

# NUTFIELD GREEN PARK

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL &  
GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

OCTOBER 2023



Nutfield Park Developments Ltd

**Nutfield Green Park**

**LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL AND GREEN BELT**

**ASSESSMENT**

10 October 2023



**FPCR Environment and Design Ltd**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been carried out for the proposed development 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, and to assess the effect of the scheme on Green Belt openness. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposals detailed in the planning application and shown on the Parameters Plans produced by Adams Architecture.
- 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 located to the north side of Nutfield village east of Redhill, Surrey. The site covers an area of 58.8ha Village broadly extending north to Nutfield Marsh Road, east to Church Hill and west to Nutfield Cemetery.

### Proposed Development

- 1.4 The proposed development comprises: *Outline planning permission for the development of the site for new homes (Use Class C3) and Integrated Retirement Community (Use Classes C2, E(e), F2), creation of new access, landscaping and associated works to facilitate the development, in phases which are severable (Outline with all matters reserved, except for Access).*

## 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;

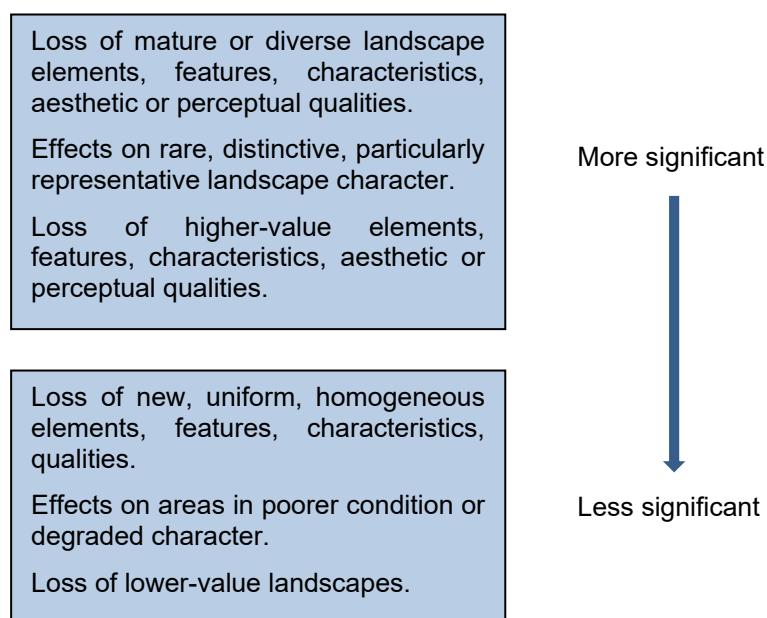
- Addition of new elements that influence character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
- Combined effects of these changes.

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)<sup>1</sup>, 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:

<sup>1</sup> 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 In respect of Green Belt land, paragraph 137 states that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Paragraph 138 sets out the five purposes of Green Belt, namely to

- a) *to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- b) *to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- c) *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- d) *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- e) *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

3.3 Paragraph 145 states that once Green Belts have been defined local planning authorities should positively enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities for access, landscape and biodiversity improvements.

3.4 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.

3.5 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*".

3.6 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".*

3.7 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.”*

3.8 The site is within an undesignated landscape with no special protected status with regards to landscape quality, however the site is located within Green Belt. 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)

3.9 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**

##### Tandridge District Council Core Strategy (2008)

3.10 The Tandridge District Council Core Strategy was adopted in October 2008 and sets out the basis for decision making on planning applications across the Borough. Policies within the Core Strategy of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the site include;

##### *Policy CSP 18 Character and Design*

*“The Council will require that new development, within town centres, built up areas, the villages and the countryside is of a high standard of design that must reflect and respect the character, setting and local context, including those features that contribute to local distinctiveness. Development must also have regard to the topography of the site, important trees or groups of trees and other important features that need to be retained.*

*Development must not significantly harm the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties by reason of overlooking, overshadowing, visual intrusion, noise, traffic and any other adverse effect.*

*The Council will have regard to “Surrey Design” and Village Design Statements in determining planning applications. The Council will apply the principle of “good enough to approve rather than bad enough to refuse”.*

*The Council will protect the wooded hillsides in the built-up areas by ensuring that new development does not adversely affect the character of these areas and that there is no overall loss of tree cover.*

*Within built up areas and villages existing green spaces that contribute to biodiversity, the quality of life, the character or amenities of the area or those that separate built up areas will be protected and where possible enhanced for the benefit of biodiversity and/or recreation.”*

##### *Policy CSP 20 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty*

*"The conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape is of primary importance within the two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, reflecting their national status. The principles to be followed in the area are to:*

- a) conserve and enhance the special landscape character, heritage, distinctiveness and sense of place of the locality;*
- b) conserve and enhance important viewpoints, protect the setting and safeguard views out of and into the AONB;*
- c) protect prominent locations on skylines and slopes and for development to take advantage of existing landscape features and tree screening;*
- d) support suitable located sustainable development necessary to facilitate the environmental, economic and social well being of the AONBs and their communities;*
- e) promote access to, particularly by means other than the car, recreation within and enjoyment of the area;*
- f) apply the highest environmental design standards to development.*

*The same principles will be applied in the associated Area of Great Landscape Value which will be retained for its own sake; as a buffer to the Surrey Hills AONB and to protect views from and into the AONB. The AGLV will be retained until such time as there has been a review of the AONB boundary."*

#### *Policy CSP 21 Landscape and Countryside*

*"The character and distinctiveness of the District's landscapes and countryside will be protected for their own sake, new development will be required to conserve and enhance landscape character."*

#### Tandridge Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014 – 2029)

- 3.11 The Tandridge Local Plan was adopted in July 2014 and supports the adopted Core Strategy and contains details of planning policies to be applied. Policies within the Local Plan of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the Site include:
- 3.12 DP7: General Policy for New Development

*"A. All new development will be expected to be of a high quality design. Development should integrate effectively with its surroundings, reinforcing local distinctiveness and landscape character. Innovative designs will be encouraged where appropriate.*

*B. Where the principle of the proposed new development – whether on a site that is previously developed or green field – is in accordance with other policies in the Development Plan, permission will be granted where the following matters are effectively addressed:*

#### *Design of Development*

1. *Character & layout: The proposal respects and contributes to the distinctive character, appearance and amenity of the area in which it is located with layouts that maximise opportunities for linkages (for example footpaths and cycle paths) to the surrounding area and local services;*

2. *Built form: The proposal is in keeping with the prevailing landscape/streetscape, reflecting the variety of local building types by using complementary building materials and designs, and does not result in overdevelopment or unacceptable intensification by reason of scale, form, bulk, height, spacing, density and design. In the case of a residential extension, the proposal should not result in the creation of a terracing effect;*
4. *Design Guidance: The proposal conforms with the guidelines as set out in adopted Conservation Area Appraisals, Village Design Statements, and Design Guidance in the form of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs);*

#### *Safeguarding Amenity*

8. *Environment: The proposals provide a satisfactory environment for the occupiers of both the existing and new development;*

#### *Safeguarding Assets, Resources & the Environment*

10. *Assets: The proposal seeks to protect and, where opportunities exist, to enhance valuable environmental (including public open space) and heritage assets;*
12. *Landscaping: The proposal ensures that landscaping is an integral element in layout design, making provision for suitable new planting, trees and boundary treatments to enhance the appearance, character and amenity of the site from the outset. The proposal is also expected to retain existing important features such as trees, hedgerows and walls wherever possible. Where a new road is required, a suitably hard and/or soft landscaped gap will be required between any existing properties and the new carriageway.”*

#### 3.13 DP10: Green Belt

*“A. The extent of the Green Belt is shown on the Policies Map. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Green Belt boundaries be altered and this would be through a review of the Core Strategy and/or through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document.*

*B. Within the Green Belt, planning permission for any inappropriate development which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt, will normally be refused. Proposals involving inappropriate development in the Green Belt will only be permitted where very special circumstances exist, to the extent that other considerations clearly outweigh any potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm.”*

#### 3.14 DP13: Buildings in the Green Belt

*“Unless very special circumstances can be clearly demonstrated, the Council will regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. However, subject to other Development Plan policies, exceptions to this are as follows:*

##### *New Buildings & Facilities*

*A. The construction of new non-residential buildings directly related to agriculture or forestry, or new residential dwellings for agricultural workers in accordance with policy DP15.*

*B. The provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.*

*C. Limited infill development within the Defined Villages in accordance with policy DP12.*

*D. Limited affordable housing to meet local community needs, either in accordance with policy DP12 (within the Defined Villages) or policy CSP5 (rural exceptions)."*

3.15 DP19: Biodiversity, Geological Conservation & Green Infrastructure

*A. There will be a presumption in favour of development proposals which seek to:*

1. *Protect, enhance or increase the provision of, and access to the network of multi-functional Green Infrastructure (GI);*
2. *Promote nature conservation and management;*
3. *Restore or create Priority Habitats; or*
4. *Maximise opportunities for geological conservation.*

*B. In order to conserve and enhance the natural environment, proposals which would result in significant harm to local, national or statutory sites of biological or geological importance or the broader GI network will be refused planning permission unless:*

1. *All reasonable alternative locations with less harmful impacts are demonstrated to be unsuitable; and*
2. *The proposal incorporates measures to avoid the harmful impacts arising, sufficiently mitigate their effects, or, as a last resort, compensate for them.*

*C. Where a proposal is likely to result in direct or indirect harm to an irreplaceable environmental asset of the highest designation, such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), ancient woodland or veteran trees, the granting of planning permission will be wholly exceptional.*

1. *With regard to SSSIs, exceptions will only be made where benefits of development at the site clearly outweigh both the impacts on the features of the site and on any broader networks of SSSIs.*
2. *In the case of ancient woodland and veteran trees exceptions will only be made where the need for and benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.*
3. *In all cases, any impacts or harm should not just be mitigated, but overall ecological benefits should be delivered.*

*D. Planning permission for development directly or indirectly affecting protected or Priority species will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the species involved will not be harmed or appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place.*

Tandridge Emerging Local Plan (2019)

3.16 At the time of writing, the Inspector examining the draft Tandridge Local Plan 'Our Local Plan: 2033' has issued a letter to the Council dated 10th August 2023, following a procedural meeting held

on 27th July 2023. Following a three year protracted examination process, the Inspector has acknowledged a number of procedural challenges in progressing the Plan such that it is not possible to make the Plan sound by proposing main modifications to it and will therefore recommend that the Plan is unsound and that it is not adopted. Alternatively, the Inspector has suggested that the Council may wish to withdraw the Local Plan before his recommendation is confirmed within the Inspector's Examination Report. Until the position on the draft Plan is formalised this Report has included draft Local Plan policies, but in the circumstances, limited weight should now be attributed to them. Once the Local Plan has been found unsound / withdrawn, the draft policies referenced will no longer be relevant and carry no weight in the determination process.

**TLP03: Green Belt**

*"The extent of the Green Belt within the District is shown on the Policies Map.*

*Further changes to the Green Belt boundary will only take place for the South Godstone Garden Community, within the Area of Search, identified in Chapter 33 of Our Local Plan: 2033 and through the preparation of an Area Action Plan.*

*Within the Green Belt, planning permission for any inappropriate development which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt, will normally be refused. Proposals involving inappropriate development in the Green Belt will only be permitted where very special circumstances exist, to the extent that other considerations clearly outweigh any potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm.*

*Neighbourhood Plans will be prepared in recognition of the Green Belt policies of the National Planning Policy Framework."*

### 3.17 TLP09: Limited and Unserviced settlements

*"All settlements not listed in policies TLP06, TLP07 and TLP08 are our Limited and Unserviced Settlements.*

*Development will also only be supported where it constitutes appropriate development in accordance with the NPPF, or where very special circumstances can be demonstrated.*

*In addition, the Council will support the following types of development:*

*Improved flood resilience and Green Infrastructure schemes and enhancements of environmental assets;*

*The Council will protect and enhance open spaces and leisure facilities for the benefit and wellbeing of our communities, where appropriate, including Local Green Spaces where they are designated through adopted Neighbourhood Plans.*

*Proposals involving redevelopment or a change of use which would result in the loss of any premises or land currently or last used as a community facility will only be permitted where:*

*I. There is no longer a demand for the facility, rendering it financially unviable. This should be demonstrated through a robust marketing strategy and viability assessment, demonstrating where the building or land has been offered for sale or letting on the open market at a realistic price and no reasonable offers have been refused; and*

*II. There are sufficient similar facilities nearby or where alternative provision can be made on another site to the same or a higher standard in terms of community benefit; or*

*III. The current use will be retained and enhanced by the development of part of the site."*

## 3.18 TLP17: Health and Wellbeing

*"The Council will support programmes and strategies which aim to reduce health inequalities and promote healthier lifestyles, and will:*

*IV. Support and deliver Green Infrastructure initiatives in accordance with the policies set out in Section 26: Green Infrastructure, Landscape and the Natural Environment."*

## 3.19 TLP18: Place-Making and Design

*"The Council will require that new development is of a high standard of design that must reflect and respect the character, setting and local context, including those features that contribute to local distinctiveness.*

*All new development across all settlements and within the countryside, irrespective of use is required to:*

*I. Be of the highest design quality and contribute positively to the area's character and identity, and*

*II. Respect the context within which it will sit and address the opportunities to enhance the character and quality of the area and local distinctiveness, and*

*III. Have particular regard to heritage assets and successfully integrate with the historic character, and*

*IV. Provide accessibility and permeability for all by creating safe and welcoming places that connect with each other, and*

*V. Provide a sense of place to include attractive streets, squares and other public spaces with a defined sense of enclosure, multi-functional open spaces and green infrastructure, and*

*VI. Incorporate measures to promote community safety ensuring that private and public amenity spaces are clearly defined and are designed to be inclusive, useable, safe and enjoyable, and*

*VII. Promote environmental resilience through sustainable design and have regard to energy use and resistance to changing climates including through the orientation and layout of properties, and*

*VIII. Integrate functional needs such as refuse / recycling storage and collection points, car and cycle parking.*

*Development proposals will be required to adhere to the principles of good design as set out in national policy and locally recognised design guides, and give particular attention to all of the following considerations:*

*IX. The relationship of the development with the topography of the site, important trees or groups of trees and other important features that need to be retained. Wooded hillsides, as depicted on the policies map, will be protected by ensuring that new development does not adversely affect the character of the surrounding areas and that there is no overall loss of tree cover.*

*X. The quality of the development in terms of scale, density, massing, height, materials and layout, including the provision of private space where appropriate.*

*XI. The quality of the public spaces created by new buildings in terms of public safety, hard and soft landscaping, and how buildings interact with public space.*

*XII. The development does not significantly harm the amenities of the occupiers of existing development by reason by overlooking, overshadowing, visual intrusion, noise, traffic or any adverse impact.*

*XIII. Developers will be required to implement or contribute towards measures to mitigate adverse impacts.*

*The Council will be considering the role of design codes and panels in future and this should be discussed at the earliest opportunity in the application process. Pre-application discussions should address any early design (and other) factors of the scheme which will be essential to successful development.”*

3.20 TLP30: Green and Blue Infrastructure

*“The existing green and blue infrastructure in the District shall be protected, enhanced and managed for the future benefit of the environment, people and the economy.*

*Development will provide a net gain in green infrastructure, which should include suitable biodiversity, habitats and wildlife corridors, while seeking to provide a high quality multi-functional green infrastructure network.*

*Brooks and watercourses and other blue infrastructure corridors should be used to guide the creation of new network paths for the benefit of biodiversity and habitat creation, to help offset the impact of climate change and mitigate flooding.*

*The Council will work with developers and other partners to deliver strategic green and blue infrastructure projects where those opportunities arise and to offset the impact of development. This will be particularly relevant for the South Godstone Garden Community which requires a single area of 100ha of natural green space, in accordance with Natural England's ANGST Standards.*

*Such matters will be further explored through the preparation of a Green-Blue Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document and in the preparation of the South Godstone Garden Community Area Action Plan.”*

3.21 TLP31: Public Rights of Way

*“In considering proposals for all types of development the following criteria will apply:*

*I. I. Existing public rights of way will be safeguarded and should be incorporated into the development in the first instance and only if necessary should diversion be considered.*

*II. Where diversions to the existing public rights of way are proposed, it should be demonstrated there are no other alternatives and that the benefits of the development outweigh the any harm resulting from the proposed diversion.*

*III. Development should, where possible, provide improvements to the public rights of way network for the benefit of promoting sustainable connectivity across the District including across railways where applicable.*

*IV. All new routes should be provided as will be multi-user routes and be designed with suitable widths to enable use as bridleways, avoiding the need for horse riders to rely on our rural roads network.*

*V. All new rights of way and gates must be designed to be in compliance with the Equalities Act 2010 or relevant legislation so they are suitable for those with mobility impairments.*

VI. All new routes should seek to extend be incorporated to extend the existing public rights of way network and reduce fragmentation by roads, railways and other infrastructure.

VII. All new developments should be designed to enable safe crossing of roads/rail and railway lines from new public rights of way.

VIII. New permissive paths are encouraged to fill in gaps in the public rights of way network.

The Council will expect applicants to have engaged with the Surrey County Council on Public Rights of Way matters at the earliest opportunity.”

3.22 TLP32: Landscape Character

“Landscape Character Areas for the District are set out on the Policies Map.

All proposals for development in the District will protect and enhance the key landscape features and visual sensitivities of the landscape character areas identified in the Surrey Landscape Character Assessment 2015 and the Tandridge Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Assessment 2016-18, or subsequent updates where they apply.

Proposals will be required to incorporate and implement the landscape guidance set out in the SLCA, 2015, and to:

- I. Protect and enhance the character and qualities of the local landscape through appropriate design and management, and
- II. Make provision for the retention and enhancement of features of landscape importance, and
- III. Protect and where possible, enhance key public views and vistas, and
- IV. Protect the landscape setting and contribute to maintaining the individual and distinct character of settlements by preventing coalescence, and
- V. Where appropriate, provide landscape mitigation.”

3.23 The Landscape Character Areas referred to within policy TLP32 are those outlined within the Surrey Landscape Character Assessment 2015 as illustrated on Figure 3 of this report.

3.24 TLP37: Trees and Soft Landscaping

“Trees and soft landscaping represent a fundamental part of the landscape of the District and its natural capital. Trees and soft landscaping also have an important role in limiting the impact of rainfall and increasing temperatures and they enhance leisure experiences. To ensure this remains the case, we will:

- I. Resist the loss of trees, woodlands, hedgerows and vegetation of significant amenity, historic, cultural or ecological value, including proposals which have the potential to threaten the continued wellbeing of such trees and vegetation;
- II. Require existing trees, hedgerows and vegetation to be positively integrated into the site layout and protected in accordance with BS5837:2012 and any subsequent update, allowing for the future growth of trees and avoiding conflict with structures, hard surfaces and resident amenity;
- III. Require comprehensive replacement planting to be provided where trees have been removed prior to planning permission being granted, unless the Council considers there is an overriding reason not to do so. Evidence of any such justification must be submitted within the application details before any deviation from the requirement to replant will be considered. Where there is

*evidence of deliberate neglect or damage to trees or woodland assets the deteriorated state of the asset will not be taken into account in any decision.*

*IV. Expect new development to positively integrate space for additional trees, hedgerows and vegetation wherever possible within layout design allowing for the future growth of trees both above and below ground and avoiding conflict with structures, hard surfaces and resident amenity;*

*V. Seek opportunities to improve links between green spaces to improve access for recreation and corridors which allow species to move between habitats.*

*Planning permission will be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland (including from indirect impacts such as increased visitor pressure), unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss and a suitable compensation strategy exists.”*

**Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan (2020-2025)**

- 3.25 The Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2020-2025 is adopted by all of the partner authorities within the area of the AONB and sets out a shared vision of the future of this special landscape. The plan identifies the key features, issues and opportunities facing the landscape and sets out aims and principles for the positive conservation and enhancement of the Surrey Hills for a five-year period.
- 3.26 The Management Plan is a material consideration that is considered when determining planning applications. It does not form part of the statutory development plan for the Council.
- 3.27 While the whole of the Management Plan should be considered in respect of planning decisions, the following policies are considered to be most relevant to the planning process, the proposed development, and landscape and visual matters:

*“Recreation, Health and Wellbeing Management Plan Policies:*

*Rt3 Significant Viewpoints And Vistas Will Be Identified, Conserved And Enhanced.”*

*“Planning Management Policies:*

*P6 Development that would spoil the setting of the AONB by harming public views into or from the AONB will be resisted.”*

**Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: Boundary Variation Project Consultation Document (2023)**

- 3.28 It is noted that the Surrey Hills AONB boundary review was underway at the time of writing this report. The proposed boundary extension areas that are outlined in the consultation document are located a substantial distance from the application site and have therefore not been considered further as part of this appraisal.

## 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 3** illustrates the NCA extent.

4.2 At this very broad landscape scale, the site lies within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA120) Wealden Greensand. This NCA extends from Folkestone and Hythe to the south-east, along with covering a narrow corridor that extends across Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Redhill, the Surrey Hills, Godalming and Haslemere. The NCA extends towards Farnham and Alton to the west and Petersfield, Midhurst and Storrington to the south and therefore covers a very extensive landscape area. The Key Characteristics for the NCA are:

- *"A long, narrow belt of Greensand, typified by scarp-and-dip slope topography, including outcrops of Upper Greensand, Gault Clay and Lower Greensand. The Greensand forms escarpments separated by a clay vale: the overall undulating and organic landform - particularly in the west - gives a sense of intimacy to the landscape. Leith Hill in Surrey is the highest point in south-east England.*
- *There are extensive areas of ancient mixed woodland of hazel, oak and birch, with some areas having been converted to sweet chestnut coppice in past centuries. These areas reflect the diverse geology, including the distinctive chalk grassland elements within the East Hampshire Hangers Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the wooded commons ('charts') of East Surrey and West Kent, and conifer plantations.*
- *Semi-natural habitats include: remnant lowland heathland, mostly concentrated in West Sussex, Hampshire and West Surrey; the wetlands associated with the River Arun in West Sussex; and unimproved acid grasslands found in commons, parklands, heathland and other areas of unimproved pasture.*
- *Fields are predominantly small or medium, in irregular patterns derived from medieval enclosure. Boundaries are formed by hedgerows and shaws, with character and species reflecting the underlying soils. On the clay, hedgerows are dense and species-rich, with occasional standard oaks. On more acidic soils they generally consist of hawthorn and blackthorn, also with occasional oak trees, and often trimmed low.*
- *Agricultural land comprises a mosaic of mixed farming, with pasture and arable land set within a wooded framework. There is a fruit-growing orchard belt in Kent and also around Selborne in Hampshire.*
- *The rural settlement pattern is a mixture of dispersed farmsteads, hamlets and some nucleated villages. Large houses set within extensive parks and gardens are found throughout the area.*
- *In the east of Kent, the Wealden Greensand has a gentler and more open aspect than in the wooded west. This part of the area is also more marked by development, with the presence of*

*major towns and communication corridors such as the M26, M25 and M20 motorways and railway lines including the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (High Speed 1).*

- The local built vernacular includes the use of Greensand, ragstone and, in the west, malmstone, bargate stone, plus dark carrstone patterned in the mortar between stones ('galletting') in Surrey, as well as timber-framing and weatherboarding.*
- There are a range of historic landscape features, including field monuments, old military defences, prehistoric tumuli, iron-age hill forts, Roman forts, the Royal Military Canal, small quarries and relics of the iron industry (including hammer ponds). Sunken lanes cut into the sandstone are a historic and characteristic feature, as are older deer parks and more recent 18th-century parklands.*
- Surface water is an important feature across the Greensand, with many streams and rivers passing through the NCA: the Western Rother, Wey, Arun, Medway and the Great and East Stour.*
- The Greensand ridge meets the coast of Kent between Folkestone Warren and Hythe. While most of the coastal strip is now built up and protected by sea defences, the undeveloped sea cliffs at Copt Point provide important geological exposures, are designated for their nature conservation interest and fall within the Dover-Folkestone Heritage Coast."*

4.3 Under the heading Wealden Greensand today the description also states:

*"Besides the woodland, the Surrey Greensand is characterised by open rolling farmland. In the south, a traditional farmscape of small fields and thick hedgerows is retained. On flatter land, however, arable use is more prevalent. This area is heavily populated with settlements such as Redhill, Reigate and Dorking. The proximity to London and the longstanding affluence of this area are reflected in the numerous notable houses, parks and gardens. This affluence continues to shape the landscape, with some of the farmland given over to smallholdings and recreational uses such as pony paddocks. In many areas, the settlements bring a suburban feel that contrasts with the essentially rural landscape of the south-western end of the NCA."*

4.4 The National Character Area (NCA) profile includes Statements of Environmental Opportunities (SEOs) for the Character Area. The following are of relevance:

*SEO 1: Protect and manage the nationally recognised and distinctive character of the landscape, conserving and enhancing historic landscape character, tranquillity, sense of place, and the rich historical and geological heritage of the Wealden Greensand. Enhance access provision where appropriate, to maintain public benefit from and enjoyment of the area.*

*For example by:....*

- Maintaining and enhancing rights of way and open access throughout the area, improving links especially to the North Downs Way and South Downs Way national trails, and to towns and villages. Developing new permissive access to historical sites and quality green space as part of a cohesive network of inspiring access provision. Increasing the benefits of these routes for biodiversity, health and local businesses, and ensuring full compatibility with agriculture. Enhanced access permission will not be appropriate in all instances and needs to be balanced to ensure that areas that are particularly vulnerable to disturbance from recreational pressures are not compromised.*

*SEO 3: Manage and significantly enhance the quality of the characteristic wetland and water environment of the Greensand. This will contribute to sustainable flood risk management, will benefit the regulation of water quality and water availability, as well as enhancing the sense of place, biodiversity, recreation and wetland habitat adaptation to climate change.*

*For example by:....*

- *...Maintaining and restoring the numerous manmade lakes and ponds for the benefit of biodiversity, the landscape, the historic environment and water storage, to reduce runoff and soil erosion.*

*“SEO 4: Plan to deliver a network of integrated, well managed green spaces in existing and developing urban areas, providing social, economic and environmental benefits, and reinforcing landscape character and local distinctiveness - particularly on or alongside the boundaries of the designated landscapes within the Wealden Greensand.”*

4.5 Under the heading experiential qualities, the description also states:

*“Tranquillity: Based on the CPRE map of tranquillity (2006) tranquillity is most associated with the intimate rural landscape of the south-west, with only pockets of tranquil areas found in the more developed eastern and central parts of the NCA. The lowest scores for tranquillity are found around Ashford, Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Redhill, at the coast and along main roads (M20, M25).”*

### **Surrey Landscape Character Assessment, Tandridge District (2015)**

4.6 The Surrey Landscape Character Assessment has been undertaken at a district level and it subdivides the landscape into twenty-one Landscape Character Types (LCT) and one hundred and forty Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). The Site is located within the LCT, Distinct Areas on the Edge of Urban Areas and within the LCA UE9: Holmthorpe Pits and Mercer's Park. The character areas are shown on Figure 3

#### UE9: Holmthorpe Pits and Mercer's Park

4.7 The location and boundaries of the LCA are described as follows:

*“The boundary is defined by the Built Up Area of Redhill and South Merstham to the west and north, the M23 motorway to the east and the A25 road to the south. The far north-east corner of the area is within the Surrey Hills AONB.”*

4.8 The characteristic features of LCA Holmthorpe Pits and Mercer's Park are:

- *“Part of the wider Greensand Valley which runs broadly east-west along the southern foot of the North Downs ridge scarp slope.*
- *The original undulating landform has been significantly altered by human intervention.*
- *The land use consist of large areas quarried for sand, currently at various stages of ‘restoration’. A number of pits form lakes, which provide recreation at Mercer's Park Country Park, nature reserves and a fishing lake. Areas of arable and pastoral fields are interspersed between the pits. There are some areas of wet woodland to the south on the sites of disused gravel workings.*
- *The small village of Nutfield is located along the A25 at the southern edge of the character area, and there are small areas of settlement off Nutfield Marsh Road, including a pond, an inn and a cricket ground next to Nutfield Marsh Common in the middle of the character area.*

- *Mounding and planting designed to screen quarry working enclose views in places, but elsewhere there are views across lakes and open fields with the North Downs ridge scarp glimpsed in the distance. There is intervisibility with the North Downs to the north, but the area is seen in context with the Built Up Area of Redhill to the west.*
- *The Tandridge Border Path Recreational Route crosses north-south through the middle of the character area and connects to public rights of way, increasing in number towards the south and Nutfield. Mercer's Park Country Park provides recreation within the northern part of the character area. A limited number of rural lanes cross the area. Short stretches of railway cross the western end of the character area adjacent to the built up end of Redhill.*
- *Nutfield Marsh Common is Open Access Land and registered as Common Land. The majority of the character area is designated as the Holmethorpe Sandpits Complex Site of Nature Conservation Interest, for its important bird habitats*
- *Substantial human intervention has altered the natural landform, but through wetland restoration now provides significant biodiversity and recreation opportunities. Ongoing restoration at Patteson Court landfill site will restore landform along the valley side which joins the greensand ridge of character area GW12 to the south”*

4.9 Under the heading Evaluation the LCA states “UE9: This area coincides with Surrey’s Wealden Greensand biodiversity opportunity area WG11 which is a mixture of floodplain grazing marsh, woodland and heathland.”

4.10 Landscape Guidance for the LCA includes:

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

4.11 The site is assessed as typical of the UE9 LCA in that it is a landscape that has had history of quarry activity and has therefore been altered by human intervention falling on the ridge of the southern side of the Greensand Valley. One of the waterbodies within the north of the site is utilised for fishing and the Tandridge Border Path passes through the site.

4.12 Activities associated with quarrying such as landform changes are typical within the UE9 LCA.

#### GW12: Earlswood To Oxted Wooded Greensand Hills

4.13 The south-western parcel of the site lies on the opposite site of the A25 from land falling within the Earlswood to Oxted Wooded Greensand Hills LCA.

4.14 The ‘Locations and Boundaries’ section of the assessment states that :

*"The Earlswood to Oxted Wooded Greensand Hills Character Area is a narrow linear character area between Redhill and Oxted, running east-west between more open greensand hills and vale to the north and the lower wealden landscape to the south. The area is defined by the underlying geology, topography and woodland cover, with boundaries following roads, field boundaries and edges of woodland. The character area is outside the Surrey Hills AONB."*

4.15 Key Characteristics of the GW12 LCA include:

- *"A narrow undulating ridgeline and hills above the low weald to the south, and generally higher than the more open greensand hills to the north.*
- *Predominately wooded, including blocks of ancient woodland, interspersed with areas of medium-sized arable fields, mostly with intact hedge and tree belt boundaries. Ribbons of woodland are located along the ridges and upper slopes. The western end of the character area includes areas of small scale pasture, paddocks and occasionally larger arable fields, with tree groups, individual mature large trees within fields. The far eastern end of the character area includes a golf course.*
- *Tree cover encloses parts of the character area, but there are also panoramic views to the wider landscape, framed by woodland, from elevated locations and gaps in tree cover.*
- *A significant number of roads, including the M23, cross the character area (largely north-south). Most roads are enclosed by roadside tree cover, and in places, such as along Cooper's Hill Road, include narrow sunken lanes with dramatic steep roadside banks with exposed earth and tree roots.*
- *The character area borders the towns of Earlswood and Oxted to the east and west, and wraps around the edges of the villages of Betchingley and South Nutfield. Except for the small settlement of Tandridge. There (sic) is limited settlement within the eastern half of the character area. The western half however, contains scattered farmstead and dwellings.*
- *A rural, fairly peaceful character area, although remoteness is reduced by influence of surrounding settlement."*

4.16 The site is located adjacent to only very small sections of the GW12 LCA. The south-western parcel of the site lies on the north side of the A25 to the west of Nutfield whilst the land directly on the opposite side of the road falls within the GW12 LCA. Elsewhere small extensions from the main body of the site application area meet the A25 opposite the GW12 LCA, however these extensions encompass means of access to the site only with no proposed alterations / development occurring.

4.17 The existing relationship with the south-western parcel of the site is limited by vegetation that flanks the A25, though there is some intervisibility between this section of the site and two grassland parcels to the south of the A25. These grassland parcels are enclosed by woodland and hedgerow boundaries restricting any further visual relationship with the site further south within the GW12 LCA.

## Designations

4.18 Figure 4 illustrates the location of the landscape related designations within the context of the Site. No statutory national or local landscape designations such as National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) apply to the site itself.

4.19 The southern boundary of the Surrey Hills AONB is located approximately 0.7km to the north-east of the site. Land within the AONB at its southern area is low lying which limits its relationship with the site. The AONB land rises steeply further north to allow for a limited and distant visual relationship between the site and the higher south facing land within the AONB – the higher areas of land lie approximately 2.5 to 3km away from the site.

4.20 Extensions to the AONB are currently being considered but the site does not lie within any of these potential extension areas. The 'Godstone Hills' extension area is the closest area under consideration and lies approximately 2km to the east of the site beyond Nutfield and Betchingly. The next closest areas lie north of the existing AONB approximately 3km north of the site beyond the M23. There is no intervisibility between these potential extension areas ('Happy Valley' and 'Caterham Woods') and the site.

4.21 The local AGLV designation covers a large area located to the south and east of Nutfield. The AGLV that falls within the immediate context of the site is located south of the A25 Nutfield Road and south-western section of the site and there is a partial visual relationship between the AGLV and the site in this area - existing trees and other vegetation that flank the A25 limits this relationship. It is noted that the AGLV has a similar visual relationship with some areas of the existing built form within Nutfield. The remaining areas of the AGLV are well screened from the site by intervening vegetation and built form.

4.22 Lower Gatton Park is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden located approximately 2km to the north-west of the site. Intervisibility is limited by distance and is only with the northern sections of the site where no built form is proposed.

4.23 A number of listed buildings/structures are located within the study area, the nearest of which is the Grade II Listed Lancelyn Club which is located off Chillmead Lane approximately 25m to the north. The Grade II Listed Charman Cottage and Leather Bottle Cottage are located off Nutfield Marsh Road approximately 30-60m to the north. The Grade II\* Listed Building Church of St Peter And St Paul and the Grade II Listed Clement Chest Tomb (10 Yards South West of Church of St Peter and St Paul) are located off Nutfield Marsh Road to the east. The Grade II Listed Folly Tower in Grounds of Redwood and 40-44, High Street are located along the High Street of Nutfield adjacent to the site to the south.

4.24 The Scheduled Monument, Betchingley Castle (ringwork and bailey) is located beyond the M23 approximately 1.1km to the east of the Site. A second scheduled monument falls within the study area - Medieval moated site, Albury Farm, Merstham to the north approximately 1.7km to the north of the site. There is no intervisibility between these two features and the site.

4.25 The Site is located wholly within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

## Topography

4.26 The following should be read in conjunction with Figure 5. Parcel references within the following descriptions relate to the Site Components Plan (Appendix E).

Context – Landform

4.27 The site is located on the north-facing slopes of a prominent ridge that lies on a broadly east/west axis to the east of Redhill. The historic core of Nutfield village, the Bletchingley Road and Bletchingley village to the east of Nutfield all lie on the higher land of the ridge at approximately 150 – 165m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). South of Nutfield land slopes down towards South Nutfield which lies at approximately 80m AOD 2km away. North of Nutfield including the site the land slope down to the north and north-west reaching a height of approximately 80m AOD where a series of lakes lie east of Holmthorpe and south of Mersham.

4.28 Further north from Mersham and the M25 land rises again steeply up to the Surrey Hills / North Downs, reaching a height of approximately 220m AOD south of Caterham.

Site - Landform

4.29 The site is broadly located on a north-west facing slope with some more localised undulation within the site. The southern extent of the meet Nutfield Road at approximately 130m AOD the land broadly slope from Nutfield Road down to a height of approximately 110m AOD at the central areas where Parcel OS7 meets OS8, 9 & 10. Further north the site continues to slope to its boundary edge reaching heights of 80-85m AOD and Chillmead Lane.

**Site and Immediate Context**

4.30 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.

Site

4.31 The site is formed by a series of irregular shaped parcels of land located north and west of Nutfield village. The site is bounded to its east by Church Hill and Nutfield Marsh Road and several residential properties located nearby to the Church of St Peter and St Paul. The southern boundary wraps around the existing residential properties (accessed off High Street, Hunters Gate and Shortacres) west of the Church Hill and High Street junction until it reaches the Public Right of Way (PRoW) Nutfield (NTF) 568 where the site extends south to High Street to include public footpath.

4.32 The site boundary then leads north along the PRoW route to exclude the Nutfield Memorial Recreation Ground and a pocket of woodland to its north. The application area then extends south again to include Park Works Road before heading west to wrap around dwellings accessed off Park Works Road, Blacklands Meadow and Parkwood Road. The field parcel located west of dwellings off Parkwood Road forms the south-western extent of the site with the boundary following the back of residential dwellings south to Nutfield Road, along the northern edge of Nutfield Road to where the field boundary leads north to include a woodland block (Parcel OS 4) within the western edge of the parcel.

4.33 The site boundary then follows the western edge of the OS4 woodland and OS 7 woodland until it the route of the PRoW NTF 192 where it leads north along the route of the PRoW to meet Chillmead Lane and incorporating pond both to the east and west of the PRoW. Leading west the redline skirts around several residential properties accessed south of Chillmead Lane by the junction with Nutfield Marsh Road. The site boundary then follows the Nutfield Marsh Road south back to dwellings opposite the Church of St Peter and St Paul.

4.34 The site has been subject to historic quarry activities resulting in a site that has a variety of separate distinct areas. A variety of different landscape features are present within the site including: a mix of woodland types occupies approximately 48% (28ha) of the site; approximately 36% (21ha) of the site is currently occupied by grassland; and approximately 2.82 ha is existing ponds.

4.35 South-western parcel: This parcel appears to be relatively unmanaged grassland and woodland. The south-eastern section of the parcel is predominantly grassland bounded by hedgerow and trees to its southern edge onto Nutfield Road. A small tree group separates this more open grassland from an area of grassland with scattered trees and scrub. West of the grassed sections and area of relatively young woodland progresses to more mature broadleaved woodland that forms the western and northern edge of the parcel. The land is sloping down to the north east rising to the western boundary. PRoW NTF 192 forms the eastern edge of this parcel leading north from Nutfield Road through the site.

4.36 South-central woodland (OS 6& 7): This parcel comprises woodland located on an area of disused workings related to historic quarry workings. The remnants of old access routes for the workings remain within the woodland with the PRoW footpath NTF 571 broadly following this route on an south-west / north-east axis. The parcel is bounded to the south by dwellings off Blacklands Meadow that back onto the sites mature broadleaved woodland. The broadleaved woodland wraps around the southern, west and north of this parcel. With the central area being secondary woodland comprising predominantly birch trees. This secondary woodland is located within a sunken area related to previous quarry workings which is more wet than the outer raised edge. PRoW NTF 192 continues north along the western edge of this parcel intersecting with PRoW NTF 621 which follows the remains of an access track leading east across the northern extent of this area of the site.

4.37 South-eastern parcels (OS12 to 16 and D8 and IRC): An area of more open land is located east of the south-central woodland. It is an area of grassy scrub with some individual trees. NTF 622 runs along the northern edge, NTF 571 to its east, NTF 571 to its south and NTF 621 to its west. These routes area not easily accessible due to the overgrown scrub vegetation and more informal access criss-crosses this area. East of the open scrub area the remaining south-eastern area of the site comprises and area of relatively flat grassland of low ecological value surrounded by broadleaved woodland to its north (which is on sloping ground) and east and south with secondary woodland to its south-west abutting residential properties off Shortacres outside of the site. this parcel is understood to have been utilised as a previous quarry function. PRoW NTF 568 runs along the west of this parcel leading to land further north within the site. NTF skirts around the northern edge of the parcel and leads onto Church Hill passing through an area within the site laid to gravel utilised informally as a parking area for the nearby church.

4.38 Western grassland (OS8): North of the south-central woodland lies an area of grassland of low ecological quality. This grassland slopes down to the north and include the NTF 192 to its west. The grassland area is contained to its east by woodland but open to its west and north allowing long range views across the wider landscape context.

4.39 Central Woodland (OS9): the parcel within the centre of the northern section of the site comprises a mix of secondary woodland to its south and broadleaved woodland to the north. Centrally within this parcel lies a small pond in an open glade.

4.40 Eastern grassland (OS10): the eastern parcel of the site slope north and east down to Nutfield Marsh Road. It comprises an are of predominantly low quality grassland with a small number of

individual trees locate within it. PRoW NTF 572 leads north-east from the south-eastern parcels to exit onto Nutfield Marsh Road. This PRoW connects with NTF 624 which also joins Nutfield Marsh Road at the same access point. NTF 624 then joins with NTF 195 which leads north-west from NTF 572 to pass between residential properties and the Inn on the Pond public house to link with Chillmead Lane.

4.41 North-western ponds (OS11): the north-western corner of the site comprises two large ponds. The PRoW NTF192 passes between these ponds. The pond to the west of the PRoW is utilised for recreational fishing whilst the pond to the east is inaccessible for recreation and is more over grown with vegetation and trees creating a biodiverse feature within the site. Trees and vegetation surrounds the ponds and links to mor trees along Chillmead lane containing an area utilised as a carpark.

#### Site Context

4.42 South of the site Nutfield village is a relatively linear settlement along the A25. The built form comprises a mix of late 19th to 20th century dwellings. South of the A25 land slopes south occupied by woodland and grassed farmland with some dispersed residential properties and employment areas associated with Priory Farm.

4.43 To the east of the site a number of residential dwellings as well as The Church of St Peter and St Paul are accessed off Church Hill and Nutfield Marsh Road. Further east lies a series of grassed fields managed as pasture. An access road leading from the A25 north to a new quarry works by Glebe Lake passes through these fields. The M23 lies approximately 700m east of the site beyond additional grassed fields and areas of woodland. A series of PRoW pass through the fields to the east of the site including NTF 175 & 188.

4.44 North of the site lower lying land is occupied by a number of lakes including Glebe Lake, Mercers Lake the latter being utilised as a recreational lake with water sport activities. Central within these lakes lies a green which includes the Nutfield Cricket Club Ground and is bisected by Nutfield Marsh Road. PRoW 182b also passes through the green leading to Mercers Farm further north. This PRoW also links to NTF 182 and NTF 173 that pass through arable fields within this area. further north more water bodies are present - Spynes Mere located east of Merstham settlement. The M25 then crosses the area on an east/west axis before land slopes steeply up forming part of the Surrey Hills AONB.

4.45 West of the site is the land slopes down to Cormongers Lane. PRoW routes NTF 190, 193 & 197 lead west from the site through these pasture fields. Further west land is utilised as a landfill site to the east of Redhill. National Cycle Route 21 leads follows a route from Chillmead Lane heading west onto Cormongers Lane and then onto a route passing adjacent to the Nutfield Marshes onto Redhill.

#### **Landscape Value**

4.46 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.

4.47 Landscape Designations: The site is not subject to any national, local or other landscape designations. Although landscape designations are not an exclusive indicator of value, and a lack

of a designation does not render a landscape as having no value, designated landscapes are commonly acknowledged as being of particular importance. A small area of the site lies on the opposite side of Nutfield Road from an area of locally designated landscape (AGLV) the relationship between the site and the wider AGLV is limited by intervening vegetation and built form within Nutfield. The Surrey Hills AONB is located approximately 1km north of the site with limited visual relationship between them.

4.48 Natural Heritage: The site largely comprises areas of grassland of predominantly low value habitat in ecological terms, although the combination of trees, hedgerows, scrub and woodland and ponds across the rest of the site provide greater ecological value due to their connectivity. The site features support a range of fauna and the majority of the site falls within a site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

4.49 Cultural Heritage: There are no Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings or Conservation Areas within the site. A number of Grade II Listed Buildings are located within the immediate context of the site including within Nutfield and by Nutfield Cricket Club Ground. The Church of St Peter and St Paul lies east of the site and is designated as a Grade II\* Listed Building. The site has a history of quarrying activities.

4.50 Landscape Condition: The overall quality of the site is considered to be relatively poorly managed. Most of the grassland areas are manged as pasture though the woodland areas have been left largely untended and would benefit from improved management regimes.

4.51 Associations: The site, and the immediate landscape, has not been subject to any known specific or important cultural associations in terms of notable artists or writers.

4.52 Distinctiveness: the site and the local landscape does not lie within a rare landscape character area at either national or local level. The landscape character is judged to be typical of that found within the area. The landscape features that are present are not rare or unusual but representative and typical of those within the locality, associated with former minerals workings.

4.53 Recreational Value: the site is crossed by several public rights of way which link to the wider network. A number of nearby rights of way look allow views into the site. The north-western areas of the site includes a pond utilised for recreational fishing. The Nutfield Memorial Recreation Ground lies adjacent to the south of the site. Parts of the site area accessed informally by the public though with no official access rights beyond the PRoW routes including part of the Tandridge Border Path.

4.54 Perceptual (Scenic): The woodland within the site contributes to the local character and provides a backdrop and skyline for views within the local area given the nature of the site being located on relatively high ground. The degree of openness within parts of the northern sections of the site also allows views out of the site to the wider landscape. It is judged that the Application Site and the local landscape is pleasant in places, with some areas having interesting though not unusual scenic qualities.

4.55 Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity): Overall the site is not particularly tranquil due to its proximity to the A25 and other well-used highway routes and also where the site is open to the west Redhill, and mineral working/land restoration and adjacent settlements area prominent within views. More enclosed areas of the Application Site can feel reasonably remote including within the woodland spaces.

4.56 Functional aspects: The site comprises some pastureland. It does not perform any particular landscape functions beyond the agricultural use and the nature of the sloping land conveying water to ponds within the site.

4.57 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**

4.58 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. The selected viewpoints broadly reflect those included within the previous refused planning application for the site which were accepted as part of that application – minor variations occur where considered applicable to this application appraisal.

4.59 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 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2023 and seasonal differences have been taken into account when determining the visual effects on these receptors.

4.60 '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).

### **Photo Viewpoints**

4.61 An assessment of the likely visual effects of the proposed development upon surrounding receptors is detailed in the subsequent section. Figure 7 details the location of the Photo Viewpoints and Figures 7-30 illustrate the photo viewpoints. They are briefly described within Appendix B.

### **Summary of Visual Baseline**

4.62 The baseline analysis results in a number of reasoned conclusions which are summarised below:

- Higher sensitivity receptors with views of the site include users of PRoW that pass through and adjacent to the site and residents within dwellings located directly adjacent to the site including those along Church Hill, Nutfield Marsh Road, Chillmead Lane to the north and east; and those along the southern edges of the site accessed off Nutfield Road, Shortacres, Hunters Gate, Blacklands Meadow and Parkwood Road;
- Users of PRoW routes within the site experience woodland setting within more contained spaces of the site in contrast with open and distant views from the more open areas of the site within the northern grassland areas on higher ground;
- Users of PRoW routes within the wider context of the site have views towards the northern sections of the site with the site woodland parcels screening the remaining development from view;

- Users of the neighbouring recreational spaces at Nutfield Memorial Recreational Grounds to the south and Nutfield Cricket Club Grounds to the north have views towards the site that are screened by existing trees and woodland;
- Visitors to St Peter and St Pauls Church have views towards the south-eastern sections of the site within the context of existing residential properties and woodland within the site;
- Users of the local roads adjacent to the site have transient views into the southern and eastern sections of the site;
- Visitors to the Surrey Hills AONB and Gatton Park Registered Park and Garden located north and north-west of the site respectively have views of the northern sections of the site where the opened grassland and adjacent woodland within the site are viewed in the context of the wider landscape which includes woodland, farmland, quarry activity and urban settlements; and
- Broadly the southern sections of the site are more visually contained and less visually sensitive than more open areas within the northern sections of the site.

## 5.0 LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

### Introduction

5.1 The development proposals are described in the Design and Access Statement and the parameters for assessment are shown on the Parameters Plans.. 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:

- Help deliver well managed green spaces to provide social and environmental benefits whilst reinforcing landscape character and local distinctiveness.
- Maintain physical links and open views to the wider landscape.
- Encourage understanding of the biodiversity and historic elements of the landscape.
- Maintain and enhance the network of public access, whilst ensuring significant biodiversity value and resource of these areas is sensitively managed and protected.
- Retain and enhance existing landscape features within the site as much as possible to help create new habitat and recreational areas in keeping with local character whilst allowing new development to take place.
- Incorporate new wet loving species within areas adjacent to new drainage features for coherent wetland landscapes.
- Proposals should incorporate features typical of the local character to help assimilate the development within its landscape context.
- Respect local historic assets including the Church of St Peter and St Paul.
- Implement proposals that will help the interpretation of the local character and history of the site.

### 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 circa 52 hectares of land dedicated to landscape, GI, public open space, play and habitat related proposals – representing approximately 88% of the total site area;
- The northern grassland areas will become accessible open space for informal recreation for the local community whilst increasing biodiversity through improved grassland management;
- The vast majority of woodland within the site will be retained with a loss of 2.13 ha of predominantly lower quality areas to allow for new access and development plots. New woodland planting within the site will be appropriately located north of Parcel B8 to help provide

visual screening for the new development within this area. The woodland will also provide more substantial ecological connections between the existing woodland features within the site.

- New scrub planting will be included within the northern sections of the site adjacent to the central woodland;
- The existing low-quality modified grassland within the north of the site will be managed for increased biodiversity;
- New wetland areas will be incorporated into the sustainable drainage design to help increase biodiversity as well as providing visual interest for users of the accessible open space;
- Interpretation panels will be located within the site to help users of the open space to appreciate the local landscape character and ecological assets present within the site;
- All public rights of way will be retained within the site with several of the routes being upgraded for ease of access and cycle use. These routes will tie into new informal paths provided within the site for recreational use and greater permeability;
- Views across the northern grassland parcels to the wider landscape context will be retained; and
- New structural planting to the north-east of Parcel IRC will help minimise potential visual impacts upon visitors to the nearby church and residents.

5.4 These proposals will be secured by legal agreement covering the use of the land, and by planning condition securing the detailed landscape design and management.

### **Landscape Management**

5.5 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, which can be secured by planning condition.

## 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 C and D 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. The measures would be set out in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which can be secured by planning condition.

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 of localised and limited significance. There are some landscape features of local merit within the site, the majority of which are retained as part of the proposals.

#### National Level Landscape Character – Wealden Greensands NCA

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 'Wealden Greensands' NCA and will be adjacent to existing residential development south of the site. Although the open land within the southern sections of the site and areas of woodland and vegetation will be lost to development, the overall strategy will greatly increase the site's biodiversity assets. 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 woodland and the existing residential context.

6.7 These proposals will contribute positively to the NCA by utilising species suited to the local character and overall help to respond positively to the SEO's included within the NCA profile. For example, by contributing to the local open access network with new permissive routes through new quality green spaces; by maintaining and introducing new waterbodies within site and managing these for ecological benefits and local character distinctiveness. Buildings will utilise detailing that

is suited to the local vernacular. The resultant landscape effects upon the NCA are therefore assessed as **Negligible** during operation.

National Level Designation – Surrey Hills AONB

- 6.8 There is considered to be very limited potential for intervisibility between the AONB and the areas of proposed built development within the site. The southern sections of residential parcels are screened by intervening woodland blocks within the site. If any parts of the proposed buildings are seen over or through the surrounding woodland, the impact will be negligible at the distance involved.
- 6.9 The north facing slopes of the site are visible from higher ground within the AONB. The north facing slopes are partially screened by intervening trees and woodland features within the views from the AONB. The slopes that are currently managed as pasture are visible as areas of grassland within the context of the wider landscape. These more visually exposed areas of the site are proposed as new publicly accessible landscape areas that will include new woodland scrub and grassland planting. The landscape proposals are predominantly for areas of open enhanced grassland which would result in no change within the context of the AONB setting.
- 6.10 The resultant effects of the proposals upon the Surrey Hills AONB are therefore considered to be **Negligible** from completion and for the long-term operation of the site.

National Level Designation – Grade II Listed Lower Gatton Park

- 6.11 The distance between the site and higher land within the park and nature of the application proposals limit the potential for landscape effects upon the park resulting from development occurring within the site. Any change would be inconsequential in relation to the setting of the Registered Park and Garden. Effects of the proposals upon Lower Gatton Park are considered to be **Negligible** from completion and for the long-term operation of the site.

Local Level Landscape Designation – Tandridge AGLV

- 6.12 The intervisibility between the site and AGLV affects only an extremely small portion of the overall AGLV designation. Proposals within the south-western parcel of the site include new dwellings and areas of green space including a landscape buffer along the southern edge of the site facing onto the A25. This settlement extension will result in a small extension in the AGLV's relationship with the built form of Nutfield. As a result, the proposed development within the south-western parcel of the site will have very limited landscape effect upon the AGLV.
- 6.13 The existing vegetation along the southern site boundary will be retained (with the exception of small loss to allow for access) and enhanced where possible. Maturation of the proposed landscape within the site's southern green corridor will help soften the edge of the proposed built form.
- 6.14 The resultant effects of the proposals upon the AGLV are considered to be **Negligible** from completion and for the long-term operation of the site.

County Level Landscape Character

UE9: Holmthorpe Pits and Mercer's Park LCA

- 6.15 There is scope through the application proposal to follow the landscape guidance set out within the Surrey Landscape Character Assessment. The proposals will achieve these by: conserving and

enhancing features of biodiversity value as far as possible by developing predominantly within the more open areas of the site where less vegetation and features of value are present resulting in minimal loss – new woodland planting will enhance existing feature and low quality grassland will be managed for increases in biodiversity; retaining the northern areas of the site as open landscapes will retain the '*open views to the wider landscape*'; and installation of interpretation signage within the new accessible open spaces will '*encourage understanding*' of the local biodiversity and historic elements of the site.

- 6.16 Change of the type proposed within the northern sections of the site will go largely unnoticed within the context of the LCA. The built form proposed within the site will increase the settlement size of Nutfield which will most be apparent from Nutfield Road when passing the site or from within the site itself. Overall, however the new development will occupy only a small area of land within the LCA UE9 located in the visually contained areas of the LCA - the nature of the surrounding woodland restricts the visual envelope of the site limiting its potential influence on the neighbouring landscape. Parts of Nutfield village that are north of the A25 do fall within the LCA and the proposed residential development will be viewed as an extension of this from limited locations and overall would have very little impact upon the LCA as a whole in particular not impacting on the existing openness associated within the north of the site and wider LCA.
- 6.17 Proposed earthworks to form the SuDS features and other landforms including the planted landform adjacent to parcel D8 will not be out of keeping within the LCA.
- 6.18 The landscape proposals will help assimilate the new built form within its landscape context. Hedgerow removals along the A25 will allow for the new main vehicular access point though these proposals will be landscaped to form a positive feature on the A25 as a gateway into Nutfield from the west.
- 6.19 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 the resultant landscape effects upon the UE9 LCA would be **Moderate to Minor Adverse** upon completion (year 1) reducing to **Minor Adverse** after 15 years.

#### GW12: Earlswood to Oxted Wooded Greensand Hills LCA

- 6.20 Once the development proposals (including new housing and access from the A25) are complete and operational the current relationship will have altered between the site and LCA. The new housing will extend the Nutfield settlement in the context of the LCA by a relatively small extent.
- 6.21 The existing vegetation along the southern site boundary will be retained (with the exception of small loss to allow for access) and enhanced where possible. Maturation of the proposed landscape within the site's southern green corridor will help soften the edge of the proposed built form within parcels D1, D2 & D3.
- 6.22 The resultant effects upon the GW12 LCA are considered to be **Negligible** at completion and in the long term.

#### Site and Immediate Context

- 6.23 From completion new housing within the southern sections of the site will change the existing settlement edge character to that of new built form set within the woodland context. New landscaping proposals adjacent to the new housing including along Nutfield Road and near Church Hill will help soften the new proposals.

- 6.24 Planting within and altered management of the northern grassland areas will result in only a slight change from the existing nature of the site with the new earthworks presenting the greatest change in character – early landscaping will help soften these features to a degree from completion.
- 6.25 New landform associated with the building plots will be noticeable locally. The new main road route will need cut and fill of the existing landform to enable safe and practical access. Additional earthworks are proposed to allow for Parcel IRC to be reduced by 1.5m with additional excavation allowing for basement construction. Earthworks within the northern grassland areas will be required to allow for new drainage features and a planted landscaped landform to be implemented.
- 6.26 Overtime new planting will mature to help soften the new built form and earthworks resulting in a development that will be well assimilated within its context. Adverse effects will be linked predominantly to the southern sections of the site whilst proposals within the northern sections of the site will result in beneficial effects overall due to an increase in biodiversity and recreational assets.
- 6.27 Landscape effects upon the site and its immediate context are considered to be **Moderate Adverse** from completion reducing overtime to **Moderate / Minor Adverse** after 15 years.

### **Summary**

- 6.28 The landscape effects have been assessed at a variety of geographical scales. The scheme would have a negligible effect on the Wealden Greensands National Character Area, the Surrey Hills AONB, and the Tandridge AGLV. Within the local landscape character area UE9 Holmthorpe Pits and Mercers Park there would be a Moderate/ Minor adverse effect at completion, reducing to a Minor effect after 15 years when the new planting is maturing. At the local level of the site and its immediate context, there would be Moderate adverse effect at completion reducing to a Moderate Minor effect by year 15. The scheme has been carefully developed within an existing landscape framework, to minimise the landscape effects beyond the site itself, and benefits will arise from the wider area of green infrastructure at the northern end of the site, through enhanced management.

### **Visual Effects**

#### **Visual Envelope (VE)**

- 6.29 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.
- 6.30 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.
- 6.31 The VE of the proposed development is broadly limited to the immediate context.

#### **Construction**

- 6.32 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 e.g. residents off Nutfield Road and linked roads to properties directly south of

the site and Church Hill. Nutfield Marsh Road and Chillmead Lane and users of PRoW and highway network will have views of construction activity to include vehicles and associated machinery, site compounds, and earthworks/ground modelling.

6.33 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 therefore considered to be up to **Major/Moderate Adverse** for these limited number of receptors, however, for less sensitive receptors and those receptors at a distance from the site, visual effects are unlikely to be any greater than **Negligible**.

#### **Operation (following Completion)**

6.34 The following provides a summary of the visual effects assessment included at Appendix D.

##### Residential Properties and Settlement

6.35 There are relatively few residential receptors likely to experience effects from the Proposed Development given the scale of the site. The residents with most direct effects of the proposals would be residents within dwellings located directly adjacent to the site where residential development is proposed close to the site boundaries. This is the case for dwellings accessed off Parkwood Road (Receptor N) that back onto the south-western site parcel where new dwellings are proposed within Parcel D1. Lesser effects will be experienced for other dwellings within this area of Nutfield including those off Blacklands Meadow and Park Works Road where views are towards existing woodland located along the southern boundaries of the site. These dwellings will have only glimpse views towards the access road (The Drive) and movements along it that passes through the south-central woodland; or of new dwellings within Parcel D7 beyond the retained woodland. Effects upon residential receptors adjacent to the south-western section of the site are considered to be **Moderate Adverse** at worst from completion and after 15 years with little scope for reduction in effects through landscaping measures.

6.36 Residents within close proximity to the south-eastern section of the site include those along Church Hill close to Church of St Peter & St Paul (4 dwellings). Receptors will experience views of the development within Parcel IRC from the rear located east of their dwellings. Views will be in the context of the filtering woodland context beyond their properties. An area of proposed structural planting will be included. This planting will help soften views of the proposed buildings which will increase overtime as plants mature. Effects upon residential receptors close to the south-eastern section of the site are considered to be **Moderate / Minor Adverse** at completion reducing to **Minor Adverse** after 15 years through planting.

6.37 As above some dwellings adjacent to the site will experience adverse effects as a result to the development, however some residential properties with views towards the site will not experience the same degree of change due to the intervening woodland within the site being retained as part of the proposals. This is the case with residents of dwellings south-east of site off High St, Hunters Gate and Short Acres (Receptor L) where views into the site are of the woodland areas located south of Parcel IRC. This will result in only glimpse views of the proposals being possible from these receptors. Effects are therefore considered to be **Minor Adverse** during operation.

6.38 Residential receptors close to the northern sections of the site (Receptor I: Residents along Nutfield Marsh Rd / Peyton's Cottages and Chillmead Lane – approximately 21 dwellings) will experience

little change in views from their properties as the landscape proposals will not be significantly different to the existing features within the site. New grassland management will be implemented, new scrub and woodland planting will take place adjacent to the existing woodland areas and for some receptors the new drainage features will be landscaped to soften their appearance resulting in them appearing relatively subtly within the existing landscape. For those receptors with views that include areas adjacent to Parcel D8 there may be distant glimpses of the upper sections of new dwellings though these would be either fully screened or filtered by the new landform feature and tree planting proposed north of Parcel D8. For this receptor those experiencing the greatest effects are considered to be **Minor Adverse** at completion reducing to **Negligible** in the long term after 15 years.

6.39 More distant residential receptors by Mercers Farm (Receptor E – 8 dwellings) would only experience glimpse views from a distance of the proposals within the northern section so the site including potential glimpses of development within Parcel D8. Effects are considered to be up to **Minor Adverse** at completion reducing to **Negligible** 15 years.

#### Public Rights of Way (PROW) and Visitors to Historic Assets

6.40 The site and its context include a strong network of PROW crossing the site and linking to the wider area.

6.41 Users of PROW routes that pass through the site within the immediate vicinity of the proposed residential areas will experience the greatest visual effects. Views that are currently of the woodland context will change to include new built form including housing, road infrastructure new surfaced paths, changes in landform and new landscaped areas. New landscaping proposals within the development areas will provide some visual softening to differing degrees along the routes as plants mature generally allowing for reduction in effects overtime. Effects upon users of these routes (Receptor B (NTF 621, NTF622, NTF 571, NTF 568) and Receptor C (NTF 192 and NTF 616 forming part of the Tandridge Border Recreational Path)) are assessed to **Major / Moderate Adverse** at completion reducing to **Moderate Adverse** after 15 years.

6.42 Visitors to the Church of St Peter and St Paul and users of the PROW NTF 188 within the church grounds will experience views of development within Parcel IRC filtered by existing and proposed tree planting. Views will be in the context of existing residential development along Church Hill and the woodland setting. Effects are assessed to be **Moderate Adverse** at completion reducing to **Moderate / Minor Adverse** after 15 years. The wireline photomontages at Figure 32 shows the potential visual effects.

6.43 Where PROWs pass through the northern sections of the site development proposals consist predominantly of landscaping including relatively minor earthworks to allow for new drainage features and new planting to create wetland features, enhancement to the woodland edges and softening of the new landforms including the new bund north of Parcel D8. Users of these routes within close proximity to D8 (Receptor A (NTF 572, NTF195, NTF 624)). At most those with views including the area north of Parcel D8 are assessed to experience **Moderate / Minor Adverse** effects at completion reducing overtime to **Minor Adverse / Negligible** effects at 15 years. The wireline Photomontage from path NTF 571 at Figure 31 shows the potential visual effects. A new earthwork landform would screen any low level activity from the year of completion, and by 15 years after completion, planting would screen any views of new development.

- 6.44 Users of other ProW or recreational spaces in the wider context including (Receptor O (NTF 190,193 & 197) and P (NTF 175 & 188)) will experience **Minor Adverse / Negligible** effects at most after completion reducing overtime to **Negligible** effects after 15 years.
- 6.45 Those within the wider context including users of the ProW to the north of Mercers Farm, Users of Nutfield Memorial Field and ProW users west of the site and north of Nutfield Cemetery effects are assessed to be no greater than **Minor Adverse / Negligible** at most from completion reducing to **Negligible** overtime.
- 6.46 For receptors at very distant locations to the north and north west of the site including Visitors to the Surrey Hills AONB (Receptor R) and Lower Gatton Park (Receptor Q) the development proposals will be relatively inconsequential within views resulting in **Negligible** effects during operation.
- 6.47 Members of the public who access the site for recreational use where official access rights do not exist will experience effects in the same way as those using the ProW routes.

#### Roads & Transport Users

- 6.48 Users of the nearby road routes will experience transient views of the development proposals. These include users of Nutfield Road passing the south-western section of the site where the new housing and access arrangement off Nutfield Road will be visible in the context of the existing Nutfield settlement edge appearing as an extension of the village. The proposal will help create a positive feature entering the village contributing to some beneficial effects during operation. Effects upon users of this section of Nutfield Road (Receptor S) are assessed to be **Moderate / Minor Adverse** at completion reducing to **Minor Adverse** overtime as planting within the southern boundary landscape buffer matures. The wireline Photomontage at Figure 33 shows the likely visual effects.
- 6.49 Other road users include those to the east and northeast of the site along Church Hill, Nutfield Marsh Road (Receptor H) partial to glimpse views of development within Parcel IRC would be visible for users of this route in the context of existing residential development and the woodland setting. Effects upon these receptors are considered to be **Minor Adverse** from completion.

#### **Night-time Visual Effects**

- 6.50 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 and development areas being lit.
- 6.51 Landscaping and the existing woodland context 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.
- 6.52 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 sources. 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.

## Summary

6.53 The contained nature of the site limits the visual effects. There would be some close range views from properties in Nutfield that are close to the site, where Moderate visual effects would be experienced, but from further away from the site is well contained and no effects greater than Minor adverse are predicted. Views from a number of public rights of ways would be affected as they pass through the site, or close to it, but again visual effects beyond the immediate site are very limited. The levels of effect would vary between Major/ Moderate adverse to minor/ negligible. There would be visual changes leading to Moderate/Minor adverse effects for users of Nutfield Road, where close to the site entrance at completion and reducing over time.

## 7.0 GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

7.1 The NPPF sets out National policy for Green Belts. Section 13 of the NPPF covers Protecting Green Belt land. The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Paragraph 137 notes that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The NPPF notes that "*The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.*"

7.2 Paragraph 138 sets out the 5 purposes of the Green Belt;

- 'a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.'

7.3 Paragraph 145 states that once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

7.4 Paragraph 147 notes that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

7.5 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was first published on 6<sup>th</sup> 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 national policy document for decision making.

7.6 The relevant guidance in the PPG includes a section on the factors to be taken in account, when considering the impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt. This notes that an assessment of openness in Green Belt terms is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume, and that the duration of the development and its reversibility are factors to consider along with the degree of activity, such as traffic generation. (Paragraph 001 Reference ID; 64-001-20190722) from 22 July 2019.

### Green Belt Purposes

7.7 In order to assess how the scheme will affect the openness of the Green Belt, the first step is to understand how the parcel of land in which the site is located, currently performs against the Green Belt purposes in paragraph 138 of the NPPF. Green Belt studies have been completed on behalf of the council. These studies are summarised below.

#### Tandridge District Council Green Belt Assessment December 2015 - Main Report

7.8 This study, which is accompanied by a series of appendices, assesses land designated as Green Belt in Tandridge. It also goes on to assesses Green Belt Areas at a local level and determines how effective they are at serving Green Belt purposes.

7.9 The study looked at Nutfield and its relationship with the Green Belt.

7.10 The study noted:

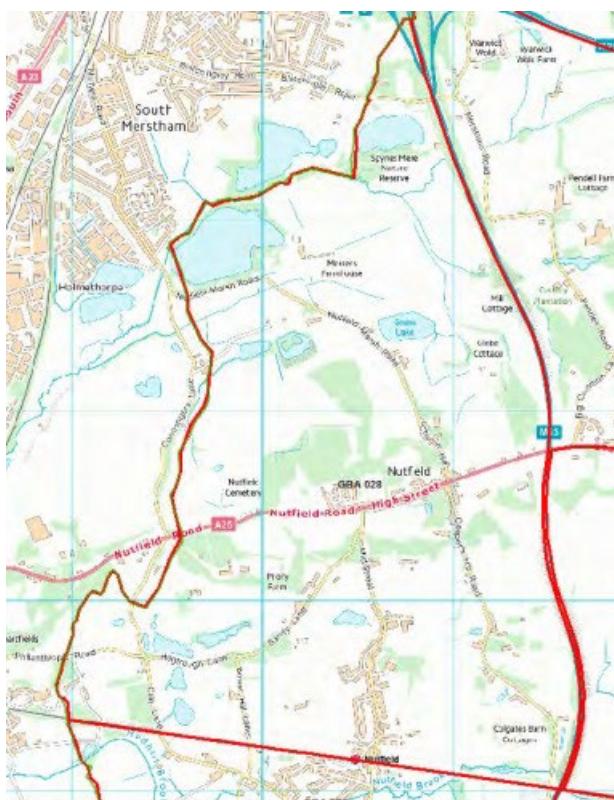
*"Nutfield*

*Nutfield has a range of different residential properties within it and some community facilities, and as a whole is cumulatively quite large and as such reduces the openness of the Green Belt."*

7.11 Nutfield was identified as an area for further investigation and was identified as area 029 Nutfield. The study noted that:

*"The settlements of Nutfield has a range of different residential properties within them and some community facilities, however, the settlements as a whole are cumulatively quite large. As such it has an impact on the openness of the Green Belt and encroaches on the countryside. Therefore, it has been identified as an area for further investigation."*

7.12 Appendix D the parcel assessment, identified Nutfield as part of parcel GB 28. The parcel is shown below on the map extract from the study bounded by the red line.:



7.13 The analysis stated that:

*"GBA 028 is located in the far west of the district, beyond the M23, along the border with Reigate and Banstead. It contains a number of large lakes and water ways, including Glebe Lake, Mercers Park and Spynes Mere Nature Reserve, and several smaller ponds and streams, plus other large bodies of water outside the District. The topography of this parcel varies, with the area around Nutfield Marsh at a lower elevation than the centre, where Nutfield lies. South from Nutfield the topography slopes downwards again"*

7.14 The study analysed the role of the parcel against the Green Belt purposes.

7.15 Under Purpose 1: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas , the study noted,

*"This parcel lies on the border with Reigate and Bansted, with the large built up area of South Merstham just beyond that. Development from South Merstham stops short of the Tandridge District border in most places, and is also kept in check by several large bodies of water that sit along the boundary line, as well as the Green Belt that lies in Reigate and Banstead that immediately abuts the settlement. South Nutfield and Nutfield are within the parcel, as well Nutfield Priory Hotel and Robert Denholm House."*

*"There are also cottages, agricultural buildings and recreational spaces within the parcel."*

7.16 It went to state that:

*"Nutfield and South Nutfield are within the parcel. South Merstham abuts the parcel and District boundary to the north west, with Redhill to the west."*

7.17 Under purpose 2 to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another, the study noted,

*"South Nutfield and Nutfield are within the parcel. The settlement of South Merstham and Redhill in the neighbouring Borough of Reigate and Banstead are adjacent to the parcel in the west. Betchingley lies not far from Nutfield across the parcel boundary with GBA 014."*

7.18 And that:

*"Within GBA 028 are the two settlements of Nutfield and part of South Nutfield. Although the distance between them is not great they are regarded as separate settlements with distinct communities. The physical landscape features between them also play a role in maintaining separation (Nutfield sits on a raised elevation and there is also a stretch of woodland providing a visual as well as physical separation).*

*Betchingley lies not far from Nutfield across the parcel boundary with GBA 014. Separation is maintained by a steep valley within which the M23 lies, providing a strong physical barrier.*

*The settlement of Redhill lies just across the border in the south western corner of the parcel. Whilst the Green Belt that sits between Redhill / South Merstham and Nutfield / South Nutfield helps to separate the settlements, this is assisted by the large water bodies and the woodlands that sit between the two.*

*The parcel acts as a buffer between South Merstham / Redhill and South Nutfield / Nutfield. It also acts as a buffer between Nutfield and South Nutfield. The woodland in the area, the topography and the large water bodies all assist in preventing the settlements from merging."*

7.19 The study concluded in relation to Purpose 2 that:

*"The parcel plays an effective role in preventing South Nutfield and Nutfield merging. However, this is further aided by the woodland and the topography between the settlements. The parcel also plays a role in separating South Merstham with South Nutfield. However, these settlements are further separated by the distance, woodland and water bodies in the parcel. Therefore, the parcel is effective at serving this purpose."*

7.20 Under purpose 3 to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, the characteristics and features were described as:

*"Outside of the settlements of Nutfield and South Nutfield there is some scattered built form, mostly isolated dwellings or small groups of dwellings, as well as some buildings ancillary to agricultural usage. However, the settlements of Nutfield and South Nutfield represent a concentration of*

*development within the Green Belt. There are some large water bodies and woodland with the parcel too.”*

*“The development within the parcel is of different size and scale. The settlements of Nutfield and South Nutfield have a range of different residential properties within them and some community facilities, however, the settlements as a whole are cumulatively quite large. Nutfield Priory Hotel and Robert Denholm House are both fairly large individual buildings, both are well screened from the surrounding area. Other isolated buildings are agricultural or smaller in scale”*

7.21 In conclusion it noted:

*“The parcel is generally considered to play a strong role in assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, but due to the concentration of development in the settlements; Nutfield and South Nutfield have been identified for further investigation”*

7.22 Under Purpose 4 to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns, the study did not identify any effects on this purpose.

7.23 Purpose 5 was not specifically described for the parcel.

7.24 The overall conclusion on how the parcel served the purposes of Green Belt stated:

*“GBA 028 makes a generally strong contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. It plays an effective role in checking sprawl, which is recognised in the strategic assessment from South Merstham and Redhill expanding into the District and as such have been identified as areas for further investigation (these areas are labelled 027 and 028 respectively on the map in Appendix F). The parcel is predominantly open countryside free from any significant concentration of development. It plays a strong role in assisting to safeguard against encroachment, although for the settlement of Nutfield and South Nutfield this is not the case and have been identified as areas for further investigation (these areas are labelled 029 and 030 respectively on the map in Appendix F). The parcel plays a role in maintaining separation between two neighbouring settlements wholly within its own boundaries, although this is further supported by the topography and woodland within the area. There are no Conservation Areas within the parcel.”*

7.25 Appendix E the Settlement Assessments 2015 to the Green Belt study, described Nutfield,

*“Nutfield is a small Green Belt settlement in the west of the District and contains residential dwellings, a pub and some commercial premises including a car maintenance workshop / garage.*

*The layout of the settlement extends either side of the A25, east to west, branching out most significantly at Parkwood Road and Blacklands Meadow in the west. The character is not excessively urban in nature but neither wholly rural. However, Nutfield has a range of different residential properties within it and some community facilities, and as a whole are cumulatively quite large and as such is reduces the openness of the settlement.*

*The settlement does not have a Conservation Area. Due to the concentration of development in the settlement of Nutfield, the settlement has been identified for further investigation”*

7.26 The stage 2 Green Belt report identified further areas for investigation.

7.27 The report stated that:

*“The settlements of Nutfield have a range of different residential properties within them and some community facilities, however, the settlements as a whole are cumulatively quite large. As such it*

*has an impact on the openness of the Green Belt and encroaches on the countryside. Therefore, it has been identified as an Area for Further Investigation.”*

7.28 The overall conclusion on Nuffield in this study was:

*“This Area is a relatively small village in the Green Belt, although not a Defined Village. Its layout comprises development to either side of the A25, some of which is in depth. Whilst the village is relatively small, the layout and density of built form along the A25 (extending between the development on the west side of Parkwood Road to the east of Church Hill and Cooper’s Hill Lane) results in a contained effect and as such it does not have an open character. Development becomes more spacious and sporadic with a lower density beyond this and these elements do contribute to the openness of the surrounding Green Belt. In light of this, it is recommended that Nutfield is further considered through the Green Belt Assessment in terms of whether or not it should be inset.”*

7.29 The Green Belt Assessment (Part 3): Exceptional Circumstances and Insetting Report June 2018 Tandridge District Council, went on to consider insetting,

7.30 The report concluded that:

*“The Settlement Hierarchy categorises Nutfield as a Tier 4, Limited and Unserviced Settlement. This settlement was grouped with Betchingley when assessed through the Hierarchy, which considers that Nutfield does not perform as well, not having the same levels of community facilities and lacking a local convenience shop, with a need for residents to gain access to basic level of services elsewhere on a frequent basis. Its access to the strategic road network and bus routes were noted however, it scored less well than Betchingley. As such it is not considered to be sustainable. Based on the above factors and the Preferred Strategy it is not being considered for insetting.”*

#### **Analysis of role of the land parcel containing the site in Green Belt Purposes**

7.31 FPCR have carried out a land parcel assessment, to analyse the role of the land in terms of Green Belt purposes. For this exercise a land parcel smaller than the land parcel in the Tandridge 2015 study, has been selected. An area with clearly identifiable boundaries has been selected and is shown on Figure 34. The FPCR sub area has been defined by roads and existing built development, woodland and other features which form easy recognisable and defensible boundaries to the parcel, as far as possible. The evaluation set out below examines how this land parcel in itself performs against Green Belt Purposes.

Purpose a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

7.32 The land parcel as a whole, lies away from large built up areas. Smaller built up areas at Nutfield and south Nutfield exist within or at the edge of the parcel and these are separated by topography and woodland, maintain separate identities, and limiting the influence of built development. Overall, it is considered the parcel plays no role in restricting the sprawl of large built up areas.

Purpose b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.

7.33 The parcel of land includes Nutfield and borders South Nutfield. These settlements are separated by the change in levels and by areas of woodland and retain their separate identities. The

undeveloped land between Nutfield and South Nutfield does play a role in maintaining the separate identities of these two settlements. Other towns are more remote from the parcel.

Purpose c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

7.34 The character of the majority of open land in the parcel, is that of restored former mineral land. The character is also influenced by the residential and active land restoration uses, that bound the parcel. The unwooded agricultural land provides a moderate role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, but the enclosed land within or adjacent to the settlements provides a much more limited role.

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

7.35 The parcel does not provide a setting, or any contribution to the special character of a historic town.

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

7.36 Any parcels of land would provide the effects in urban regeneration, so this purpose is neutral for the purpose of this assessment.

**Effect of the proposed scheme on Green Belt Purposes**

7.37 Having analysed the role of the wider land parcel in terms of Green Belt Purposes, this section of the assessment describes how development of the scheme would affect the role of the wider parcel and the overall integrity of the Green Belt

Purpose a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

7.38 Within the wider assessment parcel, built development has been carefully located, to be limited to pockets of more enclosed land, close to the existing settlement of Nutfield. Within these pockets of land, the scheme, would read as part of the existing settlement and existing and some proposed woodland, would contain and limit the influence on the wider areas that have a more open character. The scheme itself would not materially change the role of the wider land parcel. The site is not on the edge of a large built up area. As built development within the scheme would be contained by existing woodland, it would have no effect on the purpose of checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.

Purpose b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.

7.39 The wider assessment parcel does not play a role in preventing large towns merging, though part of it plays a role in the separation of Nutfield and South Nutfield. As the scheme lies north of Nutfield, it would make no difference at all to the separation with South Nutfield, which lies to the south, so would have no effect on this Green Belt purpose.

Purpose c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

7.40 The wider assessment parcel provides a limited role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Within this parcel, the scheme would only involve built development at very specific parcels of land, contained by existing woodland and settlement. The visual effects on the wider area would be very limited, and the existing character of wider countryside beyond the site

boundaries would be minimally affected. Inevitably there would be a degree of encroachment on the land used for the development itself, but the perception of encroachment on any wider area would be negligible.

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

7.41 The wider parcel does not provide this role, and the scheme would therefore have no effect on this purpose.

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

7.42 This purpose is neutral in the consideration of sites, and any green field sites on the existing Green Belt would have the same effect on this.

### **Summary**

7.43 In terms of the effects of the proposals on the purposes of the Green Belt, the scheme would have a no effect on the purposes of checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas, and a very limited role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The scheme would not lead to any merging neighbouring towns, there would be no coalescence between Nutfield and South Nutfield, and the gap between the settlements would not be narrowed. The site does not meet the criterion of preserving the setting and special character of historic towns.

### **Effects of the scheme on the Openness of the Green Belt**

7.44 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) notes that openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects - in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume, and that the duration of the development and its reversibility are factors to consider along with the degree of activity, such as traffic generation.

7.45 In terms of spatial openness, the scheme would involve the change of 58.8ha ha of low grade former landfill/ mineral extraction land to built development and green infrastructure. The developed part of the site would be approximately 7 ha. The proposed housing, in accordance with the development parameters, would be no more than two and a half storey, at and a maximum height of 10.5 m to ridge within a small section of the site. The care village would be set lower than existing ground levels so reaching 13m above the existing ground, as indicated on the parameters plans, limiting the spatial effect on the green belt.

7.46 The assessment of "*Visual Openness*" draws on the landscape and visual appraisal. This has demonstrated the limited extent from which the proposed development would be visible due to the surrounding built form and intervening vegetation. Generally, the are very few locations beyond the immediate context of the site where there would be any notable views of the proposals. The viewpoints used in the appraisal and the visual envelope are shown on Figure 6.

7.47 From the north, views are limited by woodland that surrounds the site. Where there is a small gap in the woodland, a new earth landform would be established and planted to continue containment. With the modified landform of the site, this new landform and slopes would not be out of place and with planting would be rapidly assimilated.

7.48 There would be a very limited effect on visual openness for users of the A25 Nutfield Road to the south. Some additional built development would be apparent for a short distance west of the existing settlement. South of the A25 there would be little perception of the scheme.

7.49 Overall, it is considered for the reasons above that the effects on visual openness arising from the scheme would be very limited. The extensive areas of existing woodland to the north-east and west, and settlement mainly to the south provide visual containment and additional planting within and around the scheme would further reduce any effects on visual openness over time.

## 8.0 OVERALL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### The site and context

8.1 This LVA has assessed landscape character and visual amenity, and the resulting landscape visual effects of the Proposed Development on the receiving landscape and visual receptors. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposed land uses and the parameters that are defined on the application's Parameters Plans, and application material.

8.2 The application site is located to the north side of Nutfield village east of Redhill, Surrey. The site covers an area of 58.8ha land broadly extending north to Nutfield Marsh Road, east to Church Hill and west to Nutfield Cemetery. The site comprises a series of irregular shaped field parcels with areas of woodland, grassland and waterbodies included. The site lies on sloping land that broadly slopes from south to north. The northern section of the site is broadly more visually contained by the existing woodland parcels, whilst the northern section includes more open grassland areas that are more visually prominent within the wider landscape to the north. Parts of the site have previously been utilised for quarrying and includes remnants of this previous activity.

8.3 No statutory national or local landscape designations such as National Park, AONB or AGLV apply to the site itself. The Surrey Hills AONB lies approximately 0.7km to the north of the site. Land to the south of Nutfield and opposite the south-western site parcel beyond Nutfield Road fall within the local AGLV designation.

### The scheme and landscape proposals

8.4 The masterplan proposals illustrated in the Parameters Plans and Green Infrastructure Strategy provide robust landscape mitigation embedded into the Proposed Development.

8.5 The development proposals reflected in the application material have been sensitively designed with consideration given to the baseline information and findings of the LVA. The proposals have been designed to ensure that the development is set within a substantial Green Infrastructure network. A substantial portion of the site is proposed as Green Infrastructure (c.88%). The proposals would include new planting to enhance the existing boundary trees and hedgerows along the southern site boundary, new flower rich grassland replacing existing low-quality grassland, new tree, scrub and woodland planting to help increase biodiversity and provide new ecological connections as well as visual mitigation. The proposals would also include habitat creation included as part of the sustainable drainage strategy. These proposals would combine to create a high-quality development that would be successfully assimilated within its landscape context.

### Landscape effects

8.6 At a national level the site falls within The Wealden Greensands NCA 120. The proposals offer opportunities to contribute to elements of the Statements of Environmental Opportunity set out within the NCA profile, for example, by contributing to the local open access network with new permissive routes through new quality green spaces and by maintaining and introducing new waterbodies within site and managing these for ecological benefits as well as local character distinctiveness.

8.7 The site falls entirely within the UE9: Holmthorpe Pits and Mercer's Park LCA at a local level as set out within the Surrey Landscape Character Assessment. Change of the type proposed within the

northern sections of the site will go largely unnoticed within the context of the LCA. The built form proposed within the site will increase the settlement size of Nutfield which will most be apparent from Nutfield Road when passing the site or from within the site itself. Overall, however the new development will occupy only a small area of land within the LCA UE9 located in the visually contained areas of the LCA - the nature of the surrounding woodland restricts the visual envelope of the site limiting its potential influence on the neighbouring landscape. landscape effects upon the UE9 LCA would be **Moderate to Minor Adverse** upon reducing to **Minor Adverse** after 15 years.

8.8 The majority of the existing site features of landscape value are retained. Areas of woodland require removal to allow for access and engineering, including earthworks, related to development parcels. New woodland planting will be included elsewhere to replace the losses and integrated as part of the scheme's Green Infrastructure (Landscape Strategy) which will include a variety of new planting and landscape features. Adverse landscape effects are largely associated only with the more visually contained southern sections of the site. Operational landscape effects for the site and its immediate context overall are considered to be **Minor Adverse** from completion through to 15 years.

### Visual effects

8.9 Visual receptors for the Proposed Development have been identified to include residents within close proximity to the site, users of the local highway network, users of public rights of way (including within the site itself) and visitors to local historic assets and recreational areas. Visual receptors likely to receive greatest effects are largely limited to those located within the site or located directly adjacent to it where new housing is proposed.

8.10 Visual Effects upon the most sensitive receptors are assessed to be no more than **Major / Moderate** for users of PRoW where routes pass through areas of the proposed housing reducing to **Moderate Adverse** after 15 years. For residents close to the site effects during operation are assessed to be no greater than **Moderate Adverse** at completion and in the long term for a small number of houses backing on to the site off Parkwood Road (9 dwellings). Other nearby residential receptors are assessed to have **Minor Adverse** effects at completion and after 15 years.

8.11 The more visually prominent northern sections of the site are not proposed to include new built form. Proposals within northern sections of the site are for new landscape features including new sustainable drainage features, woodland and scrub planting, flower rich grassland, existing path upgrades and new informal access routes. Effects upon receptors with views of the northern sections of the site are assessed to be no greater than **Minor Adverse**.

### Effects on the Green Belt

8.12 The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. In terms of the effects of the proposals on the purposes of the Green Belt, the scheme would have no effect on the purpose of checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas and a very limited role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The scheme would not lead to any merging of existing towns, there would be no coalescence between Nutfield and South Nutfield, and the gap between the settlements would not be narrowed. The site does not meet the criterion of preserving the setting and special character of historic towns.

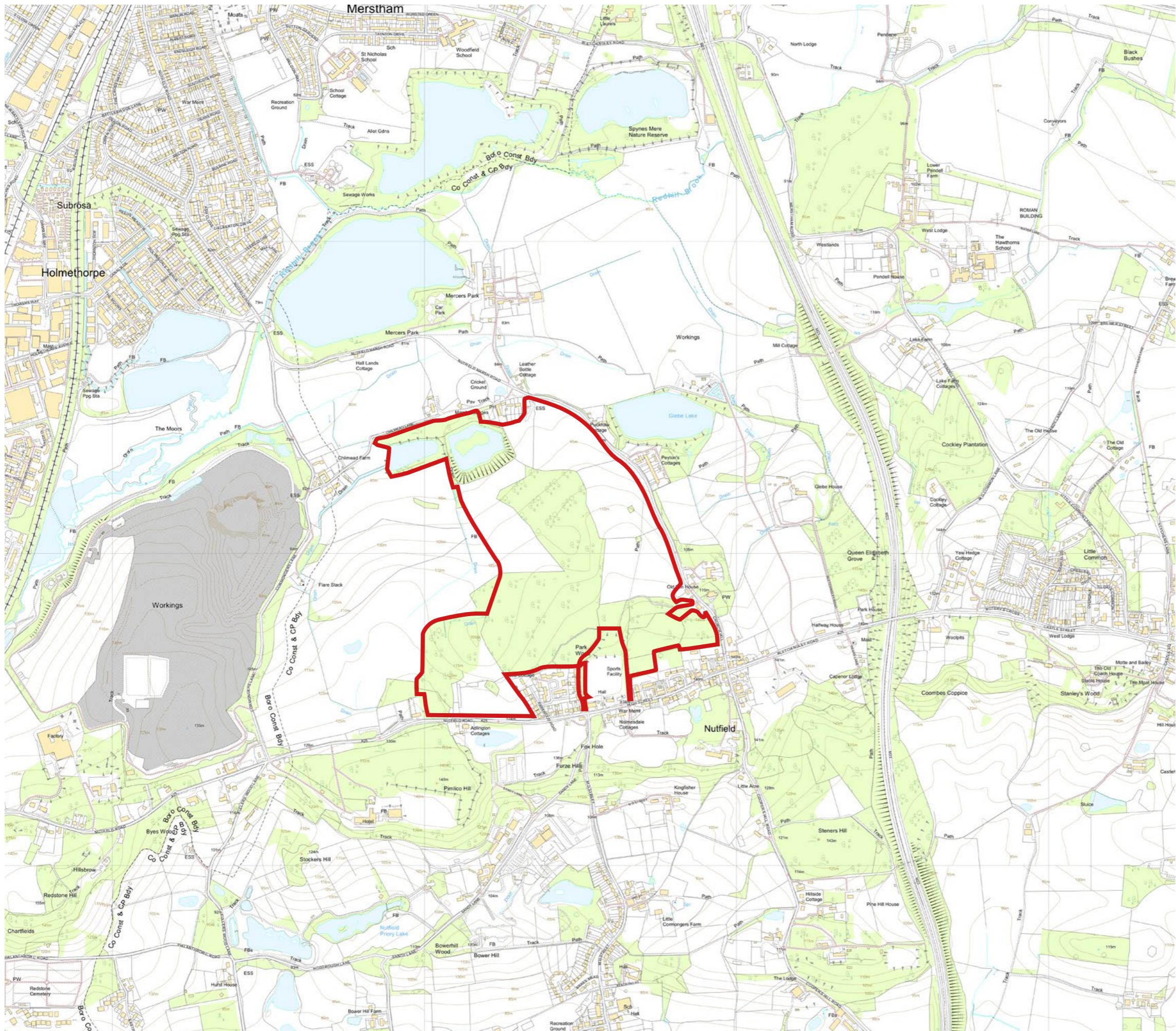
8.13 In terms of spatial openness, the scheme would involve the change of 58.8ha ha of low grade former landfill/ mineral extraction land to development and green infrastructure. The developed

part of the site would be approximately 7 ha. The housing, in accordance with the development parameters, would be no more than two and a half storey, and a maximum height of 10.5 m to ridge within a small section of the site. The care village would be set lower than existing ground levels so reaching 13m above the existing ground, as indicated on the parameters plans, limiting the spatial effect on the green belt.

8.14 The assessment of "Visual Openness" draws on the landscape and visual appraisal. This has demonstrated the limited extent from which the proposed development would be visible due to the surrounding built form and intervening vegetation. Generally, there are very few locations beyond the immediate context of the site where there would be any notable views of the proposals. Overall, this means that the effects on visual openness would be very limited. The extensive areas of existing woodland to the north-east and west, and settlement mainly to the south provide visual containment and additional planting within and around the scheme would further reduce any effects on visual openness over time.

### **Conclusion**

8.15 Overall, the site is considered to have capacity to accommodate a well-designed and considered development as set out within the application proposals. The landscape and visual effects would be very limited and localised, largely as a result of the location of the scheme, contained by the existing landscape framework, and by the mitigation designed into the scheme. The effect on Green Belt openness would be similarly limited, with existing woodland largely containing the built development, meaning there would be a negligible effect on Openness beyond the site itself.



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Site Boundary



client  
Nutfield Park Developments Ltd

project  
Nutfield Green Park  
Tandridge

drawing title  
SITE LOCATION

scale  
1:12,500 @ A3  
drawn /  
drawing / figure number

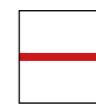
drawn  
CR /  
issue date  
11 August 2023  
rev

**Figure 1**



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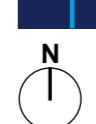


Site Boundary

client  
Nutfield Park Developments Ltd

project  
Nutfield Green Park  
Tandridge

drawing title  
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

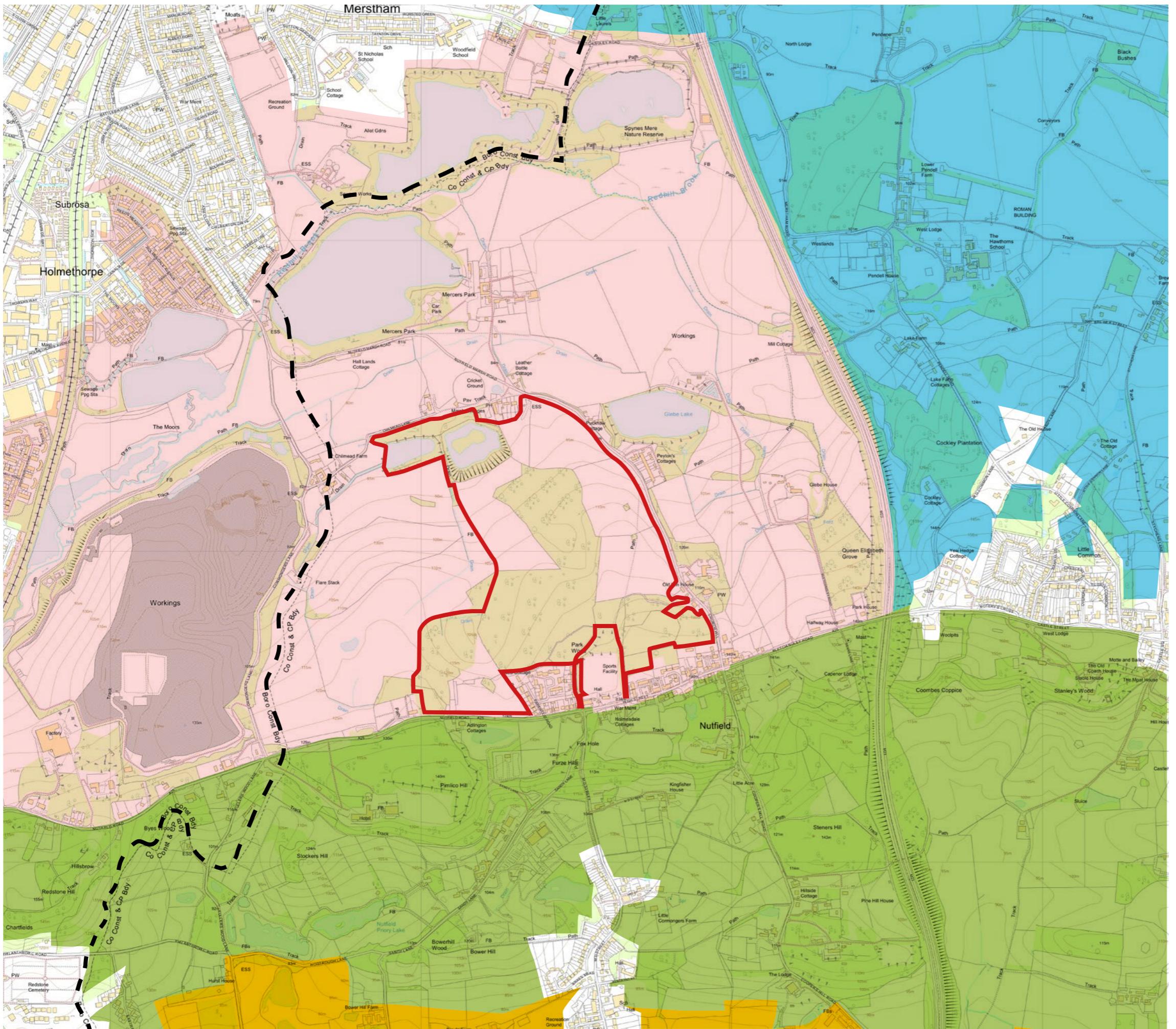


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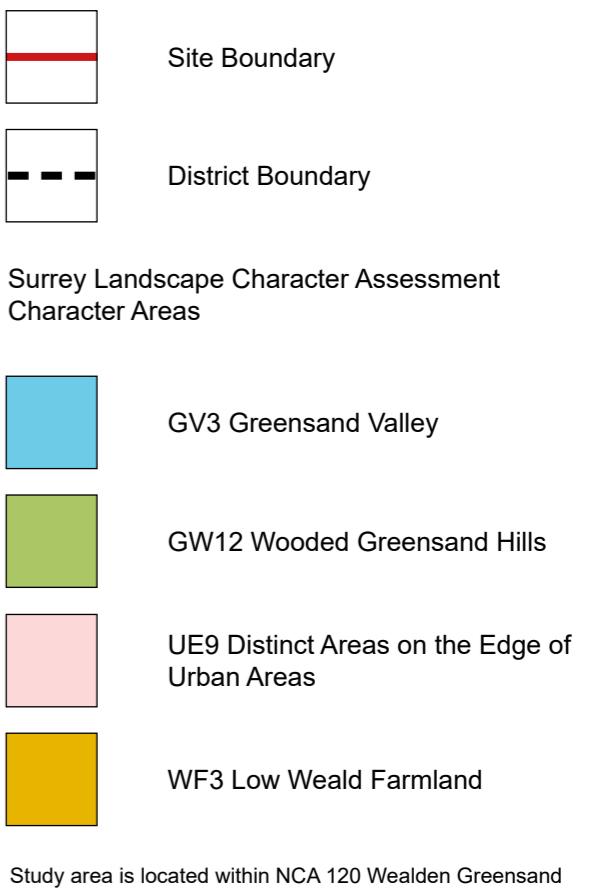
issue date  
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rev

Figure 2



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client  
Nutfield Park Developments Ltd  
project  
Nutfield Green Park  
Tandridge

drawing title  
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA

scale  
1:12,500 @ A3  
drawn /  
drawing / figure number  
issue date  
11 August 2023  
rev



Figure 3



