

East Hampshire District Council Large Development Sites

Landscape Value Statements

July 2020



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Introduction

1. This report comprises an assessment of the landscape value attached to 10 sites under consideration for large development as part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan/
2. The 10 large sites are listed below and further information can be found here: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/draft-local-plan>
 - Chawton Park
 - Extension to Land East of Horndean (Hazleton Farm)
 - Four Marks South
 - Land South of Winchester Road, Four Marks
 - Neatham Down
 - Northbrook Park
 - South Medstead
 - West of Lymington Bottom Road, South Medstead
 - Whitehill and Bordon
 - Land South East of Liphook
3. The locations of the sites are shown on the maps below - Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Figure 1: Locations of Large Development Sites – North

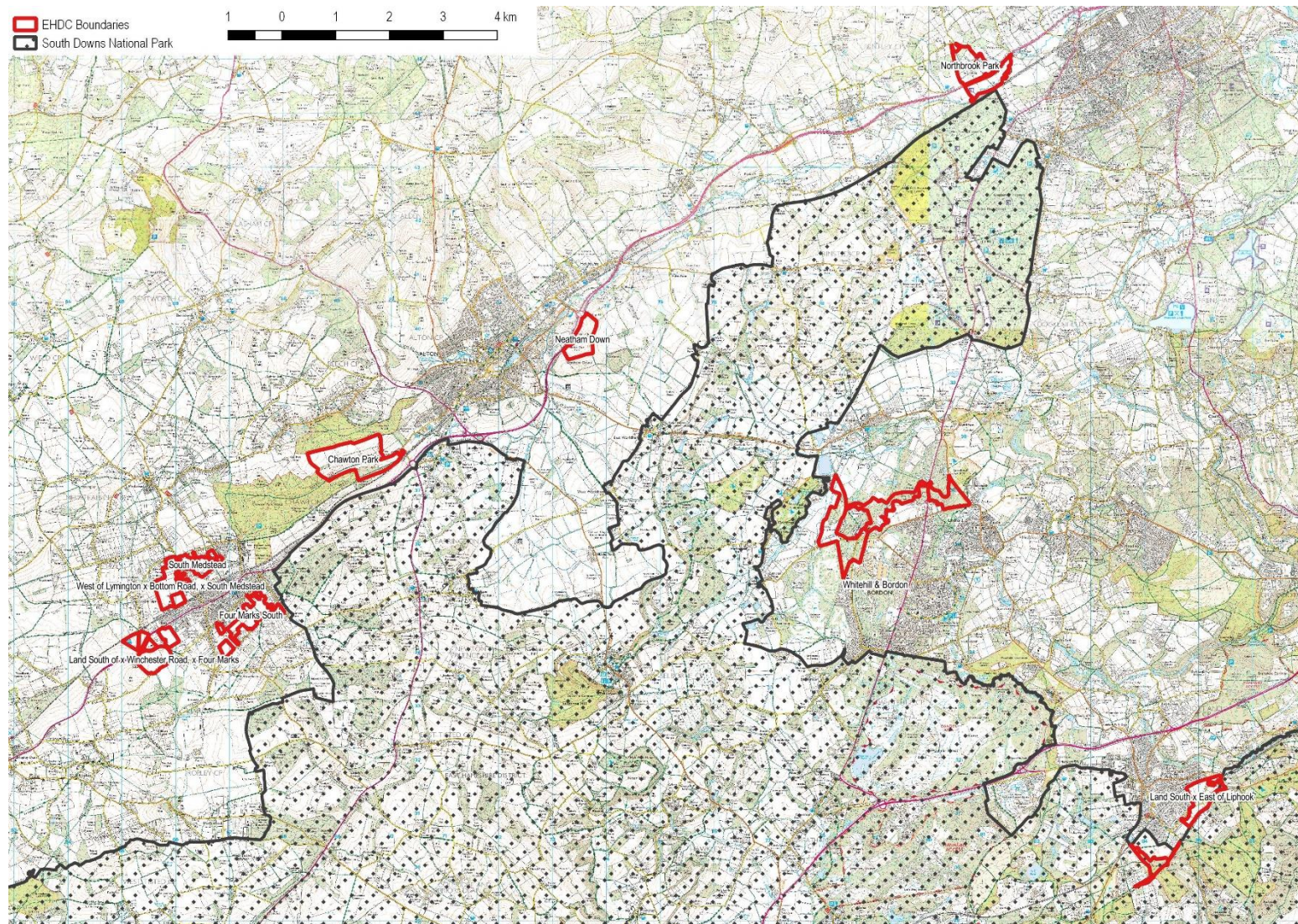
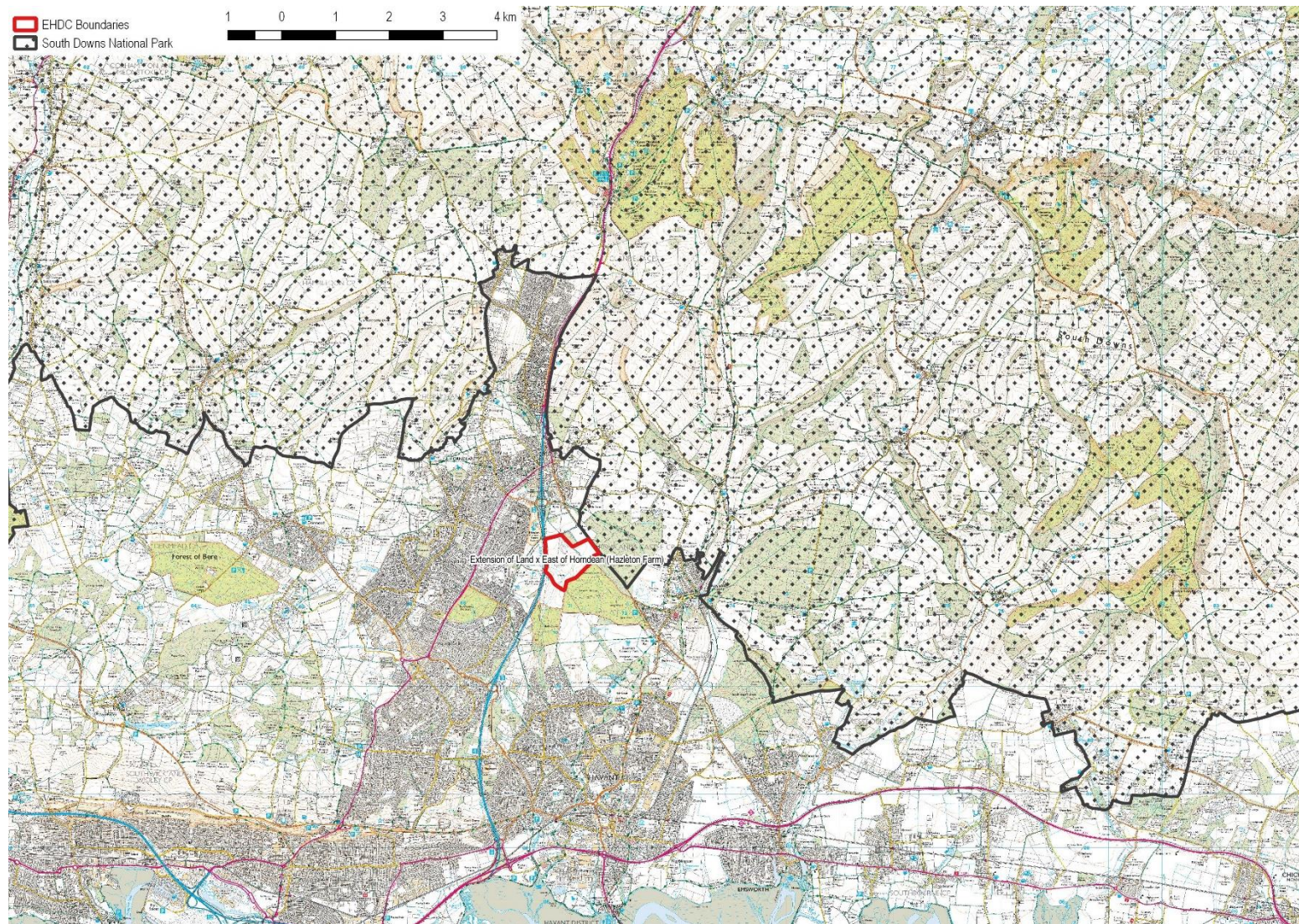


Figure 2: Locations of Large Development Sites – South



4. An assessment of each of the sites follows, each comprising the following:
 - Map showing site boundary, nearby designations and viewpoint locations
 - Description of development site
 - Photographs of site
 - Summary of landscape value

Policy background

5. The National Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) sets out in paragraph 170 that planning policy and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
6. East Hampshire District Council's (EHDC) Draft Local Plan 2017-2036 has a number of core objectives, including of most relevance to landscape: 'Core Objective B: Provide well-designed new developments that are in the right location and adaptable to climate change'. This states that new development should be *"designed and located to maintain and improve the quality of the built and natural environments, particularly around ... areas of high landscape value"*, and that *"high quality landscape, particularly the setting of the SDNP"* should be protected and enhanced.

Assessment of landscape value

7. The European Landscape Convention (ELC) recognises that all landscapes matter, be they ordinary, degraded or outstanding. There is however recognition that value is also ascribed to landscapes, and Topic Paper 6 identifies the need for judgements about landscape capacity to reflect that certain landscapes are valued by society for different reasons. As Topic Paper 6 notes, a valued landscape, whether nationally designated or not, does not automatically, and by definition, have high sensitivity.
8. The NPPF does not define the meaning of 'valued landscapes' but it is clear that they should be protected and enhanced 'in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the local plan' (paragraph 170). In addition, the Court of Appeal found (Stroud District Council v SS CLG and Gladman Developments Ltd 2015) that: *"To be valued, a landscape has to have demonstrable physical attributes which would take the site beyond ordinary countryside, rather than just popularity"* (paras. 9, 13-16). This was subsequently confirmed: *"A landscape was 'valued' if it had physical attributes taking it out of the ordinary, and an absence of designation did not necessarily mean an absence of landscape value"* (Forest of Dean DC v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government 2016).
9. Guidance to assist the assessment of landscape value is set out in the 'Guidelines for landscape and visual impact assessment' (The Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013 – GLVIA3). Assessment requires the physical, aesthetic, perceptual (scale, openness, complexity, tranquillity), ecological, historic and cultural aspects (including local or community assets) to be considered.
10. Information that will inform understanding the value of the landscape is set out in paragraphs 5.19 and 5.20:
 - Information about areas recognised by statute, such as National Parks
 - Local planning documents associated with local landscape designations
 - Information on the status of individual or groups of features, such as Conservation Areas, listed buildings, Tree Preservation Orders
 - Art and literature, including cultural associations
 - Information on landscapes of local / community interest

11. Paragraphs 5.26 to 5.30 set out how the value of landscapes which lie outside of designated landscapes should be approached:

“A starting reference to existing Landscape Character Assessments and associated planning policies and/or landscape strategies and guidelines may give an indication of which landscape types or areas, or individual elements or aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are particularly valued. A stated strategy of landscape conservation is usually a good indicator of this”. [5.27]

12. In addition to existing evidence (or in the absence of it) value should be determined through new survey and analysis using agreed criteria such as that set out in Box 5.1:

- Landscape quality (condition): A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of the individual elements
- Scenic quality: The term used to describe landscapes that appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly the visual senses)
- Rarity: The presence of rare elements or features in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type (LCT)
- Representativeness: Whether the landscape contains a particular character and/or features or elements which are considered particularly important examples
- Conservation interests: The presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of the landscape as well as having value in their own right
- Recreation value: Evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important
- Perceptual aspects: A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities, notably wildness and/or tranquillity
- Associations: Some landscapes are associated with particular people, such as artists or writers, or events in history that contribute to perceptions of the natural beauty of the area

Methodology

13. The methodology used for the assessment of landscape value for the EHDC Large Development sites draws upon the above guidance and follows the process and refers to the specific documents as set out below:
- Desktop review of documents:
 - EHDC and SDNPA Landscape Character Assessments: The extent to which the site reflects the key characteristics of the wider LCA and the overall strategy (i.e. to conserve)
 - EHDC Landscape Capacity Study (2018). The extent to which the site reflects the sensitivities of the wider parcel and its identified capacity of High, Medium-High, Medium, Medium-Low or Low¹
 - Alton Town Design Statement (2008)
 - Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan (2015)
 - Medstead and Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan (2015-2028)
 - Four Marks Village Design Statement (2001)
 - EHDC Tree Preservation Orders: <http://maps.easthants.gov.uk/easthampshire.aspx>
 - Hampshire Gardens Trust website: <http://research.hgt.org.uk/list-of-sites/>
 - Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 maps and Google Earth
 - <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map>
 - GIS mapping of designations on the site and within its immediate setting, including:
 - SDNP boundary, viewpoints and landmarks
 - Nature designations and features (SSSIs, SINCs, Local Nature Reserves, ancient woodlands)
 - Heritage designations (conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens)
 - Site visits – to view and photograph the sites from publicly accessible locations and assess aspects as set out in GLVIA Box 5.1, plus to identify any obvious contributions to ecosystems services

¹ Low capacity = high sensitivity

For the purposes of this study we have considered an outcome of Low capacity or Medium-Low capacity to add value to the site, providing the site is representative of the wider parcel.

Table 1: Landscape value criteria (within the context of this study)²

Value		Typical criteria	Typical examples within this study
Considered out of the ordinary	High	Very high importance (or quality) and rarity. No or limited potential for substitution	National scale of value Within the South Downs National Park SSSI; SPA 400m Buffer; SANG HE Register of Parks and Gardens Scheduled Monuments Grade I and II* listed buildings and their settings National recreational route or area e.g. South Downs Way
	Medium/high	High importance (or quality) and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	Regional scale of value Setting of the National Park Local landscape designation Open Access or common land Landscape value identified in local planning documents (VDS/Neighbourhood Plan) Conservation Areas and their setting Grade II listed buildings and their setting SINCs; Local Nature Reserve; Ancient woodland; TPOs Regional recreational route/area Intact landscape, in good condition and highly representative of positive and/or rare aspects of wider character, including SDNP High appeal to senses (tranquillity, scenic quality, sense of history, remoteness, wildness)
	Medium	Medium importance (or quality) and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	Local scale of value Local buildings and parks/gardens of historic interest and their settings Local recreational facilities of landscape value; local public rights of way Cultural associations
	Low	Local importance (or quality) and rarity.	Area of little value Area identified for improvement

Professional judgement

14. As the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment notes, there are ‘*complex relationships between the different components of the landscape*’. The overall value rating was reviewed to assess whether a specific or overriding aspect of value has been under- or over-weighted in the consolidation of the profile into a single overall rating. If necessary, the rating has been adjusted up or down to reflect individual aspects, ensuring that professional judgement is the final arbiter in the process.

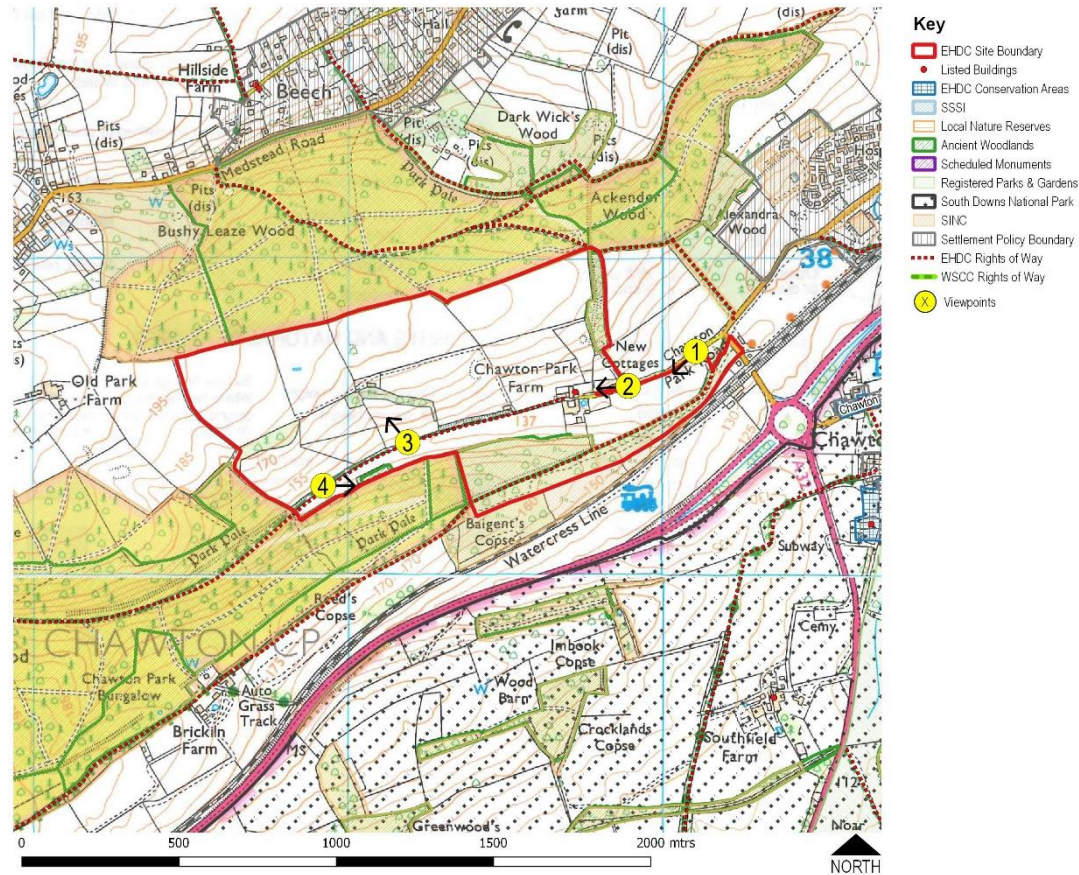
² This is based on the criteria used to determine landscape value in the EHDC Landscape Capacity Study (2018), with the judgement categories (high to low) recalibrated to relate to the site level of this value study and to include aspects which were taken into account in the assessment of landscape and visual sensitivity in the Capacity Study.

References

- Alton Town Design Statement (2008)
- Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan (2015)
- The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland. Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity
- Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland CAX 84
- EDHC Draft Local Plan 2017-2036
- EDHC Landscape Capacity Study (2018)
- EDHC Landscape Character Assessment (2006)
- Four Marks Village Design Statement (2001)
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013)
- Medstead and Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan (2015-2028)
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019)
- South Downs Local Plan (2019)
- The South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan (2013)
- South Downs National Park Special Qualities of the National Park (2011)
- South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (2011)

Chawton Park

Figure 3: Site map, designations and location of photograph viewpoints



Description of development site

The site under consideration is shown in Figure 3 above. The site contains a small, area designated as Ancient Woodland (which is part of Chawton Park Wood to the south-west) and the grade II listed Chawton Park Farmhouse. It is considered possible that there is intervisibility with the SDNP from higher ground to the north of the site and it is considered to be part of the setting of the SDNP. The attractive landscape is fairly representative of several of the special qualities of the SDNP³; *diverse inspirational landscapes and breath-taking views; tranquil and unspoilt places; an environment shaped by centuries of farming and embracing new enterprise; great opportunities for recreational activities and learning experiences; and well-conserved historical features and a rich cultural heritage.*

The site lies on the elevated clay plateau (EHDC LCA 2) with which it shares many characteristics. It comprises a number of pastoral fields to the west of Alton and Chawton and north of the Watercress Line heritage railway and A31 corridor. Chawton Park Farm lies towards the eastern boundary of the site.

The site's boundaries are generally defined by blocks of woodland, notably Bushy Leaze Wood to the north and Chawton Park Wood to the south. The majority of field boundaries reflect the historic field pattern although there has been some subdivision in fields to the north not all are defined by hedgerows.

The area's topography is locally distinct, with a ridge of high land lying to the north of the site and a less pronounced ridge to the south, enclosing the PRoW which marks the continuation of Chawton Park Road within a dry valley. The northern ridge separates the site from the village of Beech and the southern ridge separates the site from the A3. In addition to the PRoW which crosses east-west through the site there is a further east-west PRoW to the southern edge of the southern field and much of the surrounding woodland is publicly accessible.

Views from within the lower parts of the site are contained by landform, with longer views potentially possible from the elevated northern part of site.

The site is separated from the existing settlement edge of Alton by a block of woodland and an area of open farmland and from Beech by Bushy Leaze Wood. Despite the proximity of the A31 there is little influence on the site's rural character and the site has a strong relationship with and connection to the wider landscape to the west, forming part of the countryside setting to the town and separating it from Four Marks.

The site contains no watercourses and a small pond within the farmstead. Surface water flood mapping indicates a risk of flooding along the line of central PRoW.

The landscape has a small to medium scale character, with a greater sense of enclosure to lower land in the south and more openness to the north. There is a sense of tranquillity despite the nearby road.

The site contributes to a number of ecosystem services, including: the absorption of rainwater on the green field land; some carbon sequestration and biodiversity function in the trees and hedgerows; some recreational value in the presence of the public right of way.

³ These are difficult to check as they are on private land

Site Photographs



Photo 1: View south-west from Chawton Park Road on site boundary with rising landform of Chawton Park Wood providing screening of A31.



Photo 2: View west from Chawton Park Road on site boundary at start of PRow which crosses farmyard. Grade II listed Chawton Park Farmhouse to right of photograph framing view of rising landform of northern part of site.



Photo 3: View north-west from PRow towards rising landform which screens views of Bushy Leaze Wood.



Photo 4: View east from PRow across sinuous field enclosed by Chawton Park Wood on right of photograph towards farm buildings of Chawton Park Farm in distance. Chawton Park Wood and associated landform screen site from A31 and Watercress Line heritage railway.

Summary of landscape value

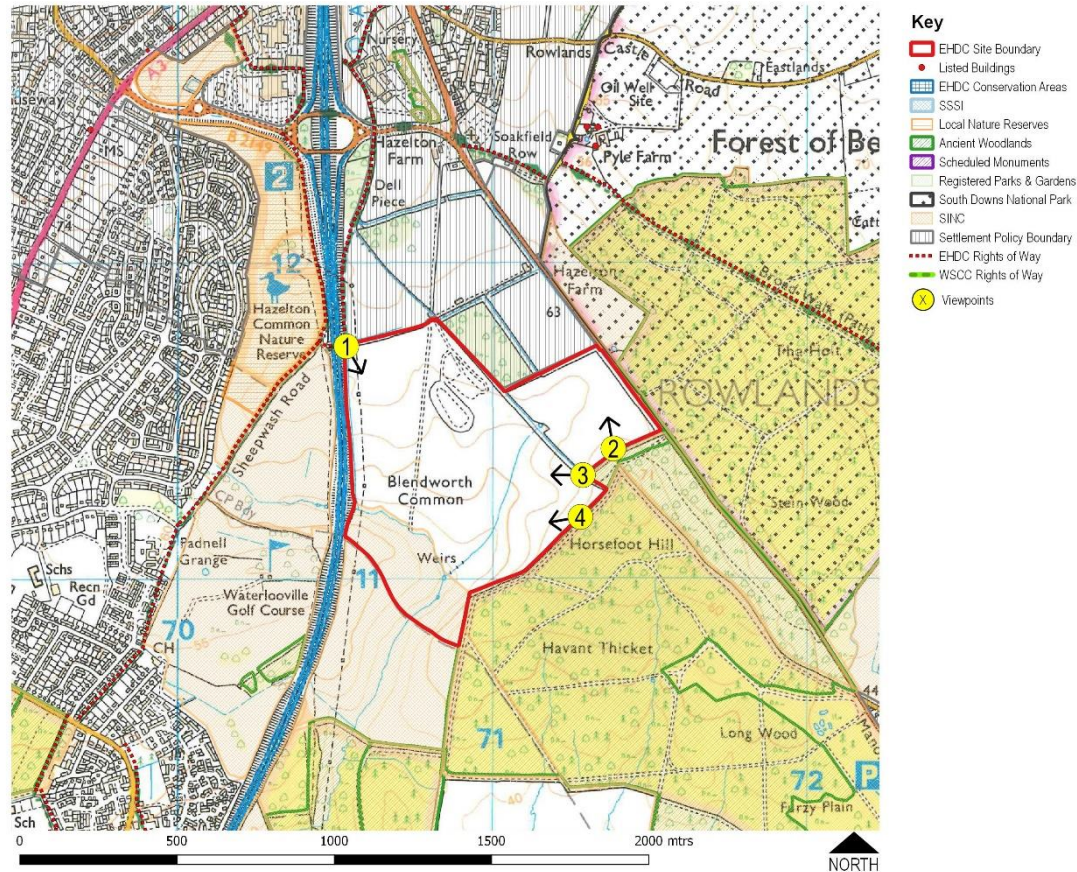
As described above, the key aspects of value associated with the site are:

- Attractive views from the footpaths which run east to west through the site, and evoke connections with the nearby SDNP
- The distinct dry-valley topography of the site and its immediate setting
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA:
 - A rolling landform
 - A landscape dominated by pasture
 - Fields of late medieval origin and of planned enclosure
 - Ancient woodland, often replanted, including large Chawton Park and Bushy Leaze Woods
 - Tree cover creates a secluded and enclosed landscape, contrasting with open arable fields
 - Isolated farmsteads of 18th and 19th century and medieval origin
 - Part of an area with an overall strategy to conserve peaceful, rural landscape of the Four Marks clay plateau, maintaining the rural character created by the unifying woodland / tree cover and farmland mosaic
- The sites strong relationship and continuity with the countryside to the west
- Medium-low capacity for the wider area identified in the EHDC Landscape Capacity Study (2018)
- Valued characteristics identified in the Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan:
 - The discreet setting of Alton within the surrounding landscape, including the skylines, to which the site contributes
- Valued characteristics identified in the Alton Town Design Statement:
 - Alton's setting, surrounded by varied countryside with a remote and quiet rural character
 - The undeveloped skyline of hills surrounding Alton
- The surrounding framework of woodland and trees which encloses the site and is particularly strong where it reflects historic field boundaries or provides valuable and linked habitat.

Within the context of this study, no aspect of the site has a high value. The high ground to the south and north of the site is considered to form part of the setting of the SDNP. The setting of the grade II listed Chawton Park Farmhouse in the eastern part of the site is considered of significance and the landscape possesses a generally high scenic quality, tranquillity, sense of history and intactness, especially surrounding the east-west footpath. The site is therefore considered to be out of the ordinary and overall the value of this site is medium/high.

Extension to land east of Horndean (Hazleton Farm)

Figure 4: Site map, designations and location of photograph viewpoints



Description of development site

The site under consideration is shown in Figure 4 above. The south-west part of the site is designated a SINC, to the south-west lies the Access area of Havant Thicket and the eastern boundary of the site lies adjacent to the SDNP and is therefore considered to be part of the setting of the SDNP. The site does not contain or abut any areas designated for heritage reasons, but the site was once part of the Forest of Bere, a medieval royal hunting preserve. There is intervisibility with the SDNP, and the attractive landscape is fairly representative of the first two special qualities of the SDNP; diverse inspirational landscapes and breath-taking views; and a rich variety of wildlife and habitats including rare and internationally important species.

The site lies at the western edge of the Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest Wooded Claylands (EHDC LCA 10a) which occupies the clay vale between the dip slope of the chalk downland and the Portsdown chalk ridge and is largely characteristic of the LCA. It comprises a medium sized field adjacent to Manor Lodge and the major part of a large field which borders the A3 (M). The south-western boundary does not follow any obvious landscape features but is determined by the boundary between East Hampshire District Council and Havant Borough Council.

The site's few boundaries are generally hedged, some which are tree-lined, with the exception of the south-west boundary described above. Some boundaries reflect the historic field pattern of Parliamentary enclosures with the area to the south-west being classified as unenclosed heath and scrub. Some disruption to field patterns has been caused by historic changes in landscape use and from the arrival of the motorway.

The area's topography is locally distinct, with a V-shaped valley running southwards across the larger field. A public footpath runs close to the north-west corner of the site adjacent to the motorway bridge and Havant Thicket, to the south east, is open access land. Due to the elevation of the site and its relative openness there are views to north and west including towards the SDNP and to settlements to the north and west.

The Horndean settlement boundary runs along the northern boundary of the site and development here may undermine the somewhat isolated character of the site which it retains despite the presence of the motorway which serves to separate the site from Cowplain to the west.

Despite the proximity of the A3(M) and the existing nearby settlements, both have little influence on the site's rural, undeveloped character and the site has a strong relationship with and connection to the wider landscape to the north and east, forming part of the countryside separation between Rowlands Castle, Horndean and Cowplain. There is some evidence of possible previous development/ hardstanding in the north of the site.

The site contains a number of watercourses which drain towards the Meon Valley and the north-eastern field appears to be surrounded by drainage ditches. Surface water mapping indicates a localised risk of flooding associated with the streams within the western part of the site.

The landscape has a medium- to large-scale with a generally open character, although Havant Thicket and Stein Wood provide some sense of enclosure, and some sense of tranquillity despite the nearby motorway.

The site contributes to a number of ecosystem services, including the absorption of rainwater on the green field land; some carbon sequestration and biodiversity function in the trees, hedgerows and heathland.

Site Photographs



Photo 1: View south-east from public footpath adjacent to site and motorway bridge towards wooded skyline of Havant Thicket



Photo 2: View north-west from edge of Havant Thicket into smaller pastoral field. SDNP is visible in distance and to right of photograph.



Photo 3: View west from edge of Havant Thicket across Blendworth Common to Portsdown Hill. Motorway is concealed by landform and vegetation. Pylons are somewhat intrusive.



Photo 4: View south-west from edge of Havant Thicket across Blendworth Common towards SINC with Portsdown Hill beyond. Motorway is concealed by landform and vegetation. Pylons are somewhat intrusive.

Summary of landscape value

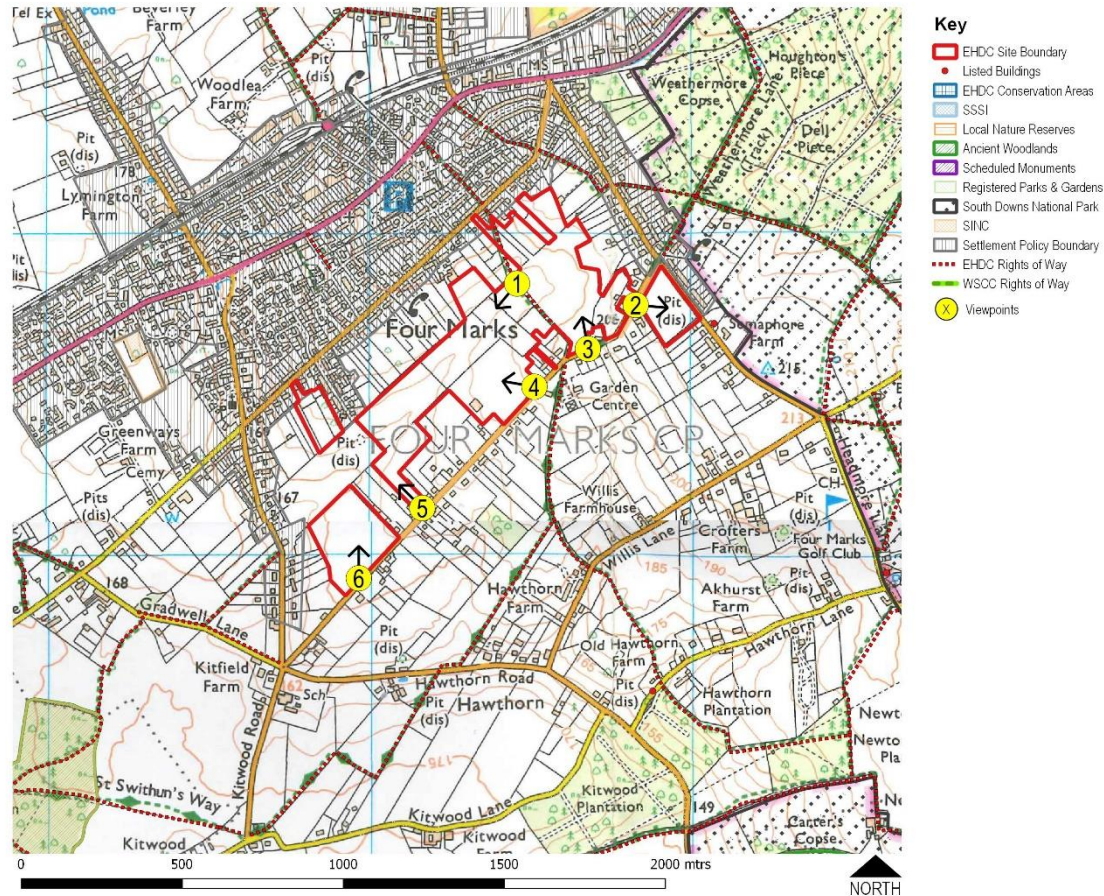
As described above, the key aspects of value associated with the site are:

- Attractive views from the footpath at north-west corner, and from edge of Havant Thicket which evoke connections with the nearby SDNP. Additional distant views to SDNP and Portsdown Hill
- Blendworth Common (North) SINC on south-west of site
- The locally distinct vale topography of the site and its immediate setting.
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA:
 - Varied landcover dominated by woodland and including pasture and common land
 - Former Royal hunting preserve
 - Pocket of heathland at Blendworth Common
 - Recreational opportunities in adjacent Havant Thicket
 - Drained by streams that flow into the Meon Valley
 - Part of an area with an overall strategy to conserve the open unsettled landscape with broad views across fields bound by hedgerows
- The sites strong relationship and continuity with the countryside to the north and east
- Medium/low capacity for the wider area identified in the EHDC Landscape Capacity Study (2018)

Within the context of this study, no parts of the site have a high value. Due to its contribution to the setting of the SDNP in the east, the presence of a SINC in the south-west and the overall sense of remoteness, scenic quality and intactness the site is considered to be out of the ordinary and overall the value is medium/high.

Four Marks South

Figure 5: Site map, designations and location of photograph viewpoints



Description of development site

The site under consideration is shown in Figure 5 above. The site does not contain or abut any areas designated for landscape, heritage or nature conservation reasons and although the eastern field is approximately 200m from the SDNP boundary there is no intervisibility and it is not considered to be part of the setting of the SDNP, nor does it strongly represent any of the special qualities of the SDNP.

The site is within the elevated, gently undulating countryside of the Four Marks Clay Plateau (EHDC LCA 2b) and is representative of the wider landscape character in some but not all respects. It comprises a group of fields to the south-east of Four Marks, west of Alton Lane, with properties on Blackberry Lane forming the western boundary. There are two fields separated from the main site; one containing a house, garden and small paddock adjacent to Blackberry Lane (not publicly visible); and one field further south on Alton Lane. The site is largely made up pasture, predominantly sheep grazing, with some horse grazing.

The site has a strong landscape framework, with boundaries that are generally hedged, some which are tree-lined, and some which reflect the historic field pattern. Several boundaries are tree-lined and some trees at the site edges are subject to TPOs.

The area's topography reflects the wider landscape, varying between fairly flat in the eastern and southern fields, to gently undulating elsewhere, with the highest ground in the east, at approximately 205-210m AOD, gently sloping away from this towards the west, with a distinctive shallow valley forming the central part of the site, falling to the south-west.

A public footpath crosses the northern part of the site linking Four Marks to Alton Lane, and the long-distance St Swithuns Way runs along Alton Lane adjacent to the site's boundary and with views across the site. Views from within the site are often contained by vegetation, buildings or landform, with slightly longer views possible from the elevated eastern part of site and the more open southern field, both south-west towards a wooded ridge (Old Down Wood).

The site is generally offset from the settlement boundary to the north-west and north-east, by the long gardens of properties on Blackberry Lane and Telegraph Lane. The settlement along Alton Lane and Telegraph Lane consists of mid- to late- twentieth century low density linear settlement with generous garden plots backing onto open countryside. Beyond Blackberry Lane, the main village of Four Marks has a denser settlement pattern which although linear, is wider in form than the outlying areas.

The site contains no water course. Surface water flood mapping indicates run-off water following the shallow valley through the centre of the site.

Although the site is effectively surrounded by the main village and outlying areas of the settlement, much of the settlement edge is well vegetated and has little effect on the rural character and sense of tranquillity which feels strongest in the southern part of site, along Alton Lane and in the attractive valley in the centre of the site. The landscape has a small-scale, secluded and enclosed character. The distinctive historic parliamentary field pattern is still evident in places along the valley giving some sense of history.

The site contributes to a number of ecosystem services, including: the absorption of rainwater on the generally green field land; some carbon sequestration and biodiversity function in the trees, hedgerows and, to a much lesser extent, the grazed grassland; some recreational value through the equestrian use and public rights of ways.

Site Photographs



Photo 1: View south-west along attractive dry valley from public footpath. Views contained by the landform and strong framework of trees and hedges.



Photo 2: View east from Alton Lane and route of St Swithuns Way towards houses on Telegraph Lane. This field is separated from the main site by Alton Lane.



Photo 3: View north from Alton Lane and route of St Swithuns Way. Houses along Blackberry Lane are visible, set within trees and the settlement is sometimes well-vegetated, sometimes more open. Overall the rural character is strong.



Photo 4: View west from Alton Lane through a gap in the hedgerow. The strong vegetation network curtails views and creates a strong rural character.



Photo 5: View north-west from Alton Lane. Houses on Bernard Avenue / Blackberry Lane are glimpsed, set within trees and the settlement is generally well-vegetated and the rural character is strong.



Photo 6: View north from Alton Lane across field at southern end of site which is separated from the main site. Houses on Bernard Avenue / Blackberry Lane are glimpsed, set within trees and the settlement is generally well-vegetated and the rural character is strong.

Summary of landscape value

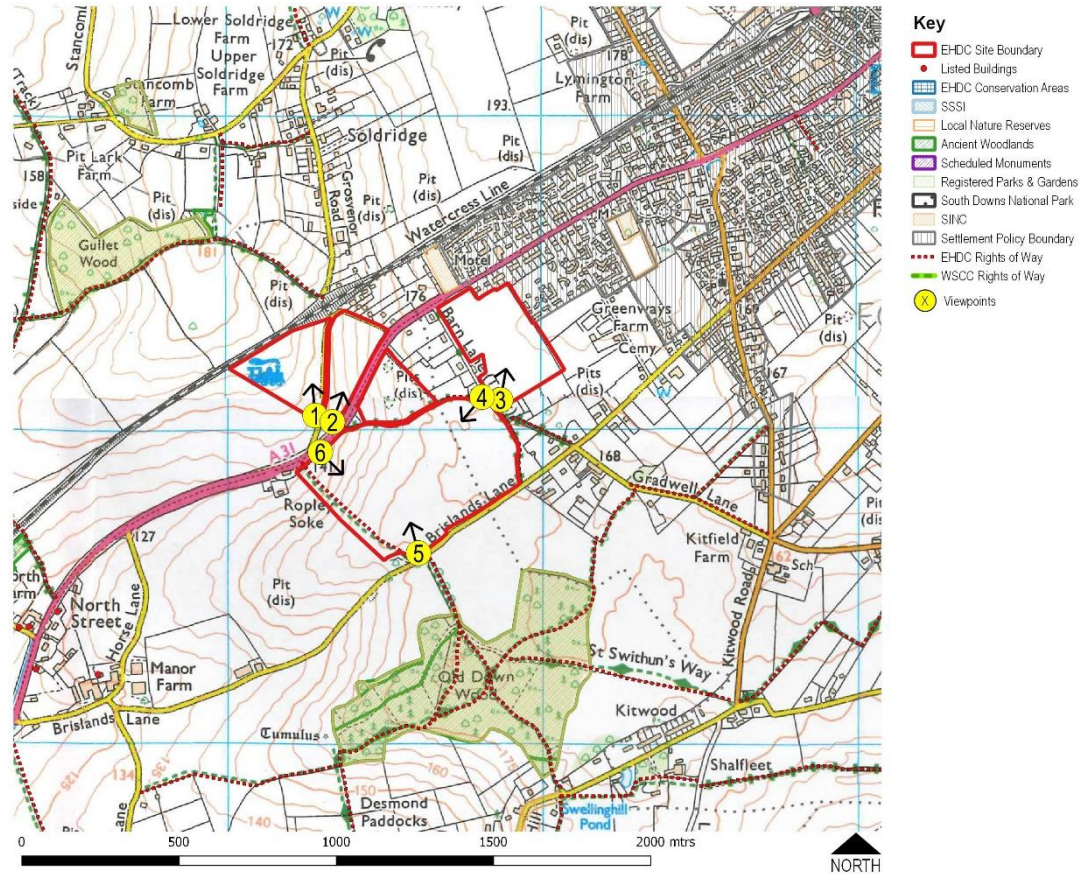
As described above, the key aspects of value associated with the site area:

- Views from the St Swithuns Way and local footpaths across countryside close to Four Marks, including the northern parts of site
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA:
 - Elevated and gently undulating landform
 - Pastoral farmland
 - Hedgerow tree cover creating seclusion and enclosure and helping to integrate built development
 - Oak as a key species in hedgerows
 - A peaceful and, in places, a still and empty landscape
 - Relatively intact hedgerow network contributing to the ecological value of the landscape
 - Field pattern reflecting the distinctive planned enclosure of the late 19th century
 - Quiet rural lanes (southern and north-eastern parts of site contribute to the rural character of Alton Lane and Telegraph Lane)
 - Part of an area with an overall strategy to conserve the peaceful rural landscape, maintaining the rural character created by the unifying woodland/tree cover and farmland mosaic (the rural character is stronger in the south-western part of site)
- Valued characteristics identified in the Medstead and Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan (2015-2028):
 - Open and green spaces surrounding the villages giving a connection to the rural environment
 - Peacefulness
 - Views of the surrounding countryside
 - The settlements retaining their own distinctive characters
- Valued characteristics identified in the Four Marks Village Design Statement (2001):
 - Preponderance of small fields surrounded by hedges and mature trees
 - Hedgerows, trees and small copses provide a framework and confer a rural character
 - Footpath network and appreciation of attractive rural landscape
- TPO tree to some boundaries
- The strong framework of agricultural hedgerows and trees which is particularly strong where it reflects historic field boundaries or provides valuable and linked habitat
- Attractive dry valley crossed with hedges and treelines
- The southern parts and central valley have greater tranquillity and rural character and contribute to the sense of place and visual and physical setting for the village

Within the context of this study, no aspect of the site has a high value. Some aspects, such as the attractive dry valley and the more tranquil parts of the site have a medium/high value, on the whole the site is considered to have a medium value.

Land South of Winchester Road, Four Marks

Figure 6: Site map, designations and location of photograph viewpoints



Description of the development site

The site under consideration is shown in Figure 6 above and comprises of 5 parcels of land. The site does not contain or abut any areas designated for landscape, heritage or nature conservation reasons and it is not considered to be part of the setting of the SDNP. There is no intervisibility with the SDNP, but the attractive landscape is fairly representative of some of the qualities of the SDNP, especially in the west; diverse inspirational landscapes and breath-taking views; an environment shaped by centuries of farming and embracing new enterprise; and well-conserved historical features and a rich cultural heritage.

The majority of the site lies on the western edge of the Four Marks Clay Plateau (EHDC LCA 2b). A small area either side of Grosvenor Road and heading south-west across the A31 into a small part of the southernmost parcel lies within the north-east corner of the Ropley Downland Mosaic (EHDC LCA 3e). The site is generally characteristic of these wider LCAs

The parcels either side of Grosvenor Road are well-hedged but other parcels are defined by vegetated roads and tracks and by residential development. To the north-west the boundary is defined by the embankment of the Watercress Line. Some boundaries reflect the historic field pattern although some amalgamation has occurred, especially in the west and the A31 introduced. To the north of Grosvenor Road and east of Barn Lane are described as Parliamentary fields with the 3 central parcels comprising ex-downland fields defined by tracks and roads.

The area's topography is locally distinct, especially the attractive rolling landform to either side of Grosvenor Road and to the immediate south of the of the A31. Further south and east the land rises to form the characteristic elevated plateau on which Four Marks sits.

A public footpath runs southwards from the A31 to Brislands Lane and PRoW also run along tracks to the north of the largest parcel of this site and along Barn Lane. Long views across the largest parcel and to open farmland and the skyline beyond are possible from Brislands Lane and there are views south-west from Barn Lane into the large parcel and its skyline. Views from the Watercress Line train are anticipated, though it was not possible to check for the purposes of this study and views to the occasional steam trains are likely to be valued.

The north-east parcel is adjacent to the existing settlement edge and influenced by it but the remaining parcels to the east are much less influenced by residential development. Despite the proximity of the A31 and the town, both have little influence on the site's generally rural, undeveloped character and the site has a strong relationship with and connection to the wider landscape to the south and west, forming part of the countryside setting to the town.

The site contains no water course, but surface water flood mapping indicates some localised risk of flooding associated with Grosvenor Road, Soke Hill and Barn Lane.

The landscape has a medium- to large-scale with a generally open character, although is somewhat more enclosed in the east. A sense of tranquillity remains away from the A31.

The site contributes to a number of ecosystem services, including: the absorption of rainwater on the green field land; some carbon sequestration and biodiversity function in the trees and hedgerows; some recreational value in the presence of the public right of way.

Site Photographs



Photo 1: View north from Grosvenor Road north of junction with A31 towards embankment of Watercress Line heritage railway which forms the skyline.



Photo 2: View north-east from Grosvenor Road north of junction with A31 towards embankment of Watercress Line heritage railway and residential properties on Gravel Lane which form the skyline.



Photo 3: View north from Barn Lane (track) towards residential properties on Chaffinch Road (right) and Winchester Road (left) which form the skyline.



Photo 4: View south-west from Barn Lane (track) towards Brislands Lane which forms the skyline.



Photo 5: View north-west from Brislands Lane towards A31 which is hidden by landform. Far-reaching views over open countryside to north-west.



Photo 6: View south-east from A31 at junction with Grosvenor Road. Rolling fieldscape forms the skyline and foreshortens views.

Summary of landscape value

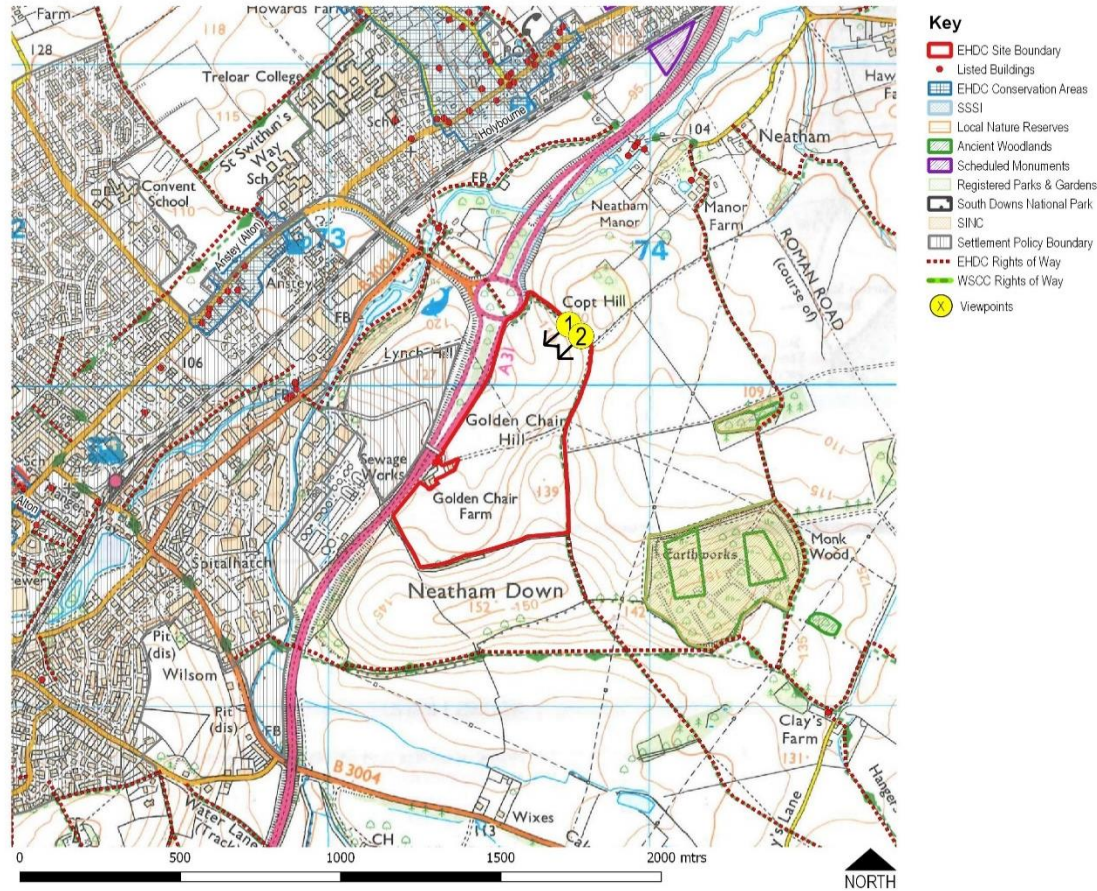
As described above, the key aspects of value associated with the site are:

- Some attractive views from Brislands Lane and Barn Lane towards open countryside which evoke connections with the nearby SDNP
- Views to and from the Watercress Line in the west of the site
- The locally distinct undulating topography in the west and the raised plateau to the east
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA 2b in the eastern parcels:
 - Elevated undulating plateau
 - A landscape dominated by arable and pasture
 - A peaceful and in places tranquil rural landscape away despite the A31 and dense settlement of Four Marks
 - A relatively intact hedgerow network
 - Part of an area with an overall strategy to conserve the peaceful rural landscape of the Four Marks Clay Plateau, maintaining the rural character created by the unifying woodland/tree cover and farmland mosaic
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA 3e in the western parcels:
 - Undulating low-lying landscape gently sloping to the west
 - Arable cropping mixed with some areas of grazing
 - Woodland and hedgerows for strong edges along rural lanes, concealing settlement
 - Narrow rural lanes cut through the landscape
- The sites strong relationship and continuity with the countryside to the south and west
- Low/medium capacity for the wider area covered by LCA 3e (adjacent to Grosvenor Road) identified in the EHDC Landscape Capacity Study (2018)
- Valued characteristics identified in the Four Marks Village Design Statement (2001)
 - Long distance and extensive views
 - Preponderance of small fields surrounded by hedges and mature trees
 - Hedgerows, trees and small copses provide a framework and confer a rural character
 - Footpath network and appreciation of attractive rural landscape
 - Panoramic views of (dark) night skies
- The outer framework of agricultural hedgerows and trees which is fairly strong where it reflects historic field boundaries or provides valuable and linked habitat

Within the context of this study, no aspect of the site has a high value. The parcels either side of Grosvenor Road retain an attractive scenic quality and form part of the setting of the Watercress Line and there are long-range views north-west from Brislands Lane, all of which are considered medium/high for their scenic quality. The most easterly parcel, east of Barn Lane is considered to be of low value. On balance, while the individual parcels have varying degrees of value the site as a whole is considered to not be out of the ordinary and overall the value of this site is medium.

Neatham Down

Figure 7: Site map, designations and location of photograph viewpoints



Description of development site

The site under consideration is shown in Figure 7 above. The site does not contain or abut any areas designated for landscape, heritage or nature conservation reasons and it is not considered to be part of the setting of the SDNP. There is no intervisibility with the SDNP, but the attractive landscape is fairly representative of the first special quality of the SDNP; diverse inspirational landscapes and breath-taking views.

The site lies at the northern edge of the distinct upper greensand terrace (EHDC LCA 6c) defined further to the south by a locally prominent escarpment. Although the lowest (northern) part of the site lies at the edge of the Northern Wey valley (EHDC LCA 4b), the site is more characteristic of LCA 6c. It comprises two large, arable fields to the south-east of Alton, with the A31 corridor forming its western edge and Golden Chair Farm lying adjacent to the western edge of the site.

The site's boundaries are generally hedged, some which are tree-lined - notably the southern boundary and the A31 edge. Some boundaries reflect the historic field pattern although some amalgamation has occurred and the A31 introduced.

The area's topography is locally distinct, with the rounded high points of Coot Hill to the north-east, Lynch Hill to the west, Golden Chair Hill in the south-eastern corner of the site, and the more elongated high ground of Neatham Down to the south. These hills form part of the high ground surrounding Alton and combine to create a 'bowled' effect containing the site's lower northern part and creating an attractive undulating landscape.

A public footpath follows the site's northern and eastern boundaries. Views from within the lower parts of the site are contained by landform, with longer views possible from the elevated eastern part of site.

The site is offset from the existing edge of settlement by the A31 and Lynch Hill beyond, although part of Lynch Hill is within the settlement policy boundary. Despite the proximity of the A31 and the town, both have little influence on the site's rural, undeveloped character and the site has a strong relationship with and connection to the wider landscape to the east, forming part of the countryside setting to the town.

The site contains no water course. Surface water flood mapping indicates wet ground in the lower northern part of the site.

The landscape has a medium- to large-scale with an open character and a sense of tranquillity despite the nearby road.

The site contributes to a number of ecosystem services, including: the absorption of rainwater on the green field land; some carbon sequestration and biodiversity function in the trees and hedgerows; some recreational value in the presence of the public right of way.

Site Photographs



Photo 1: View south-west from public footpath within site with A31 roundabout in the middle distance and Alton hidden by Lynch Hill and woodland. The high ground north of Alton forms the distant skyline.



Photo 2: View south-west from public footpath within site across attractive sweeping landform. Golden Chair Farm is just visible right of centre, set within trees and the site continues beyond the partial boundary to the trees on the skyline.

Summary of landscape value

As described above, the key aspects of value associated with the site are:

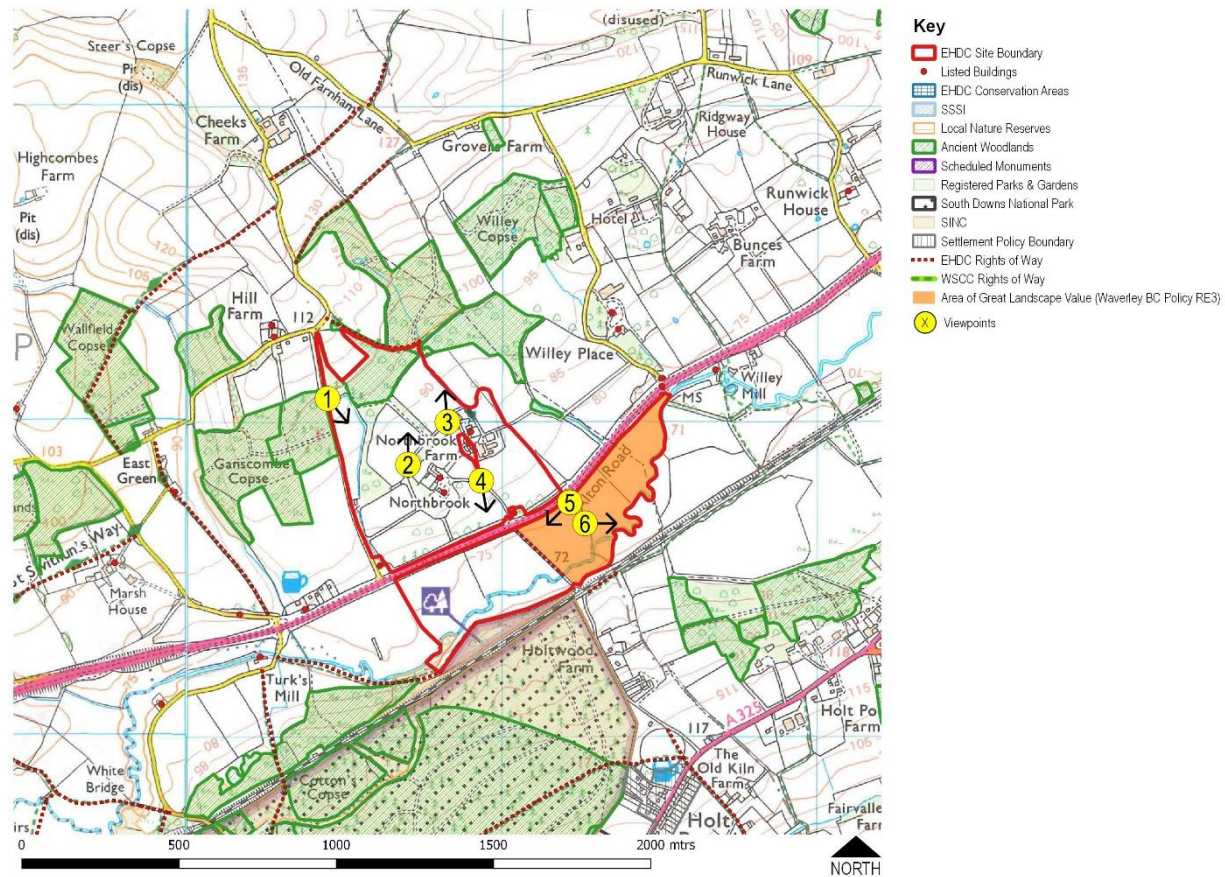
- Attractive views from the footpath along the site boundary which evoke connections with the nearby SDNP in reflecting the first special quality
- The locally distinct 'bowled' topography of the site and its immediate setting
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA:
 - Open landscape with views across arable farmland
 - A peaceful and unsettled landscape
 - Part of an area with an overall strategy to conserve the open unsettled landscape with broad views across fields bound by hedgerows
- The sites strong relationship and continuity with the countryside to the east
- Low capacity for the wider area identified in the EHDC Landscape Capacity Study (2018)
- Valued characteristics identified in the Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan:
 - The discreet setting of Alton within the surrounding landscape, including the skylines
- Valued characteristics identified in the Alton Town Design Statement:
 - Alton's setting, surrounded by varied countryside with a remote and quiet rural character
 - The undeveloped skyline of hills surrounding Alton
 - Important vistas out of the town may include views to Neatham Down and the site⁴
- The outer framework of agricultural hedgerows and trees which is particularly strong where it reflects historic field boundaries or provides valuable and linked habitat

Within the context of this study, no aspect of the site has a high value, but several factors contribute to this site being out of the ordinary, with a medium/high value.

⁴ These are difficult to check as they are on private land

Northbrook Farm

Figure 8: Site map, designations and location of photograph viewpoints



Description of development site

The site under consideration is shown in Figure x above. The site abuts, and is considered part of the setting of, the SDNP with localised intervisibility. The site's attractive landscape is fairly representative of the first special quality of the SDNP; diverse inspirational landscapes and breath-taking views.

The site lies at the north-eastern edge of the distinct Northern Wey Valley (EHDC LCA 4b) defined to the south by the locally prominent, wooded high ground of Holt Pound Inclosure, which is within the SDNP. The Farnham to Alton railway line runs along the south-eastern edge of the site and the A31 splits the site into two distinct areas – the valley floor and the valley side.

The area north of the A31 lies on the gently rising valley side and is made up of a matrix of pasture and woodland, within a strong structure of tree lines and hedgerows and containing two clusters of buildings. To the west is a cluster including the listed Northbrook House and Coach House, which we understand is used to host weddings and events. There are some formal gardens around Northbrook House and an extensive lake to the south of the house with grass bunding screening views across the lake from the main driveway. To the east is the business park complex and listed farm cottages and barn. There are considerable areas of parking north of Northbrook House and south of the business units. An area of woodland in the north of the site is classified as Ancient Woodland. The historic field pattern, which reflects pre-1810 assarts in the north-west, and former parkland around Northbrook House, is largely intact. The site is registered on the Hampshire Gardens Trust as 19th century parkland and house, but no public access is possible nor information available. The northern parts of the site do not contain any public rights of way, but the business park is accessible via the main drive from the A31. Views from the northern parts of the site are generally contained by woodland, with occasional longer views possible through gaps and from the more open parts south of the business park complex. There is some sense of history created by the older buildings, mature woodland and parkland trees, although this is weakened somewhat by the modern developments including the business park. North of the developed parts of the site and further away from the A31, the tranquillity is stronger and rural character more pronounced.

The area south-east of the A31 contains the river corridor and extends north-east along the valley and into the adjacent Waverley Borough. This south-eastern part of the site is characteristic of the Northern Wey Valley (EHDC LCA 4b) landscape and LCA 8 Alton Road River Floodplain (Farnham Landscape Character Assessment, FLCA). The section of river valley within Waverley Borough is also subject to a local landscape designation – Area of Great Landscape Value RE3. The valley floor is within the floodplain and consists of grazing marsh with parts of the river corridor designated as a SINC. A public footpath crosses the site, affording views along the valley bottom in both directions, with views contained by the valley sides to north-west and south-east. Despite the proximity of the A31, there is a strong sense of rurality and tranquillity and link with the SDNP to the south.

The site contributes to a number of ecosystem services, including: the absorption and slowing of rainwater on the green field land; carbon sequestration and biodiversity function in the trees and hedgerows; some recreational value in the presence of the public right of way.

Site Photographs



Photo 1: View south-east from the rural Crondall Road. The high ground of the wooded edge of the SDNP forms the distant skyline



Photo 2: View north from within site towards ancient woodland which forms the northern part of the site.



Photo 3: View north from within site towards ancient woodland which forms the northern part of the site



Photo 4: View south-east from driveway within site. The high ground of the wooded edge of the SDNP forms the skyline on the southern valley side



Photo 5: View south-west from public footpath near A31 across the River Wey and floodplain fields. The railway line runs along the lower slope of the valley side. The wooded valley side and high ground at the edge of the SDNP create some enclosure.



Photo 6: View east from public footpath near A31 across the River Wey and floodplain fields. The railway line runs along the lower slope of the valley side. The wooded valley side and high ground create some enclosure.

Summary of landscape value

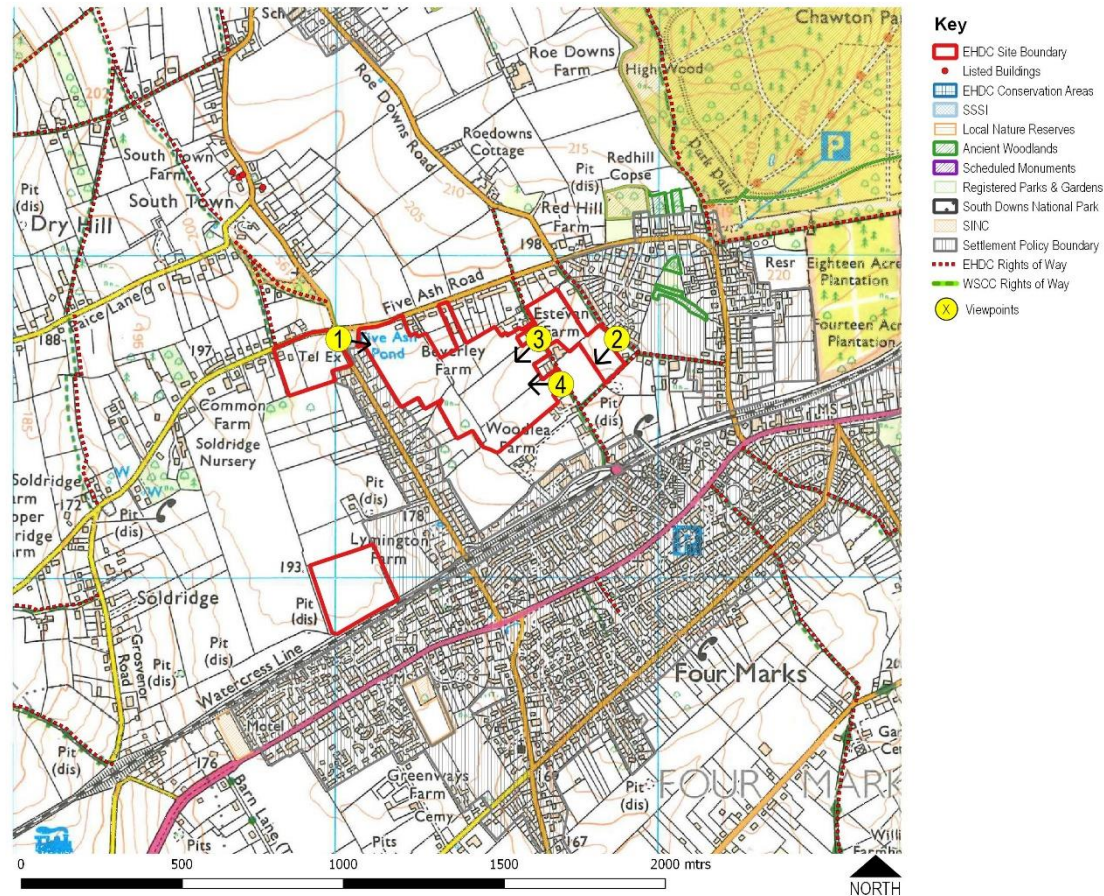
As described above, the key aspects of value associated with the site are:

- The site is within the setting of the SDNP, with localised visibility and continuity of character and attractiveness
- The eastern-most part of site is within an Area of Great Landscape Value
- The site contains an area of Ancient Woodland in the north
- Central parts of the site form the setting for a number of Grade II listed buildings
- The sense of tranquillity and rurality is strong, particularly in the north and on the valley floor
- A local footpath crosses the southern part of the site with attractive views along the valley and towards the SDNP
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA:
 - Flat valley floor with chalk river and pasture
 - Unspoilt and tranquil pastoral character
 - Woodland on the valley sides forming wooded skylines
 - Part of an area with an overall strategy to conserve the tranquil, natural character of the Northern Wey Valley which provides an open rural landscape between the towns of Alton and Farnham, with the downland to the north of the Wey forming the backdrop to the valley
- The importance of the valley floor in flood management
- The sites importance as part of the continuous valley bottom and side
- Low and medium-low capacity for the wider area identified in the EHDC Landscape Capacity Study (2018)
- The framework of hedgerows and trees which is particularly strong where it reflects historic field boundaries or provides valuable and linked habitat

Within the context of this study, no aspect of the site has a high value. Much of the site has a medium/high value, particularly the valley floor and river corridor, but also the woodland framework and heritage assets in the northern part of site. Overall the value of this site is medium-high.

South Medstead

Figure 9: Site map, designations and location of photograph viewpoints



Description of development site

The site under consideration is shown in Figure 9 above⁵ (please note that the 2 fields which are separated from the main site and lie west of Lymington Bottom Road are assessed as part of the Lymington Bottom Road site). The site does not contain or abut any areas designated for landscape, heritage or nature conservation reasons and is not considered to be part of the setting of the SDNP. It is not directly adjacent to the SDNP and has limited intervisibility with it, nor does it strongly represent any of the special qualities of the SDNP.

The site is within the elevated, gently undulating countryside of the Four Marks Clay Plateau (EHDC LCA 2b) and is representative of the wider landscape character in some but not all respects. It comprises a group of fields to the north of Four Marks, south of Five Ash Road, with Beechlands Road forming part of the eastern boundary and properties on Lymington Bottom Road forming the western boundary. The bridleways and tracks called Stoney Lane and Boyneswood Lane run through and edge the eastern part of the site. The site is largely made up pasture, predominantly horse paddocks, with some fields possibly used for hay production. A property south of Five Ash Road – Beverley Farm Cattery – is also part of the site.

Boundaries are generally hedged although some boundaries, notably along Stoney Lane are fenced. Several boundaries are tree-lined and some trees at the site edges are subject to TPOs.

The area's topography reflects the wider landscape, varying between flat to gently undulating, with the central part the flattest and the highest ground in the east, at approximately 205m AOD, gently sloping away from this towards the west, becoming slightly steeper down to Lymington Bottom Road, including a shallow valley running along the northern boundary towards Lymington Bottom Road.

The site is crossed by a bridleway along Stoney Lane and bridleways on Boyneswood Lane and Beechlands Road run along boundaries to the east and south-east and most of parts of the site are visible from public vantage points. Views from within the site are often contained by vegetation, buildings or landform, with longer views possible in the more open, elevated eastern part of site, including south-west towards the South Downs.

The site abuts the settlement boundary on short lengths of the eastern and western boundaries and the southern tip of the site is adjacent to a recently completed housing site (Ivatt Way). The settlement along Lymington Bottom Road and Five Ash Road consists of mid- to late- twentieth century low density linear settlement with generous garden plots backing onto open countryside. East of Beechlands Road the settlement dates from the late twentieth century and comprises bungalows in smaller plots. Further south (south of the Watercress Line) Four Marks has a denser settlement pattern which although linear, is wider in form than to the north. The newly completed developments at Ivatt Way and Longbourn Way to the south-west of the site create a compact extension to Four Marks, widening and intensifying the settlement along Lymington Bottom Road.

The site contains no water course, although Five Ash Pond lies just outside of the north-western corner of the site. Surface water flood mapping indicates run-off water following the shallow valley along the north of the site and wet areas along the southern boundary.

Although the site is effectively surrounded by outlying areas of the settlement, much of the settlement edge is well vegetated and has little effect on the rural character and sense of tranquillity. The exception is the open edge east of Beechlands Road which influences the south-eastern part of site, although long views from this elevated part of the site provide a visual connection with the SDNP, contributing to sense of place and a visual and physical setting for the village. The north-western part of the site has a greater connection to and function within the wider countryside, with little influence from or perception of connection with the settlement, and with the greatest sense of tranquillity and rurality. The distinctive historic parliamentary field pattern is still evident in places, though some boundaries have been lost and the perception of history is weak in the area.

The site contributes to a number of ecosystem services, including: the absorption of rainwater on the generally green field land; some carbon sequestration and biodiversity function in the trees, hedgerows and, to a much lesser extent, the grazed grassland; some recreational value through the equestrian use and public rights of ways.

⁵ Please note that the two fields which are separated from the main site and lie west of Lymington Bottom Road are assessed as part of the Lymington Bottom Road site

Site Photographs



Photo 1: View south-east across Five Ash Pond at the north-western corner of site. Views contained by the strong framework of trees and hedges.



Photo 2: View south-west from Beechlands Road, with the open edge of bungalows behind. Glimpsed long views to the South Downs are possible from this elevated position.



Photo 3: View south-west from Stoney Lane track and bridleway. The new housing at Ivatt Way is glimpsed between trees, though the settlement is generally well-vegetated.



Photo 4: View west from Stoney Lane track and bridleway. Glimpsed views of houses on Lymington Bottom Road are possible, though the strong vegetation network preserves the rural character.

Summary of landscape value

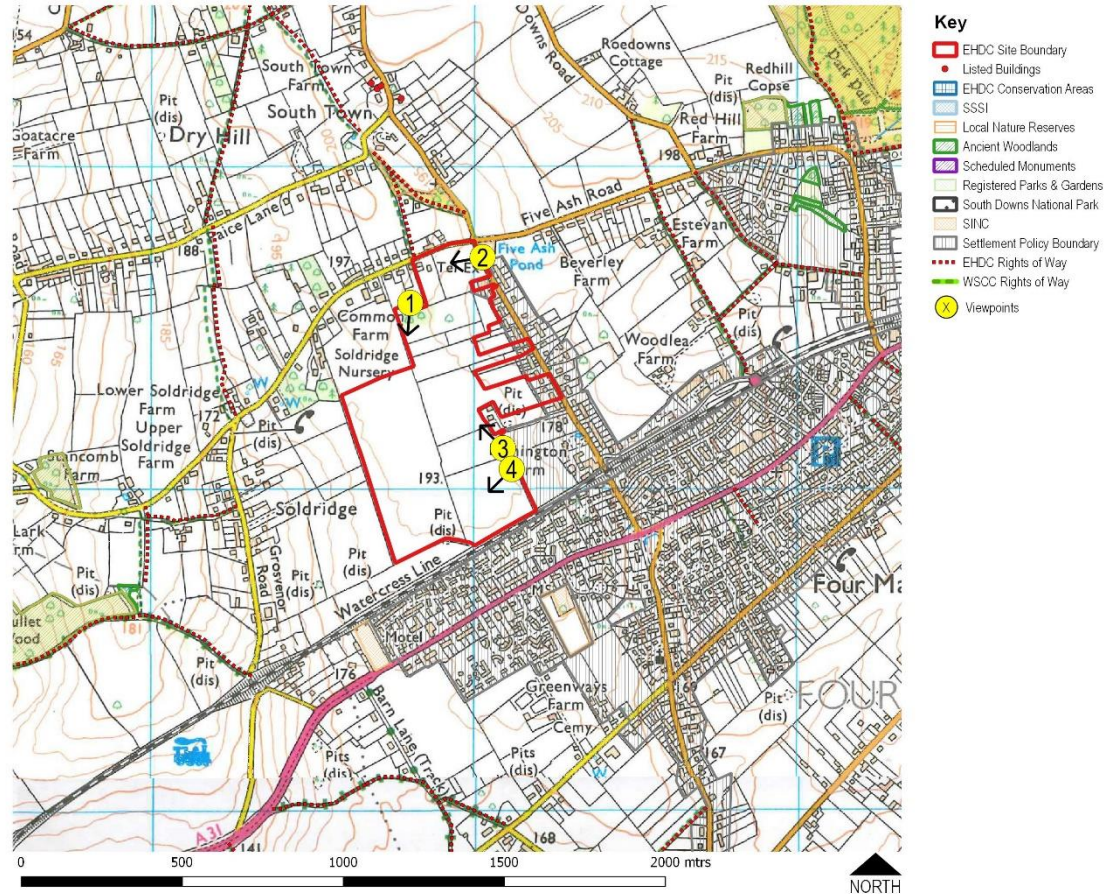
As described above, the key aspects of value associated with the site are:

- Small number of TPO trees to some boundaries
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA:
 - Elevated, gently undulating landform
 - Open and exposed on higher plateau with occasional long views (eastern part of site)
 - Field pattern reflecting the distinctive planned enclosure of the late 19th century
 - Oak as a key species in hedgerows (particularly in the north-western part of site)
 - Part of an area with an overall strategy to conserve the peaceful rural landscape, maintaining the rural character created by the unifying woodland/tree cover and farmland mosaic (the rural character is stronger in the north-western part of site)
- Valued characteristics identified in the Medstead and Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan (2015-2028):
 - The Stoney Lane 'Strip' (bridleway) is designated as an important Local Green Space under Policy 7
 - Open/green spaces surrounding the villages giving a connection to the rural environment
 - Peacefulness
 - Views of the surrounding countryside
 - The settlements retaining their own distinctive characters
- Views from the bridleways across countryside close to Four Marks, including land within the site
- Views to the hills of the SDNP to the south-west giving a sense of connection with and allowing appreciation of the Park from the higher ground in the eastern part of the site
- The strong framework of agricultural hedgerows and trees which is particularly strong where it reflects historic field boundaries or provides valuable and linked habitat
- The north-western part of the site has greater value within the wider countryside, having greater tranquillity and rural character and contributing to sense of place and a visual and physical setting for the village

Within the context of this study, no aspect of the site has a high value. Some aspects have a medium/high value, but overall the site is not considered to be out of the ordinary and therefore the value of this site is medium.

Land West of Lymington Bottom Road, South Medstead

Figure 10: Site map, designations and location of photograph viewpoints



Description of development site

The site under consideration is shown in Figure 10 above. The site does not contain or abut any areas designated for landscape, heritage or nature conservation reasons and is not considered to be part of the setting of the SDNP. It is not directly adjacent to the SDNP and has limited intervisibility with it, nor does it strongly represent any of the special qualities of the SDNP.

The site is within the elevated, gently undulating countryside of the Four Marks Clay Plateau (EHDC LCA 2b) and is representative of the wider landscape character in some but not all respects. It comprises a group of fields to the north-west of Four Marks, north of the Watercress Line heritage railway and west of Lymington Bottom Road, with a small number of existing residential properties on Lymington Bottom Road and Soldridge Road included within the site. Apart from some small areas of residential garden curtilage, the site is largely made up of horse paddocks, with some fields possibly used for hay / arable production. The field in the north-eastern corner of the site is in a degraded condition, containing a range of temporary structures, vehicles, containers and machinery.

Boundaries are sometimes hedged, sometimes fenced, with some trees, particularly associated with garden areas and notably along the Watercress Line to the south and in the north-eastern corner. In the north-eastern corner there are a small number of TPO trees along Soldridge Road and the structure of hedgerows and trees is generally stronger and the fields more enclosed – this part of the site, with its stronger landscape structure, is most representative of the wider landscape, although its current condition is degraded. Much of the western half of the site is only hedged at the outer edges giving a larger, scale and sense of openness to this part of site. The horse paddocks which make up much of the site are heavily grazed.

The area's topography reflects the wider landscape, varying between flat to gently undulating, with the south-western part the flattest and highest, at approximately 195m AOD, gently sloping away from this in all directions, becoming slightly steeper down to Lymington Bottom Road to the east.

The site is not crossed by any public rights of way and parts are difficult to view from public vantage points, although the western boundary hedge and higher ground in the west forms the skyline in views from public views to the west. Views from the Watercress Line train are anticipated, though it was not possible to check for the purposes of this study. Views from within the site are contained in the enclosed parts to the north-east and east, and longer in the more open, elevated western part of site, including south towards the South Downs⁶.

The site contains some scattered houses (along Lymington Bottom Road) and abuts the settlement boundary to the east and south. The settlement along Lymington Bottom Road, and more generally to the north of the Watercress Line, consists of mid- to late- twentieth century low density linear settlement with generous garden plots backing onto open countryside. South of the Watercress Line, Four Marks has a denser settlement pattern which although linear, is wider in form than to the north. The newly completed development at Longbourn Way to the east of the site creates a compact extension to Four Marks, widening and intensifying the settlement along Lymington Bottom Road.

The site contains no water course or feature and generally appears wetter in the north-eastern part.

Much of the northern and eastern parts of the site, although often rural in character with some degree of tranquillity, are closely related to the existing settlement. The western part of the site has a greater connection to and function within the wider countryside, with little influence from or perception of connection with the settlement, despite the proximity of the railway line. Long views from this elevated part of the site provide a visual connection with the SDNP, contributing to sense of place and a visual and physical setting for the village and separation from the nearby settlement at Soldridge to the west. The distinctive historic parliamentary field pattern is still evident in places, though some hedgerows have been replaced with fencing. The stronger structure of hedge and mature trees in the north-eastern corner give some sense of historic reference, as does the presence of the heritage Watercress Line to the south, which also contributes to the area's sense of place through multiple senses. Otherwise the perception of history is weak in the area.

⁶ Note that during fieldwork it was not possible to enter the site despite attempts made by the site promotor to assist access. The site was viewed from adjacent roads and from a private track via an open gate off Soldridge Road. The site promotor provided further photographs of other parts of the site.

The site contributes to a number of ecosystem services, including: the absorption of rainwater on the generally green field land particularly in the lower ground in the north-east (although the ground could be compacted, reducing rainwater absorption); some carbon sequestration and biodiversity function in the trees, hedgerows and, to a much lesser extent, the heavily grazed grassland; some recreational value through the equestrian use, although the lack of public access limits any wider benefit in this respect.

Site Photographs



Photo 1: View south from private land off of Soldridge Road across the higher, more open ground on the western side of site with the hills of the South Downs visible in the distance



Photo 2: View south-west from Lymington Bottom Road across the north-eastern part of site which is in a degraded condition, containing temporary stable and storage structures, farm machinery, storage containers and assorted objects. The structure of hedgerows and oak trees, which is typical of the wider landscape character, is strongest in this part of the site.



Photo 3: View north-west through gap in hedge from newly completed housing at Longbourn Way. The buildings visible are outside the site.



Photo 4: View from newly completed housing at Longbourn Way across paddock towards more open, higher ground beyond the hedge, with the trees along the Watercress Line to the left of the picture.

Summary of landscape value

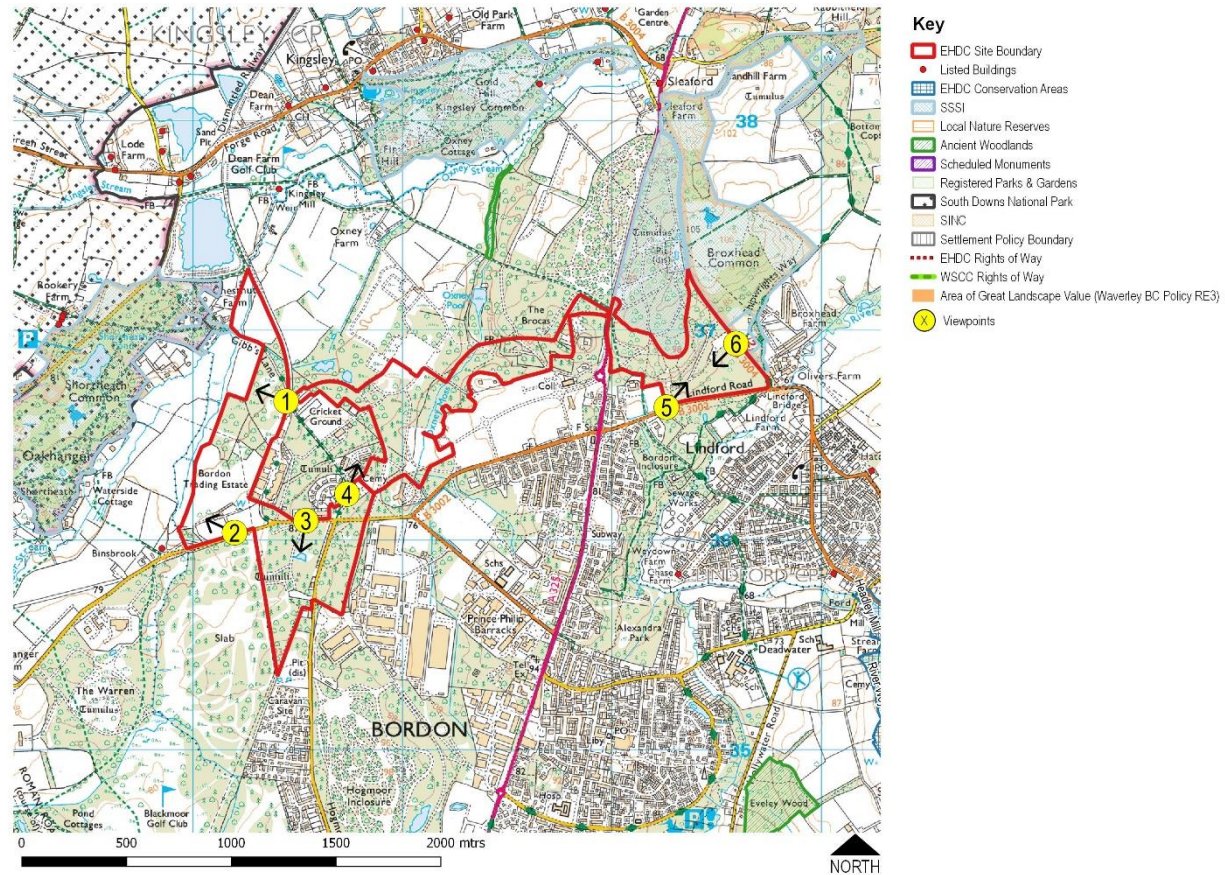
As described above, the key aspects of value associated with the site are:

- Views from the heritage Watercress Line across open countryside close to Four Marks, including open land in the south of the site (although views may be limited by trees along the line)
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA:
 - Elevated, gently undulating landform (western parts of site)
 - Open and exposed on higher plateau with occasional long views (western parts of site, although views are private as the site is not publicly accessible)
 - Field pattern reflecting the distinctive planned enclosure of the late 19th century
 - Oak as a key species in hedgerows (particularly in the north-eastern parts of site)
 - Part of an area with an overall strategy to conserve the peaceful rural landscape, maintaining the rural character created by the unifying woodland/tree cover and farmland mosaic (the rural character is stronger in the western parts of site; the woodland/tree cover is stronger in the north-east)
- Small number of TPO trees along Soldridge Road
- Views to and sounds and smells of trains on the Watercress Line, whose presence contributes to the sense of place and connection with history
- Valued characteristics identified in the Medstead and Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan (2015-2028):
 - Open/green spaces surrounding the villages giving a connection to the rural environment
 - Peacefulness
 - Views of the surrounding countryside
 - The settlements retaining their own distinctive characters
- Views to the hills of the SDNP to the south giving a sense of connection with and allowing appreciation of the Park from the open, higher ground in the western parts of the site (although views are private as the site is not publicly accessible)
- The framework of agricultural hedgerows and trees which is particularly strong in the north-east and where it reflects historic field boundaries or provides valuable and linked habitat
- The western parts of the site have greater value within the wider countryside, having greater tranquillity and rural character and contributing to sense of place and a visual and physical setting for the village and separation from the nearby settlement at Soldridge to the west

Within the context of this study, no aspect of the site has a high value. Parts of the site have a medium/high value, mostly focussed in the western parts of the site. Much of the site is not considered to be out of the ordinary and overall the value of this site is medium.

Whitehill and Bordon

Figure 11: Site map, designations and location of photograph viewpoints



Description of development site

The site under consideration is shown in Figure 11 above and comprises a series of linked parcels to the north and south of Oakhanger Road and Lindford Road. The site is not within the SDNP, but the boundary lies approximately 90m from the western part of the and accordingly parts of the site are considered to form part of its setting. The most southerly parcel contains one scheduled monument and the central parcel abuts others, and large areas of the site are designated SINCs. The most easterly parcel also abuts the Broxhead and Kingsley Common SSSI.

There is some intervisibility with the SDNP, and the landscapes are generally representative of the second, third and fifth special qualities of the SDNP; a rich variety of wildlife and habitats including rare and internationally important species; tranquil and unspoilt places; and great opportunities for recreational activities and learning experiences.

The site lies at the western edge of the Whitehill to Liphook Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic (EHDC LCA 8c) close to its boundary with the Kingsley/Blackmoor Mixed Farmland Woodland (EHDC LCA 7b) and Kingsley/Blackmoor Mixed Farmland and Woodland (SDILCA LCA K2) but is largely characteristic of LCA 8c.

It comprises a small group of medium/large pastoral/arable fields in the west of the site with the remainder of the site comprising areas of woodland punctuated by the occasional clearing and remnants of military use.

The site's boundaries are occasionally marked by roads or development boundaries but otherwise not obviously defined. Mature trees mark the field boundaries in the more pastoral landscape to the north-west, but hedgerows are largely absent. These boundaries reflect the historic field pattern but typically a historic field structure is lacking as the area transitioned directly from heathland to Bordon Camp with little intervening subdivision and formalisation.

The site occupies the Lower Greensand and its transition to the clay vale in the west and is gently undulating.

A few short lengths of public footpath cross or bound the site and there is a small area of Access Land within the site to the north-east. The eastern boundary of the site abuts a larger area of Access Land. Whilst there are few areas formally designated for public access it is apparent that large parts of the site are used for informal recreations

The site lies adjacent to a few small pockets of existing development associated with former military use, especially around the military cemetery and Bordon Trading Estate. Further south large-scale development is being undertaken but the settlement boundary does not appear to reflect these proposals currently. Despite the proximity of new and existing roads and considerable amounts of development there is still little influence on the site's undeveloped, wooded character away from this and parts of the site have a strong relationship with and connection to the wider landscape to the north and west forming part of the countryside setting to the town and contributing to its separation from outlying villages.

Oxney Moss stream and its tributaries cross the centre of the site and there is a pond in the south-west of the site. Surface water flood mapping indicates a risk of flooding associated with Oxney Moss. There is also a risk of flooding to the western boundary of the site associated with Oakhanger Stream.

The landscape has a large-scale with a generally wooded and enclosed character and a sense of tranquillity away from roads and development.

The site contributes to a number of ecosystem services, including: the absorption of rainwater on the open land; carbon sequestration and biodiversity function in the trees and hedgerows; some recreational value in the presence of the public rights of way and informal access areas.

Site Photographs



Photo 1: View west from Bordon Trading Estate into Bordon Mineral Site SINC.



Photo 2: View north-west from Oakhanger Road towards the SDNP and Hangers which form the skyline.



Photo 3: View south from Oakhanger Road into The Slab SINC



Photo 4: View north-east from car park of Bordon Military Cemetery towards Oxney Farm Woodland SINC.



Photo 5: View north-east from Lindford Road into Broxhead Common South and West SINC.



Photo 6: View south-west from Broxhead Farm Road across hardstanding towards Oakhanger Road towards Broxhead Common South and West SINC.

Summary of landscape value

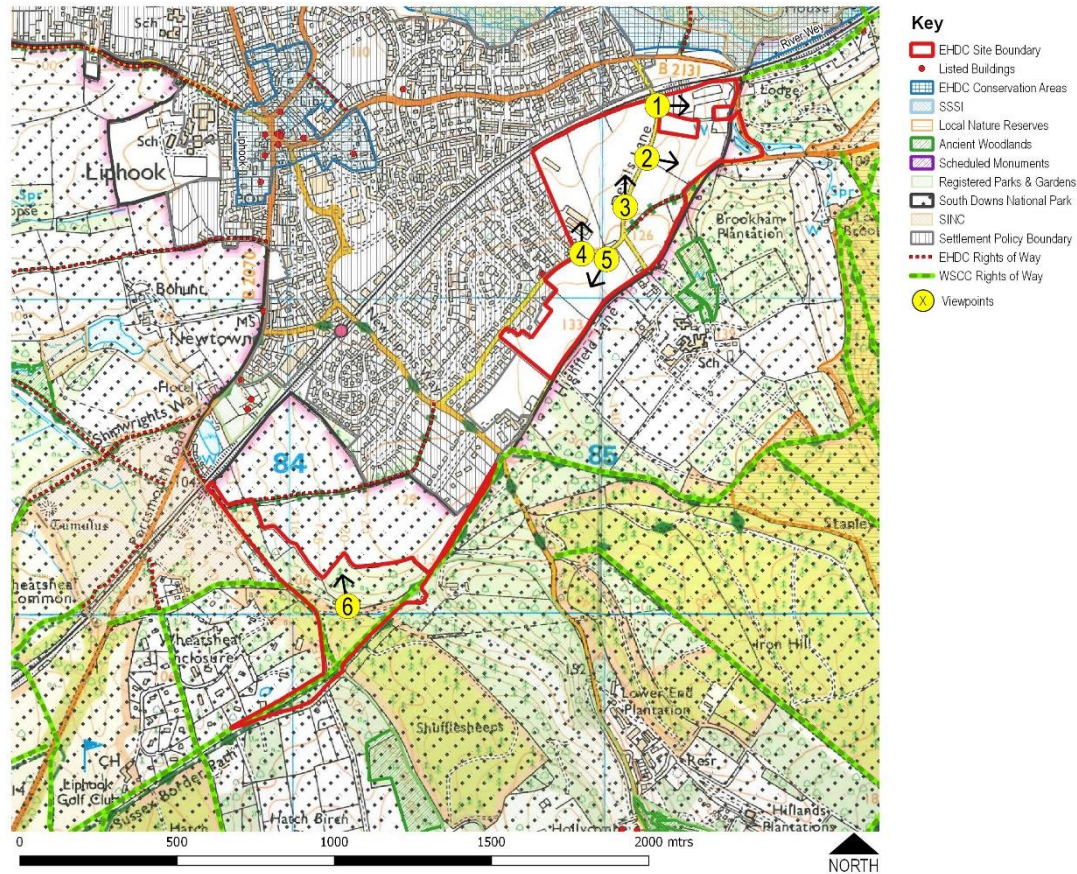
As described above, the key aspects of value associated with the site are:

- Western part of site contributes to setting of SDNP
- Popular recreational routes through woodland and along footpaths which evoke connections with the nearby SDNP in reflecting some of its special qualities
- Large number of SINC and adjacent to Broxhead Common SSSI
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA:
 - Gently undulating landform cut by a number of watercourses
 - Sandy acidic soils supporting tracts of woodland and heathland commons
 - Small to medium fields of pasture, paddock and rough grazing with a framework of ancient woodlands and wood pasture
 - Areas of settlement contained by woodland
 - Well-developed footpath network along Oxney Stream with access to Broxhead Common
 - Ponds, mires and wet grassland in low lying areas
 - A tranquil, natural character is retained away from built up areas and busy roads
 - Numerous Bronze Age barrow cemeteries are signs of a prehistoric ritual landscape
 - Views limited by dense woodland cover
- Part of an area with an overall strategy to conserve the mosaic of woodland, heathland and pastureland cover and ensure that this area provides a strong rural setting for existing areas of development. The distinctive landscape of the incised stream valleys should be conserved
- The sites strong relationship and continuity with the countryside to the north and west
- Low capacity for the wider area identified in the EHDC Landscape Capacity Study (2018)
- The framework of woodland, heathland and wetland habitat that provides valuable and linked habitat

Within the context of this study, no aspect of the site has a high value. The land to the west is undesignated but considered to form part of the setting of the SDNP and the rural approach to the town. Much of the site is designated as SINC and used as informal recreational areas with generally high levels of scenic quality, tranquillity and intactness. A small area south of the cemetery, which is considered to be of medium importance for its local historic interest, is undesignated. The site is therefore considered to be out of the ordinary and overall the value of this site is medium/high.

Land South East of Liphook

Figure 12: Site map, designations and location of photograph viewpoints



Description of development site:

The site under consideration is shown in Figure x above and comprises two parcels of land. The southern parcel abuts a SINC, includes an area of Access land and lies within the SDNP. The northern parcel adjoins the SDNP boundary and is therefore considered to form part of its setting. Neither parcel contains nor abuts any areas designated for heritage reasons. The generally attractive landscape in the northern parcel is fairly representative of the fourth special quality of the SDNP; An environment shaped by centuries of farming and embracing new enterprise. While the southern parcel is more representative of the second, third and fifth; A rich variety of wildlife and habitats including rare and internationally important species; Tranquil and unspoilt places; Great opportunities for recreational activities and learning experience

Both parcels lie within the Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic (EHDC LCT 8) with the northern parcel located within the Whitehill to Liphook subdivision (EHDC LCA 8c) and the southern parcel within the Woolmer Forest/Weaver's Down sub-division (EHDC LCA 8b). Both are considered broadly characteristic of the LCA. The northern parcel comprises several small fields and paddocks and further subdivided areas used for commercial premises or as paddocks. The southern parcel comprises several irregularly-shaped subdivided areas of woodland.

The northern parcel's boundaries are generally defined by hedgerows and woodland with the northern part of this area comprising small rectilinear fields with wavy boundaries and those to the south as small parliamentary fields. The northern parcel largely retains its historic field patterns but there has been some amalgamation and also some subdivision. The northern part of the southern parcel (which lies within EHDC) also comprises small parliamentary fields and retains its historic field pattern although the line of pylons and associated woodland clearance are somewhat intrusive.

The topography of the northern parcel is gently undulating and that of the southern parcel climbs more dramatically to the east which are typical of the LCA.

The northern parcel is crossed and bounded by a number of narrow lanes and one PRoW which afford views into the individual fields. Long-range views are generally not possible due to the intervening woodlands. There will also be views for neighbouring properties and the railway. The southern parcel is partly an open Access area but views tends to be limited by the dense woodland cover.

The northern parcel is bounded to the north and west by the settlement boundary and the railway line which influence the site and give it an 'edge of settlement' character in places providing a rural approach to this part of Liphook. The southern parcel is more removed from the formal settlement and less influenced by its adjacent residential properties, although the railway line passes along a small part of its northern-most tip.

Neither parcels of this site contain a watercourse but there are some ponds to the north-east corner of the northern parcel. Surface water flood mapping indicates a localised risk of flooding within the southern parcel.

The landscape has a small-scale with generally enclosed character and a moderate sense of tranquillity despite the nearby roads and railway. The southern parcel is more tranquil.

The site contributes to a number of ecosystem services, including: the absorption of rainwater on the green field land; carbon sequestration and biodiversity function in the trees and hedgerows; some recreational value in the presence of the public right of way and open access land.

Site photographs:



Photo 1: View east from Devils Lane towards SDNP into nursery site. No view of SDNP is possible due to elevated landform and poly tunnels. Views may be possible from within the site.



Photo 2: View east from Devils Lane across rough field towards SDNP which forms the skyline.



Photo 3: View north from Devils Lane across rough field towards railway with Hazelbank Close and Collyers Crescent beyond.



Photo 4: View north from Chitley Lane into Poultry Farm. Views to railway line are largely concealed by landform.



Photo 5: View south-west from Chiltley Lane across open field towards Highfield Lane on left of photo which forms SDNP boundary.



Photo 6: View north-west from track within Access land woodland within SDNP. Pylons and associated clearing are detracting features

Summary of landscape value

As described above, the key aspects of value associated with northern parcel of the site are:

- Generally attractive views from the footpath and highways which somewhat evoke connections with the adjacent SDNP.
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA:
 - Gently undulating landform;
 - Small to medium fields of pasture, paddock and rough grazing;
 - Rural lanes
 - A tranquil, natural character is retained away from built up areas and busy roads.
 - Part of an area with an overall strategy to conserve the mosaic of woodland, heathland and pastureland cover and ensure that this area provides a strong rural setting for existing areas of development.
 - The site's strong relationship and continuity with the countryside to the south-east.
- Low capacity for the wider area identified in the EHDC Landscape Capacity Study (2018).
- The outer framework of agricultural hedgerows and trees which is particularly strong where it reflects historic field boundaries or provides valuable and linked habitat.

Within the context of this study, no aspect of the northern parcel has a high value. Parts of the parcel have a medium/high value, mostly focussed in the western parts of the site in connection with the setting of SDNP. Much of the parcel is not considered to be out of the ordinary and overall the value of the northern parcel is medium.

As described above, the key aspects of value associated with southern parcel of the site are:

- Within the SDNP
- Open Access land
- Adjacent to a SINC
- Generally attractive views within the parcel
- Positive characteristics of the wider LCA:
 - Undulating landform;
 - Oak-birch woodland
 - Strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity but impinged on by settlement
 - Part of an area with an overall strategy to conserve the distinct heathy character of the landscape and aim to create new-interconnected heathland within the overall woodland framework.
 - The site's strong relationship and continuity with the countryside to the south.
- Not assessed for capacity in the EHDC Landscape Capacity Study (2018).
- The tree cover provides valuable and linked habitat.

Within the context of this study, the southern parcel has a high value due to its location within the SDNP. Parts of the parcel also have a medium/high value, mostly connected with the Open Access land to the south-west and the overall sense of remoteness and tranquillity but overall the parcel is considered to be out of the ordinary and overall the value of the southern parcel is high.