



fabrik

Langley Bottom Farm, Epsom, Surrey

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment
July 2025

Issue sheet

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Figure 1.1 – Site location (fabrik, 2025)

 Site boundary

1.0

Introduction

fabrik Chartered Landscape Architects have been appointed by Fairfax Acquisitions to carry out this report, in order to consider the likely physical and visual impacts arising as a result of the Proposed Development of the Site.

The Proposed Development comprises:

‘Outline planning application for up to 110 dwellings (including affordable homes) with all matters reserved apart from access from Langley Vale Road.’

This report sets out landscape policy (together with any related policy on ecological and heritage assets) and any supporting guidance documents / informatives and then goes on to describe the constituent baseline landscape elements (the existing geology, soils, landform, drainage, vegetation cover, land use, settlement, the history of the landscape and the way that landscape is experienced) which together inform landscape character, landscape condition and value. The LVIA then describes the baseline character and amenity of the identified visual receptors (considering the visual envelope, the different groups of people, places affected, the nature of the view and the visual amenity).

The landscape constraints and opportunities are then set out to inform the proposed development. Any mitigation measures and assumptions which have informed the assessment of effects are set out after the description of the proposed development. The effects of the proposed development are then considered against each of the landscape and visual receptors relative to the particular stages of the project. The penultimate section of this report comprises a landscape policy assessment.

The location of the Site is shown in Figure 1.1 on the previous page overleaf.

The methodology for the LVIA is based on the ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (third edition) by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (Routledge, 2013). A full methodology is set out at Appendix 1.

1.1 Desktop Research

The desktop survey carried out as part of the LVIA included the review of Ordnance Survey maps, interactive maps, aerial photography, published landscape character assessment documents, planning policy and the emerging development proposals. The extent of the baseline and therefore the impact appraisal is broadly defined by the Zone of Theoretical Visual Influence (ZTVI) as determined by the initial desk study and verified in the field and therefore extends to 3km from the Site.

The desk top assessment also identifies any likely changes to the current baseline situation which are likely to be in place prior to the proposed development proceeding.

The field work was carried out in April 2025 and recorded the existing landscape elements within the Application Site; the contextual landscape elements; and identified a series of key visual receptors. The visual assessment element includes a photographic survey of the Application Site taken from a series of representative key views, chosen to represent a range of locations including both public and private views, distances and directions around the Site. The weather conditions and camera lense were also recorded.

1.2 Field Work

The field work was carried out in April 2025 and recorded the existing landscape elements within the Application Site; the contextual landscape elements; and identified a series of key visual receptors. The visual assessment element includes a photographic survey of the Application Site taken from a series of representative key views, chosen to represent a range of locations including both public and private views, distances and directions around the Site. The weather conditions and camera lense were also recorded.

2.0

Landscape Planning Context

2.1

Designations and Policy

Designations

The Site is located within the Green Belt and Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV).

There is one Registered Park and Gardens within the study area, the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) Ashtead Park, located 1.3 km west of the Site. To the north-west of Site the National Nature Reserve (NNR) Ashtead Common is located 1.3km from Site.

There are numerous blocks of Ancient woodland to the south of the Site at Langley Vale Woods, including Great Hurst Wood, Little Hurst Wood and Downs View Wood. The Site is also located adjacent to the Warren Ancient Woodland to the east, which is also designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance.

The North Downs National Character Area (NCA) is located approximately 3km to the south of the Site and encompasses the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Historic and Cultural Landscape

The Site is not subject to a historic or cultural landscape designation, however a number of Grade II listed buildings are located within the study area. Those within proximity to the Site include:

- Boundary Wall to Woodcote Park, 0.16km west of the Site.
- Wall Bordering North West and South Sides of the Warren, 0.05km east of the Site.
- Warreners Cottage & Walls, 0.5km east of the Site.
- The Well, 0.5km east of the Site.
- Coal Tax Post at Junction with Langley Vale Road, 0.6km west of the Site.
- Coal Tax Post to South East of Langley Bottom Farm, 0.3km south of the Site.
- Coal Tax Post to South East End, 0.6km east of the Site.
- Coal Tax Post to South of Racecourse. 0.9km north east of the Site.
- Additionally, the Langley Vale Centenary Woods are located 0.7km south-west of Site.

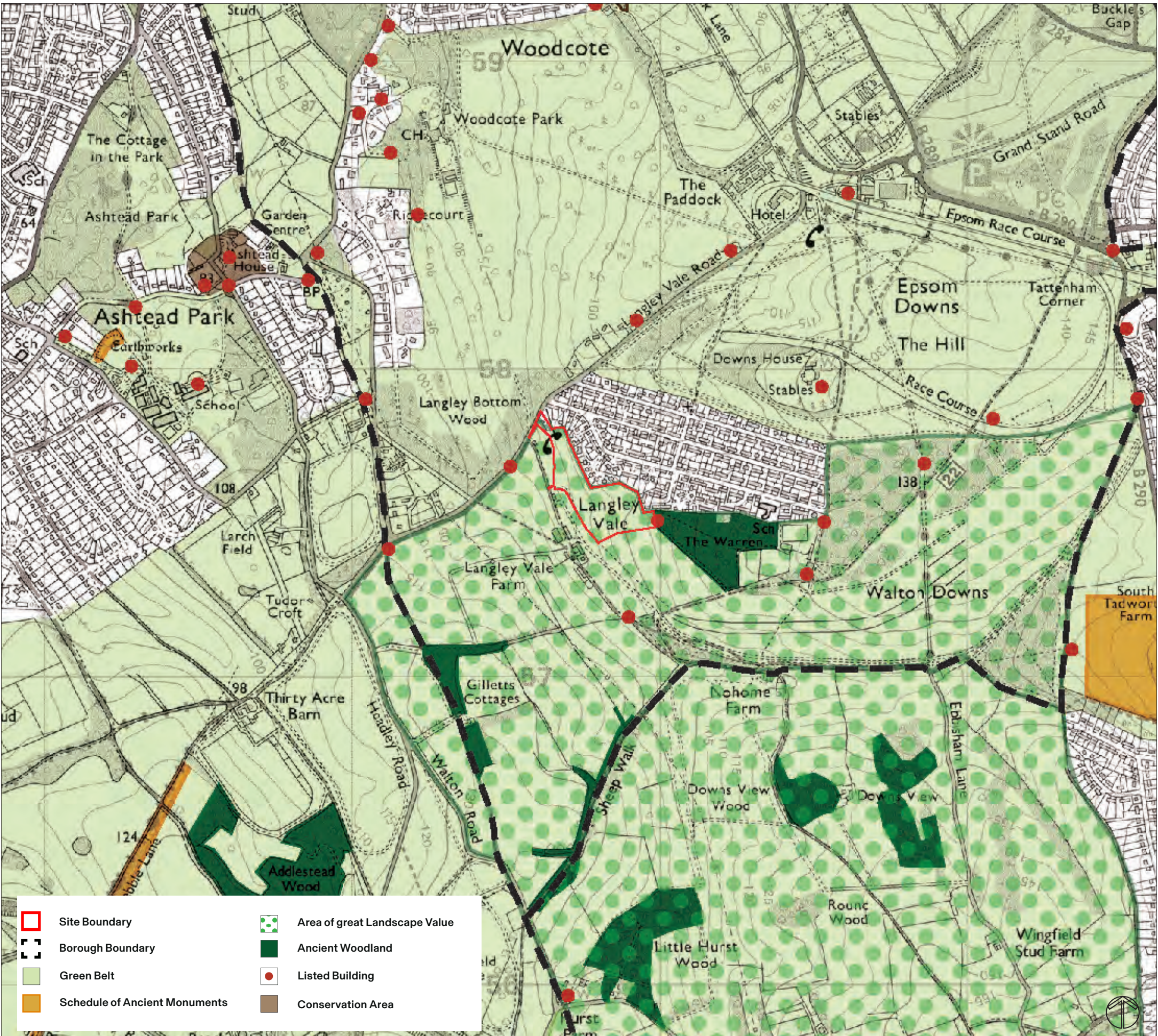
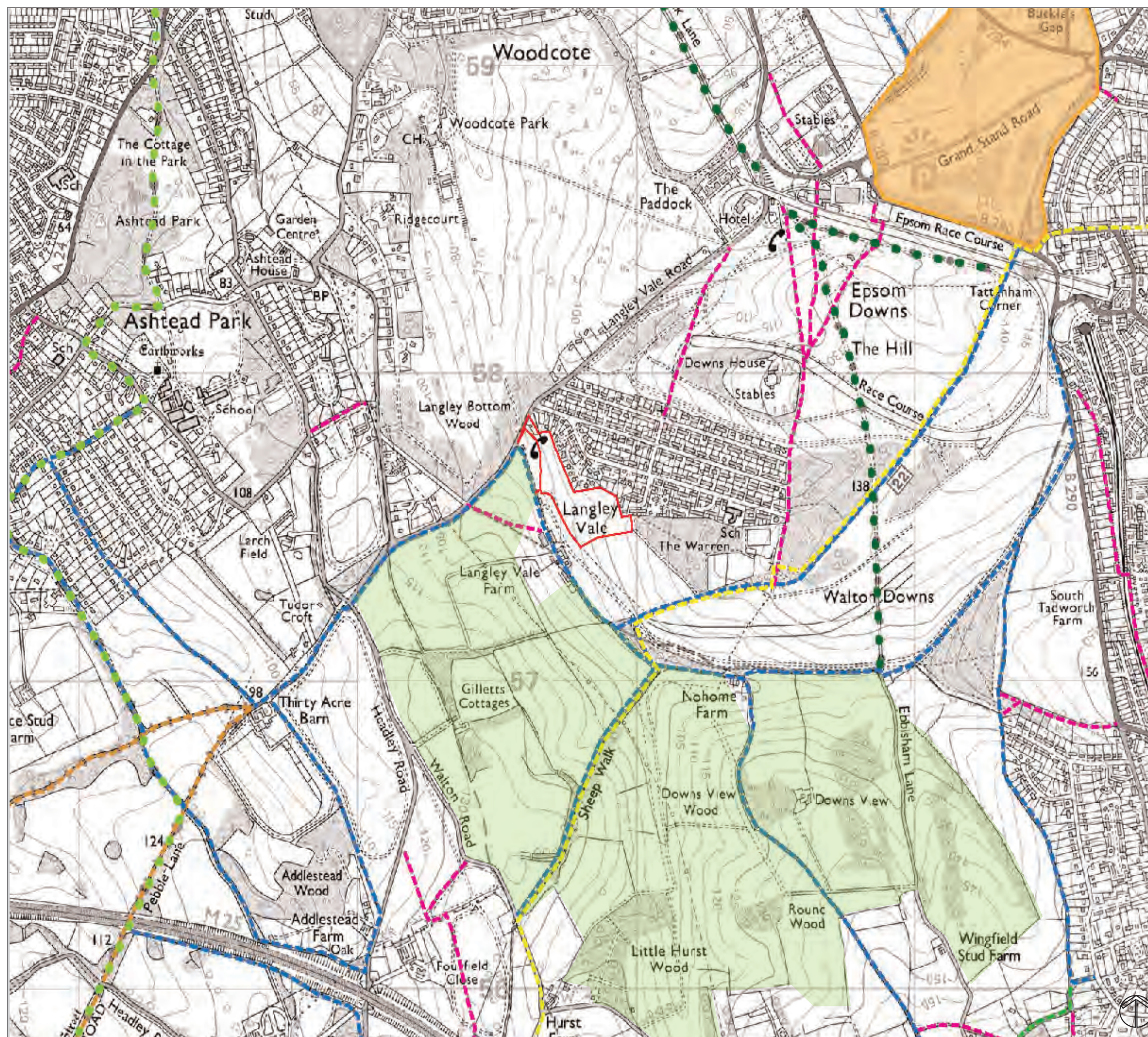


Figure 2.1 – Local designations (fabrik, 2025)



- Site Boundary
- Footpaths
- Bridleways
- Byways
- Other route with public access
- Cycleways / Sustrans Route No. 22
- Thames Down Link national trail
- Open Access Land
- Langley Vale Centenary Wood

Public Rights of Way

As illustrated in Figure 2.2 to the left, an extensive network of public footpaths, bridleways, cycle routes and restricted byways span the study area and connect to the wider landscape beyond.

The Thames Down Link, long-distance public right of way, crosses the west of the study area, approximately in a north-south orientation. There is additionally an area of Open Access Land adjacent to Epsom Race Course in the north of the study area. Those PRoW within proximity to the Site include:

- Bridleway BW127
- Bridleway BW33
- Bridleway BW138

Notably, Langley Vale Centenary Wood to the south of the Site is a publicly accessible woodland managed by the Woodland Trust, with a network of public footpaths, bridleways, and permissive paths that provide recreational opportunities for its visitors. While it is not designated as Open Access Land under the CRow Act, it remains a well-used recreational resource, with managed access and infrastructure to facilitate public enjoyment.

Figure 2.2 – Public rights of way, Open access land and Registered Common Land (fabrik, 2025)

2.1.1 National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The December 2024 NPPF seeks the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The following issues and policies of the NPPF are pertinent to the proposed development and this assessment.

Section 2 - achieving sustainable development, para 8, subsection c relating to an environmental objective, states:

“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...”

Section 8 - promoting healthy and safe communities, para 103 under the open space and recreation sub-heading states:

“Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support effects to address climate change...”

Para 105 states:

“Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.”

Para 106 on Local Green Space states:

“The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them...”

Para 108 goes on to state: "Policies and decisions for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with national policy for Green Belts set out in chapter 13 of this Framework."

Section 12 - achieving well-designed places. Para 131:

“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...”

Para 132:

“... Design policies should be developed with local communities so that they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics...”

Para 135:

“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 users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”

Para 136 relates to trees and 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.”

Para 137:

“Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals...”

Para 139:

“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 which use visual tools 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 which use visual tools 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.”

Section 13 - Protecting the Green Belt. Para 142 states:

“The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.”

Para 143 sets out the five purposes of the Green Belt as:

a. “to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;

b. to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;

c. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;

d. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and

e. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.”

The Site is located within the Epsom & Ewell Green Belt. A separate Green Belt Assessment has been prepared by fabrik Chartered Landscape Architects to accompany the application, which considers the likely spatial and visual impacts on the openness and Purposes of the Green Belt arising as a result of the Proposed Development.

Under the subsection on proposals affecting the Green Belt, Section 14 - meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change. The elements relevant to landscape matters include para 164 states: “New development should be planned for in ways that:

a. avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through incorporating green infrastructure and sustainable urban drainage systems;...

Under the sub section on planning and flood ris, Para 172, subsection c goes on to state with regard to 'all plans' that: “c. using opportunities provided by new development and improvements in green and other infrastructure to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding, (making as much use as possible of natural flood management techniques as part of an integrated approach to flood risk management).”

Section 15 - conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Para 187:

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

a. protecting and enhancing valued landscapes... (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 nest and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.

c. maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it...”

Para 189:

“Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.”

Planning Practice Guidance

The NPPF is supported by the on-line resource Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) There are a number of sections of relevance, as set out below.

Climate change is considered in para 001 (ID 6-001-20140306) states: "... local planning authorities should ensure that protecting the local environment is properly considered alongside the broader issues of protecting the global environment. Planning can also help increase resilience to climate change impact through the location, mix and design of development.

Addressing climate change is one of the core land use planning principles which the National Planning Policy Framework expects to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking..."

Planning for well-designed places and the sub-section on 'How are well-designed places achieved through the planning system?' are set out at para 001 (ID: 26-001-20191001) which states: "Well-designed places can be achieved by taking a proactive and collaborative approach at all stages of the planning process, from policy and plan formulation through to the determination of planning applications and the post approval stage... To be read alongside this guidance, the National Design Guide sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice.

... 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.

Good design is set out in the National Design Guide under the following 10 characteristics:

- context
- identity
- built form
- movement
- nature
- public spaces
- uses
- homes and buildings
- resources
- lifespan

The National Design Guide can be used by all those involved in shaping places including in plan-making and decision making."

With regards to the factors to be taken into account when considering the potential impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt, para 001 (ID: 64-001-20190722) states that: "... where it is relevant to do so, requires a judgment based on the circumstances of the case. By way of example, the courts have identified a number of matters which may need to be taken into account in making this assessment. These include, but are not limited to:

- openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal

- may be relevant, as could its volume;
- the duration of the development, and its remediability – taking into account any provisions to return land to its original state or to an equivalent (or improved) state of openness; and
- the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation."

With regard to development on brownfield land in the Green Belt, para 004 (ID: 64-004-20231219) states that: "The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the policy on proposals affecting the Green Belt. Where previously developed land is located within the Green Belt, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out the circumstances in which development may not be inappropriate. This includes limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, subject to conditions relating to the potential impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt.

The Framework indicates that certain other forms of development are also 'not inappropriate' in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. This includes the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction."

The setting to a heritage asset is described at para 013 (ID: 18a-013-20190723) as follows: "All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The setting of a heritage asset and the asset's curtilage may not have the same extent.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting. The contribution may vary over time.

When assessing any application which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation."

Green infrastructure is the topic of para 004 (ID: 8-004-20190721) and states: "Green infrastructure can embrace a range of spaces and assets that provide environmental and wider benefits. It can, for example, include parks, playing fields, other areas of open space, woodland, allotments, private gardens, sustainable drainage features, green roofs and walls, street trees and 'blue infrastructure' such as streams, ponds, canals and other water bodies. References to green infrastructure in this guidance also apply to different types of blue infrastructure where appropriate."

Para 006 (ID: 8-006-20190721) then sets out that green

infrastructure can help in:

- "Building a strong, competitive economy: Green infrastructure can drive economic growth and regeneration, helping to create high quality environments which are attractive to businesses and investors.
- Achieving well-designed places: The built environment can be enhanced by features such as green roofs, street trees, proximity to woodland, public gardens and recreational and open spaces. More broadly, green infrastructure exists within a wider landscape context and can reinforce and enhance local landscape character, contributing to a sense of place and natural beaut.
- Promoting healthy and safe communities: Green infrastructure can improve the wellbeing of a neighbourhood with opportunities for recreation, exercise, social interaction, experiencing and caring for nature, community food-growing and gardening, all of which can bring mental and physical health benefits. Outdoor Recreation Value (ORVal) is a useful online tool that can be used to quantify the recreational values provided by greenspace. Green infrastructure can help to reduce health inequalities in areas of socio-economic deprivation and meet the needs of families and an ageing population. It can also help to reduce air pollution and noise.
- Mitigating climate change, flooding and coastal change: Green infrastructure can contribute to carbon storage, cooling and shading, opportunities for species migration to more suitable habitats and the protection of water quality and other natural resources. It can also be an integral part of multifunctional sustainable drainage and natural flood risk management.
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment: High-quality networks of multifunctional green infrastructure contribute a range of benefits, including ecological connectivity, facilitating biodiversity net gain and nature recovery networks and opportunities for communities to undertake conservation work.'

Guidance on trees and woodland is set out under the natural environment is set out within para 029 (ID 8-20190721) and states: 'Well-placed and well-chosen trees on streets and in urban spaces can provide a range of benefits: encouraging walking and enhanced physical and mental health; contributing to local environmental character and distinctiveness; providing habitats for wildlife; reducing noise and excessive heat; and supporting sustainable drainage. Changing climate, in particular hotter summers and more frequent periods of dry weather, and unknown pests and diseases, will place new pressures on green infrastructure in the long-term, so trees of the right species and age profile are essential'.

Para 036 (ID: 8-036-20190721) considers landscape and sets out that: 'The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally designated landscapes but also the wider countryside. Where landscapes have a particular local value, it is important for policies to identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence... The cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully.'

Open space, sports and recreation facilities are considered under para 001 (ID: 37-001-20140306) which states: 'Open space should be taken into account in planning for new development and considering proposals that may affect existing open space (see National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 96). Open space, which includes all open space of

public value, can take many forms, from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development, linear corridors and country parks. It can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby; have an ecological value and contribute to green infrastructure (see National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 171, as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development, and an important component in the achievement of sustainable development (see National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 7-9).'

National Design Guide

The National Design Guide (30 January 2021) illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. Paragraph 20 sets out the components of good design, including layout, form and scale, appearance, landscape, materials and detailing. The 10 characteristics of a well designed place are described in paragraph 36 as follows:

- 'Context - enhances the surroundings.
- Identity - attractive and distinctive.
- Built form - a coherent pattern of development.
- Movement - accessible and easy to move around.
- Nature - enhanced and optimised.
- Public spaces - safe, social and inclusive.
- Uses - mixed and integrated.
- Homes and buildings - functional, healthy and sustainable.
- Resources - efficient and resilient.
- Lifespan - made to last'.

National Model Design Code

The National Model Design Code forms part of the Planning Practice Guidance expanding on the characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide.

2.1.2 Local Development Plan

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Core strategy 2007

The policies relevant to landscape and visual effects are summarised below:

POLICY CS4 - OPEN SPACES AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE:

... Provision of the amount and type of open space within the Borough will have regard to the standards identified in the most recent Audit of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities and Assessment of Local Needs. The required quantity and range of open spaces will be rigorously maintained, and focus will be given to the creation and maintenance of an accessible network of green spaces within the built up area of the Borough...

Development which results in a deficit of open space provision will not be permitted.

On all new residential developments there will be a requirement for open space and recreational provision in accordance with the details set out in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document. This policy will apply to all new residential developments within the Borough where

a quantitative or qualitative deficiency of open space or recreational provision exists, or where the development would lead to such a deficiency.

Where it is impractical or inappropriate to provide the open space within the housing scheme, the Council will expect a financial contribution from the developer to allow an alternative means of provision or enhancement. The nature and extent of that contribution will be governed by the formulae set out in the SPD, the identification of needs in the Audit of Open Space, and other evidence as appropriate."

POLICY CS5 - THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

"The Council will protect and seek to enhance the Borough's heritage assets including historic buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains, ancient monuments, parks and gardens of historic interest, and other areas of special character.

The settings of these assets will be protected and enhanced.

- High quality and inclusive design will be required for all developments. Development should:
- create attractive, functional and safe public and private environments;
- reinforce local distinctiveness and complement the attractive characteristics of the Borough;
- make efficient use of land and have regard to the need to develop land in a comprehensive way."

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Development Management Policies Document 2015

The purpose of the Development Management Policies Document (DMPD) is to:

- "Support the strategic objectives and deliver the vision of the Core Strategy by promoting and enabling development that delivers the Spatial Strategy;
- Along with Core Policies, set criteria by which planning applications and site allocations will be considered and determined."

The policies relevant to landscape and visual effects are summarised below:

POLICY DM5: TREES AND LANDSCAPE

"The Borough's trees, hedgerows and other landscape features will be protected and enhanced by:

- Planting and encouraging others to plant trees and shrubs to create woodland, thickets and hedgerows;
- continuing to maintain trees in streets and public open spaces and selectively removing, where absolutely necessary, and replacing and replanting trees;
- requiring landscape proposals in submissions for new development, which retain existing trees and other important landscape features where practicable and include the planting of new semi-mature trees and other planting.

Where trees, hedgerows or other landscape features are removed, appropriate replacement planting will normally be required. Consideration should be given to the use of native species as well as the adaptability to the likely effects of climate change.

Every opportunity should be taken to ensure that new development does not result in a significant loss of trees, hedgerows or other landscape features unless suitable replacements are proposed. Where removal is required, sound justification will be sought, supported by appropriate evidence such as health, public amenity, street scene or restoration of an historic garden. In the case of arboriculture evidence, this will be provided by a suitably qualified individual."

POLICY DM6: OPEN SPACE PROVISION

"We will ensure all new provision for sports and play meets qualitative standards and optimises accessibility to all users."

POLICY DM7: FOOTPATH, CYCLE AND BRIDLEWAY NETWORK

"New development affecting existing or proposed footpath, cycle and bridleway networks will not be permitted if it results in the loss of, or has a harmful impact on, these networks.

Where new development provides an opportunity to improve existing and proposed networks and such improvements are practical and viable we will seek their delivery as part of the development. Alternatively we will seek financial contributions towards implementation of improvements through the appropriate mechanism."

Policy DM9 Townscape Character and Local Distinctiveness

We will use the Conservation Area Appraisals and Environmental Character Study to guide the assessment of development proposals.

We will seek enhancement of the townscape through new development, particularly those areas with poorer environmental quality and where the character has been eroded or needs improving.

Planning permission will be granted for proposals which make a positive contribution to the Borough’s visual character and appearance. In assessing this we will consider all of the following:

- compatibility with local character and the relationship to the existing townscape and wider landscape;
- the surrounding historic and natural environment;
- the setting of the proposal site and its connection to its surroundings; and
- the inclusion of locally distinctive features and use of appropriate materials

POLICY DM 10: DESIGN REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS:

"Development proposals will be required to incorporate principles of good design.

The most essential elements identified as contributing to the character and local distinctiveness of a street or area which should be respected, maintained or enhanced include, but are not limited, to the following:

(i) prevailing development typology, including housing types

and sizes;
(ii) prevailing density of the surrounding area;
(iii) scale, layout, height, form (including roof forms), massing;
(iv) plot width and format which includes spaces between buildings;
(v) building line; and
(vi) typical details and key features such as roof forms, window format, building materials and design detailing of elevations, existence of grass verges etc.

Development proposals should also:

(vii) be adaptable and sustainability designed, subject to aesthetic considerations;
(viii) incorporate the principles of safe design to reduce the risk and fear of crime, e.g. natural surveillance, appropriate levels of lighting;
(ix) have regard to the amenities of occupants and neighbours, including in terms of privacy, outlook, sunlight/daylight, and noise and disturbance;
(x) ensure that the development incorporates an appropriate layout and access arrangements for servicing the completed development from adjoining highway and pedestrian networks;
(xi) where appropriate their design and layout must not prejudice the development potential for similar proposals on neighbouring plots;
(xii) have regard to the public realm and to ways in which it can be enhanced as an integral part of the design of the development; and
(xiii) avoid locating structures, including, e.g. telecommunications equipment and building plant where they will be visually intrusive and likely to result in an adverse effect on the character and visual amenities of the local and wider area.

Further detailed guidance relating to residential developments, including householder developments, is included in our Design Quality Supplementary Planning Document."

POLICY DM11: HOUSING DENSITY:

"We will, in principle, support proposals for new housing that make the most efficient use of development sites located within the Borough’s existing urban area.

Proposals for new housing must demonstrate how the density of development would contribute towards maintaining and enhancing the visual character and appearance of the wider townscape and lead to no net loss of biodiversity.

The density of new housing developments will in most cases not exceed 40 dwellings per hectare. We will consider exceptions to this approach where:

The development site has been identified in the Site Allocations Policies Document as being appropriate for a higher density; or

It can be demonstrated that the site enjoys good access to services, facilities and amenities via existing public transport, walking and cycling networks; and

The surrounding townscape has sufficient capacity to accommodate developments of higher density."

POLICY DM13 BUILDING HEIGHTS:

"Buildings higher than 12m will be inappropriate in all areas of the Borough except the identified areas within the Epsom Town Centre Boundary (Refer to Proposals Map Plan E) where

buildings up to a maximum height of 16m will be allowed in certain locations.

Maximum heights are defined as the distance between ground level and the building's eaves/ gutter. Above the maximum heights, the roof of the building shall be no higher than 4 m and the slope of the roof shall be no greater than a 45° pitch.

Proposals that incorporate roof mounted building plant rooms that exceed the maximum heights will not be permitted. Subject to viability and practical considerations we will seek the siting of plant rooms within the building itself.

Building up to the maximum heights stated will not be appropriate in every location. In addition it may not be appropriate for the roofspace to be utilised as an additional storey. Proposals must respect:

- The character and context of the surrounding locality, particularly in relation to existing building heights and roofscapes
- The impact on the streetscene and views
- The Conservation Area (where applicable)
- Listed buildings and the setting of listed buildings
- Topography"

2.1.3 Material Considerations

The following guidance documents are relevant material considerations. Material considerations also include the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance, National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, as set out in Section 2.1.1.

Epsom and Ewell Green infrastructure study (September 2013)

The Study was prepared by the Council in order to inform the preparation of a Borough-wide Green Infrastructure Strategy by bringing together the related issues of the Green Belt, biodiversity and nature conservation, and open spaces.

In regards to the Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLVs), the strategy states that:

"Part of the Borough has a designation as an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). The landscape quality of the area that covers Walton Downs, which extends into adjoining districts to the south and east, has been identified as being of county-wide significance, and its designation was supported by Surrey County Council. The designation of this area as an AGLV affords it some additional protection against inappropriate development that would weaken the landscape character of the area. The AGLV is close to the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the boundary of which is currently under review with a view to potentially including some of the surrounding AGLV areas within it. Unfortunately, Epsom & Ewell's AGLV does not merit inclusion within the AONB as the landscape is not of a contiguous and consistent quality. There is also a possibility that the AGLV designation could be removed following the review of the AONB boundary. The Council still considers this area as important green open space and a valued landscape asset, and its green belt status will ensure it remains protected from inappropriate development."

3.0

Landscape Character

3.1

Published Landscape Character

The term 'landscape' commonly refers to the view or appearance of the land as perceived by people. Landscape applies to any natural, rural, urban or urban edge areas, in land, water and seascape areas.

Landscape character is the combination of both natural / physical, cultural / social and perceptual / aesthetic influences, which give rise to a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse and which define the 'sense of place'. The landscape is not therefore simply a visual phenomenon.

The following sections set out the landscape character framework of the study area from the national and regional level through to county and district scale based upon existing character assessments undertaken by Natural England and Surrey County Council.

3.1.1

National Landscape Character Assessment

The general character of the English countryside has been described at a national level by Natural England in the profile for National Character Area (NCA) 119: North Downs (2013).

The key characteristics pertinent to the study area as described as:

- *“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 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 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..”*

The opportunities and landscape changes identified in the assessment pertinent to the Site are set out below:

“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.

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.

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.”

3.1.2

County / Borough Character Assessment

Surrey Landscape Character Assessment

As illustrated in Figure 3.1 overleaf, the Site lies within the character area identified as UE3: Epsom Downs. The broader UE landscape type comprises distinct areas on the edge of urban areas across the County, displaying the following key characteristics:

- *"Unique areas, with a variety of characteristic and uses, which do not readily fall within the broader character types set out in the landscape character assessment.*
- *On the edges of towns, often entirely enclosed by Built Up Areas, the majority of these areas have significant human intervention, and frequently provide outdoor amenity for the surrounding population.*
- *Although often enclosed by urban areas, they maintain physical and visual connections to the wider landscape.*
- *Provide landscape setting to adjacent urban areas and settlements.*
- *These areas are also characterised by having high biodiversity value and potential, close to Built Up Areas."*

Key characteristics of the UE3: Epsom Downs in particular are described as:

- *“Elevated downland, underlain by the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation.*
- *Landform slopes up from the south and west towards Tattenham Corner, at the north-eastern character area boundary.*
- *Consists of open, large scale, relatively exposed fields used for Epsom Race Course and associated gallops, paddocks etc., along with irregular shaped blocks of woodland. Large grandstand buildings are located outside the character area to the north.*
- *Open across the majority of the character area with long distance views of London from high ground, but occasional blocks of woodland result in some localised enclosure.*
- *Abuts the roads on three sides, but access is limited to tracks and rights of way within the main body of the character area.*

- *The character area surrounds Langley Vale to the south-west, and abuts development to the east, but the character area is largely unsettled within.*
- *Includes enclosure scheduled as an ancient monument at South Tadworth Farm, at the west of the character area*
- *Two areas of chalk grassland at the edges of the racecourse are designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.*
- *The racecourse allows an open aspect to the character area, with views to the wider landscape to the south although the sense of remoteness is reduced due to human influence within and surrounding the character area."*

Guidance for the broader UE landscape type includes:

- *"Conserve and enhance biodiversity value of remnant habitats, and key landscape characteristics that are identified as priority habitats.*
- *Seek opportunities to link existing habitats through habitat restoration.*
- *Protect and enhance the landscape setting to adjacent settlements and urban areas.*
- *Maintain physical links and open views to the wider landscape.*
- *Maintain and enhance the network of public access, whilst ensuring significant biodiversity value and resource of these areas is sensitively managed and protected.*
- *Encourage understanding of the biodiversity and historic elements of the landscape.*
- *Conserve the historic elements of the landscape as remnants of an older landscape."*

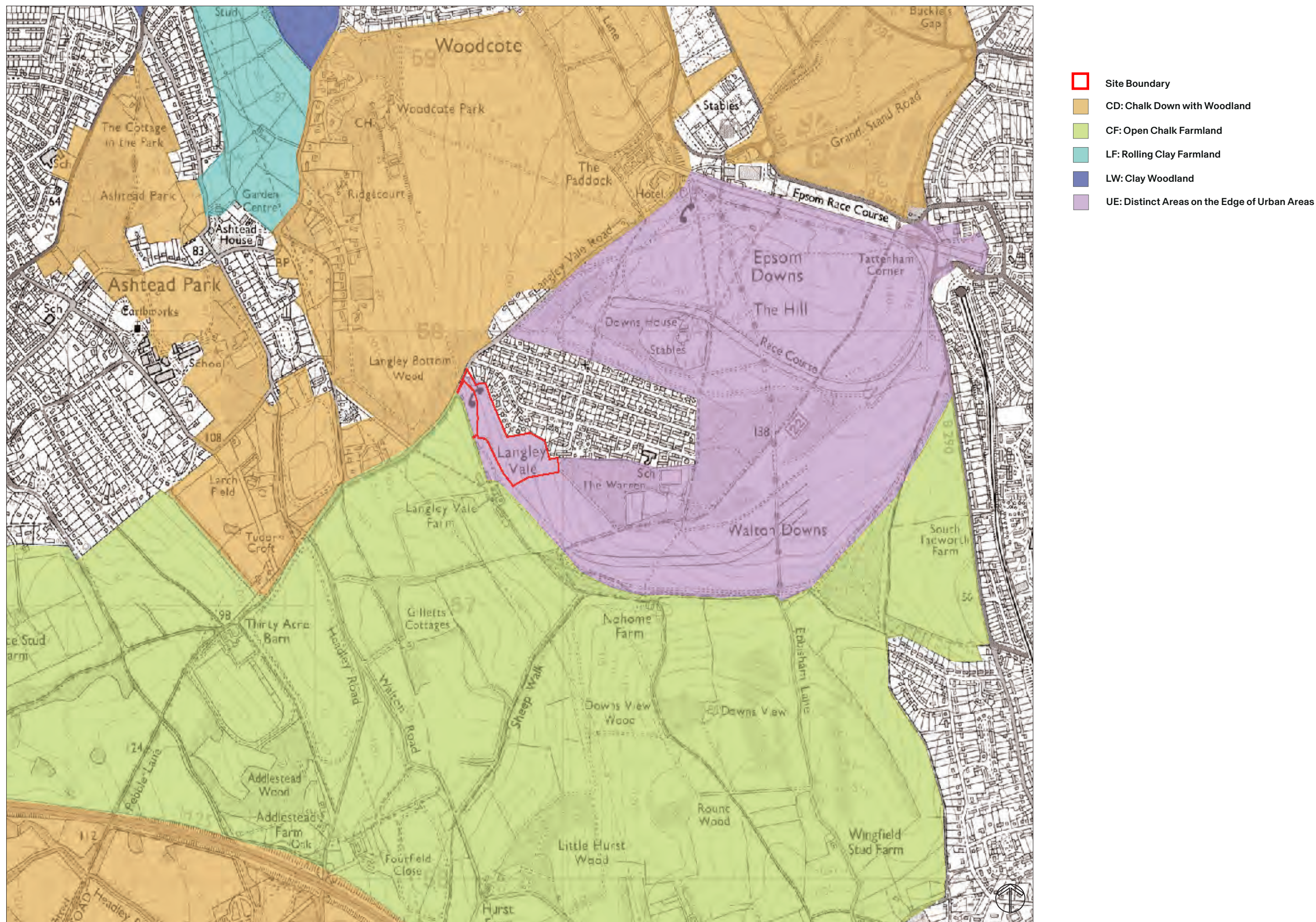


Figure 3.1 – Landscape Character Areas (fabrik, 2025)

3.2 Contextual Landscape Appraisal

The study area is characterised by its undulating topography that creates dry valleys localised and ridgelines, with a mix of agricultural land, woodland, and settlements. The predominant feature of the surrounding landscape is the Epsom Downs Racecourse. Vegetation is dominated by woodlands, with the notable England's Centenary Wood in Langley Vale. The area's open spaces, such as the Racecourse and Ashtead Park, offer communal access, while the skyline is marked by the built form of settlements and the grandstand at the racecourse.

Geology and Soils

The geology of the study area is comprised of shallow lime-rich soils, with the soils within the Site and its immediate setting identified by Soilscape England as freely draining, loam. They are characteristic of herb-rich downland, limestone pastures and lime-rich woodlands.

Landform and Drainage

The study area comprises of a network of undulating hills and dry valleys. Valley sides are gently sloping and vary in their height and width.

A major valley is situated within the centre of the study area, connecting the settlement of Tadworth in the southeast with Ashtead in the northwest. The settlement of Langley Vale spans the ridgeline to the north of the valley, with levels rising to 138m AOD to the east of the settlement edge. This ridgeline additionally connects with the Epsom Downs Racecourse in the northeast of the study area, where levels are highest in the east at approximately 150m AOD at Tattenham Corner.

Within the west of the study area, a major ridgeline is positioned in a north-south orientation, with a height in the south of 135m AOD adjacent to Gilletts Cottages, falling gently northwards to a height of approximately 85m AOD adjacent to RidgECourt and Woodcote Park.

In the south of the study area, the ridgelines and valleys are more intimate in form, with steeper slopes forming tributaries to the major valley which dissects the study area. In this location, the valley floors are narrow and are typically lined with bridleways and footpaths.

Within the Site's vicinity, whilst the visual envelope of the localised valley is contained by the prevailing landform and surrounding woodland, this enclosure fosters a sense of intimacy.

Vegetation Cover

Woodland is a dominant feature across the study area, with blocks of woodland interspersed with and providing linear belts alongside agricultural fields and enclosing settlement edges. Small woodland clumps are located within golf courses and public open spaces.

Additionally 'England's Centenary Wood' is situated at Langley Vale Wood, within the southeast of the study area. The proposed Centenary Wood comprises of existing Ancient Woodland (such as Little Hurst Wood and Downs View Wood), plus newly planted trees on former agricultural land south of Nohome Farm. The project, launched in 2015, aims to create new woodland, with approximately 200,000 native broadleaved trees.

Land Use

The study area comprises of a mixture of settlements, agricultural land, paddocks, horse training areas / gallops, racecourse, golf courses, areas of public open space, woodland blocks and hedgerows. A network of roads, railway line and public rights of way cross the area.

Settlement Pattern

Settlements within the study area include Langley Vale, the eastern extent of Lower Ashtead (in the west of the study area) and the western edges of Tadworth and Tattenham Corner (in the east of the study area).

Langley Vale comprises of a distinct layout, with linear streets, which follow the alignment of the ridgeline, with a central connecting road which spans the ridgeline, connecting the lower slopes to the higher. Cul-de-sacs lead from the southern-most linear street are typical of the 1970s era.

The fringes of Ashtead and Tattenham Corner are suburban in form and character, with large, predominantly detached dwellings set within treed streetscenes.

Away from the settlement edges, farmsteads and detached houses with stables can be found within an agricultural setting, including to the immediate south of the Site at Langley Vale farm where new residential development is being constructed.

Movement Corridors

The M25 motorway crosses the southwestern section of the study area, forming a key regional transport corridor, though it does not have a direct junction within the locality. Consequently, the local road network remains disconnected from the M25.

Langley Vale Road serves as the primary connector within the area, linking to Ashley Road and the B284, which provide

access to Epsom (northwest) and Tattenham Corner (east). Additionally, a network of tertiary roads extends through the wider study area, integrating with major transport routes.

Figure 2.2 illustrates the Public Right of Way network.

Time Depth

Listed buildings are located across the study area, with clusters around Ashtead Park and Woodcote Park in the northwest, and the racecourse in the north.

Conservation Areas are focused around Ashtead House in the northwest of the study area and around Tadworth railway station in the southeast.

Ashtead Park is a Registered Park and Garden and the manor house itself (now part of the City of London Freeman's School) is Grade II* Listed.

Epsom Down Racecourse has a rich history associated with thoroughbred horse racing, dating back to 1661 and the 'spa' period of Epsom's history. In 1913 at the racecourse, suffragette Emily Davison threw herself in front of King George V's horse.

Pre-Raphaelite painters John Everett Millais and William Holman Hunt had collections with the local area and used local scenes as backgrounds for a number of their paintings.

Public / Communal Open Space

Public open space within the study area is focused around the Epsom Downs Racecourse, situated within the centre of the study area. The Racecourse, and associated spurs, provides an expansive area of common land (with some restrictions) and is intersected by an expansive network of public rights of way.

To the north of the Racecourse, Epsom Cemetery is located adjacent to Downs Road and the B290.

Ashtead Park is situated within the nothwest of the study area and is a publicly accessible nature reserve with woodland originally part of the parkland associated with Ashtead manor house.

Langley Vale Centenary Wood, located to the south and southwest of the Site, is a publicly accessible woodland managed by the Woodland Trust. It features a network of public footpaths, bridleways, and permissive paths, offering recreational opportunities for visitors.

3.2.1 Summary Of Contextual Landscape Character

Overall, the contextual landscape and Site setting is limited to the immediate local landscape. The landscape character of the study area is defined by its landform, vegetation, land use and time depth. These factors have all informed the settlement pattern and growth. The character of the study area reflects a rural-urban fringe, influenced by its proximity to Langley Vale and surrounding settlement. While elements of rural character, such as field patterns and underlying landform, remain present, these are increasingly influenced by the adjacent built environment, infrastructure, and land use. The area is broadly representative of the wider character area, displaying a transitional landscape where urban influences meet remnants of a more traditional rural setting. Despite this, the study area retains a degree of scenic and landscape quality, and holds recreational and conservation value, with several areas designated for their ecological and heritage importance.



Figure 3.2 – Land Cover (fabrik, 2025)

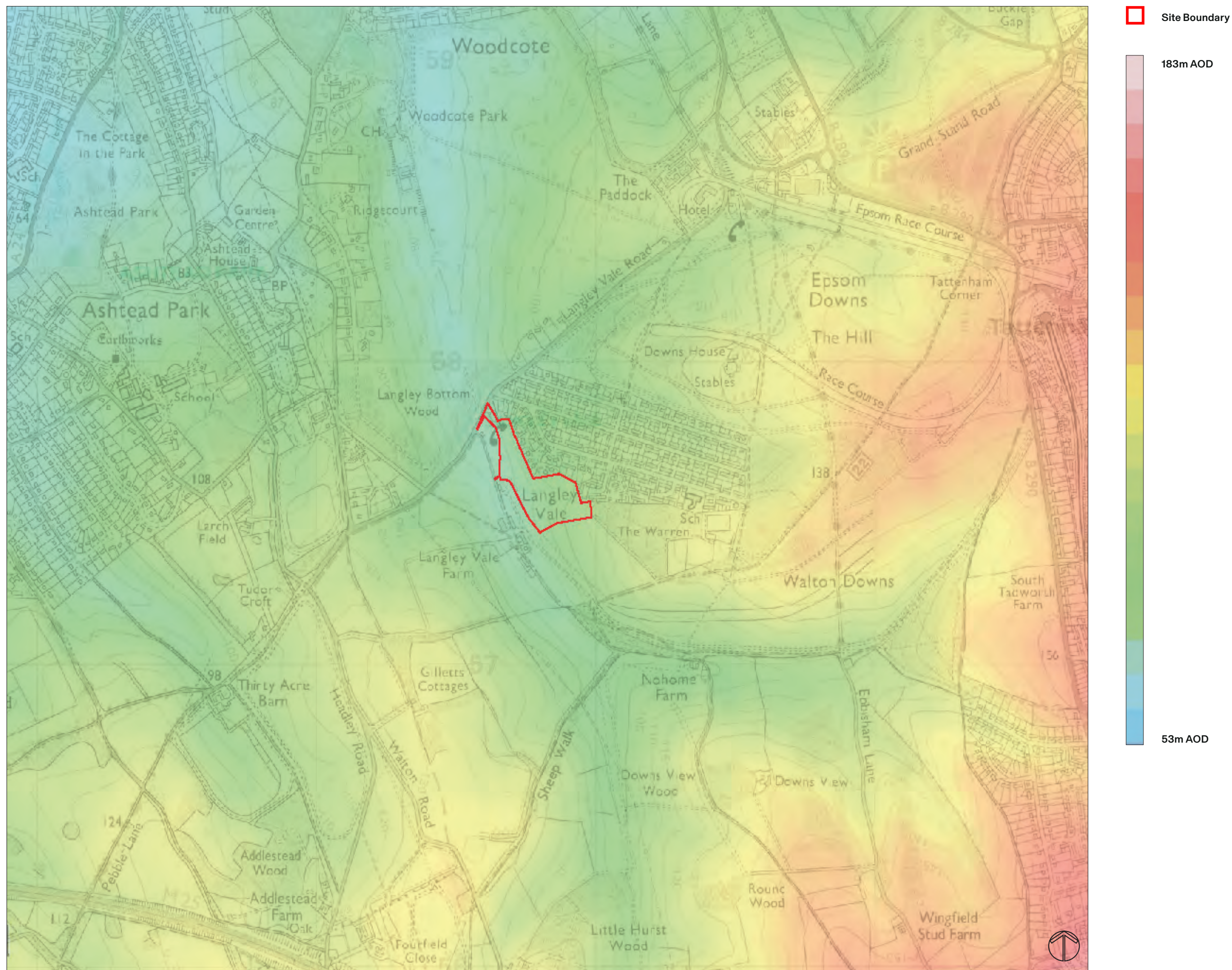


Figure 3.3 – Topography and Drainage (fabrik, 2025)

3.3 Site and Immediate Context Appraisal

Figure 3.4 illustrates the key components of the Site’s character and associated photographs are set out overleaf.

Landform and Drainage

The Site is situated on the western slope of a valley that extends from Tadworth in the southeast to Ashtead in the north. This topography influences local drainage patterns and contributes to the area’s landscape character.

The Site lies within Flood Zone 1, indicating a low probability of fluvial flooding. However, a surface water (pluvial) flow path, as mapped by the Environment Agency, traverses the Site. Additionally, localized surface water flooding can occur due to the undulating topography both within the Site and in the surrounding area.

Vegetation Cover

Vegetation within the Site is primarily confined to hedgerows, trees, and shrubs along the northeastern residential boundaries, as well as the Ancient Woodland at The Warren, located immediately to the east. The Warren, positioned on the sloping hillside, contributes to the Site’s visual containment by partially screening views towards Epsom Downs Racecourse.

Beyond the Site boundary, native tree species, including Sycamore, English Oak, Field Maple, Ash, Hawthorn, and Cherry, have been assessed by Arbortrack Systems Ltd as Grade B and C quality. Along the southwestern boundary, a native Cherry and Hawthorn hedge (situated off-site) has been classified as Grade C quality.

To the east and southeast, native trees and hedgerow planting define the boundaries of adjacent agricultural fields. These elements contribute to the rural character of the landscape but have also been assessed as Grade C quality.

Land Use

As illustrated in Photograph A, the Site comprises a large agricultural field and a smaller, irregularly shaped field parcel, both adjoining the southern settlement edge of Langley Vale. These fields are located on the sloping valley side leading to a ridgeline in the north, and are typical of the wider area.

As illustrated in Photograph C, a timber-fenced bridleway follows the alignment of the Site’s access road from Langley Vale Road, running parallel to the western boundary. Additionally, a public footpath adjoins the northwestern boundary, crossing the adjacent field before connecting with the bridleway along Langley Vale Road.

The built environment within the study area is predominantly domestic in scale, with residential buildings typically two storeys high and featuring low-pitched roofs.

As illustrated in Photograph E, in Langley Vale, housing consists mainly of detached and semi-detached dwellings. Properties along the northeastern boundary face north, with private gardens extending towards the Site. A notable exception to

the predominantly low-rise character is the Epsom Racecourse grandstand and hotel, which, due to their large scale, serve as prominent landmarks within the wider landscape.

As illustrated in Photograph B, a development of 20 homes has been approved at the adjacent farm site (Appeal Ref: APP/P3610/W/21/3280881) and is currently under construction, which once complete will further contextualise the Site within a settlement edge setting.

A two-storey residential dwelling, seen in Viewpoint 11, is located within the redline boundary to the northwest of the Site, adjacent to a Texaco petrol station off Langley Vale Road. This dwelling is physically and visually separated from the main built form of Langley Vale by the intervening petrol station, reducing its sense of association with the broader residential area. The Site is also influenced by the presence of an electrical substation situated to the northwest, along Bridleway 33.

Site setting and Overall Character

The Site is predominantly agricultural land, positioned adjacent to Langley Vale’s settlement edge and Epsom Racecourse. From the southwest, the dwellings of Langley Vale are visually prominent along the skyline, as they occupy the upper slopes of a local ridgeline (which forms part of a broader elevated landform to the north).

The Site itself sits on the lower slopes of the valley side, beneath the visual horizon created by Langley Vale’s housing. As a result, the Site maintains a strong visual connection with the settlement and integrates well with the existing built fabric.

Other than its sloping topography, the Site contains no significant landscape features. There are no isolated areas, and the presence of nearby residential dwellings, as well as traffic movement along Langley Vale Road, ensures that the Site does not evoke a sense of remoteness.

As illustrated in Photograph D, southward views from the Site reveal a contained agricultural landscape, defined by gently rolling terrain and enclosed by woodlands and orchards. This setting enhances the scenic and tranquil qualities of Centenary Wood, contributing to the area’s visual appeal and recreational value.

The Site has no visual relationship with the Surrey Hills National Landscape to the south. The designated area lies over 2km away and is separated from the Site by the M25 motorway, as well as intervening landform and substantial vegetation. These factors collectively prevent any intervisibility or visual connection between the Site and the designated landscape. Therefore, the Site does not influence the setting of the National Landscape.

Summary of Site and its immediate context

The Site comprises sloping agricultural land on the western side of a shallow valley, forming part of the rural edge of Langley Vale. While rural in appearance, the Site is strongly influenced by its proximity to the settlement, with housing on higher ground creating a defined edge and limiting any sense of remoteness. The presence of nearby public rights of way, residential gardens, and ongoing development to the west reinforces its peri-urban character.

Vegetation is limited to hedgerows and scattered boundary trees, with The Warren Ancient Woodland offering some containment to the east. Although the Site sits within a broader rural landscape, it lacks distinctive features and is visually and functionally connected to the settlement.



Figure 3.4 – Site landscape appraisal with photograph locations (fabrik, 2025)



Photograph A
View looking northeast from Bridleway 33, illustrating the Sites relationship with Langley Vale's settlement edge.



Photograph B
View looking northwest from Bridleway 33, illustrating the on-going construction works of 20 new homes adjacent to the Site.

 Site boundary
 Photo location





Photograph C
View looking northwest from Bridleway 33 which runs parallel to the Site's western boundary.



Photograph D
View looking northwest from Bridleway 127 towards the Site. Properties along Langley Vale's southern settlement edge overlook the Site to the right, and Centenary Wood is seen to the left.

 Site boundary
 Photo location





Photograph E
View looking southwest from Langley Close within Langley Vale. Beyond the properties, the landform gently falls away, creating a descending gradient that limits visibility into the Site itself.



 Site boundary
 Photo location

4.0

Visual Assessment

The extent to which the Site is visible from the surrounding landscape is based on grading degrees of visibility, as defined in the legend on the right. It is determined from a visual inspection of the Site and its context from roads, Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and residential streets. Seasonal change in existing evergreen and deciduous plant material will affect the available views. Typically views will be different through the seasons with a greater sense of enclosure in the summer months when deciduous trees are in leaf.

Visual receptors at the viewing opportunities identified at figures 4.1 and 4.2 include those within residential dwellings, those using transport corridors and those using public rights of ways, as explained further below. The photographs as taken for viewpoints 1 to 14 are set out on the subsequent pages and summary text is included for each individual representative view.

The fieldwork was completed in April 2025. Photographs were taken at 1.7m height above ground with a Nikon DSLR camera with a 35mm lens (and a 2/3rds sensor) to achieve an equivalent 52.5mm focal length.

Overall, views of the Site are limited to a localised geographic area and in a location which is already influenced by the existing built form of Langley Vale and the Epsom Racecourse.

4.3.1 Summary of Visual Envelope

A visual summary from key receptor types are set out below, whilst character and amenity of views are described in the captions below photographs 1-16.

Fieldwork established that the Site has a limited visual envelope whereby public views of the Site are primarily experienced from the immediate PRoW network and from limited locations within the local landscape. These include views from:

- Langley Vales southern residential edge.
- Langley Vale Road corridor to the east of the Site.
- The PROW network to the south and west of the Site.
- Permissive footpaths within Centenary Wood to the south of the Site.

Views of the Site become difficult to establish further away from the local environment due to a combination of the prevailing topography and the intervening vegetation and built form.

Residential

Within immediate proximity, viewing opportunities occur from those dwellings within the southern section of Langley Vale, in particular from those dwellings that directly back on to the Site. These dwellings are located in an elevated position, with views beyond intervening garden vegetation and across the valley below, of which the Site forms the eastern slopes. Refer to viewpoint 1 and viewpoint 4 (which illustrates the existing southern settlement edge and varied garden boundary treatments).

Filtered views of the Site additionally occur from within proximity of Langley Bottom Farm farmhouse, which is nestled within the valley bottom and enclosed by adjacent built form and mature hedgerows. Refer to viewpoint 8. The character and amenity of the southern views is largely informed by the well treed and undulating farmland.

Within the wider landscape, there are limited opportunities for residential receptors to view the Site as a result of the adjacent rising landform to the west, the undulating topography within the local landscape and the prominence of trees and mature hedgerows.

Public Rights Of Way and Open Space

Within the local proximity of the valley, users of the public rights of way network experience both open and glimpsed views of the Site in the context of the dwellings of Langley Vale. These include:

- Bridleway 33 to the immediate west (refer to viewpoints 4, 5, 6).
- Footpath 32, on the northeast facing hillside to the west (refer to viewpoint 5).
- Bridleway 146, on the northeast facing hillside (refer to viewpoints 2, 3, 12, 13).
- Bridleway / cycleway no. 22 to the southeast of the Site, within proximity to the gallops (viewpoints 9) and The Warren (viewpoint 10).

In addition to the views experienced from the prow network, as illustrated in viewpoints 15 And 16, close to medium range views of the Site are also afforded from the grounds of Langley Vale Centenary Wood to the south. The character and amenity of these view are informed by the combination of undulating farmland and the cluster of dwellings on the ridgeline at Langley Vale, all set within a well treed landscape framework.

Views of the Site from public rights of way across the wider landscape are generally truncated by vegetation and undulating landform which continues to rise northeastwards towards Epsom Downs racecourse and southwestwards towards the M25.

Transport Corridors

The Site is apparent from a short section of Langley Vale Road - between Headley Road to the southwest and Grosvenor Road to the north of the Site beyond the petrol station. The character and amenity of views from this road corridor is informed by the hedgerows and trees within the southern section, views to the dwellings at Langley Vale on the ridgeline and the agricultural land within the valley. Whilst the Site is apparent from this location, it is set below the skyline which consists of houses and rear gardens, with views of the racecourse grandstand beyond. Glimpsed and filtered views of the Site are apparent from those road corridors within the southern section of Langley Vale, in between buildings and garden vegetation.

There are no views of the Site from transport corridors within the wider landscape, due to the undulating topography and prevalence of trees and vegetation.



- Site boundary
- 21 Open view location (the whole site / much of the site is visible, or where the Site forms much of the view)
- 21 Partial view location (some of the Site is visible, or where the Site forms a small part of the wider view)
- 21 Truncated view location (the Site is obscured by intervening elements, or is difficult to perceive)

Figure 4.1 – Visual summary from the immediate site environs (Fabrik, 2025)



Viewpoint 1			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Transient users of Langley Vale Road	85m AOD	<1m	View looking south across the Site from the pavement on Langley Vale Road, adjacent to the residential edge of Langley Vale. Open views of the Site occur in the foreground, where its sloping landform is seen context of the pumping station and Langley Bottom Farm. Beyond the pumping station, the background of the view comprises pastoral farm land on the east facing slopes of the valley, on top of which there is a wooded ridgeline.

- Site boundary
- 21

Viewpoint location – open view
- 21

Viewpoint location – partial view
- 21

Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 2			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Users of Bridleway 146	87m AOD	160m	View looking north-east across the Site from Bridleway 146. The partial views of the Site from this location are mostly limited to its northern most field parcel, which is experienced in the context of the residential edge of Langley Vale along the ridgeline. The pumping station in the midground of the view serves as an intrusive element. Views to the right (east) of the Site's larger agricultural field are filtered by mature hedgerow planting that follows the route of the bridleway.

-  Site boundary
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 3			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Recreational users of the footpath alongside Bridleway 146 and transient users of Langley Vale Road	87m AOD	160m	View looking east across the Site from the footpath associated with bridleway 146. Other than the Sites northern most smaller field parcel that is screened by the pumping station, there are open views afforded of the Site which is experienced in the context of the residential edge of Langley Vale. 2 storey dwellings are seen to run across the ridgeline in the background of the view and are broken up by garden boundary vegetation.

- Site boundary
- 21

Viewpoint location – open view
- 21

Viewpoint location – partial view
- 21

Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 4			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Recreational users of Bridleway 33	85m AOD	<10m	View looking north-east towards the Site from Bridleway 33. Open views of the Site occur from this location in the context of the residential edges of Langley Vale, which, along with the vegetation, forms part of the visual horizon.

- Site boundary
- 21

Viewpoint location – open view
- 21

Viewpoint location – partial view
- 21

Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 5			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Recreational users of footpath 32	92m AOD	150m	View looking north-east towards the Site from the elevated section of footpath 32. Open views of the Site occur in the context of the residential dwellings at Langley Vale which are prominent on the skyline and frame views of the Site in a settlement edge context.

-  Site boundary
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 6			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Users of Bridleway 33	88 AOD	90m	Views looking north-east towards the Site from Bridleway 33. As illustrated, the view is currently influenced by the on-going construction works associated with APP/P3610/W/21/3280881 around the adjacent farm site. Partial views of the Site are afforded beyond the intervening construction activity and boundary vegetation, in which the dwellings along Langley Vales southern edge sit above the gently sloping arable field. Once built, the new properties associated with APP/P3610/W/21/3280881 will partially obstruct views of the Site.

- Site boundary
- 21

Viewpoint location – open view
- 21

Viewpoint location – partial view
- 21

Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 7			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Users of Bridleway 33	88m AOD	90m	Views looking north-east towards the Site from Bridleway 33. As illustrated, the view is currently influenced by the on-going construction works associated with APP/P3610/W/21/3280881 around the adjacent farm site. Partial views of the Site are afforded beyond the intervening construction activity and boundary vegetation, in which the dwellings along Langley Vales southern edge sit above the gently sloping arable field. Once built, the new properties associated with APP/P3610/W/21/3280881 will partially obstruct views of the Site.

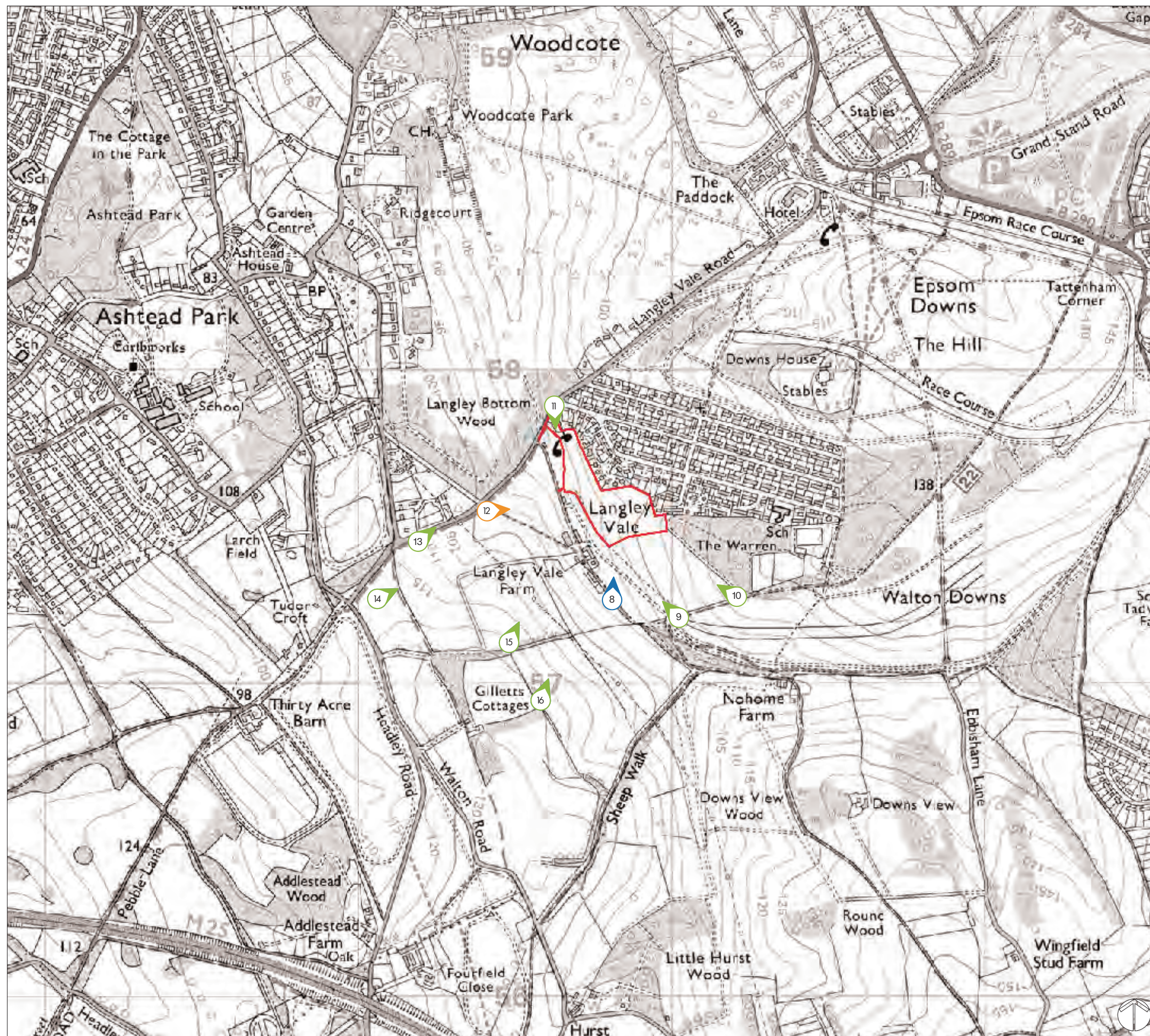
- Site boundary
- 21

Viewpoint location – open view
- 21

Viewpoint location – partial view
- 21

Viewpoint location – truncated view





- Site boundary
- 21 Open view location (the whole site / much of the site is visible, or where the Site forms much of the view)
- 21 Partial view location (some of the Site is visible, or where the Site forms a small part of the wider view)
- 21 Truncated view location (the Site is obscured by intervening elements, or is difficult to perceive)

Figure 4.2 – Visual Summary from distant receptors (fabrik, 2015)



Viewpoint 8			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Users of Bridleway 33	91m AOD	150m	View looking north towards the Site from Bridleway 33. Views of the Site from this location are screened the intervening tree belt to the east of Langley Bottom Farm. The location of the Site is discerned relative to the dwellings being visible over the intervening clipped hedge.

-  Site boundary
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 9			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Users of Bridleway 127	99m AOD	330m	View looking north-west towards the Site and Langley Vale from Bridleway 127. Partial views of the southern extents of the Site occur in the context of the residential edges of Langley Vale. Views of the remainder of the Site to the northwest are screened by the intervening landform. Langley Bottom Wood to the northwest forms a wooded ridgeline in the background of the view.

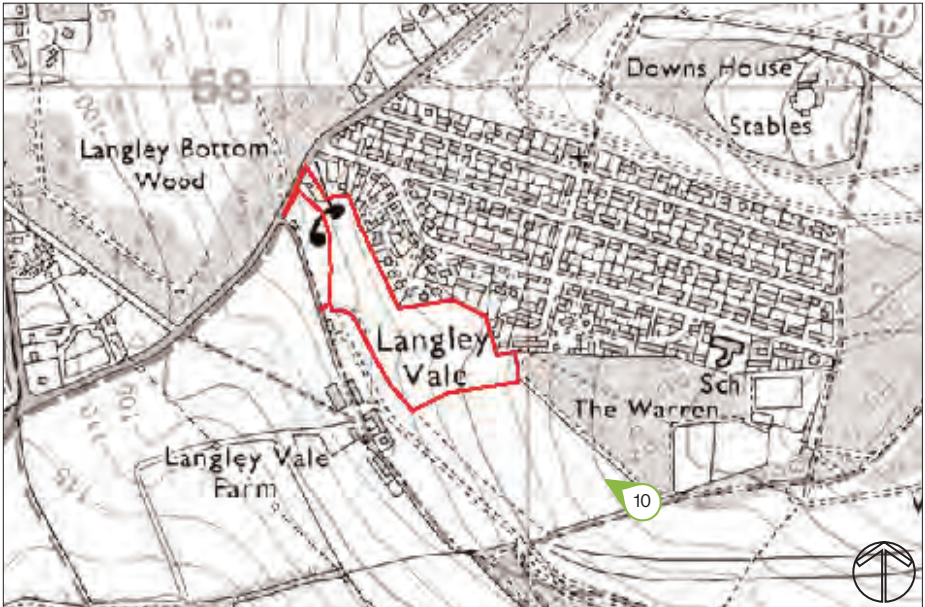
-  Site boundary
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 10			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Users of Bridleway 127	118m AOD	320m	View looking northwest towards the Site from Bridleway 127 to the southeast. The majority of the Site is screened from the view by the intervening landform. Langley Bottom Wood to the northwest forms a wooded ridgeline in the background of the view.

-  Site boundary
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 11			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Transient users of Langley Vale Road	85m AOD	<5m	View looking south towards the Site from Langley Vale Road, adjacent to the texaco garage. From this location along the road, the 2 storey dwelling located within the Site's north western field parcel dominates the view and restricts visibility of the wider Site beyond.

-  Site boundary
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 12			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Users of Bridleway 146	98m AOD	240m	View looking east towards the Site from the junction of Bridleway 146 and footpath 32. Open views across the Site occur from this location and where the residential edge of Langley Vale forms part of the visual horizon, set amongst layers of woodland planting. The Epsom Grandstand also forms a distinguishable built element in the view.

-  Site boundary
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 13			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Users of Bridleway 146	113m AOD	490m	View looking north-east towards Langley Vale and the site from Bridleway 146. Partial views of the northern and eastern parts of the Site occur from this location, in the context of the residential areas of Lngley Vale beyond. There may be more extensive views of the Site from those on horseback, but the character and amenity of the view would not notably change.

-  Site boundary
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 14			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Visitors of Langley Vale Centenary Wood	113m AOD	520m	View looking north-east towards the site from the open space associated with the car park for Langley Vale Centenary Wood, accessed from Headley Road. The Site is just discernible, together with dwellings at Langley Vale.

-  Site boundary
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 15			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Recreational users / visitors of Langley Vale Centenary Wood	125m AOD	470m	View looking north-east towards the Site from a permissive footpath within Centenary Wood. Beyond the intervening orchard, the Site's larger agricultural field stretches across the midground of the view and is framed by the residential built form of Langley Vale. The Epsom Racecourse grand stand serves as a distinguishable feature in the view; seen to be sitting above the well wooded ridgeline.

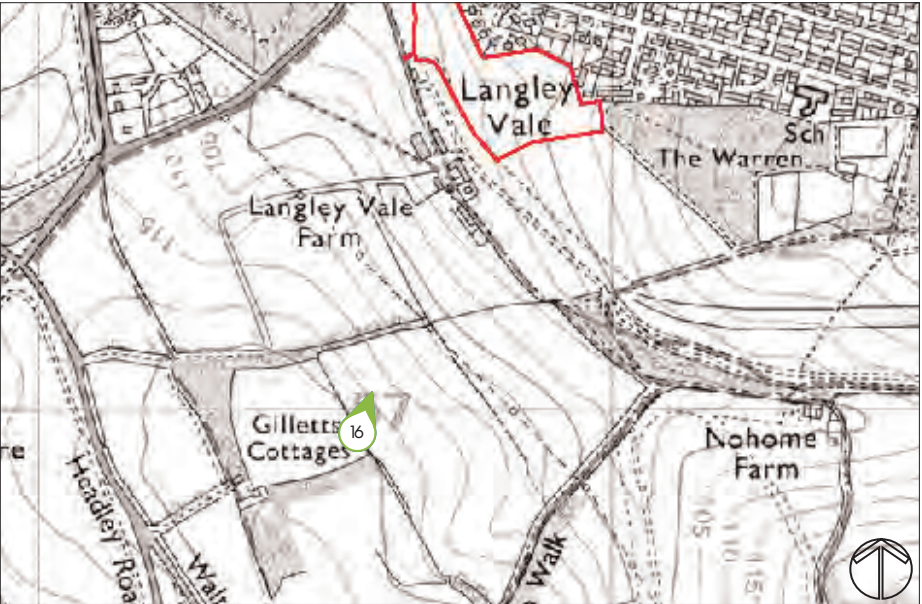
-  Site boundary
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 16			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Recreational users / visitors of Langley Vale Centenary Wood	124m AOD	505m	View looking north-east towards the Site from a permissive footpath within Centenary Wood. Beyond the intervening orchard, the southern extents of the Site's larger agricultural field is visible framed by the residential built form of Langley Vale. The Epsom Racecourse grand stand serves as a distinguishable feature in the view; seen to be sitting above the well wooded ridgeline.

-  Site boundary
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view



5.0

Summary of Baseline Assessment

5.1 Landscape and Visual Considerations

Based on the initial desktop analysis and field work, the following landscape and visual opportunities have been identified to inform the iterative masterplan design process:

- The Site relates well to the existing built form of the settlement edge to the north, is physically and visually disconnected from the existing Surrey Hills National Landscape and the Site's setting to the south has a limited quantum of the special qualities associated with the Surrey Hills National Landscape (relative to the proposed extension);
- Development of the Site in a sensitive manner is unlikely to extend the visual envelope associated with Site or Langley Vale to the north;
- The established vegetation in the vicinity of the Site provides both visual and physical containment (in part) to the northwest and northeast as well as making a strong contribution to existing green infrastructure. There is the opportunity for proposed development to reinforce this green infrastructure and strengthen its connections through the Site;
- Development of the Site offers the opportunity for improving access to the wider Green Belt and the Langley Vale Centenary Wood through the creation of meaningful publicly accessible green space within and potentially to the southeast of the Site to improve the quality and legibility of the connection between the residential area to the north and the PRoW network to the south and southeast;
- Existing vegetated boundaries and those void of any vegetation can be supplemented with additional planting; and
- There is limited intervisibility between the Site and its wider landscape context, southwest of the adjacent east facing hillside towards Ashtead Park.

Constraints to development within the Site include:

- Several PRoW are present within the immediate Site context;
- The Site is situated within the immediate vicinity of Langley Vale Centenary Wood;
- Ancient Woodland is situated to the immediate southeast of the Site;
- Open views to the Site from the immediate setting to the southwest.

5.2 Landscape Led Development Parameters

The following landscape led development parameters have been informed by the landscape and visual policy context, published landscape character assessment and the key views:

- The landscape elements of highest value should be retained, including the Ancient Woodland edge.
- 15m offsets to Ancient Woodland should be respected with additional woodland edge planting as appropriate and following ecologist advice.
- A significant area of connected green infrastructure could be delivered to the southeast of the Site, including woodland planting, in line with the key characteristics of the UE3: Epsom Downs Character Area, to redefine the southeastern edge of the associated field parcel, and extend the wooded character southward, providing a positive interface and transition between the settlement edge and the countryside beyond (and in time reducing the visual envelop associated with Langley Vale);
- Sensitively located development parcels, well related to the existing settlement edge, could be placed in the landscape, with the retention of some of the Site, as green infrastructure / open space.
- The development parcel should be set back from Langley Vale Road to maintain the sense of openness within the northern section of the Site, when viewed from within proximity to the existing settlement edge.
- The development parcel should also be set back from the Ancient Woodland to the southeast, with additional woodland planting to bolster the existing woodland edge and in time truncate views of the Site from the PRoW to the east. This additional planting will supplement the existing wooded character, will form a positive interface between the new homes and the adjacent racecourse gallops, whilst being consistent with the character of the local settlement interface.
- Development should be limited in height to respect the domestic scale of the dwellings on the edge of the settlements at Langley Vale.

5.3 Recommended Embedded Mitigation Strategies

This mitigation strategy has been developed through desktop analysis of the landscape character assessments and historic mapping as well as field work to understand the landscape and visual constraints and opportunities identified above. The resulting mitigation strategy incorporates recommendations as set out in published landscape character assessments and reinforces the strategies set out in green infrastructure supplementary planning guidance. The key principles of which are:

- Substantial mitigation along the boundaries, including hedgerow and tree planting, providing an enhanced green corridor, with benefits for wildlife and biodiversity.
- The potential provision of connected green infrastructure with improved habitats and recreational opportunities to the east of the Site.
- The proposals should be domestic in scale, limited to 2 storeys in height, with dwellings located away from the highest ground within the Site.

5.4 Summary

Following the appraisal of the existing landscape and visual context, and in considering the Landscape and Visual Opportunities and Constraints, it is considered that the Site provides the opportunity to sensitively accommodate residential development, to provide a positive and improved settlement edge and integrate / transition into the adjacent rural landscape, as consistent with guidelines set out within published character assessments.

As with the development of any green field site, there will be landscape and visual harm associated with development parcels and harm to the Green Belt purposes and openness accordingly. To minimise harm, development parcels are to be set back from boundaries and framed by proposed green infrastructure and open space, to create a coherent settlement edge set in and contained (in part) by a robust green infrastructure strategy and contained by the localised network of undulating valleys and hillsides.

Publicly accessible green space could be delivered that would relate strongly to the wider landscape context as well as improving the quality of access to and recreation within the Green Belt, as in accordance with NPPF Para 145.



Figure 5.1 – Opportunities and Constraints Plan (fabrik, 2025)

6.0

Parameter Plans

6.1

Description of the Proposed Development

The outline application is for a residential development of up to 110 homes, up to two and a half storey in height, with public open space. Vehicular access will be from Langley Vale Road, at the Site's northwestern boundary.

In addition to the submitted parameter plan, an indicative masterplan has been prepared, which sets out a potential detailed layout, with areas of open space and proposed green infrastructure. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement (DAS) which explains the intended design rationale and presents visualisations, character zones and strategy plans covering land use, indicative housing mix and building heights.

The development parameters as extracted from the DAS and presented overleaf have informed the impact assessment of the LVIA.

The parameters have sought to respond sensitively to the identified opportunities and constraints of the Site and its setting and incorporate the majority of the published guidelines associated with the Local Character Area, through the following landscape – led principles:

Land Use

The Proposed Development comprises 'Outline planning application for up to 110 dwellings (including affordable homes) with all matters reserved apart from access from Langley Vale Road.'

Based on the Illustrative Masterplan, the scheme includes a mix of predominantly low-density, detached dwellings, arranged around a permeable street layout. In addition to housing, the proposal incorporates areas of publicly accessible open space, children's play provision, and an integrated SuDS network. These elements combine to form a multi-functional landscape that supports both residential and recreational uses, while helping to define and soften the settlement edge.

Vegetation

The Proposed Development retains existing boundary vegetation, particularly along the northeastern edge, where hedgerows and trees form a visual buffer between the Site and existing residential properties. New native planting is proposed along the Site's southern and western boundaries, creating a green edge that enhances biodiversity and visual containment.

Importantly, the Site also lies adjacent to the Warren Ancient Woodland. A 15-metre offset is maintained from the woodland edge, within which enhanced native boundary planting and public open space will be provided. This buffer safeguards the woodland's ecological integrity, prevents physical disturbance, and ensures a sensitive visual transition from built form to ancient habitat.

A substantial area of tree planting and informal landscape character will also be introduced within the proposed public open space, with further structural planting around the SuDS features and swales. This approach strengthens habitat connectivity while creating a robust landscape framework for the development.

Topography / Drainage

The Site lies on a gentle west-facing slope that descends away from Langley Vale, following the local valley form. The layout responds to this topography by stepping development down the slope, avoiding abrupt changes to the landform.

Surface water drainage will be managed via a sustainable drainage strategy, incorporating swales, basins, and attenuation features located along the Site's western low point. These features will be integrated into the green infrastructure, forming part of the wider network of open space and contributing to the character of the Site.

Perceptual and Aesthetic Qualities

The Proposed Development has been designed to respond sensitively to the character of Langley Vale. It will comprise low-rise buildings (maximum 2 storeys), using materials and architectural detailing that reflect the local vernacular.

The layout has been designed to provide a soft and graduated edge to the village, with development set back from key boundaries and filtered by new planting. The inclusion of green corridors, open spaces, and footpath links will enhance accessibility and reinforce the rural fringe character of the area.

Overall, the scheme aims to integrate positively with its landscape context and maintain a strong sense of place that reinforces the existing character of Langley Vale.



7.0

Identification of Receptors for Impact Assessment

7.1

Landscape Receptors

The baseline section of this report identifies the key planning policies and designations, landscape character areas and key features and characteristics of the Site and study area. The baseline assessment considers and a value is assigned for each landscape receptor. Table 7.1 summarises the types of landscape receptors found within the study area and their associated value.

Those receptors identified in Table 7.1 (highlighted in pale green), will be taken forward into the impact assessment.

7.1 Summary of Landscape Receptors	
Landscape Receptors	Value
Published Guidelines: County character area UE3 Epsom Downs	Medium
Langley Vale Centenary Wood and its Setting	Medium
Site Landform and Drainage	Medium
Site Vegetation	Medium
Site Land Use	Medium
Site Setting and Overall Character	Medium

7.2

Visual Receptors

As set out in the visual baseline at Section 4, the Site is well contained in views from the wider landscape due to the combination of topography, built form and vegetation.

The visual baseline sets out the visual assessment with description of how the Site is viewed from within the study area. The key visual receptor groups to be assessed are summarised at Table 7.2 , along with their associated value.

7.2 Summary of Visual Receptors		
Visual Receptor Type / Group	Representative Viewpoints	Value
Transient from Langley Vale Road	1, 3 and 11	Medium
Residential receptors along Langley Vale's southern edge	Intervisibility between properties and the Site appreciated in 3, 4 and 5	Medium
Transient from Bridleway 146	2, 3, 12 and 13	Medium
Transient from Bridleway 33 and footpath 32	4, 5, 6 , 7 and 8	Medium
Transient from Bridleway 127	9, 10	Medium
Visitors of Langley Vale Centenary Wood	14, 15 and 16	Medium

7.3

Limitations and Assumptions

The following assumptions will be made in relation to the assessment of effects (amend and edit as relevant to the project):

- The assessment baseline year is 2025.
- The assessment is based on the principles set out in the Illustrative Masterplan. It is assumed that the development will be low density, limited to a maximum height of 2.5 storeys, and will adopt a layout, scale, and design approach that reflects the established character of Langley Vale.
- Existing vegetation will continue to grow at rates typical of its location, species and maturity.
- For the visual assessment from residential properties, transport corridors and public rights of way, the receptor is a standing adult with an eye height of 1.65m.
- Visual effects are based on good visibility. Visual effects can be expected to vary, with poor visibility at times of low cloud, rainfall and at dusk. At these times a reduction in visual clarity, colour and contrast will be experienced. Reduced visibility will limit the extent of views, particularly long distance views. Therefore, the assessment of effects will present a worst case scenario, when the proposed development will be most visible.
- The assessment is based on publicly accessible locations. Professional judgement is used to determine the likely effects from private properties.

8.0

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects

The criteria for the significance of landscape and visual effects is set out in the LVIA methodology at Appendix 1. The landscape and visual receptors and their values are categorised into receptor types and are assessed alongside the receptor susceptibility to the specific proposed change in order to identify the receptors sensitivity.

The sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptor is combined with the magnitude of change to determine the significance of effect. Magnitude is determined relative to the size, scale, geographic extent, duration, permanence and reversibility of the individual project through the application of professional judgement and opinion.

The landscape and visual effects of the proposed development are set out in a series of impact tables as follows:

- Effects on contextual landscape receptors (i.e. effects on landscape receptors beyond the Site boundary, for example, indirect effects on landscape character).
- Site landscape receptors (i.e. direct effects on landscape receptors within the Site boundary only).
- Visual receptors (i.e. effects arising from the changes to the landscape which are perceived by both static and transient receptors).

The significance of effects are considered for the proposed development - at Year 1 post construction and at Year 15. Construction effects have been scoped out from the assessment as effects are anticipated to be temporary, small scale and as such are not deemed significant.

Included overleaf is the assessment of landscape and visual effects resulting from the proposed development. The judgements and associated process, is presented in a tabulated format for ease of reading and includes commentary regarding susceptibility, sensitivity, magnitude of change and professional judgement for the level of effect plus the nature of effect, for identified receptors as set out at tables 7.1 and 7.2.

Table 8.1 Published and Contextual Landscape Receptors

Landscape Receptor	Landscape Sensitivity				Magnitude of Change					Significance of Effect		Nature of Effect
	Landscape Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity Judgement	Description	Scale	Duration and Reversibility	Magnitude Judgement	Description				
Published Landscape Character Receptor												
County character area UE3 Epsom Downs	Medium	Medium	Medium	The UE3 Epsom Downs LCA is of Medium value. Its elevated chalk downland geology, open fields associated with the historic Epsom Racecourse, and long-range views towards London all contribute to its scenic and recreational value. The presence of designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Ancient Woodlands, AGLVs, and Scheduled Ancient Monuments all enhances its cultural and ecological value. While the LCA is largely unsettled and retains a semi-rural character, its proximity to urban development and major roads, including the M25, reduces the sense of remoteness, which slightly moderates its overall value. The UE3 LCA is judged to have a Medium susceptibility. While its elevated topography and open aspect make it visually sensitive, the landscape is defined in part by its proximity to the urban edge, which inherently reduces its susceptibility to further change, particularly residential development. The presence of the racecourse and associated infrastructure already introduces notable human influence, and surrounding development within Langley Vale and Tattenham Corner further integrate it into the urban fringe. Combining the Medium value with the Medium susceptibility results in an overall Medium sensitivity.	Compact	Long	Year 1	Low	The introduction of new dwellings will cause a permanent loss of a relatively small area of the wider LCA's agricultural land, resulting in a Low magnitude of change. At Year 1, the coherent layout of the Proposed Development will respond positively to the existing landform, vegetation, and landscape character of the Site. In particular, the new residential development within the Site, together with the committed areas of open space to the south, will respect and enhance the existing landscape and settlement pattern of Langley Vale. While the introduction of new homes will cause a permanent loss of a relatively small area of the LCA's agricultural land, it will also introduce areas of publicly accessible green spaces, play space, native tree planting and wetland areas. On this basis, the Proposed Development will result in an overall Negligible Adverse significance of effect at Year 1. By Year 15, the magnitude of change within the Site will remain Small , and the significance of effect will continue to be Negligible Adverse . Nonetheless, over time, the proposed native planting and areas of open space will have matured, softening and filtering views of the built form and further integrating the development into the surrounding landscape. The established vegetation will reinforce the existing landscape structure and contribute positively to local character, ensuring the Proposed Development sits comfortably within the evolving settlement pattern of Langley Vale.	Year 1	Negligible	Adverse
							Year 15	Low		Year 15	Negligible	Adverse
Contextual Landscape Receptor												
Langley Vale Centenary Wood and its setting	Medium	Medium	Medium	Langley Vale Centenary Wood and its setting is considered to have Medium landscape value. As a publicly accessible, large-scale woodland established by the Woodland Trust, it contributes to local green infrastructure, biodiversity, and recreation. Its gently rolling topography, mix of open glades, young woodland, and more established tree belts, along with views across adjacent farmland, provide a sense of place and tranquillity. Its commemorative purpose also adds a layer of cultural and community value. While not statutorily designated, its public use, ecological interest, and role in the local landscape setting elevate its value above the ordinary. The wood has a Medium susceptibility. Its permissive footpaths offer filtered views towards the Site, however, the woodland does provide internal visual enclosure in many places. The susceptibility of the receptor is moderated by the existing urban influence of Langley Vale and the Epsom Downs Racecourse. Combining the Medium value with the Medium susceptibility results in an overall Medium sensitivity.	Compact	Long	Year 1	Low	The Proposed Development will introduce 110 permanent dwellings into the setting of Centenary Wood. Given the filtered and partial nature of views, the localised visibility of the Site, and the mitigating influence of planting and settlement context, the magnitude of change is considered to be Small . The Proposed Development will be visible from certain permissive paths and open areas within and around the wood. However, it will be read as a contiguous and logical extension to the existing settlement, which is already evident on the ridgeline to the north. The character, experience, and value of Langley Vale Centenary Wood, including its tranquillity, biodiversity, and commemorative role, will be retained. Considering the above, there will be an overall Minor Adverse significance of effect at Year 1. Over time, the maturing structural planting and integration of green infrastructure will soften the appearance of built form. This will aid in assimilating the development into the local landscape context. Nonetheless, the significance of effect at Year 15 will remain Minor Adverse .	Year 1	Minor	Adverse
							Year 15	Low		Year 15	Minor	Adverse

Table 8.2 Site Landscape Receptors

Landscape Receptor	Landscape Sensitivity				Magnitude of Change					Significance of Effect	Nature of Effect	
	Landscape Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity Judgement	Description	Scale	Duration and Reversibility	Magnitude Judgement	Description				
Site Specific Landscape Character Receptor												
Land use	Low	Medium	Medium - Low	The agricultural fields that comprise the Site's two parcels are not designated and are common features in the immediate and wider landscape context. They are in a relatively good condition, being in active arable use. The tranquillity of the fields and their immediate surroundings are degraded by the presence of the built form within Langley Vale. The Site also contains a single residential dwelling to the northwest. The residential property is a modern, unremarkable dwelling adjacent to a petrol station and does not contribute positively to the character or value of the Site. On this basis, the value of the receptor is considered to be Low. There would be an inevitable change in the existing land use of the Site with the Proposed Development in place. The character of the arable fields is already eroded by detracting features, namely residential built form in Langley Vale. Development proposals will also be able to incorporate recommendations as set out in published guidelines. On this basis, the agricultural fields are considered to have some potential to accommodate development of the type proposed. The receptor is therefore judged to have a Medium susceptibility. Combining the Low value with the Medium susceptibility results in an overall Medium - Low sensitivity.	Substantial	Long	Year 1	High	At Year 1, the existing agricultural fields will be subject to a pronounced and irreversible change from open pasture use to predominantly residential development, such that the overall integrity of this landscape feature will be lost. This includes the removal of the single residential dwelling off Langley Vale Road to accommodate access into the Site, which will contribute to the initial landscape disturbance. Therefore, there will be a High magnitude of effect. The layout will create open spaces including new planting, green infrastructure, and enhancement of existing boundary vegetation, and these improvements will begin to have a positive effect upon completion. The Proposed Development also includes the introduction of new recreational footpath connections that link into the existing Public Rights of Way network, along with the provision of children's play spaces within the areas of public open space. Whilst the fields will no longer be agricultural in nature, the biodiversity and landscape value will have begun to improve as a result of the implemented landscape strategy. On this basis, at Year 1 the significance of effect will be Moderate Adverse. The landscape strategy implemented at Year 1 will have established by Year 15, resulting in landscape and biodiversity improvements to this landscape receptor. The change to this receptor will remain noticeable and irreversible, however, the positive effects resulting from the landscape enhancements will provide mitigation that will reduce the adverse effects. The magnitude of effect therefore reduces to Medium, resulting in a Minor Adverse significance of effect.	Year 1	Moderate	Adverse
							Year 15	Medium		Year 15	Minor	Adverse
Vegetation	Medium	Low	Medium - Low	Vegetation within the Site is primarily confined to hedgerows, trees, and shrubs along the northeastern residential boundaries. These are not rare, and many of the hedgerows appear to be in a degraded state that impacts the landscape's integrity, with visible fragmentation. The Site is also situated adjacent to the Warren Ancient Woodland which makes a positive contribution to the character of the Site and the wider area. On balance, the value is judged to be Medium. In general, the field boundary vegetation is considered to have high potential for retention and enhancement as part of predominantly residential development. The development proposed can also incorporate recommendations as set out in published guidelines. Overall, the receptor is considered to have a Low susceptibility. Combining the Medium value with the Low susceptibility results in an overall Medium - Low sensitivity.	Sizeable	Long	Year 1	Low	The Proposed Development will retain all existing vegetation within the Site, including hedgerows and trees along its boundaries. New structural planting will be introduced along the western edge around SuDS features, within the southeastern POS, and importantly, along the eastern boundary, reinforcing the interface with the existing Langley Vale settlement. While planting will not yet be mature, it will begin to strengthen the Site's vegetative structure and reinforce the settlement edge. As such, there will be a Low magnitude of effect. The overall significance of effect at Year 1 is assessed as Minor Beneficial, reflecting the protection of existing vegetation and the early establishment of a green framework. By Year 15, proposed planting across the Site will have matured, delivering a well-integrated vegetative framework. The eastern boundary planting will form a defined and softened settlement edge, contributing to visual containment and reinforcing local landscape character. Enhanced vegetation within the POS, along SuDS corridors, and on the western edge will support biodiversity and visual amenity. The adjacent Warren Ancient Woodland will remain protected and perceptually connected to the Site's green infrastructure. As such, the mangitude of effect will increase to Medium at Year 15. Reflecting a robust and mature planting strategy that enhances landscape quality, ecological connectivity, and integration with the existing settlement, the significance of effect at Year 15 is assessed as Moderate Beneficial.	Year 1	Minor	Beneficial
							Year 15	Medium		Year 15	Moderate	Beneficial

Table 8.2 Site Landscape Receptors (Cont.)

Landscape Receptor	Landscape Sensitivity				Magnitude of Change					Significance of Effect	Nature of Effect	
	Landscape Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity Judgement	Description	Scale	Duration and Reversibility	Magnitude Judgement	Description				
Site Specific Landscape Character Receptor												
Landform and Drainage	Medium	Medium	Medium	The Site sits on a gentle west facing slope of a valley that extends from Tadworth in the southeast to Ashtead in the north. A value of Medium is assigned as the landform is typical of the local landscape. Susceptibility is Medium as the landform has a varied composition and the type of development may potentially alter the overall integrity of the receptor. Combining the Medium value with the Medium susceptibility results in an overall Medium sensitivity.	Compact	Long	Year 1	Low	The layout has been designed to respond sympathetically to the existing topography, with minimal regrading or reshaping of the landform. The proportion of the Site where landform alteration is required is limited, and the overall valley structure and slope direction will remain legible. SUDs will be positioned along the western boundary to reflect the existing hydrological pattern. These features will contribute positively to local green-blue infrastructure and help manage surface water runoff in line with the natural flow of the land. On this basis, there will be a Low magnitude of effect and overall Minor Adverse significance of effect at both Year 1 and 15.	Year 1	Minor	Adverse
							Year 1	Low		Year 15	Minor	Adverse
Site Setting and Overall Character	Medium	Medium	Medium	The Site is locally designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value, ascribing it a degree of landscape and scenic quality. It is located within a localised valley that is framed by a backdrop of wooded skylines, which adds to its visual character, however the presence of development along Langley Vales southern edge diminishes the overall aesthetic appeal. Permission has also recently been granted for the construction of an additional 20 new properties (APP/P3610/W/21/3280881) to the immediate west of the Site, which will further detract from the setting. Despite the substantial PRoW network in the vicinity, the Site itself is not crossed by any PRoW and therefore offers limited recreational value. Ecological value is also considered to be limited. On balance, the Site Setting and Overall Character is considered to have a Medium value. The development is likely to alter the overall integrity of the Site's agricultural character. However, due to the influence and proximity of the existing residential development within Langley Vale, the Site is considered to have a Medium susceptibility arising from the proposed residential development. Combining the Medium value with the Medium susceptibility results in an overall Medium sensitivity.	Sizeable	Long	Year 1	High - Medium	At Year 1, the Proposed Development will result in the replacement of the Site's agricultural land with built form, associated infrastructure, and areas of open space, leading to a noticeable change in the character and use of the Site. The introduction of 110 dwellings will permanently alter the Site's open charachter. As such, there will be a High - Medium magnitude of effect.	Year 1	Moderate	Adverse
							Year 15	Medium	The Site is visually and contextually influenced by the adjacent settlement edge of Langley Vale, which already interrupts the rural landscape. The proximity of the recently consented development to the west further contributes to the perception of ongoing change and expansion. The development layout has been designed to respond to local topography and incorporates green infrastructure, which will provide some initial mitigation, though landscape planting will not yet be mature. The development will feature low-density detached housing of up to 2 storeys, using locally reflective materials and a sensitively designed layout that responds positively to the character and context of Langley Vale. The scheme will also deliver publicly accessible open space, play areas, SuDS features, and enhanced recreational footpath connections, which will contribute to the local landscape structure and amenity value. As such, at Year 1 there will be an overall Moderate Adverse significance of effect. By Year 15, while the agricultural character will remain permanently altered, the perceived change will be less stark, and the new settlement edge will appear more coherent with the evolving context. Accordingly, the magnitude of change at Year 15 reduces to Medium. The maturation of structural and native planting, along with the integration of open space, will soften the built form and better assimilate the development into the surrounding landform and vegetation pattern resulting in an overall Minor Adverse significance of effect.	Year 15	Minor	Adverse

Table 8.3 Visual Receptors

Visual Receptor	Landscape Sensitivity				Magnitude of Change				Significance of Effect	Nature of Effect		
	Landscape Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity Judgement	Description	Scale	Duration and Reversibility	Magnitude Judgement	Description				
Visual Receptor												
Transient from Langley Vale Road	Medium	Low	Medium - Low	The view is from within an AGLV which is a designation of regional importance, and therefore of Medium value. Receptors are primarily motorists of Langley Vale Road whose attention is not on the landscape but on the road ahead / direction of travel. As such, the susceptibility is considered to be Low . Combining the Medium value with the Low susceptibility results in an overall Medium - Low sensitivity.	Modest	Medium	Year 1	Medium	Views of the Site from Langley Vale Road are largely screened by roadside hedgerows, limiting visibility for most of its length. Where visible from the southern section of the road, the Site's agricultural land use is apparent, seen within the context of the settlement of Langley Vale. More open and direct views are available near the Site's northwestern boundary (see Viewpoint 3), where glimpses of the new dwellings will be possible for an intermittent period and at close range. From this location, the development will be perceptible and experienced as a continuation of the existing settlement, extending downslope from the established developed ridgeline. This change will introduce built form into views previously comprising agricultural land, however the development will appear clearly associated with the existing built edge. Structural planting along the Site's western boundary, adjacent to the access road and SuDS, will also begin to filter views, although this will not yet be fully effective. Considering the above, the magnitude of effect will be Medium at both Year 1 and 15. At Year 1, the significance of effect will be Moderate Adverse , with consideration of the localised visibility of the development but also the design approach. By Year 15, the development will appear more fully integrated into the landscape. Structural planting along the western boundary will have matured, providing an effective visual buffer that softens views from the road. The low-density character, and modest building heights will contribute to a settled, contextually appropriate appearance. On this basis, the significance of effect at Year 15 will reduce to Minor Adverse .	Year 1	Moderate	Adverse
							Year 15	Medium		Year 15	Minor	Adverse
Residential receptors overlooking the Site along Langley Vale's southern edge	Medium	High	Medium - High	Medium value is assessed as views are from dwellings that overlook the Site. Susceptibility is High as the view contributes to the amenity experience from dwellings. Combining the Medium value with the High susceptibility results in an overall Medium - High sensitivity.	Sizeable	Long	Year 1	Medium - High	From the rear elevations and gardens of properties backing onto the Site to the east, views currently extend across open fields that descend into the valley and rise again towards Centenary Wood. The Proposed Development will lead to a noticeable change in the view that is permanent, introducing new low-density dwellings that descend down further into the valley. The magnitude of effect will therefore be Medium - High . However, the housing will be offset from the enhanced eastern boundary, and due to the descending topography, only rooflines and upper façades are likely to be visible from most properties. As such, although potentially filtered by the new built form, views towards Centenary Wood will remain available above the new development. Properties to the southeast, such as those on Saddlers Way and the Hayes, will overlook areas of open space. Considering the above, the overall significance of effect at Year 1 and 15 will be Moderate Adverse , due to the development's offset from the boundary, limited building heights, retained views towards Centenary Wood, and proposed planting that will help reduce visual impact.	Year 1	Moderate	Adverse
							Year 15	Medium - High		Year 15	Moderate	Adverse
Transient from Bridleway 146	Medium	High	Medium - High	The value is assessed as Medium as the views are from within an AGLV and the view forms part of the experience. Susceptibility is High as people are engaged in an activity and at a location where they are focused on the landscape and where the view contributes to the amenity. Combining the Medium value with the High susceptibility results in an overall Medium - High sensitivity.	Sizeable	Long	Year 1	Medium	Bridleway 146 runs parallel to Langley Vale Road and affords open views across the Site, where the existing settlement edge of Langley Vale forms part of the visual horizon (see Viewpoints 3 and 12). The Proposed Development will permanently introduce new dwellings across the width of the Site, noticeably extending the visible built edge and bringing development slightly closer to the receptor. As such, the magnitude of effect will be Medium . The new dwellings will remain set below the skyline and will continue to sit beneath the wooded horizon. It will also appear as a direct extension of the existing settlement, with comparable form, scale (up to 2 storeys), and character. The western Site boundary will be planted, however will offer little mitigation during the early stages. On this basis, the overall signifiance of effect at Year 1 is considered to be Moderate Adverse . At Year 15, the proposed planting along the Site's western boundary will have matured, softening the transition between the development and the adjacent agricultural landscape. Built form will remain visible in views from the bridleway but will continue to read as an integrated part of the Langley Vale settlement, resulting in an overall Minor - Moderate Adverse significance of effect.	Year 1	Moderate	Adverse
							Year 15	Medium		Year 15	Minor - Moderate	Adverse
Transient from Bridleway 33 and Footpath 32	Medium	High	Medium - High	The value is assessed as Medium as the views are from within an AGLV and the view forms part of the experience. Susceptibility is High as people are engaged in an activity and at a location where they are focused on the landscape and where the view contributes to the amenity. Combining the Medium value with the High susceptibility results in an overall Medium - High sensitivity.	Sizeable	Long	Year 1	Medium	Bridleway 33 runs parallel to the Site's southwestern boundary. The most open views are experienced from the northwestern extent of the route (see Viewpoint 4), where users currently overlook arable fields and the settlement edge of Langley Vale. The Proposed Development will extend built form across the Site, bringing it visually closer to the bridleway. This will result in a noticeable and permanent change to the view, particularly where views are not already obstructed by vegetation or the ongoing construction works associated with the permitted development (APP/P3610/W/21/3280881) to the west of the Site (see Viewpoints 6, 7 and 8). On this basis, there will be a Medium magnitude of effect at both Year 1 and 15. The new dwellings will be set back from the bridleway and filtered by boundary planting associated with the green corridor and SUDS. The new dwellings will be read as a continuation of the existing edge of Langley Vale and emerging development to the west, consistent in character and height. As such, the overall significance of effect will be Moderate Adverse at Year 1. As the proposed landscaping matures and filters views, the visual impact of the new housing will lessen, reducing the significance of effect to Minor Adverse at Year 15.	Year 1	Moderate	Adverse
							Year 15	Medium		Year 15	Minor	Adverse

Table 8.3 Visual Receptors (cont.)

Landscape Receptor	Landscape Sensitivity				Magnitude of Change					Significance of Effect		Nature of Effect
	Landscape Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity Judgement	Description	Scale	Duration and Reversibility	Magnitude Judgement		Description			
Transient from Bridleway 127	Medium	High	Medium - High	The value is assessed as Medium as the views are from within an AGLV and the view forms part of the experience. Susceptibility is High as people are engaged in an activity and at a location where they are focused on the landscape and where the view contributes to the amenity. Combining the Medium value with the High susceptibility results in an overall Medium - High sensitivity.	Modest	Long	Year 1	Medium	Bridleway 127 runs to the south of the Site, with intermittent open views toward the Site's southern boundary. At present, this boundary is weakly defined and lacks any significant landscape structure. The Proposed Development will establish a more robust edge through the introduction of new hedgerow and tree planting, behind which the primary area of POS will be located. The rooflines of the new dwellings will be partially discernible above this new green boundary, resulting in a change to the backdrop of the view. The proposed dwellings will screen views of the existing properties at Langley Vale currently visible on the skyline, replacing one form of development with another, but at a lower elevation and closer to the receptor. Considering the above, there will be a Medium magnitude of effect at both Year 1 and 15. At Year 1, the overall significance of effect will be Minor - Moderate Adverse, owing to the change from an open arable field to built development. While the new green edge will soften and filter the development, the overall change reduces openness. By Year 15, the boundary vegetation will have matured, providing greater visual screening of the built form. The POS in the foreground will reinforce the rural edge to the development, while any visible rooflines will remain set behind a strong green framework. As such, the significance of effect will reduce to Minor Adverse at Year 15.	Year 1	Minor - Moderate	Adverse
							Year 15	Medium		Year 15	Minor	Adverse
Visitors of Langley Vale Centenary Wood	Medium	High	Medium - High	The value is assessed as Medium as the views are from within an AGLV and the view forms part of the experience. Susceptibility is High as people are engaged in an activity and at a location where they are focused on the landscape and where the view contributes to the amenity. Combining the Medium value with the High susceptibility results in an overall Medium - High sensitivity.	Modest	Long	Year 1	Medium	Views towards the Site from the southwestern part of Centenary Wood are limited and typically filtered by vegetation. Where visible, notably from elevated positions in the northern part of the wood and along permissive paths, the Site is seen beyond layers of orchard planting, sitting in the background of views and beneath the established settlement edge of Langley Vale. The Proposed Development will extend built form further down the slope, increasing the horizontal spread of development within the view. While planting and topography will limit exposure, the introduction of built form into this currently open arable field will be a perceptible and permanent addition to the backdrop. As such, there will be a Medium magnitude of effect at Year 1 and 15. The replacement of open farmland with new dwellings will reduce the perceived scale and containment of Langley Vale in these views. However, the development will remain below the skyline, be read as part of the settlement edge, and be partially filtered by existing vegetation. Considering the above, there will be an overall Minor - Moderate Adverse significance of effect at Year 1. At Year 15, the significance of effect is assessed as Minor Adverse, reflecting a reduced visual impact due to maturing vegetation, while acknowledging the lasting change from open agricultural land to housing in the context of a sensitive recreational landscape.	Year 1	Minor - Moderate	Adverse
							Year 15	Medium		Year 15	Minor	Adverse

9.0

Assessment Against Landscape Policy and Character

The National Planning Policy Framework, guidance, plus district and neighbourhood plans alongside supplementary guidance have been key considerations in the preparation of the development proposals, and are summarised below.

NPPF

A network of high quality open space is proposed as recommended at Para 102, in order to provide opportunities for physical activity, health and wellbeing of communities and to deliver benefits for nature and support effects to address climate change.

The development protects and enhances the public right of way within the Site, as recommended at Para 104.

High quality design is proposed in accordance with recommendations set out at Para's 131, 132 and 135, in that the scheme:

- has been developed through consultation with the local community and LPA.
- is evidenced by the local areas defining characteristics.
- adds to the overall quality of the area.
- is visually attractive with good architecture, layout and landscaping.
- is sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.
- establishes a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials.

Design quality is considered, and takes into consideration local design guidance and supplementary planning documents, as recommended at Paras 137 and 139.

Proposals conserve and enhance the natural environment as per Para 180 and as recommended at Para 182, the development is sensitively located and designed to avoid adverse effects on the setting to any designated area.

The Proposed Development will not conflict with the aims of Paragraph 189 of the NPPF. The Site does not form part of the setting of the Surrey Hills National Landscape due to the absence of intervisibility, resulting from intervening topography and established woodland. Additionally, the Site lies over 2km from the designated area and is physically and visually separated by the M25 corridor. As such, there will be no adverse impact on the character, setting, or special qualities of the Surrey Hills National Landscape.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Core Strategy (2007)

In accordance with Policy CS4, the scheme delivers high-quality on-site public open space in line with the Developer Contributions SPD. The open space contributes to the Borough's green infrastructure network and avoids any shortfall in provision. If on-site delivery cannot fully meet demand, financial contributions will be made in accordance with policy.

The development accords with Policy CS5, respecting and enhancing local heritage and landscape character. In particular, the Site adjoins the Warren Ancient Woodland and the Listed 'Wall Bordering North West and South Sides of the Warren'. A 15m offset from both the woodland and the listed wall is provided, within which new boundary planting and publicly accessible green space will be established. These buffers serve to protect the ecological integrity of the Ancient Woodland and the setting of the listed structure, while providing a sensitive and visually appropriate transition between built form and heritage assets.

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Development Management Policies Document 2015

The Proposed Development meets the requirements of Policy DM5 through the retention and enhancement of landscape features and the planting of native species suited to the area. Where removals are necessary, they are justified and mitigated through replacement planting. Public open space meets quality and accessibility standards (Policy DM6) and will be managed to support both amenity and biodiversity. Pedestrian links to the surrounding countryside are maintained and enhanced, in line with Policy DM7.

As required by Policy DM9, the development complements townscape character and the surrounding natural environment. The layout, massing and materials will respond to the character of Langley Vale. Policy DM10 will be further met through attention to building scale, spacing, roof forms, and use of traditional detailing, ensuring the development integrates comfortably within its landscape and townscape setting.

The development density is low and appropriate to its edge-of-settlement location (DM11), and building heights remain below the 12m maximum (DM13), with careful treatment of roofscape and massing to avoid impacts on key views or the setting of the adjacent woodland and listed wall. In combination, the proposals comply with all relevant landscape, design and open space policies and ensure that development is both context-sensitive and of high quality.

Area of Great Landscape Value

The Proposed Development lies within the Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), but the Site's contribution to the designation is limited due to the influence of surrounding built form at Langley Vale. The design has been landscape-led, ensuring that the proposals do not undermine the purpose or integrity of the AGLV. Development is well-contained and softened by planting, with open space reinforcing the visual edge of the settlement. The scheme therefore avoids undermining the purpose of the AGLV and introduces landscaping that reinforces the edge of the settlement without eroding its open or rural qualities.

Assessment Against Landscape Character Guidance

The Site lies within the Urban Edge (UE) landscape character type, where a transitional mix of rural and suburban influences is expected. The development is well aligned with guidance for this character area, responding to both ecological and visual sensitivities.

The proximity to the Warren Ancient Woodland is a key consideration. A 15m buffer is provided, consistent with Natural England standing advice, and this zone will be enhanced with native boundary planting and informal public open space. These measures serve to protect the woodland's biodiversity value and safeguard it from adverse effects. The adjacent listed wall is similarly protected through spatial offsetting, ensuring that its setting remains legible and uninterrupted by development.

New planting uses native species and reinforces the historic landscape structure, while also providing visual screening and character reinforcement at the Site's boundaries.

The layout maintains long views across the Site to the wider countryside to the west, helping to retain the open, transitional quality of the area. Building forms are set back and framed by landscaping, preserving visual connections while reducing their impact on the skyline and surrounding land. Public access is promoted through new and improved links to existing footpaths.

While the Site contains no designated heritage assets itself, the nearby listed wall and Ancient Woodland are respected through open space buffers and design layout that maintain their visibility, integrity, and setting. These features also contribute to the understanding of the site's historic landscape, in line with guidance to conserve and interpret historic elements.

Overall, the Proposed Development responds positively to landscape character guidance. It protects valued features, conserves and enhances biodiversity, and reinforces the spatial and visual qualities of the urban edge landscape.

Summary and Conclusions

10.1 Summary

Landscape and Visual Baseline

Due to the combination of topography, built form and vegetation, the contextual landscape and Site setting is limited to the immediate local landscape. The landscape character of the study area is defined by its landform, vegetation, land use and time depth. These factors have all informed the settlement pattern and growth. The character of the study area reflects a rural–urban fringe, influenced by its proximity to Langley Vale and surrounding settlement. While elements of rural character, such as field patterns and underlying landform, remain present, these are increasingly influenced by the adjacent built environment, infrastructure, and land use. The area is broadly representative of the wider character area, displaying a transitional landscape where urban influences meet remnants of a more traditional rural setting. Despite this, the study area retains a degree of scenic and landscape quality, and holds recreational and conservation value, with several areas designated for their ecological and heritage importance.

The Site comprises sloping agricultural land on the western side of a shallow valley, forming part of the rural edge of Langley Vale. While the Site comprises an open agricultural field, it is strongly influenced by its proximity to the settlement, with housing on higher ground creating a defined edge and limiting any sense of remoteness. The presence of nearby public rights of way, residential gardens, and ongoing development to the west reinforces its peri-urban character. Vegetation is limited to hedgerows and scattered boundary trees, with The Warren Ancient Woodland offering some containment to the east. Although the Site sits within a broader rural landscape, it lacks distinctive features and is visually and functionally connected to the settlement.

Fieldwork confirms that the Site has a limited visual envelope, with public views largely confined to the immediate local area, particularly from sections of the PRoW network and selected viewpoints. Residential visibility is restricted to nearby properties on the southern edge of Langley Vale, especially those directly backing onto the Site, and from Langley Bottom Farm. Elsewhere, residential views are limited by topography and vegetation. PRoW users experience a combination of open and filtered views of the Site, particularly from bridleways and footpaths to the west, south, and southeast. Views from Centenary Wood also experience the Site in context with the ridgeline settlement and treed landscape. Visibility from transport corridors is limited to a short stretch of Langley Vale

Road, with further filtered views through vegetation within southern Langley Vale. Views from wider road networks are largely obscured due to the undulating terrain and mature planting. Overall, long-range visibility is constrained by the prevailing landform and intervening vegetation and built form.

A landscape-led approach has shaped the development parameters to ensure a sensitive response to the Site's character and visual context. Key strategies include retention of high-value landscape features such as the Ancient Woodland, with 15m offsets and supplementary planting to strengthen ecological and visual buffers. Development parcels are to be sensitively located adjacent to the existing settlement edge, set back from Langley Vale Road and the woodland to maintain openness and limit visual impact. A substantial area of green infrastructure is proposed to the southeast, enhancing the wooded character of the area, creating a positive transition to the countryside, and reducing the visual envelope over time. Embedded mitigation includes boundary planting to form green corridors, domestic-scale buildings limited to 2 storeys, and placement away from higher ground to respect the surrounding landscape and settlement form.

Summary of Landscape Effects

The Proposed Development will result in a permanent change to the Site's current agricultural character, introducing built form, associated infrastructure, and areas of open space. At Year 1, this transformation will lead to a range of landscape effects, most notably the loss of open pasture and the introduction of residential development. While the initial impact on the Site's landscape character and setting is assessed as Moderate Adverse, this is balanced by the inclusion of embedded mitigation such as green infrastructure, recreational footpaths, play areas, and the protection and enhancement of existing vegetation. These elements will begin to contribute positively to local landscape structure and amenity value from the outset.

By Year 15, the proposed planting will have matured, resulting in improved integration of the development within the surrounding landscape. The development will form a softened and coherent extension to the existing Langley Vale settlement, supported by a robust framework of native vegetation and publicly accessible green space. The magnitude of change to most landscape receptors will reduce over time, with significance of effects typically lowering to Minor Adverse, and in the case of vegetation and landscape structure, improving to Moderate Beneficial, reflecting long-term landscape and ecological enhancements.

Summary of Visual Effects

The Proposed Development will result in a series of permanent but localised visual changes, primarily affecting receptors in close proximity to the Site. Views from Langley Vale Road are largely screened, with views of the part of the Site from the southern part of the road and open views of the Site from within proximity to the northwest. From here, the development will be perceived as a continuation of the existing settlement and will have a Moderate Adverse effect at Year 1, reducing to Minor Adverse by Year 15 as planting matures. More noticeable changes will occur for nearby residents along the eastern boundary, where open views across farmland will be replaced by low-density housing. However, offset development, retained views to Centenary Wood, and landscape buffers will help limit visual intrusion, resulting in Moderate Adverse effect across both Year 1 and 15.

Public rights of way surrounding the Site will also experience varying degrees of visual change. Bridleways 146, 33, and 127 will all experience the introduction of built form within views, with initial Moderate Adverse effects reducing over time as planting establishes, filtering and softening the development. Similarly, elevated viewpoints within Centenary Wood will experience some visibility of the extended settlement edge, though existing vegetation, topography, and the development's alignment with the wider settlement pattern will mitigate visual impact. Overall, the visual effects will reduce over time, with long-term significance ranging from Moderate to Minor Adverse.

10.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, while the Proposed Development will result in a permanent change to the Site's current agricultural character, it has been carefully designed to respond positively to the landscape setting and character of Langley Vale. The Proposed Development incorporates a robust green infrastructure network, including publicly accessible open space, play areas, SuDS features, and new footpath connections that enhance recreational access and ecological value. Over time, the maturing planting and landscape strategy will strengthen the local landscape structure, soften the visual impact of development, and contribute positively to biodiversity and amenity. As such, the Proposed Development has the potential to deliver notable landscape benefits, reinforcing the evolving character of Langley Vale in a manner that is consistent with local distinctiveness and long-term landscape objectives.

1.0

LVIA Methodology

LVIA Methodology

Introduction

The methodology employed in carrying out an LVIA is drawn from the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment's 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA3) Third Edition (Routledge 2013). The method adopted follows a structured and transparent process, and is proportionate to the proposals.

The term landscape is defined as an area perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of nature and / or human factors. It results from the way that different components of our environment – both natural and cultural / historical interact together and are perceived by us. The term does not mean just special, valued or designated landscapes and it does not only apply to the countryside. The definition of landscape can be classified as:

- All types of rural landscape, from high mountains and wild countryside to urban fringe farmland (rural landscapes);
- Marine and coastal landscapes (seascapes); and
- The landscape of villages, towns and cities (townscapes).

An LVIA provides a description of the baseline conditions and sets out how the study area and Site appears, or would appear, prior to the Proposed Development. The baseline assessment is then used to predict the landscape and visual impacts arising from the Proposed Development. The assessment of impact is carried out as part of the iterative design process in order to build in mitigation measures to reduce the impacts as much as possible. The impact assessment will identify and assess effects during the stages of the Proposed Development (and in the case of this site the initial site enabling and construction stages and then at the operational phases).

The photography will be prepared in accordance with Technical Guidance Note 06/19 on Visual Representation of Development Proposals (Landscape Institute, 17 September 2019).

Summary Overview of LVIA Methodology

Landscape and visual assessments are separate, although linked, procedures. For example, often the assemblage of landscape elements contributes to informing the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and the degree of visibility from the range of visual receptors.

- The baseline assessment describes:
- Each of the landscape elements which then collectively inform landscape character for the Site and its context;
 - The character, amenity and degree of openness of the view from a range of visual receptors (either transient, serial or static views);
 - The current and future baseline scenarios; and
 - The value of each of the landscape and visual receptors.

Landscape effects derive from either direct or in-direct changes to the physical landscape which may give rise to changes to the individual landscape components. This in turn effects the landscape character and potentially changes how the landscape is experienced and valued.

Visual effects relate to the changes that arise in the composition, character and amenity of the view as a result of changes to the landscape elements.

- The assessment of effects therefore systematically:
- Combines the value of the receptor with the susceptibility to the proposed change to determine the sensitivity of the receptor;
 - Combines the size, scale, geographic extent, duration of the proposals and its reversibility in order to understand the magnitude of the proposal;
 - Combines the sensitivity of the each of the receptors and the magnitude of effect to determine the significance of the effect;
 - Presents the landscape and visual effects in a factual logical, well-reasoned and objective fashion;
 - Indicates the measures proposed over and above those designed into the scheme to prevent/avoid, reduce, offset, remedy, compensate for the effects (mitigation measures) or which provide an overall landscape and visual enhancement;
 - Sets out any assumptions considered throughout the assessment of effects; and
 - Sets out residual effects.

Effects may be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse) direct or indirect, residual, permanent or temporary short, medium or long term. They can also arise at different scales (national, regional, local or site level) and have different levels of significance (major, moderate, low, negligible or neutral / no change). Residual effects are those at year 15 considering any additional mitigation measures in place over and above those designed in to the scheme.

The combination of the above factors influences the professional judgement and opinion on the significance of the landscape and visual effects.

The emphasis is placed on the narrative text describing the landscape and visual effects, and the judgements made about their significance, with tables and matrices used to support and summarise the descriptive text. The criteria and thresholds set out in the methodology are used to inform the assessment of effects. Ranges of criteria and thresholds are used in the assessment where appropriate. Whilst every possible range is not defined in the methodology, each of the thresholds and criteria are clearly explained, and therefore the logic to each range can be traced.

Cumulative effects of all other known development may also be considered.

The following sections set out in more detail the assessment process employed.

Establishing the Landscape Baseline

Desk and Field Studies

The initial step is to identify the existing landscape and visual resource in the vicinity of the Proposed Development– the baseline landscape and visual conditions. The purpose of baseline study is to record and analyse the existing landscape, in terms of its constituent elements, features, characteristics, geographic extent, historical and cultural associations, condition, the way the landscape is experienced and the value / importance of that particular landscape. The baseline assessment will also identify any potential changes likely to occur in the local landscape which will change the characteristics of either the Site or its setting.

A desk study is carried out to establish the physical components of the local landscape and to broadly identify the boundaries of the study area. Ordnance survey (OS) maps and digital data are used to identify local features relating to geology, soils, landform, drainage, vegetation cover, land use, settlement, the history of the landscape and the way that landscape is experienced, which together combine to create a series of key characteristics and character areas. Vertical aerial photography and Google streetview will be used to supplement OS information. At this stage, any special designated landscapes, such as National Landscapes (formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), National Parks, Green Belt, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Areas of Special Character); heritage or ecological assets are identified. A review of information available in terms of any published historic landscape characterisation together with any other landscape / capacity / urban fringe and visual related studies is carried out at this stage. In addition, a desk study of any unbuilt commitments will be incorporated.

Landscape character assessment is the tool for classifying the landscape into distinct character areas or types, which share common features and characteristics. There is a well established methodology developed in the UK by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage in 2002, which has been superseded in England by guidance published by Natural England in 2014. The national, regional and some level character assessments are often available in published documents. The character assessment will also identify environmental and landscape opportunities, recent changes, future trends and forces for change where they may be important in relation to the proposal, especially considering how the landscape appears, or would appear prior to the commencement of development. The condition of the landscape, i.e. the physical state of an individual area of landscape, will be described as factually as possible. The assessment of landscape importance includes reference to policy or designations as an indicator of recognised value, including specific features or characteristics that justify the designation of the area.

These desk based studies are then used as a basis for verification in the field. The field based assessment also considers the perceptual qualities of the landscape, including tranquillity.

Judgements on the value of both the landscape and visual receptor are made at the baseline stage.

Landscape Value

Value is concerned with the relative value or importance that is attached to different landscapes. Landscape value is inherent, considered independently of the development proposals.

The baseline assessment considers any natural and cultural heritage, landscape condition, associations with notable people, events and the arts, distinctiveness, recreational opportunities, and perceptual qualities (including scenic quality, wilderness, tranquillity and / or dark skies). These environmental, historical and cultural aspects, physical and visual components are considered together with any statutory and non-statutory designations, taking into account other values to society, which may be expressed by the local community or consultees. Wherever possible information and opinions on landscape value is to be sought through discussions with consultees, stakeholders and user groups.

Landscape value is not always signified by designation. When considering a non-designated area, landscape value will be determined through a review of existing assessments, policies, strategies and guidelines. Where appropriate, new survey and analysis will inform judgements about landscape value. Any landscape designation will be considered in terms of their 'meaning' to today's context.

The tables relating to landscape value and the value attached to views are a starting point for consideration in the field. The following table sets out the criteria and definitions used in the baseline assessment to determine landscape value (in addition to condition / quality). Box 5.1 set out within 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA3) Third Edition (Routledge 2013), along with Technical Guidance Note 02/21 'Assessing landscape value outside national designations' (Landscape Institute, May 2021) have been used to inform these criteria.

Not all of the criteria within Table 1.1 need to be met for a landscape to be assigned a value of high, medium or low.

1.1 Landscape Value Criteria		
High	Medium	Low
Natural Heritage Unique components relating to ecology, geology, topography, soils and water. Components may be nationally / internationally designated, including: · Sites of Important Nature Conservation · Heritage Coasts · Special Protection Areas · Ancient Woodland	Natural Heritage Common components relating to ecology, geology, topography, soils and water. Components may be designated at the local or borough level, including: · TPO's · Nature Reserve's	Natural Heritage Inconsequential components relating to ecology, geology, topography, soils and water. Generally non-designated.
Cultural Heritage Rare or distinct components relating to built history that positively contribute to landscape character including: · drove roads / salt ways / packhorse trails · sunken lanes · ridge and furrow fields · relic farmsteads Nationally / internationally designated component/s including: · UNESCO World Heritage Sites · Listed buildings / structures and their associated setting. · Historic Parks ad Gardens (included within the Register by Historic England) · Registered Battlefield · Scheduled Ancient Monuments	Cultural Heritage Common components relating to built history that positively contribute to landscape character such as vernacular architecture typical of the locality. Locally designated component/s including: · Conservation Areas · Scenic Trails / Scenic Routes · Locally listed buildings and monuments Non-designated components but acknowledge locally for their heritage importance or expressed through non-statutory designations.	Cultural Heritage Few or no components relating to built history that positively contribute to landscape character. Generally non-designated.
Landscape Condition Landscape area or components in a very good physical condition / intact, with appropriate management. Absence of detracting/ incongruous features (or features are present but are not prominent).	Landscape Condition Landscape area or components in a good - ordinary condition, with scope to improve. Some detracting / incongruous features.	Landscape Condition Landscape area or components in a poor condition, with scope to improve. Many detracting / incongruous features. Disturbed or derelict land.
Associations Many or significant connections with well-known events, people, works of art, science or technical achievements that positively contribute to perceptions of the landscape.	Associations Some connections with well-known events, people, works of art, science or technical achievements that positively contribute to perceptions of the landscape.	Associations Few or no connections with well-known events, people, works of art, science or technical achievements that positively contribute to perceptions of the landscape.
Distinctiveness Unique components that make a strong and multifaceted positive contribution to landscape character e.g. the whalebone arch in Whitby. Landscape area that is recognised nationally / internationally for its scenic beauty, including areas within: · National Parks · National Landscapes Landscape areas that have a strong visual or functional link with adjacent designated landscapes and their special qualities.	Distinctiveness Some components that are unique and contribute positively to landscape character. Recognised locally, including designations such as Special Landscape Areas, Areas of Great Landscape Value, Strategic or Local Gaps.	Distinctiveness Few landscape areas that are unique and contribute positively to landscape character. Certain individual components identified in landscape character assessments may be worthy of conservation. Frequent dominant detracting features.
Recreational Prominence of open access land, common land and public rights of way (particularly National Trails, long distance trails, Coastal Paths and Core Paths), plus high quality public open space. Areas with very good or good accessibility with opportunities for the enjoyment of the outdoors.	Recreational Some open access land, common land and public rights of way. Areas with good or ordinary accessibility with opportunities for the enjoyment of the outdoors.	Recreational A limited quantum of open access land, common land and public rights of way. Poor accessibility with opportunities for the enjoyment of the outdoors.
Perceptual Unique landscape areas or components, particularly regarding scale, form, colour, texture, diversity or contrasts that positively contribute to landscape character. High levels of tranquillity and relative wildness, including sense of remoteness, dark skies, presence of wildlife / bird song and relative peace and quiet.	Perceptual Demonstrates some wildness and tranquillity. Some detracting features.	Perceptual Limited or no sense of wildness and tranquillity. Frequent / multiple detracting features.
Functional Unique landscape areas or components that contribute to the healthy functioning of the landscape and make a strong and multi-facated positive contribution to landscape character e.g. areas that form carbon sinks such as peat bogs; landscapes / elements that have a strong physical or functional links with an adjacent national landscape designation, or are important to the appreciation of its special qualities	Functional Landscape areas or components which make some contribution to the healthy functioning of the landscape; landscapes / elements that have some physical or functional links with an adjacent national landscape designation, or provide some role to the appreciation of its special qualities.	Functional Limited or no contribution to the healthy functioning of the landscape or adjacent national landscape designations.

Establishing in the Visual Baseline Desk & Field Studies

The visual baseline will establish the area in which the Site and the Proposed Development may be visible, the different groups of people who may experience the views, the places where they will be affected and the nature, character and amenity of those views.

The area of study for the visual assessment is determined through identifying the area from which the existing Site and proposal may be visible (the Zone of Theoretical Visibility or ZTV). The baseline ZTV of the Site is determined through either manual topographical analysis (a combination of desk and field based analysis which are considered appropriate for Landscape and Visual Appraisals and projects below the EIA threshold) or digital mapping based on bare earth modelling, (which do not take account of features such as vegetation or built form) constructing a map showing the area where the Proposed Development may theoretically be visible. The extent of the mapping will depend on the type of proposal. The actual extent of visibility is checked in the field to record the screening effect of buildings, walls, fences, trees, hedgerows and banks not identified in the initial bare ground mapping stage and to provide an accurate baseline assessment of visibility. Viewpoints within the ZTV should also be identified during the desk assessment, and the viewpoints used for photographs selected to demonstrate the relative visibility of the Site (and any existing development on it and its relationship with the surrounding landscape and built forms). The selection of a range of key viewpoints will be based on the following criteria for determination in the field:

- The requirement to provide an even spread of representative, specific, illustrative or static / kinetic / sequential / transient viewpoints within the ZTV and around all sides of the Site;
- From locations which represent a range of near, middle and long distance views (although the most distant views may be discounted in the impact assessment if it is judged that visibility will be extremely limited);
- Views from sensitive receptors within designated, historic or cultural landscapes or heritage assets (such as adjacent to Listed Buildings - and co-ordinated with the heritage consultant - key tourist locations and public vantage points such as viewpoints identified on OS maps);
- The inclusion of strategic / important / designed views and vistas identified in published documents;

Views from the following are to be included in the visual assessment:

- Individual private dwellings. These are to be collated as representative viewpoints as it may not be practical to visit all properties that might be affected;
- Transient or static views from public viewpoints (i.e. from roads, railway lines and Public Rights of Way - including tourist or scenic routes and associated viewpoints);
- Areas of publicly accessible green space (i.e. public open space, open access land, recreation grounds, country parks, visitor attractions, tourist destinations or scenic viewpoints); and
- Places of employment, where relevant.

The final selection of the key viewpoints for inclusion in the LVIA will be based proportionately in relation to the scale and nature of the development proposals and likely significant effects.

The visual assessment records:

- The character and amenity of the view, including topographic, geological and drainage features, woodland, tree and hedgerow cover, land use, field boundaries, artefacts, access and rights of way, direction of view and potential seasonal screening effects and any skyline elements or features.
- The type of view, whether oblique or direct; panoramic or vistas.
- The extent of visibility of the range of receptors is based on a grading of degrees of visibility, from a visual inspection of the Site and surrounding area. There will be a continuity of degree of visibility ranging from no view of the Site (truncated) to fully open views. Views are recorded, even if views are truncated of the existing site, as the Proposed Development may be visible in these views. To indicate the degree of visibility of the Site from any location, three categories are used:
 - a **Open View:**
An open view of the whole site / where much of the Site is visible, or where the Site forms much of the view.
 - b **Partial View:**
Some of the Site is visible, or where the Site forms a small part of the wider view;
 - c **Truncated View:**
No view of the Site or the Site is difficult to perceive.

Following the field survey (which should cover ideally both winter and summer views) the extent to which the Site is visible from the surrounding area will be mapped. A Viewpoint Plan will be prepared to illustrate the representative views into / towards the Site (if publicly accessible) and the degree of visibility of the Site noted.

The visual assessment will include a series of annotated photographs, the location and extent of the Site within the view together with identifying the character and amenity of the view, alongside any specific elements or important component features such as landform, buildings or vegetation or detracting features which interrupt, filter or otherwise influence views.

By the end of this stage of the combined landscape and visual site study, it will be possible to advise, in landscape and visual terms, on any specific mitigation measures required in terms of the developments preferred siting, layout and design.

Value of Visual Receptors

Judgements on the value attached to the views experienced are based on the following criteria.

1.2 – Value Attached to Views	
Value	Criteria
High	Views from and to landscapes / viewpoints of national importance, or highly popular visitor attractions where the view forms a significant role in the visual experience, and / or has nationally recognised cultural associations. This may include residential receptors in Listed Buildings where the primary elevation of the dwelling is orientated to take advantage of a particular view (for example across a Registered Park and Garden or National Park or AONB).
Medium	Views from and to landscapes / viewpoints of regional / district importance or moderately popular visitor attractions where the view forms part of the experience, and / or has local cultural associations. This may include residential receptors where the primary elevation of the dwelling is orientated to take advantage of a particular view.
Low	Views from and to landscapes / viewpoints with no designation, not particularly important and with minimal or no cultural associations. This may include views from the rear elevation of residential properties.

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Susceptibility and Magnitude

The assessment of landscape and visual effects is obtained through assessing susceptibility, combining this with the judgement on value, to form the sensitivity of receptors. Sensitivity is then linked with a judgement of magnitude of effect experienced to form the assessment of effect. Susceptibility, sensitivity and magnitude of effect are explained further within this section.

Landscape Susceptibility

The susceptibility of the landscape is a measure of its vulnerability to the development proposed, without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation.

The overall susceptibility for each landscape receptor is categorised as High, Medium or Low as set out in Table 1.3.

1.3 – Landscape Susceptibility Criteria	
Susceptibility	Criteria
High	The receptor has a well-defined composition with a direct relationship to adjacent key characteristics. The development proposed is likely to alter the overall integrity of the receptor and is very unlikely to be able to accommodate recommendations as set out in published guidelines.
Medium	The receptor has a varied composition with some links to adjacent key characteristics. The development proposed may potentially alter the overall integrity of the receptor and could incorporate recommendations as set out in published guidelines.
Low	The receptor has a disjointed composition with little - no links to adjacent key characteristics. The development proposed is unlikely to alter the overall integrity of the receptor and is capable of incorporating recommendations as set out in published guidelines.

Visual Susceptibility

The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of:

- the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and
- the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations.

The overall susceptibility for each visual receptor is categorised as High, Medium or Low as set out in Table 1.4

1.4 Visual Susceptibility Criteria	
Susceptibility	Criteria
High	People engaged in an activity and/or at a location where they are focused on the landscape; where the view contributes to the amenity experience; and where there is opportunity to appreciate the view.
Medium	People engaged in an activity and/or at a location where they are not especially focused on the landscape; where the view contributes in part to the amenity experience; and where there is some opportunity to appreciate the view.
Low	People engaged in an activity and/or at a location where they are not focused on the landscape; where the view does not contribute to the amenity experience; and where there is little - no opportunity to appreciate the view.

Sensitivity Judgements

The assessment of landscape / visual sensitivity is then combined through a judgement on the value attributed to that receptor (at the baseline stage) and the susceptibility of the receptor to the proposed change using the criteria as set out in Tables 1.3 and 1.4.

Table 1.5 below sets out the sensitivity matrix, with criteria set out as High, Medium and Low.

1.5 Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Matrix				
		Landscape / Visual Receptor Susceptibility		
		High	Medium	Low
Landscape / Visual Value	High	High	High	Medium
	Medium	High	Medium	Medium
	Low	Medium	Medium	Low

Landscape Magnitude of Effects

Size and Scale

Factors contributing to the size and scale of the change to be experienced by the landscape receptor (as set out in Table 1.6) include the extent of the receptor that will be altered (with reference to their wider contribution to the landscape); the degree to which aesthetic of perceptual aspects will be altered; and the geographical area that will be directly and indirectly altered.

1.6 Landscape Scale Criteria	
Extent	Description
Substantial	Likely be a whole scale change to the landscape receptor, which will result in change in the integrity of the receptor of a wide geographic area.
Sizeable	Likely be change to a high proportion of the landscape receptor, which will result in a noticeable change in the integrity of the receptor of an extended geographic area.
Modest	Likely be change to a moderate proportion of the landscape receptor, which will be perceptible and have some effect on the integrity of the receptor within a localised geographic area.
Compact	Likely be change to a limited proportion of the landscape receptor, which will not be discernible or have no - limited effect on the integrity of the receptor within its immediate setting (very localised geographic area).

Duration and Reversibility

Factors contributing to the duration of the change to be experienced by the landscape receptor (as set out in Table 1.7) include whether the change is wholly reversible, permanent or temporary. Construction impacts are likely to be short term, temporary, but see the start of a permanent change. Operational effects are likely to be long term, permanent and either irreversible or reversible, depending on the nature of the project.

1.7 Landscape Duration and Reversibility Criteria	
Extent	Description
Long	Likely to be of permanence (10 - 25 years +) with limited prospect of being reinstated and is deemed irreversible.
Medium	Likely to be of permanence (between 5-10 years) and is potentially, or theoretically reversible.
Short	Likely to be up to 5 years and is wholly or partially reversible / receptors can be reinstated.
Very Short	Likely to be temporary (up to 2 years) and readily reinstated / reversed. Includes construction effects (unless these are for an extended period).

Visual Magnitude of Effects

Scale

Factors contributing to the scale of the change to be experienced by the visual receptor (as set out in Table 1.8) include the angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor; the distance of the viewer from the Proposed Development; the extent of the area over which the changes will be visible; and the degree of visual intrusion of the Proposed Development in the view.

1.8 Visual Scale Criteria	
Extent	Description
Substantial	Likely be a distinct change in the composition of the view, close to the viewer and occupying a wide extent of the view.
Sizeable	Likely be a noticeable change in the composition of the view, which may be close to the viewer and / or occupying a sizeable extent of the view.
Modest	Likely be a perceptible change in the composition of the view, which may be at some distance from the viewer, or nearby but only glimpsed and/or occupying a discrete extent of the view.
Compact	Likely be a barely perceptible change in the composition of the view, which is likely to be at a considerable distance from the viewer and only glimpsed and / or occupying a limited extent of the view.

Duration and Reversibility

Factors contributing to the duration of the change to be experienced by the visual receptor (as set out in Table 1.9) include whether the view is experienced in fixed or transient views; and the nature of transient views - being intermittent, glimpsed or continuous.

1.9 Visual Duration and Reversibility Criteria	
Extent	Description
Long	Likely to be of permanence and visible for a continuous period.
Medium	Likely to be of permanence and intermittently visible.
Short	Likely to be temporary and visible for a continuous period.
Very Short	Likely to be temporary and intermittently visible.

Magnitude of Effect Judgements

The assessment of size / scale / geographic extent plus duration and reversibility is then combined based on the matrix as set out in Table 1.10 below, with criteria set out as High, Medium, Low and Negligible.

1.10 Magnitude Matrix					
		Duration and Reversibility			
		Long	Medium	Short	Very Short
S c a l e	Substantial	High	High - Medium	Medium	Low - Negligible
	Sizeable	High - Medium	Medium	Medium	Low - Negligible
	Modest	Medium	Medium	Low	Negligible
	Compact	Low - Negligible	Low - Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Significance of Effects

Sensitivity and magnitude of effect are considered alongside one another for each receptor, in line with Table 1.11 below, to draw conclusions on the significance of landscape and visual effects. The significance of effects will be considered at different stages of the project life cycle: during construction; at Year 1 of operation; and at Year 15 of operation.

The assessment of significance is subject to professional judgement and is rated on a scale of Negligible through to Major. Table 1.11 sets out a starting point for the assessment, it is important that a balanced and well reasoned professional judgement of these two criteria is provided with an explanation..

1.11 Significance Matrix				
		Landscape and Visual Receptor Sensitivity		
		High	Medium	Low
Magnitude	High	Major	Major	Moderate
	Medium	Major	Moderate	Moderate
	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Negligible

The judgement of significance indicates how important the effect is likely to be from a landscape and visual perspective. For schemes subject to Environmental Impact Assessment, effects of Major or Moderate significance are deemed ‘significant’ as governed by the EIA Directive (2014/52/EU).

1.12 Significance Description	
Significance	Description
Major	An effect that is likely to be very important from a landscape and visual perspective.
Moderate	An effect that is potentially important from a landscape and visual perspective.
Minor	An effect that is unlikely to be important from a landscape and visual perspective.
Negligible	An effect that has minimal importance from a landscape and visual perspective.
No change	No effect and therefore of no importance from a landscape and visual perspective.

Nature of Effects

Effects are defined as beneficial, adverse, or neutral, as defined in Table 1.13. This consideration is termed the ‘balance of effects’, factoring in both the potentially beneficial and adverse aspects associated with a given change and its resultant effect. Where landscape effects are judged to be adverse, additional mitigation or compensatory measures are to be considered. The significant landscape effects remaining after mitigation are then to be summarised as the residual effects.

Effects will be described clearly and objectively, and the extent and duration of any negative / positive effects quantified, using four categories of effects, indicating a gradation from high to low.

1.13 Nature of Effects Criteria	
Nature	Description
Beneficial	An effect that will on balance result in an improvement to the condition, integrity or key characteristics/ composition of the landscape receptor or viewing experience.
Adverse	An effect that will on balance result in damage to the condition, integrity or key characteristics/composition of the landscape receptor or viewing experience.
Neutral	An effect that will on balance maintain the condition, integrity or key characteristics / composition of the landscape receptor or viewing experience and may incorporate a combination of positive and negative aspects.

Effects During Site Enabling & Construction

- It is recognised that project characteristics and hence sources of effects, will vary through time. The initial effects arise from the Site enabling and construction works. Sources of landscape and visual effects may include:
 - The location of the Site access and haulage routes;
 - The origin and nature of materials stockpiles, stripping of material and cut and fill operations / disposal and construction compounds;
 - The construction equipment and plant (and colour);
 - The provision of utilities, including lighting and any temporary facilities;
 - The scale, location and nature of any temporary parking areas and on-site accommodation;
 - The removal of vegetation to facilitate site access and establish the development platforms;
 - The measures for the temporary protection of existing features (such as vegetation, trees, ponds, etc) and any temporary screening (such as hoarding lines); and
- The programme of work and phasing of construction.

Effects During Operation (at Year 1 and Year 15)

- At the operational stage, the sources of landscape and visual effects may include:
- The location, scale, height, mass and design of buildings in terms of elevation treatments; structures and processes, including any other features;
 - Access arrangements and traffic movements;
 - The operational landscape, including landform, structure planting, green infrastructure and hard landscape features.

Mitigation Measures

The purpose of mitigation is to avoid, reduce and where possible, remedy or offset, any significant (major to moderate) negative (adverse) effects on the landscape and visual receptors arising from the Proposed Development. Mitigation is thus not solely concerned with ‘damage limitation’, but may also consider measures that could compensate for unavoidable residual effects. Mitigation measures may be considered under three categories:

- Primary measures that intrinsically comprise part of the development design through an iterative process;
- Standard construction and operational management practices for avoiding and reducing environmental effects (tertiary mitigation); and
- Secondary (or residual) measures designed to specifically address the remaining effects after the primary and standard construction practices have been incorporated.

Residual Effects

The residual effects of the Proposed Development are to be assessed. Residual effects are those at year 15 and consider any additional mitigation measures required to address specific landscape and visual sensitivities in place over and above the primary mitigation measures proposed and those already included and designed in to the scheme. The process of assessing residual effects is the same as assessing the primary effects.

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