



Gladman Developments Ltd

The Hill, Littlebourne

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

November 2023

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been carried out for The Hill, Littlebourne by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd (FPCR). The purpose of this LVA study is to provide an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposals detailed in the planning application and Design and Access Statement (DAS).
- 1.2 FPCR is a multi-disciplinary environmental and design consultancy established over 60 years, with expertise in architecture, landscape, ecology, arboriculture, urban design, masterplanning and environmental impact assessment. The practice is a member of the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and is frequently called upon to provide expert evidence on landscape and visual issues at Public and Local Plan Inquiries.

Site Location

- 1.3 Figures 1 and 2 show the location and context of the site. The site is situated to the west of the village of Littlebourne. Littlebourne is located approximately 6.5km to the east of Canterbury, Kent. The site adjoins both The Hill (A257) on its north eastern edge and Bekesbourne Lane to the south.
- 1.4 Howletts Wild Animal Park is situated on the western edge of the site, with the residential development of Littlebourne to the east, agricultural land and woodland blocks to the north and agricultural land and Nail Bourne shallow valley to the south.
- 1.5 The A257 connects Littlebourne to Canterbury and the A2. The closest railway station is located at Bekesbourne Hill to the south west of the site, some 1.8km away.

Proposed Development

- 1.6 The proposed development is a residential development for up to 300 dwellings, 30% of which will be affordable homes. A number of units within the scheme will provide accommodation for the elderly. Facilities provided within the scheme include: a local shop, a community orchard and allotments, structural landscape features such as tree belts and woodland blocks on the site boundaries, tree lined streets, a host of sustainable drainage features, play and sports recreation provision, a pedestrian crossing close to the vehicular access on The Hill which adjoins footpath and cycleway routes that connect the northern and southern parcels and forge new links into the surrounding landscape.

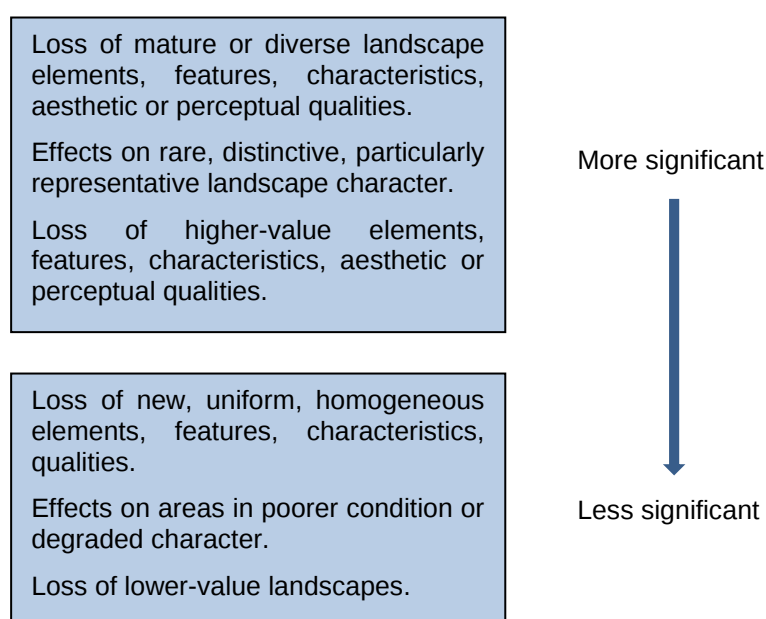
2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 This LVA has been prepared based upon the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, in 2013. The assessment of Landscape Value also takes account of guidance in Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02-21 “Assessing landscape value outside national designations”.
- 2.2 In summary, the GLVIA3 states:
- “Landscape and Visual impact assessment (LVIA), is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity.”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 1.1.)
- 2.3 There are two components of LVIA:
- *“Assessment of landscape effects; assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;*
 - *Assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 2.21.)
- 2.4 The GLVIA3 states:
- “LVIA can be carried out either as part of a broader EIA, or as a standalone ‘appraisal’ of the likely landscape and visual effects of a proposed development...”*
- *As a standalone ‘appraisal’ the process is informal and there is more flexibility, but the essence of the approach – specifying the nature of the proposed change or development; describing the existing landscape and the views and visual amenity of the area that may be affected; predicting the effects, although not their likely significance; and considering how those effects might be mitigated – still applies”.* (GLVIA paragraph 3.2)
- 2.5 The components of this report include: baseline studies; description and details of the landscape proposals and mitigation measures to be adopted as part of the scheme; and identification and description of likely effects arising from the proposed development.
- 2.6 In terms of baseline studies, the assessment provides an understanding of the landscape that may be affected, its constituent elements, character, condition and value. For the visual baseline, this includes an understanding of the area in which the development may be visible, the people who may experience views, and the nature of views.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

- 2.7 GLVIA3 states that *“An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 5.1).
- 2.8 The baseline landscape is described by reference to existing published Landscape Character Assessments and by a description of the site and its context.
- 2.9 A range of landscape effects can arise through development. These can include:
- Change or loss of elements, features, aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;

- Addition of new elements that influence character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
 - Combined effects of these changes.
- 2.10 The characteristics of the existing landscape resource are considered in respect of the susceptibility of the landscape resource to the change arising from this development. The value of the existing landscape is also considered.
- 2.11 Each effect on landscape receptors is assessed in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. In terms of size or scale of change, the judgement takes account of the extent of the existing landscape elements that will be lost or changed, and the degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects or key characteristics of the landscape will be altered by removal or addition of new elements. Geographical extent is considered by reference to the extent of the area over which there will be a change. Duration is considered for the landscape effects, with short term effects being defined as those lasting less than 5 years, medium term effects lasting between 5 and 10 years and long-term effects being defined as anything over 10 years in duration.
- 2.12 The level of effect is determined by considering the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of effect on the landscape. Final conclusions on the overall landscape effects are drawn from the assessment components described. This appraisal describes the nature of the landscape effects, and whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 1) and longer term (year 15).
- 2.13 GLVIA3 sets out some guidance on the underlying principles, which are used in this appraisal. This includes Figure 5.10, Scale of significance. Whilst this scheme is not EIA development, and judgements on significance are not therefore required, the Figure does provide useful guidance on reaching an overall judgement on the level of effects. This is repeated below (note this includes the correction of a typo, from the published document).



- 2.14 The criteria used in the appraisal are set out in Appendix A.

Assessment of Visual Effects

- 2.15 An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. This appraisal describes the nature of the visual effects and, whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 1 Winter) and longer term (year 15 Summer).
- 2.16 The first stage in the assessment is to identify approximate visibility/ visibility mapping. This is done by either a computerised Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)¹, or by manual methods using map study and field evaluation. A series of viewpoints are included within the assessment that are representative of views towards the site from surrounding visual receptors. Other views of the site are included where it supports the description and understanding of the site's landscape and visual characteristics.
- 2.17 The views also typically represent what can be seen from a variety of distances from the development and different viewing experiences.
- 2.18 It is important to remember that visual receptors are all people. For each affected viewpoint, the assessment considers both the susceptibility to change in views and the value attached to views.

"The visual receptors most susceptible to change are generally likely to include:

- *Residents at home;*
 - *People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views;*
 - *Visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;*
 - *Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area;*
- Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes tend to fall into an intermediate category of moderate susceptibility to change. Where travel involves recognised scenic routes awareness of views is likely to be particularly high."* (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.33.)

"Visual receptors likely to be less sensitive to change include:

- *People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape;*
- *People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life (although there may on occasion be cases where views are an important contributor to the setting and to the quality of working life)." (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.34.)*

- 2.19 Each of the visual effects is evaluated in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration or reversibility.
- 2.20 In terms of size or scale, the magnitude of visual effects takes account of:

¹ Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV): A map usually digitally produced, showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible. [GLVIA3]

- *“The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development;*
- *The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line height, colour and texture;*
- *The nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses” (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.39).*

2.21 The geographical extent of the visual effect in each viewpoint is likely to reflect:

- The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
- The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development;
- The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.

2.22 As with landscape effects, the duration of the effect could be short to long term or permanent and the same definitions apply.

2.23 GLVIA3 states that there are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and context and with the type of proposal, but the following points should be noted;

- *Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant*
- *Effects on people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant*
- *Large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features already present within the view. (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.44)*

2.24 The criteria used in this appraisal are set out in Appendix A.

Overall Landscape and Visual Effects

2.25 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects. This overall judgement is formed from a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the assessment criteria.

2.26 GLVIA3 notes, at paragraphs 5.56 and 6.44, that there are no hard and fast rules with regard to the level of effects, therefore the following terms have been used for this appraisal:

- **Major**
- **Moderate**
- **Minor**
- **Negligible**

- 2.27 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as, for example, Major/ Moderate or Moderate/ Minor. This indicates that the effect is assessed to lie between the respective definitions or to encompass aspects of both.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, September 2023)

- 3.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policy and in combination these policies give the Government's vision of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need for well-designed places, promoting healthy and safe communities and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 3.2 Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for the countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives include protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
- 3.3 Paragraph 174 states at part a) that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes and goes on to clarify that this should be in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan. Part b) states that planning policies and decisions should recognise *"the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside"*.
- 3.4 Paragraph 175 advises that:
"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries".
- 3.5 Paragraph 176 goes on to add:
"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues". And
"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."
- 3.6 The site is within an undesignated landscape with no special protected status and is not in the setting of a nationally designated landscape. The character of the site and its immediate context is assessed within this report to help inform decisions regarding *"the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside"*. The potential to enhance green infrastructure networks is also considered.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 3.7 The PPG was first published on 6th March 2014 and is a regularly updated online planning resource which provides guidance on the NPPF and the planning system. The NPPF continues to be the primary document for decision making.

Local Planning Policy

Canterbury District Local Plan (Adopted 2017)

- 3.8 This adopted Local Plan sets out the vision for the District to 2031. The following policies set out within the plan are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development:

Policy DBE3 Principles of Design

- 3.9 *“The distinctive character, diversity and quality of the Canterbury District will be promoted, protected and enhanced through high quality, sustainable inclusive design, which reinforces and positively contributes to its local context creating attractive, inspiring and safe places.*

Proposals for the development, which are of a high quality design, will be granted planning permission having regard to other plan policies and the following considerations:

a. The character, setting and context of the site and the way the development is integrated into the landscape;

b. The visual impact including the impact on local townscape character and landscape and the skyline;”

Policy DBE7 Public Realm

- 3.10 *“In order to achieve high quality design of the public realm, development proposals will be expected to:*

a. Reinforce or enhance the established character of the area;

b. Integrate with existing path, circulation networks and patterns of activity and permeability;

c. Integrate with the existing landscape setting;

d. Respond to contextual features and be locally distinctive;....

...g. Create attractive, manageable, well functioning spaces within the site.”

Policy LB4 Landscape Character Areas

- 3.11 This policy ensures that consideration is given to landscape character and states the following:

“Proposals for development, and associated land use change or land management, should demonstrate that they are informed by, and sympathetic to, the landscape character of the locality. In considering development proposals, the Council will take every opportunity to reinforce, restore, conserve or improve, as appropriate, the landscape character of the area in which development is proposed.

Development will only be permitted if the following criteria can be satisfied:

a. Development would be appropriate to the economic and social wellbeing of the area;

b. The site selection can be adequately justified, with the siting of development minimising the impact;

c. Development would safeguard or strengthen tranquillity, features and patterns that contribute to the landscape character and local distinctiveness of the area;

d. The scale, design, materials and landscaping measures are appropriate and would lead to an enhancement of the character of the landscape; and

- e. *Development will promote maintenance, enhancement, and restoration of biodiversity as appropriate in accordance with policy LB9.*

All development should take into account the sensitivity of the particular landscape to accommodate change. Development, or associated land use change or land management, which does not significantly adversely affect the landscape character of an area, will normally be allowed. The development should have regard to the Canterbury Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal to identify the character areas and features affected."

Policy LB10 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

- 3.12 This policy highlights the importance of retaining trees, hedgerows and woodland that 'make an important contribution to the amenity of the site and the surrounding area'. The policy also highlights the importance of maintaining and enhancing the character of woodland and hedgerow networks through the following:
- a. *"Incorporating tree planting as an integral element of landscaping schemes where this is in keeping with the landscape character of the area;*
 - b. *Protecting ancient woodland, ancient trees and 'important' hedgerows from damaging development and land uses;*
 - c. *Promoting the retention and effective management, and where appropriate, extension and creation of new woodland areas and hedgerows;*
 - d. *Promoting and encouraging the economic use of woodlands and wood resources, including wood fuel as a renewable energy source;*
 - e. *Promoting the growth and procurement of sustainable timber products; and*
 - f. *Promoting the retention, enhancement and extension of existing hedges."*

Policy OS12 Green Infrastructure

- 3.13 This policy relates to all new development and states that:
- a. *"Green infrastructure is planned, designed and managed to conserve and enhance the distinctive character and special qualities of, rural and urban landscapes, and the identity of settlements. Where feasible as part of all new developments and proposals, developers will need to establish and extend green space networks as corridors for movement by foot and cycle, as havens for wildlife and natural habitats and for leisure, amenity and recreational use. Where practicable green linkages should be encouraged from within existing settlements to the open countryside.*
 - b. *Existing open space is conserved and enhanced as part of these networks, which where possible, should extend through major new development sites and connect directly with community facilities, employment areas and transport hubs in order to deliver sustainable development and support the health and well-being of residents."*

Draft Canterbury District Local Plan | to 2045 (October 2022)

- 3.14 The Draft Canterbury District Local Plan is currently undergoing consultation. As a part of the Draft Local Plan the site is allocated for residential development. Policy R15 provides a detailed criteria for the development of the site. The following Policies are relevant to landscape and visual matters:

Policy R15 – The Hill, Littlebourne

- 3.15 Site R15 is allocated for mixed-use development. Planning permission will be granted for development which meets the following criteria:

1. “Development mix

Across the site, which measures 15.99 ha, the development mix will include:

- a. *Approximately 300 new dwellings across circa 8.63 ha...*
- b. *...A minimum of 30 units of older person accommodation, to be located adjacent to community facilities and services ...*
- c. *Non-residential development: (i) Provision of new local shopping and community facilities, including a shop/cafe, to serve new and existing residents; (ii) Provision of a new high quality waste water treatment works at an appropriate location within the site; ...*
- d. *Open space: new on-site open space will be provided in line with Policy DS24, to include approximately:*
 - (i) *2.84ha of natural and seminatural;*
 - (ii) *1.60ha of amenity green space (including green corridors);*
 - (iii) *0.57ha of parks and gardens;*
 - (iv) *0.39ha of play facilities including:*
 - *0.18ha of fixed play areas with LAP and LEAP facilities; and*
 - *0.21ha of NEAPs and destination play facilities.*
 - (v) *0.62ha of outdoor sports; and*
 - (vi) *11 allotment plots (0.27ha).*

2. Design and layout

The design and layout of the site should:

- a. *...Provide a significant amount of the required open space alongside the community facilities towards the north-east of the site to maximise accessibility for existing and future residents and to contribute to the character and vitality of the village; ...*
- b. *....Provide a landscape buffer containing natural and semi natural open space to the north and west of the site to provide visual separation between development and surrounding countryside and Howletts Wild Animal Park...*

3. Landscape and green infrastructure

The green and blue infrastructure strategy for the site should:

- a. *Provide a comprehensive and integrated sustainable urban drainage network which makes use of the existing topography and natural features of the site where appropriate;*

- b. *Provide 20% biodiversity net gain, in line with Policy DS21;*
- c. *Incorporate opportunities for landscape and biodiversity enhancements identified within the Local Character Area H6: Littlebourne Fruit Belt set out in Canterbury Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal;*
- d. *Retain and enhance elements of historic landscape including field boundaries and hedgerows and incorporate these where possible and appropriate into the design and layout of the development;*
- e. *Provide habitat, pollinator and ecological connectivity across the site and with the surrounding landscape, including with Priority Habitats; and*
- f. *Incorporate long distance views towards the countryside to the South-East with viewing corridors within open space.*
- 4. Access and transportation

The access and transport strategy for the site should:

- a. *Provide safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle connectivity”*

Policy DS21 – Supporting biodiversity recovery

- 3.16 “1. All proposals for major development must be accompanied by a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy which demonstrates:

On new developments of over 300 homes, a minimum of 20% tree cover across the site, in line with the council’s Tree Strategy. All new developments should incorporate woodlands, trees and / or street trees in keeping with the landscape character of the area; and

- a. *That existing open space, notable ecological features, and green and blue infrastructure, including ancient woodland, species rich or non improved grassland, hedgerows, trees, wetlands and river corridors, are conserved, enhanced and, where possible, extended; and...*
- b. *An appropriate mix of green and blue infrastructure which conserves and enhances the distinctive character and special qualities of rural and urban landscapes, and the identity of settlements; and*
- c. *That publicly accessible open space has been designed and integrated as part of the overall strategy, taking full advantage of the potential for multiple benefits including increased physical activity, enhanced play, wildlife, sustainable urban drainage, tree planting and landscape provision; and*
- d. *How the development will provide for the needs of pollinators such as through the selection and planting of pollinator friendly species and the implementation of pollinators friendly management prescriptions; and*
- e. *That the fragmentation of existing and proposed habitats and open spaces, within and adjacent to the site, has been avoided by maintaining, creating, extending or enhancing ecological networks, green corridors, and Public Rights of Way. These connections should be managed over the long term as natural havens for wildlife and, where appropriate, multifunctional for leisure, amenity and recreational use supporting pedestrian and cycle movement; and*

- f. *Consideration, and inclusion where appropriate, of opportunities for improving connectivity of habitats in strategically important Biodiversity Opportunity Areas; and*
 - g. *Provision for the long-term maintenance and management of all natural and semi natural assets, including landscape character, associated with the development. This includes consideration of the multi-benefits of the green and blue infrastructure such as:*
 - (i) *Promoting and encouraging the economic use of woodlands and wood resources, including wood fuel as a renewable energy source;*
 - (ii) *Promoting the growth and procurement of sustainable timber products; and*
 - (iii) *Providing opportunities for outdoor education; and*
 - (iv) *Promoting species rich grassland that are typical of the local area and are managed by either grazing or hay cuts.*
2. *Proposals for non-major development will be expected to incorporate blue and green infrastructure proportionately to the size and location of the proposed development and its impacts. As a minimum proposals must:*
- a. *Retain existing trees and hedgerows, and where possible increase tree cover and hedgerows; and*
 - b. *Ensure green and infrastructure provision are in-keeping with the local landscape character of the area; and*
 - c. *Consider opportunities for the multibenefits of any proposed green or blue infrastructure; and*
 - d. *Mitigate for and adapt to the effects of climate change; and*
 - e. *Mitigate, and wherever possible avoid, any habitat fragmentation; and*
 - f. *Conserve and where possible enhance, connect or extend Public Rights of Way networks; and*
 - g. *Retain, protect and, where possible, enhance any notable ecological features of conservation value such as ancient woodland, semi improved grassland, hedgerows, trees, wetlands, river corridors and other water bodies, and habitats that offer breeding or feeding sites of local importance to populations of protected or targeted species; and*
 - h. *Provide details on the long-term maintenance and management of the green and blue infrastructure.*
3. *All proposals for development, other than those exempt through national legislation, will be required to demonstrate and deliver a minimum of 20% biodiversity net gain calculated using the latest Natural England biodiversity metric (or an alternative metric set out in legislation), and taking consideration of any national or local guidance on what values should be used."*

Policy DS22 – Landscape Character

"1. Proposals for development should demonstrate that they are informed by, and are sympathetic to, the landscape character of the locality. Proposals will be expected to take every opportunity to reinforce, restore, conserve or improve, as appropriate, the landscape character of the area in which development is proposed.

Proposals for development will be permitted if the following criteria are satisfied:

- a. The key sensitivities and values of the Landscape Character Areas, as identified in the Canterbury District Landscape Character Assessment and Biodiversity Appraisal 2020 or Kent Downs AONB Landscape assessments (or subsequent updates), have demonstrably informed the design of the development; and*
- b. The location, layout, scale and design considers the sensitivity of a particular landscape to accommodate change, and conserves and/or enhances what is special or distinctive about landscape character. This includes considering and, where appropriate, incorporating relevant Landscape Guidelines and Key Habitat Opportunities as identified in the Canterbury District Landscape Character Assessment and Biodiversity Appraisal 2020 or Kent Downs AONB Landscape assessments (or subsequent update); and*
- c. The development does not have an adverse impact on important long distance views, including from vantage points; and*
- d. The development retains, integrates or enhances distinctive local natural, semi-natural, historic or cultural features; and*
- e. The development avoids harm to the landscape and takes appropriate opportunities to enhance landscape character; and*
- f. The development avoids or mitigates any impacts on the character and landscape context of the historic City of Canterbury.*

3. Proposals for development which would cause significant harm to the landscape character of an area will be refused.

Other Relevant Strategies, Guidelines or Documents

Draft Canterbury District Tree Strategy (2022-2045)

- 3.17 This document is currently undergoing consultation but is used as a part of the evidence base for the emerging local plan. As a part of this document and the Draft Canterbury District Local Plan | to 2045 (October 2022) consideration is being given to all development over 300 homes being required to provide 20% tree cover across the site.

Policy Summary

- 3.18 The planning policy context for landscape and visual related matters covers some broad considerations. The site does not fall within any national or local landscape designations. The application proposals will have due regard for the relevant policies above including ensuring there is sufficient open space provision, and that the development respects the local landscape character of the area.

4.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS

Landscape Character

National Character

4.1 National Character Area (NCA) profiles have been prepared by Natural England for the 159 NCAs defined across England. These NCA profiles include a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area's characteristics. Figure 4 illustrates the NCAs and other defined character areas within the context of the site.

4.2 At this very broad landscape scale, the site, lies within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 113 'North Kent Plain'. This NCA is a linear area which stretches from Ramsgate and Margate on the east coast, to Bromley adjacent to the Inner London NCA and therefore covers a very extensive landscape tract. The NCA is briefly described as follows:

"The North Kent Plain National Character Area (NCA) is the strip of land between the Thames Estuary to the north and the chalk of the Kent Downs to the south. The area is open, low and gently undulating. It is a very productive agricultural area with predominantly high-quality, fertile loam soils characterised by arable use. Traditional orchards, soft fruits and other horticultural crops exist in central and eastern areas giving rise to the use of the title 'Garden of England'. it is generally an open landscape: characteristic shelterbelts occur within the fruit-growing areas, but the agricultural land is mostly devoid of hedgerows."

4.3 Under Key Characteristics the NCA description includes the following references;

- *"An open, low and gently undulating landscape, characterised by high quality, fertile, loamy soils dominated by agricultural land uses.*
- *The area's geology is dominated by Palaeogene clays and sands, underlain by the Chalk.*
- *Geologically a chalk outlier – and historically an island separated from the mainland by a sea channel – Thanet forms a discrete and distinct area that is characterised by its unity of land use, arising from the high quality fertile soils developed in thin drift deposits over chalk.*
- *Large arable/horticultural fields with regular patterns and rectangular shapes predominating, and a sparse hedgerow pattern.*
- *Orchards and horticultural crops characterise central and eastern areas, and are often enclosed by poplar or alder shelterbelts and scattered small woodlands.*
- *Other semi-natural habitats include fragments of neutral, calcareous and acid grassland, and also heathland.*
- *The area has rich evidence of human activity from the Palaeolithic period. Key heritage assets include Roman sites at Canterbury, Reculver and Richborough; the Historic Dockyard at Chatham; military remains along the coast; and historic parks and buildings.*
- *Large settlements and urban infrastructure (including lines of pylons) are often visually dominant in the landscape, with significant development around Greater London and the Medway Towns, as well as around towns further east and along the coast. Major rail and road links connect the towns with London."*

- 4.4 The North Downs (NCA 119) lies east and south of the site, with the boundary of the NCA running along the southern extent of the site. There is very limited intervisibility between the site and the wider NCA as a whole due to the contained nature of the site and local intervening features and topography.

The Landscape Assessment of Kent (October 2004)

- 4.5 The Landscape Assessment of Kent was prepared for Kent County Council and is based on existing landscape character assessments of the county updating them to conform with current guidance. It subdivides the landscape into 19 Character Areas with the proposal site located within The North Kent Fruit Belt character area which has the following Characteristic Features:

“Well enclosed, medium scale field pattern. Rolling, quiet, picturesque. Traditional Kentish elements such as hops and orchards are characteristic. Well managed, simple form. The edge of the Canterbury urban area influences views, landuse and circulation. The views towards the Cathedral are very important. Outlying villages are quiet and rural, but with an increasing suburban influence.”

- 4.6 In relation to Condition the assessment states that:

“The landscape has a coherent pattern of elements: well enclosed and well managed fields with farmsteads and oasts over the rolling landscape. This pattern is interrupted by some large areas of arable cultivation and post and wire fencing, but there are few other visual detractors. The intensity of the fruit and arable farming weakens the ecological interest of the farmland, which has limited woodland, few hedges or any other opportunity for seminatural habitat. Culturally, there are areas which exhibit an intact framework of well maintained hedges and shelter belts around large farmsteads and oasts. The area is considered to be in moderate condition.”

- 4.7 In relation to Sensitivity the assessment states that:

“Many of the key characteristics, such as single species shelter belts, large square oasts and dwarf root stock trees, are recent influences on the historic landscape. Woodlands and historic hedgerows are indistinct, some highways have also lost distinctive characteristics.

Visibility is high as views are open across the apparent landform. Sensitivity is considered to be moderate.”

- 4.8 The overall Landscape action for the character area is to “*Conserve and Create*” and actions include:

- *“Conserve historic settlement patterns and isolated settlements on minor ridges in the landscape.*
- *Conserve the enclosure and well-managed attributes of the medium scale field pattern.*
- *Create small woodlands to link with existing copses.”*

- 4.9 The East Kent Horticultural Belt character area lies to the east of the site and Littlebourne. There is very limited intervisibility between the site and this Character Area as a whole due to the contained nature of the site and local intervening features and topography.

Canterbury Landscape Character Assessment and Biodiversity Appraisal October 2020

- 4.10 The study identifies 9 Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and 42 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within Canterbury District. The site is located within “*LCT H: Central Mixed Farmlands*” and at a more detailed scale “*LCA H6: Littlebourne Fruit Belt*.”
- 4.11 The site’s LCT is described as: “*distinguished by its agricultural land use and slightly sloping landform. The farmland is predominantly arable with some pasture and orchards. There is a contrast between open areas of large-scale fields due to agricultural intensification and hedgerow removal, and more enclosed historic parklands and small river valleys. There are small villages and hamlets linked by narrow rural roads, with some larger transport infrastructure*”.
- 4.12 The Littlebourne Fruit Belt LCA is part of an extensive fruit belt area that covers a substantial part of East Kent. *Key Characteristics of the area are:*
- “*Gently rolling landform with deep loamy soils.*
 - *Agricultural land intensively farmed traditionally as orchards and hops but giving way to arable practices resulting in there being an overall limited biodiversity interest.*
 - *Small parcel of woodland and acid grassland forming the Swanton Aerial Site LWS*
 - *Strong field pattern created by windbreaks and crops.*
 - *Clumps and belts of trees including small isolated blocks of ancient woodland.*
 - *Encompassing most of the Littlebourne, Bekesbourne and Woolton Farm and Little Barton Farm Conservation Areas, providing some rural setting to their associated historic buildings (although influenced by the agricultural intensification that has occurred following changes from fruit production to arable).*
 - *Scattered clusters of historic buildings including traditional farm buildings, remnants of estate properties and oast houses.*
 - *Proximity to the urban edge of Canterbury City with localised urban fringe influences and some suburbanisation.”*
- 4.13 Key sensitivities and values of the LCA are stated as:
- “*Areas continuing with traditional agricultural practices that are under threat from arable conversion.*
 - *Hedgerows and remnant shelterbelts that provide a trace of the former structure and pattern of the landscape.*
 - *Limited areas of valuable habitats including woodland and acid grassland at Swanton Aerial Site LWS, and other hedgerow and woodland corridors.*
 - *Blocks of ancient woodlands contribute towards the historic setting of the landscape.*
 - *The historic village of Littlebourne and its distinctive local vernacular of weather board, half tile and brick – a Conservation Area – with many historic buildings including the Grade I listed Barn at Littlebourne Court and adjacent Church of St Vincent.*
 - *Rural setting to Littlebourne, Bekesbourne and Woolton Farm and Little Barton Farm Conservation Areas, which is evidently being influenced by agricultural intensification diminishing the sense of place.*

- *Rural character of lanes lined with hedgerows (although heavily trafficked).*
 - *The role of the LCA in contributing towards the rural setting to the historic Canterbury City, in separating it with outlying villages to the east and the rural separation provided between Bekesbourne / Patribourne and Littlebourne.*
- 4.14 The site lies adjacent to the Littlebourne Conservation Area though it does not fall within it.
- 4.15 The Landscape Guidelines and Key Habitat Opportunities for the Character Area include:
- *“Conserve old orchards for their biodiversity value and to restore areas for the traditional farming practice of top fruit production.*
 - *Conserve the traditional pattern and structure of the landscape by improving the continuity of hedgerow and shelterbelt features to enhance the rectilinear field pattern and to strengthen habitat connectivity.*
 - *Restore and create wetland habitat, which contributes to the Lower Stour Wetlands BOA habitat network.*
 - *Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of agricultural fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins and other wildlife-friendly farming methods.*
 - *Conserve the local distinctiveness and strong vernacular of historic buildings, particularly within the Littlebourne Conservation Area.*
 - *Avoid urban fringe uses which detract from the otherwise simple pattern of the landscape and rural setting to the historic Canterbury City, improving boundary treatments with the use of native hedgerows to help filter views of urban fringe uses.*
 - *Any proposals for highway upgrading should retain the rural character of the lanes.*
- 4.16 Area H5 Nailbourne Parklands lies south east of the site. The closer areas of the character area are on lower-lying land with restricted long distance views. The nature of the topography and features within the landscape limit intervisibility between the site and this character area.
- 4.17 Area G2 Trenley Park Woodlands lies north and north west of the site. The wooded nature of the neighbouring character area results in lack of intervisibility between the site and Trenley Park Woodlands LCA.

Designations

- 4.18 Figure 3 identifies the location of relevant designations within the surrounding area. There are no statutory landscape designations that cover the site or lie adjacent to it.
- 4.19 The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies approximately 2.6km south-west of the site at its closest point. The local topography and nature of the landscape results in no intervisibility between the site and AONB.
- 4.20 Littlebourne Conservation Area (CA) lies directly north and east of the site. Properties adjacent to the north, north western and north eastern site boundaries fall within the western extent of the CA. The remainder of the CA occupies the eastern section of the village.
- 4.21 Ickham and Wichhambreaux Conservation area lies north-east of Littlebourne. There is no intervisibility between the site and this CA.

- 4.22 A number of Grade II Listed Buildings lie within the study area including some near to the site including the Holly Lodge directly north-west of the site and Coaches Cottage directly north-east of the site off The Hill. Existing hedgerows currently provide visual separation between the site and these designated features. A separate heritage statement accompanies the application.

Topography

- 4.23 The following should be read in conjunction with Figure 5.

Context – Landform

- 4.24 Littlebourne is located on a relatively low-lying (approximately 10 to 30m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD)) east facing slope. The sloping landform forms part of the western valley edge of the Nail Bourne. The Nail Bourne flows on a broadly south-west to north-east axis and feeds into the Little Stour further east.

Site - Landform

- 4.25 The site reflects the wider village topography being located on an east facing slope. The highpoint of the site lies in the north western corner of the parcel (c.33m AOD) with the low point to the eastern corner of the site where it joins the A257 (c.17m AOD). The northern edge of the site is situated in the most elevated position. A drainage channel cuts east to west through the centre of the site, dividing the area into two distinct parcels of land. The land falls north west / west to east in the northern parcel. The southern parcel of the site slopes west to east, from the boundary of Howletts Wildlife Park towards the existing settlement edge and Bekesbourne Lane.

Site and Immediate Context

- 4.26 An assessment of landscape character of the site and its immediate context has been carried out, providing a finer level of assessment than the published studies.
- 4.27 The location of the site is shown at Figure 1. The site forms part of a wider agricultural field that lies on the western edge of Littlebourne to the south of The Hill (A257). The site is bounded to the north and east by residential development within Littlebourne. The south western edge of the site adjoins Howletts Wildlife Park and the southern boundary connects to Bekesbourne Lane. Generally, the site boundaries are formed by a combination of hedgerow and tree planting apart from on the north western edge where the parcel has an open aspect to the continuing agricultural field.
- 4.28 The site is bounded to the north by a tall, mature hedgerow alongside The Hill and to the east by the unmade track and existing drainage ditch. The drainage ditch runs alongside individual mature trees that form the field boundary. The eastern, western and southern boundaries of the site are a combination of tree planting and hedgerow, the condition of boundary treatments is mixed across the site according to the adjacent land use.
- 4.29 Littlebourne village is generally situated to the east of the site apart from a large individual Grade II Listed dwelling that adjoins the sites northern edge. Land directly north of the site falls within the Littlebourne Conservation Area, there are several Grade II Listed Buildings within the vicinity of the site.

- 4.30 Howletts Wild Animal Park accessed off Bekesbourne Lane, is situated to the south west of the site. The closer sections of the animal park are utilised for car parking only and are not recreational areas.
- 4.31 Within the wider landscape to the north and north-west are several groups of woodland on higher ground including Pine Wood and Court Wood.
- 4.32 There are a small number of Public Rights of Way passing through the immediate context of the site. Footpath CB 156 follows the route of School Path linking The Hill / Jubilee Road junction with Bekesbourne Lane. CB 143 passes through development north of The Hill and exits onto The Hill east of Coach Cottages – views are limited for the length of the route by existing development. Other routes in the vicinity include Footpath CB 150 to the west and Footpath CB 157 to the south.

Landscape Value

- 4.33 In terms of "landscape value" it is appropriate to examine the role of the site and its immediate context in terms of the range of local factors set out in LI TGN 02-21, and summarised in the methodology. This considers the landscape in terms of a range of factors as set out below. As a starting point, landscape designations have been considered.
- 4.34 Landscape Designations: The site and its wider landscape context (including its Visual Envelope) are not subject to any national, local or other landscape designations.
- 4.35 Natural Heritage: As an area of farmed, agricultural land with few landscape features other than the drainage ditch that dissects the site, a small number of mature trees around the ditch, and boundary vegetation the site is considered to have low habitat potential or interest.
- 4.36 Cultural Heritage: The site does not include any landmarks or designations although the north and north eastern site boundaries do adjoin Littlebourne Conservation Area. A heritage assessment has been carried out as a part of the application.
- 4.37 Landscape Condition: At the time of survey the site had low level vegetation on ploughed ground. A length of mature trees formed the north-western boundary and mature hedge along the boundary with The Hill. A number of individual mature trees are located along the site's eastern boundary (ref: application Arboricultural Assessment). Overall, it is deemed that the landscape condition is low – medium.
- 4.38 Associations: The site and immediate context has no known associations with well known literature, poetry, art, music or notable people that may contribute the perception of the landscape.
- 4.39 Distinctiveness: The site has an agricultural character that is in keeping with the context but is also influenced by surrounding land uses which include the adjoining residential development and highway. As an area of agricultural land bound by hedgerows and trees at the edge of a settlement, the site and its immediate context are broadly representative of local landscape character but are not considered to contain any particularly rare or distinctive features.
- 4.40 Recreational Value: No Public Rights of Way pass through the site. The site does not form part of any significant recognised viewpoints. The site is partially visible from the PRoW along School Path (CB156) and PRoW CB-150.
- 4.41 Perceptual (Scenic): Views out of the site to the wider arable landscape are possible from within the site and include some longer distance views across Nail Bourne valley to the south-west. Views are possible across the site from some vantage points within the neighbouring dwellings and road

to the wider countryside where gaps in the hedge allow. Views are predominantly well screened by landform, intervening boundary features and woodland/trees in the wider context limiting longer distance views out of the site.

- 4.42 Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity): The neighbouring residential, commercial properties and highway routes effect the site's tranquillity. Whilst Bekesbourne Lane is narrow and rural in its character it is a well used route and influences the southern parcel of the site. A level of noise disturbance associated with animals housed at Howletts Wildlife Park was experienced whilst on site.
- 4.43 Functional aspects: The site is an area of agricultural land that comprises primarily of boundary vegetation and landscape features. The drainage ditches that travel across the site and alongside the eastern edge provide a level of water management in the area although there are no additional landscape functions that are apparent.
- 4.44 In conclusion and having appraised the above factors it is judged that the site and the immediate landscape is of **Medium** landscape value.

Visual Baseline

- 4.45 A visual appraisal has been undertaken for the site. This has explored the nature of the existing visual amenity of the area and sought to establish the approximate visibility of the site from surrounding locations and receptors. A series of photo viewpoints have been selected which support this analysis.
- 4.46 Photographs have been taken to illustrate a view from a specific vantage point, or to demonstrate a representative view for those receptors that are moving through the landscape, e.g. rights of way users. The photographs may demonstrate varying degrees of visibility and include both short and long range views. The photographs were taken on the 22.11.22 and seasonal differences have been taken into account when determining the visual effects on these receptors.
- 4.47 'Photo Viewpoints', as referred to in this report are 'Type 1 Visualisations' or 'Annotated Viewpoint Photographs', as referred to in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note on 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' (TGN 06/19). KJSKJFG

Photo Viewpoints

- 4.48 An assessment of the likely visual effects of the proposed development upon surrounding receptors is detailed in the subsequent section. Figure 6 details the location of the Photo Viewpoints and Figures 7 – 12 illustrates the photo viewpoints. They are briefly described below.

Viewpoint 1: View west from The Hill close to Public Right of Way CB143

- 4.49 This photo viewpoint image provides an indication of the potential views of the scheme for road and footpath users as well as residents on The Hill to the north east of the site.
- 4.50 There are residential properties to the right and left hand side of the image. The way marker post denoting PRoW CB-143 can be seen beyond the terraced housing to the right. The north eastern parcel of the site is visible from this position where there is an access to the unmade track that runs along the eastern boundary. The tall and continuous hedgerow that runs alongside The Hill, on the north eastern site boundary can be seen extending along the road. The established tree

belt present on the north western boundary between the site and Little Acres Grade II Listed building is visible beyond the site parcel.

Viewpoint 2: View north west from the unmade track on the northern section of the eastern site boundary

- 4.51 Residents and allotment owners using the unmade track will have views into the northern parcel of the site as they travel alongside the boundary. Vegetation alongside the route provides a level of screening although tree, hedgerow and bramble planting is broken with the northern portion of the site being visible from a number of locations. The southern and western extents of the site cannot be seen from this location.
- 4.52 To the right of the photo viewpoint the properties that face the site on the adjacent side of The Hill can be seen above the roadside hedgerow. The sloping nature of the site is clearly evident from this position.

Viewpoint 3: View south towards the site from The Hill

- 4.53 For road and footpath users, patrons of The Evenhill and, residents on The Hill views into the site are partly screened by the continuous and tall hedgerow that runs along the route. On the northern edge of the site the hedgerow is in poor repair and views into the development are available.
- 4.54 A bus shelter is position on the northern edge of the site. The established tree belt present on the north western boundary between the site and Little Acres can be seen on the right hand side of the photograph.
- 4.55 Due to the elevated position of the Photo Viewpoint there are views across the development parcel to distant tree planting on the adjacent site boundary. Views across the site are only present where the boundary hedgerow is broken or in poor condition.

Viewpoint 4: View south east from Canterbury Road, close to Public Right of Way CB151

- 4.56 From this elevated position to the west of the site there are views towards the development area for road and footpath users. The hedgerow denotes the extent of the field parcel within which the site is located although the development edge is set back some distance from the visible boundary and is not visible.
- 4.57 The slope of the immediate site context is apparent from this location and provides a level of screening to the development area in combination with the existing vegetation.

Viewpoint 5: View east from the western extent of the site boundary

- 4.58 Whilst this viewpoint location is not representative of a public view, it is included to show the relationship of the site and the settlement and to illustrate the degree of intervisibility with the western edge of the village.
- 4.59 The sloping landform of the northern parcel of the site is clearly seen from this location. The drainage channel that separates the northern and southern development areas extends into the distance in the centre of the image and adjoins the vegetated eastern boundary of the site.
- 4.60 Properties that overlook the northern parcel of the site on The Hill can be seen above the boundary hedgerow across the northern field parcel.

Viewpoint 6: View south west along the southern site boundary on Bekesbourne Lane close to Public Right of Way CB156

- 4.61 For road and footpath users travelling west from Littlebourne views into the site are limited by boundary tree planting and vegetation. The road has quite a rural character due to its width, the adjacent arable land use and combination of tree planting and hedgerows flanking both sides.
- 4.62 The access to PRoW CB156 can be seen to the right of the image.

Viewpoint 7: The north east from Public Right of Way CB157

- 4.63 From this location on Public Right of Way CB157 users have views of properties on Bekesbourne Lane. The open arable field allows for views across the field to the boundary tree and hedgerow planting alongside Bekesbourne Lane.
- 4.64 Whilst the site itself is not visible, tree planting on the southern site boundary is visible alongside tree planting located in Howletts Wildlife Park.

Viewpoint 8: View north from Bridleway CB160

- 4.65 Where the Bridleway is elevated in the landscape there are views across Nail Bourne's shallow valley towards the site. The gap in planting and bare nature of the vegetation provides glimpsed views towards the site. Properties that are visible in the distance through the tree planting are located to the east of the site, with a small section of the site visible for users of the route.

Viewpoint 9: View north west from Bridleway CB160

- 4.66 As users of this Bridleway travel towards Littlebourne there are a number of views available towards the site across the low lying land. Screening provided by intervening planting limits views of the southern site boundary and the landform of the site in combination with the low lying position of the Bridleway serve to further reduce the opportunity to see the site.

Summary of Visual Baseline

- 4.67 The baseline analysis results in a number of reasoned conclusions which are summarised below:
- The site is relatively visually contained to the immediately surrounding area. Distant views are limited by tree planting in the immediate context of the site as well as tree blocks in the surrounding area.
 - Residents on The Hill adjacent to the site, have views into the development area above the boundary hedgerow. Residents to the east and south east of the site have limited views of the development area from a combination of both their side and rear aspects.
 - Mature, tall tree planting on the northern section of the north western boundary provides screening to the site from the Grade II Listed property to the north. Woodland blocks set away from the site provide screening to the site from the north.
 - There is intervisibility with the edge of Littlebourne Conservation Area where it adjoins the site, views from further afield within the heritage designation are limited by intervening development.
 - The southern section of the north western edge of the site is currently open, as such views extend to the field boundary on Canterbury Road.

- There are a number of Public Rights of Way and Bridleways in the general vicinity of the site. Views into the area from these routes are limited by intervening development and vegetation. Where views are available they are seen either from within the residential setting of Littlebourne or with the settlement as a backdrop.
- Land to the south of the site has a more rural character than to the north and north east where residential development is more dense. Properties to the south on Bekesbourne Lane have individual characters, are set back from the road.

5.0 LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Introduction

- 5.1 The development proposals are described in the Design and Access Statement and other information accompanying the planning application. The existing landscape resource and the visual receptors and amenity of the site have been considered by the planning and design process and have informed the resultant scheme. This approach has entailed collaboration between landscape, urban design, ecological and other professionals. The landscape components of the scheme are an important integral part of the proposals.

Landscape Design and GI Objectives

- 5.2 The key objectives of the landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are to:
- Retain good quality vegetation within, and on the boundary of the site and provide enhancements through GI proposals that will create new, varied and diverse habitats;
 - Enhance biodiversity and ecological habitats within the site through the inclusion of tree planting, native hedgerows, a mix of grasslands and ecological features such as bird boxes and habitat piles;
 - Improve habitat connectivity from the site into the surrounding landscape by forging links to vegetation in the immediate setting;
 - Provide a range of additional recreational facilities and create new routes across the site that connect to existing routes in the vicinity, encouraging use by the local community as well as new residents;
 - Set development back from sensitive boundaries and include a suitable amount of structural planting and GI to mitigate potential visual impacts upon the surrounding area;
 - Create quality public open spaces in locations where the proposed development can be seen from the surrounding area to soften the proposals and utilise existing landscape features;
 - Form a strong site boundary to the north west where there is no existing edge to the site and the landform is elevated;
 - Reduce visual effects through the provision of appropriate structural landscape features; and
 - Manage surface water drainage through the inclusion of attenuation ponds and a wetland area that connect to existing drainage. This will also increase the biodiversity of the site through the provision of natural open spaces and species rich grasses.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure (GI) Proposals

- 5.3 The landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are detailed in the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application. In summary these proposals include:
- The provision of 6.995 hectares of land dedicated to landscape, GI, public open space, play and habitat related proposals – representing approximately 40% of the total site area;

- Two attenuation basins that link into an on site sustainable drainage network that comprises of a wetland area, an existing drainage channel through the centre of the site and a Water Recycling Centre which is enclosed and partly screened by tree planting and vegetation.
- New woodland belts of broadleaved species would be planted on the northern and western edges of the site, and on the elevated portions of the site, to form a strong boundary tree belt to the surrounding area, particularly where there is no existing field boundary.
- To provide enhancement by delivering a diverse range of new landscape habitats. This includes, the planting of broadleaved woodland, trees and native species rich hedgerows, and the creation of no public access grassland habitats for biodiversity benefits. This includes appropriate mixes for the scheme's drainage features.
- To deliver open space and opportunities for play and informal recreation. This includes an equipped children's play area, trim trail and fitness items and, a community orchard, allotments, new circular walking routes for healthy active living within the Public Open Space.
- New pedestrian and bicycle connections to The Hill and Bekesbourne Lane from the site will improve connectivity across Littlebourne.
- To explore opportunities in which to 'green' the built environment at the detailed stage with the use of street trees and landscape streets, 'pocket parks', village greens, roadside verges and the inclusion of native shrubs, hedges and trees for gardens.

Landscape Management

- 5.4 All of the landscape areas and public open space features will be managed and maintained. This would be achieved through the implementation of a comprehensive Landscape Management Plan (LMP), to ensure the successful establishment and continued thriving of the landscape proposals.

6.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

- 6.1 The following section outlines the likely landscape and visual effects that would arise from proposed development on the site. Schedules detailing these likely landscape and visual effects for the receptors are included in Appendices B and C respectively. Please refer to these in conjunction with the following descriptions.

Landscape Effects

Construction

- 6.2 All construction works would be carried out in accordance with best practice procedures to minimise any adverse impact on landscape character. Appropriate methods will be adopted to protect retained trees and vegetation based upon BS 5837: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction.
- 6.3 There will be disruption to the site's landscape during the construction phase, which will potentially include the erection of site hoarding. Protective fencing will however be utilised where required for retained hedgerows and trees.
- 6.4 The landscape effects during construction are assessed as being of a transient nature and, given that the timescales involved will be relatively short, this is considered to be of limited significance overall. Inevitably there will be some disruption to the site landscape and its immediate environs during this phase of works. Effects will be localised and limited in extent, resulting in a **Major / Moderate Adverse** landscape effect upon the site and immediate context during the construction phase, while effects upon the wider landscape are considered to be **Minor Adverse / Negligible**.

Operation (following Completion)

- 6.5 The site is not covered by a national designation for landscape quality. It is not in or adjacent to either a National Park or an AONB. Direct effects upon the landscape fabric of the site are considered to be localised and limited. There are some landscape features of local merit within the site, the majority of which are retained as part of the proposals.

National Character Area

- 6.6 The proposed residential development will result in direct impacts upon the landscape character of the site however potential effects upon the wider landscape will be very limited. The new housing will occur within a very small area of the 'North Kent Plain' and will be adjacent to existing residential development north and east of the site. Although the open land and some small sections of vegetation will be lost to development, the overall strategy will result in some localised beneficial effects upon the site's structural landscape features and biodiversity. The development will have a relatively limited influence upon the surrounding landscape given the site's level of physical and visual containment afforded by the localised landform, intervening vegetation and the existing residential context.
- 6.7 The proposals will provide opportunities for a positive contribution to the NCA's character through appropriate tree species and other landscape planting. The resultant effect upon the NCA is assessed as **Negligible - None**.

The Landscape Assessment of Kent (October 2004)

- 6.8 The site forms a relatively small part of the North Kent Fruit Belt LCA described within the Landscape Assessment of Kent. The site is not considered wholly typical of the character area as visibility of the site is more limited than implied for the wider character area. Proposals will have limited influence upon the surrounding wider countryside landscape. The new development would result in some beneficial effects due to the increase in accessible open space and biodiversity contributions resulting in a **Minor Adverse - Negligible** effect upon the Character Area post construction.

Canterbury Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal (October 2020)

- 6.9 The site falls within “LCT H: Central Mixed Farmlands” and at a more detailed scale “LCA H6: Littlebourne Fruit Belt.” as outlined within the Canterbury Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal. The site is considered typical of the area description and offers opportunities to contribute positively to it through well-considered landscape design. The substantial amount of structural planting proposed to the north and west of the site will tie in with the existing woodland belts present in the area and both provide a level of screening to the development and tie in with the former structure of the area. The creation of a wetland area to enhance the efficacy of the sustainable urban drainage system will also help the site to contribute to the surrounding habitat network. This structural planting and the large area of GI and Public Open Space included within the site will serve to soften the potential impact on the surrounding LCA, filtering views of the development, substantially enhancing the habitat potential of the area and helping it to blend into the surrounding area. Resultant effects upon the LCA are considered to be **Minor Adverse** at completion reducing to **Negligible** in the longer term.

Site and immediate context

- 6.10 In terms of the site itself and its immediate context, the landscape effects will be similarly limited. Inevitably there will be some initial disruption to the local landscape (as with any greenfield development) with the proposed development altering the predominant use of the land from open space to residential use. The majority of existing landscape features including the mature trees, drainage features and hedgerows along the site’s perimeters would be retained where possible. New structural tree planting, sustainable drainage features, species rich grasslands, tree groups, individual tree planting, fruit trees, scrub tree groups, native and single species hedgerows would contribute positively to the local GI network.
- 6.11 Although the replacement of parts of the existing field with housing will have a notable effect on part of the site, the proposed variety of open spaces, amount and range of new tree and hedgerow planting will help to balance the overall change across the site landscape and reduce landscape effects in the medium term.
- 6.12 Considering the above points and the beneficial effects of the area of new accessible open space and positive architectural features suggested in the application material it is considered that there will be a Medium magnitude of change overall, resulting in a **Moderate Adverse** effect upon completion. Landscape effects would reduce to **Moderate - Minor Adverse** landscape effect overall in the long term.

Visual Effects

Visual Envelope (VE)

- 6.13 The VE (Figure 6) of the proposed development identifies the surrounding land from within which views towards any part of the proposed development are likely to be possible. The VE is not however, an indicator of the effect of the proposed development on the view but simply, its visible extent in the surrounding landscape.
- 6.14 A hand drawn VE for the proposed development was initially prepared based upon the local topography context and proposed building heights. This has then been reviewed on site and refined to take account of the visual 'screening' provided by buildings, trees and other features.
- 6.15 The VE of the proposed development is relatively contained to the site and its immediate environs apart from where land is elevated to the south and there are partial and glimpsed views likely from a small number of locations. Existing tree planting to the north and north east provide screening to the site, properties on the eastern edges of the site enclose it to views set away from the boundary. Existing tree planting on the southern site boundary on Bekesbourne Lane limits views into the development area, any loss of tree planting along the route will likely increase the opportunity for views. Tree planting on and within Howletts Wildlife Park limits views into the site from the west. The north western boundary of the site has an open boundary with the continuing field, as such, the VE of the site extends towards Canterbury Road where roadside vegetation and tree planting stops views of the site extending beyond it.
- 6.16 There could be some limited locations (beyond the extent of the VE shown) that could have a potential distant or very limited view to a part of the development. Equally, there could be some locations shown within the VE that would not experience any views to the resultant development.

Construction

- 6.17 During the construction phase, adverse visual effects will occur and these will largely reflect the actual extent of visibility of the site for the various receptors. Inevitably those visual receptors in closest proximity ie. residents off The Hill and users of highway network will have views of construction activity to include vehicles and associated machinery, site compounds, and earthworks/ground modelling.
- 6.18 It is assessed that the overall visual effects during the construction phase would be over a relatively short duration (c. 2-3 years) and consequently there would be a short-term effect as a result. Construction visual effects for the limited number of receptors close to or adjacent to the site are considered to be up to **Major/Moderate Adverse**, however, for less sensitive receptors and those at a distance from the site, visual effects are unlikely to be any greater than **Minor Adverse**.

Operation (following Completion)

- 6.19 The following provides a summary of the visual effects assessment included at Appendix C.
- 6.20 The impact of the Proposed Development and the consequential effects on visual receptors has been assessed. On completion, it is judged the Proposed Development would result in a **Major / Moderate Adverse** effect on a limited number of receptors within the immediate surroundings of the site, but a **Minor Adverse to Negligible** impact on receptors within the wider landscape due

to the existing landform and intervening trees and hedgerows. Beneficial effects of the new landscape planting and settlement edge proposals contribute to the overall effects.

- 6.21 Fifteen years after completion, the site would benefit from an established and maturing landscape of habitats including structural planting and grassland. Visual effects would again vary depending on the sensitivity and location of the receptors, resulting in up to a **Moderate Adverse** effect on the receptors in the immediate vicinity of the site and a **Negligible** effect within the wider landscape. In the longer term, any adverse effects would continue to diminish.
- 6.22 The availability of open views towards the built form within the site are limited and broadly identified as being close to mid-range views including from some higher sensitivity receptors. Localised topography, vegetation cover and built development restrict visibility of the site from the majority of the wider landscape.

Residential Properties and Settlement

- 6.23 Residents of properties to the east of the site on The Hill are likely to have views into the development area from the frontage of their properties on both the ground and upper floors once necessary hedgerow removal has taken place to allow access into the site and to facilitate the construction of an improved pedestrian crossing. The proposed scheme directly responds to the surrounding settlement context by fronting new properties onto The Hill but, setting them back behind a wide green corridor that comprises of avenue trees and will create a pleasant frontage to the development. To the south of the site, where the development adjoins Bekesbourne Lane and the character of the landscape is less built up and existing properties are set away from the site boundary, partial and glimpsed views from these properties to the southern area of the site are available. There are a small number of individual properties located along School Path, generally they are set away from the site beyond planting and long gardens apart from a single dwelling that adjoins the south eastern tip of the site. The proposed Water Recycling Centre is enclosed by tree planting and vegetation in order to filter and soften potential views of the facility from the south eastern edge of the site. The scheme directly responds to the varied character of land to the south by setting development back from the boundaries behind green corridors and public open space, configuring the development layout to reflect the adjacent settlement pattern, and forming a wide tree belt on the western edge to create a substantial tree boundary to the new urban edge.
- 6.24 The proposals will represent a large and immediately apparent change for residents on The Hill, although it be in keeping with the wider context of the outlooks from the residents. Whilst there are a number of other residential properties in the vicinity of the site most are set away from the site boundary beyond gardens, tree planting or other established boundary vegetation. As such, effects on these receptors are reduced. Effects upon views are considered to be **Moderate - Major Adverse** at completion reducing to **Moderate Adverse** for residents adjacent to the eastern site boundary on The Hill. For those set away from the site effects are generally assessed as **Minor - Moderate Adverse** at completion, once proposed GI has established and matured, at year 15, effects are considered to be **Minor Adverse**.

Public Rights of Way (PROW) and Other Footpaths etc

- 6.25 Whilst there are a number of PROWs in the vicinity of the site views into the development area for the users are limited by surrounding properties, the intervening landform and vegetation around the site. GI proposals seek to mitigate potential effects by providing a substantial area of Public

Open Space that comprises of structural tree belts and woodland blocks on the site boundaries to provide screening and softening of views of the proposed scheme, particularly from locations that have an open aspect with the development area.

- 6.26 For users of those routes in closest proximity to the site CB156, CB143, CB157, CB151, and CB150 the effects of the proposed scheme are likely to represent an obvious and recognisable change where there are unobstructed views of the development area, as such, effects are assessed as **Moderate - Minor Adverse** at completion, decreasing to **Minor Adverse** at year 15. With regard to users of PRowS and Bridleways set away from the site views of the development area are generally from elevated positions in the landscape and glimpsed through tree planting at some distance, as such effects are likely to be **Minor Adverse / Negligible** at completion and further reduce to **Negligible** at year 15.

Roads & Transport Users

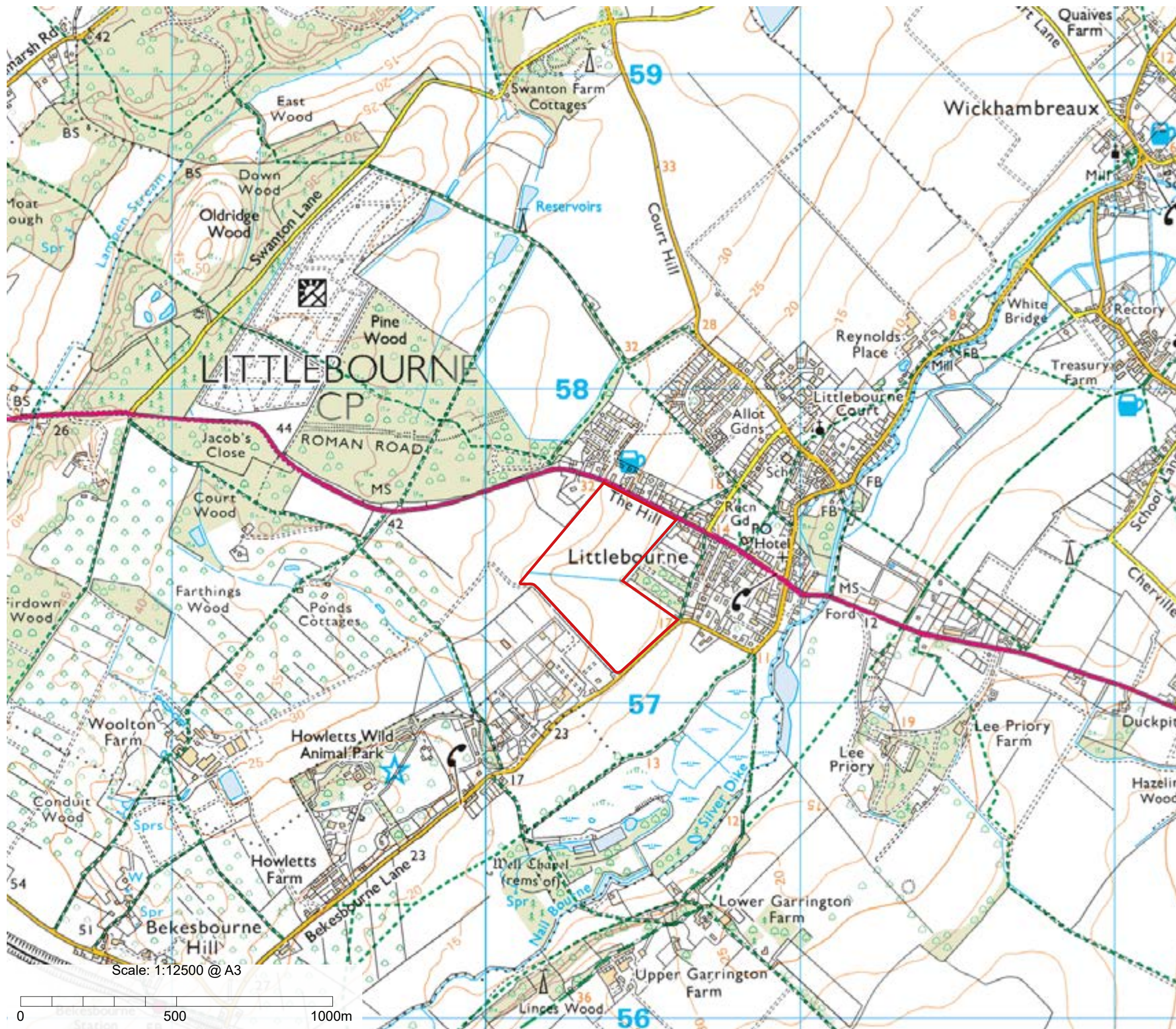
- 6.27 Users of two principal routes are likely to have views of the development as they travel past the site. The Hill has a built up character as it travels past the site into and from Littlebourne, as such the proposed scheme is unlikely to represent anything more than a minor component of the wider view that is in keeping with the context. Road users on Bekebourne Lane experience a more rural setting as they travel to and from the village due to the width of the route and views of the adjacent arable land use. Views into the development will be transient as road users travel past the site and set behind green corridors that comprise of tree planting, hedgerows and woodland belts. Resultant effects are considered to be **Moderate – Minor Adverse** from completion reducing to **Minor adverse** in the longer term.

Night-time Visual Effects

- 6.28 The site is located adjacent to existing residential development. The baseline night time landscape does include light spill from the built area. The development proposals will inevitably result in an extension to the existing light spill, due to the new housing being lit, together with potential for other lighting related to the vehicular movements.
- 6.29 Landscaping will help to filter and soften the overall appearance of the built form and assist in reducing the visual effects of increased light sources upon the surrounding landscape once the development is operational.
- 6.30 From a distance, it is considered that whilst there is likely to be some illumination from the development proposals (as with any new development) it will be observed against the existing light spill and individual light sources visible within the local settlements. Proposed new landscape planting within the development will help limit, filter and screen views towards individual light sources such as car head lights etc. whilst the specification, positioning and control of new light sources will help to ensure that the lighting does not contribute to light spill on the night sky.

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The proposed development is a residential development for up to 300 dwellings, 30% of which will be affordable homes. A number of units within the scheme will provide accommodation for the elderly. Facilities provided within the scheme include: a local shop, a community orchard and allotments, structural landscape features such as tree belts and woodland blocks on the site boundaries, tree lined streets, a host of sustainable drainage features, play and sports recreation provision, a pedestrian crossing close to the vehicular access on The Hill which adjoins footpath and cycleway routes that connect the northern and southern parcels and forge new links into the surrounding landscape.
- 7.2 The site is situated to the west of the village of Littlebourne, Canterbury. The site adjoins both The Hill (A257) on its north eastern edge and Bekesbourne Lane to the south. Howletts Wild Animal Park is situated on the western edge of the site, with the residential development of Littlebourne to the east, a combination of agricultural land and woodland blocks are situated to the north and primarily agricultural land to the south.
- 7.3 The site is relatively featureless in term of vegetation with only a small amount of planting within the site itself, trees and hedgerows in a mix of conditions are positioned around the boundary of the development area. A drainage channel runs through the centre of the site and alongside the northern portion of the eastern edge. The site slopes from it's north western edge towards the eastern site boundary, in line with the immediate topographical context.
- 7.4 The visual envelope of the site is relatively limited to the site and its immediate context. A combination of surrounding development, woodland blocks, field boundary vegetation and topography minimise views from surrounding receptors. Where views of the site are available, they are generally seen with a settlement backdrop or from within a residential context.
- 7.5 The site and its immediate context are not covered by any national or local designations. Littlebourne Conservation Area adjoins the sites northern and eastern boundaries, within which a small number of Grade II Listed buildings are situated within the study area.
- 7.6 The site is included in the Draft Canterbury District Local Plan to 2045 (October 2022) under Policy R15 – The Hill, Littlebourne. The Policy sets out several criteria for the appropriate development of the site.
- 7.7 Whilst the proposed development represents an extension of Littlebourne, the site is visually contained to most of the surrounding area. Potential views of the site are mitigated through a number of design measures which will create a suitable edge to the development in addition to a range of habitats, vegetation enhancements and connections. Whilst there would inevitably be some adverse landscape and visual effects at completion, it is judged that the effects of the proposed development would be localised and limited in their geographical extent and will not result in any unacceptable long term harm.



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 Site Boundary

client
Gladman Developments Ltd
project
The Hill, Littlebourne

drawing title
LOCATION PLAN

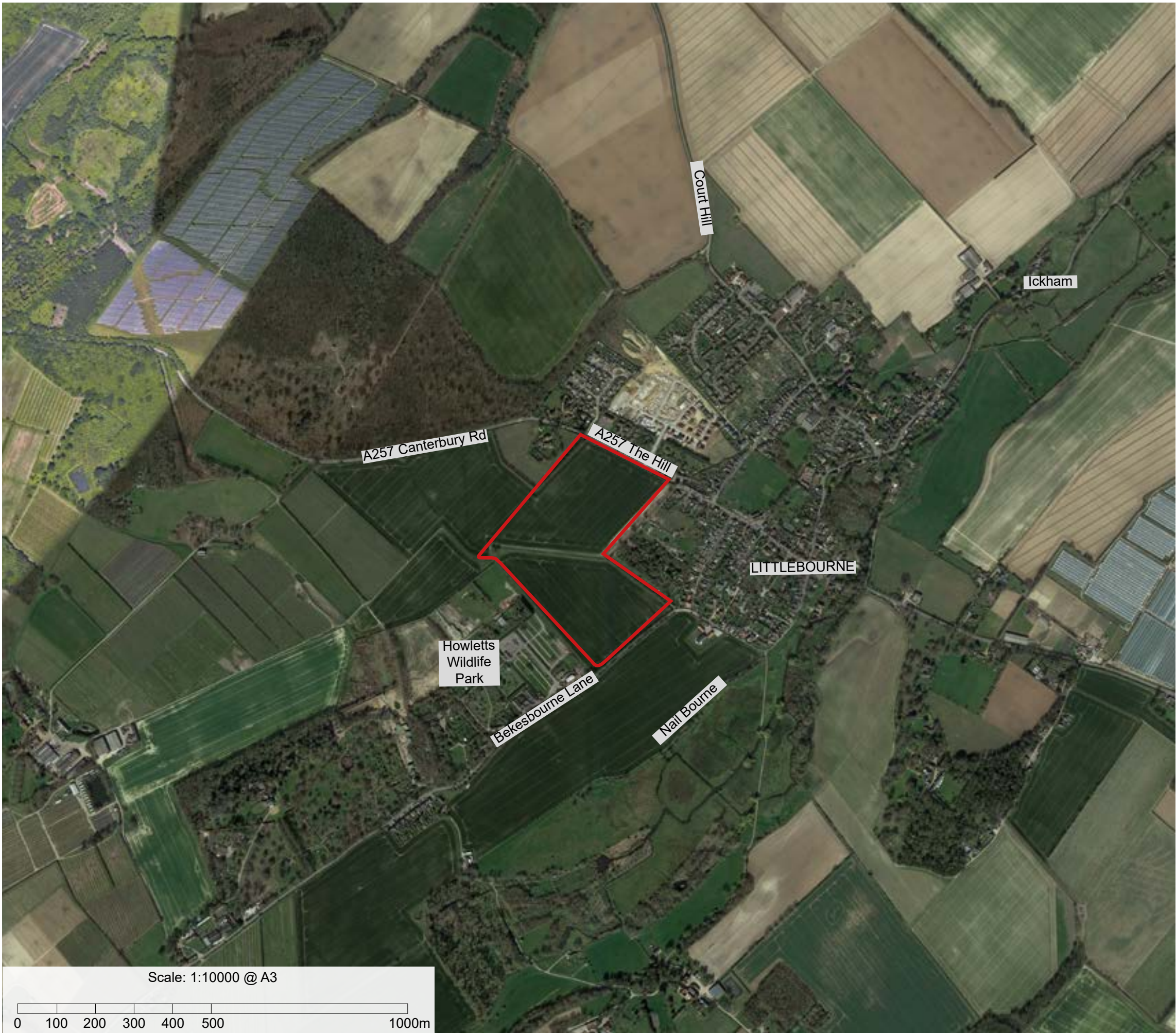
scale
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drawing / figure number

drawn
JPF

issue date
January 2023
rev



Figure 1



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 Site Boundary



client
Gladman Developments Ltd

project
The Hill, Littlebourne

drawing title
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

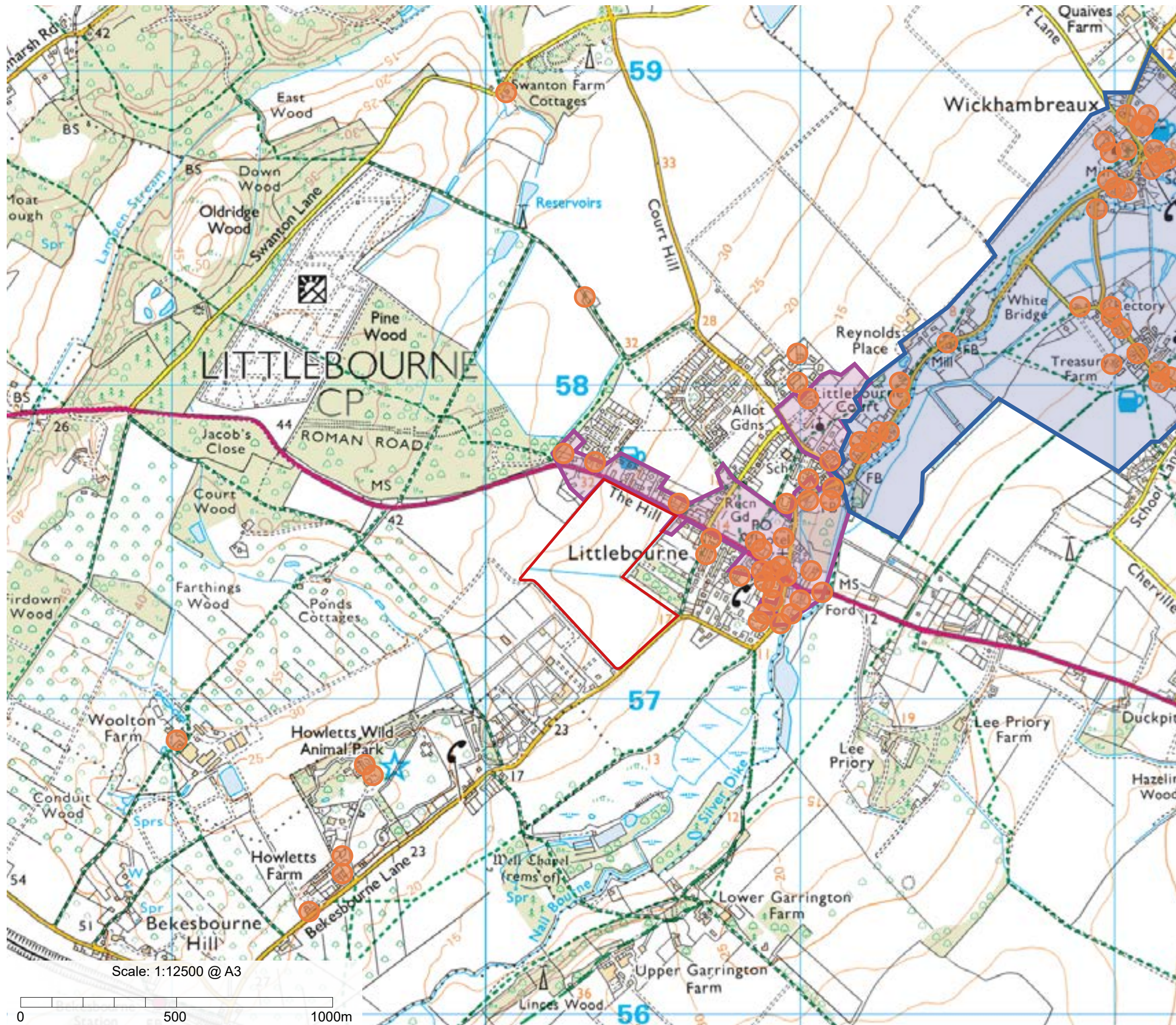
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drawn
JPF

issue date
January 2023

rev

Figure 2



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-  Site Boundary
-  Listed Buildings
-  Littlebourne Conversation Area
-  Ickham and Wickhambreaux Conversation Area

client
Gladman Developments Ltd

project
The Hill, Littlebourne

drawing title
DESIGNATIONS

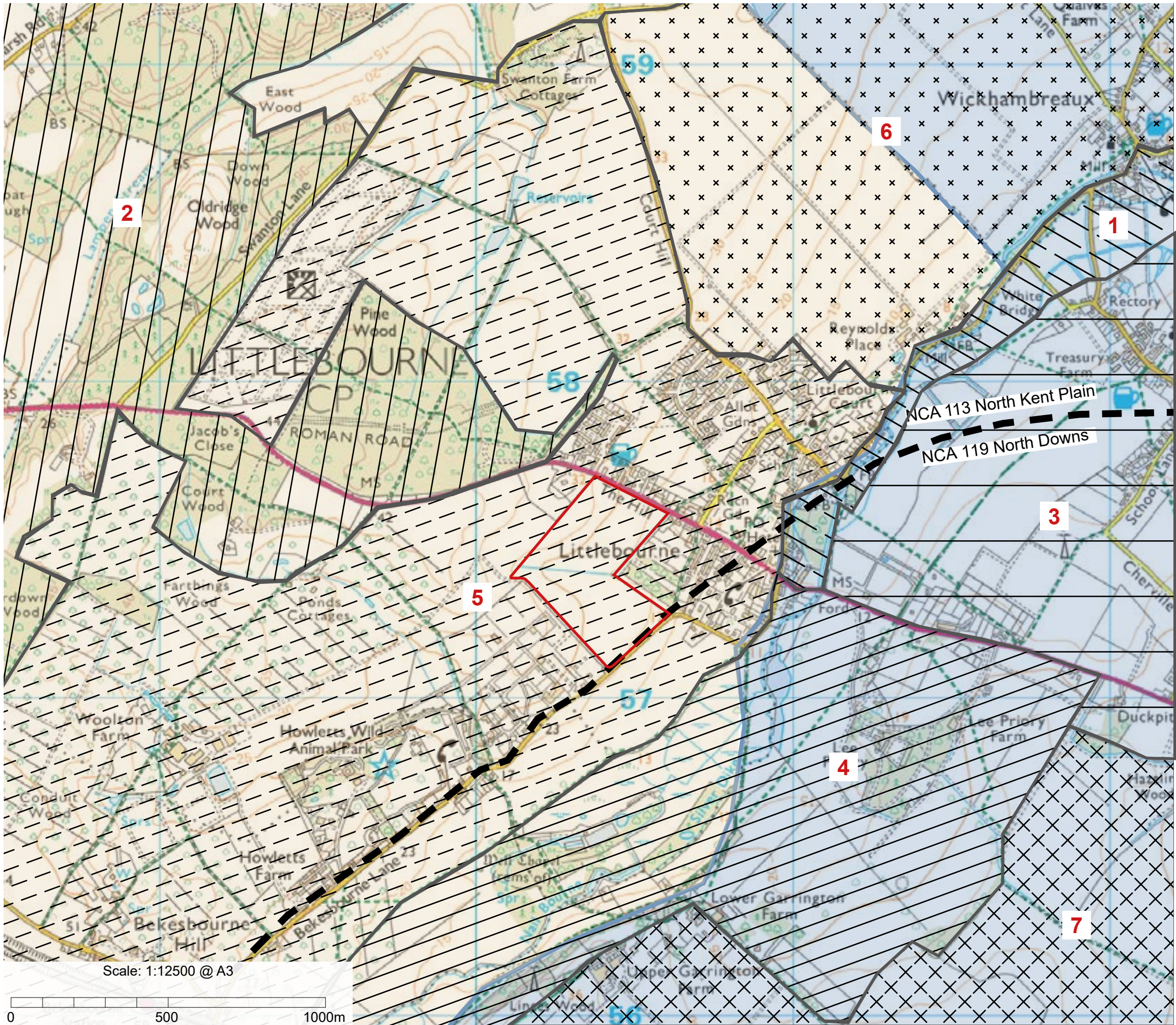
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issue date
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rev



Figure 3



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- Site Boundary
- National Character Area Boundary
- Landscape Assessment of Kent, Kent Country Council 2004
- North Kent Fruit Belt
- East Kent Horticultural Belt
- Landscape Character Biodiversity Appraisal, Canterbury October 2020
- 1 LCA F5: Little Stour Valley
- 2 LCA G2: Trenley Park Woodlands
- 3 LCA H3 :ickham Farmlands
- 4 LCA H5:Nailbourne Parklands
- 5 LCA H6: Littlebourne Fruit Belt
- 6 LCA H7: Wickhambreaux Horticultural Belt
- 7 LCA I2 :Bramling Downland

client
Gladman Developments Ltd

project
The Hill, Littlebourne

drawing title
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

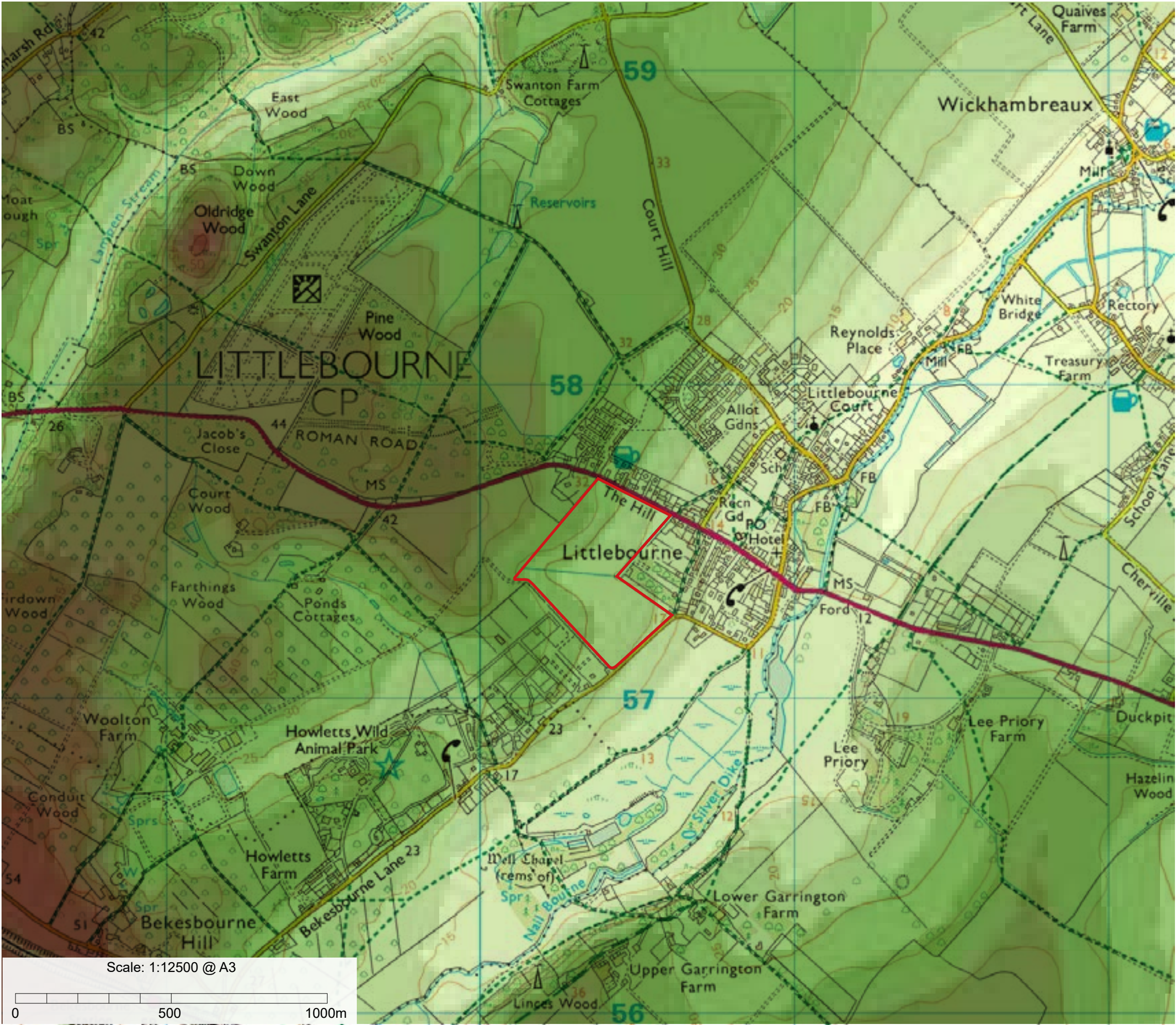
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JPF

issue date
January 2023

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Figure 4



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client
Gladman Developments Ltd

project
The Hill, Littlebourne

drawing title
TOPOGRAPHY PLAN

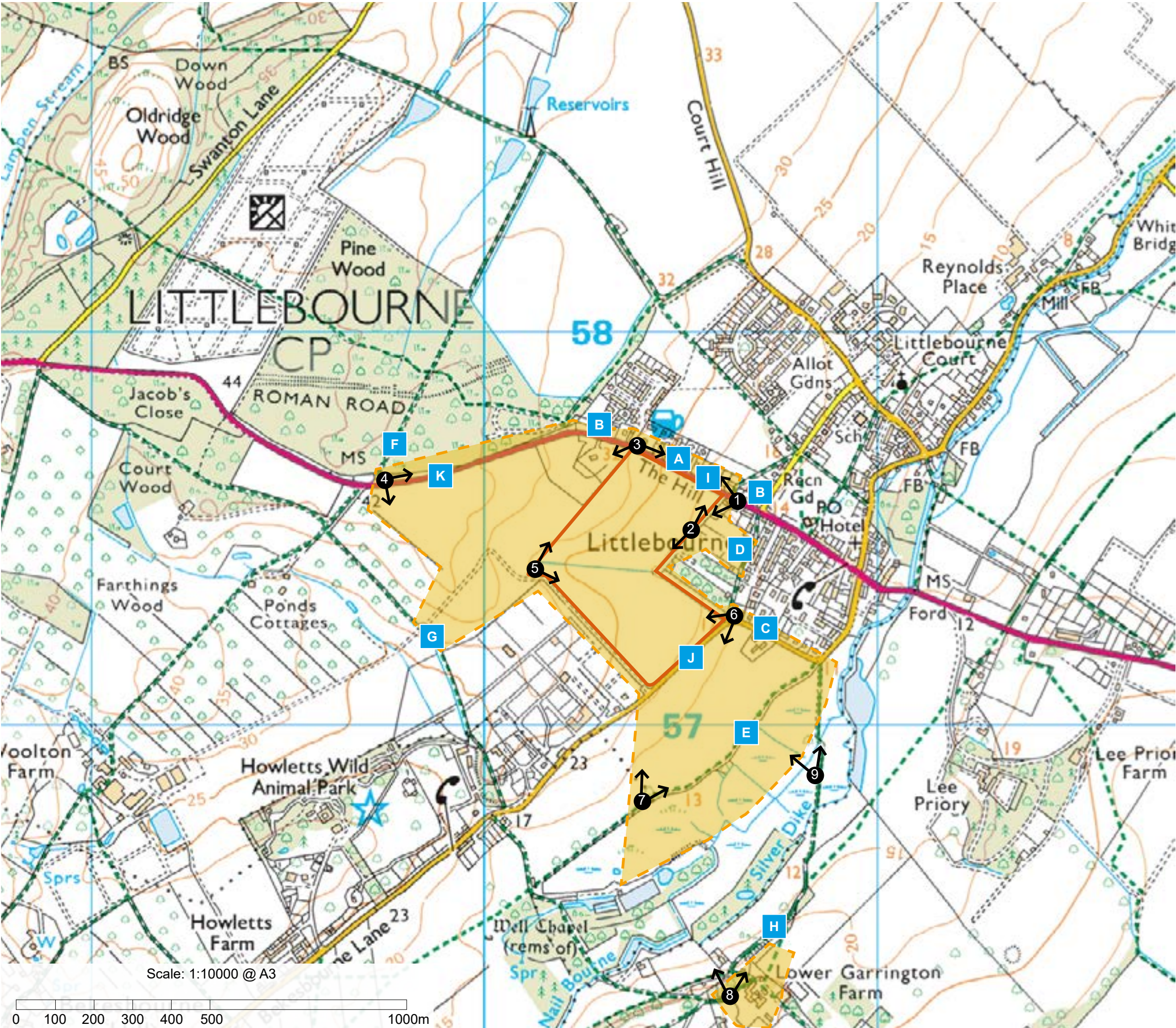
scale
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JPF

issue date
January 2023

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Figure 5



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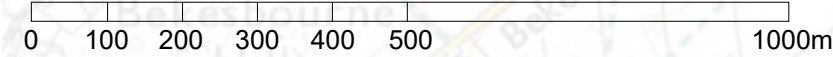
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-  Site Boundary
-  Photo Viewpoint Location
[Ref Figures 7-12 for location details]
-  Receptor Location
 - A: Residents on The Hill adjacent to the site
 - B: Residents on The Hill away from to the site
 - C: Residents of Bokesbourne Lane
 - D: Users of PRoW CB-156
 - E: Users of PRoW CB-157
 - F: Users of PRoW CB-151
 - G: Users of PRoW CB-150
 - H: Users of Bridleway CB-160
 - I: Road users on The Hill
 - J: Road users on Bokesbourne Lane
 - K: Road users on Canterbury Road

 Approximate Visual Envelope
(See Note)

Note:-
The Approximate Visual Envelope provides a representative boundary and representative area of visual influence. Within the envelope, existing landscape and / or physical features provide localised screening effects. Further distant views may occur outside the envelope boundary, although the effects of the proposed development upon these views is considered to be negligible as a result of the distance and intervening screening effects.

Scale: 1:10000 @ A3





client
Gladman Developments Ltd

project
The Hill, Littlebourne

drawing title
VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN

scale
1:10000@ A3

drawn
JPF

issue date
January 2023

rev
-

Figure 6



Photo Viewpoint 1: View west from The Hill close to Public Right of Way CB143

K:\5000538\LANDS\VA\2022\653_LUW\07_12.indd



Photo Viewpoint 1
Date & time of photo: 22 Nov 2022,10:41
Camera make & model, & sensor format:
Canon EOS 6D, FFS
Horizontal Field of View: 87°
Direction of View: 270°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

Visualisation Type: Type 1
Projection: Cylindrical
Enlargement factor: 100%

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Photo Viewpoint 2: View north west from the unmade track on the northern section of the eastern site boundary



Photo Viewpoint 2 continued



Photo Viewpoint 2
Date & time of photo: 22 Nov 2022, 13:03
Camera make & model, & sensor format:
Canon EOS 6D, FFS
Horizontal Field of View: 174°
Direction of View: 315, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

Visualisation Type: Type 1
Projection: Cylindrical
Enlargement factor: 100%

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Photo Viewpoint 3: View south towards the site from The Hill



Photo Viewpoint 3 continued



Photo Viewpoint 3
Date & time of photo: 22 Nov 2022, 10:44
Camera make & model, & sensor format:
Canon EOS 6D, FFS
Horizontal Field of View: 147°
Direction of View: 180°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

Visualisation Type: Type 1
Projection: Cylindrical
Enlargement factor: 100%

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Photo Viewpoint 4: View south east from Canterbury Road, close to Public Right of Way CB151



Photo Viewpoint 5: View east from the western extent of the site boundary.



Photo Viewpoint 4
Date & time of photo: 22 Nov 2022, 11:12
Camera make & model, & sensor format: Canon EOS 6D, FFS
Horizontal Field of View: 87°
Direction of View: 135, bearing from North

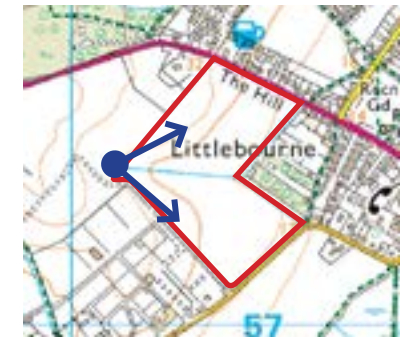


Photo Viewpoint 5
Date & time of photo: 22 Nov 2022, 11:27
Camera make & model, & sensor format: Canon EOS 6D, FFS
Horizontal Field of View: 87°
Direction of View: 95, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

Visualisation Type: Type 1
Projection: Cylindrical
Enlargement factor: 100%

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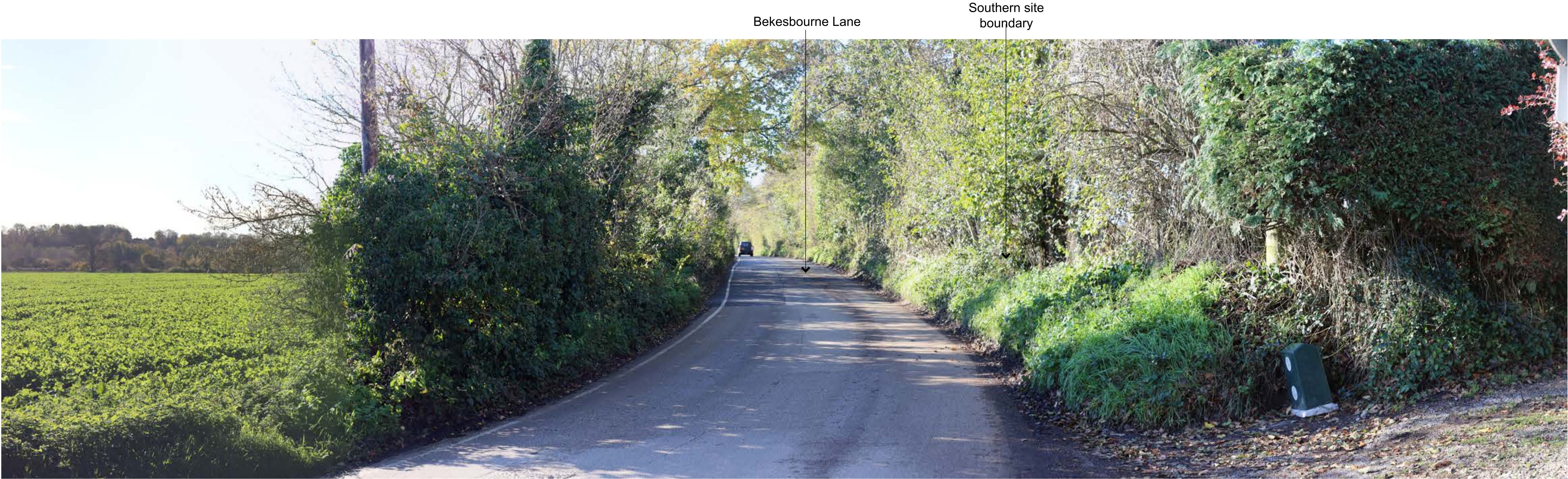


Photo Viewpoint 6: View south west along the southern site boundary on Bekesbourne Lane close to Public Right of Way CB156



Photo Viewpoint 7: View north east from Public Right of Way CB157



Photo Viewpoint 6
Date & time of photo: 22 Nov 2022, 11:46
Camera make & model, & sensor format:
Canon EOS 6D, FFS
Horizontal Field of View: 87°
Direction of View: 230, bearing from North



Photo Viewpoint 7
Date & time of photo: 22 Nov 2022, 11:55
Camera make & model, & sensor format:
Canon EOS 6D, FFS
Horizontal Field of View: 87°
Direction of View: 45, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.

Visualisation Type: Type 1
Projection: Cylindrical
Enlargement factor: 100%

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Photo Viewpoint 8: View north from Bridleway CB160



Photo Viewpoint 9: View north west from Bridleway CB160

Appendix A

Landscape and Visual Appraisal – Methodology and Assessment Criteria

Introduction

- 1.0 The methodology for the Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) undertaken for the proposed development is detailed in the LVA report. The following information should be read in conjunction with this methodology.
- 1.1 As advised in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) (GLVIA3), the judgements made in respect of both landscape and visual effects are a combination of an assessment of the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the landscape or visual effect. The following details the definitions and criteria used in assessing sensitivity and magnitude for landscape and visual receptors.
- 1.2 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as High/ Medium or Moderate/ Minor etc. This indicates that the assessment lies between the respective definitions or encompasses aspects of both.

Landscape

Landscape Sensitivity

- 1.3 Landscape receptors are assessed in terms of their 'Landscape Sensitivity'. This combines judgements on the value to be attached to the landscape and the susceptibility to change of the landscape from the type of change or development proposed. The definition and criteria adopted for these contributory factors is detailed below.
- 1.4 There can be complex relationships between the value attached to landscape receptors and their susceptibility to change which can be especially important when considering change within or close to designated landscapes. For example, an internationally, nationally or locally valued landscape does not automatically or by definition have a high susceptibility to all types of change. The type of change or development proposed may not compromise the specific basis for the value attached to the landscape.

Landscape Value

- 1.5 Value can apply to a landscape area as a whole, or to the individual elements, features and aesthetic or perceptual dimensions which contribute to the character of the landscape. The following criteria have been used to categorise landscape value. Where there is no clear existing evidence on landscape value, an assessment is made based on the criteria/ factors identified below (based on the guidance in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21 "Assessing landscape value outside national designations", (which provides more up to date guidance than Box 5.1 of GLVIA3).

- Natural Heritage
- Cultural Heritage
- Landscape Condition
- Associations
- Distinctiveness
- Recreational
- Perceptual (scenic)
- Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)
- Functional

Landscape Value	Definition
High	Landscape receptors of high importance based upon factors of natural and cultural heritage, condition, distinctiveness, recreational value, perceptual qualities associations and functional aspects.
Medium	Landscape receptors of medium importance based upon factors of natural and cultural heritage, condition, distinctiveness, recreational value, perceptual qualities and quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreational value, perceptual qualities, associations and functional aspects.
Low	Landscape receptors of low importance based upon factors of natural and cultural heritage, condition, distinctiveness, recreational value, perceptual qualities and quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreational value, perceptual qualities, associations and functional aspects.

Landscape Susceptibility to Change

- 1.6 This means the ability of the landscape receptor (overall character type/ area or individual element/ feature) to accommodate the change (i.e. the proposed development) without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline position and/ or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies. The definition and criteria for the assessment of Landscape Susceptibility to Change is as follows:

Landscape Susceptibility to Change	Definition
High	A highly distinctive and cohesive landscape receptor, with positive characteristics and features with no or very few detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features intact and in very good condition and/ or rare. Limited capacity to accept the type of change/ development proposed.
Medium	Distinctive and more commonplace landscape receptor, with some positive characteristics/ features and some detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features in moderate condition. Capacity to accept well planned and designed change/ development of the type proposed.
Low	Landscape receptor of mixed character with a lack of coherence and including detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features that may be in poor or improving condition and few that could not be replaced. Greater capacity to accept the type of change/ development proposed.

Magnitude of Landscape Effects

- 1.7 The magnitude of landscape effects is the degree of change to the landscape receptor in terms of its size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. The table below sets out the categories and criteria adopted in respect of the separate considerations of Scale or Size of the Degree of Change, Reversibility the geographical extent and duration of change are described where relevant in the appraisal.

Scale or Size of the Degree of Landscape Change

Scale or Size of the Degree of Landscape Change	Definition
High	Total loss of or substantial alteration to key characteristics / features and the introduction of new elements totally uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be fundamentally changed.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key characteristics / features and the introduction of new elements that would be evident but not necessarily uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be obviously changed.
Low	Limited loss of, or alteration to one or more key characteristics/ features and the introduction of new elements evident and/ or characteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be perceptibly changed.
Negligible	Very minor alteration to one or more key characteristics/ features and the introduction of new elements characteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be minimally changed.
None	No loss or alteration to the key characteristics/ features, representing 'no change'.

Geographical Extent

Geographical extent	Definition
Extensive	Notable change to an extensive proportion of the geographic area.
Moderate	Notable change to part of the geographic area,
Minimal	Change over a limited part of the geographic area.
Negligible	Change over a very limited part of the geographical area

Duration

Duration	Definition
Short term	The change will occur for up to 5 years.
Medium Term	The change will occur for between 5 and 10 years.
Long term	The change will occur for over 10 years

Reversibility

Reversibility	Definition
Irreversible	The development would be permanent and the assessment site could not be returned to its current/ former use.

Reversible	The development could be deconstructed/ demolished and the assessment site could be returned to broadly its current/ historic use (although that may be subject to qualification depending on the nature of the development).
------------	---

Visual

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 1.8 Visual sensitivity assesses each visual receptor in terms of their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity and also the value attached to particular views. The definition and criteria adopted for these contributory factors is detailed below.

Visual Susceptibility to Change

- 1.9 The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of; firstly, the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and secondly, the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focussed on the views and visual amenity they experience.

Visual Susceptibility to Change	Definition
High	Residents at home with primary views from ground floor/garden and upper floors. Public rights of way/ footways where attention is primarily focussed on the landscape and on particular views. Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape and/ or on particular views. Communities where views make an important contribution to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents. Travellers on recognised scenic routes.
Medium	Residents at home with secondary views (primarily from first floor level). Public rights of way/ footways where attention is not primarily focussed on the landscape and/ or particular views. Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes.
Low	Users of outdoor recreational facilities where the view is less important to the activities (e.g. sports pitches). Travellers on road, rail or other transport where views are primarily focussed on the transport route. People at their place of work where views of the landscape are not important to the quality of the working life.

Value of Views

- 1.10 The value attached to a view takes account of any recognition attached to a particular view and/ or any indicators of the value attached to views, for example through guidebooks or defined viewpoints or references in literature or art.

Value of Views	Definition
High	A unique or identified view (e.g. shown as such on Ordnance Survey map, guidebook or tourist map) or one noted in literature or art. A view where a heritage asset makes an important contribution to the view.
Medium	A typical and/ or representative view from a particular receptor.
Low	An undistinguished or unremarkable view from a particular receptor.

Magnitude of Visual Effects

- 1.11 Magnitude of Visual Effects evaluates each of the visual effects in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. The table below sets out the categories and criteria adopted in respect of the Scale or Size (including the degree of contrast) of Visual Change. The distance and nature of the view and whether the receptor's view will be stationary or moving are also detailed in the Visual Effects Table.

Scale or Size of the Degree of Visual Change	Definition
High	The proposal will result in a large and immediately apparent change in the view, being a dominant and new and/ or incongruous feature in the landscape.
Medium	The proposal will result in an obvious and recognisable change in the view and will be readily noticed by the viewer.
Low	The proposal will constitute a minor component of the wider view or a more recognisable component that reflects those apparent in the existing view. Awareness of the proposals will not have a marked effect on the overall nature of the view.
Negligible/ None	Only a very small part of the proposal will be discernible and it will have very little or no effect on the nature of the view.

Level of Effect

- 1.12 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects. This overall judgement is formed from a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the assessment criteria.
- 1.13 GLVIA3 notes, at paragraphs 5.56 and 6.44, that there are no hard and fast rules with regard to the level of effects, therefore the following descriptive thresholds have been used for this appraisal:
- **Major**
 - **Moderate**
 - **Minor**
 - **Negligible**

- 1.14 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as, for example, Major/ Moderate or Moderate/ Minor. This indicates that the effect is assessed to lie between the respective definitions or to encompass aspects of both.

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
National Landscape Character									
Natural England, National Character Area Profile (NCA) 113 ‘North Kent Plain’	Medium	Medium	Medium	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Negligible	No	Whilst the proposed scheme represents an alteration of the field parcel, from agricultural uses in keeping with the NCA to residential development the area already has a strong visual relationship with the settlement edge. The site is relatively enclosed due to the combination of landform, vegetation and development. Due to the scale of the site, when considered in the context of the wider character area and the potential influence of existing urbanising features on the character of the area is it unlikely that the site will effect the NCA. Mitigation measures include local landscape features and a substantial amount of structural tree planting and vegetation across the site. Tree species specified should be in keeping with the locality and connect to the NCA.	Negligible / None	Negligible / None	Negligible / None
Natural England, National Character Area Profile (NCA) 119 ‘North Downs’	Medium	Medium	Medium	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Negligible	No	Site falls outside of this NCA although the boundary of the NCA is suited along the southern edge of the site on Bekesbourne Lane. Intervisibility between the site and the North Downs NCA is limited and within a tiny percentage of the overall NCA. Potential visibility of the site from the NCA is limited to a short section of Bekesbourne Lane and potentially glimpsed views across the valley landscape to the south. Any effects are considered to be inconsequential across the NCA.	Negligible / None	Negligible / None	Negligible / None
Landscape Character Assessment (LCA):									
Landscape Assessment of Kent (October 2004) The North Kent Fruit Belt	Medium	Medium	Medium	Construction: Low - Medium Completion: Low Year 15: Negligible	No	The site is located wholly within The North Kent Fruit Belt LCA and forms a small parcel of land within the area. The development parcel does not display the key characteristics of the area as set out in the report. Visibility is more limited that implied by the description where it states that ‘visibility is high’ and the site does not conform to the characteristic description such as “single species shelter belts, large square oasts and dwarf root stock trees”. The landscape action for the character area is to ‘Conserve and Create’ regarding the protection of medium scale field patterns and the creation of small woodlands. The GI proposals intend to comply with both recommendations, forming a new structural field boundary to enclose the site through the implementation of native hedgerows and structural tree planting. Woodland blocks are proposed along the extent of the western boundaries to tie in with existing tree planting and create a level of screening to the site. Some beneficial effects would occur because of the proposed landscape.	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse / Negligible	Negligible

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
Canterbury Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal (October 2020) <i>LCA H6: Littlebourne Fruit Belt</i>	Medium	Medium	Medium	Construction: Low Completion: Low/ Negligible Year 15: Negligible	No	The site is considered to be representative of the Littlebourne Fruit Belt with the characteristic gently rolling landform, close proximity to the urban edge and agricultural land use. Recommendations set out in the document include encouraging traditional farming practices, such as fruit orchards, conserving the traditional pattern and structure of the landscape through improved hedgerow continuity and shelter belt features and the creation of wetland habitat. The proposed GI of the scheme seeks to provide the community with a range of outdoor facilities that include a community orchard. New native planting is present across the site in the form of woodland blocks, tree belts, tree avenues, native hedgerows and wetland trees; to enhance the diversity of the site, enable it to connect the existing GI, form an improved and continuous boundary to Littlebourne and provide a level of screening to the development, particularly from the north west where the boundary is open. The proposed drainage system comprises of a number of different features that include a wetland area that connects with existing drainage channels in and around the site. Whilst the scheme will represent an alteration to the field parcel the substantial amount of proposed GI will provide a level of enhancement that is in line with relevant guidance.	Minor / Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible
Landscape Character: Site and Immediate Context									
Site and Immediate Context	Medium	Medium	Medium	Construction: High/ Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Medium	No	The site is formed by a relatively featureless area of agricultural land that has a strong visual relationship with the settlement edge of Littlebourne on its eastern extent. The site is bounded by mature tree planting and vegetation for much of its edge, the planting is in a mixed condition. Positive landscape features present on the site will be retained where possible, with a substantial number of enhancements proposed to the site within the GI to improve the diversity of habitat and vegetation through the proposals. Whilst the proposed scheme represents the alteration of an agricultural field for development, the site is influenced by its position adjacent to Littlebourne and provides an opportunity to form a substantial greened edge to the settlement and new connections between the north and south of the village. The scheme will provide a range of recreation facilities for new and existing residents, include a host of sustainable drainage features, provide a diverse mix of native vegetation in the form of woodland belts, tree avenues, native hedgerows and tree groups to enclose the site, enhance habitat diversity and tie in with Landscape Character and Policy recommendations relevant to the site. Once the proposed GI has established and matured effects will likely reduce.	Moderate / Major Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Minor Adverse -

APPENDIX C: VISUAL EFFECTS TABLE (VET)												
Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs (including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion (Winter)	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion (Summer)
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) (approx. m/km)	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
A VP 1 VP 2 VP 3	<i>Residential</i> Residents of The Hill adjacent to the site (approx. 14 dwellings)	High	Medium	High - Medium	10m at closest point	Full	Permanent	Construction: High - Medium Completion: High - Medium Year 15: Medium	For residents of properties adjacent to the site there likely to be large and immediately apparent changes to the property frontage from both ground and upper floors. The existing site boundary hedgerow will require removal in part to facilitate access to the site and to enable the development to visually connect with the adjacent settlement. Existing properties with frontages close to the roadside will experience increased effects compared to dwellings that are set back behind front gardens. Whilst the proposed scheme represents an obvious change to the field parcel for residents, the scheme will tie in with the adjacent residential context. Currently views into the wider landscape are limited for residents by the existing hedgerow. Proposed dwellings will be set back from the roadside beyond a green corridor that comprises hedgerows and tree planting. Once the construction phase is complete and planting has established and matured views of the development will be softened.	Major – Moderate Adverse	Moderate – Major Adverse	Moderate Adverse
B VP 1	<i>Residential</i> Residents of The Hill set away from the site (approx. 20 dwellings)	High	Medium	High - Medium	15m at closest point	Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium - Low Year 15: Low	Where properties on The Hill side onto the site, or are set back not directly adjacent to the site boundary, views into the development area are reduced by intervening properties and vegetation. It is likely that the scheme will be seen as a recognisable change for residents of these properties, with partial views available towards the site from their ground and upper floors. The development is in keeping with the surrounding context. Design mitigation measures, such as setting development back from the shared edges of the site, orientating proposed dwellings to emulate the settlement pattern and a substantial amount of boundary tree and hedgerow planting will filter views of new properties, reducing the overall effects upon the receptor.	Moderate Adverse	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse

C VP 6 VP 7	<i>Residential</i> Residents of Bokesbourne Lane (approx. 12 dwellings)	High	Medium	High - Medium	25m at closest point	Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium - Low Year 15: Low	Properties in Bokesbourne Lane are generally large, individual dwellings that are set back from the roadside beyond boundary walls, fences or planting. Where residents have open views from within their property curtilage the outlook comprises of low lying agricultural land and vegetation situated on field boundaries. Views of the southern parcel of the site are likely to be available according to the proximity to the development. Due to the narrow nature of the route and open views into adjacent fields the aspect has a rural character. The proposed development represents a continuation of residential properties along the route. The loss of trees on the boundary with Bokesbourne Lane to facilitate access will increase views of the site. However, views of properties fronting onto Bokesbourne Lane will be in keeping with the development principles of the area. Proposed GI will aid in mitigating the effects of the development on residents by filtering views of new properties with avenue tree planting and native hedgerows. Proposed dwellings will be set back from the boundary, particularly on the south eastern tip of the site where an attenuation pond is situated.	Moderate Adverse	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse
D No VP	<i>Residential</i> Residents of School Path and Rose Acre Road (approx. 12 dwellings)	High	Medium	High - Medium	Adjacent to site boundary	Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium - Low Year 15: Low	For residents on School Path and Rose Acre Road views of the site may be available from their rear aspect according to the position of the dwelling and the presence of intervening vegetation and boundary treatments. The proposed scheme mitigates the potential effect of development on these receptors by situating Public Open Space in parts of the site that may be more visible, retaining boundary tree planting and vegetation where possible and proposing a substantial amount of new structural planting within the scheme to screen and filter views of the development. To mitigate potential views of the Water Recycling Centre a tree and vegetation buffer is proposed around it to filter and soften the aspect should it be glimpsed beyond boundary vegetation. As dwellings are generally set back from the boundary of the site the intervening distance combined with existing and proposed tree planting will serve to minimise potential effects upon the receptor.	Moderate – Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse – Negligible
E VP 6	<i>Public Right of Way</i> Users of PRow CB-156	High	Medium	High - Medium	10m at closest point	Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium - Low Year 15: Low	This footpath has an urban character as it travels along the rear of properties on Rose Acre Road from The Hill and emerges on Bokesbourne Lane. Views of particular areas of the site may be available as users travel the route according to intervening vegetation and boundary treatments. Any views available of the scheme will be in keeping with the built up character of the route. Mitigation measures such as boundary planting and locating public open space in more visible areas of the site will help to reduced views of the scheme. As users of the route emerge onto Bokesbourne Lane a new footpath link is proposed that will facilitate access to the north of the village through a variety of public open spaces proposed in the site.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate – Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse

F VP 1	<i>Public Right of Way</i> Users of PRoW CB-143	High	Medium	High - Medium	20m at closest point	Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium - Low Year 15: Low	Users of this route emerge on The Hill after travelling west along the rear of properties on Jubilee Road. Views of the site are only available where the route meets The Hill and whilst development of the site will represent recognisable and obvious change to the vista where the path terminates it will be in keeping with the developed nature of the route. Development on the north eastern edge of the site will be set back from the shared boundary beyond a green corridor that comprises of tree planting and hedgerows providing a level of mitigation to the alteration.	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible
G VP 7	<i>Public Right of Way</i> Users of PRoW CB-157	High	High	High	220m at closest point	Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium - Low Year 15: Low	Land to the south of the site is primarily agricultural, users of PRoW CB-157 travelling north east towards Littlebourne have open views across the low lying field to existing properties on Bekesbourne Lane. Tree planting on the southern site boundary, at Howletts Wildlife Park and along Bekesbourne Lane. Existing vegetation on Bekesbourne Lane will provide a level of screening to the site although views are likely to increase through the loss of boundary tree planting to facilitate access. Whilst the development is likely to be visible for much of the footpath on the approach to Littlebourne it will be seen in the context of existing properties on Bekesbourne Lane. Proposed GI will help to soften and filter views of structures on the southern edge of the site, with properties set back behind a green corridor comprising of hedgerows and tree planting and an attenuation feature.	Moderate – Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse – Negligible
H VP 4	<i>Public Right of Way</i> Users of PRoW CB-151	High	High	High	440m at closest point	Glimpse	Permanent	Construction: Low Completion: Low - Negligible Year 15: Negligible	Users of this route travel through a woodland block to the north of the site, where the route emerges onto Canterbury Road views into the site may be glimpsed over roadside vegetation. Due to the sloping topography of the land to the north west of the site views into the site are limited. The substantial amount of structural planting proposed on the north west site boundary will provide a further level of screening. Should views of the site be available for the routes users it will be seen with the backdrop of residential development at Littlebourne and read as a continuation of the village.	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse – Negligible	Negligible
I No VP	<i>Public Right of Way</i> Users of PRoW CB-150	High	High	High	330m at closest point	Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium - Low Completion: Low Year 15: Low - Negligible	As users of PRoW CB-150 travel south towards views of properties on The Hill are available across the northern site parcel for a short stretch of the route. The landform of the development area and existing tree planting in the immediate context of the site provide a level of screening to the southern parcel. The proposed scheme will bring residential development closer to the route' however, as properties in Littlebourne are already evident in the outlook the alteration is not at odds with context. The proposed scheme seeks to introduce a substantial amount of structural tree and hedgerow planting to form a strong, greened boundary to the site on its north western edge. As development is primarily focussed on the lower areas of the site parcel views of new properties from this location will be further reduced.	Moderate Adverse	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse

J VP 8	<i>Bridleway</i> Users of Bridleway CB-160	High	High	High	250m at closest point	Glimpse	Permanent	Construction: Medium - Low Completion: Low Year 15: Low - Negligible	Where Bridleway CB-160 is elevated above the intervening valley landscape there are glimpsed views towards the site through tree planting of the elevated areas of the site. As the route drops down towards Nail Bourne views are reduced by a combination of the levels and intervening vegetation. Elevated views are more distant and are unlikely to be overt for users of the route. The proposals seek to retain the more prominent, elevated areas of the site as GI to reduce visibility of the development from the surrounding area. Once construction is complete it is unlikely that the scheme will represent more than a minor alteration to the outlook for a very short stretch of the overall route.	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible
K VP 1 VP 2 VP 3	<i>Transport</i> Road users on The Hill	Medium	Low	Medium - Low	Adjacent to site boundary	Full	Permanent	Construction: High - Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Medium - Low	Views into the site for road users on The Hill are limited by the tall hedgerow that runs alongside the route. Alteration to the site will represent an obvious and recognisable change for road users as they pass the development however, change will be in keeping with the residential character of the road. The design will seek to mitigate potential impacts by setting development back beyond a green corridor that comprises of retained and proposed hedgerow and a mix of tree planting. Once construction is complete and planting established and matured, views into the development will be softened and read as a sensible continuation of the adjacent settlement pattern.	Moderate – Minor Adverse	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse
L VP 8 VP 9	<i>Transport</i> Road users on Bokesbourne Lane	Medium	Medium	Medium	Adjacent to site boundary	Full	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium - Low Year 15: Low	Bokesbourne Lane is a narrow route out of Littlebourne, users travel along the site's southern boundary. Their view into the development area is screened by mature boundary tree planting, some of which will require removal to facilitate access. Removal of tree planting along this edge will increase visibility of the site however, properties on the southern edge of the site will be set back behind a green corridor that comprises native hedgerow, tree planting, a woodland block and an attenuation pond. Users of Bokesbourne Lane have views of the existing properties along the route as well as the agricultural landscape to the south. Alteration to the site will not be out of keeping in terms of the wider context. Views of the site will be transient in their nature as users travel past the boundary.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate – Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
M VP 4	<i>Transport</i> Road users on Canterbury Road	Medium	Medium	Medium	220m at closest point	Glimpse	Permanent	Construction: Low - Medium Completion: Low Year 15: Low – Negligible	Canterbury Road connects Littlebourne to Canterbury, the route is flanked by hedge and individual hedgerow trees and a woodland block. Views towards the site for road users are limited by a combination of the roadside vegetation and the topography of the intervening land. The design proposes a substantial amount of structural planting on the north western edge of the site where views may be possible for road users. Effects of the scheme on road users are likely to minor when passing the site at speed with focus upon the route.	Minor Adverse – Negligible	Negligible – Minor Adverse	Negligible