



**Proof of Evidence of Paul Warren
BA (Hons) DIPLA CMLI**

Landscape Matters

LAND SOUTH OF THE A271 AND
EAST OF THE A22, LOWER
HORSEBRIDGE, HAILSHAM

Appendix C

**Extracts from New Settlements &
Large Urban Extensions (Full
document available CD 9.3)**

Appellant: Hertfordshire Holdings
Ltd.

Planning Inspectorate No. Appeal:
APP/C1435/W/23/3335625

Wealden District Council

Application No. WD/2022/3222/MAO

March 2024

Wealden District Council

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

New Settlements and Large Urban Extensions

Final report
Prepared by LUC
November 2023



Designated Landscapes	Though distant views towards the site may be afforded from elevated areas within the South Downs National Park, at distances exceeding 7km, views of the development will be seen in the context of existing development at Hailsham and are unlikely to adversely affect the special qualities of the National Park.
Settlement Form, Edge and Setting	Development on the site could affect: ■ The settlement boundary formed by the wooded A22 corridor to the western edge of Hailsham, albeit this has already been breached by development along Hempstead Lane to the south. ■ The wider rural setting of Hailsham (however, views into the area are generally limited by woodland along the A22 as noted above). ■ The perception of coalescence between Hailsham and the smaller settlements of Lower Dicker and Upper Dicker.. The settlement of Upper Dicker is considered to be more sensitive, given the more dispersed settlement form and stronger sense of rurality and tranquillity. However, woodland along the eastern edge of Upper Dicker screens some views towards the site. In contrast, Lower Dicker lies along the busy A22 and has some perceived sense of coalescence with Hailsham (due to ribbon development along the A22 and A271), which indicates a lower sensitivity.
Visual Amenity	Development on the site could affect the visual amenity of: ■ Pedestrians and residents along the western settlement edge of Hailsham and road users on the A22. However, views are generally glimpsed due to the presence of intervening vegetation. ■ Residents and road users along Coldharbour Road and Hempstead Lane. ■ Residents within the site at the Starnash and Hatches farmsteads. ■ Users of public rights of way within the site, including the promoted Wealdway. ■ Visitors to the South Downs National Park, although views of development would be at distance, appearing in the context of existing development at Hailsham and partially screened by intervening woodland located to the south-west and west of the site. ■ Visitors to Knockhatch adventure park.
Cumulative Issues	
Potential for Cumulative Effects with Other Large Strategic Site	This site, in combination with the other strategic site to the north of Hailsham (Site 205/1410, 919/3000) would result in a general expansion of the settlement into the surrounding rural landscape. However, given the intervening distance between the sites and the well-wooded character of the surrounding landscape, significant visual cumulative effects are unlikely.
Potential for Mitigation and Enhancement	
Landscape and visual effects could be avoided/minimised by following the guidance below: ■ Retain, protect and enhance all mature vegetation within and surrounding the site, especially mature woodlands, trees, and hedgerows. Development should avoid and be set back from the ancient woodlands at Hempstead Farm with a buffer zone of at least 15 metres to avoid root damage⁷. The buffer zone could provide a valuable habitat for woodland wildlife and should consist of semi-natural habitat (e.g. a mix of woodland edge and semi-improved grassland to provide structural complexity and species diversity). ■ Woodland along the A22, Coldharbour Road and Hempstead Lane should be retained and enhanced so as to limit views into the site from existing residential properties and from the road. ■ The connectivity of woodlands should be retained and enhanced through tree planting and hedgerow corridors, in line with the River Cuckmere Habitat Link Biodiversity Opportunity Area. ■ Conserve and manage the streamside woodlands, riverside vegetation and wetland habitats, to 'slow the flow' and assist in reducing flood risk as well as increase biodiversity, in line with the aims of the River Cuckmere Habitat Link Biodiversity Opportunity Area.	

⁷ See [Natural England and Forestry Commission Guidance](#) for further information.