne Road looking across the proposed Mornings Mill site



VP9	Type 1: Panoramic View	(Distance 0.23km looking north)	
Baseline Description	This is another view from Eastbourne Road looking up at the land within Mornings Mill Farm for which a planning application has recently been submitted. The empty property on the south corner of the Proposed Development site is visible on the left and several mature oaks and field maples can be seen along the boundary between the two sites.		
Predicted change	The housing and taller medical centre will be visible in the middle distance through the boundary vegetation, which will have a greater filtering effect in summer when in full leaf. If the cumulative scheme at Mornings Mill Farm proceeds it would dominate the view from this viewpoint and for north-bound users of Eastbourne Road, which changes direction near to this point.		
Type of Effect	The rooflines of new housing will be visible beyond the trees. The empty house will be demolished and replaced with an attenuation pond.		
Magnitude of Change	Negligible change in the existing view as a result of the Proposed Development, but a medium effect due to the other proposals along Eastbourne Road.		
Assessment	Sensitivity	Road users - Medium	
	Magnitude due to the Proposed Development:	Small	
	Cumulative effects from all Eastbourne Rd proposals:	Large	
Overall Visual Effects – a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect		a) Moderate b) Major / moderate	

Viewpoint 10: View from the PROW footpath Eastbourne 1a at the foot of the South Downs scarp slope



VP10	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 1.28km looking north)	
Baseline Description	This is a view across open space at the foot of the South Downs scarp with the residential district of Willingdon set between the field and the site. The vegetation and fence on the left of the photograph mark the boundary of a cemetery. The site can be distinguished by the two groups of lombardy poplars which appear yellow near the centre of the view, catching the setting sun. The footpath follows the 35m contour and is therefore set approximately 15m higher than the site, allowing views across the tops of the intervening houses to the site. The adjoining sites of Mornings Mill Farm and Brodricklands Farm are also visible although they make a minor contribution to the view. The white wind turbines are prominent vertical elements in the distance.	
Predicted change	At this level the Proposed Development and the cumulative schemes would be just visible, but would blend into the general arrangement of housing and trees which dominates the view. Tree planting at the boundaries and within the site will have a worthwhile effect at this distance by breaking up the straight outlines of the dwellings and the more prominent medical centre.	
Type of Effect	Being in the background of this view the additional housing will not appear to encroach further onto open space and will have little impact.	
Magnitude of Change	The proposals will result in a barely perceptible change in this view without affecting the overall quality and will form an inconspicuous element in the wider landscape. This judgement applies to the other proposals under consideration for their cumulative effects.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude due to the Proposed Development: Cumulative effects from all Eastbourne Rd proposals:	Users of the PRoW – High Very small Very small
Overall Visual Effects – a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect b) Minor b) Minor		

Viewpoint 11: View from the PROW footpath Eastbourne 3b descending the South Downs scarp slope



VP11	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 1.78km looking north-east)	
Baseline Description	This is a view from the South Downs on the north side of Butts Brow where the PROW follows the ridge and for a short distance is directly aligned on the site, affording a good view into it. This viewpoint is at approximately 150m above ordinary datum, and the site is located on the far left hand edge of the patch of green in the middle distance. The wind turbines on the far side of the A27 Polegate bypass can be seen in the centre of the photograph and the sea is just visible on the far right. There are several PROWs on this east-facing series of scarp slopes, overlooking the valley to varying degrees including a section of the 1066 Country Walk.	
Predicted change	The proposed development would have the effect of filling in a small part of the green space with housing. The larger developments at Mornings Mill Farm and Brodricklands and Hamlands Farms will be also be visible to a greater extent as they are larger and closer to the viewpoint.	
Type of Effect	The additional housing will have the effect of reducing the extent of green space visible in the middle distance from this location. The existing block of housing on the left is partially screened by the trees, and in the summer months the housing will be even less visible, which may cause the additional proposed housing in the centre of the view to be more noticeable.	
Magnitude of Change	A small change is anticipated in the existing view as a result of the Proposed Development alone, which would be noticeable by the observer without affecting the overall quality. Additional weighting is given to this view as it forms the setting to the National Park. When considered in conjunction with the other proposals in the vicinity it is considered that the change would be medium since most of the green space within that part of the view will be erased.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude due to the Proposed Development: Cumulative magnitude from all Eastbourne Rd proposals:	Users of the PRoW within the South Downs National Park – High Small Medium
Overall Visual Effects – a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect a) Minor b) Major / moderate		

Viewpoint 12: View from the PROW footpath Eastbourne 1a at the foot of the South Downs scarp slope



VP12	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 1.98km looking north)	
Baseline Description	This is a view from the South Downs at Butts Brow where the land rises to around 200m, This view is taken at approximately 125m above ordinary datum, and the site is located on the far left hand edge of the patch of green in the middle distance. The wind turbines on the far side of the A27 Polegate bypass can be seen in the centre of the photograph and the sea is just visible on the far right. There are several PROWs on this east-facing series of scarp slopes, overlooking the valley to varying degrees including a section of the 1066 Country Walk.	
Predicted change	The proposed development would have the effect of filling in a very small green part of the view with housing. The larger developments at Mornings Mill Farm and Brodricklands and Hamlands Farms will be also be visible to a greater extent as they are larger and closer to the viewpoint.	
Type of Effect	The additional housing will have the effect of reducing the extent of green space visible from this location. The magnitudes of change as assessed are lower than those at VP11 since the green open space occupies a smaller proportion of the view.	
Magnitude of Change	A very small change is anticipated in the existing view as a result of the Proposed Development alone, which would be barely noticeable by the observer since the land affected is adjacent to existing residential areas when viewed from this direction. The cumulative effects of all the proposed developments are considered to be small, since a larger percentage of the green space within that part of the view will be lost.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude due to the Proposed Development: Cumulative magnitude from all Eastbourne Rd proposals:	Users of the PRoW within the South Downs National Park – High Very small Small
Overall Visual Effects – a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect a) Minor b) Moderate		

Viewpoint 13: View from the Cuckoo Trail looking across the Open Levels



VP13	Type 1: Panoramic View (Distance 2.07km looking west)	
Baseline Description	This is a view across the Levels area from the Cuckoo Trail, and also illustrates the type of landscape experienced by walkers on the long distance path 1066 Country Walk as they approach Willingdon from the east. The long distance path itself is nearby but was impassable on the day of the survey. In the foreground are open grazed fields surrounded by hedges, and the land falls gently to the south, becoming more marshy as it approaches the coast. A series of electricity pylons are intrusive elements across the view. The residential districts of Lower Willingdon are visible in the centre of the image, and the silhouettes of the South Downs provide a distinct outline on the horizon.	
Predicted change	From this point the proposals would not be visible since they are obscured by hedges and trees. The hedge line coming into the centre of the photograph from the right effectively screens the land beyond. Just to the left of the end of the hedgeline however the construction compound of the Brodricklands Farm development is visible, indicating that this development will be visible from this location, albeit at a small scale.	
Type of Effect	The additional housing of the consented scheme minimally affects the baseline situation by extended the visible extent of housing horizontally across the middle of the view. The Proposed Development will not be visible.	
Magnitude of Change	Negligible change in the existing view as a result of the Proposed Development, and a very small impact due to the other proposals along Eastbourne Road.	
Assessment	Sensitivity Magnitude due to the Proposed Development: Cumulative magnitude from all Eastbourne Rd proposals:	Users of the PRow – High Negligible Very small
Overall Visual Effects – a) Proposed Development only b) Cumulative effect a) Negligible b) Minor		

APPENDIX E - Glossary of terms

Analysis (landscape)	The process of breaking the landscape down into its component parts to understand how it is made up.
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Assessment (landscape)	An umbrella term for description, classification and analysis of landscape.
Biodiversity	The concept of variety in all species of plants and animals through which nature finds its balance.
Classification	A process of sorting the landscape into different types using selected criteria, but without attaching relative values to the different kinds of landscape.
Compensation	The measures taken to offset or compensate for residual adverse effects that cannot be mitigated, or for which mitigation cannot entirely eliminate adverse effects.
Constraints map	Map showing the location of important resources and receptors that may form constraints to development.
Countryside	The rural environment and its associated communities (including the coast)
Cumulative Effects	The summation of effects that result from changes caused by a development in conjunction with other past, present or reasonably foreseeable actions.
Diversity	Where a variety of qualities or characteristics occurs.
Element	A component part of the landscape (for example, roads, hedges, woods)
Enhancement	Landscape improvement through restoration, reconstruction or creation.
Environment	Our physical surroundings including air, water and land.

Environmental appraisal	A generic term for the evaluation of the environmental implications of proposals (used by the UK Government in respect of policies and plans).
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	The evaluation of the effects on the environment of particular development proposals
Field pattern	The pattern of hedges and walls that define fields in farmed landscapes.
Geographical Information System (GIS)	Computerised database of geographical information that can easily be updated and manipulated.
Heritage	Historical or cultural associations.
Indirect impacts	Impacts on the environment, which are not a direct result of the development but are often produced away from it or as a result of a complex pathway. Sometimes referred to as secondary impacts.
Landcover	Combinations of land use and vegetation that cover the land surface.
Landform	Combinations of slope and elevation of the land conditioned by knowledge and identity with a place.
Landscape capacity	The degree to which a particular landscape character type or area is able to accommodate change without unacceptable adverse effects on its character. Capacity is likely to vary according to the type and nature of change being proposed.
Landscape character	The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular type of landscape, and how this is perceived by people. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement. It creates the particular sense of place of different areas of the landscape.
Landscape character type	A landscape type will have broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern discernible in maps and field survey records.

Landscape effects	Change in the elements, characteristics, character and qualities of the landscape as a result of development. These effects can be positive or negative.
Landscape evaluation	The process of attaching value (non-monetary) to a particular landscape, usually by the application of previously agreed criteria, including consultation and third party documents, for a particular purpose (for example, designation or in the context of the assessment)
Landscape factor	A circumstance or influence contributing to the impression of a landscape (for example, scale, enclosure, elevation)
Landscape feature	A prominent eye-catching element, for example, wooded hilltop or church spire.
Landscape quality (or condition)	is based on judgements about the physical state of the landscape, and about its intactness, from visual, functional, and ecological perspectives. It also reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements which makes up the character in any one place.
Landscape resource	The combination of elements that contribute to landscape context, character and value.
Landscape sensitivity	The extent to which a landscape can accept change of a particular type and scale without unacceptable adverse effects on its character.
Land use	The primary use of the land, including both rural and urban activities.
Landscape value	The relative value or importance attached to a landscape (often as a basis for designation or recognition), which expresses national or local consensus, because of its quality, special qualities including perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness, cultural associations or other conservation issues.
LCA	Landscape Character Area
Magnitude	A combination of the scale, extent and duration of an effect.

Methodology	The specific approach and techniques used for a given study.
Mitigation	Measures, including any process, activity or design to avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate for adverse landscape and visual effects of a development project.
NCA	National Character Assessment
Perception (of landscape)	The psychology of seeing and possibly attaching value and/or meaning to landscape.
Precautionary principle	Principle applied to err on the side of caution where significant environmental damage may occur, but where knowledge on the matter is incomplete, or when the prediction of environmental effects is uncertain.
Preference	The liking by people for one particular landscape element, characteristic or feature over another.
PRoW	Public Right of Way
Quality	See Landscape quality
Receptor	Physical landscape resource, special interest or viewer group that will experience an effect.
Scenario	A picture of a possible future.
Scoping	The process of identifying the likely significant effects of a development of the environment.
Sense of place (genius loci)	The essential character and spirit of an area; <i>genius loci</i> literally means 'spirit of the place'.
Sensitive/sensitivity	See landscape sensitivity
Sieve mapping	Technique for mapping environmental constraints, working from a series of overlays, sieving out less important factors.
Sustainability	The principle that the environment should be protected in such a condition and to such a degree that ensures new development meets the needs of the present without

	compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Technique	Specific working process
Threshold	A specified level in grading effects, for example, of magnitude, sensitivity or significance.
Visual amenity	The value of a particular area or view in terms of what is seen.
Visual effect	Change in the appearance of the landscape as a result of development. This can be positive (ie beneficial or an improvement) or negative (ie adverse or a detraction)
Visual envelope	Extent of potential visibility to or from a specific area or feature.
Visualisation	Computer simulation, photomontage or other technique to illustrate the appearance of a development.
Worst-case situation	Principle applied where the environmental effects may vary, for example, seasonally to ensure the most severe potential effect is assessed.
Zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV)	Area within which a proposed development may have an influence or effect on visual amenity.

APPENDIX F - Sources of Information

10.45 The following sources of information were obtained or consulted during the course of the assessment:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013).
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2018).
- Technical Advice Note 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals (2019).
- National Planning Policy Framework (2019).
- Consultations with the client regarding the development proposals;
- Details of other proposals where available on the Planning Portal
- Natural England published national landscape character assessment;
- Wealden Landscape & Settlement Character Assessment by Chris Blandford Associates, 2014
- South Wealden Growth Area Landscape and Ecology Studies by The Landscape Partnership, April 2017
- East Sussex County Landscape Assessment 2015
- Aerial photography;
- MAGIC.gov.uk website
- Ordnance Survey Mapping at 1:10,000, 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 scale;
- Site visits and fieldwork to confirm data derived from available mapping and to identify and assess potential impacts.

APPENDIX G – Policy

10.46 Development of the site is determined by the current planning policies of Wealden District Council as outlined in section 2 above. The relevant landscape policies which have been considered during the design development and assessment of the scheme include:

10.47 Saved Policies from the Local Plan 1998:

Environment EN8: Low Weald

Development within the Low Weald will only be permitted if it conserves the low rolling agricultural character of the landscape. In considering any proposal, particular regard will be had to:-

- 1) areas of unspoilt and remote countryside;
- 2) the setting of settlements;
- 3) areas on the fringe of adjacent statutorily designated landscapes;
- 4) the retention of woods, boundary trees and hedges;
- 5) attractive vernacular buildings and groups of buildings.

Environment EN12: Protection of Trees and Woodlands

The Council will seek to retain and enhance the contribution of trees and woodland areas to the landscape character of the District, including the amenity value of trees in built up areas. This will be promoted by:-

- 1) endorsement of the principles and guidelines contained in the Trees and Woodland Strategy for East Sussex;
- 2) support for the preparation of local Trees and Woodland Conservation and Management Plans;

- 3) encouragement for woodland management through participation in tree and hedgerow planting schemes by farmers, voluntary organisations and others, and where appropriate, as part of development proposals;
- 4) making Tree Preservation Orders where appropriate to protect trees and woodland areas of significant amenity value;
- 5) giving weight to proposals, including business proposals, that help to sustain and manage forestry and woodland areas when considering them against other policies of the Plan;
- 6) resisting development proposals which would result in the loss of trees which make a valuable contribution to the character of the landscape, a settlement or its setting.

Environment EN14: Landscaping within Developments

In appropriate cases, the Council will require landscaping, including surface treatments, to be carried out as part of development proposals.

Where required, such schemes should:-

- 1) seek to retain existing trees, significant hedgerows and other valuable site features;
- 2) normally comprise primarily native species;
- 3) complement the scale and character of the proposed development and the locality;
- 4) have regard to associated nature conservation benefits;
- 5) be implemented at the earliest practicable opportunity and thereafter satisfactorily maintained during the early years.

Environment EN27: Layout and Design of Developments

Proposals for development will be permitted when the following layout and design criteria are met:-

- 1) the scale, form, site coverage, density and design of the development and the use of materials and landscaping should respect the character of adjoining development and, where appropriate, promote local distinctiveness. The design, materials and landscaping should be of an appropriate high standard;
- 2) the proposed development should not create an unacceptable adverse impact on the privacy and amenities of adjoining developments and the neighbourhood by reason of scale, height, form, noise and traffic movements;
- 3) the proposed development should ensure a satisfactory environment for the future occupants, including adequate provision for daylight, sunlight, privacy, garden space and/or appropriately landscaped amenity areas;
- 4) the proposed development should not constitute an unacceptable backland or 'tandem' form of development;
- 5) regard has been paid to crime prevention measures whenever possible and appropriate.

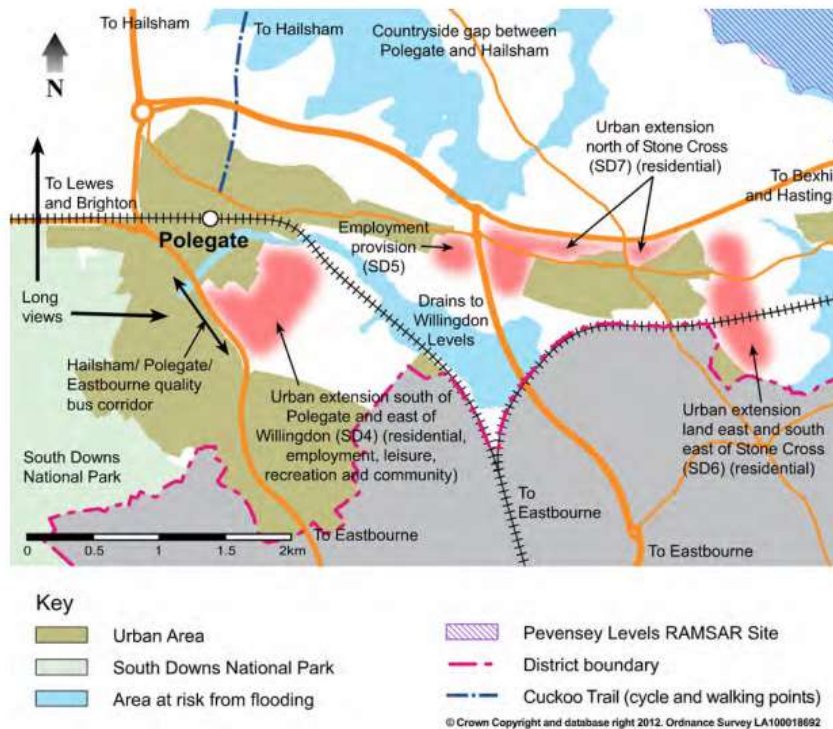
Leisure and Recreation LR5: Informal Amenity Space in New Residential Developments

The Council will seek the provision of informal amenity space, additional to the outdoor playing space required under Policy LR3, in all large new housing developments, where appropriate, incorporating existing landscape features such as trees, hedgerows, etc.

10.48 Policies from the Core Strategy Local Plan (February 2013)

The site is identified within the “urban extension south of Polegate and east of Willingdon (SD4) (residential, employment, leisure, recreation and community)” in Figure 8 Polegate and Willingdon and Stone Cross Area Strategy from the *Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan 2013*.

Figure 8 Polegate and Willingdon and Stone Cross Area Strategy



WCS13 Green Infrastructure

The District's existing network of green infrastructure will be protected, improved and enhanced by the implementation of a Green Infrastructure Strategy, ensuring a multifunctional, accessible network which maintains and improves biodiversity and landscape character, increases opportunities for healthy living and contributes to healthy ecosystems and climate change objectives.

Development proposals will not be permitted which would result in the loss of existing open space or harm to Wealden's network of green

spaces unless measures are incorporated within the development that will either mitigate the effects of development or alternative and suitable provision is made that is accessible, of good quality and value to its users, in an appropriate location, at an appropriate scale and nature and would positively contribute to the overall network of green space.

All new residential development will be required to contribute to the green infrastructure network and where appropriate to make provision for new or enhancement of existing open space. Where the scale of development would be too small to make on-site provision, the Council will seek developer contributions either towards the improvement of existing open spaces or towards the provision of open space elsewhere.

10.49 South Downs National Park Authority Policies

Strategic Policy SD4: Landscape Character

1. Development proposals will only be permitted where they conserve and enhance landscape character by demonstrating that:

a) They are informed by landscape character, reflecting the context and type of landscape in which the development is located;

b) The design, layout and scale of proposals conserve and enhance existing landscape and seascape character features which contribute to the distinctive character, pattern and evolution of the landscape;

c) They will safeguard the experiential and amenity qualities of the landscape; and

d) Where planting is considered appropriate, it is consistent with local character, enhances biodiversity, contributes to the delivery of GI

and uses native species, unless there are appropriate and justified reasons to select non-native species.

2. Where development proposals are within designed landscapes, or the setting of designed landscapes, (including historic parkscapes and those on the Historic England Register of Historic Parks and Gardens) they should be based on a demonstrable understanding of the design principles of the landscape and should be complementary to it.

3. The settlement pattern and individual identity of settlements and the integrity of predominantly open and undeveloped land between settlements will not be undermined.

4. Green and blue corridors will be safeguarded. Development proposals should identify and take opportunities to create and connect green and blue corridors.

5. The restoration of landscapes where features have been lost or degraded will be supported where it contributes positively to landscape character.

Strategic Policy SD6: Safeguarding Views

1. Development proposals will only be permitted where they preserve the visual integrity, identity and scenic quality of the National Park, in particular by conserving and enhancing key views and views of key landmarks within the National Park.

2. Development proposals will be permitted that conserve and enhance the following view types and patterns identified in the Viewshed Characterisation & Analysis Study:

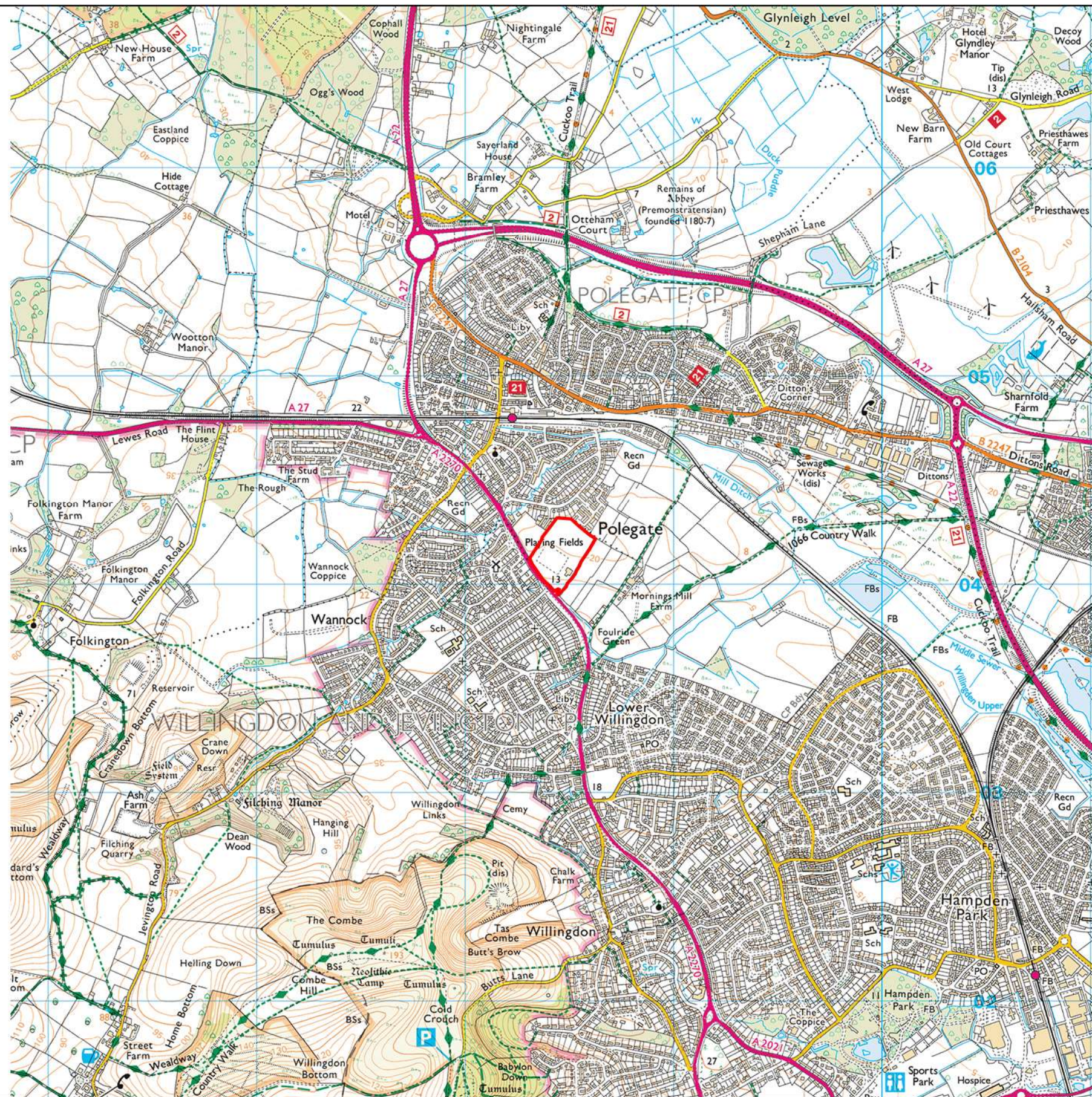
a) Landmark views to and from viewpoints and tourism and recreational destinations;

b) Views from publicly accessible areas which are within, to and from settlements which contribute to the viewers' enjoyment of the National Park;

c) Views from public rights of way, open access land and other publicly accessible areas; and

d) Views which include or otherwise relate to specific features relevant to the National Park and its special qualities, such as key landmarks including those identified in Appendix 2 of the Viewshed Characterisation & Analysis Study, heritage assets (either in view or the view from) and biodiversity features.

3. Development proposals will be permitted provided they conserve and enhance sequential views, and do not result in adverse cumulative impacts within views.



LEGEND



Site boundary



For ordnance survey map legend, refer to:
<https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/docs/legends/25k-raster-legend.pdf>

Client: Danescroft

Scheme: Eastbourne Road, Willingdon

Drawing: Ordnance Survey Plan

Figure No: 1

ACD Ref: DANE23096

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: IN

Checked: PD





LEGEND



Site boundary



Image supplied by Google Maps
<https://maps.google.co.uk/>
 Accessed 01 December 2020

Client: Danescroft

Scheme: Eastbourne Road, Willingdon

Drawing: Aerial Photograph

Figure No: 2

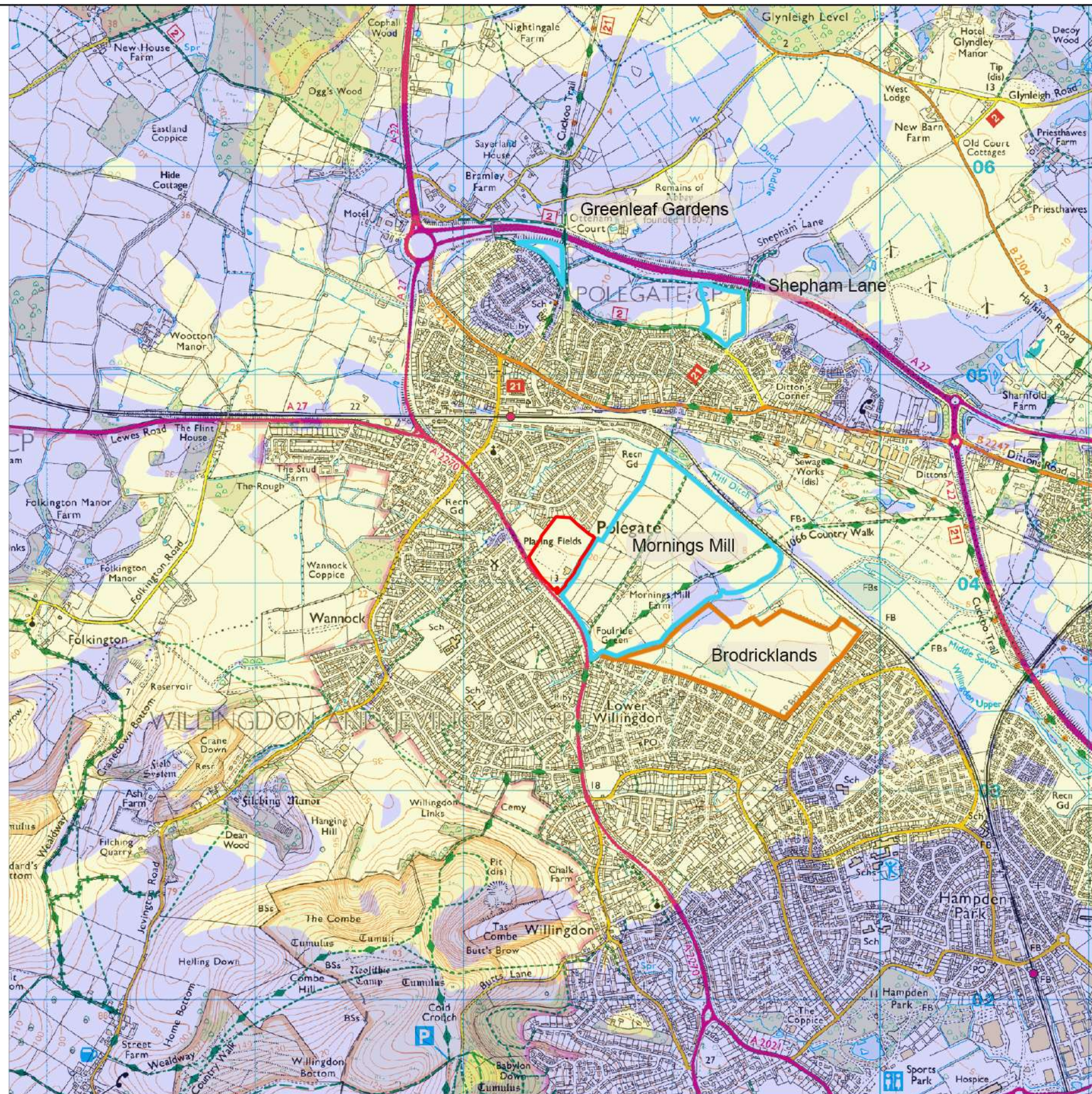
ACD Ref: DANE23096

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: IN

Checked: PD





LEGEND



Site boundary



Cumulative developments:
Blue - application stage
Orange - consented

Zone of theoretical visibility



Yellow wash - Potential view



Blue wash - No potential view



NB: Generated using Ordnance Surveys Terrain 5 Dataset which is based on 5m resolution Digital Terrain Model (DTM), incorporating the proposed development modelled across the site to a maximum anticipated height of 9m.
Proposed scheme is derived from the proposed Red Line Boundary (RLB) areas dated 25/11/2020 with reference points included across the full extent of the RLB site. The ZTVs do not include the layout of buildings which are not known at this stage.
ZTV calculated using MapInfo Pro 17.0 with observer eye height 1.6m above ground.
Viewshed analysis represents surface topography, without taking into account potential visual barriers in the form of trees, hedgerows, woodland, buildings and other manmade elements.

Client: Danescroft

Scheme: Eastbourne Road, Willingdon

Drawing: Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Figure No: 3

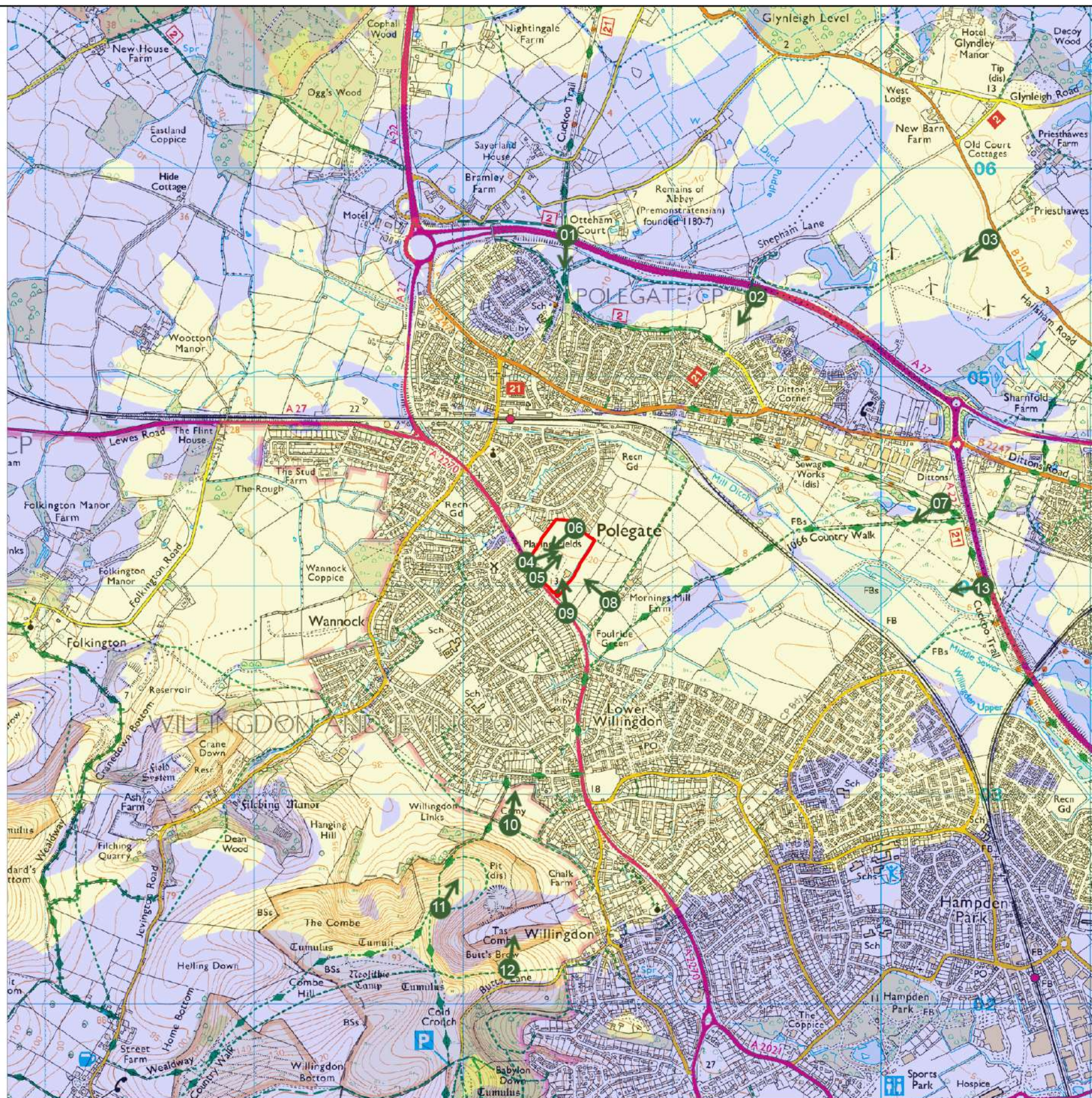
ACD Ref: DANE23096

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: IN

Checked: PD





LEGEND



Site boundary



Viewpoint location

Zone of theoretical visibility



Yellow wash - Potential view



Blue wash - No potential view



NB: Generated using Ordnance Surveys Terrain 5 Dataset which is based on 5m resolution Digital Terrain Model (DTM), incorporating the proposed development modelled across the site to a maximum anticipated height of 9m.
Proposed scheme is derived from the proposed Red Line Boundary (RLB) areas dated 25/11/2020 with reference points included across the full extent of the RLB site. The ZTVs do not include the layout of buildings which are not known at this stage.
ZTV calculated using MapInfo Pro 17.0 with observer eye height 1.6m above ground.
Viewshed analysis represents surface topography, without taking into account potential visual barriers in the form of trees, hedgerows, woodland, buildings and other manmade elements.

Client: Danescroft

Scheme: Eastbourne Road, Willingdon

Drawing: Viewpoint Location Plan

Figure No: 4

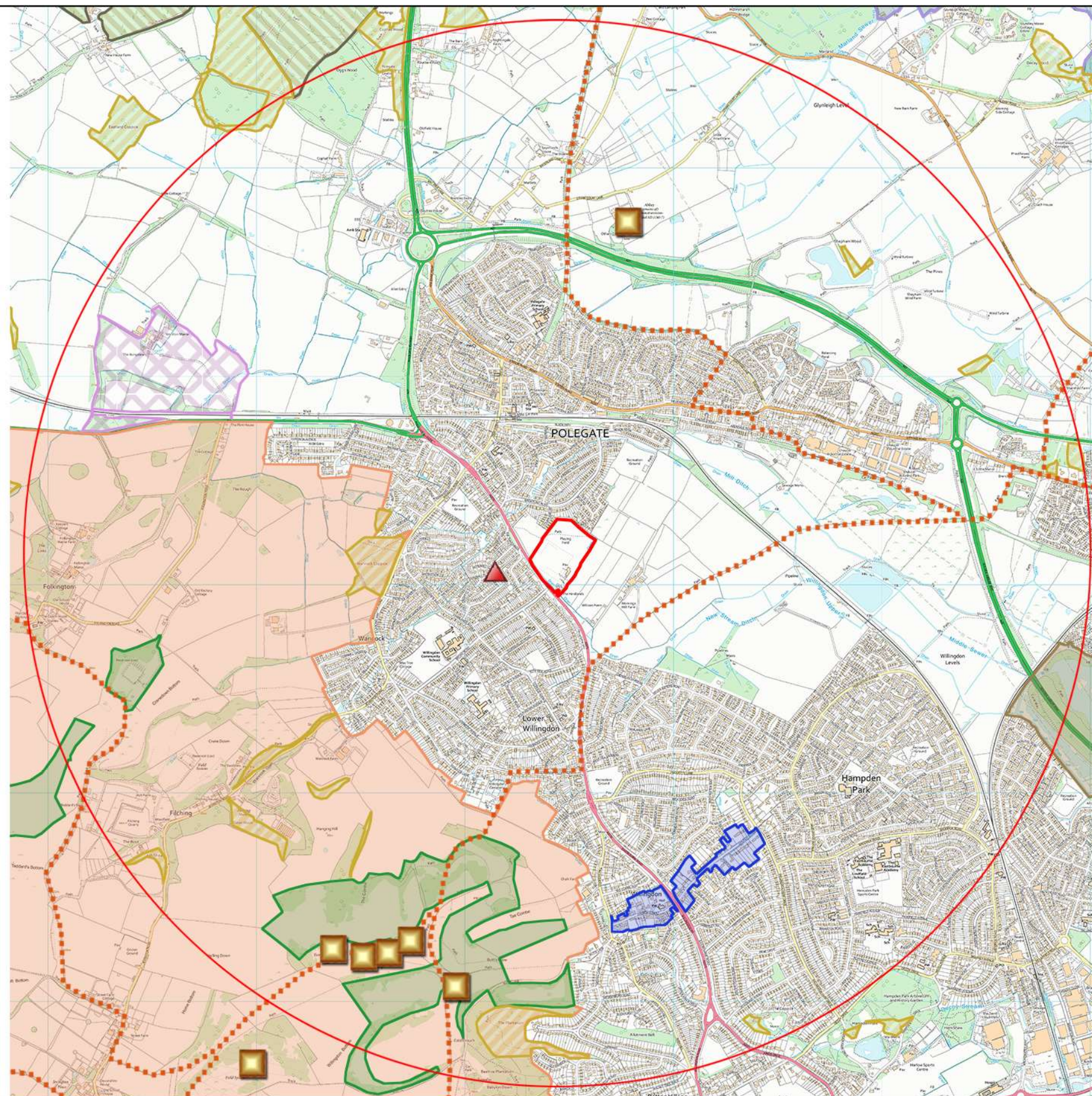
ACD Ref: DANE23096

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: IN

Checked: PD





LEGEND



Site Boundary

2.5km Radius

Registered Parks and Gardens - Wootton Manor

National Park - South Downs

Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland

Ancient Replanted Woodland

Country Park - Shinewater Park

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Conservation Area - Willingdon

Special Area of Conservation and RAMSAR - Pevensey Levels

Long Distance Walking Paths

Scheduled Monuments

Listed Building within approx. 500m of Site



Client: Danescroft

Scheme: Eastbourne Road, Willingdon

Drawing: Designations Plan

Figure No: 5

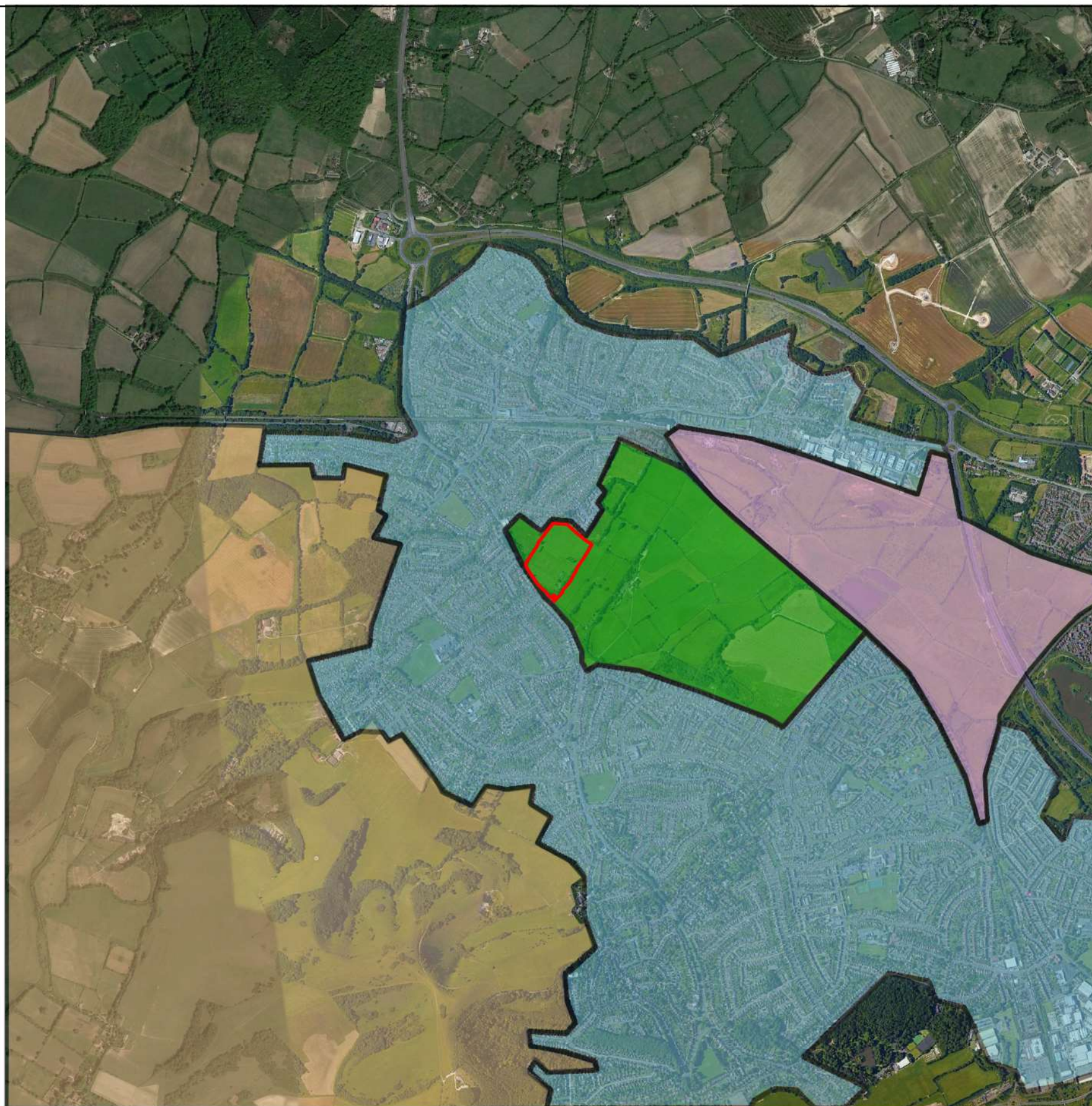
ACD Ref: DANE23096

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: IN

Checked: PD





LEGEND



Site boundary



Playing Field / Farmland Character Area



Urban Character Area



Open Levels Character Area



South Downs Character Area



Image supplied by Google Maps
<https://maps.google.co.uk/>
 Accessed 01 December 2020

Client: Danescroft

Scheme: Eastbourne Road, Willingdon

Drawing: Landscape Character Areas

Figure No: 6

ACD Ref: DANE23096

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: PD

Checked: JS





Figure No. 7: Landscape Strategy Plan



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Website: www.acdenvironmental.co.uk

ECOLOGICAL SURVEYS * PROTECTED SPECIES LICENSING * MITIGATION * IMPACT ASSESSMENT
ARBORICULTURAL SITE MONITORING AND SUPERVISION * ARCHAEOLOGY
LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT * LANDSCAPE AUDIT * PROJECT MANAGEMENT
EXPERT WITNESS* LANDSCAPE DESIGN & PLANNING LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT