Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Part 1

Land at SIX MILE

Holloway Architects

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 EDLA were appointed by Holloway Architects to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of land at Six Mile ('the Site') in respect of residential led redevelopment ('the Proposed Development').

1.2 With reference to **Figure L01: Site Context Plan**, the Site is a small area of previously developed land adjacent to Six Mile garage, on the B2068 (Stone Street). The Site consists of several utilitarian style buildings, hardstanding and retaining walls and does not contribute positively to the local landscape character due to its poor visible condition and no architectural quality.

1.3 **Figure L01: Site Context Plan** also demonstrates that the Site is within the Kent Downs National Landscape, which is afforded great weight in planning policy in respect of conserving and enhancing the landscape.

1.4 The LVIA has therefore been undertaken to inform the iterative design process via identifying the landscape and visual opportunities and constraints of the Site, given its location within the Kent Downs National Landscape, via reviews of published studies, character assessments and fieldwork.

1.5 The LVIA then sets out the likely landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development during the operational phases, including in relation to the special characteristics of the National Landscape.

1.6 The LVIA has been undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architects, with extensive experience in residential assessment in Kent and the Kent Downs National Landscape. The LVIA should be read in combination with the illustrative materials and drawings for determination, upon which the assessment is based.

2.0 LVIA METHODOLOGY

2.1 The following section summarises the LVIA assessment methodology, which is set out in full in **Appendix I**.

LVIA METHODOLOGY

2.2 The LVIA has been undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition[1], (GLVIA 3).

2.3 The LVIA methodology is specific to the assessment of landscape and visual effects, such that it may differ from other environmental topics. As an overview:

- Landscape effects relate to changes to the landscape as a resource, i.e. changes to the physical features of the landscape and/or the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential characteristics of the landscape; and
- Visual effects relate to the changes to a person's view, form the loss of addition of features within their view, due to the Proposed Development.

LVIA Study Area

2.4 With reference to GLVIA 3, the purpose of the LVIA study area is to identify the geographic area in which effects may occur due to the Proposed Development.

2.5 The study area has been determined through fieldwork, reviews of aerial mapping and published landscape character assessments. The study area extends up to 1.5 kilometres (km) from the Site.

2.6 The study area is assessed as being representative and proportionate to the assessment of landscape and visual effects. Whilst the Proposed Development may be perceived from beyond the study area, the combination of distance, intervening land uses, buildings, vegetation and landform are assessed as negating the likelihood for landscape and visual effects.

LVIA Methodology

Landscape and Visual Receptor Sensitivity

2.7 With reference to **Appendix I** and GLVIA 3, the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors to the Proposed Development is determined via an assessment of their value and susceptibility.

2.8 Landscape value relates to the relative value attached to the landscape by society. Landscape susceptibility relative to the ability of the landscape to accommodate the Proposed Development and/or

[1] Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013

achieve relevant landscape planning policies or strategies. With reference to **Appendix I**, landscape sensitivity is assessed as ranging between high, medium and low.

2.9 Visual value relates to whether the view is common place, designated, identified in published studies, or guide books. Visual susceptibility relates to the occupation of the viewer, e.g. a resident with a fixed view or a motorist with a transient view. With reference to **Appendix I**, visual sensitivity is assessed as ranging between high, medium and low.

Landscape and Visual Magnitude of Impact

2.10 In accordance with GLVIA 3, the landscape magnitude of impact (change) is assessed in relation to the size, extent, duration and reversibility of the Proposed Development. With reference to **Appendix I**, the landscape magnitude of impact is assessed as ranging between high, moderate, low, negligible and none.

2.11 The visual magnitude of impact is assessed in relation to the scale of change within a person's view, the distance from the person and the extent of the composition of the view across which the Proposed Development and associated changes would be visible. With reference to **Appendix I**, the visual magnitude of impact is assessed as ranging between high, moderate, low, negligible and none.

Landscape and Visual Effects

2.12 The relationship between the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impact establishes the effect, which can be beneficial or adverse.

2.13 Table 2-1 sets out the guide which is used to inform the assessment of the effects via the relationship between the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impact.

2.14 Should professional judgement consider that the effect differs from this guide then a reasoned explanation is provided in the assessment narrative.

2.15 Similarly, where the guide enables a choice of effect, e.g. major or moderate, a reasoned explanation is provided in the assessment narrative to justify the single predicted effect (i.e. major).

Table 2-1: Guide to determining the significance of landscape and visual effects

		Sensitivity		
	Criteria	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**
Magnitude	**High**	Major or Moderate	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor
	Moderate	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Moderate or Minor
	Low	Moderate or Minor	Moderate or Minor	Minor
	Negligible	Minor or Negligible	Minor or Negligible	Negligible
	None	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

2.16 The assessment of the Proposed Development is undertaken for the operation year 1 (winter) and operation year 15 (summer) phases, as set out in the below assumptions.

Night-time Lighting Assessment (Character of the Night Sky)

2.17 With reference to **Appendix I**, a qualitative (non-measured) lighting assessment has been undertaken via night-time fieldwork and a review of lighting within the Proposed Development.

2.18 The LVIA has identified the existing sources of lighting across the study area and defined the lighting environmental zone, based upon the environmental zones set out in the Guidance Note for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light[2].

2.19 The assessment predicts the impact to the character of the night sky via the same methodology as the LVIA and whether the proposed lighting would alter the existing environmental lighting zones across the study area.

Limitations and Assumptions

2.20 The LVIA has been undertaken based upon the following assumptions:

- The assessment is based upon the drawings for determination, including highways and information in the Design and Access Statement;
- Viewpoints are located on publicly accessible land, with the likely impacts and effects on views from residential properties ascertained via fieldwork, reviews of aerial mapping and professional judgement;

[2] Institution of Lighting Professionals, Guidance Note 01/21, The Reduction of Obtrusive Light, https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-1-for-the-reduction-of-obtrusive-light-2021/

- The construction phase is not assessed as this is temporary and the pertinent matter is the effects of the change in land use and permanent introduction of new built form;
- The year 1 of operation assessment assumes that the Proposed Development is completed and in use. The assessment is undertaken for winter, such that deciduous vegetation is not in leaf;
- The year 1 of operation assessment assumes that new planting is low in height, with new trees ranging between 1 metre (m) and 3m in height;
- The year 15 of operation assessment similarly assumes that the Proposed Development is complete and in use. The assessment is undertaken for summer, such that all vegetation across the study area and within the Site is in leaf;
- The year 15 of operation assessment assumes that the new planting will have established to be taller in height that at year 1. The growth rate is based on 1m every 3 years, such that new trees will range up to 8m in height; and
- The lighting assessment is based on the implementation of best practice lighting design measures as set out in the British Standards and by the Institution of Lighting Professionals, as to minimise glare, light spillage and sky glow (light trespass).

3.0 THE SITE

3.1 With reference to **Figure L01: Site Context Plan**, the Site is a broadly square area of land, located adjacent to Six Mile garage. The Site consists of existing buildings and hardstanding, such that it is previously developed land. The Site is bound by:

- Mockbeggar Street and residential properties to the north;
- Ancient woodland to the east and south; and
- Six Mile garage, Six Mile Garage House and Woodside to the west.

3.2 With reference to the following extract of **Viewpoint A**, taken from the western part of the Site, the Site consists of several buildings, up to c.7m in height. The buildings are of no architectural merit, being utilitarian in form. As a result the scenic quality of the Site is very low. The photograph also demonstrates that the buildings are located below the vegetated skyline and that the engineered landform results in buildings in a higher topographic position across the central and eastern parts of the Site in comparison to those in the western part of the Site.



Image 3-1 :Extract of Viewpoint A

3.3 **Viewpoint B**, taken from the eastern edge of the Site, demonstrates the extent of hardstanding across the Site. There are views of fields to the west of the Site, but as set out in the following visual appraisal there is limited public access to this land, and the Site is not visible from public rights of way (PRoW) to the west of the Site. The photograph also demonstrates the high degree of enclosure to the Site due to the proximity to the ancient woodland and poor condition of the existing buildings.

3.4 **Viewpoint C** is taken from the south-west edge of the Site. The photograph demonstrates the level change across the Site via the retaining walls and the extent of hardstanding. The photograph also demonstrates the high degree of enclosure to the Site due to the proximity to the ancient woodland.

3.5 The main feature of the Site is the engineered landform, resulting in the central and eastern parts of the Site being topographically higher than the western part of the Site. The transition in level is via a retaining wall. There is also a retaining wall along the northern edge of the Site, forming the transition

between the Site and the lower lying Mockbeggar Street. Several telegraph poles also cross the northern edge of the Site.

3.6 The Site is not crossed by any PRoW. The Site is not within, nor adjacent to, a Conservation Area and does not contain any listed buildings.

3.7 There is no key vegetation within the Site, nor landscape structure. As set out above, the Site borders ancient woodland, which is a highly valued are rare landscape feature.

3.8 As set out in the introduction, the Site is within the Kent Downs National Landscape. The relevant aspects of the National Landscape are set out in the following chapter. However, the following table sets out the Site's relationship to the special landscape components of the National Landscape, as set out in the National Landscape Management Plan.

Table 3-1: The National Landscape Special Qualities in Relation to the Site

National Landscape Management Plan Special Landscape Components	The Site
Dramatic landform and views, including the south-facing scarp slope and long distance panoramic views.	There is no dramatic landform within the Site and the Site is not part of the south-facing scarp slope. There are not long distance panoramic views from the Site.
Biodiversity rich habitats, particularly chalk downland.	As previously developed land there is no biodiversity rich habitat at the Site.
Farmed landscape, reflecting the long established land use.	The Site is not a farmed landscape.
Woodland and trees, reflecting the high percentage of ancient woodland across the AONB.	There is no vegetation cover in the Site.
A rich legacy of historic and cultural heritage, covering past settlements and artistic association.	The Site does not exhibit any historic or cultural heritage legacy.
The Heritage Coast, covers the shoreline either side of Dover and the White Cliffs.	The Site is not part of the Heritage Coast.
Geology and natural resources, including the chalk, soils and water aquifers.	As previously developed land, the Site is not representative of these components.
Tranquillity and remoteness, including for dark night skies and the important perceptual qualities of the AONB	The tranquillity at the Site is limited by the surrounding land uses, which similarly result in no sense of remoteness. The Site is in an area of localised lighting and therefore is not representative of the dark-skies.

3.9 From the above, the Site is considered to be of low sensitivity overall due to being previously developed land of very low scenic quality and with extensive hard-standing and utilitarian style buildings. Whilst the Site is within the National Landscape, it is not representative of the special landscape components. The only aspect of landscape importance to the Site is that it borders ancient woodland, which is a highly valued landscape feature.

4.0 SITE CONTEXT

4.1 With reference to **Figure L01: Site Context Plan**, a 1.5km area of land around the Site has been reviewed in terms of its landscape features and elements ('the study area').

4.2 The purpose of the study area is that this is the area of geographic area which may be impacted upon by the Proposed Development, either via physical or perceived change. The 1.5km study area is considered to be proportionate to the Proposed Development and any perception of the Proposed Development from beyond the study area would not result any effects, due to the combination of distance, intervening features and existing land uses at the Site.

4.3 The following section sets out the key features across the study area.

Landform and Hydrology

4.4 With reference to **Figure L02: Topography Plan**, to the north of the Site, the landform falls along the alignment of the B2068, from around 155m AOD to 150m AOD, at the northern edge of the study area. The pattern of landform is notably more undulating, and forms a localised valley extending between the B2068 and High Minnis Lane.

4.5 To the east of the Site, the landform rises very gradually across West Wood to around 165m AOD, to form a plateau extending to the Forest Lodge. To the east of the Forest Lodge, the landform falls consistently towards eastern edge of the study area.

4.6 To the south of the Site, the landform rises across West Wood, to form a ridgeline at around 180m AOD, to the south of the Site.

4.7 In contrast, the landform falls to the south-west to north-west of the Site, on the opposite side of the B2068 to around 150m AOD at Yew Tree Farm, to the south-west of the Site and 152m AOD at residential properties to the west of the Site. The landform remains low lying across fields in the western part of the study area to the west of the Site, and then falls steeply towards a localised valley at little Pett Bottom Farm, at around 124m AOD, to the west of the Site at the western edge of the study area.

4.8 The Site is therefore situated in an area of undulating landform due to several localised valley systems, which results in a complex pattern of landform. The Site is in a relatively elevated position in relation to lower lying land to the north and west of the Site, whilst is situated at a similar topographic position as land to the east of the Site. The Site is well enclosed in relation to the wider landscape by rising landform to the south of the Site.

Vegetation Patterns

4.9 With reference to on-line mapping[3], trees to the immediate north-east of the Site, within the grounds of Gore Farm House (on the opposite side of Mockbeggar Street) are covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO no.04 1989).

4.10 With reference to **Figure L01: Site Context Plan**, there is extensive ancient woodland to the immediate east and south of the Site (Lyminge Forest), extending to the edge of the study area. With reference to the Arboricultural Survey, trees at the edge of this woodland, adjacent to the Site, consist of sweet chestnut, oak and hornbeam species, up to 13 metres in height. The trees have been classified as category B vegetation, with root protection areas which extend into the eastern edge of the Site.

4.11 This ancient woodland also extends across the north-east part of the study area, to the east of Sandy Lane and more intermittently to the south-west of the B2068, across Hedgecock Wood and Stowting Rough.

4.12 To the immediate north of the Site, both Mockbeggar Street and the B2068 are bordered by established road side vegetation. There are mature trees within the ground of residential properties to the immediate north of the Site.

4.13 The surrounding fields are open in character due to the arable land use, but they are divided by a hedgerow and trees. The lanes are also similarly bordered by roadside hedges and trees, such that there is well vegetated character to the study area, through the combination of ancient woodlands, roadside vegetation and the large extent of rural land uses. With reference to the following visual appraisal, the extent and density of the existing vegetation substantially influences the visibility of the Site.

Settlement Pattern and Land Use

4.14 With reference to **Figure L01: Site Context Plan**, Six Mile is characterised as a very small scale hamlet, concentrated to the east of the B2068, at the staggered junctions of Maxted Street, Lymbridge Green Road and Mockbeggar Street. The exception is Cherry Trees, which is an individual farm, located between the B2068 and Lymbridge Green Road, forming the south-west part of Six Mile.

4.15 The Site forms part of the south-east part of Six Mile, being located to the east of Six Mile Garage and House and Woodside (a residential property). The garage is utilitarian in style, consisting of two rows of pumps beneath a canopy and a single storey red brick commercial building. The adjacent residential property (Six Mile Garage House) is two storeys in height, with a light cream yellow render façade. There is a single storey side extension on the northern façade of the buildings. Woodside residential property is located to the south of the garage and consists of a bungalow with a separate single storey garage. The bungalow is broadly 'L' shaped due to a conservatory extension extending the building line. There are two tall communication masts in the grounds of the property.

4.16 The north-east part of Six Mile consists of Six Mile House and several residential properties which extend north-east from Elmfirlf and Gore Farm House. Access to these properties is via a land adjacent to the northern edge of the Site.

4.17 Lymbridge Green is a small ribbon scale settlement pattern, located in the south-west part of the study area. There are also clusters of small scale residential lands uses adjacent to Maxted Street, to the north-east of the Site and adjacent to Misling Lane, to the north of the Site.

4.18 Beyond these residential areas the main land use is agriculture, characterised by a range of arable field sizes.

4.19 Woodland covers the north-east and southern parts of the study area, via a series of regular shaped plantations, with managed access and visitor parking facilities.

Public Rights of Way and Access (PRoW)

4.20 With reference to on-line mapping[4] and **Figure L01: Site Context Plan**, the following PRoW within the study area are relevant to the LVIA:

- PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE147/1, extending between Lymbridge Green Road and the B2068, to the north-west of the Site;
- PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE34/1, extending between the B2068 and Sandy Lane, to the north-east of the Site;
- PRoW (footpath) 0164/HE35/2, to the east of the Site, within the woodland; and
- PRoW (public bridleway) 0090/HE145/2, to the west of the Site, crossing lower lying land in the western part of the Study Area.

4.21 As set out, the Site is not crossed by any PRoW and therefore does not form part of these recreational routes.

Designations

4.22 With reference to **Figure L01: Site Context Plan**, all of the study area is within the Kent Downs National Landscape.

[3] Folkestone and Hythe District Council, https://folkestone-hythe.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=95f9db5c8443496aa543e7d4193717c8

[4] Kent Count Council, https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/countrysideaccesscams/standardmap.aspx

4.23 There are no Conservation Areas within the study area. There are several listed buildings, although none are in proximity to the Site.

4.24 The woodland to the west and south of the Site is a local wildlife site.

Character of the Night Sky

4.25 With reference to the following extract from the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England on-line mapping[5], which illustrates the level of radiance (night-lights) that shine up into the night sky, the Site is indicated as within an area of 'darker' night skies, via the light grey/blue hatching.

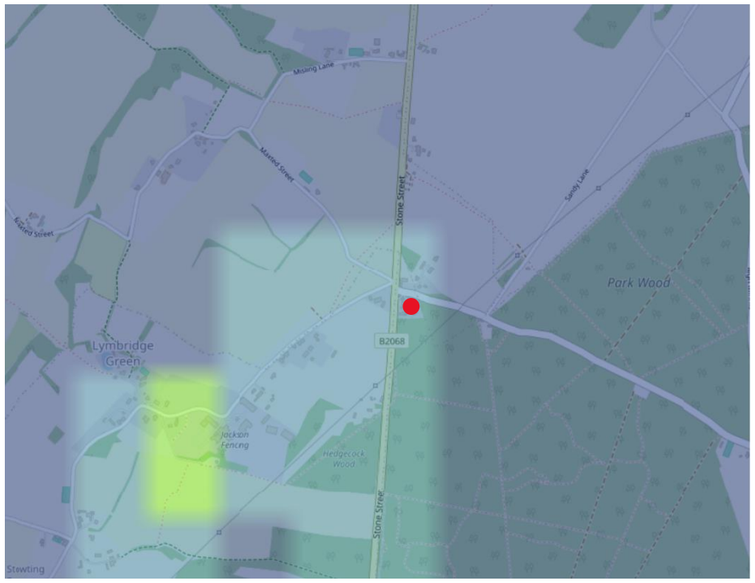


Image 4-1: Extract of the CPRE mapping, with the Site illustrated by the red dot

4.26 The 'brighter' night skies are in the south-west part of the study area at Lymbridge Green (yellow hatching).

4.27 From the fieldwork, the Site is not currently lit. There is lighting at the garage via a single lighting column, and very localised light spillage from surrounding residential land uses, as well as vehicle headlights on the road networks.

4.28 The Site and study area are therefore considered to be in an E1: Natural Environmental Lighting Zone.

5.0 THE KENT DOWNS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

5.1 The following sections sets out National Landscape documents relevant to the LVIA – retaining the title 'AONB' in publications and policy.

Kent Downs AONB Management 2021-2026[6]

5.2 The AONB Management Plan sets out the special characteristics and qualities of the National Landscape and identifies the key issues, opportunities and threats facing the National Landscape.

5.3 The stated special landscape components, characteristics and qualities of the Kent Downs National Landscape are:

- Dramatic landform and views, including the south-facing scarp slope and long distance panoramic views;
- Biodiversity rich habitats, particularly chalk downland;
- Farmed landscape, reflecting the long established land use;
- Woodland and trees, reflecting the high percentage of ancient woodland across the AONB;
- A rich legacy of historic and cultural heritage, covering past settlements and artistic association;
- The Heritage Coast, covers the shoreline either side of Dover and the White Cliffs;
- Geology and natural resources, including the chalk, soils and water aquifers; and
- Tranquillity and remoteness, including for dark night skies and the important perceptual qualities of the AONB.

5.4 The stated main issues, opportunities and threats to the landform and landscape character include loss and damage to the character via poorly designed development; urban fringe impacts through recreational pressure and climate change.

5.5 The stated landform and landscape character principles are:

- *"LLC1: The protection, conservation and enhancement of special characteristics and qualities, natural beauty and landscape character of the Kent Downs AONB will be supported and pursued;*
- *LLC2: The promotion, management, restoration and appropriate creation of viewpoints will be supported;*
- *LLC3: The provision of co-ordinated and high-quality landscape conservation guidance will be pursued, focusing on the special characteristics and qualities, natural beauty and the landscape character of the Kent Downs AONB;*
- *LLC4: The prevention, detection and enforcement action against illegal and overtly damaging activities which detract from landscape character will be pursued;*

[5] Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, https://www.cpre.org.uk/light-pollution-dark-skies-map/

[6] Kent Downs AONB Management Plan, https://kentdowns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/The-Kent-Downs-AONB-Management-Plan-2021-2026-Adopted.pdf

- *LLC5: The revised Kent Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment forms an integral interconnected, component part of the AONB Management Plan and should be used to inform proposals and land management impacting the AONB;*
- *LLC6: The improved awareness and appreciation of all the special qualities of the Kent Downs AONB landscape and its conservation to people who influence the future of, live, work in or visit the AONB will be pursued; and*
- *LLC7: The development of strategic, long-term, landscape action and enhancement plans for areas of the Kent Downs AONB which present the greatest threats or opportunities or where natural capital enhancement, intended net gain, nature recovery, ELM or climate mitigation investments are proposed, will be pursued."*

5.6 Stated sustainable development principles include:

- *"SD1: Ensure that policies, plans, projects and net gain investments affecting the Kent Downs AONB take a landscape led approach are long term, framed by the Sustainable Development Goals appropriate to the Kent Downs, cross cutting and recurrent themes, the vision, aims and principles of the AONB Management Plan;*
- *SD2: The local character, qualities, distinctiveness and natural resources of the Kent Downs AONB will be conserved and enhanced in the design, scale, siting, landscaping and materials of new development, redevelopment and infrastructure and will be pursued through the application of appropriate design guidance and position statements;*
- *SD3: Ensure that development and changes to land use and land management cumulatively conserve and enhance the character and qualities of the Kent Downs AONB rather than detracting from it;*
- *SD8: Ensure proposals, projects and programmes do not negatively impact on the distinctive landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the Kent Downs AONB; and*
- *SD9: The particular historic and locally distinctive character of rural settlements and buildings of the Kent Downs AONB will be maintained and strengthened. The use of sustainably sourced locally-derived materials for restoration and conversion work will be encouraged. New developments will be expected to apply appropriate design guidance and to be complementary to local character in form, siting, scale, contribution to settlement pattern and choice of materials."*

Kent Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment, 2020[7]

5.7 The reference to the following extract of the published study, the Site is located in Landscape Character Area 1C: East Kent Downs (LCA 1C) and the small sub-area Petham. The stated relevant key characteristics of LCA 1C are:

- *"Rounded chalk plateau dissected by a series of parallel narrow dry valleys, becoming increasingly pronounced towards the south;*
- *Dominant land use is arable agriculture, but there are also areas of parkland, orchards, vines, woodland and pasture. Field patterns are variable, but are generally larger on ridges then in valleys, reflecting historic processes of enclosure;*
- *Relatively sparse settlement of scattered farms and occasional nucleated villages, often of brick and flint construction. Concentration of settlement in the Nail Bourne Valley, and notable common-edge settlement of Stelling Minnis;*
- *A relatively tranquil part of the Kent Downs AONB, with a strongly rural feel. The pattern of ridges and dry valleys gives the landscape a rhythmic feel, particularly in the south of the LCA; and*
- *Views are often linear and channelled by landform. There are long views from high ground, overlooking adjacent valleys."*

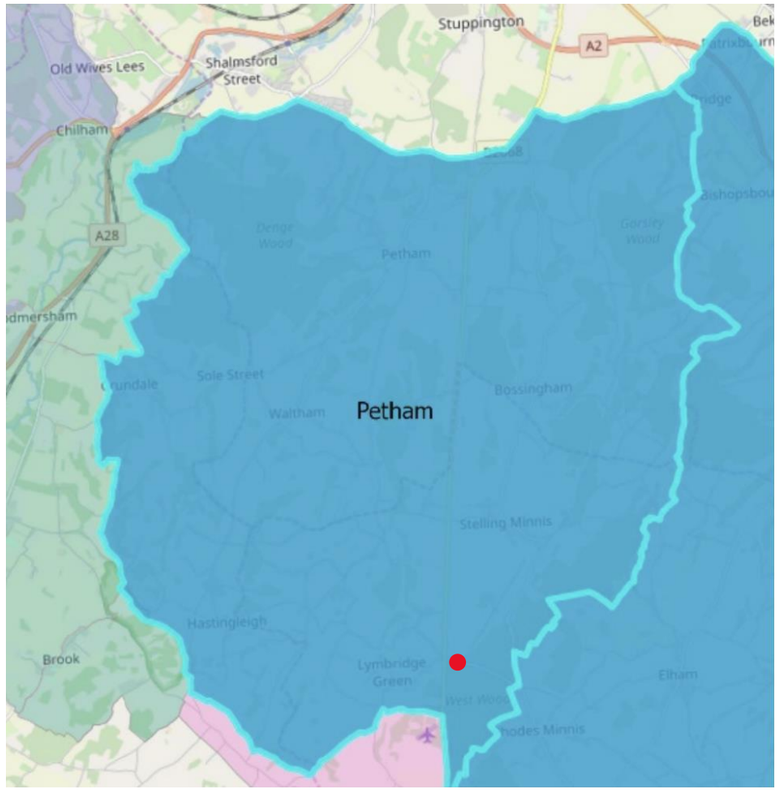


Image 5-1: Extract of the National Landscape Character Assessment, with the Site illustrated via a red dot.

5.8 The published description of sub-area Petham includes:

"To the east of the Stour Valley is an intimate, sparsely populated, and remote landscape of long, rolling valleys and widely scattered farms. Blocks of deciduous woodland (including extensive areas of Ancient Woodland) crown the narrower

[7] Kent Downs Landscape Character Assessment, https://kentdowns.org.uk/landscape-character-assessment-2020/

ridges or sweep along the upper valley slopes, providing a sense of enclosure and emphasising the curving landform…;

The largest settlements are generally found in the river valleys and on valley sides, but there are also several villages (often with origins associated with routeways or common-edges, such as Stelling Minnis) which are on high ground. Large farms are scattered across the plateaux as well as nestled in valleys. The distinct built form includes some minor estate houses."

5.9 The stated sensitivities in relation to development are:

"Development which is of a scale or type that does not sit comfortably within the AONB landscape is largely confined to the peripheries of this LCA, particularly around Hawkinge and on the edge of Dover, although there have been large-scale development proposals elsewhere, such as at Bridge. Such developments risk undermining the area's rural nature, and the distinctive character of its buildings. Linear expansion of valley-floor settlements up the valley sides has occurred in several villages, and is noticeable within the landscape. Urbanising and urban-fringe influences are most prevalent along the main roads within the area, particularly around larger settlements. These can reduce the rural character, and also introduce elements which are not designed to be locally-distinctive."

5.10 The 'aspirational landscape strategy' includes:

"Any visual and landscape impacts from surrounding urban areas, main roads and new developments are kept to a minimum through high quality design and careful land management. Development within the LCA is at a scale and of a quality that does not detract from, and seeks to conserve and enhance, the character and qualities of the area."

5.11 Relevant 'protect' guidelines are

- *"Protect the small scale, isolated pattern and rural character of settlements within this LCA. Avoid ribbon development along roads and large scale development;*
- *Protect skylines and consider the impacts of new developments (including communications masts) on open skylines;*
- *Protect trees and woodlands, particularly where they have a screening function;*
- *Protect open views and long views along valleys, avoiding the introduction of new developed elements into these views; and*
- *Protect tranquillity, resisting developments which increase levels of noise and movement in the landscape, and maintain the remote, undeveloped qualities of the valley."*

5.12 Relevant 'manage' guidelines are:

"Enhance ecological connectivity in arable areas, for example through provision of field margin strips and re-connecting hedgerows."

5.13 Relevant 'plan' guidelines are:

- *"Promote high design standards for rural developments to ensure that they make a positive contribution to landscape character, for example through careful choice of materials, and an appropriate scale and massing of building. Seek the sympathetic use of local materials – brick, tile and flint; and*
- *Ensure that high quality design of settlement edges is integrated into any plans for development within the LCA or on its periphery."*

Kent Downs AONB guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development[8]

5.14 The guidance sets out colourways and palettes as examples of how to select harmonious and interesting colour tones on building elevations. In terms of the Chalk Downs (which covers the Site), the recommended colours are various shades of green and dark hues, along with some lighter greys and cream tones.

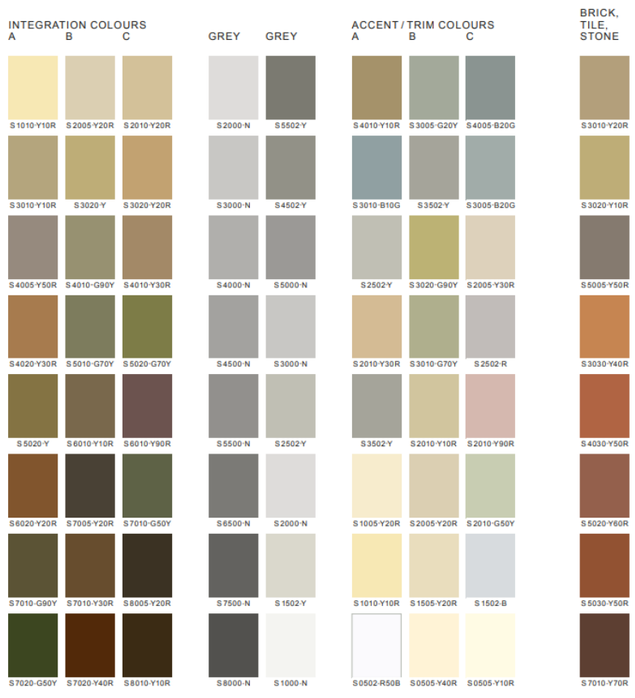


Image 5-2: Extract of the AONB Colour Swatches for the Chalk Downs

[8] Kent Downs AONB, Guidance on the selection and use of colour, https://kentdowns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/KDAONB-Colour-guidance-final-SCREEN.pdf

Kent Downs AONB Landscape Design Handbook[9]

5.15 The handbook provides design guidance to contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the special characteristics of the AONB as a whole, and the distinctiveness of its individual character areas, along with suggestions for new planting.

5.16 The stated relevant key characteristics of Petham are

- *"Intimate rolling valleys;*
- *Scattered farmsteads;*
- *Block of deciduous woodlands on ridges;*
- *Extensive views into secluded coombes;*
- *Areas of traditional chalk grassland;*
- *Frequent redundant oast houses;*
- *Almost no hop gardens still in production; and*
- *Hedges and hedgerow trees."*

5.17 The stated overall landscape character objectives relevant to the Site are:

- *"To maintain the existing woodland cover, increasing the proportion of deciduous woodlands and to restore the hedgerow network."*

5.18 Relevant design guidelines for Petham are:

- *"Conserve and manage characteristic mixed woodlands of beech, oak, ash and yew and hazel coppice with beech standards. Conserve and manage hedgerows and shaws. Conserve and replant beech avenues on cross contour roads. Conserve and enhance species rich grassland. Conserve the small scale, isolated settlement pattern. Seek the use of sympathetic local materials – brick, tile and flint."*

6.0 PUBLISHED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENTS

6.1 The Site is covered by the following published landscape character assessments and associated studies, which support the planning policy evidence base and provide guidance on the management of future change:

Natural England, National Character Area 119, North Downs (NCA 119)[10]

6.2 The Site and study area are covered by NCA 119, which is an extensive area of land extending between Surrey and Dover. The Site is located at the eastern edge of NCA 119, between Folkestone and Dover. The settlement pattern is described as:

- *"traditional small, nucleated villages, scattered farms and large houses with timber framing, flint walls and Wealden brick detailing. Twisting sunken lanes, often aligned along ancient drove roads, cut across the scarp and are a feature of much of the dip slope."*

6.3 Stated key characteristics relevant to the Site and study area are:

- *"Cretaceous Chalk forms the backbone of the North Downs. A distinctive chalk downland ridge rises up from the surrounding land, with a steep scarp slope to the south providing extensive views across Kent, Surrey and Sussex and across the Channel seascape to France;*
- *The North Downs end at the dramatic White Cliffs of Dover, one of the country's most distinctive and famous landmarks. Most of the coast between Kingsdown and Folkestone is unprotected, allowing for natural processes. The cliffs are home to internationally important maritime cliff-top and cliff-ledge vegetation;*
- *The south-facing scarp is incised by a number of short, bowl-shaped dry valleys, cut by periglacial streams and often referred to as combes. The undulating topography of the dip slope has also been etched by streams and rivers, today forming dry valleys, some of which carry winterbournes that occasionally flow in the dip slope, depending on the level of the chalk aquifer."*

6.4 Relevant Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO) are:

- *"Manage, conserve and enhance the distinctive rural character and historic environment of the North Downs, including the long-established settlement pattern, ancient routeways and traditional buildings. Protect the tranquillity of the landscape and sensitively manage, promote and celebrate the area's rich cultural and natural heritage, famous landmarks and views for future generations (SEO 1); and*
- *Plan to deliver integrated, well-managed multi-functional green space in existing and developing urban areas, providing social, economic and environmental benefits and reinforcing landscape character and local*

[9] Kent Downs AONB, Landscape Design Handbook, https://kentdowns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Landscape-Design-Handbook.pdf

[10] Natural England, National Character Area 119: North Downs, http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/7036466?category=587130

distinctiveness, particularly on or alongside the boundaries of the designated landscapes within the North Downs (SEO 4)."

Landscape Assessment of Kent, Part 2, East Kent Downs, LCA Petham (LCA Petham)[11], 2004

6.5 The Site is located in LCA Petham. The stated key characteristics relevant to the Site are

- *"Intimate, remote, long rolling valleys;*
- *Deciduous woodland on ridges;*
- *Chalk grassland/rough grass shaws/rare species;*
- *Overgrown hedgerows with many trees;*
- *Scattered farms and redundant oasts."*

6.6 The published study assesses the condition of the LCA as '*good*', due to a coherent pattern of elements, few detracting features and a moderate ecological integrity.

6.7 The published study assesses the sensitivity of the LCA as '*high*', due to the historic continuity, dominant landform and high visibility.

6.8 The stated landscape actions are based on 'conserve', with the following relevant to the Site:

- *"Conserve settlement patterns, avoiding ridgeline development;*
- *Conserve woodland cover and localised characteristics;*
- *Conserve grasslands; and*
- *Conserve shaws Conserve highway characteristics of narrow cross contour and ridgeline road."*

LANDSCAPE RECEPTOR SUMMARY

6.9 From the above baseline review, the following table summarises the landscape and visual receptors included in the following assessment and their sensitivity, which is set out in full in **Appendix IV**:

Table 6-1: Landscape Receptor Summary

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity
The Site	Low
NCA 119: North Kent Downs	High
LCA Petham	High
LCA 1C: East Kent Downs	High
LCA 1C: East Kent Downs - Petham	High
Local Landscape Character Area Six Mile	Medium

7.0 VISUAL APPRAISAL

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

7.1 With reference to **Figure L03: Zone of Theoretical Visibility** (ZTV), the theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development has been modelled, based upon 7m high buildings, to reflect the height of new buildings on the most elevated part of the Site. The ZTV includes the existing landform, but does not model the existing woodland and buildings, and therefore constitutes a 'bare-earth' model. Whilst this is 'unrealistic' it does provide a precautionary approach to inform the fieldwork and accords with GLVIA 3.

7.2 The ZTV demonstrates that the theoretical visibility:

- Extends consistently across the northern part of the study area, due to the relatively elevated position of the Site in relation to lower lying landform;
- Is concentrated to within close proximity of the Site to the east due to rising landform within the woodlands, beyond which culminate at a ridgeline, beyond which the proposed buildings would not be visible;
- Extends for a short distance to the south of the Site, due to the undulating and rising landform; and
- Extends across most of the western part of the study area, due to the western part of the study area being an area of lower lying landform in relation to the Site.

Fieldwork

7.3 Fieldwork has been undertaken from across the study area in October 2023. The fieldwork involves identifying publicly accessible locations ('viewpoints') to determine the visibility of the Site. The locations of the viewpoints are illustrated on **Figure L04: Viewpoint Plan**. The following section should be read in combination with the photographs presented in **Figure L05**. As the fieldwork was undertaken whilst the deciduous vegetation was in leaf, consideration is also given for winter scenario's.

7.4 **Viewpoint 1** demonstrates that when in close proximity to the Site, along the B2068, most of the Site is screened by Six Mile House and the garage in summer. The exception is the upper parts of the existing buildings on the more elevated central and eastern parts of the Site. The overall extent of views is short in range due to the density of the woodland bordering the Site. The scenic quality of the view is low due to the garage and highways signage. In winter, the composition of the view would remain similar, due to the alignment of the view between Six Mile House and the garage, as well as the height of road side

[11] Kent County Council, Landscape Assessment of Kent, 2004, https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/12462/Landscape-Assessment-of-Kent-October-2004_Part2.pdf

vegetation; however, the existing buildings within the Site would be slightly more visible than in summer months.

7.5 From PRoW across low lying land to the west of the Site, the intervening vegetation screens the Site in summer, as demonstrated by **Viewpoint 2**. In winter, there are likely to be highly softened views of the existing buildings, due to the density of the intervening vegetation.

7.6 The upper parts of the existing buildings in the central and eastern parts of the Site are visible from PRoW to the north-west of the Site, as illustrated by **Viewpoint 3**; however, the Site forms a very small part of the wider view. In winter, there would be an increase in the visibility of the existing buildings within the Site, although still seen in the context of the garage and Six Mile House, which would also be more visible in winter conditions.

7.7 In summer, the Site is not visible from the northern part of the study area, including locations along the B2068 and PRoW, as demonstrated by **Viewpoints 4 to 7**. This is due to the density of the intervening roadside vegetation and field boundary vegetation. In winter, the density of the intervening vegetation is similarly considered to substantially screen the Site, with only the potential for largely softened views from parts of the PRoW.

7.8 Similarly, the Site is not visible from PRoW to the east of the Site within the ancient woodland, as demonstrated by **Viewpoint 8**. In winter, the density of the intervening woodland is similarly considered to screen the Site.

7.9 The existing buildings in the northern part of the Site are visible at close range from along Mockbeggar Lane, as demonstrated by **Viewpoints 9 and 10**. Within these views, the existing buildings offer a very low scenic quality and do not contribute positively to the composition of the view.

7.10 The Site is also partially visible from the B2068 on the southern approach to the Site, as demonstrated by **Viewpoint 11**, seen beyond Woodside and Six Mile Garage House. The existing utilitarian blue building in the southern part of the Site is visible, set below the woodland, which truncates any longer distance views across the Site. The overall composition of the view is of a cluster of varied building forms and heights set against the contemporary and utilitarian form of Six Mile Garage, and several tall communication masts and overhead pylons. The composition of the view is considered to remain similar in winter conditions as well.

7.11 The Site is not visible from PRoW in the wider study area due to the density of the intervening vegetation, as demonstrated by **Viewpoint 12**.

Visual Summary

7.12 From the fieldwork, the visibility of the Site and the Proposed Development is far less than suggested by the ZTV due to the density of the intervening vegetation which is not accounted for in the bare-earth ZTV.

7.13 The Site is visible at close range from the road networks and adjacent land uses; along with PRoW to the north-west of the Site. Within these views, the Site is seen in the context of existing land uses. The existing buildings in the central and eastern parts of the Site are the more visible buildings, due to being in a slightly more elevated topographic position in the Site.

7.14 The overall scenic quality of these views towards the Site is lowered by the garage and the buildings within the Site.

7.15 The Site is not visible from the wider study area due to the density of the intervening vegetation and undulating landform.

7.16 The following table summarises the visual receptors included in the following assessment in relation to their viewpoint (VP) and sensitivity, which is set out in full in **Appendix V**:

Table 7-1: Visual Receptor Summary

VP	Visual Receptor	Sensitivity
1	1A. Road users on the B2068 1B. Residents at Six Mile House	Medium High
2	2A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE147/2	High
3	3A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE147/1	High
4	4A. Road users on the B2068	Medium
5	5A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE34/1	High
6	6A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE34/1	High
7	7A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE34/1	High
8	8A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0164/HE35/2	High
9	9A. Road users on Mockbeggar Lane	Medium
10	10A. Road users on Mockbeggar Lane 10B. Residents at Gore Farm	Medium High
11	11A.Road users on the B2068 11B. Residents at Six Mile Garage House 11C. Residents at Woodside	Medium High High
12	12A. Recreational users on PRoW (bridleway) 0090/HE145/2	High

8.0 POLICY RELEVANT TO LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL MATTERS

8.1 The following policies are relevant to landscape and visual matters.

National Planning Policy Framework, 2023[12]

8.2 The relevant NPPF policies are paragraphs:

- 8 - outlining that the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainable development;
- 96 - outlining the use of street layouts which allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods;
- 123 – which outlines that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account promoting regeneration and change;
- 129 – which sets out area-based character assessments can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently;
- 131 - in respect of achieving well-designed places via high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings;
- 135 – requiring planning decisions to ensure that development will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, including being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history;
- 136- in respect of new tree planting;
- 137 – requiring early consideration of design quality and engagement with communities;
- 139 – which sets out that significant weight should be given to development which promotes high levels of sustainability or that helps raise the standard of design in an area, as long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of the area;
- 180 – requiring planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment;
- 182 – which sets out that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in AONB's. The scale and extent of development within designated areas should be limited; and
- 183 – applications in an AONB (albeit for 'major development') should include an assessment of any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities and the extent to which that could be moderated.

National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)

8.3 The following PPG are relevant to landscape and visual matters:

- Design: process and tools[13] (2019), which explains the processes and tools that can be used through the planning system and how to engage local communities effectively;
- Light Pollution[14] (2019), which advises on how to consider light within the planning system;
- Natural Environment[15] (2019), which explains key issues in implementing policy to protect and enhance the natural environment, including green infrastructure and biodiversity.

National Design Guide, 2021

8.4 This guide[16] illustrates how well-designed places can be achieved in practice, based upon ten characteristic 'themes', including context, identity and nature.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council Core Strategy Review, 2022[17]

8.5 The Core Strategy sets out the long term vision for the District.

- CSD4: Green Infrastructure of Natural Networks, which includes for the National Landscape having the highest status of protection and that a high level of protection will be given to ancient woodland; and
- SS1: District Spatial Strategy, whereby within the North Downs Area (covers the Site) development will be limited to sensitively meeting communities needs or is exceptional circumstances in respect of 'major' development.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council Places and Policies Local Plan, 2020[18]

8.6 The development plan sets out the Council's policies and proposals for the development and use of land in the district. Relevant policies are:

- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction, whereby development should include measures to adapt to climate change, including the provision of green infrastructure;
- E2: Existing Employment Sites, whereby such sites are permitted for redevelopment where the existing uses impact on the natural environment;

[12] Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a11af7e8f5ec000f1f8c46/NPPF_December_2023.pdf
[13] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, https://www.gov.uk/guidance/design
[14] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, https://www.gov.uk/guidance/light-pollution
[15] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment
[16] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/962113/National_design_guide.pdf
[17] Folkestone & Hythe District Council, https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/downloads/file/3593/core-strategy-review-2022
[18] Folkestone & Hythe District Council, https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/downloads/file/3598/places-and-policies-local-plan

- HB2: Cohesive Design, whereby on sensitive sites, development integrates into the Neighbourhood, Create and Place and Creates Streets and Homes;
- NE2: Biodiversity, whereby all new development will be required to conserve and enhance the natural environment;
- NE3: Protecting the District's Landscape and Countryside. Within the National Landscape, planning permission will be granted where it can be demonstrated that the natural beauty and locally distinctive features of the AONB and its setting are conserved and enhanced; proposals reinforce and response to rather than detract from the AONB; development does not lead to coalescence and meets the opportunity of the Management Plan and supporting design guidance; and
- NE5: Light Pollution and External Illumination, whereby 'major' development schemes are required to accord with the best practice guidance provided by the ILP.

9.0 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS AND PRIMARY MITIGATION

Opportunities and Constraints

9.1 From the above, the landscape and visual opportunities of the Site are:

- Previously developed land, where there has been alteration to the underlying pattern of landform (via retaining walls), hardstanding and buildings;
- The existing buildings within the Site are of no architectural merit, and their degraded and very low condition results in no scenic quality, such that the Site is a visual detractor in the landscape;
- The Site is physically well contained by woodland and existing buildings, such that the Proposed Development would similarly be well contained and would not result in sprawl;
- The Site is visually well contained, with only localised views. The Proposed Development presents the opportunity to raise the scenic quality of the Site and within the composition of views;
- The Site is not publicly accessible;
- There is no internal vegetation at risk of removal; and
- The Site is well located in relation to the exiting settlement pattern, forming part of small cluster of land uses at Six Mile.

9.2 The landscape and visual constraints of the Site are:

- The Site is within the Kent Downs National Landscape; however it does not represent any of the special qualities of the designation, nor is the Site considered to represent the key characteristics of the landscape character areas. The Site therefore presents the opportunity to enhance and improve the condition and scenic quality of this part of the National Landscape;
- The Site is bordered by ancient woodland, which can be addressed by offsetting development from the vegetation and root protection zones and in accordance with the Arborists recommendations;
- The Site is visible at close range from the local road networks; however these views are very transient and the Site is not the main focus of the view;
- The Site is visible from residential properties in proximity to the Site; however the removal of the existing buildings and the introduction of high quality architecture and new planting can improve the scenic quality and composition of these views.

9.3 With reference to the **Opportunities and Constraints Plan**, the Proposed Development can be successfully accommodated within the Site via:

- Offsetting development from the very high sensitivity zone covering the root protection zone and boundary with the ancient woodland;
- Introducing high quality architecture, with the building heights remaining below the top of the tree canopies;

- Implementing new boundary vegetation to reflect the character of well vegetated roads and lanes;
- Re-grading landform within the Site to reduce the requirement for retaining walls where practicable;
- Orientating new buildings to maximise views across the wider landscape, rather than towards existing residential properties and tall pylons;
- Building façade and colour tones to be derived from the National Landscape guidance documents; and
- Setting new buildings within a new landscape framework which aims to increase the vegetation cover across the Site and habitat connectivity between the woodland and wider landscape so as to respond positively to the published landscape character assessment guidelines.

Primary Mitigation

9.4 With reference to the drawings for determination, the architectural layout has included mitigation measures to reduce any potential landscape and visual effects. The measures are:

- Offsetting the proposed buildings from the edges of the Site and the ancient woodland;
- Responding to the existing level change across the Site via terracing and underground parking;
- High quality architecture through the same residential and office building form and cladding, including vertical timber cladding and traditional red brick;
- Residential buildings situated across the Site on the same alignment to ensure a consistent and well planned street-scape.



Image 9-1: Extract of the DAS, illustrating the western elevation of Proposed Development

9.5 In addition to the above and the following extract of the Landscape Masterplan, the proposed buildings would be set within a new landscape framework which consists of:

- Implementing new tree planting along the western edge of the Site, between the proposed buildings and the existing garage and residential land uses;
- Native hedging to divide residential gardens, along with rain gardens;
- Planters around the residential buildings to increase the overall vegetation cover
- Delineation of the access road and driveways via differing paving patterns; and
- Sedum green roofs above the car-parking areas.



Image 9-2: Extract of the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan

The Design

9.6 From the above and with reference to the following extracts of the Design and Access Statement (DAS), the Proposed Development would provide a high quality architectural design, set within a new landscape structure.

9.7 There would be a very high degree of enclosure to the Proposed Development due to its location between the woodlands and existing residential land uses, as demonstrated by the following CGI's from the DAS.



Image 9-3: Aerial view from the DAS

9.8 Image 9-3 demonstrates the high degree of enclosure to the layout via the woodland and existing residential land uses which border the Site, such that the perception of the change in land use will be very localised with new buildings remaining below the vegetated skyline.

9.9 The image also demonstrates the ordered arrangement of the new residential properties, with the intervening planting between their external spaces and the existing residential land uses bordering the Site. The reduced eaves height to the first floor of the proposed residential buildings reduces their perceived mass and the detailing to across the gable ends provides visual interest and similarly reduces the perception of the overall mass.

9.10 The valued building materials are the vertical clad timber, traditional red brick and the red clay plain tiles. The ordered arrangement and consistent use of a similar palette of materials provide a co-ordinated and high quality design and evident by the following image from the DAS from the south-east edge of the Site, along with the new landscape framework.



Image 9-4: DAS view from the south-east edge of the Site

9.11 As the above design measures are embedded in the drawings for determination, they are accounted for in the following assessment of landscape and visual effects.

10.0 LIKELY LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

10.1 The Proposed Development is assessed in relation to the identified landscape and visual receptors at year 1 of operation (winter) and year 15 of operation (summer). The assessments assume that the Proposed Development is fully built out and in use. The following section summarises the likely landscape and visual effects, which are set out in full in **Appendix IV and V**.

SITE CHARACTER EFFECTS

10.2 At the Site level, the Proposed Development would remove the existing buildings and introduce a new office building with underground parking in the northern part of the Site. There would a row of four semi-detached properties, extending southwards across the remainder of the Site, which each property in a parallel south-west to north-east alignment. A vehicle access route would extend along the northern and eastern edges of the Site to provide access to the residential dwellings and enable a turning head for larger vehicles. All new buildings would therefore be set back from the ancient woodland and located centrally within the Site.

10.3 The residential buildings would utilise the existing level change across the Site, with the residential buildings being situated across the plateau, and extending up to 7.85m in height. There would be a high architectural quality to these buildings via their pitched roof form and alternating floor to ceiling windows on the gable ends. The lower storeys would be traditional red brick, with the remainder of the facades a dark stained timber cladding, providing a visually recessive colour against the back-drop of the woodland. The Office building would similarly share the red brick and dark timber cladding, so as to provide a unified architectural design with the residential properties, resulting in the overall character of the Proposed Development being perceived as residential.

10.4 The new buildings would be set within a new landscape framework, including for sedum roofs above the carparking areas and a new tree belt between the western edge of the Site and adjacent residential land uses. The combination of the new residential land use, improved scenic quality and vegetation structure would result in a high degree of change at years 1 and 15 and in relation to the existing character of the Site, a **moderate beneficial effect**.

PUBLISHED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS EFFECTS

10.5 In relation to NCA119: North Kent Downs, the Proposed Development would respond positively to the Statements of Environmental Opportunity via retaining the form of the existing settlement pattern at Six Mile, via the Proposed Development remaining within the footprint of the former land use. The Proposed Development would also retain the surrounding ancient woodland through the offset between the proposed buildings and the root protection areas.

10.6 In relation to Kent LCA Petham, the Proposed Development would respond positively to the published guidelines, by conserving the woodland cover around the perimeter of the Site and introducing additional tree planting along the western edge of the Site.

10.7 Ultimately, for the NCA and Kent landscape character areas, the scale and extent of the Proposed Development would be too small to alter the character of their wider geographic areas and the effects are predicted to be **neutral**.

10.8 In relation to the National Landscape Character Area LCA 1C: East Kent Downs – Petham, the form, scale and materials of the proposed buildings would not undermine the rural nature of the area, due to being a high quality development with recessive colours on the façade and valued building materials via red brick and red clay plain tiles.

10.9 The Proposed Development would be located in a part of the LCA which already forms an area of urban-fringe influences via the existing land uses, garage, roads and residential properties; representing a part of the LCA which is not inherently rural, remote or undeveloped. However, the quality of the architecture and the ordered arrangement of the proposed buildings, with their unified facades, would enable a stronger sense of place and a more locally distinctive architectural design at Six Mile and within this part of the National Landscape.

10.10 The Proposed Development would respond positively to the published guidelines by protecting the small scale settlement pattern at Six Mile, with a replacement office and four semi-detached buildings within previously developed land, thereby avoiding large scale development. The skyline would be protected as the proposed buildings would remain below the height of the woodland and be back-clothed by the woodland. The perception of the residential buildings would represent a far higher scenic quality than views of the existing buildings.

10.11 The Proposed Development would be a very small physical and perceived change in relation to the extent of the LCA, such that the effects at years 1 and 15 of operation are predicted to be **negligible beneficial**.

10.12 At the more local scale of Six Mile, the effects are predicted to be **minor beneficial**, as the shared form and materials across the new buildings would result in the Proposed Development being perceived as a unified design and a residential area set within the existing extent of built development at Six Mile. The overall change would be beneficial to the character of the area and result in an improved sense of place.

Landscape Summary

10.13 With reference to Appendix IV, the following table summarises the predicted landscape effects at years 1 and 15 of operation.

Table 10-1: Landscape Effect Summary

Landscape Receptor	Year 1 Effect	Year 15 Effect
The Site	Moderate Beneficial	Moderate Beneficial
NCA 119: North Kent Downs	Neutral	Neutral
LCA Petham	Neutral	Neutral
LCA 1C: East Kent Downs	Neutral	Neutral
LCA 1C: East Kent Downs - Petham	Negligible Beneficial	Negligible Beneficial
Local Landscape Character Area Six Mile	Minor Beneficial	Minor Beneficial

VISUAL EFFECTS

10.14 With reference to **Appendix V**, for road users on the B2068 (**Viewpoint 1**), in winter, the proposed office building would not be visible due to being located beyond Six Mile House. The upper facades of the southernmost residential properties, including their pitched roofline would be visible, replacing views of the existing utilitarian building with a higher scenic quality. In comparison to the blue colour of the existing building, the proposed black timber façade would be more recessive in colour and visually integrated against the backdrop of ancient woodland, along with the proposed residential buildings remaining below the wooded skyline. The lower facades and gardens of the proposed residential properties would not be visible due to the intervening garage and roadside vegetation. The overall change to the composition of the view would be small, and is a balance between the beneficial change from the removal of the existing building and the introduction of additional roofscape and building form, set within the composition of the garage and existing roof scape of Six Mile Garage House. In summer the change to the composition of the view would reflect that in winter, with a small reduction in the visibility of the Proposed Development due to the roadside vegetation being in leaf.

10.15 For recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE147/2 (**Viewpoint 2**), on low lying land to the west of the Site, the density of the intervening vegetation would largely soften the Proposed Development in winter, and screen it entirely in summer.

10.16 For recreational users in a more elevated position in the landscape, on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE147/1, to the north-west of the Site (**Viewpoint 3**), in winter, the proposed buildings would be visible, replacing views of the existing large blue utilitarian building within the Site, with a symmetrical arrangement of high quality buildings, all with a similar dark toned timber façade. The alignment of the proposed buildings would be orientated south-west to east within the composition of the view, thereby reducing the overall perceived extent and mass of the new buildings. The proposed buildings would also remain below the vegetated skyline. The Proposed Development would be seen as a continuation of the residential buildings within the view, extending from Six Mile House to beyond the garage, but remaining within the overall cluster of Six Mile Garage House and Woodside. In summer, with the roadside vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the proposed residential buildings would reduce, thereby the overall change to the composition of the view would also reduce.

10.17 From PRoW and road networks in across the northern part of the study area (**Viewpoints 4 to 7**) the Proposed Development would not be visible in winter and summer due to the density of the intervening vegetation. The exception is for recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE34/1, where the upper parts of the proposed residential buildings would be discernible, although largely softened by the intervening vegetation in winter, but not visible in summer.

10.18 Similarly the Proposed Development would not be visible from recreational routes within the ancient woodland in winter and summer, due to the density of the vegetation (**Viewpoint 8**).

10.19 In closer proximity to the Site, along Mockbeggar Lane, (**Viewpoints 9 and 10**), there would be close range views of the new office building, replacing the existing low scenic quality building. The change to the composition of the view would be via an improved architectural quality to the building, as the view is already demarcated by buildings in close proximity to the receptors.

10.20 The proposed residential buildings would also be visible for road users on the B2068 (**Viewpoint 11**) and residents adjacent to the Site. The upper façade and roofline of the proposed residential buildings would result in additional building within the Site than the existing utilitarian blue building, resulting in a more developed composition to the view, although one which reflects the existing visual context of residential land uses extending from Woodside to Six Mile House. The proposed residential building would be recessive in colour due to the black timber facades and would remain below the vegetated skyline. The orientation of the proposed buildings would allow views to remain across the Site to the woodland. The proposed buildings would present a high architectural quality and a higher scenic quality, which is considered alongside the additional development across the view.

10.21 From longer distance locations within the western part of the study area, (Viewpoint 12), the Proposed Development would not be visible due to the intervening vegetation and distance from the Site.

Visual Summary

10.22 With reference to Appendix V, the following table summarises the predicted visual effects at years 1 and 15 of operation.

Table 10-2: Summary of Visual Effects

Visual Receptor	Year 1 Effect	Year 15 Effect
1A. Road users on the B2068 1B. Residents at Six Mile House	Minor Beneficial Minor Beneficial	Negligible Beneficial Negligible Beneficial
2A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE147/2	Negligible Adverse	Neutral
3A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE147/1	Moderate Beneficial	Minor Beneficial
4A. Road users on the B2068	Neutral	Neutral
5A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE34/1	Neutral	Neutral
6A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE34/1	Negligible Adverse	Neutral
7A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE34/1	Neutral	Neutral
8A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0164/HE35/2	Neutral	Neutral
9A. Road users on Mockbeggar Lane	Minor Beneficial	Minor Beneficial
10A. Road users on Mockbeggar Lane 10B. Residents at Gore Farm	Moderate Beneficial	Moderate Beneficial Neutral

Visual Receptor	Year 1 Effect	Year 15 Effect
	Negligible Beneficial	
11A.Road users on the B2068 11B. Residents at Six Mile Garage House 11C. Residents at Woodside	Minor Beneficial Minor Beneficial Minor Beneficial	Minor Beneficial Minor Beneficial Minor Beneficial
12A. Recreational users on PRoW (bridleway) 0090/HE145/2	Neutral	Neutral

Effects to the Character of the Night Sky

10.23 The Proposed Development would introduce new lighting within the Site via the office and residential land uses. With reference to the Design and Access Statement, the design of the windows has been carefully considered to limit light spillage. In combination with the use of best practice measures for the lighting design, it is assessed that whilst there would be an adverse effect at the Site level due to new lighting, this would be very small in scale and extent, such that the wider character of the night sky would not be impacted. Therefore, there would be a **neutral effect** to the character of the night sky.

Effects to the Kent Downs National Landscape

10.24 The Proposed Development would not impact the special characteristics and qualities of the National Landscape. This is because there would be no change to valued landform, given the Proposed Development would be located in an area of existing modified landform and a previously developed site. The Proposed Development would not impact any ecological habitats, nor chalk downland, given the existing developed character of the Site, similarly there would be no impact to the farmed landscape, woodlands and dramatic views.

10.25 Whilst the Proposed Development would introduce new office and residential land uses, this would be to a part of the National Landscape which is already characterised by residential land uses and main roads, along with the garage. The Proposed Development would therefore be located in an area where aspects of tranquillity and remoteness are already eroded by the existing landscape uses.

10.26 The Proposed Development would provide the opportunity to improve the landscape/townscape character of this part of the National Landscape, as well as the perceived sense of place at Six Mile. The Proposed Development represents a high quality designed development which can raise the standard of development in the National Park generally.

10.27 The Proposed Development would therefore respond positively to the relevant policies by conserving the special characteristics and qualities of the natural beauty and landscape character of the National Landscape.

10.28 In respect of the sustainable development principles, the proposed Development would enhance the local character of Six Mile, via redevelopment of an area of land which does not contribute positively to the landscape, via high quality development which uses valued building materials in accordance with the National Landscape design guidelines.

Response to Policy

10.29 The following section sets out the response of the Proposed Development to the relevant policies.

National Planning Policy Framework, 2023

10.30 The Proposed Development is considered to respond positively to the social and environmental objectives of sustainable development through the introduction of high quality architecture set within a new landscape framework. The siting of the Proposed Development at an area of previously developed land is considered to respond well to making efficient use of land and promoting regeneration and change in accordance with policy 123.

10.31 The Design and Access Statement sets out the character of the local area, which in combination with reviews of the published landscape character assessments, have been used to inform the design in accordance with paragraph 129 and 137.

10.32 The high quality design would achieve an improved sense of place and beneficial landscape effects, responding positively to paragraph 131 and 135. The new tree planting within the Site also accords with policy 136 and in combination with the new buildings provides a high level of sustainability to raise the design standards of the area in accordance with paragraph 139.

10.33 The Proposed Development is predicted to result in a range of beneficial landscape effects, due to replacing the existing buildings and very low scenic quality of the Site with high quality architecture. The Proposed Development would therefore respond positively to policy 180.

10.34 In respect of the National Landscape, the scale and extent of the Proposed Development would be very small and in an area of previously developed land. The residential layout would remain physically contained by woodland and existing residential properties, to form an integrated part of the existing settlement pattern at Six Mile. The Proposed Development would conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Landscape and therefore responds positively to policy 182.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council Core Strategy Review, 2022

10.35 The proposed layout would be offset from the ancient woodland, thereby protecting the woodland and responding positively to policy CSD4: Green Infrastructure of Natural Networks.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council Places and Policies Local Plan, 2020

10.36 The proposed planting within the Site and across the western edge of the Site introduces new vegetation to improve the vegetation cover across the Site. In combination with the design measures set out in the

Design and Access Statement for the new building, this is a positive response to the policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction.

10.37 The existing character of the Site is considered to negatively impact on the landscape character and people's views. Therefore, redevelopment of the Site is considered to accord with policy E2.

10.38 The design standard of the Proposed Development, with office and residential buildings sharing the same form and architectural finishes, creates a cohesive design in accordance with Policy HB2.

10.39 As set out in the landscape and visual effects, the Proposed Development would result in a range of beneficial effect, thereby conserving and enhancing the natural environment in response to Policy NE2.

10.40 In respect of Policy NE3: Protecting the District's Landscape and Countryside, the natural beauty and locally distinctive features of the National Park would be conserved and enhanced. This is via the proposed buildings replacing buildings of a very low scenic quality; the layout retaining the ancient woodland and introducing high quality architecture and external spaces. The Proposed Development would reinforce a positive sense of place at Six Mile and would not result in any coalescence given the Site is bound by woodland, roads and residential land uses. The Proposed Development would meet the aims of the National Landscape Management Plan and its supporting design guidance.

10.41 In respect of Policy NE5: Light Pollution and External Illumination, the Proposed Development would not alter the character of the night sky, due to its very small scale and extent, and location adjacent to existing residential and employment sources of lighting.

11.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

11.1 EDLA have undertaken a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of land at Six Mile ('the Site') in respect of new residential led redevelopment ('the Proposed Development').

Baseline

11.2 With reference to **Figure L01: Site Context Plan**, the Site is a broadly square area of land, located adjacent to Six Mile garage. The Site consists of existing buildings and hardstanding, such that it is previously developed land within the Kent Downs National Landscape.

11.3 The existing buildings are of no architectural merit, being utilitarian in form. As a result, the scenic quality and condition of the Site is very low and the Site does not contribute positively to the landscape, the sense of place, nor the sense of arrival at Six Mile.

11.4 There is level change across the Site via retaining walls, resulting in the buildings in the central and eastern parts of the Site being in a slightly higher topographic position than those buildings in the western part of the Site. There is a generally high degree of enclosure to the Site due to the proximity to the ancient woodland, which extends to the east and south of the Site and Six Mile garage and residential properties to the west of the Site.

11.5 The Kent Downs National Landscape is afforded great weight in planning policy in respect of conserving and enhancing the landscape. However, the Site is considered to be of low sensitivity to change overall due to being previously developed land of very low scenic quality and not representative of the stated special landscape components of the National Landscape.

11.6 In respect of the published landscape character assessments, at the local scale, the Site is covered by Area 1C: East Kent Downs and the smaller geographic area of Petham. The stated aspiration for new development is that any visual or landscape impacts are kept to a minimum by high quality design. Specifically, existing vegetation and skylines should be protected, such that new development makes a positive contribution to the landscape character, via its scale, massing and materials. The National Landscape guidance on the selection and use of colour notes that the Site is in an area where the recommended colour tones are based around a range of tones to aid in making development visually recessive.

11.7 With reference to **Figure L03: Zone of Theoretical Visibility**, the theoretical visibility of the Site and the Proposed Development is concentrated to the north and west of the Site. From the fieldwork, the visibility of the Site and the Proposed Development is far less than suggested by the ZTV due to the density of existing vegetation not accounted for in the ZTV model. The Site is visible at close range from the road networks and adjacent land uses; along with PRoW to the north-west of the Site. Within these views, the Site is seen in the context of existing residential land uses. The existing buildings in the central and eastern parts of the Site are the more visible buildings, due to being in a slightly more elevated topographic position in the Site and rendered blue in tone. The overall scenic quality of these views towards the Site is lowered by Six Mile garage and the buildings within the Site. The Site is not visible from the wider study area as suggested by the ZTV due to the density of the intervening vegetation and undulating landform.

Mitigation

11.8 With reference to the **Opportunities and Constrains Plan**, the Site is considered to provide the opportunity for redevelopment due to being previously developed land and with a very localised visibility. The main constraint to the Proposed Development is the offset required from the ancient woodland, which is accounted for in the layout via offsetting the proposed buildings from the edges of the Site and the ancient woodland.

11.9 The Proposed Development responds positively to the existing level change across the Site via terracing and underground parking and introduces high quality architecture through building form and cladding, including vertical timber cladding and traditional red brick. These new buildings are set within a new landscape framework, consisting of extensive tree planting along the western edge of the Site.

Likely Effects

11.10 At the Site level, the combination of the new residential land use, improved scenic quality and vegetation structure would result in a high degree of change at years 1 and 15 and in relation to the existing character of the Site, a **moderate beneficial effect**.

11.11 The Proposed Development would respond positively to published landscape character guidance via retaining the form of the existing settlement pattern at Six Mile and conserving the woodland cover around the perimeter of the Site and introducing additional tree planting along the western edge of the Site. Ultimately, for the National and Kent landscape character areas, the scale and extent of the Proposed Development would be too small to alter the character of their wider geographic areas and the effects are predicted to be **neutral**.

11.12 In relation to the National Landscape Character Area LCA 1C: East Kent Downs – Petham, the form, scale and materials of the proposed buildings would not undermine the rural nature of the area, due to being a high quality development with recessive colours on the façade and valued building materials via red brick and red clay plain tiles. The Proposed Development would be located in a part of the LCA which already forms an area of urban-fringe influences via the existing land uses, garage, roads and residential properties; representing a part of the LCA which is not inherently rural, remote or undeveloped. However, the quality of the architecture and the ordered arrangement of the proposed buildings, with their unified facades, would enable a stronger sense of place and a more locally distinctive architectural design at Six Mile and within this part of the National Landscape. The Proposed Development would be

a very small physical and perceived change in relation to the extent of the LCA, such that the effects at years 1 and 15 of operation are predicted to be **negligible beneficial**.

11.13 Visually, the Proposed Development would only be visible at close range to the Site. Within these views, the proposed residential building would be recessive in colour due to the black timber facades and would remain below the vegetated skyline. The orientation of the proposed buildings would allow views to remain across the Site to the woodland. The proposed buildings would present a high architectural quality and a higher scenic quality, which in comparison to the existing buildings would be a beneficial change to the composition of the view. The Proposed Development is therefore predicted to result in a range of **beneficial effects** at year 15.

Kent Downs National Landscape

11.14 The Proposed Development would not impact the special characteristics and qualities of the National Landscape due to being located on previously developed land. Whilst the Proposed Development would introduce new office and residential land uses, this would be to a part of the National Landscape which is already characterised by residential land uses and main roads, along with the garage. The Proposed Development would therefore be located in an area where aspects of tranquillity and remoteness are already eroded by the existing landscape uses.

11.15 The Proposed Development would provide the opportunity to improve the landscape/townscape character of this part of the National Landscape, as well as the perceived sense of place at Six Mile. The Proposed Development represents a high quality designed development which can raise the standard of development in the National Park generally. The Proposed Development would therefore respond positively to the relevant policies by conserving the special characteristics and qualities of the natural beauty and landscape character of the National Landscape.

Conclusion

11.16 The Proposed Development is considered to respond positively to the social and environmental objectives of sustainable development through the introduction of high quality architecture set within a new landscape framework.

11.17 The proposed buildings would replace utilitarian buildings of a very low scenic quality which do not contribute positively to the landscape character. The Proposed Development would create a stronger residential sense of place and sense of arrival at Six Mile and provides the opportunity to raise the design standards of the local area and within this part of the National Landscape.

11.18 The Proposed Development is predicted to result in a range of local beneficial landscape and visual effects due to the high quality design proposals and can therefore be successfully accommodated within the Site and the National Landscape.

12.0 LVIA APPENDIX I: LVIA METHODOLOGY

12.1 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) methodology follows the best practice principles for assessing landscape and visual effects recommended by the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition, 2013 (GLVIA 3). Reference is also made to the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02/21: Assessing landscape value outside national designations, 2021 (TGN 02/12).

12.2 LVIAs are undertaken by professionals who are also typically involved in the design of the landscape and the preparation of landscape strategies and management proposals. This can allow the assessment to proceed as an integral part of the overall scheme design. Judgements are based on training and experience, and supported by evidence and reasoned argument.

12.3 In accordance with the GLVIA 3, the following distinct but related assessments are undertaken within a LVIA:

- Assessment of landscape effects – assessing effects of the Development on the landscape as a resource (i.e. changes to physical elements/features of the landscape and/or the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential characteristics that make different landscapes distinctive); and
- Assessment of visual effects – assessing effects of the Development on the views available to people and their visual amenity (i.e. changes in the context and character of views as a result of the change or loss of existing elements of the landscape and/or the introduction of new elements).

12.4 A LVIA typically involves the following key steps:

- Baseline studies – establishing the existing landscape and visual conditions within the Site and the wider study area against which the effects of the Development are assessed.
- Mitigation by Design – identifying measures to avoid/prevent, reduce or offset/remedy adverse potential landscape and visual effects.
- Assessment of effects – systematically assessing the potential landscape and visual effects of the Development, including whether they are adverse or beneficial.

STUDY AREA

12.5 The LVIA study area extends up to 1.5 kilometre (km) from the Site. Whilst the Proposed Development may be perceived beyond this distance, it is assessed that beyond the study area there would be no landscape or visual effects. This is due to the combination of distance, landform, vegetation and the existing perception of existing settlements and infrastructure. The study area is therefore considered proportionate for the assessment of landscape and visual effects.

ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Landscape Receptors

12.6 The character within the Site and the wider study area are recorded to provide a baseline against which the effects of the Development can be assessed. The assessment adopts the broad and inclusive European Landscape Convention (ELC) definition of landscape character embracing both rural and urban landscapes.

12.7 The character of the landscape is recorded by reference to relevant published landscape character assessments, desk-top analysis and field surveys.

12.8 Landscape receptors are defined aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by a proposal. Landscape receptors may include:

- National and local landscape designations (e.g. National Landscapes, Areas of High Landscape Value and Areas of Attractive Landscape);
- Landscape character areas as identified within published guidance; and
- Landscape features that contribute to landscape character.

12.9 The **sensitivity** of the landscape receptor is a combination of its **value** and **susceptibility** described below:

Landscape Value

12.10 GLVIA 3 sets out the following factors of value within Box 5.1:

- Landscape quality;
- Scenic quality;
- Rarity;
- Representativeness;
- Conservation Interest;
- Recreational value;
- Perceptual aspects; and
- Association.

12.11 Table 12.1 sets out the value criteria for the assessment.

Table 12-1: Landscape Value Assessment Criteria

Value	Definition
High	A landscape with a strong quality and scenic quality, which is in very good condition via its overall landscape structure and may exhibit rare features. A landscape of many and/or strong representative, conservation interest and recreational value. A landscape of high perceptual aspects and association.

Medium	A landscape with some quality and scenic quality, which is in good condition via its overall landscape structure. A landscape of some representative, conservation interest and recreational value. A landscape of perceptual aspects and association.
Low	A landscape with a limited quality and scenic quality, which is in average condition via its overall landscape structure. A landscape of limited representative, conservation interest and recreational value. A landscape of limited perceptual and association.

Landscape Susceptibility

12.12 GLVIA 3 paragraph 5.41 sets out that susceptibility is "*the ability of a landscape receptor to accommodate the Development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.*"

12.13 The criteria for assessing landscape susceptibility is based on a three point scale as set out in Table 12.2 below.

Table 12-2: Landscape Susceptibility Assessment Criteria

Susceptibility	Definition
High	A landscape that has a very limited ability to accommodate the changes that would result from the type of development proposed without adversely changing its essential character / overall integrity.
Moderate	A landscape that has the ability to accommodate some degree of the changes that would result from the type of development proposed without adversely changing its essential character / overall integrity.
Low	A landscape that is robust or tolerant to accommodating the changes that would result from the type of development proposed, which would have limited effects on its essential character / overall integrity.

12.14 Criteria that may be taken into consideration in the assessment of landscape susceptibility include landform, pattern / complexity, composition, landcover and the relationship of a given landscape area to existing settlements or developments.

Landscape Sensitivity

12.15 Assessing the sensitivity of landscape receptors combines judgements of the value attached to the landscape with its susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed, as set out above.

12.16 The criteria for assessing landscape sensitivity is based on a three point scale, as set out within Table 12.3.

Table 12-3: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Criteria

Sensitivity	Definition
High	Typically a landscape that is of high value and high susceptibility. For example, a landscape of very good condition and scenic quality with strong conservation interests, representativeness and recreational value such that there is a very limited ability to accommodate change without adversely changing its essential character / overall integrity.
Medium	Typically a landscape that is of medium value and moderate susceptibility. For example, a landscape of good condition with some scenic quality, conservation interests, representativeness and recreational value such that there is some ability to accommodate change without adversely changing its essential character / overall integrity.
Low	Typically a landscape of low value and low susceptibility. For example, a landscape of poor condition with limited scenic quality and conservation interests, representativeness and recreational value such that there is a high ability to accommodate change without adversely changing its essential character / overall integrity.

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

Assessing the Magnitude of Landscape Effects

12.17 The magnitude of a landscape effect is defined as the degree of change to landscape features or characteristics that will result from the introduction of the Proposed Development. The key factors which may influence the magnitude are:

- The extent of the Proposed Development;
- The relationship and distance of the Proposed Development to adjoining landscapes and the wider landscape context;
- The degree to which landscape character features will be changed by the Proposed Development;
- Whether effects are short (less than 5 years), medium (5-10 years) or long term more than 10 years) and
- Whether effects are permanent or temporary.

12.18 The criteria for assessing the landscape magnitude (change) is based on a five point scale as set out in Table 12.4 below.

Table 12-4: Magnitude of Landscape Impact Assessment Criteria

Magnitude	Definition
High	Typically, the Development would result in the extensive loss/alteration of key landscape characteristics and features. The change to the landscape character may be permanent or reversible.
Moderate	Typically, the Development would result in some loss/alteration of key landscape characteristics and features. The change to the landscape character may be permanent or reversible.
Low	Typically, the Development would result in a slight loss/alteration of key landscape characteristics and features. The change to the landscape character may be permanent or reversible.
Negligible	Typically, the Development would result in only very minor loss/alteration of key landscape characteristics and features. The change to the landscape character may be permanent or reversible.
None	The Development would not change the landscape characteristics or features.

Assessing Landscape Effects

12.19 Table 12.5 below sets out a matrix as a guide to the combination of sensitivity and magnitude, in order to establish the effect. Where professional judgement considers that the effects differ from this guide, then a reasoned explanation is provided in the assessment narrative. Similarly, where the guide allows for a choice, e.g. major or moderate, the justification is provided in the assessment narrative.

Table 12-5: Landscape Effects Guide

		Sensitivity		
	Criteria	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**
Magnitude	**High**	Major	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor
	Moderate	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Moderate or Minor
	Low	Moderate or Minor	Moderate or Minor	Minor
	Negligible	Minor or Negligible	Minor or Negligible	Negligible
	None	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

12.20 The criteria for assessing landscape effects are based on a seven point scale as set out in Table 12.6 below.

Table 12-6: Landscape Effects Assessment Criteria

Effect	Definition
Major Adverse	Typically, the Development would result in considerable deterioration of the quality and integrity of the landscape. For example by: • Introducing major changes that are at considerable variance with the scale, pattern and perceptual qualities of the area; or • Substantially diminishing the condition of the landscape through the extensive loss of valued features. Mitigation measures are very unlikely to fully remedy the effects and there would be adverse residual impacts.
Moderate Adverse	Typically, the Development would result in a partial deterioration of the quality and integrity of the landscape: • Introducing moderate changes that may be at odds with the scale, pattern and perceptual qualities of the area; or • Diminishing the condition of the landscape through the partial loss of valued features. Mitigation measures may remedy some but not all of the effects and there may still be some adverse residual impacts.
Minor Adverse	Typically, the Development would result in a slight deterioration of the quality and integrity of the landscape: • Introducing minor changes that are unlikely to be at odds with the scale, pattern and perceptual qualities of the area; or • Slightly diminishing the condition of the landscape through the limited loss of valued features.
Negligible Adverse	Typically, the Development would result in a very slight deterioration of the quality and integrity of the landscape: • Introducing negligible changes that are unlikely to be at odds with the scale, pattern and perceptual qualities of the area; or • Very Slightly diminishing the condition of the landscape through the limited loss of valued features.
Neutral	The Development would result in no discernible change to the character and quality of the landscape.
Negligible Beneficial	Typically, the Development would result in a very slight improvement to the landscape resource by enhancing the condition of some existing valued landscape features.
Minor Beneficial	Typically, the Development would result in a slight improvement to the landscape resource by enhancing the condition of some existing valued landscape features.
Moderate Beneficial	Typically, the Development would result in a partial improvement to the quality and integrity of the landscape. For example, by: • enhancing the condition of or restoring some existing valued landscape features, and • introducing new features that make a modest contribution to strengthening landscape character.
Major Beneficial	The Development would result in a considerable improvement to the quality and integrity of the landscape. For example, by: • substantially enhancing the condition of or restoring some existing valued landscape features, and • introducing new features that make a substantial contribution to strengthening landscape character.

ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

Visual Analysis and Viewpoint Mapping

12.21 The potential visibility of the Site and the Proposed Development is established through desk top studies, through a review of existing landform, vegetation and settlement patterns.

12.22 Taking into account the visibility mapping and the location of visual/landscape receptors within the study area, a range of representative viewpoint locations from which views of the Site may be possible are selected. These include short distance views (largely related to receptors within the Site's immediate zone of visual influence) and long distance views (related to receptors within the wider study area).

Identification of Receptors

12.23 Visual receptors are individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a proposal. For the purposes of the assessment, the following visual receptors are considered:

- Users of public rights of way and public open spaces (including Country Parks and Access Land where relevant);
- Visitors to public viewpoints;
- People engaged in outdoor sport or at work;
- Residential properties; and
- Road users travellers (motorists, cyclists and pedestrians).

Value of the View

12.24 The criteria for assessing the value of views is based on a three point scale as set out in Table 12.7 below.

Table 12-7: Value of Views Assessment Criteria

Value	Definition
High	View from a location that is likely to be of national importance, where the view forms part of the experience, and is likely to be experienced by a high number of people. Locations could include nationally designated landscapes / tourist destinations of national/regional importance / historic parks/gardens with designed vistas and views / National Trails and other promoted trails of regional importance.
Medium	View from a location that is likely to be of local importance, either designated or with cultural associations, where the view obtained forms part of the experience, and is likely to be experienced frequently by high numbers of people. Locations could include local public rights of way with evidence of regular use / public open spaces / residential areas / local transport routes.
Low	View from a location that is not designated, with minimal or no cultural associations, where the view is unlikely to be frequently experienced by a number of receptors. Locations could include recreational routes/areas, residential areas or transport routes.

Susceptibility of Visual Receptors

12.25 The susceptibility of visual receptors to changes in their views and general visual amenity typically depends on the activity or expectations of people experiencing the view, and the extent to which their attention is likely to be focused on the view.

12.26 The criteria for assessing the susceptibility of visual receptors to change is based on a three point scale as set out in Table 12.8.

Table 12-8: Susceptibility of Receptors Assessment Criteria

Susceptibility	Definition
High	Receptors with high susceptibility to changes in views that would result from the Proposed Development where the primary enjoyment/amenity value comes from the contribution that views of the surroundings make, such as: • Residents at home; • People engaged in informal outdoor recreation activities directly related to the visual setting (e.g. users of country parks, promoted trails/ public rights of way and historic parks and gardens); • Visitors to public scenic viewpoints.
Moderate	Receptors with moderate susceptibility to changes in views that would result from the Proposed Development, such as: • Visitors to tourist attractions or cultural landmarks where views of the surroundings contribute to the experience; • Cyclists or recreational users, or users of a scenic route where views of the surroundings specifically contribute to the experience.
Low	Receptors with limited susceptibility to changes in views that would result from the Proposed Development where views of the surroundings form an incidental contribution to the experience of the activity being undertaken, such as: • Areas of formal outdoor recreation activities (e.g. football, rugby, children's play areas); • Main road and rail users;
	• People at their place of work whose attention is focused on their work and the visual setting is not considered to contribute to the quality of working life.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

12.27 Assessing the visual sensitivity of receptors combines judgements of the value attached to the view with the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of change or development proposed.

12.28 The criteria for assessing visual sensitivity is based on a three point scale as set out in Table 12.9 below.

Table 12-9: Visual Sensitivity of Receptors Assessment Criteria

Sensitivity	Definition
High	Typically, a view of high value experienced by receptors of high susceptibility to relatively small changes in the view.
Medium	Typically, a view of medium value experienced by receptors of moderate susceptibility to some degree of changes in the view.
Low	Typically, a view of low value experienced by receptors of low susceptibility to more substantial changes in the view.

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

Assessing the Magnitude of Visual Effects

12.29 The magnitude of impact is defined as the degree of change in a view that will result from the introduction of the Proposed Development. The key factors which may influence the magnitude are:

- the distance between the Proposed Development and the receptors;
- the prominence of the Proposed Development in views;
- the extent of the Proposed Development visible and the extent of the view being occupied by the Proposed Development;
- the backdrop and foreground within the view;
- whether effects are short, medium or long term; and
- whether effects are permanent or temporary.

12.30 The criteria for assessing the magnitude of visual impact is based on a five point scale as set out in Table 12.10 below.

Table 12-10: Magnitude of Visual Effects Assessment Criteria

Magnitude	Definition
High	Typically, the Proposed Development would appear as a very visually dominant feature and have a large-scale effect on the view, resulting in a pronounced / complete change / contrast to the existing view. The change may be permanent and long-term.

Moderate	Typically, the Proposed Development would appear as a visually prominent feature and have a medium-scale effect on the view, resulting in a noticeable change / contrast in the view. The change may be permanent or temporary/short-term.
Low	Typically, the Proposed Development would appear as only a minor and not visually prominent component, resulting in an unobtrusive change / small-scale contrast in the view. The change may be permanent or temporary/short-term.
Negligible	The Proposed Development would result in a barely perceptible change in the view. There would be no fundamental change to the viewing experience. The change may be permanent or temporary/short-term.
None	The Proposed Development would not be visible.

Assessing the Visual Effects

12.31 Table 12.11 below sets out a matrix as a guide to the combination of sensitivity and magnitude, in order to establish the effect. Where professional judgement considers that the effects differ from this guide, then a reasoned explanation is provided in the assessment narrative. Similarly, where the guide allows for a choice, e.g. major or moderate, the justification is provided in the assessment narrative.

Table 12-11: Visual Effects

		Sensitivity		
	Criteria	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**
Magnitude	**High**	Major or Moderate	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor
	Moderate	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Moderate or Minor
	Low	Moderate or Minor	Moderate or Minor	Minor or Negligible
	Negligible	Minor, Negligible or Neutral	Minor, Negligible or Neutral	Negligible or Neutral
	None	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

12.32 The criteria for assessing the visual effects is based on a seven point scale as set out in Table 12.12 below.

Table 12-12: Visual Effects Assessment Criteria

Effect	Definition
Major Adverse	Typically, changes to a view resulting from the Development that would result in pronounced deterioration to the view. Mitigation measures are highly unlikely to remedy all the effects and there may be adverse residual impacts.
Moderate Adverse	Typically, changes to a view resulting from the Proposed Development that would result in a partial deterioration to the view Mitigation measures may be likely to remedy the effects although there may be some adverse residual impacts.
Minor Adverse	Typically, changes to a view resulting from the Proposed Development that would result in a slight deterioration to the view.
Negligible Adverse	Typically, changes to a view resulting from the Proposed Development that would result in a very slight deterioration to the view.
Neutral	No perceptible changes to a view from the Proposed Development that would result in either adverse or beneficial visual effects for any receptors.
Negligible Beneficial	Typically, small scale improvements to a view resulting from the Proposed Development that would result in very slight benefits to the view
Minor Beneficial	Typically, small scale improvements to a view resulting from the Proposed Development that would result in slight benefits to the view.
Moderate Beneficial	Typically, medium scale improvements to a view resulting from the Proposed Development that would result in partial improvements to the view.
Major Beneficial	Typically, large scale improvements to a view resulting from the Proposed Development that would result in substantial improvements to the view as experienced.

Character of the Night Sky

12.33 The LVIA identifies the existing character of the night sky via a review of relevant publications and night-time fieldwork. The classification of the environmental lighting zones is derived from the Institution of Lighting Professionals Table 2: Environmental Zones, as set out in Table 12.13.

Table 12-13: Environmental Lighting Zones

Zone	Surrounding	Lighting Environmental	Examples
E0	Protected	Dark	Astronomical Observable dark skies, UNESCO starlight reserves, IDA dark sky places.
E1	Natural	Dark	Relatively uninhabited rural areas, National Parks, National Landscapes, IDA buffer zones etc.
E2	Rural	Low district brightness	Sparsely inhabited rural areas, village or relatively dark outer suburban locations.
E3	Suburban	Medium district brightness	Well inhabited rural and urban settlements, small town centres of suburban locations.
E4	Urban	High district brightness	Town / City centres with high levels of night-time activity.

13.0 LVIA APPENDIX II: EXTRACTS OF PUBLISHED STUDIES

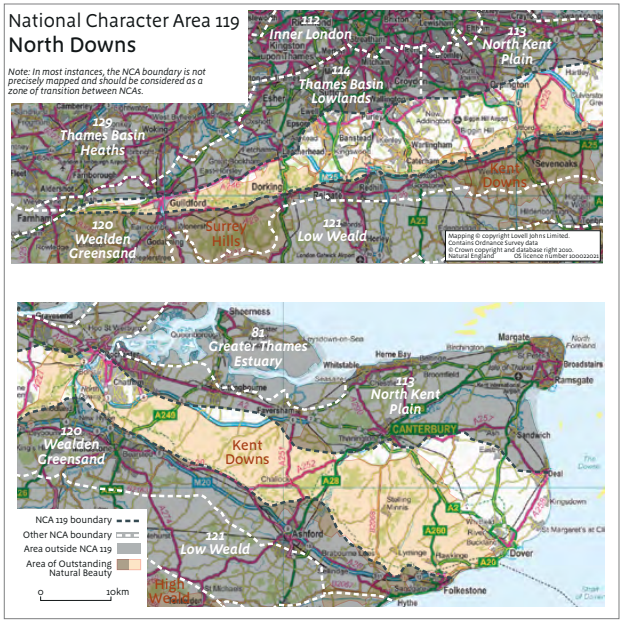
Summary

The North Downs National Character Area (NCA) forms a chain of chalk hills extending from the Hog's Back in Surrey and ending dramatically at the internationally renowned White Cliffs of Dover. The settlement pattern is characterised by traditional small, nucleated villages, scattered farms and large houses with timber framing, flint walls and Wealden brick detailing. Twisting sunken lanes, often aligned along ancient drove roads, cut across the scarp and are a feature of much of the dip slope. The Kent Downs and Surrey Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty designations are testament to the scenic qualities and natural beauty of the area.

Agriculture is an important component of the landscape, with variations in soils supporting mixed farming practices where arable, livestock and horticulture have co-existed for centuries. The woodlands, many of which are ancient, are a prominent feature of the landscape, yet their ecological value has suffered in recent years due to a reduction in active management, particularly of mixed coppice, since the 1990s. Two Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are designated for their rare woodland compositions. Chalk grassland is particularly notable, with seven SAC designated for chalk grassland interest including outstanding assemblages of rare orchids. The chalk downland habitats support rare species, including the late spider orchid – wholly restricted to Kent – and the black-veined moth and straw belle moth which are currently found only within the North Downs.

The North Downs are cut by the valleys of the Stour, Medway, Darent, Wey and Mole with their associated wetland habitats. The chalk aquifer of the North Downs is important for supplying water within Kent and to London.

The coast is of international significance with an SAC designation due to the presence of rare maritime cliff communities found within the cliff face and on cliff-tops. Two stretches of the coast are recognised as Heritage Coast: South Foreland and Dover to Folkestone. An outstanding range of historical and geological features are found along the coast, including Dover Castle and the White Cliffs with their strong cultural associations. Other historical features, including numerous Scheduled Ancient Monuments and buildings dating from the medieval period, are scattered throughout.



Click map to enlarge; click again to reduce.

More urban-fringe influence and modern development is associated with the land fringing Croydon, Purley and south London in the western part of the downs, with Dorking, Redhill and Guildford located on the fringes of the NCA. In the east, Dover is the main settlement, but the Medway towns of Rochester and Chatham and the town of Folkestone also lie on the periphery of the NCA. Other towns, including Maidstone, Ashford and Sevenoaks, and the city of Canterbury, although within adjacent NCAs, lie close to the boundary. Views from the eastern scarp are dominated by generally undeveloped landscapes much valued by visitors, with outstanding views across the Vale of Holmesdale to the Weald and from many parts of the downs to France. These views are affected to varying degrees by the Channel Tunnel terminal development and the M25 and M20 corridors.



Chalk grassland is an important component of the North Downs NCA supporting a range of wildlife.

Development pressures and agricultural practices continue to be forces for change throughout the NCA; high-quality and well managed green infrastructure both within and surrounding the NCA could help to service the demands of a growing population, a changing climate and increased pressures on natural resources, including the chalk aquifer, critical for water provision. Opportunities to create more robust and resilient ecological networks across the agricultural landscape should be maximised, working in partnership to secure positive environmental outcomes. The natural and cultural assets of the NCA support food production, regulation of water and soils, biodiversity, recreation, tranquillity, sense of place and sense of history.

Statements of Environmental Opportunity

- **SEO 1**: Manage, conserve and enhance the distinctive rural character and historic environment of the North Downs, including the long-established settlement pattern, ancient routeways and traditional buildings. Protect the tranquillity of the landscape and sensitively manage, promote and celebrate the area's rich cultural and natural heritage, famous landmarks and views for future generations.

- **SEO 2**: Protect, enhance and restore active management to the diverse range of woodlands and trees of the North Downs, for their internationally and nationally important habitats and species, cultural heritage and recreational value and to help to deliver climate change mitigation and adaptation. Seek opportunities to establish local markets for timber and biomass to support the active management of local woods, while recognising their contribution to sense of place, sense of history and tranquillity.

- **SEO 3**: Manage and enhance the productive mixed farming landscape of the North Downs and the mosaic of semi-natural habitats including the internationally important chalk grassland. Promote sustainable agricultural practices to benefit soils, water resources, climate regulation, biodiversity, geodiversity and landscape character while maintaining food provision.

- **SEO 4**: Plan to deliver integrated, well-managed multi-functional green space in existing and developing urban areas, providing social, economic and environmental benefits and reinforcing landscape character and local distinctiveness, particularly on or alongside the boundaries of the designated landscapes within the North Downs.



Children enjoy the extensive views from Wye NNR across adjoining NCAs. The NCA offers opportunities for access and education.

Description

Physical and functional links to other National Character Areas

The North Downs National Character Area (NCA) borders the Wealden Greensand NCA to the south, while to the north it borders the Thames Basin Lowlands NCA between Farnham and Purley, and the North Kent Plain NCA in west, mid and east Kent. The scarp forms a defining feature along the length of the NCA and panoramic views provide links with adjoining NCAs and beyond. Views across London, the Thames Estuary and to the south help provide the context and setting of this NCA.



The steep scarp slope provides extensive views over adjacent NCAs as shown here in Surrey.

The catchments of the rivers Wey, Mole and Darent drain through valleys dissecting the downs from the Wealden Greensand in the south to the Thames in the north, while further east the River Medway runs north to the Thames Estuary and the Stour runs north-east to the Kent coastline. Flooding is an issue along localised stretches of the rivers and activities within the NCA may have the potential to exacerbate or alleviate downstream flooding in adjacent NCAs. The chalk bedrock supports a principal aquifer which supplies water to both London and Kent. Spring flow from the Chalk is an important feed for the internationally designated habitats of the north Kent marshes and the Thames Estuary.

Coastal processes link NCAs and the construction of harbours at Dover and Folkestone has prevented any continuing sediment transport around South Foreland, but there is a moderate northwards movement of shingle into the North Kent Plain NCA coast. The role of this sediment supply in the development and denudation of beaches has a critical influence on the rate of coastal erosion. The proximity of this NCA to mainland Europe is notable, with the significant activity at the Port of Dover allowing for the passage of goods and people between England and the rest of Europe.

The M20 runs from Folkestone and Ashford along the southern boundary of the NCA until it cuts across to London. The M2/A2 skirts the northern boundary, connecting Dover and Canterbury to Chatham and south and east London. High Speed 1 (the Channel Tunnel Rail Link) has reduced the travel time by rail between Dover and London.

Key characteristics

- Cretaceous Chalk forms the backbone of the North Downs. A distinctive chalk downland ridge rises up from the surrounding land, with a steep scarp slope to the south providing extensive views across Kent, Surrey and Sussex and across the Channel seascape to France.
- The broad dip slope gradually drops towards the Thames and the English Channel, affording extensive views across London and the Thames Estuary. The carved topography provides a series of dry valleys, ridges and plateaux.
- Chalk soils are predominant across the NCA but the upper part of the dip slope is capped by extensive clay-with-flint deposits. Patches of clay and sandy soils also occur with coombe deposits common in dry valleys.
- The North Downs end at the dramatic White Cliffs of Dover, one of the country's most distinctive and famous landmarks. Most of the coast between Kingsdown and Folkestone is unprotected, allowing for natural processes. The cliffs are home to internationally important maritime cliff-top and cliff-ledge vegetation.
- The area is cut by the deep valleys of the Stour, Medway, Darent, Wey and Mole. The river valleys cut through the chalk ridge, providing distinctive local landscapes which contrast with the steep scarp slope.
- The south-facing scarp is incised by a number of short, bowl-shaped dry valleys, cut by periglacial streams and often referred to as combes. The undulating topography of the dip slope has also been etched by streams and rivers, today forming dry valleys, some of which carry winterbournes that occasionally flow in the dip slope, depending on the level of the chalk aquifer.

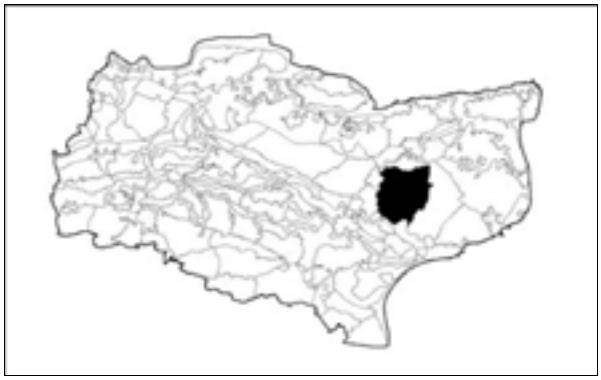


The fertile and lighter soils of the footslopes and valley bottoms support arable farming.

Key characteristics continued

- The footslope of the escarpment supports arable cropping, the dominant land use within the NCA. In the east, the richer, loamy soils of the lower dip slope support large tracts of mixed arable and horticultural production.
- Woodland is found primarily on the steeper slopes of the scarp, valley sides and areas of the dip slope capped with clay-with-flints. Well-wooded hedgerows and shaws are an important component of the field boundaries, contributing to a strongly wooded character. Much of the woodland is ancient.
- Tracts of species-rich chalk grassland and patches of chalk heath are important downland habitats and of international importance.
- Ancient paths, drove roads and trackways, often sunken, cross the landscape and are a distinctive feature of the dip slope. Defensive structures such as castles, hill forts and Second World War installations, and historic parks, buildings and monuments are found throughout.
- Small, nucleated villages and scattered farmsteads including oasts and barns form the settlement pattern, with local flint, chalk and Wealden brick the vernacular materials.
- In the western part of the area, around and to the west of Sevenoaks and into Surrey, there is increased urban development.

PETHAM: EAST KENT DOWNS



PETHAM

To the east of the Stour Valley is an intimate, remote landscape of long, rolling valleys and widely scattered farms. Blocks of deciduous woodland crown the narrower ridges or sweep along the upper valley slopes, providing a sense of enclosure and emphasising the curving landform. There are frequent tantalising views into secluded coombes and extensive areas of traditional chalk grassland, such as Winchcombe Downs, supporting colonies of rare orchids and butterflies.

Although the hedgerow network is more fragmented and generally less diverse than around Elham, many hedges are overgrown or contain significant numbers of hedgerow trees, producing strong lines of vegetation across the otherwise smooth folds of the valleys. Many of the valley sides have a narrow strip of rough grassland, scrub or woodland along their steepest slopes, where cultivation has never been possible. Known locally as shaves, they are often rich wildlife havens and provide a valuable contrast with the otherwise intensively farmed valley landscapes.

This was once an area of widespread hop cultivation, but although frequent redundant oast houses dot the landscape, there are almost no hop gardens still in production.

EAST KENT DOWNS

Petham lies within the larger character area of the East Kent Downs.

This is a remote, peaceful area of downland, which ends in the dramatic white cliffs of Dover. Above the southern scarp, the broad back of the chalk hills is furrowed by a series of long narrow, parallel valleys running north east. In these dry valleys, the valley bottom streams or nailbournes are underground, only flowing at the surface occasionally, during very wet winters.

The western valley systems are branching and intricate. The steep, rounded slopes are crossed by thick shaws or overgrown hedges, often swathed in the white seed-heads of wild clematis. Large arable fields on the ridge-top plateau are visually contained by long strips of deciduous, ancient woodland along the valley sides or ridge-top conifer forests, west of Elham. Towards the coast, however, the landscape becomes more exposed. There is less woodland and the strongly linear pattern of parallel ridges and valleys is more distinct.

The countryside here is criss-crossed by a maze of tiny, sunken, one-track lanes. Houses are widely scattered and many villages, traditionally built of local flint, brick and tile, are still little more than a church, a manor and a pair of farm cottages - an important characteristic of this landscape. However, this area is best known, not for its beautiful dry valleys or remote churches, but for its long association with the defence of the realm The "White Cliffs of Dover" and the widely scattered military remains, such as pill-boxes and gun-emplacements, still exert a strong cultural influence on the landscape.

next >>

PETHAM: EAST KENT DOWNS

PHOTOGRAPH



CONTEXT

Regional: Kent Downs AONB

Condition

	low	moderate	high
good	REINFORCE	CONSERVE & REINFORCE	**CONSERVE**
moderate	CREATE & REINFORCE	CONSERVE & CREATE	CONSERVE & RESTORE
poor	CREATE	RESTORE & CREATE	RESTORE

Sensitivity

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

Intimate, remote, long rolling valleys.
Deciduous woodland on ridges.
Chalk grassland/rough grass shaws/rare species.
Overgrown hedgerows with many trees.
Scattered farms and redundant oasts.

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Condition

There is a coherent pattern of strong landform and wooded ridges and grasslands. The few visual detractors involve development on the ridgeline and suburban land uses. Ridgeline woods, hedges and shaws provide the moderate network of semi-natural habitats within intensive arable and pasture land. Heritage features of woodland and hedges/shaws vary in condition; hedgerows are declining in use and many are over-mature. Built form has a moderate positive impact overall as large farms with many outbuildings are the slightly negative influence.

Sensitivity

There is a distinct settlement pattern of villages within valleys and large farms on the plateau. Built form itself is also distinct and includes some minor estate houses. Many such characteristics are historic, but the broadleaf woodland and the highways have a greater time depth. There is a moderate local sense of place. The sensitivity of this area is considered to be high, mainly due to the dominant landform and the subsequently high visibility.

LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

Conserve woodland cover, ensuring that the characteristic species mix (beech, oak, ash, yew) hazel coppice and beech standards remain distinctive features.
Conserve beech avenues on cross-contour roads and promote their replanting to become a more frequent feature.
Conserve the settlement patterns, avoiding ridgeline development.
Conserve shaws and apply long term management to ensure their continuance.
Conserve and enhance species rich grasslands.
Conserve hedgerows along roads.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Condition — **Good.**

Pattern of elements:	Coherent.
Detracting features:	Few.
Visual Unity:	Unified.
Cultural integrity:	Variable.
Ecological integrity:	Moderate.
Functional Integrity:	Coherent.

Sensitivity — **High.**

Distinctiveness:	Characteristic.
Continuity:	Historic.
Sense of Place:	Moderate.
Landform:	Dominant.
Extent of tree cover:	Intermittent.
Visibility:	High.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

CONSERVE.

Conserve settlement patterns, avoiding ridgeline development
Conserve woodland cover and localised characteristics
Conserve grasslands
Conserve shaws
Conserve highway characteristics of narrow cross-contour and ridgeline roads

previous <<

4.0 East Kent Downs

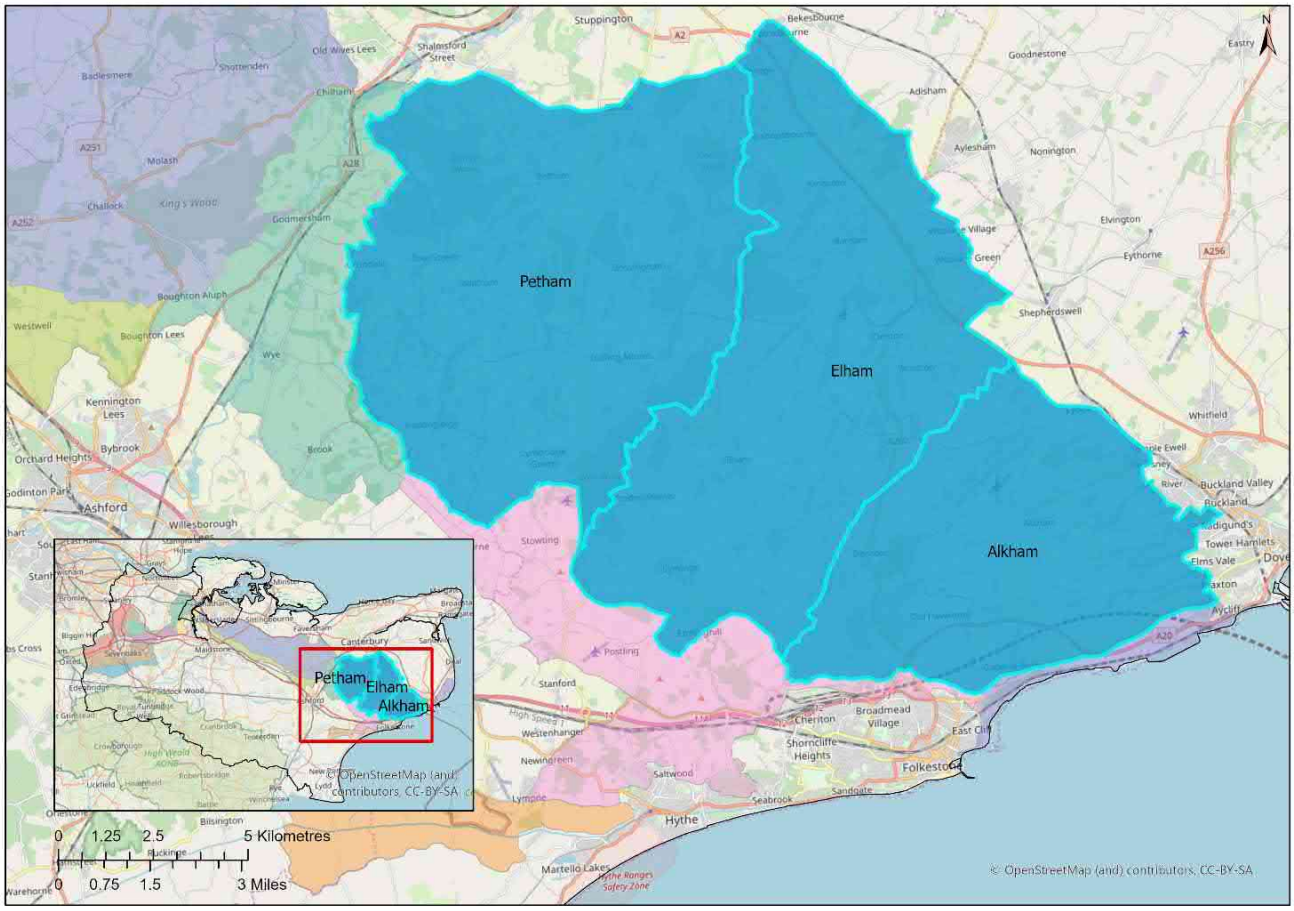
Landscape Character Area 1C

Landscape Character Type: Chalk Downland

Districts/ Boroughs: Ashford; Canterbury; Dover; Shepway

Landscape/Countryside Partnerships: Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership

Location and Context: This large LCA is located in the east of the Kent Downs AONB, to the east of the Stour Valley LCA, and north of the Postling Scarp and Vale and the White Cliffs Coast LCAs. It includes several settlements, the largest of which are Lyminge, Hawkinge, Elham and Barham.



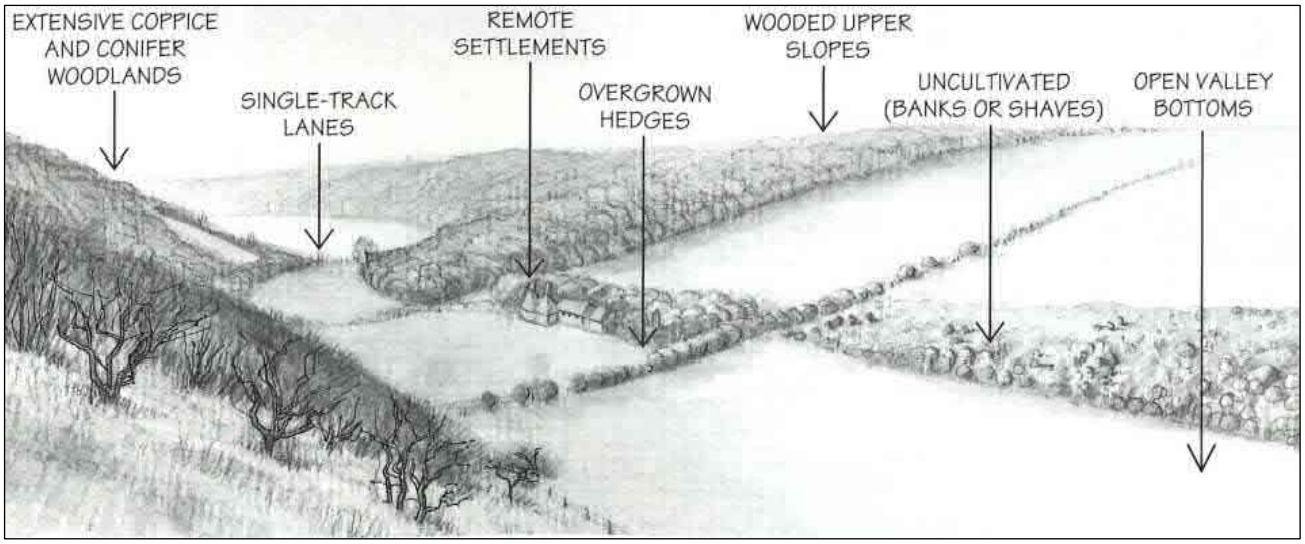
Location map for East Kent Downs LCA, also showing Local Character Areas of Petham, Elham and Alkham



A typical scene in the East Kent Downs- the Nailbourne Valley looking north towards Barham

Summary Characteristics

- Underlying geology of Cretaceous chalk. In places the surface has weathered to create a layer of clay-with-flints, forming heavy, sticky soils.
- Rounded chalk plateau dissected by a series of parallel narrow dry valleys, becoming increasingly pronounced towards the south.
- Little surface water, but seasonal streams appearing only in winter (Nailbournes) are a distinctive feature.
- Extensive woodland blocks, particularly on ridge tops, and strips of woodland on steep valley sides. Extensive coppice and conifer woodlands. Shaves, copses and hedgerow trees throughout.
- Dominant land use is arable agriculture, but there are also areas of parkland, orchards, vines, woodland and pasture. Field patterns are variable, but are generally larger on ridges then in valleys, reflecting historic processes of enclosure.
- Semi-natural habitats include woodland, chalk grassland and parkland.
- Scattered historic buildings including churches, manors, country houses, farms and cottages.
- Relatively sparse settlement of scattered farms and occasional nucleated villages, often of brick and flint construction. Concentration of settlement in the Nail Bourne Valley, and notable common-edge settlement of Stelling Minnis.
- Dense network of historic roads and tracks, including Prehistoric routeways, Roman roads medieval drove roads and Turnpikes. Sunken single-track lanes are also characteristic.
- A relatively tranquil part of the Kent Downs AONB, with a strongly rural feel. The pattern of ridges and dry valleys gives the landscape a rhythmic feel, particularly in the south of the LCA.
- Views are often linear and channelled by landform. There are long views from high ground, overlooking adjacent valleys.



Sketch of the East Kent Downs from 'The Kent Downs Landscape' (1995)

4.1 Description

4.1.1 This is a remote, peaceful area of downland, towards the eastern end of the AONB. Its character is strongly influenced by the underlying chalk geology. Above the southern scarp, the broad back of the chalk hills is furrowed by a series of long, narrow, parallel valleys, running north-east. In these dry valleys, the valley bottom streams or *nailbournes* are underground, only flowing at the surface occasionally, during very wet winters. Water management has always been a challenge in this landscape because of the lack of surface water. Between the valleys are expansive plateaux, often covered with heavy, sticky clay-with-flint soils.

4.1.2 The western valley systems are branching and intricate. The steep rounded slopes are crossed by thick shaws or overgrown hedges, often seasonally swathed in the white seed-heads of wild clematis. Although much of the area has been cultivated, there are still important grassland habitats, particularly at the tops of the valley sides which are too steep to plough. Large arable fields on the ridge top plateaux are visually contained by long strips of deciduous, ancient woodland along the valley sides, or ridge-top conifer forests west of Elham. Towards the coast, however, the landscape becomes more exposed. There is less woodland and the strongly linear pattern of parallel ridges and valleys is more distinct.

4.1.3 The countryside of the East Kent Downs is criss-crossed by a maze of tiny, sunken one-track lanes. Many of these tracks have ancient origins, and some may have been routeways from prehistoric times. The Roman road of Stone Street (B2068) cuts through the landscape, one of several Roman Roads in the area connecting Canterbury to the coast. These ancient routes are still in use today, with many as roads, or incorporated into routes such as the Pilgrims' Way and North Downs Way. Some lanes and tracks are relics of land divisions which can date back centuries. Houses are widely scattered and many villages, traditionally built of local flint, brick and tile, are still little more than a church, a manor and farm cottages. The place name 'Minnis' refers to common land. Although most common has now been enclosed for farmland, Stelling Minnis remains the last unenclosed downland common in the Kent Downs, representing an unaltered relic of the medieval manors. .



Plateau scene near Elmsted

4.1.4 This is still a strongly rural landscape with a sense of timelessness. Much of the land is agricultural, but there are also pockets of orchards, hop gardens, an increasing number of vineyards, extensive historic parklands, and woodlands. Together they contribute to variations in its character. The larger villages have a range of origins, including the coaching village of Bridge and the railway town of Lyminge. Hawkinge is a substantial recent settlement built on open farmland which was a former Second World War grass airfield. Several villages and historic parks are designated as Conservation Areas.

4.1.5 The presence of the coast nearby influences the weather, with sea mist filling valleys and hovering over plateaux. Views within this Landscape Character Area are often enclosed and channelled by the linear dry valley landforms. These views contrast with the wider, panoramic views experienced from the plateaux. Dover Castle is a significant landmark to the east, and in the far south of the area, views are dominated by the presence of the sea. Although there are some localised influences from main roads and larger settlements, in general this is a peaceful landscape which feels relatively tranquil and detached from urban life. With the exception of Hawkinge, it is one of the least developed parts of the Kent Downs AONB. The area is associated with the artist Henry Moore, who lived and worked at 'Burcroft' in Kingston in the Nail Bourne Valley. He later wrote 'living at Burcroft was what probably clinched my interest in trying to make sculpture and nature enhance each other.'



Ancient trackway over Crundale Downs

4.2 Local Character Areas

4.2.1 There are three Local Character Areas within the East Kent Downs LCA. **Petham** in the west contains a network of valleys and is the least settled part of the LCA. **Elham** in the centre contains several large villages and is more strongly influenced by parkland and estate landscapes. **Alkham** in the east comprises a series of steep parallel valleys running towards the Dour, interspersed by plateaux.

Petham

4.2.2 To the east of the Stour Valley is an intimate, sparsely populated, and remote landscape of long, rolling valleys and widely scattered farms. Blocks of deciduous woodland (including extensive areas of Ancient Woodland) crown the narrower ridges or sweep along the upper valley slopes, providing a sense of enclosure and emphasising the curving landform. There are also occasional huge uninterrupted open fields on the high plateaux between the ridges. There are frequent tantalising views into secluded coombes and extensive areas of traditional chalk grassland, such as Winchcombe Downs, supporting colonies of rare orchids and butterflies.

4.2.3 Although the hedgerow network is more fragmented and generally less diverse than around Elham, many hedges are overgrown or contain significant numbers of hedgerow trees, producing strong lines of vegetation across the otherwise smooth folds of the valleys. Where they occur, infield trees are important landscape features. Many of the valley sides have a narrow strip of woodland along their steepest slopes, where cultivation has never been possible. Known locally as *shaves*, they are often rich wildlife havens and provide a valuable contrast with the otherwise intensively farmed valley landscapes. This was once an area of widespread hop cultivation, but although redundant oast-houses dot the landscape, there are almost no hop gardens still in production. The largest settlements are generally found in the river valleys and on valley sides, but there are also several villages (often with origins associated with routeways or common-edges, such as Stelling Minnis) which are on high ground. Large farms are scattered across the plateaux as well as nestled in valleys. The distinct built form includes some minor estate houses.



Dry Valley near Crundale, in the Petham Local Character Area

Elham

4.2.4 This area is a transitional landscape between the remote, enclosed countryside east of the Stour Valley and the exposed, ridges and valleys between Folkestone and Dover. It has a more settled feel, with more frequent villages, and open views from the narrow ridge-top roads. The rolling downland is the dominant visual element, and its character is also influenced by the presence of parkland and large estates. There are several Conservation Areas in the northern part of the area, comprising villages and historic parkland. The Elham Way (between Canterbury and Hythe) runs through this area.

4.2.5 The Elham Valley carves its way through the centre of this area, in a wide attractive sweep, up to Barham and Patrixbourne. It contains a line of large villages, including Lyminge, Elham, Barham and Bridge. To the west is one of the most densely-wooded ridges of the AONB, where expanses of conifer plantations are interspersed with remnants of deciduous, ancient woodland, still concealing the ancient double banks which once formed the boundary of Elham Park. It includes more recent woodland associated with Denton Court and Wootton Park, as well as sweet chestnut coppice around Lyminge.

4.2.6 To the east of the Elham Valley, the landscape is predominantly large, intensively cultivated arable plateaux interspersed by dry valleys. Woodlands are fewer and much smaller, frequently on the steep valley sides. Although there has been extensive loss of hedgerows, this area still has a high proportion of hedgerow trees and botanically-rich hedges, usually near the villages. The less exposed, northern slopes around Denton are still dotted with pockets of historic parkland and orchards, and there are larger parkland estates including Acrise Park, Broome Park, Bourne Park, Bifron Park and Charlton Park. Extensive areas of grassland, parkland and woodland are managed by the Ministry of Defence. Narrow roads linking farmsteads evoke a great sense of time-depth, with settlements, estates, buildings and hedgerows also contributing a historic influence. The Norman church at Paddlesworth is the highest church in the North Downs, and is one of many isolated churches in the East Kent Downs.



The Elham Valley near Barham, with Charlton Park in the middle of the photo

Alkham

4.2.7 This area is dominated by the long parallel ridges and sometimes isolated valleys which feed into the Dour valley. Near the coast, the ridges become increasingly narrower and the valleys closer. There are long views to Dover Castle, which are often framed by valley landforms. There are fewer woodlands here than in the west, and most occur on the steep valley slopes, where cultivation has been uneconomic. Many, therefore, are very old and of high nature conservation value, but few are actively managed. Of particular note is surviving Elm woods and hedges near Elms Vale, Dover. There are also areas of scrub on valley sides, often occurring where grassland has been left ungrazed. Much of the hedgerow network on the plateaux, which was largely a 19th Century creation, was replaced by post and wire fence in the late 20th Century, so that gradually the former unenclosed landscape was unintentionally re-created. In recent years the trend has reversed, with hedges planted on fenced and unfenced boundaries as part of landscape enhancement projects. There are extensive MoD training grounds near Lydden which tend to be cattle-grazed and include bands of conifers used in training exercises.

4.2.8 There are a number of surviving medieval buildings within this landscape. These include St John's chapel near Swingfield Street (associated with the Knights of St John) and the remains of St Radigund's Abbey east of Alkham, dating from 1191. There are also several medieval village churches still in use, and numerous historic houses. Steep sunken lanes and tracks wind up valley sides, connecting the dry valleys with the open downland above.

4.2.9 The former airfield at Hawkinge, effectively a new urban settlement, is now housing, with associated new buildings and roads visible within the landscape. The apparently undifferentiated design has little reference to its location in the Kent Downs AONB, and contrasts with the surrounding historic field patterns and ancient woodland. Management of land for equine use is a further concern in this area, particularly within the Alkham Valley.



The Farthingloe Valley looking towards Dover Castle



Chestnut coppice (and chestnut pale fencing) at Pillars Wood near Paddlesworth



Some of the steepest land has never been cultivated and supports strips of woodland known locally as 'shaves'.



Elham Village



Elmsted Church with its unusual shingled tower and ancient churchyard yew tree



Soft fruit-growing near Bridge



Acrise Park

4.3 Landscape Condition, Sensitivities and Forces for Change

4.3.1 This is a landscape with a sense of timelessness, and for much of the area, large-scale or modern development is not apparent. The landscape appears well managed, and its condition is generally good. This area has been the focus of many habitat restoration schemes. However, the landscape is not static, and it is affected by changing practices in land management as well as development pressure. Some of the changes, such as the change in crop choice from orchards to vines, the increasing use of land for equine management, and the introduction of suburban-style gates, boundaries and road junctions are incremental, but can add up to considerable landscape change across the area.

4.3.2 The 1995 Assessment noted *the decaying hedges, derelict buildings and abandoned farm machinery which also occur in this area are further signs of a landscape under economic stress.* Today, although there are very occasional untidy farms, there is not a sense of abandonment or economic stress. Comparison of the 1995 and 2017 photographs below shows that there has been some loss of parkland/ hedgerow trees, and that the foreground hedgerow has grown up, but otherwise the landscape looks very similar.

4.3.3 The dominance of the landform within this LCA means that skylines can be particularly prominent and therefore sensitive to change. The woodlands provide some screening function, but with tree disease becoming an increasing issue such screening cannot be relied on in the long term.



View west from Elmsted, GR 114449 in 1995 (above) and 2017 (below)

Issue	***Landscape sensitivities and potential landscape impacts***
Changing farming practices	The trend for vine growing reflects changes in the Kent climate, as well as changing fashions. The French champagne maker Tattinger has recently started planting vines in this part of Kent, so this change is likely to continue – significant parts of the LCA are thought suitable for vine growing. The use of polytunnels for soft fruit growing is also having an impact on the landscape in the north of this LCA, although it is not currently prevalent. The light colour and reflective nature of the plastic covers mean that they stand out within the wider landscape, especially where they cover an extensive area. Intensification of farming has occurred over recent decades, and can be seen in the larger farm buildings and structures, and in the large open arable fields from which hedgerows have been removed. There has also been some diversification, particularly letting of land or change of use for horse grazing. This can result in the use of high visibility fencing, heavy grazing pressure and subdivision of fields which have a locally-significant detrimental landscape impact. The new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) offers opportunities to restore and reinforce valued characteristics of the landscape.
Condition of habitats	Some areas of particular wildlife value, such as chalk grassland and woodland exist simply because the land is too steep or difficult to plough. They are not intentional, and therefore often may not be in active management. Growth of scrub on grassland is noticeable around the LCA, due to reduction in grazing pressure. Woodland is also often under-managed, although there are areas of coppice. Past decades have seen planting of extensive conifer plantations, particularly in the central part of the LCA. Some (e.g. Park Wood) are owned by the Forestry Commission and have some recreational function. The trend for 'woodlotting' when woodlands are broken up into multiple ownership makes co-ordinated management of woodlands much more difficult and can have direct landscape impact through subdivision of woods and the introduction of fences, sheds and hard-standing areas. Ash Dieback is affecting hedges, woodlands and in-field and roadside trees, and is currently particularly noticeable in the south of the LCA. There are also localised impacts from increasing deer populations. Intensification of agriculture over past decades has resulted in loss of hedgerows and field margins. Recent years have seen a focussed effort on improving habitats locally, including bringing contiguous areas of farmland and grassland (across multiple farm holdings) into positive management. Schemes include field margins, hedgerow restoration/ planting and some of the largest areas of wildflower-seeded arable reversion in the county. Nevertheless, there are still further opportunities for restoration of habitats and wildlife corridors.
Recreation	There are a small number of recreation sites such as Lydden Race Circuit, caravan sites, and golf courses, which do not currently sit comfortably within the surrounding landscape, affecting landscape quality and in the case of Lydden having significant temporal noise effects, harming the tranquillity of the landscape There is also some recreation pressure, particularly on popular footpaths and bridleways near larger settlements which is resulting in path erosion and dog waste. Off-road vehicles damage paths and track surfaces in some areas, particularly during the winter months.

Issue	***Landscape sensitivities and potential landscape impacts***
Management and maintenance of historic buildings, structures and designed landscapes	There are a small number of Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments 'at risk' within this LCA, including barrows, estate buildings, churches and St Radigund's Abbey. The settings to historic buildings are also vulnerable to changes, particularly new development and highways measures. Maritime defence heritage is particularly vulnerable due to its coastal location and lack of public awareness of its existence. There are a number of historic parklands within this LCA, and without pro-active management, such as the planting of young parkland trees, the parklands will gradually disappear from the landscape as trees become over-mature and die or become damaged in high winds or affected by tree pests and disease. At the moment, some historic parkland is in MOD ownership, and is well managed, but should land ownership change, its future management is not guaranteed.
Development	Development which is of a scale or type that does not sit comfortably within the AONB landscape is largely confined to the peripheries of this LCA, particularly around Hawkinge and on the edge of Dover, although there have been large-scale development proposals elsewhere, such as at Bridge. Such developments risk undermining the area's rural nature, and the distinctive character of its buildings. Linear expansion of valley-floor settlements up the valley sides has occurred in several villages, and is noticeable within the landscape. Urbanising and urban-fringe influences are most prevalent along the main roads within the area, particularly around larger settlements. These can reduce the rural character, and also introduce elements which are not designed to be locally-distinctive.
Highways and transport	The location of the proposed new Lower Thames Crossing is likely to increase traffic levels on the A2, which may in turn lead to more traffic management features and further erode its rural character. Potential widening of the A2 and pressure for lorry parks along its routes are also concerns. Loss of character of rural lanes and impacts on the tranquillity of the small lane and rural road network is a further concern, particularly given increased traffic levels and numbers of delivery vehicles and inappropriate highway treatments. This LCA is generally quite tranquil but tranquillity can be interrupted by overflying airplanes following principle designated international flight paths for Heathrow and Gatwick.
Water management and coastal change	The LCA's underlying chalk geology means that is vulnerable to both drought and occasional flooding, when the nailbourne streams run.
Climate change and natural forces	The gradual warming of temperatures is reflected in the land use changes which are already occurring within the LCA, particularly the growing of vines. Hotter, drier summers are likely to result in drought conditions and water shortages. These may also affect the types of trees, plants and animals which can thrive. Wetter winters and more frequent storm events are likely to result in flooding.



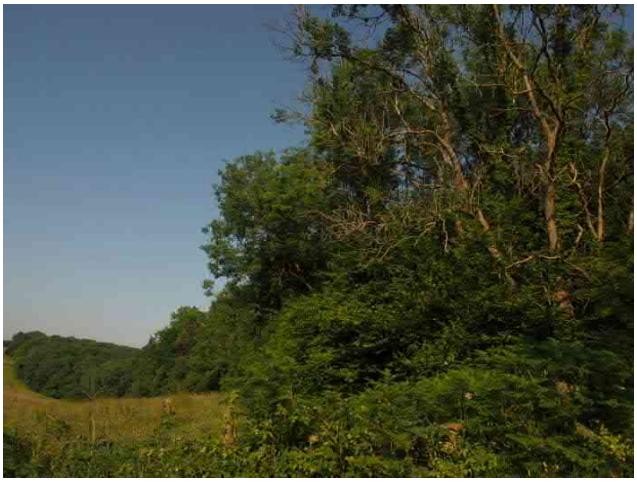
Newly-planted vines near Barham



Polytunnels near Bridge



Scrub growth on valley side, Farthingloe Valley



Ash Dieback in woodland edge near Hemsted



New development on former airfield at Hawkinge



Increased traffic levels are affecting the tranquillity of rural lanes

4.4 Landscape Management Recommendations

Aspirational Landscape Strategy

The LCA retains its strongly rural character, which is conserved and enhanced. Any visual and landscape impacts from surrounding urban areas, main roads and new developments are kept to a minimum through high quality design and careful land management. Development within the LCA is at a scale and of a quality that does not detract from, and seeks to conserve and enhance, the character and qualities of the area. Local communities, Planning Authorities and other agencies work together to achieve this. Rural lanes retain their historic character and are not unduly influenced by signage, kerbs or other urbanising features.

Local farms are thriving, and where farms are diversifying (for example into or vine growing) this is being done in a way which conserves and enhances the landscape. Farmland management promotes wildlife and landscape enhancements through the provision and linking of habitats, and the positive management of landscape features. Woodland, forestry and grassland areas are in active sustainable management, and are interconnected.

The area's rich heritage is celebrated and looked after, and local people are aware of the history and importance of their local landscape.

Protect

- Protect historic/ archaeological sites and their settings, particularly those identified as 'at risk'.
- Protect non-designated historic landscape features such as lanes and field patterns, particularly where they are threatened with highways works or other development.
- Protect the small scale, isolated pattern and rural character of settlements within this LCA. Avoid ribbon development along roads and large scale development.
- Protect the isolated nature of farmsteads.
- Protect skylines and consider the impacts of new developments (including communications masts) on open skylines.
- Protect trees and woodlands, particularly where they have a screening function.
- Protect open views and long views along valleys, avoiding the introduction of new developed elements into these views.
- Protect tranquillity, resisting developments which increase levels of noise and movement in the landscape, and maintain the remote, undeveloped qualities of the valleys.

Manage

- Manage tree and woodland cover, promoting a characteristic and resilient species mix (using The Ash Project species recovery mixes) and hazel and chestnut coppice where appropriate. Replace dead ash trees with alternative species as necessary, and increase the proportion of deciduous woodlands. Promote deciduous planting at the edges of plantations. Extend woodland edges and create shaws to define arable fields and pastures.
- Manage hedgerows and shaws and try to link them with woodlands to enhance the habitat network. Reinstate hedgerows lost through intensive agricultural practices. Manage in-field trees and replace and replant to increase their number across the LCA. Promote in-field and roadside trees using existing hedge stock.
- Enhance ecological connectivity in arable areas, for example through provision of field margin strips and re-connecting hedgerows.

- Manage common land around Stelling Minnis to improve biodiversity and retain distinctive character. Use considered reintroduction of grazing if feasible.
- Conserve treed avenues alongside roads where they are a feature of the landscape.
- Conserve and enhance chalk grasslands, particularly where invasive scrub is taking hold, through appropriate grazing, and connecting and expanding them where possible. Consider reversion of arable land to grassland.
- Continue to promote best practice with regard to equine management, work with Local Authorities to require and condition best practice, where planning permission is granted for a change of use from agricultural to equine management
- Manage public rights of way, ensuring that popular routes are robust enough to cope with the level of use. Provide new paths where required (e.g. dog-walking circuits near new developments) and work with landowners to address issues of illegal off-road vehicles and to minimise conflicts between off-road vehicles and legitimate users.
- Manage the impact of highways and highway schemes through the use of the Rural streets and lanes design guidance.

Plan

- Promote high design standards for rural developments to ensure that they make a positive contribution to landscape character, for example through careful choice of materials, and an appropriate scale and massing of building. Seek the sympathetic use of local materials – brick, tile and flint.
- Ensure that high quality design of settlement edges is integrated into any plans for development within the LCA or on its periphery.
- Promote landscape enhancements and the mitigation of effects in and around recreational facilities (e.g. golf courses, caravan sites and Lydden motor circuit) to aid their integration into the landscape.
- Provide guidance on best-practice for planting vines with regard to the local landscape. This could include (for example) considering the alignment of vines, working within (or restoring) the surrounding hedgerow network, avoiding vines being seen against the horizon from key viewpoints, and the introduction of wildlife friendly habitats.
- Work with local communities to raise awareness of the landscape's value.
- Work with Highways Authorities to minimise the visual and landscape impacts of gantries, signage and other highways measures and ensure the application of the Kent Downs AONB Rural Streets and Lanes Design guidance.
- Work with Highways Authorities to increase the biodiversity value of verges and hedgerows without compromising safety.
- Develop guidance to ensure that impacts on views from the LCA are taken into account when considering development in the vicinity of the AONB.
- Encourage partnership working between different Local Authorities, agencies and community groups to enable seamless working across the AONB. Consider environmental/ landscape limits in planning and plan making.
- Within the setting of the LCA, work with Local Planning Authorities and designers to achieve the best possible landscape and ecological integration and minimal impact on views, with compensation achieved for lost qualities.
- Use the existing and valued landscape characteristics and qualities to design new tree establishment as part of climate change mitigation.

14.0 LVIA APPENDIX III: RELEVANT POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework

14.1 Paragraph 8 states:

"Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."

14.2 Paragraph 96 states:

"Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling."

14.3 Paragraph 123 states:

"Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;

b) local market conditions and viability;

c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;

d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and

e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places."

14.4 Paragraph 129 states:

"Area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places."

14.5 Paragraph 131 states:

"The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process."

14.6 Paragraph 135 states:

"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users49; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."

14.7 Paragraph 136 states:

"Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users."

14.8 Paragraph 137 states:

"Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot."

14.9 Paragraph 139 states:

"Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or

b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings."

14.10 Paragraph 180 states:

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

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate."

Folkestone & Hythe Core Strategy

14.11 Policy CSD4 includes:

- *"The council will require development proposals over their lifetime:*
  i. To provide net gains in biodiversity at least to comply with statutory and/or national policy requirements (assuming no residual loss);
  ii. To demonstrate that they protect and enhance valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils, commensurate to their status and quality;
  iii. So far as possible, to deliver improvements in green infrastructure (GI) assets in the district and ensure positive management of areas of high landscape quality or high costal/recreational potential identified in the Green Infrastructure Report (2011) (or any updates to this report)."

14.12 Policy SS1 includes for the North Downs Area:

- *"North Downs Area - The future spatial priority for new development in the North Downs area is on the creation of a landscape-led sustainable new settlement based on garden town principles outside the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) boundary, designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the AONB, and the expansion of Sellindge. Within the Kent Downs AONB development will be limited to consolidating Hawkinge's growth and sensitively meeting the needs of communities at better-served settlements. Major development will be refused within the*

AONB other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. All proposed development in the North Downs area will have to satisfy the requirements of policy CSD5 (d). in order to avoid any significant impact on the water quality of the Stodmarsh European designated sites."

Folkestone & Hythe District Council Places and Policies Local Plan

14.13 Policy CC2 includes:

- *"The development includes measures to adapt to climate change, such as the provision of green infrastructure, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) in accordance with Policy CC3, suitable shading of pedestrian routes and open spaces and drought resistant landscaping."*

14.14 Policy E2 states:

- *"Existing employment sites are protected for business purposes under classes B1 and B8. Proposals to fully or partly redevelop existing employment sites for alternative uses will be permitted provided that it is demonstrated that:*

  1. The existing or former employment use is no longer appropriate in terms of neighbouring uses or impacts on the natural environment; or
  2. The site or premises has been subject to sustained marketing over a 12 month period prior to the submission of the planning application but the site or premises has remained unlet or unsold for all appropriate types of B class employment use and no reasonable offers have been received;
  3. It does not prevent or limited opportunities for any remaining land left undeveloped coming forwarded for employment purposes;
  4. Any established businesses are relocated to appropriate alternative premises within the local area; and
  5. The site is unviable for redevelopment for an alternative employment use.

  In addition, proposals should demonstrate that the proposed new use does not undermine neighbouring employment uses or their future development."

14.15 Policy HB2: Cohesive Design includes:

- *"Cohesive Design For major housing developments or complex proposals or on sensitive sites, a design statement should be prepared which demonstrates compliance with Building for Life 12, as far as is reasonably practicable. The statement should demonstrate how the proposal: Integrates into the Neighbourhood 1. Integrates into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones where appropriate; while also respecting existing buildings and land uses along the boundaries of the development site; 2. Provides (or is located close to) community facilities such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs and cafés; 3. Has good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency; and 4. For housing development, provides a mix of housing types and tenures that meet local requirements. Creates a Place 5. Creates a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character, well related to the local landscape character; 6. Takes advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), trees which contribute positively to the landscape; wildlife habitats, existing buildings, heritage assets, site orientation and micro-climates; 7. Integrates buildings with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and turn street corners well; and 8. Makes it easy for residents and visitors to find their way around. Creates Streets and Homes 9. Creates streets that encourage low vehicle speeds and social interaction; 10. Provides well integrated parking that does not dominate the street; 11. Clearly defines public and private spaces and ensures they are attractive, can be well managed and are safe; and 12. Provides adequate external storage space for refuse and recycling as well as storage for vehicles and cycles."*

14.16 Policy NE2: Biodiversity includes:

- *"All new development will be required to conserve and enhance the natural environment, including all sites of biodiversity or geodiversity value (whether or not they have statutory protection) and all legally protected or priority habitats and species. The Council will support development that:*
  i. Enhances, retains and protects existing sites and features of nature conservation value including wildlife corridors, ancient woodland and geological exposure that contribute to the priorities established through the Biodiversity Action Plan and the Green Infrastructure Plan;
  ii. Does not reduce, and where feasible, improves species' ability to move through the environment in response to predicted climate change, and to prevent isolation of significant populations of species; and
  iii. Incorporates features that enhance biodiversity as part of good design and sustainable development, including the creation of new pollinator habitat suitable to the scale of development."

14.17 Policy NE3: Protecting the District's Landscapes and Countryside states:

- *"The impact of individual proposals and their cumulative effect on the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and its setting will be carefully assessed. Planning permission will be granted where it can be demonstrated that all the following criteria have been met:*

  1. The natural beauty and locally distinctive features of the AONB and its setting are conserved and enhanced;
  2. Proposals reinforce and respond to, rather than detract from, the distinctive character and special qualities including tranquillity of the AONB. The design scale, setting and materials of new development must be appropriate to the AONB;
  3. Either individually or cumulatively, development does not lead to actual or perceived coalescence of settlements or undermine the integrity of the predominantly open and undeveloped, rural character of the AONB and its setting;
  4. Development is appropriate to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area or is desirable for the understanding and enjoyment of the area (where this is consistent with the primary purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty); and
  5. Development meets the policy aims of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and AONB Unit produced supporting design guidance.

Landscape Character Areas Proposals should demonstrate that their siting and design are compatible with the pattern of natural and man-made features of the Landscape Character Areas, including their cultural and historical associations. Opportunities for remediation and improvement of damaged landscapes will be taken as they arise"

14.18 Policy NE5: Light Pollution and External Illumination includes:

- *"Applications for major development, and development including significant external lighting, will be approved if:*
  1. The proposal does not materially alter light levels outside the development site;
  2. The proposal does not adversely affect the use or enjoyment of nearby buildings or open spaces; and
  3. The proposed lighting scheme accords with the best practice guidance provided by the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) (2011) relevant to the particular Environmental Zone (see table below).

15.0 LVIA APPENDIX IV: LIKELY LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

15.1 The following table sets out the likely landscape effects at years 1 (winter) and year 15 (summer).

Table 15-1: Likely Landscape Effects

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment	Impact	Effects
The Site	Value The Site is evidently within the Kent Downs National Landscape, which is inherently of the highest value; however, the Site does not reflect any of the key characteristics, nor special landscape components of the designation, such that the Site is of limited representativeness to the designated landscape. The condition of the Site is very low, due to its derelict character and existing buildings. Therefore, the value is assessed as low, despite the National Landscape Designation. Susceptibility As an area of previously developed and modified landform, with no key vegetation, the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) The Proposed Development would remove the existing buildings and introduce a new office building with underground parking in the northern part of the Site. There would a row of four semi-detached properties, extending southwards across the remainder of the Site, which each property in a parallel south-west to north-east alignment. A vehicle access route would extend along the northern and eastern edges of the Site to provide access to the residential dwellings and enable a turning head for larger vehicles. All new buildings would therefore be set back from the ancient woodland and located centrally within the Site. All residential buildings would utilise the existing level change across the Site, with the residential buildings being situated across the plateau, and extending up to 7.85m in height. There would be a high architectural quality to these buildings via their pitched roof form and alternating floor to ceiling windows on the gable ends. The lower storey would be traditional red brick, with the remainder of the facades a dark stained timber cladding. The Office building would similarly share the red brick and dark timber cladding, so as to provide a unified architectural design. The new buildings would be set within a new landscape framework, including for sedum roofs above the carparking areas and a new tree belt between the western edge of the Site and adjacent residential land uses. The combination of the new residential land use, improved scenic quality and vegetation structure would result in a high degree of change at year 1. Year 15 (summer) Compared to the year 1 assessment, the proposed planting along the western boundary of the Site would have established. This would provide an increased vegetation structure to the Site.	Yr1: High Yr15: High	Yr1: Moderate Beneficial Yr15: Moderate Beneficial
NCA 119: North Kent Downs	Value Xx Susceptibility Xx Sensitivity xx	Year 1 (winter) The change from the Proposed Development would reflect that set out above at the Site level. The Proposed Development would respond well to the SEO via retaining the form of the existing settlement pattern at Six Mile, via the Proposed Development remaining within the footprint of the former land use. The Proposed Development would also retain the surrounding ancient woodland through the offset between the proposed buildings and the root protection areas. The proposed planting, particularly the new tree belt along the western edge of the Site would form a new green space within the development, reflecting the character of the surrounding woodland. The scale and extent of the Proposed Development would be too small to alter the character of the wider geographic area of the NCA. Therefore, there would be no change to the character of the NCA at year 1. Year 15 (summer) The assessment would mirror that at year 1, with the Proposed Development being too small to alter the character of the NCA.	Yr1: None Yr1: None	Yr1: Neutral Yr15: Neutral
LCA Petham	Value As the LCA covers land within the National Landscape, the value is high. Susceptibility As an area of rolling landform and woodland and a small scale settlement pattern, the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity	Year 1 (winter) The Proposed Development would be located in a previously developed part of the LCA and would conserve the settlement pattern by remaining in the footprint of past land uses and adjacent to existing residential lands uses. Similarly the Proposed Development would conserve the woodland cover and introduce additional tree planting within the Site. There would be no change to any of the stated key characteristics and the Proposed Development would remove detracting buildings. Year 15 (summer)	Yr1: None Yr1: None	Yr1: Neutral Yr15: Neutral

	The combination of the high value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	The assessment would mirror that at year 1, with the Proposed Development being too small to alter the character of the NCA.		
LCA 1C: East Kent Downs	Value As an area of land within the National Landscape, the value is high. Susceptibility As an area of rolling landform and arable land uses and a relatively sparse settlement pattern, the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the high value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year1 (winter) The Proposed Development would introduce high quality architecture within an existing developed site, replacing buildings of no scenic quality. The scale and extent of the change would be very small in relation to the wider geographic area of the LCA and therefore there would be no change to the character. Year 15 (summer) The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Yr1: None Yr15: None	Yr1: Neutral Yr15: Neutral
LCA 1C: East Kent Downs - Petham	Value As an area of land within the National Landscape, the value is high. Susceptibility As an area of rolling valleys, woodland and sparse settlement pattern, the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the high value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year1 (winter) The dark tones of the timber façade would not undermine the rural nature of the area, due to being recessive colours. The Proposed Development would be located in a part of the LCA which already forms an area of urban-fringe influences via the existing land uses. However, the quality of the architecture and the ordered arrangement of the proposed buildings and their unified facades would enable a stronger sense of place and a more locally distinctive architectural design at Six Mile. The Proposed Development would respond positively to the stated guidelines by protecting the small scale settlement pattern at Six Mile, with a replacement office and four semi-detached buildings, thereby avoiding scale development. The skyline would be protected as the proposed buildings would be back-clothed by the woodland and views of the residential buildings would represent a far higher scenic quality than views of the existing buildings. By offsetting the proposed buildings from the woodland, this vegetation would be protected. The Proposed Development would be located adjacent to existing residential properties, roads and a garage, such that it is located in a part of the LCA which is not inherently tranquil, remote nor undeveloped. The Proposed Development would be a very small physical and perceived change in relation to the extent of the sib-area. Year 15 (summer) At year 15, the establishment of the proposed planting would increase the vegetation cover and scenic quality of the Site. The planting would provide a more integrated and settled character to the Site, as well as reduce the perception of the lower parts of the residential buildings. The scale and extent of the change would remain as per year 1, such that the impacts and effects would also remain similar.	Yr1: Negligible Yr15: Negligible	Yr1: Negligible Beneficial Yr15: Negligible Beneficial
Local Landscape Character Area Six Mile	Value As an area of land within the National Landscape, but which is developed and not fully representative of the key characteristics, the value is medium. Susceptibility As an area of developed land, along with fields and woodland the susceptibility is moderate. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and moderate susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) The Proposed Development would remove buildings of a very low scenic quality which do not contribute positively to the local character and replace these with w new office building and residential land uses. The shared form and materials across the new buildings would result in the Proposed Development being perceived as a unified design and a residential area set within the existing extent of built development at Six Mile. The overall change would be beneficial to the character of the area and result in an improved sense of place. Year 15 (summer) The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Yr1: Moderate Yr15: Moderate	Yr1: Minor Beneficial Yr15: Minor Beneficial

16.0 LVIA APPENDIX V: LIKELY VISUAL EFFECTS

16.1 The following table sets out the likely visual effects at year 1 (winter) and year 15 (summer) of operation.

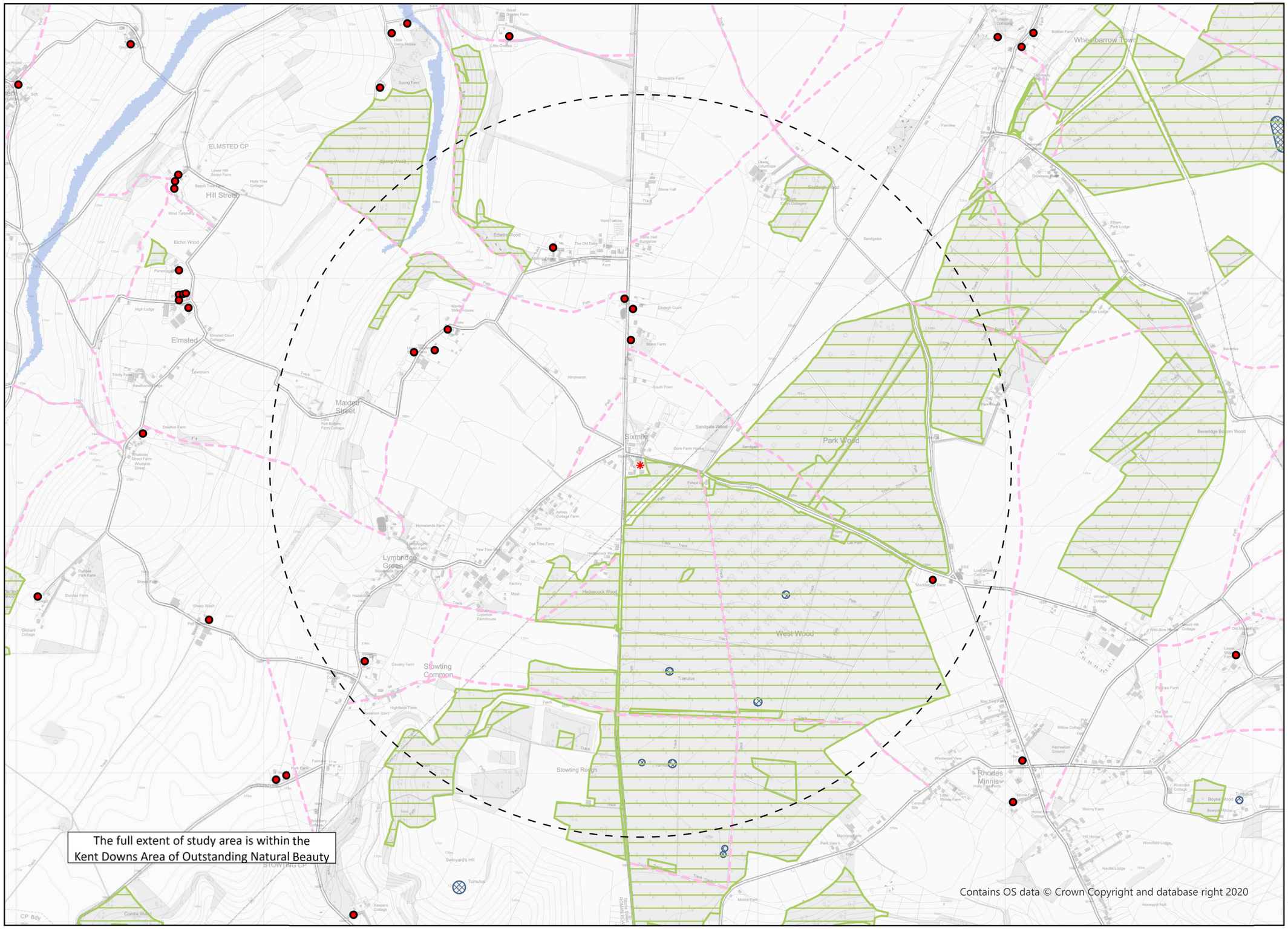
Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment	Impact	Effects
1A. Road users on the B2068	Value The view from the road is likely to form part of the experience and is frequented by a high number of people. The value is medium. Susceptibility As road users where views contribute to the experience, the susceptibility is moderate. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and moderate susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) The proposed office building would not be visible due to being located beyond Six Mile House. The upper facades of the southern most residential properties, including their pitched roofline would be visible, replacing views of the existing utilitarian building with a higher scenic quality. In comparison to the blue colour of the existing building, the proposed black timber façade would be more recessive in colour and visually integrated against the backdrop of ancient woodland, along with the proposed residential buildings remaining below the wooded skyline. The lower facades and gardens of the proposed residential properties would not be visible due to the intervening garage and roadside vegetation. The overall change to the composition of the view would be small, and is a balance between the beneficial change from the removal of the existing building and the introduction of additional roofscape and building form, set within the composition of the garage and existing roof scape of Six Mile Garage House. Year 15 (summer) In summer, with more of the roadside vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the roofscape and upper facades of the proposed residential buildings would reduce in comparison to the winter assessment, such that the overall change to the view would similarly reduced.	Yr1: Low Yr1: Negligible	Yr1: Minor Beneficial Yr15: Negligible Beneficial
1B. Residents at Six Mile House	Value The view is likely to be valued by those present and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) There would be oblique views from ground floor windows on the southern elevation of the property and the upper storey windows on the eastern façade of the proposed office building and residential buildings, although largely softened by the height of the garden hedge. The removal of the existing buildings and replacement with architecture of a higher scenic quality would be a beneficial change to the composition of the view. The new buildings would be seen beyond Six Mile Garage and the movement and activity of the garage, such that that in combination with the oblique angle of the view, the overall change to the composition of the view would be very small. Year 15 (summer) Compared to the year 1 assessment, the proposed planting along the western edge of the Site would have established, to be taller in height, providing a higher scenic quality to the composition of the view in comparison to the existing garages and buildings within the Site. The overall change and extent of the view would remain very small due to the height of the roadside hedge adjacent to the windows.	Yr1: Low Yr1: Negligible	Yr1: Minor Beneficial Yr15: Negligible Beneficial
2A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE147/2	Value The view forms part of the experience and is likely to be of local importance, such that the value is medium. Susceptibility As recreational users, the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) The upper parts of the proposed residential roofline would be visible, although highly softened by the density of the intervening vegetation. The roofscape would provide a consistent form within the composition of the view in comparison to the existing buildings and the black timber would be a visually recessive colour, reflecting the pitched alignment of agricultural buildings in the foreground of the view. The overall change to the composition of the view would be very small, resulting in additional buildings within the background of the view. Year 15 (summer) Compared to the year 1 assessment, the Proposed Development would not be visible due to the intervening vegetation being in leaf.	Yr1: Negligible Yr1: None	Yr1: Negligible Adverse Yr15: Neutral
3A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE147/1	Value The view forms part of the experience and is likely to be of local importance, such that the value is medium. Susceptibility As recreational users, the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity	Year 1 (winter) The slightly elevated position of the receptor would enable the proposed residential buildings to be visible, replacing views of the existing large blue utilitarian building within the Site, with a symmetrical arrangement of high quality buildings, all with a similar dark toned timber façade. The alignment of the proposed buildings would be orientated south-west to east within the composition of the view, thereby reducing the overall perceived extent and mass of the new buildings. The proposed buildings would also remain below the vegetated skyline. The Proposed Development would be seen as a continuation of the residential buildings within	Yr1: Moderate Yr1: Low	Yr1: Moderate Beneficial Yr15: Minor Beneficial

	The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	the view, extending from Six Mile House to beyond the garage, but remaining within the overall cluster of Six Mile Garage House and Woodside. Year 15 (summer) Compared to the winter year 1 assessment, with the roadside vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the proposed residential buildings would reduce, thereby the overall change to the composition of the view would also reduce. The establishment of the proposed planting along the western edge of the Site would result in a more vegetated character to the composition of the view across the Site and provide a stronger visual link with the surrounding vegetation.		
4A. Road users on the B2068	Value The view from the road is likely to form part of the experience and is frequented by a high number of people. The value is medium. Susceptibility As road users where views contribute to the experience, the susceptibility is moderate. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and moderate susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) The Proposed Development would not be visible due to the density of the intervening vegetation, the alignment of the B2068 and the intervening Six Mile House property. Year 15 (summer) The assessment would reflect that in winter.	Yr1: None Yr1: None	Yr1: Neutral Yr15: Neutral
5A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE34/1	Value The view forms part of the experience and is likely to be of local importance, such that the value is medium. Susceptibility As recreational users, the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) The Proposed Development would not be visible due to the density of the intervening field boundary vegetation and that the height of the proposed buildings would remain below the vegetated skyline. Year 15 (summer) The assessment would reflect that in winter.	Yr1: None Yr1: None	Yr1: Neutral Yr15: Neutral
6A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE34/1	Value The view forms part of the experience and is likely to be of local importance, such that the value is medium. Susceptibility As recreational users, the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) The density of the intervening vegetation would substantially soften views of the proposed residential roofscape. This would replace views of the existing buildings and the colour tones of the proposed buildings would be more visually recessive. The overall change to the composition of the view would be barely discernible. Year 15 (summer) The Proposed Development would not be visible due to the density of the intervening vegetation.	Yr1: Negligible Yr1: None	Yr1: Negligible adverse Yr15: Neutral
7A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0090/HE34/1	Value The view forms part of the experience and is likely to be of local importance, such that the value is medium. Susceptibility As recreational users, the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) The Proposed Development would not be visible due to the density of the intervening field boundary vegetation. Year 15 (summer) The assessment would reflect that in winter.	Yr1: None Yr1: None	Yr1: Neutral Yr15: Neutral
8A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) 0164/HE35/2	Value The view forms part of the experience and is likely to be of local importance, such that the value is medium. Susceptibility As recreational users, the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity	Year 1 (winter) The Proposed Development would not be visible due to the density of the intervening woodland. Year 15 (summer) The assessment would reflect that in winter.	Yr1: None Yr1: None	Yr1: Neutral Yr15: Neutral

	The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.			
9A. Road users on Mockbeggar Lane	Value The view from the road is likely to form part of the experience and is frequented by a high number of people. The value is medium. Susceptibility As road users where views contribute to the experience, the susceptibility is moderate. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and moderate susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) The upper part of the proposed office building would be visible, replacing the existing white rendered breeze-block building with a corrugated roof with a high quality façade of black timber and red plain tiles. The orientation and small footprint of the proposed office building in comparison to the existing building would also reduce the visible extent of development within the composition of the view. The overall change would be beneficial via creating a higher scenic quality within the composition of the view. Year 15 (summer) With the intervening roadside vegetation in leaf and the establishment of the proposed planting in the north-east part of the Site, the visibility of the proposed office building would be softened which in combination with the removal of the existing building would retain the predicted effects.	Yr1: Low Yr1: Low	Yr1: Minor Beneficial Yr15: Minor Beneficial
10A. Road users on Mockbeggar Lane	Value The view from the road is likely to form part of the experience and is frequented by a high number of people. The value is medium. Susceptibility As road users where views contribute to the experience, the susceptibility is moderate. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and moderate susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) There would be close range views of the new office building, replacing the existing building of low scenic quality. The change to the composition of the view would be via an improved architectural quality to the building, as the view is already demarcated by buildings in close proximity to the receptor. Year 15 (summer) Compared to the year 1 assessment the establishment of the proposed planting would provide a more settled character to the composition of the view and a greater integration between the proposed office and the external space. The high quality of the architecture in comparison to the existing building would retain the impacts and effects as per year 1.	Yr1: High Yr1: High	Yr1: Moderate Beneficial Yr15: Moderate Beneficial
10B. Residents at Gore Farm	Value The view is likely to be valued by those present and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) There would be largely softened views of the proposed office building due to the density of the intervening roadside and garden vegetation. The replacement of the existing building with a higher quality architectural building and of more recessive colour tones would be beneficial. Year 15 (summer) Compared to the year 1 assessment, with the intervening roadside vegetation in leaf, the Proposed Development would not be visible.	Yr1: Negligible Yr1: None	Yr1: Negligible Beneficial Yr15: Neutral
11. Road users on the B2068	Value The view from the road is likely to form part of the experience and is frequented by a high number of people. The value is medium. Susceptibility As road users where views contribute to the experience, the susceptibility is moderate. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and moderate susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) The upper façade and roofline of the proposed residential building would be visible, seen beyond Woodside and Six Mile Garage House. The proposed development would result in additional building within the Site than the existing utilitarian blue building, resulting in a more developed composition to the view, although one which reflects the existing context of residential land uses extending from Woodside to Six Mile House. The proposed residential building would be recessive in colour due to the black timber facades and would remain below the vegetated skyline. The orientation of the proposed buildings would allow views to remain across the Site to the woodland. The proposed buildings would present a high architectural quality and a higher scenic quality, which is considered alongside the additional development across the view. Year 15 (summer) Compared to the year 1 assessment, the proposed planting along the western edge of the Site would be taller in height, softening views of the lower facades of the residential buildings.	Yr1: Moderate Yr1: Moderate	Yr1: Minor Beneficial Yr15: Minor Beneficial
11B. Residents at Six Mile Garage House	Value The view is likely to be valued by those present and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high.	Year 1 (winter) There would be oblique views from the upper storey windows on the southern façade of the proposed residential buildings. There would also be oblique views from the windows on the eastern elevation, due to the height of the intervening evergreen hedge. The proposed buildings would improve the scenic quality of the Site via removing the existing buildings and introducing high quality architecture.	Yr1: Low Yr15: Low	Yr1: Minor Beneficial Yr15: Minor Beneficial

	Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 15 (summer) By year 15, the establishment of the proposed planting along the western edge of the Site would reduce the visibility of the lower facades of the proposed buildings, whilst the remainder of the proposed development would remain visible.		
11C. Residents at Woodside	Value The view is likely to be valued by those present and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) There would be oblique views from the ground floor windows of the bungalow of the Proposed Development and more open views from the curtilage of the property. The proposed buildings would improve the scenic quality of the Site via removing the existing buildings and introducing high quality architecture. Year 15 (summer) By year 15, the establishment of the proposed planting along the western edge of the Site would reduce the visibility of the lower facades of the proposed buildings, whilst the remainder of the proposed development would remain visible.	Yr 1: Low Yr15: Low	Yr1: Minor Beneficial Yr15: Minor Beneficial
12. Recreational users on PRoW (bridleway) 0090/HE145/2	Value The view forms part of the experience and is likely to be of local importance, such that the value is medium. Susceptibility As recreational users, the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Year 1 (winter) The Proposed Development would not be visible due to the distance and density of the intervening vegetation, even in winter. Year 15 (summer) The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Yr1: None Yr1: None	Yr1: Neutral Yr15: Neutral

17.0 LVIA APPENDIX VI: LVIA FIGURES



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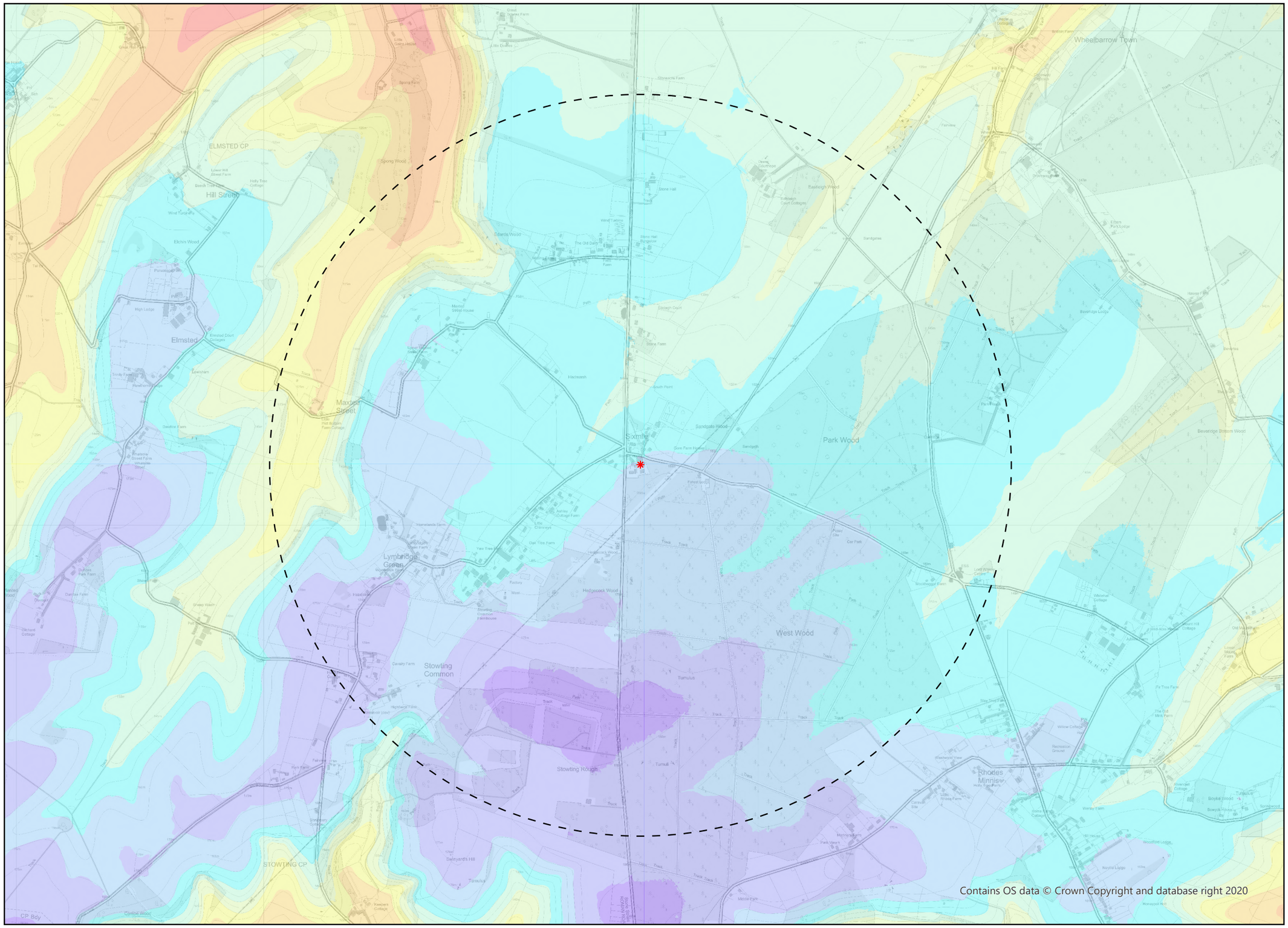
LAND AT SIX MILE GARAGE

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

SITE CONTEXT PLAN

Drawing No	0558-L01
Status	Final
Date	21-02-2024
Scale	1:15,000@A3
Revision	-

N



Key:

- Proposed Site
- Study Area 1.5km

DTM (metres above ordnance datum)

Value

- 90 - 100 m
- 100 - 110 m
- 110 - 120 m
- 120 - 130 m
- 130 - 140 m
- 140 - 150 m
- 150 - 160 m
- 160 - 170 m
- 170 - 180 m
- 180 - 190 m

* The contour coloring is representative for visualization purposes only, taken from a Global Multi-Resolution Terrain Elevation Data (2010) from the USGS website https://earthexplorer.usgs.gov/ (accessed at 06.04.2022)

230 115 0 230 460 Metres

N

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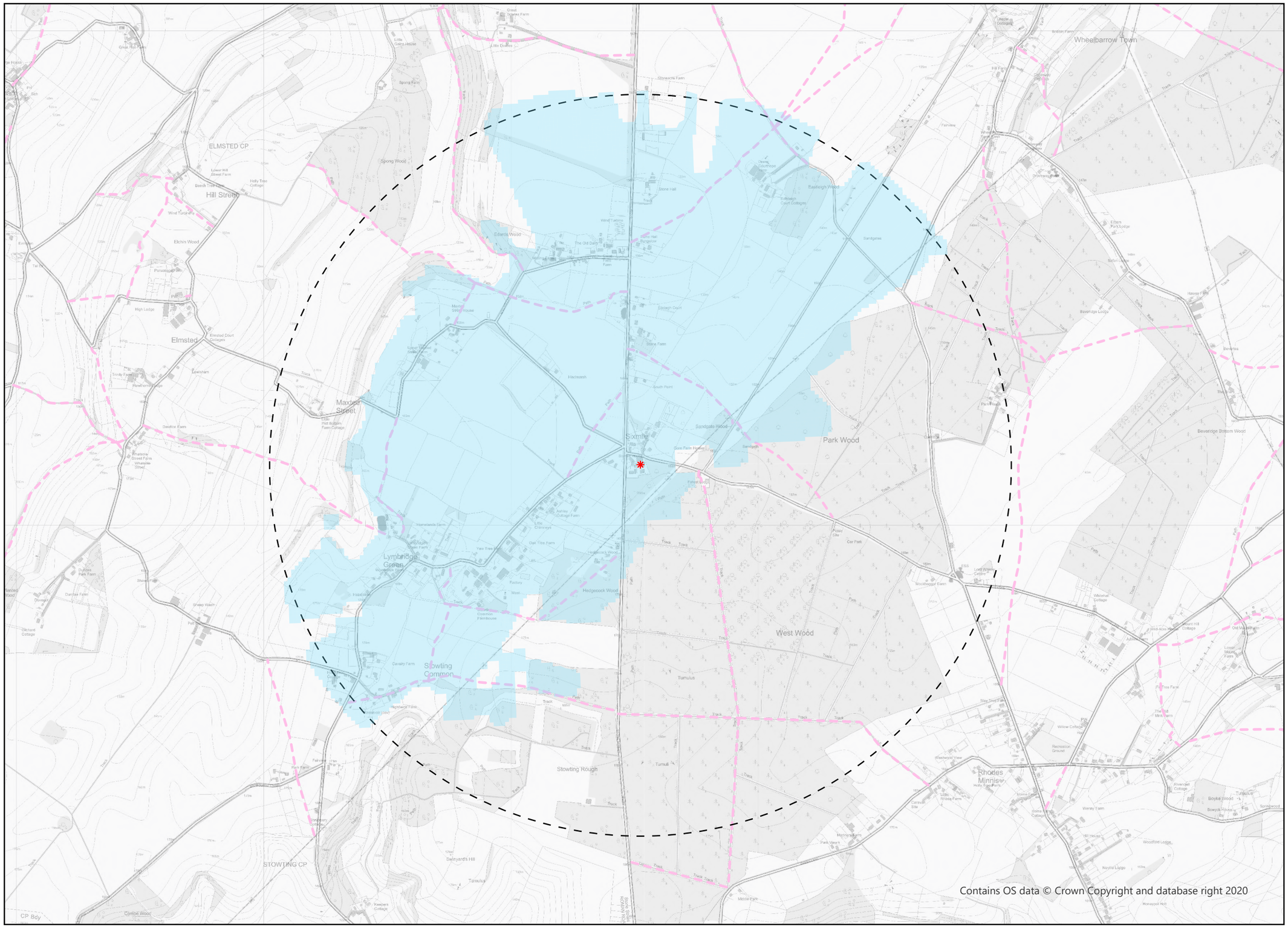
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LAND AT SIX MILE GARAGE

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

TOPOGRAPHY PLAN

Drawing No	0558-L02
Status	Final
Date	21.02.2024
Scale	1:15,000@A3
Revision	-



Key:

- Proposed Site
- Study Area 1.5km
- Public Right of Way
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Notes:

Modelled on DTM data (topography)
Height of building: 7m
Height of viewer: 1.5m
This illustrates the potential extents of visibility of development on the site, based on bare earth modelling, it does not take into account structures or woodlands that may further restrict visibility.

230 115 0 230 460
Metres

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LAND AT SIX MILE GARAGE

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY

Drawing No	0558-L03
Status	Final
Date	21.02.2024
Scale	1:15,000@A3
Revision	-

N