

Land at Steyning Road, Shoreham-by-Sea
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

For Cobbetts Developments
December 2016



Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Land at Steyning Road, Shoreham

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This assessment identifies the potential landscape and visual effects of proposed residential development of 52 dwellings on land at Steyning Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex ('the Site' – Figure 1). The proposed scheme is to be submitted as an outline planning application with all matters reserved, including final architectural design and landscape, except change of use and site access. Integral to the application will also be the Environment Agency's (EA) proposed new flood defence bund which forms part of their wider Tidal Wall Scheme. The bund would be re-aligned within the site from the current proposal but would maintain the same landscape planting as proposed by the EA.
- 1.2. This assessment considers separately the effects of change that the outline scheme is likely to have on the existing landscape, including its features and character, and on the existing visual amenity that people in and around the Site are likely to experience.
- 1.3. The value and sensitivity attributed to the existing landscape and views within the Site and surrounding area forms the 'baseline' for assessing the relative significance of potential effects of development. To assist in setting the 'benchmark' for these values and sensitivities, reference has been made to relevant landscape-related policy, designations and related planning guidance before assessing the changes that development might bring about.
- 1.4. Consideration is also given to the inherent design measures incorporated within the proposed scheme that reduces potential effects and recommends any other landscape-related mitigation measures that might be incorporated to further minimise the impacts as far as is reasonable and appropriate.
- 1.5. Landscape and visual effects are interrelated to many other environmental effects but assessed separately. There is a particular synergy between landscape and archaeological/cultural heritage and ecology and this assessment should be read in conjunction with any specialist assessments of these.
- 1.6. The assessment was initially prepared for a proposed mixed residential and commercial scheme in September 2014 and updated in July 2015. This version of the assessment has been updated to reflect the residential only scheme and is based on recent site visits in December 2016 to check that any local or area changes, although none were identified, were properly taken into account.
- 1.7. The assessment has been undertaken broadly in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Third Edition 2013) published by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment. The extent of the assessment is considered appropriate to the scale of the proposed development and relies on plain English narrative rather than comparative tables. However the methodology and definition of terms and significance is included in Appendix A for reference.

2. LANDSCAPE RELATED PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1. National: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 2.1.1. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which is defined as having three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. The environmental role is defined as:

'contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimize waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon' (Para 7)

Landscape and visual considerations are a part of this environmental role but should also be balanced with economic and social considerations through the planning process.

- 2.1.2. With regard to landscape-specific issues there is an emphasis on protecting and giving great weight only to conserving landscapes which have the highest status of protection. In this regard the NPPF refers, amongst other designations, to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and that planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. The pertinent landscape consideration is whether there is:

'any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities and the extent to which that could be moderated.'

- 2.1.3. The Site was included within the South Downs AONB until 2010. Following the designation of the South Downs as a National Park it was removed from the AONB. It was redefined in the Draft Adur Local Plan 2012 as 'countryside' and within a 'local green gap' and this is reflected in the emerging Adur Local Plan Policies map 2016 as Countryside Policy 13 and Local Green Gap Policy 14. Although not subject to the planning constraints of an AONB its proximity to the South Downs National Park places the requirement that development does not detract from the quality of outward views from it. This is discussed further below.

- 2.1.4. The NPPF also requires 'good design' for all new development (NPPF Chapter 7) and states that LPAs should set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans to plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of green infrastructure.

- 2.1.5. With particular regard to lighting the NPPF states:

'By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.'

2.2 Regional and Local Policy

- 2.2.1. Adur District Council (ADC) is the local planning authority determining the planning application. West Sussex County Council may provide advice on any potential highway and environmental impacts of planning applications they are determining. It is also worth noting that the Environment Agency, a statutory consultee in the planning process, have an approved Tidal Wall Scheme including a flood defence bund within the site area.

- 2.2.2. The Local Development Framework is currently being prepared. The 'Submission Adur Local Plan 2016' was submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in October 2016 for independent examination. If the Inspector considers the Plan to be sound with no further changes to be made, then the Plan will

be adopted in 2017. The Local Plan, when adopted, will be the 'umbrella' for all subsequent policy and guidance documents to be produced as part of the new Local Development Framework (LDF).

- 2.2.3. The LDF documents including this Local Plan will eventually replace the Adur District Local Plan 1996. Until this happens, much of the Adur District Local Plan is 'saved' and its policies will continue to be used in making planning decisions. Hence relevant policies are provided in the Adur District Local Plan 1996 (saved Policies) and the Revised Draft Adur Local Plan 2013.
- 2.2.4. The following sections review the designations and policies with regard to the assessment of landscape, townscape and visual amenity effects.

Adur District Local Plan 1996 Saved Policies

The Adur District Local Plan 1996 Saved Policies articulates the following broad landscape related principles:

Table 1: Summary and Extracts of Relevant Saved Policies (all edited)

Saved Policy	Requirement
Policy AG1	This policy seeks to guide development to the built up area and to protect the countryside and in particular sensitive areas within the countryside.
Policy AP9	This policy relates to lighting for new developments stating ' <i>a level of lighting which not only provides the minimum for public safety but is also energy efficient and designed to illuminate the ground only</i> ' will be sought.
Policy AC1	Relates to development of the countryside in general. Development will not normally be permitted for:- <i>'(a) development outside the boundary of the built-up area unless it is for quiet recreation or related to the essential needs of agriculture, horticulture or forestry. Any development will need to be of a particularly high standard of design, must be in keeping with the locality and sited so as to minimise noise disturbance and visual intrusion.</i> <i>(b) the extension of isolated groups of buildings or the consolidation of linear or sporadic development.</i> <i>Any development will need to be of a particularly high standard of design, must be in keeping with the locality and sited so as to minimise noise disturbance and visual intrusion.'</i>
Policy AC4	Relates to Strategic Gaps. The policy states: <i>'....development will not normally be permitted. This is in order to prevent coalescence and to retain the separate identities and amenities of the settlements.</i> <i>Where circumstances are regarded to be compelling, planning permission will be subject to control over siting and design so as to minimise any impact on the landscape and subject to access and environmental criteria.</i> <i>Opportunities will be sought to conserve and improve the landscape and amenity of these strategic gaps to enhance their value as open countryside. Extensive development for recreational purposes may be permitted where such development will improve the landscape, will not damage nature conservation interests, will not involve substantial buildings or hard-surfaced areas and will not involve the irreversible development or loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.'</i>

Saved Policy	Requirement
Policy AB11	Relates to listed buildings and the effect of new development on their settings. <i>'The District Planning Authority will require that the design and materials do not adversely affect the setting. New development which would adversely affect the setting of a Listed Building will not be permitted.'</i>
Policy AB16	A specific policy relating to the protection and enhancement of the River Adur for amenity purposes and to resist development that would adversely affect views along and across it between the Surry Hard and the A27. The policy also allows for <i>'opportunities to be taken, when considering development proposals, to improve the river scene'</i> .
Policy AB22	Relates to the development of open spaces within the built-up area and seeks to refuse permission if they are important to the character of the neighbourhood, or for amenity or recreation purposes.
Policy AB27	Relates to new development. It states: <i>'Planning permission for new development which could appropriately accommodate landscaping will only be granted subject to a scheme forming an integral part of the proposal and the scheme being appropriate to the coastal environment of Adur District, including the planting of predominantly native trees.'</i>

2.2.5. Adur District Local Plan Revised Draft 2013.

The Adur District Draft Local Plan 2013 is one of the key informing documents of the Local Development Framework. The relevant policies relating to landscape are provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary and Extracts of Relevant Policies (all edited)

Vision, Objectives Policies	Statement / Requirements
V7	Adur's character and local distinctiveness (urban and rural, coastal and countryside) will be maintained and enhanced through protection of its landscape, townscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity. Important views will have been protected.
07	To protect and improve the setting of the South Downs National Park, the River Adur, coastal waterfront, Local Green Gaps, conservation areas and other cultural and historic assets and where appropriate, access to them. Areas of nature conservation value will be preserved and enhanced. New development will avoid impacts on biodiversity and the natural environment as far as possible, and mitigate and/ or compensate where necessary.
11	Extract relating to the setting of the River Adur: <i>'...The setting of the River Adur will be protected and opportunities taken through new development and other measures to improve public access to and along the River (where consistent with this aim) and open up views to it. New development adjacent to the river must respect its location and character. Sites on the waterfront will provide new and improved access to the water including a new waterside cycle and walkway, and slipways where appropriate, in conjunction with flood defence works where necessary.....'</i>

Vision, Objectives Policies	Statement / Requirements
13	<p>Extract relating to development within the countryside and Local Green Gaps</p> <p><i>'.....Any development in the countryside should not result in a level of activity which has an adverse impact on the character of the area.....'</i></p> <p><i>...Outside of the strategic sites identified in this Local Plan, Local Green Gaps between the settlements of Lancing/ Sompting–Worthing, and Lancing-Shoreham-by-Sea will be protected in order to retain the separate identities and character of these settlements. Within these areas any development permitted must not (individually or cumulatively) lead to the coalescence of settlements.</i></p> <p><i>The landscape character of Adur and other areas of countryside, the coast, river, and settlement pattern will be protected and where possible enhanced. Any development or activities within the countryside must respect and where appropriate reinforce the distinctiveness and sense of place of the above areas, taking into account the various elements which contribute to their distinctiveness such as geology and landform, biodiversity, scenic quality, strategic views, tree cover, settlement patterns, heritage and local vernacular, and land use. The setting of the South Downs National Park must be respected.'</i></p>
14	<p>Relating to the quality of the Built Environment and Public Realm</p> <p><i>'Development should be of a high architectural quality, and respect and enhance the character of the site and its surroundings in terms of proportion, form, context, massing, siting, layout, density, height, size, scale, materials, detailed design features and landscaping. Development should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Enhance the local environment by way of its appearance and character, with particular attention being paid to the architectural form, height, materials, density, scale, orientation, landscaping and layout of the development;</i> ▪ <i>Include a layout and design which take account of the potential users of the site;</i> ▪ <i>Incorporate the principles of securing safety and reducing crime through design in order to create a safe and secure environment;</i> ▪ <i>Make a positive contribution to the sense of place, local character and distinctiveness of an area; and not have an unacceptable impact on adjacent properties, particularly</i> ▪ <i>residential dwellings, including unacceptable loss of privacy, daylight/sunlight, outlook or open amenity space;</i> ▪ <i>Respect the existing natural features of the site, including land form, trees and biodiversity and contribute positively to biodiversity;</i> ▪ <i>Have safe access to the highway network, and not result in harm to highway safety;</i> ▪ <i>Have acceptable parking arrangements (in terms of amount and layout)</i> ▪ <i>Incorporate public art in major developments* where appropriate.</i> <p><i>Opportunities will be taken to improve the public realm through new development, transport schemes or regeneration schemes. These will aim to improve the quality, accessibility and legibility of public streets and spaces.</i></p> <p><i>Best practice guidance published by the Government, the Council and other bodies will be used when assessing applications. Design codes, planning briefs and masterplans will be developed for key sites where appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>Lighting incorporated into developments should provide the minimum for public safety, be energy efficient, designed to illuminate the target only and avoid light pollution'.</i></p>

Vision, Objectives Policies	Statement / Requirements
15 & 16	<p>Relates to conserving the historic environment and character of Adur including the setting of Listed Buildings.</p> <p><i>'The Council will conserve and enhance the historic environment and character of Adur, which includes historic buildings, features, archaeological assets and their settings. Where development affecting any heritage asset is permitted, it must be of a high quality, respecting its context and demonstrating a strong sense of place.'</i></p> <p><i>....Development should not adversely affect the setting of a Listed Building, conservation area or archaeological feature.</i></p>
30	<p>Relates to the protection and enhancement of Green Infrastructure</p> <p><i>'Green infrastructure will be protected and enhanced and access to it improved where necessary and appropriate. When considering green infrastructure provision, the ecological characteristics of the area will be taken into account in order to maximise the biodiversity benefits. Developments will be required to incorporate elements of green infrastructure into their overall design, and/or enhance the quality of existing Green Infrastructure as appropriate'.</i></p>
31	<p>Relates to Biodiversity</p> <p><i>'All development should ensure the protection, conservation, and where possible, enhancement of biodiversity, including nationally and locally designated sites, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs), marine habitats and other Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitat areas, wildlife corridors, and protected and priority species. New development must seek opportunities to protect and, where possible, enhance biodiversity.....'</i></p> <p><i>.....Nationally designated sites: Proposed developments which would adversely affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) (individually or cumulatively) will not normally be permitted.....'.</i></p>
32	<p>Places the requirement on the inclusion of open space for major residential developments.</p> <p><i>'Major development for residential use will be required to provide open space on site in accordance with the Council's adopted standards. The type of open space to be provided will be determined by the scale and type of development and the needs of the area.'</i></p>

2.2.6. Submission Adur Local Plan 2016.

As stated above this Plan is currently being examined and subject to any changes, (due to the representations being considered) will most likely be adopted during 2017. Policies 13 and 14 are particularly relevant to the site and are described below. Listed within the many core documents, forming the background studies of the Local Plan preparation, are the Adur Landscape Study Update (including one specifically for the site titled Adur Landscape Study Update 'Shoreham Gateway'), the Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity (all Sheils Flynn, January 2016) and a Local Green Gap Topic Paper (October 2016).

The Landscape Study Update 2016 updates the 2012 landscape work and was intended to 'test' Policies 13 and 14 of the Proposed Submission Adur Local Plan 2014. It also updates the study with reference to the (then) proposed Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls scheme.

Table 3: Summary and Extracts of Policies 13 & 14 (all edited)

Policy	Requirement
Policy 13	<p>Adur's Countryside and Coast</p> <p><i>Outside of the Built Up Area Boundary, development will only be permitted where essential; it is forflood management, or is otherwise consistent with this Local Plan (or subsequent DPDs).</i></p> <p><i>Any developmentshould not result in a level of activity which has an adverse impact on the character of the area.</i></p> <p><i>The landscape character of Adur and other areas of countryside,, river, and settlement pattern will be protected and where possible enhanced. Any development or activities must respect and where appropriate reinforce the distinctiveness and sense of place.. taking into accountelements which contribute to their distinctiveness such aslandform,..... scenic quality, strategic views,..... settlement patterns, heritage and local vernacular, and land use. The setting of the South Downs National Park must be respected.</i></p>
Policy 14	<p>Local Green Gaps</p> <p><i>Local Green Gaps between the settlements ofLancing Shoreham-by-Sea will be protected in order to retain the separate identities and character of these settlements. Within these areas any development permitted must be consistent with other policies of this plan, and must not (individually or cumulatively) lead to the coalescence of settlements.</i></p>

2.2.7 The landscape sensitivity assessment that was an appendix to a 2012 Landscape and Ecology Study was updated in 2016 for the following stated reasons:

- To rationalise the Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) which were split by the South Downs National Park;
- To extend the relevant LCAs to cover the whole of the River Adur corridor (the 2012 study used the LCAs identified in the Urban Fringe Study which did not cover this area in full);
- To reassess some of the LCAs to take account of the Brighton & Hove Football Academy Training Ground (which had been built since the 2012 Landscape Study);
- To reassess some of the LCAs having greater regard to their function as Local Green Gaps.

2.2.8 As a result of these considerations, the sensitivity scores for some of the LCAs changed including 'LCA 4 Adur Gateway', which includes the site, as follows:

'LCA 4 Adur Gateway (previously titled NE Adur Fringe): The landscape character sensitivity changed from medium-low to medium, the visual sensitivity changed from medium-low to medium-high and the overall landscape sensitivity changed from medium-low to medium-high.

When these changes became known through the Amendments to the Proposed Submission Adur Local Plan (2016), published between 31 March and 11 May 2016, representations were made by Cobbetts Developments, amongst other organisations, highlighting some assumptions that the study had made and potential inconsistencies and inaccuracies. It is understood that responses are currently being considered by Adur Planning officers.

The LCA description and issues of landscape sensitivity are returned to in the following section and discussed further in the assessment of impacts for this current proposed scheme.

3. BASELINE CONDITIONS

3.1. The Site's General Context

Figures 1 and 2

The Site is located on Steyning Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex (National Grid Reference TQ 20642 06229). It lies to the immediate south of the elevated section of the A27 (Shoreham By-Pass); to the immediate east of the River Adur, the Ricardo Technical Centre and Shoreham Airport and to the west, St Nicholas Church (Grade I Listed Building) and a hinterland of residential development. Beyond the A27, the land rises naturally to the South Downs National Park, emphasised by the backdrop of Lancing College. Whilst the site sits in an area defined as 'countryside' and within a Local Green Gap identified in Local Plan Policies map 2016, it is more readily identifiable as urban fringe¹.

3.1.1. The Landscape of the Site – Main Features and Elements

The Site is roughly an elongated triangle in shape extending from a narrow point at its northern end following the curve of the A27 path of the raised A27 gyratory junction on-slip then tapering southwards to the southern boundary omitting the south west corner which contains a pumping station. The Site is 2.48ha in size and is currently used as a paddock and a stabling yard. It is relatively flat and along its eastern boundary partially visually contained by sporadic shrubs bordering the fence line. However over most of its length it is open to direct views from passing traffic on Steyning Road. The road itself is visually contained further to the east by dense deciduous woodland scrub. The exception to this is the southern end of the Site which abuts Old Shoreham Conservation Area and is overlooked by property (Valentine Close). To the west, a tall overgrown hedgerow separates the Site from the Downs Link coastal path and the intertidal mudflats and saltmarsh of the River Adur.

These main landscape/ townscape features and other elements within the site and the surrounding area are described in more detail below. The value associated with these and the amount these are changed or influenced by potential development forms part of the judgement on whether the effects could be considered significant:

3.1.1.1. Topography and Landform

Figure 1

The Site sits within both a tidal and fluvial flood plain on relatively low lying land between approximately 3 and 4m AOD. To the north-east and north-west of the floodplain the land rises to reach local high spots at Mill Hill (100m AOD), Beeding Hill (168m AOD), Coombe Head (100m AOD) and Annington Hill (125mAOD). These form part of a series of undulating hills which collectively form part of the open downland landscape of the South Downs National Park. The nature of the undulating topography provides a backdrop to the low lying River Adur floodplain. The importance of these topographical features is considered further in the impact assessment section. However, there are no topographic or landform features of note on the Site itself which might feasibly be affected by development. Of relevance however will be the proposed flood bund as part of the Environment Agency Tidal Wall Scheme which on both the current approved alignment and proposed alignment as part of this scheme will introduce a largely artificial landform into the flat paddock. There will be some local landform impact from this which is considered as part of the impact on landscape character and setting.

¹ A transition zone between urban and rural land uses

3.1.1.2. *Boundaries, Land-use and Vegetation*

Figure 3

The Site is currently actively used as horse paddock and is divided in two parts; grazing paddock and stabling yard (Buddies Yard). The grazing paddock retains many characteristics of semi improved grassland that has been extensively over grazed (by horses). In some areas the intensive overgrazing has left areas of bare ground. The yard contains storage and equipment associated with horses; a timber stabling block, horse trailers, caravan, vehicles, stacked timber, wood chippings (this covers the yard area) garden furniture and general paraphernalia. A wooden post and rail fence separates the two areas.



View of southern end of the Site

The northern boundary defined by post and rail fence follows the path of the raised A27 gyratory junction on-slip. It is largely devoid of vegetation thus enabling open views above and through to the fields beyond.



View towards the northern end of the Site

The eastern boundary is also defined by an open post and rail fence which in places is overgrown by sporadic shrubs. It is separated from Steyning Road by a 2 -3m wide highway verge and a crash barrier in part. The verge is close mown immediately adjacent to the carriageway but left to grow against the Site's fence giving a sense of partial enclosure. At the junction with the northern boundary a drainage water feature is located and its presence is highlighted by a dense isolated clump of bramble and bulrush. Access in to the Site is provided by a field gate located at the south eastern end of the Site boundary opposite No 2 Valentine Close.

The southern boundary is defined by an overgrown tall hedgerow and hedgerow trees. It abuts an access track leading to a pumping station situated in the south western corner of the Site. The pumping station comprises a single storey brick building with a pitched roof and is visible from Steyning Road.



The Pumping Station

The western boundary abuts a former railway embankment which now accommodates the Downs Link coastal path. The boundary is defined by open wire mesh fencing bordered by a tall hedgerow dominated by bramble and elder. At its intersection with the northern boundary a shallow drainage water feature is evident. This vegetated boundary visually separates the Site from the river landscape.

3.1.1.3. Public Right of Ways and Public Open Space

Figure 3

Steyning Road (A283) is a fairly busy road and provides one of the few main accesses into Shoreham-by-Sea town centre approximately 1.3km to the south. To the north it connects with the A24 at Washington. Over much of its length it is essentially rural in character until it passes the southern limit of the Site where upon it skirts the urban fringe of Old Shoreham becoming more urbanised with a continuous pavement along its eastern side and bounded by the Downs Link coastal path and the river on its western side. Over the section of road that is continuous with the Site there is no pavement, the road being defined instead by highway verge and also to the east by continuous belt of deciduous woodland scrub which partially contains it in views from the adjoining residential development in 'The Paddock' and 'Lesser Foxholes' and vice versa. The post and rail fencing along the Site's eastern boundary enables the traffic to have direct but transient views into the Site.

The northern end of the Site is overshadowed by the elevated A27 Shoreham Bypass which sits above the Site and is back grounded by the rising landscape of the South Downs National Park. At this point the structure forms a gyratory junction allowing access onto and off the bypass via a series of slip roads. It is a very busy highway connecting the coastal towns of Worthing, Shoreham-by-sea and Brighton to each other. In this locality it provides a visually dominant and significant element in the landscape.

There are six PRoWs of note for the Site:

- The Downs Link (Sustrans Regional Cycle Route 79) Coastal Path runs parallel to the western boundary of the Site in a north south direction. It links Shoreham-by-Sea to Guildford effectively connecting the South Downs with the North Downs. The cycle path predominantly follows the trackbed of a former railway and is lined on either side by a tall hedgerow. On the eastern side of the cycle path this vegetation borders the western boundary of the Site and there are limited perceivable views from it into the Site. Running immediately parallel is a footpath which has open views over the river. Occasional gaps in the vegetation between the two enable views across the river. Prominent features in the view include the elevated A27 and the Ricardo technical centre lining the opposite river bank. Also noticeable is the distinctive gothic architectural form of Lancing College Chapel (Grade I Listed Building). It provides a dominant feature and distinctive landmark above the floodplain landscape.



View northwards from the cycle path. The vegetation marking the right hand side of the frame borders the western boundary of the Site

- North of the A27 Footpath 3139/3 follows the northern boundary of the Site through the columns supporting the A27 gyratory junction to follow the river bank. The bend in the river at this point reduces the visibility of the Site.
- Footpath 2049 (viewpoints 3 and 4) lies on the western bank of the River Adur. It follows a broadly north south direction along the river between Upper Beeding and via Footpath 2048, Adur Recreation Ground. In the vicinity of the Site it skirts the Ricardo industrial development and Shoreham Airport on a raised embankment. From this slightly elevated position wide open views across Cecil Pashley Way into the airport are available. Eastwards panoramic views across the river take in the mudflats, the dominant elevated A27 against the South Downs backdrop, the hedgerow bordering the Downs Link Downs Link (Sustrans Regional Cycle Route 79) Coastal Path and beyond, the wooded belt bordering the urban landscape and the distinctive form of St Nicholas Church (Grade I Listed Building) nestling amongst pine trees which collectively act as a local landmark in the view. Northwards as the river bends west, views across the river towards the Site tail off with distance.
- Footpath 2048 (viewpoint 5) is a continuation of Footpath 2049 and continues southwards towards Adur Recreation Ground leading eventually to Shoreham Harbour. Views northward towards the Site are viewed against the Old Shoreham Toll Bridge (Grade II listed) in the foreground.
- Bridleway 2048/1 coincides with Old Shoreham Toll Bridge. Originally built in 1781-2 it is constructed entirely from wood and recently renovated in 2008, it provides a distinctive visual feature within the river corridor affording wide and extensive views northward and southward from it along the river shoreline.
- Footpath 3138 extends from Steyning Road northwards under the A27 gyratory junction towards Mill Hill Nature Reserve. In doing so it leaves the floodplain landscape and rises gradually upwards through a wooded corridor to the wide open space of Mill Hill Nature Reserve. From this position, a panoramic view over the floodplain extending from the urbanised area of Mill Hill to the east across the floodplain towards the airport, the Ricardo development and finally to Lancing College are obtainable. Over the entire view the presence of the A27 cuts the view in two halves forming a linear built moving feature (due to traffic) that draws the eye.

There is no formal public open space in the direct vicinity as shown on ADC's designations planning map. Adur Recreation Ground lies 1km to the south and is screened from view by the railway line, Shoreham Toll bridge and vegetation lining the river edge. Two smaller open spaces lie to the south east of the Site at a distance of 1.2km and 1.4km. They are allotments and are situated adjacent to the cemetery and Swiss Primary School. Beyond these and further to the east Buckingham Park (2.4km) and the playing fields of St Nicholas and St Mary CE Primary School (2.5km) lie. All are enveloped by residential development; views are therefore unlikely towards the Site. Of note however is the public open space of Mill Hill Nature Reserve approximately 0.55km to the north of the Site. From this location similar views as described for Footpath 3135 are also obtainable (viewpoint 9).

3.1.1.4. *Settlement and buildings*

Figure 2

The Site currently sits within an area of land defined by ADC as 'countryside' and also within a local green gap. On the earliest OS maps the Site is shown as marshland. The southern boundary of the Site abuts Old Shoreham Conservation Area. This area constitutes earliest settlement within Shoreham-by-Sea dating back to the pre Roman era². It includes St Nicholas Church, No's 1-4 Steyning Road, Valentine Close and part of Old Shoreham Toll Bridge within the immediate vicinity of the Site. The area also includes the Red Lion Pub (Grade II Listed) and properties either side of The Street. Over the centuries new development was concentrated in New Shoreham (founded by the Normans) at the mouth of the River Adur and over time the two have coalesced to form Shoreham-by-Sea. The town forms part of a wide ribbon of development stretching from Brighton to Worthing. The pattern of settlement began its origins in a grid pattern that has been added to over time on an estate by estate basis. Much of the housing stock with the exception of Old Shoreham Conservation Area contains predominantly inter war housing and 1970's detached houses and 1950's/60's suburban housing dominated by terraced and semi-detached houses. The development is interspersed with pockets of open spaces provided by parks, allotments, cemetery and school playing fields.

Listed Buildings

Old Shoreham Conservation Area contains a number of listed buildings. The most relevant in terms of proximity to the Site are:

- St Nicholas Anglo-Saxon Church Grade I Listed Building located approximately 30m to the south east,
- The Red Lion Pub-Grade II Listed Building located approximately 60m to the south east and,
- Shoreham Toll Bridge Grade II Listed Building located approximately 40m to the south.

Both St Nicholas Church and Shoreham Toll Bridge have the potential to view the Site. The Red Lion Pub does not due to the angle of view which is compromised by the curvature of Steyning Road and the properties fronting it in this locality.



St Nicholas church

In the wider context, the Site is overlooked from Lancing College and in particular the grounds of Lancing College Chapel (Grade 1 Listed Building). There is also potential for the Site to be viewed from the 1930s airport terminal building at Shoreham Airport which is also Grade II* listed and the Grade II hanger beyond. Views from the latter are however of less importance due to the comparable levels of the Site and the airfield.

² Ref: British History on Line <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=18237&strquery=roman+shoreham>



Lancing College

Other Buildings

The following particular developments of note in considering development on the Site:

- Ricardo Technical Centre located directly to the west of the Site on the opposite bank of the River Adur at a distance of 0.25k. The Centre comprises a number of industrial 'shed' like buildings.



Ricardo Technical Centre

- 1 and 3 Steyning Road located directly south of the Site within the Conservation Area. These comprise two storey detached houses slightly set back from the main road. Their main orientation is facing the road. No 3 has a window on its gable end facing towards the Site. No 4 Steyning Road has no views of the Site and is not included further in this assessment.
- 2 and 4 Steyning Road: attractive pair of semi-detached houses with knapped flint facades and walling situated on the eastern edge of Steyning Road within the Conservation Area. These properties face on to Steyning Road diagonally opposite No 1 Steyning Road. Views from their front elevation towards the Site are consequently oblique. No 4 Steyning Road does have views towards the Site from its northern gable end.
- 1, 2 and 3, Valentine Close is situated directly opposite the southern end of the Site. This development appears to be relatively new and comprises a terraced two storey development with attic windows set back from the road in a slightly elevated position within the shadow of St Nicholas Church. It sits within the Conservation Area surrounded by lawn and bounded by white picket fencing.

3.1.1.5. *Lighting*

There are lighting columns around the A27 at-grade roundabout which extend under the elevated section on the Steyning Road approach into Shoreham. From the elevated section along the length of Steyning Road adjoining the Sites eastern boundary there are none, the first re-appearing again opposite and at the entrance to Valentine Close where the road speed reduces to 30mph. Thereafter they become more frequent as the road progresses towards Shoreham town centre. Directly across the river from the Site the Ricardo Technical Centre is lit by three lamps along the river frontage and also by further internal security floodlighting. This provides a stark contrast to the relative low lighting levels to the east of the site arising from housing in the vicinity.

3.1.2. **Defining the Landscape's Character, Value and Sensitivity**

Designations

Figure 2

The South Downs National Park is a high level landscape quality designation that washes over the whole area to the north of the A27. Further indicators of value and sensitivity are the SSSI status awarded to the River Adur and designation of Mill Hill as a local Nature Reserve; the designation of the land (including the Site) as a Local Green Gap and the proximity of Listed Buildings point to the value of the area as a whole.

3.1.3. **Existing Landscape Character Assessments**

Existing Landscape Character Assessments provide a definition of character and from which judgements of 'value' and 'sensitivity' can be derived. Information relating to Landscape character has been obtained from:

- A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape (2005)
- South Downs Integrated Landscape Assessment (2006)
- Adur District Council Landscape Character Assessment (Tibbalds 2009)
- Landscape and ecological Surveys of Key Sites within Adur District, (Shiels Flynn 2012 and updates 2016)
- Urban Fringe Study for Adur District (Baker Associates and Enderby Associates 2006).

There is a hierarchy of national, regional and local landscape character assessments (LCAs) that lay the basis for understanding and appreciating the components of any landscape to assist in decision making.

3.1.3.1. *National*

At national level the site falls within Natural England's National Character Area 126: 'South Coast Plain' defined as 'a narrow strip running along the Hampshire and Sussex coast from the edge of Southampton in the west to Brighton and Hove in the east. It is a 'high level' analysis of the landscape, noting broad key characteristics, such as 'the area has significant urban development, with settlements along the coastline'. It forms the framework however for the more local character assessments which tend to be more useful for specific site assessments.

Although not within the South Downs National Park the Site lies adjacent to it and is separated from it by the A27. The relevant characteristics and qualities of the South Downs National Park which contribute to the natural beauty of the area are relevant because the Site has the potential to affect views from land within the designation. Key characteristics especially relevant to the Site are therefore:

- Variety and contrast: Perception of remoteness in close proximity to urban areas, openness and enclosure

- Special perceptual qualities: strong sense of space, remoteness and quietness
- Views: expansive with big open skies, strong skylines and sense of elevation with views down to and across the surrounding landscape and seascape.

3.1.3.2 County

The West Sussex landscape Character Assessment also locates the Site within the South Coast Plain and in further detail, within a character area defined as SC13 'Worthing and Adur Fringes'. This also describes key characteristics of the area and those pertinent to the Site and its environs are:

- Low lying flat open landscape
- Dominant urban fringe with major conurbations. Settlement edges often sharply contrast with adjacent open countryside.
- Frequent urban fringe influences of horse paddocks, light industry, airport, and recreational open space.
- Long views to the Downs.
- Busy minor and major roads.
- Industry in the countryside.
- South Coast railway line links the areas.

The assessment highlights the key landscape and visual sensitivities of the area to be:

- Urban development pressures, especially in the gaps between settlements.
- Closing of open views between settlements.
- Industrialisation of agricultural areas due to changes in farm practices.
- Major existing road improvements and the possibility of new ones.

These characteristics are re-evaluated further in '*Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape* (November 2005). This document takes on board the key characteristics and provides a strategy for their future including conservation and enhancement measures. With regard to urban fringes the document states: '*The urban fringe combines a distinctive landscape character (including a combination of open spaces, woodlands, and hedgerows) with well-managed land uses which benefit residents and visitors in town and country alike*'. It also pays due attention to the South Downs National Park by stating:

'The setting of the South Downs and the long views from the downland edge northwards continue to remain unaffected by landscape loss and visible major new development. Where down meets town to the south, the setting of the South Downs remains unaffected by new development, and the character of the landscape fringing the coastal towns is strengthened by screening woodland, scrub and tree cover.'

Recommendations for landscape management within SC13 'Worthing and Adur Fringes' are also provided and are mainly aimed at maintaining and strengthening the landscape framework, filtering and unifying views of the urban edge through appropriate planting and long term management.

The South Downs Integrated Landscape Report 2005 (updated 2011) provides further character assessment of the Adur Floodplain. The purpose of the report is to provide a comprehensive and integrated assessment of the

landscape within the national park and the areas that abut it. In this respect those pertinent to the landscape and visual context of the Site and its environs are described as follows:

- *'Flat valley floor of the deep U-shaped Adur Valley between Bramber (a former port) and Old Shoreham.*
- *A landscape of apparent large and expansive scale..., consistent pasture land cover, lack of vertical elements and far-reaching views across the open floodplain. Views are contained by the valley sides.*
- *Contains the meandering course of the tidal River Adur which flows between artificial flood banks. Public rights of way provide access along the tops of the floodbanks.*
- *The absence of woodland and generally low incidence of trees results in a large scale, open landscape with extensive views across the floodplain.*
- *Tranquillity affected by proximity of built development on the valley sides, the A283 and A27.*
- *Views to the landmarks of Bramber Castle and Lancing College on the adjacent valley sides – Lancing College is a particularly distinctive building at the 'entrance' to the Adur valley.'*

The report identifies key changes to the Adur Floodplain as the creation of the 'Downs Link' along the dismantled railway line, the introduction of transmission lines into the floodplain and the building of the A27 and its elevated junction with the A283. Relevant to the landscape and visual context of the Site, the Management Plan allied to this assessment recommends:

- Conserve, and expand the traditional landscape of grassland meadows and wet woodland on the floodplain.
- Ensure that solutions to flood management are sustainable.... and compatible with the character of the floodplain.
- Conserve views of the landmarks ofLancing College.

3.1.3.4 Local

Adur District Council Landscape Character Assessment 2009

The ADC Landscape Character Assessment 2009, places the Site within *'The Lancing-Shoreham Gap'* It provides detailed information on the environs of the Site and in particular its landscape setting and of all the LCAs is probably the most helpful in defining key characteristics. The landscape characteristics of the Lancing –Shoreham Gap are described as:

'An area between Shoreham-by-Sea and Lancing. To the north it is bounded by the A27 and to the south by the A259. It is dissected by the railway line. Half of the area is occupied by Shoreham Airport and associated commercial uses. The open space is separated from the sea by an area of housing either side of the A259 and the Widewater Lagoon. As the land is generally flat and low lying, large areas are prone to flooding with meandering rifes and straight drainage ditches'.

The assessment picks up on the historical significance of Lancing College; the Airport and Old Shoreham Bridge and identifies the views from the urban fringes and the River Adur but picks out the most important to be those from Lancing College, Old Shoreham Bridge and the cycle path along the Adur.

The report identifies key issues within the area to be:

- retaining the sense of openness and landscape setting for example by considering views from the South Downs as well as views from within the gap;
- ensuring that where necessary, development is sensitive to its surrounding, that it is of high quality and respects existing views;
- improving the urban edges and relationship between built form and open areas;
- improving connection between the South Downs and seafront in terms of linked pedestrian/cycle routes and ensure river access;
- improve public access to open areas for recreational use and,
- improve landscape quality.

Landscape Character Assessment with a view for identifying land for housing.

Other references to the landscape character and quality are contained in the *Urban Fringe Study for Adur District* (Baker Associates and Enderby Associates 2006) and the *Landscape and Ecological Surveys of Key Sites within Adur District* report (Shiels Flynn 2012 and updates 2106). These documents draw upon the landscape character assessments provided above and in addition provide a review of land suitable within the district for new housing development up to a planned period of 2026. The Study reviewed land within and outside the Strategic Gap³ (Local Green Gap) on the premise that it was feasible that land within the designation could be developed without compromising the principles behind it.

Urban Fringe Study

This study reviewed the Site describing it in the context of the Lancing -Shoreham Gap and in acknowledgement of the relationship between the Site and land within the Strategic Gap which was described as 'tenuous' as being:

'poorly defined, although it does contribute to views across the river and airport when travelling on the A27. Small fields subdivided and grazed intensely by horses. The site is dominated by the A27 junction, structures and the noise of traffic. The site is separated from the river by flood defence embankment. The industrial buildings on the west bank are visually intrusive. Partially separated from the urban edge to east by scrub on low valley side and from land to the north by the raised junction associated with the A27'.

It reports that in terms of supporting development the Site would be suitable on the basis of low environmental impact, low effect on agricultural quality, a moderate effect on flooding and no effect on archaeology. It ruled out the potential for residential uses based on noise from the A27 which it is understood was unsubstantiated. It did however; state that the **Site was suitable for development** stating that a high quality employment use would be appropriate as a gateway development to Shoreham in this locality.

Landscape and Ecological Surveys of Key Sites within Adur District 2012

The 2012 Shiels Flynn report similarly draws on the evidence from the published landscape character assessments and also in a similar manner to the Urban Fringe Study reports on the viability of the Site in landscape terms to support development. It picks up also on the Strategic Gap identifying the Site within a character area defined as LC4 NE Adur Fringe and in keeping with the other assessments, picks up on the proximity and setting of the South Downs National Park, the dominance of the A27 and the proximity to St Nicholas (Grade 1 Listed Building) Church. This report concludes:

³ Lancing – Shoreham Gap was previously defined as a Strategic Gap in the Adur District Local Plan 1996 but in the revised Draft Plan 2013 is now referred to as a Local Green Gap.

*'This LCA is a small, narrow part of the Lancing Gap and seems disconnected from it. It is important as part of the gateway sequence of views and spaces on the northern edge of Shoreham, **but makes little contribution to the Lancing gap as a whole.***

The area particularly the southern part close to the church) makes an important contribution to the landscape setting of St Nicholas, Shoreham, a Grade I listed building and of the Shoreham Toll bridge, a Grade II listed building, particularly in views from the elevated A27 to the north.'*

The 2012 report concluded by assessing the overall landscape sensitivity of the Site as **medium-low**⁴.

The Adur Local Plan Assessment of landscape sensitivity – Adur Local Plan area report (2016)

The 2016 updates led to a re-visiting of these conclusions as part of a series of background studies supporting decisions on spatial development strategy for the Adur Local Plan. As described in 2.2.8 above the update re-visiting and raised the landscape character sensitivity and visual sensitivity assessments and concluded the overall landscape sensitivity of the Site be raised to **medium-high**⁵.

Cobbetts Developments Ltd representation to Adur & Worthing Councils

Whilst there clearly are key landscape and visual issues to consider in and around the Adur valley this recent change in rating does appear to be out-of-kilter with the previous studies. As a result ECE Planning on behalf of Cobbetts Developments Ltd submitted a representation to Adur & Worthing Councils on 11th May 2016. This points out that the two studies were produced by the same consultant using the same methodology such that only two changes could have resulted in the escalation: firstly, the enlargement of the site to include the river Adur Estuary and the Ricardo Employment Site and secondly the perceived impact that the Adur Tidal Walls riverside defence may have.

It is evident that there has been no change in the landscape makeup of the Site since the two studies were carried out which the 2012 study noted was of:

...poor condition, with a mix of temporary fencing, horse stables, water troughs etc.

The Adur Tidal Walls Scheme will have some impact on the site and the representation made asserts that the provision of a large, engineered and clearly man made flood defence structure will have an urbanising impact on the character, diminishing the importance and sensitivity of the landscape. The change in status appears therefore to result from the subsequent inclusion of the river Adur Estuary / Ricardo site within the character area which is considered to misconstrue the landscape value of the site by including other landscape areas such as the estuary itself (even though its presence would have formed part of the 2012 assessment). As such, the Landscape Character Sensitivity of the Site is considered to be of **medium – low** sensitivity as originally set out in the 2012 report.

⁴ **Moderate Sensitivity** - Landscape/townscape or features of moderate strength of character/visual interest, and moderate condition/quality. Considered to be reasonably tolerant to some change.

Low Sensitivity - Landscape/townscape or features in generally poor condition/quality, often including visual detractors such as power lines, industrial or derelict land or inappropriate built forms with low aesthetic value, visual interest or sense of cohesion, and low value and considered potentially tolerant of substantial change.

⁵ **High-Moderate Sensitivity** - Landscape/townscape or features of distinctive character, in good condition/high-moderate quality. May be of importance at a local level and susceptible to change.

In relation to the increased visual sensitivity rating, the only other change that could have been associated with the site is the approved Adur Tidal Walls scheme and the perceived increased opportunity for viewing the site at close range from the Downs link public right of way. Following discussions with the Environment Agency, Cobbetts Developments Ltd understand that contrary to the 2016 update report, scrubland on the river banks will be replaced as shown by the areas of planting for reach E3 in the Adur Tidal Walls planning application. Concluding reasonably that visibility in terms of longer distance views from the riverside level and from some more elevated positions from the west and from the north will be reduced.

With regard to the closer, Downs Link public right of way the Landscape Study 2016 update states:

The Adur Tidal Walls Scheme will change the relationship of this landscape character area to the River Adur because the tall hedgerow/scrub vegetation along the riverside path is likely to be removed to construct a higher flood embankment. The riverside path (the Downs Link) will run along the crest of the bund. As a result, the fields alongside the path are likely to become more visible and their role as part of the wider landscape setting of the River Adur will be enhanced. As the only undeveloped part of the Adur floodplain within the Lancing- Shoreham Gap, this is a highly sensitive riverside meadow landscape, which is vulnerable to change.

The representation acknowledges that the view will be elevated but that the negative impact of a raised defence bund and the planting proposed on the easternmost side of the defence will still reduce and filter views towards the site. This specific potential impact is discussed further in Section 5.0 of this assessment.

It concludes that the change in the overall status from medium – low to medium -high cannot be justified for the Site.

3.1.4. **Summary of Landscape Character and Sensitivity to Change**

In summary the wider landscape around the Site is highly valued and this is reinforced through the South Downs National Park designation; the historic value of the area and the ecological and visual sensitivity of the River Adur. Also the protection of the area as a Local Green Gap preventing the coalescent of development such that the default starting position is that all areas should be considered sensitive to development.

The LCAs particularly focus on the issue of the Strategic (now Local Green) Gap and its defining features that need to be conserved in order to maintain its good condition and avoid undue change to its character. These features are considered to be the lack of development, the sense of openness which enables the local landmarks of Lancing College, St Nicholas Church and the airfield to provide dominant visual landmarks and the river corridor.

The tranquillity of this landscape however is self-evidentially offset by the presence of the elevated A27, its slip-roads, roundabout and columns, the A283, the operational airport, the Ricardo Technical Centre and the poor quality of the paddock associated buildings which dominate local views in the vicinity of the Site. In the immediate surrounds to the Site the components that are considered to be of most determining value to the landscape are the characteristics of:

- The rolling downland to the north
- The River Adur corridor
- The proximity to the Conservation Area and listed buildings (St Nicholas Church and Old Shoreham Bridge)
- The visual landmarks (Lancing College and St Nicholas Church)
- The proximity to Shoreham Airport
- The proximity to the urban areas of Shoreham

With regards to the Site itself, it lies to the immediate east of the River Adur in the shadow of the A27 elevated gyratory junction and the hills of the South Downs. **As confirmed by the Urban Fringe Study findings and by the 2012 Shiels Flynn assessment it offers little contribution to the wider landscape character of the Local Green Gap.**

The most visually sensitive boundaries are considered to be to the north and west due to the more open nature of the landscape to the north and the sensitive ecology and setting of the river. The vegetation bordering the western boundary is also considered desirable to maintain for its own sake because it provides some contribution to the wider landscape. The eastern and southern boundaries are less so. The eastern boundary fronts the busy A283 presenting a partially open aspect to it which becomes more sensitive at its southern end due to the proximity of Old Shoreham Conservation Area and the visually distinctive St Nicholas Church. The southern boundary although bordering the Conservation Area is considered the least sensitive to change being buffered by scrub. The core of the Site is considered to be the least sensitive.

The landscape of the Site is considered to be consistent with the LCAs, and the Urban Fringe Study and the 2012 Shiels Flynn assessment. Maintaining consistency as well with the previous version of this LVIA in July 15, the site is judged as having a **moderate to low sensitivity** to change and a capacity for development. There clearly is the potential for residential development on a moderate scale which can 'fit-in' with its surroundings, be submissive in its association with the river Adur, maintain key views such as of St Nicholas Church and from the South Downs and have minimal impacts on existing residents and users of PROWs.

Following the summary of the studies above, and informed by the site visit and professional judgement, the following local level character areas have been identified for the purposes of establishing a basis for assessment of landscape impacts for the Scheme. Their key characteristic features and their judged local value and sensitivity are described below:

Character Area A - The Site

The site is located on the eastern edge of the river Adur in the shadow of the South Downs National Park and the A27 elevated gyratory junction. It is lower than the adjoining western boundary of the Downs Link Coastal Path and is currently screened by vegetation which combines to act as a natural buffer to the Downs Link and river and visually contains the Site in views from the wider valley floodplain to the west. The eastern and northern boundaries are more exposed but are ultimately contained by rising ground towards the South Downs National Park, Steyning Road and Mill Hill urban areas. The Site is therefore considered more sensitive on the northern and western boundaries and to a lesser extent, the eastern edges.

Overall the Site landscape's sensitivity to change is considered to be **low** due to its containment and existing use as an overgrazed pasture and a stabling yard but its edges particularly, southern and western are considered to be **moderate** due their proximity to sensitive elements within the landscape i.e. the river, exposure to views from the South Downs National Park and proximity to Old Shoreham Conservation Area, St Nicholas Church and residential property in its environs notably Valentine Close.

Character Area B - Steyning Road.

The main road is busy but with a semi-rural character. Immediately south of the Site it takes on an urban character being openly flanked along its eastern boundary by fairly ordinary terraced residential development and along its western edge by a continuous wall overgrown in part that provides some visual screening in part to the River Adur

and the Airport further to the west. The road is also dominated by lighting columns, telegraph posts and overhead wires.

Overall the road's landscape's sensitivity to change within Character Area B is considered to be **moderate** due to the open aspect of the Site fronting the road and also the quality of the environment it passes through briefly namely Old Shoreham Conservation Area.

Character Area C – Old Shoreham Conservation Area and Mill Hill Suburbia

East of Steyning Road the landscape transforms in to a blend of suburbia, a combination of large 1970's detached properties set within wide roads, 1950s/60's semi-detached and terraced housing set in treed lined roads and within a mature landscape framework. On the edge of this and adjoining the southern boundary of the Site is Old Shoreham Conservation Area. Most of the buildings within the Conservation Area are distinct dating back from the 16th century and in the locality of the Site includes St Nicholas Church, No's 1 -4 Steyning Road, Valentine Close and part of Old Shoreham Bridge.

Overall the sensitivity to change of this part of Old Shoreham Conservation Area in close proximity to the Site is considered to be **high**. The remainder less so as it is set back further in to the urban environment of Mill Hill and screened from view by the properties described above and by the curvature of Steyning Road southwards. The sensitivity to change for these set back areas is considered to be **low**.

Character Area D – The River Adur

The inter-tidal mudflats and salt marsh of the Adur Estuary are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Flanked on either side in the locality of the Site by development it provides a physical rural gap between the urban townscape of Old Shoreham and the wide open landscape of the Airport. The Ricardo Technical Centre visually dominates the river corridor at this point. Access to the river edge is provided by continuous footpaths and the Downs Link Coastal Path which runs parallel to the Site along its length. Longer distance views to the north and south are available from Old Shoreham Bridge. In terms of landscape character it is of high value and therefore its sensitivity to change is considered equally **high**.

Character Area E – Shoreham Airport

The airfield forms an open and active landscape comprising mown grass, runways, taxiways and apron areas with regular aircraft movements. Built development along the southern boundary of the airport comprises a mix of hangars, workshops and offices that provide accommodation for a range of businesses, both airport and non-airport related. Many of the buildings have an industrial appearance that reflects their aviation related function. The distinctive listed Terminal Building is located at the centre of this built up area. The airport is of local historic value being established in 1911 and played its part in both the First and Second World Wars. Due to its listed period buildings and facilities, Shoreham Airport has been used by film-makers seeking to portray a small town airport, and has appeared in period dramas such as Agatha Christie's Poirot. It is currently used by private light aircraft, flying schools, and for pleasure flights and light aircraft and helicopter maintenance.

The open part of the airport, along with Monks Farm to the west is evidentially the main contributor to the Local Green Gap and the prevention of coalescence between Shoreham and Lancing. It is worth noting that emerging Adur policy directs areas of development to the currently open area of the airport in the north-east part of the airfield and

adjoining areas at Monks Farm and at Ricardo Technical Centre. Overall the sensitivity to change is considered to be **low-moderate**.

Character Area F - Ricardo Technical Centre

To the north of the airport, the Ricardo Technical Centre is located between the A27 and the river directly opposite the Site. The Centre comprises a number of buildings including a range of units similar in form to the industrial hangar buildings within the airport. Ricardo Technical Centre is the head office and largest of Ricardo's international network of technical facilities and it is also the longest established, having been opened in 1919. Its complex of buildings provides research facilities into the design, development and research of internal combustion engines and systems including gasoline, diesel and gaseous fuelled engines of all sizes. The large industrial sheds within the complex are out of scale with surrounding land uses and although purposefully designed to reflect the form of the hangers within the airport dwarf them by comparison. In elevated views from the South Downs National Park and from Lancing College the centre acts as a focal point within the wide open landscape detracting from the rural character of the river corridor. It is insular in nature with no outward views towards the Site.

The landscape sensitivity of this development is considered to be **low**.

Character Area G – The A27

The A27 effectively cuts the landscape in two separating the Adur floodplain from the rolling downland of the South Downs National Park. In the locality of the Site the footprint of the gyratory junction is large, occupying an expansive area which is disproportionate to the tight urban fabric close by. It also detracts from the quality of the Conservation Area and provides a dominant element rising above the landscape featuring in all views from the floodplain towards the National Park and vice versa. Its sensitivity to change is considered to be **low**.

Character Area H – South Downs National Park

The land to the north of the A27 rises upwards and transforms from the low lying floodplain into a mosaic of green rolling pastures, open spaces, ancient woodlands and river valleys. To the north of the Site from the higher ground of Mill Hill Nature Reserve open uninterrupted views southwards across the floodplain towards the Sea are obtainable but marred by the presence of the A27. Further westwards Lancing College provides a dominant visual landmark emphasising further the quality of this landscape. Its sensitivity to change is therefore correspondingly **high**.

3.2. Baseline Conditions: Visual

3.2.1. The Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI)

Figure 4

The approximate extent of the predicted ZVI is shown on Figure 4. The topography contributes to the overall landscape character of the area and the visibility of any proposed development. It is a combination of natural topography combined with the screening effects of vegetation and buildings which define the edges of the ZVI.

The Site is broadly contained within the landscape by a combination of factors: its comparable level with the flat landscape of the river floodplain including Shoreham Airport airfield, existing vegetation and buildings within the Ricardo Technical Centre to the west; to the east by the rising landform and development within Old Shoreham and

to the north the elevated A27 backgrounded by the rolling hills of the South Downs National Park. Views are primarily therefore from the river corridor; close to the Site and from higher ground within the National Park.

The extreme south eastern corner of the Site is highly visible to properties in its immediate vicinity. These include Valentines Court, St Nicholas Church at the edge of Old Shoreham Conservation Area and to a lesser degree from No 3, Steyning Road. This property is not so sensitive due to its orientation. It faces on to Steyning Road with the gable end of the property facing towards the Site. To the wider south, the curvature of Steyning Road, vegetation lining it and development within Old Shoreham mask views towards the Site.

To the immediate east the Site is partially screened by woodland scrub bordering the backs of properties within The Paddock and lesser Foxholes. Further to the north east, theoretical views are possible from properties on the western side of Mill Hill Road and also from the adjoining paddocks. Views will also be obtainable from the footpath and properties immediately to the north of Mill Hill Bridge.

To the north and north-west the theoretical extent of the ZVI is the greatest. This is due to the rising landform and the openness of the landscape. Areas where distance views are obtainable are from parts of Lancing College grounds and from Mill Hill Nature Reserve. Longer theoretical views may be available but with distance the impact of the view diminishes as the Site blends with other elements within the landscape.

Whilst there may be some views from certain locations beyond these areas the influence of any proposed residential development on the Site is considered to be negligible due to distance, or the effects of intervening buildings, landform and vegetation. It should be emphasized within the ZVI itself there are many localised screening effects from local landform, existing hedgerows and other buildings which will create 'blind spots' within this zone.

3.2.2. Visual Receptors and their Sensitivity

The most sensitive receptors are considered to be those most likely to benefit from and appreciate the landscape or townscape quality, setting and views available through each of the character areas identified above. The most sensitive receptors are usually considered to be residents followed by users of community facilities and recreational users of PROWs (walkers, cyclists, horse riders etc) and of other accessible public open spaces. The least sensitive receptors are usually considered to be users of public transport, motorists and employees at work engaged in activities other than those to do with enjoying the view. In order of sensitivity the following potential receptors have been identified and either included for assessment or 'scoped out' due to very minor or negligible potential views of any proposed development:

3.2.2.1. Residents

Sensitivity Assessment of Residents within the ZVI:

High Potential Sensitivity due mainly proximity and/or openness of view. All will be susceptible to the proposed construction, clearance of vegetation and the proximity of any proposed housing in the development:

- **Valentines Court:** situated opposite the south eastern corner of the Site and within Old Shoreham Conservation area, these properties currently look directly in to the stabling yard in the southern part of the Site (Viewpoint 2).

Moderate Potential Sensitivity due to proximity and context of view, direct open oblique views, filtered views through vegetation and primarily from first floor windows:

- **No 4 Steyning Road**, part of a semi-detached pair of houses within Shoreham Conservation Area: No's 2 and 4 Steyning Road are located diagonally south of the Site on the opposite side of Steyning Road. They front the road but have oblique views towards the Site. No 4 however has additional open and direct views towards the site from side windows from both ground and first floor.
- **Properties within the Paddock and lesser Foxholes**: These properties are largely screened from the site by woodland scrub lining the eastern edge of Steyning Road. The scrub is fairly dense but there are gaps in coverage where some properties, and primarily upper floors only, are visible from the Site. It is therefore reasonable to assume that these properties can reciprocally view into the Site from certain windows.

Low Potential Sensitivity due to further distance away, current context of view or largely screened view:

- **No 3 Steyning Road**, located within Old Shoreham Conservation Area: This detached property is set back from the Southern boundary of the Site and largely screened by intervening scrub. The property faces on to Steyning Road but it has an upper window on its gable end which overlooks the Site.
- **Properties situated on the western side of Mill Hill Road**: These are situated on the western side of Mill Hill Road south of the bridge over the A27. Overlooking the foreground, some will enjoy panoramic views over the Site towards the river, the A27 (including part of elevated gyratory) Ricardo Technical Centre and Shoreham Airport. Also visible in the longer distance is the urban expanse of Lancing. For some properties further south down the hill views of Lancing College are also visible but always within the context of the A27.

Other houses in the vicinity of the Site including those within Old Shoreham Conservation Area and Mill Hill are essentially 'scoped out' as they are either set behind screening vegetation and/or set back from the road such that the Site has no visual bearing on their outlook.

3.2.2.2. *Users of PRoWs and Open Space*

Sensitivity Assessment of Users of PRoWs spaces within the ZVI.

High Potential Sensitivity due to proximity and openness of view:

- **Footpath 2049** lies on the western bank of the River Adur and skirts Ricardo Technical Centre and Shoreham Airport on a raised embankment. From this slightly elevated position, wide open views across the river take in the mudflats, the dominant elevated A27 against the South Downs backdrop and the tall hedgerows bordering the Downs Link. The view also takes in the wooded belt bordering the urban landscape beyond the Site; St Nicholas Church and Old Shoreham Bridge. This is a particularly sensitive view as development has the potential to compromise the setting of the Church and the bridge and other buildings within the Old Shoreham Conservation Area in this locality.
- **The Downs Link** (Sustrans Regional Cycle Route 79) Coastal Path runs parallel to the western boundary of the Site in a north south direction following the trackbed of a former railway. Occasional views in to the Site are available where the hedgerow is thin or gapped.
- **Bridleway 2048/1** crosses the Old Shoreham Toll Bridge and affords panoramic views stretching from The Ricardo Technical Centre across the river including the A27 bridge (with moving traffic visible); the elevated A27 gyratory junction and the tall hedgerows defining the edge of the Downs Link. All viewed against the back drop of the hills of the South Downs National Park.
- **Footpath 3138** extends from Steyning Road northwards under the A27 gyratory junction towards Mill Hill Nature Reserve via Mill Hill Road. In doing so it leaves the floodplain landscape through a wooded area that

screens the Site from view. As it rises gradually upwards to the wide open space of Mill Hill Nature Reserve it skirts the edge of the A27 cutting enabling panoramic views over the floodplain extending from the urbanised area of Mill Hill to the east across the floodplain towards the airport; the Ricardo development and finally to Lancing College to be obtained. Through the open junction of the A27 the northern end of the Site is clearly visible.

Moderate Potential Sensitivity due to distance away and or levels of screening

- **Footpath 2049** south of Old Shoreham Bridge: Views of the Site progressively taper off with distance with the Site being readily absorbed in to the urban backdrop of Mill Hill.

Low Potential Sensitivity due to context, distance and substantial screening:

- **Footpath 3139/3** situated along the eastern side of the river north of the Site: Views from this footpath are limited by vegetation lining the Downs Link and the columns supporting the elevated A27.

3.2.2.2 *Sensitivity Assessment of Users of Community Facilities within the ZVI:*

High Potential Sensitivity: None identified.

Moderate Potential Sensitivity: due to proximity to the Site:

- **Users of St Nicholas Church and grounds**: The Church is set back from Steyning Road within a mature landscape setting. There are some views towards the Site from the path leading to the cemetery and from a narrow gap in the perimeter vegetation bordering the boundary with Steyning Road. Views are partial and do not directly affect the setting of the cemetery consequently the sensitivity to change is considered to be moderate.

Low Potential Sensitivity due to context, use, distances away and/or levels of screening:

- **Shoreham Airport**: Users of the visitor's observation terrace and the airfield are likely to have views of the Site but the views will be in the context of Ricardo Technical Centre, the river and against the backdrop of development in Mill Hill and the A27. Due to these factors (distance and context) the sensitivity of users to change is considered to be low.
- **Lancing College**: Users of the College are likely to be able to obtain long distance views of the Site however given the distance and the context of the view with regard to the backdrop of urban development and the visual dominance of the buildings forming the Ricardo Technical Centre in the view, users are likely to be of low sensitivity to changes in the far distance.

3.2.2.3. *Other users including motorists and employees within the ZVI.*

High Potential Sensitivity: None identified.

Moderate Potential Sensitivity: None identified.

Low Potential Sensitivity due to type of use and activity not generally regarded sensitive to issues of visual amenity:

- **Ricardo Technical Centre**: This complex dominates the western bank of the River Adur opposite the Site. It comprises large industrial type sheds enclosed by chainlink fencing and solid walling, partially obscured in places by vegetation. The complex sits below the level of the flood defence. Employees are unlikely to have

views of the Site other than transient views between buildings through the chainlink fencing. Employees here are unlikely to be overly sensitive to visual changes in the immediate locality.

- **Users of Steyning Road (A283) and the A27:** Views from these roads are transient in nature and users are not considered sensitive to change.

3.2.3. Selection of Viewpoints for Assessment

Figures 4 and 5

The following public viewpoints have been selected as representative of the views of the range of receptors and sensitivities identified above for further assessment. All of the publicly accessible and Site viewpoint locations and extent of panorama are shown on Figure 3 and the accompanying photographs are included on Figure 4 Viewpoints 1-9. In some cases the assessment is based on a reciprocal view (i.e. a view from the Site looking towards a receptor where that receptor is on private land and/or some distance away to demonstrate the likely extent and field of view). The key viewpoints are set out below with their associated visual sensitivity:

Viewpoints 1: Views south and east of the Site. These are representative of the type of views from the Downs Link Coastal Path adjacent to the western boundary of the Site. Over much of its length the Site is screened by a tall hedgerow however at its northern end a gap in the vegetation enables views in the Site. Receptors using the Downs Link have been attributed a **low to moderate sensitivity** to change attributed to the level of screening along this side of the Site.

Viewpoint 2 from Steyning Road in front of Valentine Close demonstrates the view into the Site from this edge of the Old Shoreham Conservation Area and these properties. From here direct views in to the stabling yard and field are obtainable. Receptors are therefore attributed **high sensitivity** to change in this context.

Viewpoints 3 and 4: These look towards the Site and are representative for users of Footpath 2049 and 2048/1 (old Shoreham Bridge). Viewpoint 3 is from the edge of Old Shoreham Bridge and the footpath looking towards the Site. It places the Site within the context of St Nicholas Church; the edge of urban development and the paddocks on Mill Hill. Viewpoint 4 is similar but is taken from the bridge itself. The receptors using these PRowWs have been attributed **high sensitivity** to change in this context.

Viewpoint 5: This view is representative of the view from Footpath 2049 to the north of the A27 Bridge. The open edge of the northern boundary of the site can be viewed but is dominated by the elevated A27 and slip roads; the columns supporting the elevated road break up the full view of the Site into framed snapshots. Receptors using this footpath are more likely to be visually drawn to the A27 bridge structures; the river itself and the sheds within the Ricardo Technical Centre. They are therefore considered to be of **low sensitivity** to change. Further northwards the view becomes obscured by the bend in the river and tails off with distance.

Viewpoint 6: This viewpoint demonstrates the views from Footpath 2048 south of the Old Shoreham Bridge. Closer to the bridge, views towards the Site are masked by the bridge itself but further southwards views towards the Site are evident. However the Site itself is screened by the vegetation bordering the Downs Link which blends with the vegetation on the hill behind it. The focal points of the view are provided by the A27 and the traffic on it and to a lesser degree, St Nicholas Church. The change in sensitivity for users of this footpath is considered to be **moderate reducing to low and negligible** with distance.

Viewpoint 7: This is taken from the grounds of St Nicholas Church. It demonstrates the view from the path leading to the cemetery towards the stabling yard. Above the yard the distinctive form of Lancing College Chapel can be seen but in this particular view of it the foreground of horsey paraphernalia littering the yard is prevalent. In addition a narrow view can be obtained across the Site through a gap in the overgrown hedgerow bordering the cemetery.

Although a sensitive location, outward views from the Church grounds and cemetery are somewhat secondary to the immediate visual context of the Church and cemetery themselves. The sensitivity to change is therefore considered to be **low** (within the cemetery itself) **to moderate** (from the Church path).

Viewpoint 8: This is a representative view taken from the terminal building at the airport. From here the Site can be seen as a narrow band of land set within the context of Ricardo Technical Centre, the river, the elevated A27, Mill Hill and St Nicholas Church. Given the constant changing scene provided by moving aircraft; vehicles on the A27 and the distance to the Site receptors are considered to be of **low sensitivity** to change.

Viewpoint 9: This view taken from the small car park in front of Lancing College Chapel. It demonstrates the panoramic view towards the River and Shoreham in the distance. Immediately discernible in the view are the large flat roofs of the buildings within the Ricardo Technical Centre which at first can be confused with the river. They act as a focal point in the view detracting from the distinctive form of St Nicholas Church which is just discernible. The vegetation bordering the Sites western boundary blends with the urban backdrop making it difficult to pinpoint in this context. Given the distance and the context of the view receptors are considered to be of **low sensitivity** to change.

Viewpoint 10: This shows the most open views from the South Downs National Park. The view takes in a wide panorama stretching from Mill Hill across the river floodplain towards Shoreham Airport and further westwards towards Lancing College. The full extent of the floodplain is laid out and the Site is clearly visible between the elevated structures forming the A27. From this exposed position receptors are likely to perceive a **moderate sensitivity** to change.

Viewpoint 11: This view is taken from the edge of the Mill Hill Road crossing bridge. From this viewpoint the extreme northern end of the Site is just discernible beneath the elevated A27. The main focus of view however is provided by the A27 and the highly visible and distinctive Lancing College Chapel. Sensitivity of change for receptors on the bridge is therefore considered to be **low**.

4. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1. *Scheme Description*

Figure 6

- 4.1.1. The proposal is currently at an outline design stage for the development of 52 three -storey residential dwellings with varied roof heights, associated access road, parking, private and open space. The proposed scheme illustrated on Figure 6 has been prepared by ECE Architects and shows one optimal layout that makes best use of the land available for development. Further design information is included in the Design and Access Statement and summarised below.
- 4.1.2. The layout is largely driven by responses to two opposing parameters of the Site. The first is the noise from the surrounding roads which requires built form to form a screen around the frontage to reduce potential noise levels to external amenity spaces. The second is in response to The Design Review Panel (Planning Officers) feedback which was to provide a solution that is in part perforated and permeable. Within this context the design also aims to relate well to the existing settlement, its landmarks, views and vernacular.
- 4.2. *Relationship to Existing Settlement Pattern*
- 4.2.1. The focus of the design approach has been to provide appropriately sized housing for the sites location and commensurate with other properties in the vicinity and subservient to surrounding visual landmarks and the Old Shoreham Conservation Area. Both height and footprint have been carefully considered in the design response, creating appropriate views towards the site from the surrounding area and a hierarchy of built form within the overall building design. The layout is driven by the relationship between the Site and the river corridor and the impact that development will have in relation to the surrounding visual landmarks and Old Shoreham Conservation Area.
- 4.2.2. Footprints and scales maximise views from the site and through the site, provide a clear public realm strategy that addresses the issues of permeability within the site and a clear relationship with the surrounding context.
- 4.2.3. The site is a mixture of three storeys buildings with variation in roof form that provides some variation in height, with a full three storeys utilised within key areas to provide individuality and mark key locations within the site. This includes the apartment block that marks the entrance to the site from Steyning Road and the river frontage units adjacent.
- 4.2.4. A strong frontage of built form is provided to Steyning Road with careful consideration given to providing sight lines through the site and beyond. The river front dwellings are formed of detached units, reinforcing the permeable nature of the site and allowing potential views from the South Downs link into the heart of the site rather than attempting to block potential views.
- 4.2.5. The approach to the scale and massing of the built form relates to the scale within Shoreham and adds to the scheme's sense of place, creating prominent visual references for the development when viewed externally and when entering the site.
- 4.2.6. The design approach considered both distant and local views to ensure the scale and design response compliments the surrounding environment and is commensurate with the context. This detailed approach to the roof line and heights is a sympathetic response to the local context and effective use of the land. Proposed roof materials aim to contribute to the sustainable strategy and create visual interest, further enhanced by the varied roof lines.
- 4.2.7. The form has been broken in key locations to mark routes into the site and create variation in the scale.

4.3. *Relationship to Local Landmarks and Vernacular*

- 4.3.1. The development has responded to the character scale, form and architectural detail to ensure it does not detract from the listed landmarks.
- 4.3.2. The tower of St Nicholas Church is something of a landmark within local and wider views as evidenced on the various viewpoint photographs and the proposed development has been respectful of this. Due to the site's lower level the height of the three storeys will still be commensurate with, for example, Valentines Close opposite. Whilst very close-up views will always be obstructed by buildings, in views from nearby public rights of way, and from the other side of the River Adur, there would be no compromise in the prominence of St Nicholas's Church.
- 4.3.3. The proportion and variety of dwellings is a key characteristic of the area. The proposal has sought to replicate this arrangement of differing dwelling types and variety within the street frontage, whilst retaining a proportional relationship to each other and the context of Shoreham.
- 4.3.4. Whilst subject to final details it is the aim of the design to choose materials and the intricacy in using those materials to reflect the characteristic of the appearance within Shoreham. It is the stated aim within the DAS that the appearance of the proposal will contribute and enhance the local distinctiveness of Shoreham and that the modern interpretation of the historic context will assist in conserving the cultural heritage of Shoreham and provide a suitable transition both into and out of Shoreham to or from the South Downs National Park.
- 4.3.5. The properties to the western boundary have been designed to provide variety, preserve the privacy yet ensure a sense of openness and not enclosure, whilst also addressing the sites constraints. The units to the sites boundary are formed of different house types to provide articulation and interest whilst also providing an acoustic barrier to the adjacent road network. There are gaps at strategic points to increase the perceived openness and views though the site to context beyond.
- 4.3.6. The units all have habitable accommodation above ground floor therefore, allowing for parking and storage to be on plot underneath the units.

4.4. *Landscape Strategy and Mitigation.*

- 4.4.1. Whilst subject to detail design the landscape strategy includes a number of elements.
- 4.4.2. Most significantly the Environment Agency Tidal Wall Scheme bund is realigned such that it encloses the development around the northern boundary and eastern sides. These are the most potentially visible boundaries on the approach into Shoreham on the A283 and where a planted bund will maintain a sense of green entrance if not open-ness. Whilst in its purest engineering form the bund will appear man-made and artificial, the proposed alignment feels more appropriate to the shape of the field than the approved EA alignment which unsympathetically dissects the field in two. Furthermore, there are clear potential advantages when delivered as part of the development, for the outward faces of the bund to be graded more gently into the existing landform and field shape to soften its otherwise artificial appearance.
- 4.4.3. The landscape proposals as part of the EA approved scheme (Ref: E3-Old Railway Planting Plan) includes a diverse grass mix and native plant species mix, the latter including *Cornus sanguinea* (dogwood), *Corylus avellana* (hazel), *Hippophae rhamnoides* (sea buckthorn), *Prunus spinosa* (blackthorn), *Rosa canina* (dog rose) and *Sambucus nigra* (elderberry). This mix will provide a thick screening of around 3-5m high as well as being a food source for wildlife. It is the stated aim of Cobbett Developments to use this same mix (or as otherwise agreed with the EA and planning authority) across the proposed realigned bund. Bearing in mind the height of the bund above the site level and the additional height of planting this will, in time, provide significant screening and softening of the built development.

- 4.4.4. There is also an option in the detail landscape design to explore the advantages of planting the outward facing part of the bund and the remaining part of the field to the elevated section of the A27 with a woodland mix to in part replicate the vegetated wooded slopes to the east. Whilst arguably reducing the openness of the field it would visually connect the open spaces along this part of the Green Gap and further screen views of development from the north and east.
- 4.4.5. The same applies to the existing western boundary, adjoining the Downs Link. The exact alignment and earthworks required by the EA is not yet determined but it is understood that the EA's preferred approach is to retain the existing hedgerow along the western boundary as far as is possible. However, in the event that the detail design requires its removal, replacement planting will be provided which in time will provide the same or better level of filtered screening. Hence, whilst built development will be perceived and roof tops visible, it will not be dominant and the main outlook and focus of views will remain on the River Adur.
- 4.4.6. The central area of the scheme is indicatively laid out as open space and play area. The scale and orientation of the space presents an opportunity to plant a number of significantly large native specimen trees that have the space to develop a natural and full habit. This opportunity is increasingly rare in modern housing schemes due to density and in this situation will be beneficial in adding filtered screening to break up built outlines in longer overlooking views from the east and north.

5. IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

5.1. Landscape and Townscape

5.1.1. The National Park designation that washes over the whole of the landscape north of the A27 confers a high value and status to the landscape. This is recognised and reflected in policy and the published LCAs.

5.1.2. The Site sits within the Lancing - Shoreham-by-Sea Local Green Gap an area that is considered to be 'countryside' and to be retained to avoid coalescence and impacts on the river. Both the Urban Fringe Study and the Shiels Flynn Report of 2102 reviewed the Site and its potential to support development and concluded that development would not affect the gap. The 2016 update of the Landscape Study confers a higher sensitivity on the site and the gap than was previously identified although this appears to have been based on wider landscape factors and the EA Tidal Wall Scheme. To remain consistent with the earlier iteration of this assessment the overall landscape sensitivity has been determined as 'medium-low'.

Taking account of the above baseline landscape assessment and from the analysis and review of existing relevant landscape guidelines and priorities for the Lancing to Shoreham Gap, the following key design principles for any potential new development were identified:

- To integrate the proposed development into the urban fringe landscape;
- To avoid coalescence and ensure the identity of Old Shoreham Conservation Area is maintained;
- Minimise any changes in key local and widespread views - particularly those to or from Lancing College, the South Downs, The River Adur, Old Shoreham Bridge, the Airport Terminal building and Old Shoreham Conservation Area.
- To ensure any new development does not break the horizon line of the sea or skyline of the South Downs in any of the panoramic and overlooking views;
- To avoid any significant impacts on the adjoining South Downs National Park landscape.

5.1.3. Accordingly, in order to identify and assess potential impacts due reference is made to the baseline assessments above and an acknowledgement that sensitive development, that respects the wider landscape and specific landscape constraints, is feasible and less harmful than other sites within the setting of the South Downs National Park.

5.1.4. The assessment also takes in to consideration the allocation of up to 15000 m² of employment space in the north-east parts of Shoreham Airport airfield south of Old Shoreham Bridge. The Adur Submission Local Plan considers that this will '*not have significant impacts on the open character of the area between Shoreham and Lancing and key views to and from the South Downs National Park [subject to] the development being sensitively sited and designed*' (Local Plan para 2.76).

5.1.5. Within this wider landscape, the Site sits in an area that is clearly redundant providing neither a contribution to the nearby urban areas primarily Old Shoreham Conservation Area or the river. Despite being in the shadow of the elevated A27 gyratory and dominated by the Ricardo Technical Centre on the opposite side of the river, it is however visible in strategic views. The existing landscape character of the Site itself is poor being given over to paddock and horse-related stabling etc. As with any new or greenfield development there will be some visual effects but the development, being residential and of stated high quality design, is not considered intrinsically adverse in nature. However effects on the immediately adjacent Old Shoreham Conservation Area, the river corridor and views from the South Downs National Park are potentially most susceptible to landscape changes.

5.1.6. In order to predict whether there are likely to be any significant effects on the wider landscape character and on the landscape setting and features of the Site itself and the surrounding areas, the following sections review the

character areas and the extent of change the proposed development is anticipated to make on the baseline assessment described in Para 3.1.4 above:

Character Area A – The Site

The site sits on the eastern edge of the river Adur in the shadow of the South Downs National Park and the A27 elevated gyratory junction and flanked on its eastern side by Steyning road and development. The northern part of the site was considered to be more sensitive due to its exposure in views from the South Downs National Park; the western boundary less so being screened by a tall hedgerow bordering the Downs Link although it is acknowledged that the EA Tidal Wall scheme may raise the adjoining embankment by circa 600mm. The southern half of the Site was considered less sensitive because of its existing use as a stabling yard which detracts from the setting of the St Nicholas Church and Old Shoreham Conservation Area.

Quite clearly the change from paddock and stabling yard to residential will be a substantial change, largely regardless of density and landscape mitigation. The Site was ascribed a low sensitivity due to its existing land uses but increasing to moderate sensitivity on its edges. With the substantial land-use change this can only be recognised as a **major effect** however the real 'significance' of this must be placed in context with the evident fact that this would be true for any greenfield development and that the effect is applicable to the Site area only which is not publicly accessible. This is also tempered by the fact that the Site especially at its lower end is of low quality and does little to contribute to the setting of the Conservation Area it abuts.

Character Area B - Steyning Road.

The main road is busy with a semi-rural character attributed to the Site as it passes by it. Development of the Site will change this by extending an urbanising influence from the A27 interchange all the way in to Shoreham. The loss of this green stretch however is not a significant loss due to the existing urban influences within the area provided by the elevated A27; Ricardo Technical Centre and more distantly, Shoreham Airport. There is no pavement in the vicinity of the Site views into it are therefore from passing traffic and are transient in nature. Whilst there will be a loss to this fleeting openness the EA bund and potential for significant woodland and shrub planting will maintain a green entrance and substantially soften views of the built development.

Hence the moderate sensitivity attributed to the road, the change in character from a semi-rural to a semi-urban one results in a **minor-moderate** impact on the road's landscape character.

Character Area C – Old Shoreham Conservation Area and Mill Hill Suburbia

The Site shares its southern boundary with Old Shoreham Conservation Area which in the vicinity of the Site comprises St Nicholas Church (Grade 1 Listed Building), No's 1 -4 Steyning Road, Valentine Close and part of Old Shoreham Toll Bridge. Due to the sensitivity of these buildings the area has a high sensitivity to change. However in this locality the current Site condition (horse paraphernalia, vehicles and general rubbish) detracts from the quality of the setting of these buildings and the proposed and approved EA bund would add to the artificiality of the landform. The development of the Site into a potentially high quality residential development provides an alternative to this which offers opportunity to address this.

Impact arising from the new development is therefore considered to be **moderate but beneficial** as it provides the prospect to create a clearer and more sympathetic setting for the Conservation Area enabling more accord with the river. The remainder of the Conversation Area is as discussed set back further in to the urban environment and

screened from view by the properties described above and also by the curvature of Steyning Road southwards. Properties lining Mill Hill Road look over the Site towards the airport, Ricardo Technical Centre and Lancing in the distance. The Site will therefore be viewed against a backdrop of existing development. The impact of the development from these areas is therefore considered to be **minor-negligible**.

Character Area D – The River Adur

The Site has little direct influence on the river other than some sense of openness when using the Downs Link. However this is set to change irrespective of the development of the Site through the EA Tidal Wall Scheme and the allocation of up to 15000 m² employment space on Shoreham Airport. This will further extend the urbanising effect already established by Ricardo Technical Centre along the river edge inevitably changing the character of the river frontage. Development on the Site will also have a similar effect but to a much lesser extent as it will be viewed in the context of the urban backdrop of Mill Hill and the buildings within the Conservation Area. The proposed EA Tidal Wall Scheme will raise the embankment by around 600mm although the retention and/or replacement of planting along the western boundary of the Site will help to partially screen it in views from the river corridor and will also act as a buffer to the river, Downs Link and other footpaths in the vicinity.

At the northern end of the Site it is within the shadow of the elevated A27 but proposed landscape mitigation presents the opportunity to reinforce the edge with a substantial green buffer, reflecting the wooded hillside opposite, and containing the Site as a landscape unit and not influencing the landscape of the River corridor.

Whilst the landscape is highly valued and its ecological sensitivity is acknowledged through its SSSI status the impact of the development is considered to create a **minor-moderate** impact which will further reduce over time as the development beds in to the landscape and proposed planting matures.

Character Area E – Shoreham Airport

The character of Shoreham Airport is set to change with the allocation of up to 15000m² of employment space and with further allocations for development to the west. The development within the airfield would partially screen the Site development in views and any visual context would still be in relation to new development in the foreground and existing built development on the rising ground east of the Site. Therefore any impact is considered to be **negligible** in nature.

Character Area F - Ricardo Technical Centre

The Ricardo Technical Centre located opposite the Site was assessed as being of low sensitivity due to the insular nature of the development. Impacts arising from the development are therefore correspondingly **negligible**.

Character Area G – The A27

The A27 presents a dominant feature elevated above the floodplain and is a key element in all views from the floodplain. It provides the main transport corridor along the coast connecting Brighton to Worthing, outwards views from it are transient in nature and any significance to them will relate to the openness and the contrast between the floodplain and the rising Downs. The development of the Site will not effect these key aspects such that impacts are considered to be **negligible**.

Character Area H – South Downs National Park

The landscape context of the South Downs in this area is related to its openness, the contrast between the rising slopes of the Downs and the flat floodplain. The LCAs also highlight the characteristics of adjoining settlements and built elements within the floodplain especially around Ricardo's and the airfield. Whilst from the higher ground around Mill Hill Nature Reserve development on the Site will be just visible it is a very small component, behind the elevated A27 gyratory and not the focus of the general panoramic nature of the landscape. Proposed mitigation planting around the north and eastern side of the development will not screen but will further soften built form in this overlooking context. Whilst visual impact is considered separately below, changes to the landscape character of this part of the South Downs, despite being of high sensitivity will thus be **negligible**.

Identification of Potential Impacts – Visual

- 5.2.1. This section considers the potential changes in visual amenity and resulting visual effects for residents and users ('the receptors'). The predicted impact on all receptors, as described and identified in 3.2.2 above, is provided in the tables below. Based on this assessment of each receptor the context of each viewpoint described in paragraph 3.2.3 above is reviewed and the likely effects of the proposed development defined. In the viewpoint impact description a distinction is only made between Year 1 of the scheme and Year 15 (after implementation of planting to account for a period of growth and maturity) and between summer and winter, where this is considered to be especially relevant.

- 5.2.2. Predicted impact on each receptor type:

Residents

Receptor	Sensitivity	Change and Context	Assessed Impact
Valentines Close	High	Slight-moderate: current views across the A283 to stabling yard will change to a small terrace of new housing.	Moderate
No 4 Steyning Road	Moderate	Slight: Generally oblique views but some direct from side windows, already in context of A283 and housing opposite.	Negligible
Properties within The Paddock and Lesser Foxholes	Moderate	Slight: largely screened and primarily upper floors only. Due to height difference any longer views from upper storeys not affected.	Negligible
No 3 Steyning Road	Low	Slight: upper window on gable end overlooks the Site but is set back from the boundary and screened by intervening scrub.	Negligible
Properties on west side of Mill Hill Road	Low	Slight: overlooking the foreground but focus on panoramic views over the Site in context with river, the A27, Ricardo's and Airport. Due to height difference these longer views not affected.	Negligible

Users of PRoWs and Open Space

Receptor	Sensitivity	Change and Context	Assessed Impact
Footpath 2049 (west bank of River Adur)	High	Slight: Upper parts of development visible across river but not a major component of the open and expansive views and no obstruction of upper parts of St Nicholas Church.	Minor
The Downs Link (Sustrans Regional Cycle Route 79) Coastal Path	High	Slight: Short length of overall path on which users' main focus is the river and views along the river corridor. Openness of site is currently limited. EA scheme will raise path, upper parts of development will be visible but filtered by retention and/or new planting.	Moderate
Bridleway 2048/1 (across Old Shoreham Toll Bridge)	High	Slight: panoramic views context of river, Ricardo's, A27 and traffic, backdrop of Downs. Site not a major component of the open and expansive views and no obstruction of upper parts of St Nicholas Church.	Minor
Footpath 3138 Steyning Rd - Mill Hill via Mill Hill Road	High	Slight: northern part of Site visible from section north-east of the Site around A27 cutting. Context of road, panoramic views over floodplain, urbanised area of Mill Hill to	Negligible

		Ricardo's and airport. Site not focus of view and mitigation planting would soften edges of built development.	
Footpath 2049 south of Old Shoreham Bridge	Moderate	Slight: Views of Site progressively taper off with distance. No obstruction of view towards church, bridge or Mill Hill	Negligible
Footpath 3139/3 east side of river north of Site	Low	Negligible; Views limited, context of A27 columns, mitigation planting.	Negligible

Users of Community Facilities within ZVI

Receptor	Sensitivity	Change and Context	Assessed Impact
St Nicholas Church and grounds	Moderate	Slight: set back from Steyning Road within a mature landscape setting with built surrounds. Glimpsed context of site only and edge of built development only.	Minor
Shoreham Airport public areas of Terminal	Low	Slight: Potential views of upper parts of development the Site but in context of Ricardo's, river, settled backdrop of Mill Hill and A27.	Negligible
Lancing College / Chapel environs	Low	Negligible: long distance views of Site but small component and not focus of view. Context of wider panoramic views of urban edge and Ricardo's.	Negligible

Other users including motorists and employees within the ZVI.

Receptor	Sensitivity	Change and Context	Assessed Impact
Ricardo Technical Centre	Low	Negligible: limited views from employee areas and across river.	Negligible
Users of Steyning Road (A283)	Low	Moderate: Outlook along Steyning Road will change from open field to green entrance and built development but not intrinsically adverse and views transient in nature.	Minor

- 5.2.3. Summary of visual impacts based on the viewpoints, potentially containing several types or multiple receptors, are as follows:

Viewpoint 1 Low-Moderate Sensitivity: At the northern end of the Site, the EA bund and proposed tree and shrub planting will reduce the glimpse of the open paddock but largely screen views through and under the A27 of built development. Further to the south in this viewpoint, adjacent to the Site boundary, the raised EA bund will facilitate better views over the river which is likely to be the focus of users' views. The proposed development will be visible but any dominance will be softened and filtered by the retention of the existing hedgerow and/or the re-planting of the hedgerow as part of the EA works. Consequently combined visual impacts are perceived to be **moderate** in Year 1 but as the combined works of the EA and the development bed-in and planting matures over time will continue reducing to **negligible** by Year 15.

Viewpoint 2 High Sensitivity: The eastern edge of the Site will change substantially in views from Steyning Road replacing the semi-rural and fairly open edge with a semi-urban one. However, the residential development is not considered incongruous in this context and will replace the low visual quality of the stabling yard and mitigation planting may further mask parts of the elevated A27. The siting and lower level of the proposed development, in relation to the majority of housing on the eastern side of the A283, ensure the current setting of the Conservation Area is largely unchanged. The properties more directly affected and considered of high sensitivity are Valentine Close and No 4 Steyning Road with users of the road considered far less sensitive. The combined visual impact for this viewpoint and its environs is therefore considered to be **moderate-minor** reducing to **minor** as road front planting matures and the development becomes an accepted element within the townscape.

Viewpoints 3 and 4 High Sensitivity: These views, obtained from Footpath 2049 and the Old Shoreham Bridge will change with views towards the upper parts of the proposed development. Currently the Site is visually screened by

vegetation bordering the Downs Link (Sustrans Regional Cycle Route 79) Coastal Path. The Environment Agency's proposed new bund will retain and/or replant the existing hedgerow which will continue to screen and filter views of the main built forms such that only the varied roofscape is likely to be visible. Views of St Nicholas Church, depending upon the exact angle of view will be partially screened from points along the footpath however in most views the development will merely be a part of the context of the backdrop of properties extending up to the skyline defined by Mill Hill Road. The development would also be viewed in the same panoramic context of the A27 and the Ricardo Technical Centre which will continue to dominate the landscape in views from along the river.

In the context of these two viewpoints the impact of the development is predicted to be **minor-moderate** in nature.

Viewpoint 5 Low Sensitivity: This view provides intermittent views towards the Site caused by the A27 overbridge and slip roads and the columns supporting them with distant glimpses of St Nicholas Church and the buildings within its vicinity. Also within the view are the sheds within the Ricardo Technical Centre. The viewpoint is thus largely open but collectively several dominant features in the river corridor indicate the increasing urban approach. In this context, the development including the EA Tidal Wall Scheme will create a new visual element along the far river frontage. The proposed mitigation planting around the northern boundary and the retained and/or re-planted hedgerow to the western will soften and filter harder built edges such that the varied roof scape only will be the likely visible element. Whilst this will be a noticeable change to the view it would still be dominated by the A27 and the focus is still on the river corridor itself such that in this context the impact is predicted to be **minor** in nature.

Viewpoint 6 Moderate-Low Sensitivity: This viewpoint demonstrates the views from Footpath 2048 south of the Old Shoreham Bridge. Closer to the bridge, views towards the Site are masked by the bridge itself but further southwards views towards the roof scape of the proposed development will be evident. From this location the residential development will extend the urban settlement towards the A27 but will not mask the traffic on it. Importantly, south of the development existing views of the Conservation Area including St Nicholas Church will be unaffected. The change in sensitivity for users of this footpath is considered to be **moderate reducing to minor and negligible** with distance.

Viewpoint 7 Low-Moderate Sensitivity: There are two areas within the grounds of the Church where the Site can be viewed; directly in front of the nave wall of the Church over a low wall and through a narrow gap in the hedgerow bordering the edge of the graveyard. Both look across the existing low quality stabling yard towards the Ricardo Technical Centre, Lancing College and the South Downs National Park. The foreground view will be replaced by parts of the new residential development although due to the distance and lower level of the site, views towards the bulk of Lancing College Chapel would be retained in most parts. These changes however do not directly affect the cemetery which is fairly insular in nature contained for the most part by vegetation and other buildings. It is a space that is essentially introverted and therefore in this context impacts of the development are considered to be **minor** in nature.

Viewpoint 8 Low Sensitivity: This view is set to change with the development of the eastern edge of the airfield which will obstruct some views towards the river and the Site although the elevated A27 and the South Downs National Park will still be visible. Whilst the varied roofscape of the development will be noticeable predicted impact on this viewpoint is considered to be **minor-negligible due** to distance and the context in which it will be viewed.

Viewpoint 9 Low Sensitivity: Views from Lancing College and the Chapel environs are panoramic taking in the urban extent of Old Shoreham; the distinctive form of St Nicholas Church above the flat expansive roofs of the Ricardo Technical Centre, the river corridor and associated structures. Development on the Site will more readily pinpoint the Site within the view and partially mask views of Valentine Close and also a proportion of the lower facade of St Nicholas Church but importantly not the distinctive tower and roof. Given the distance, the settled backdrop and the small component it represents in the panoramic context of the view, impact from this viewpoint is considered to be **minor**.

Viewpoint 10 Moderate - High Sensitivity: Views from this locality are wide and far reaching towards the sea. The full extent of the floodplain is very much in evidence and within it the visual detractors of Ricardo Technical Centre and the elevated A27 and slip roads. The view also takes in the urban hill side; the river corridor (mudflats and Old Shoreham Bridge) and the airport terminal buildings and airfield backgrounded by the sea and distant development in Shoreham Harbour and Lancing. It displays the whole of the Lancing-Shoreham Local Green Gap but demonstrate that the airfield is the main component. This view however is set to change irrespective of development within the Site with development along the eastern boundary of the airfield and Monks Farm. In this context changes provided by the development of the Site are measured. The residential development would infill the Site broadly up to the line of the A27 and in this overlooking view would only be softened by proposed mitigation planting around and within the development. However the planting will break up hard outlines and assist in integrating the development within the local environment such that it will be perceived as a continuity of the urban landscape to the east of it. Neither will it obstruct the longer distant views of the floodplain. Impacts are therefore considered to be **moderate but reducing to minor** by year 15 as the urban context of other allocations are built out and the development itself becomes embedded within the settlement edge.

Viewpoint 11 Low Sensitivity: This view is taken from the edge of the Mill Hill Road Bridge. From this viewpoint the A27 and Ricardo's is dominant although the northern end of the Site is just discernible beneath the elevated A27 and a narrow glimpse of the middle of the site is just visible due to a gap in the vegetation on the opposite side of the cutting. Given the small proportion of the Site that is visible and the extent of mitigation planting around the north and east boundaries only upper parts of the development would be visible and from this locality are considered to be **minor** in nature

Summary

From all viewpoints the development of the Site will constitute some change in the view, the impact being dependent upon the distance over which it is viewed; the openness of the view and the context. The surrounding area presents some major visual detractors in the form of the elevated A27 and slip roads and the Ricardo Technical Centre which detract from the distinctive and historical landmarks within the vicinity of the Site namely; Lancing College, St Nicholas Church and Old Shoreham Conservation Area. With the exception of St Nicholas Church and No's 2 and 4 Steyning Road other buildings within the Conservation area abutting the Site are of ordinary quality and their outlook toward the river is inhibited by the Site which is of low quality. Residential development is not considered intrinsically adverse and as an alternative to the paddock provides some opportunity to improve the approach into Shoreham with no real measurable impact on the setting of the Conservation Area.

In the long distance and panoramic views the Site represents a small component within the wider floodplain landscape. It sits at the foot of the urban edge forming a bridge between urban and river influences and is dominated in all views by the A27 and the Ricardo Technical Centre.

6. MITIGATION MEASURES

- 6.1. The primary aim of mitigation is to reduce or minimise the identified significant adverse impacts. Some of this reduction will be down to time for new planting to mature.
- 6.2. The 'significant' effects are those primarily identified as 'major' adverse impacts although 'moderate' impacts are still important to mitigate. The reduction of other minor adverse impacts and design enhancements are all desirable given the high value of the South Downs National Park; the River Adur and the proximity of the site to Shoreham Conservation Area but it is the significant effects that should be the focus of attention for mitigation.
- 6.3. The proposed development and its inherent design and landscape measures is described in Section 4.0 and shown on the illustrative layout. The layout has been created to 'design out' significant effects as far as possible and succeed in minimising most potential impacts such that only one major landscape impact on the site itself and two specific moderate visual impacts on Valentines Court and the Downs Link respectively (Table 5 below). It should be noted that the latter two also form part of the assessment of several of the general viewpoints and should not be 'double counted'. However for completeness all the other impacts down to moderate-minor impacts are identified in Table 6 below:

Table 5: The Significant Effects and Principles of Mitigation

Major Landscape Effect	Mitigation
The substantial change in character of the Site itself – from a paddock and stabling yard to residential development.	This is a permanent effect and one that cannot be mitigated. The perceived 'significance' of this effect must however be put in context that this effect is essentially the same for any greenfield development and that the effect is still confined to the Site, which is not currently publicly accessible.
Moderate Landscape Effect	
Old Shoreham Conservation Area in close proximity to the site.	The Old Shoreham Conservation Area abuts the Site at the southern end but the design and layout of the residential housing acknowledges this through the use of natural and sympathetic building materials, boundary treatments and the scale of the units to ensure the setting is retained and respected.
Moderate Visual Effect	Mitigation
Valentines Court and Viewpoint 2	This is a permanent effect due to the direct change in view from the stabling yard to residential. However this is a measured change and one to be considered in the context of the busy A283 between and that residential development is not considered intrinsically adverse. At the detailed design stage boundary treatments and hard and soft landscaping will be designed to be appropriate and to fit in with the local context and vernacular.

Downs Link Coastal Path and Viewpoint 1	<p>This is a permanent effect due to the change from glimpsed open views of the paddock to residential. Similarly this is a measured change as the path will be affected by the EA Tidal Wall Scheme, and whether the existing hedgerow is retained by the EA and/or replanted will continue to provide filtered screening despite a relatively modest increase in height of the bund. In any event this is a relatively short section of the path and the focus of views from the Downs Link will continue to be the river corridor.</p>
Viewpoint 6: View from Footpath 2048, east side of airport and south of Old Shoreham Bridge	<p>Views largely restricted to upper parts of the development the effect is mitigated by the design approach to provide variable heights and roofscape and that the Church is not obstructed.</p> <p>The raised EA bund and the existing retained and/or re-planted trees and shrubs along the western boundary as part of the EA scheme will screen and filter the majority of the built form.</p> <p>With distance on the path this effect is considered to reduce to minor and negligible further to the south.</p>
Viewpoint 10: View from Mill Hill in South Downs National Park	<p>The area to the north of the A27 is covered by a high quality landscape designation and as such views from this landscape are highly sensitive. From Mill Hill there are panoramic views over the coastal plain towards the sea.</p> <p>The Site is a small component within this. Hard outline of development will be tempered and softened by the proposed encircling bund and new planting which will integrate the development into the settled urban landscape to the east.</p> <p>With time this effect is considered to reduce to minor.</p>

Table 6: The Minor-moderate Effects and Principles of Mitigation

Minor - moderate Landscape Effect	Mitigation
Steyning Road	<p>The change in character from a semi-rural to semi-urban road along the site frontage is tempered by the EA bund and the associated proposed planting. Whilst there is some loss of openness to the paddock it is of low quality and the proposed landscape frontage will retain the green approach into Shoreham.</p>
The River Adur	<p>The proposed EA Tidal Wall Scheme will raise the embankment by around 600mm although the retention and/or replacement of planting along the western boundary will partially screen it from the river corridor and act as a buffer to the river, Downs Link and other footpaths in the vicinity.</p> <p>Proposed landscape mitigation at the northern end reinforces the edge with a substantial green buffer, reflecting the wooded hillside opposite, and containing the Site as a landscape unit and not influencing the landscape of the River corridor</p>

Minor - moderate Visual Effects	
Viewpoints 3 and 4 from Footpath 2049 and Old Shoreham Bridge	The EA's proposed new bund will retain and/or replant the existing hedgerow which will continue to screen and filter views of the main built forms such that only the varied roofscape is likely to be visible.

6.4. Landscape Enhancement Measures

Whilst landscape retention and enhancement proposals are included in the outline scheme these and any other additional measures should be considered at the detail stage to further assist in bedding the development into the landscape. The range of such proposals might include:

- Grading of the outward face of the EA bund to further marry the artificial landform better into the natural ground and to aid establishment and maintenance of the planting.
- Planting the northern area with a woodland mix to provide visual and screening continuity with the vegetated hillside to the east ensuring it takes account of any SuDs/water storage requirements.
- Utilise the space within the internal open space to establish large native specimen trees.
- Minimise and reduce any effects of required lighting.
- Ensure the access entrance and boundary treatments respond to the context and vernacular of the semi-rural approach and the Conservation Area.
- Provide a long term management and maintenance plan for the general care and establishment of the new landscape.

7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The Site is an elongated triangle in shape extending from a narrow point at its northern end following the curve of the A27 path of the raised A27 gyratory junction on-slip then tapering southwards to the southern boundary omitting the south west corner which contains a pumping station. The Site is currently used as horse paddock and stabling yard (Buddies Yard) which contains storage and equipment associated with horses; a timber stabling block, horse trailers, caravan, vehicles, stacked timber, garden furniture and general paraphernalia. A wooden post and rail fence separates the paddock from the yard. The overall landscape quality of the Site itself is therefore considered to be low.
- 7.2 The Site is relatively flat and open along its northern and eastern boundaries. The southern end of the Site abuts Old Shoreham Conservation Area and is overlooked by Valentine Close and partially by others. It is also close to St Nicholas Church, a Grade 1 Listed Building and local landmark. To the west, a tall hedgerow separates the Site from the Downs Link (Sustrans Regional Cycle Route 79) Coastal Path and the intertidal mudflats and saltmarsh of the River Adur.
- 7.3 The Site is accessed from the busy Steyning Road (A283) that provides one of the few main accesses into Shoreham-by-Sea town centre approximately 1.3km to the south. It is essentially rural in character until it passes the southern limit of the Site where upon it skirts the urban fringe of Old Shoreham becoming more urbanised with a continuous pavement along its eastern side and bounded by the Downs Link coastal path and the river on its western side.
- 7.4 Key landscape and visual detractors within the vicinity of the site include the elevated A27 gyratory junction which overshadows the northern end of the Site providing a visually dominant element in the landscape and Ricardo Technical Centre which forms a continuous line of development on the opposite side of the river.
- 7.5 The area is served by a series of PRoWs the most notable of which are those that follow the river corridor. These are the Downs Link which runs parallel to the western boundary of the Site and footpaths 2048 and 2049 which follow the river on the opposite side to the Site. Also of note is Bridleway 2048/1, Old Shoreham Bridge (Grade II Listed). From these PRoWs there are panoramic views, the focus is the river corridor although the Site forms a component of the views, the existing hedgerow boundary screening most glimpses of the paddock itself.
- 7.6 The whole floodplain landscape is back grounded to the north by the rising slopes of the South Downs National Park. Prominent within this, but not related to the site at all is Lancing College Chapel which has a commanding position over the floodplain landscape.
- 7.7 In terms of planning, the wider landscape around the Site is highly valued and this is reinforced through policies protecting the South Downs National Park designation; the historic value of the area and the ecological and visual sensitivity of the River Adur. Also the protection of the area as a Local Green Gap preventing the coalescent of development such that the default starting position is that all sites and areas are considered sensitive to development.
- 7.8 The LCAs particularly focus on the issue of the Local Green Gap and its defining features that need to be conserved in order to maintain its good condition and avoid undue change to its character. These features are considered to be the lack of development, the sense of openness which enables the local landmarks of Lancing College, St Nicholas Church and the Airport to provide dominant visual landmarks and the river corridor. The tranquillity of this landscape however is offset by the presence of the A27; the operational airport and the Ricardo Technical Centre. In the immediate surrounds to the Site the components that are considered to be of most value to the landscape are the characteristics of:
- The rolling downland to the north

- The River Adur corridor
- The proximity to the Conservation Area and listed buildings (St Nicholas Church and Old Shoreham Bridge)
- The visual landmarks (Lancing College Chapel and St Nicholas Church)
- The proximity to Shoreham Airport
- The proximity to the urban areas of Shoreham

- 7.9 With regards to the sensitivity of the Site itself there is some inconsistency in the recent Adur Landscape Study Updates in 2016 which raises its sensitivity above that of previous studies. In order to retain consistency with the bulk of the previous studies and the previous version of this assessment it is considered to be of moderate to low sensitivity to change. This is considered reasonable given the poor quality of the site itself, the potential impact on it of the approved EA Tidal Wall Scheme, further allocation of development in the airfield opposite and the presence of A27 elevated gyratory junction. As stated in Adur's Urban Fringe Study and Shiels Flynn assessment of 2012 and confirmed by site visit, it offers little contribution to the wider landscape character of the Local Green Gap.
- 7.10 The most visually sensitive boundaries are considered to be to the north and west due to the more open nature of the landscape to the north and the setting of the river. The vegetation bordering the western boundary is desirable to maintain for its own sake because it provides some contribution to the wider landscape however the EA scheme is unclear and this may be retained and/or replanted as part of the bund works. The eastern and southern boundaries are less sensitive. The eastern boundary fronts the busy A283 presenting a partially open aspect to it becoming more sensitive at its southern end due to the proximity of Old Shoreham Conservation Area. The southern boundary although bordering the Conservation Area is considered less sensitive to change being buffered by scrub. The core of the Site is considered to be the least sensitive.
- 7.11 The proposed development is an outline planning application for the development of 52 three -storey residential dwellings with varied roof heights, associated access road, parking, private and open space. The proposed scheme shown on Figure 6 makes make best use of the land available. The layout is driven by the parameters of the Site, namely noise from surrounding roads and advice from The Design Review Panel (Planning Officers) to provide a solution that is in part perforated and permeable. Within this context the design also aims to relate well to the existing settlement, its visual landmarks and vernacular and the wider landscape of the River Adur corridor. The layout and height of the dwellings preserve St Nicholas's Church as a local landmark. Furthermore the landscape mitigation proposals, delivered through the proposed scheme as well as through the EA's Tidal Wall Scheme, ensures screening is maintained on the western (River Adur) boundary and improved on the northern and eastern boundaries.
- 7.12 The layout and range of design and mitigation measures minimise most potential impacts at source such that only one major landscape impact on the site itself and two specific moderate visual impacts on Valentines Close and the Downs Link respectively have been identified and described in the bullet points below. The latter two also form part of the assessment of several of the general viewpoints which considers local and long distance views within which there may be more than one type of receptor. These are described in Sections 5 and 6 above along with the identified minor-moderate effects, most of which are considered to reduce in severity in time as planting matures and the development beds in with its environs. The major and two specific moderate effects are:
- The substantial change in landscape character of the Site itself from paddock to residential development which is an inevitable consequence of development but one that is common with any greenfield site and tempered by the fact that the Site is, not publicly accessible.
 - The change in view and outlook for the frontage of Valentines Close opposite the stabling yard area of the Site which will change to residential development. This is a measured effect such that the busy A283 lies

between and the existing stabling yard is of poor visual quality. This is a specific part also of Viewpoint 2 Steyning Road, where the change from a semi-rural approach to one that is semi-urban is acknowledged but tempered by the fact that residential development is not out of context and that the landscape mitigation maintains a substantial green edge along the road side.

- The change in outlook of the short length of the Downs Link adjacent to the Site which is raised by the proposed EA works and from where filtered views of the development and rooftops will be available. The significance of this is also reduced by the fact that users' of the Link will always be primarily focused on the river and views along the river corridor. Openness of the Site is currently limited and will remain so with the retention and/or new planting of the western hedgerow boundary. This is a specific part also of Viewpoint 1 in which as the combined works of the EA and the development bed-in and planting matures the effect is considered to reduce to a negligible one over time.

- 7.13 From most viewpoints the development of the Site will to some extent constitute a change in the view but the impact is dependent on the distance over which it is viewed; the openness of the view and the context. The surrounding area presents some major visual detractors in the form of the elevated A27 and slip roads and the Ricardo Technical Centre as well as some distinctive landmarks including St Nicholas Church within the wider Old Shoreham Conservation Area and Lancing College Chapel. With the exception of St Nicholas Church and No's 2 and 4 Steyning Road other buildings within the Conservation area abutting the Site are of fairly ordinary quality and their outlook toward the river is inhibited by the Site which is of fairly low quality. High quality residential development with appropriate detailing and material as described in the Design and Access Statement provides the opportunity to reflect and reinforce the setting for the Conservation Area.
- 7.14 In longer distance views, such as opposite the River Adur on the eastern edge of the airfield, and from Mill Hill, views of St Nicholas Church are unobstructed and the Site a small component seen in context with the settled edge. The Site is not the focus of wide panoramic views and does not affect the appreciation of the River Adur, the contrast between the flood plain and the Downs and the wider green gap of the airfield, many of which are dominated by the A27 and the Ricardo Technical Centre.
- 7.15 Policy identifies the need to prevent the coalescence of settlements (in this case the Lancing and Shoreham Local Green Gap) and to preserve the openness of the Local Green Gap. The Site has definitive borders of River Adur, the A27 junction and existing development to the east and south which makes it physically impossible to expand further. The exclusion of this site from the green gap using the physical features of the River Adur to define a recognisable and permanent boundary line would be consistent with NPPF⁶ with regard to protecting local green gaps i.e. *'define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent'*.
- 7.16 In terms of visual impacts on the Local Green Gap, the Site is visually cut off from the gap by the River Adur and the Ricardo Technical Centre to the west, a point that was also made in the Urban Fringe Study which described the relationship between the Site and the rest of the gap as a *'tenuous visual relationship'*. Furthermore the additional allocation of development within the north-east part of the airfield will self-evidentially be more intrusive.
- 7.17 As previous studies have indicated there are no material landscape reasons why the Site should even be included within the Green Gap but there are also policies within the Local Plan which provide support for development. These relate to the principles for:
- Protecting the setting of the South Downs National Park, the River Adur, conservation areas and other cultural and historic assets
 - Preserving and enhance areas of nature conservation value.

⁶ Paragraph 85, National Planning Policy Framework.

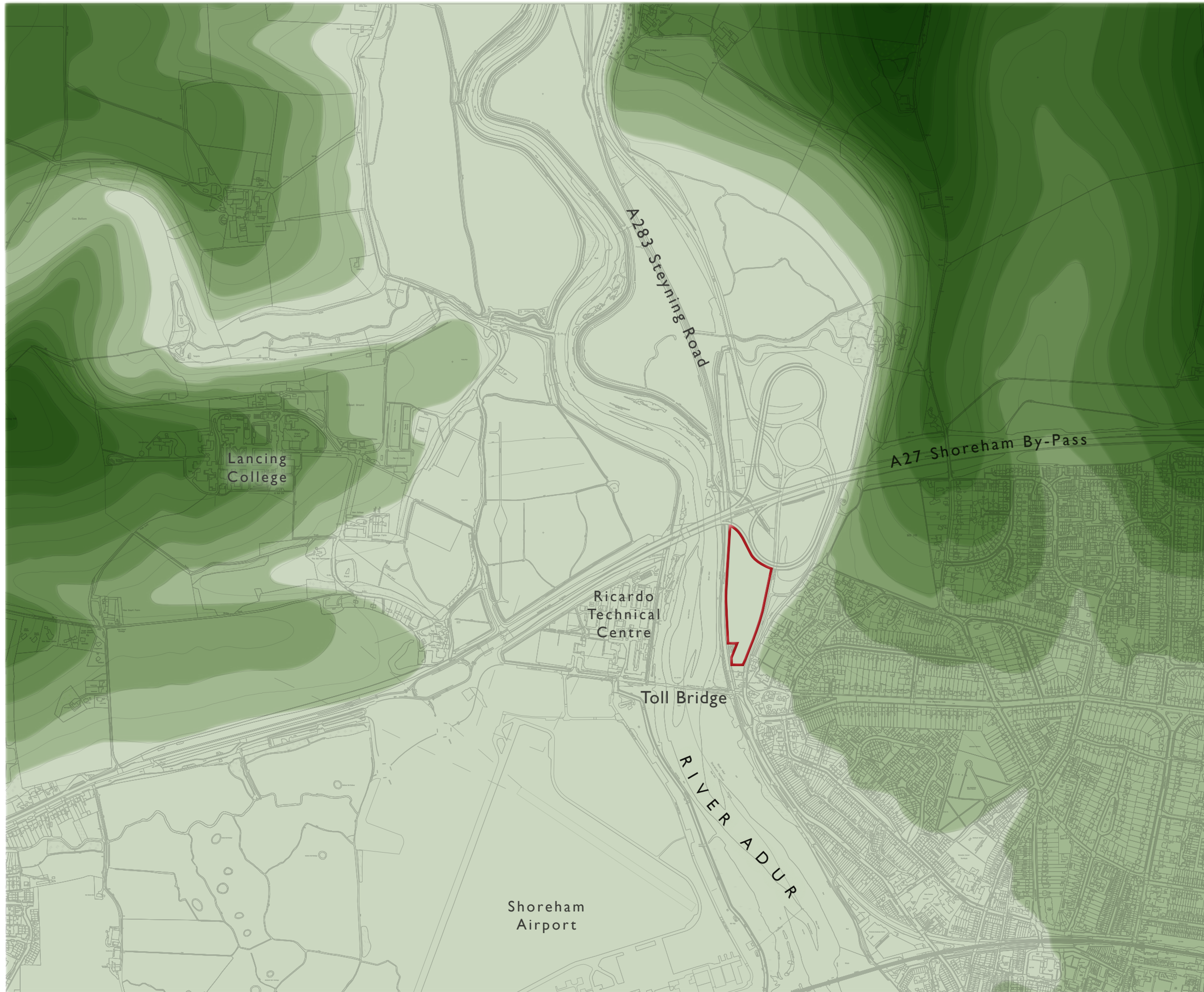
- Improving public access to the river and open up views to it in conjunction with flood defences where necessary.
- Providing new development that respects its location and character.

7.18 The proposed development acknowledges these principles by replacing the low quality environment of the Site with a high quality development that is more sympathetic to the urban context by:

- Acknowledging the views towards the Site from sensitive landscape areas.
- Respecting Old Shoreham Conservation Area through layout, design and the proposed use of natural and sympathetic materials that reflect the vernacular character.
- Providing additional planting to screen and soften the proposed development which will ensure the development blends in with the immediate and wider urban and landscape environment.
- Respect the sensitivity of the river by retaining a strong planted western and northern boundary through the EA Tidal Wall Scheme.

7.19 The natural containment of the Site provided by the physical boundaries surrounding it, the inherent measures within the outline design and the range of additional mitigation measures combine to ensure that most policy aims are met and that local and wider area landscape characters have been respected. The resulting impacts on landscape and visual amenity have been found to be locally contained to adjoining properties and the road and the adjoining footpath. Lesser effects to the public rights of way further away and on the edge of the South Downs National Park have been found to be largely minor in nature. As such it is considered that the overall effect of the proposed development is entirely within acceptable norms.

FIGURES



KEY



Site Boundary

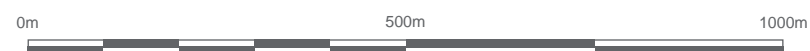


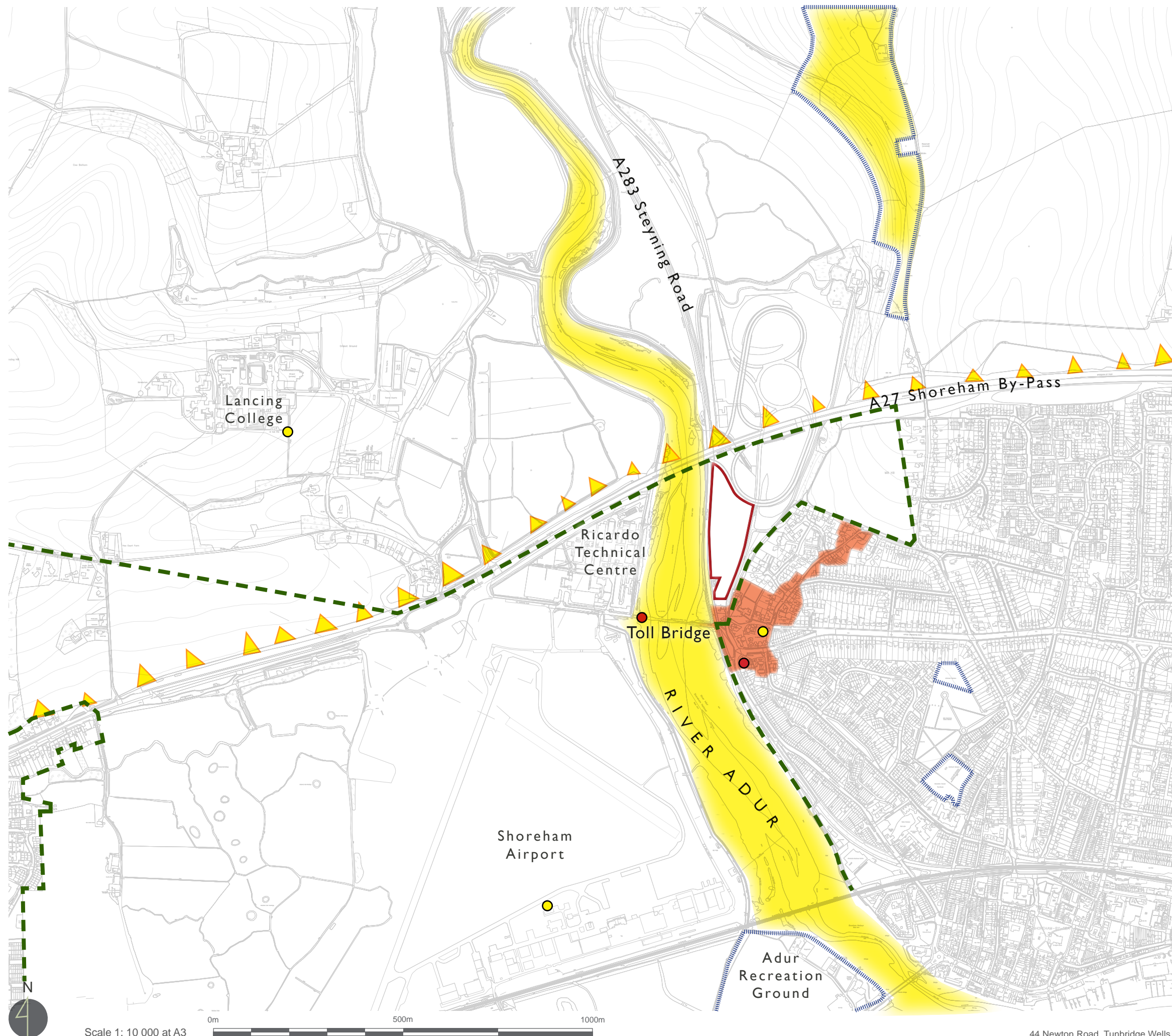
> 100m
80 - 90
70 - 80
60 - 70
50 - 60
40 - 50
30 - 40
20 - 30
10 - 20
< 10 m

Shoreham
Figure I. The Site and
Topography



Scale 1: 10 000 at A3

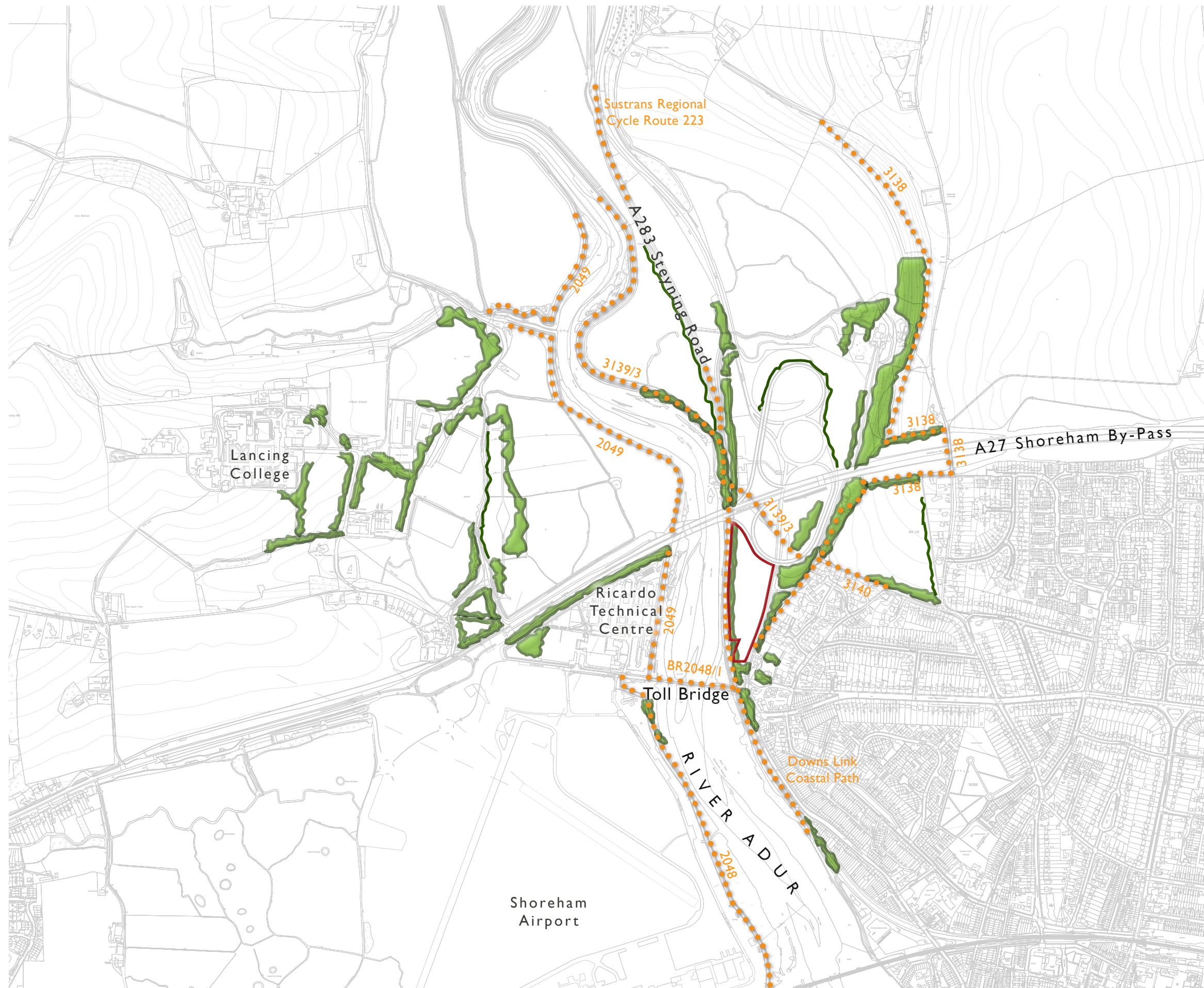




KEY

- Site Boundary
- Lancing-Shoreham Local Landscape Gap formerly 'Strategic Gap'
- Conservation Area
- South Downs National Park
- Site of Special Scientific Interest/Local Nature
- Public Open Space
- Landmark Listed Buildings
- Other Listed Buildings

Shoreham
Figure 2. Environmental
Context Plan



KEY



Site Boundary



Significant Vegetation

PRoWs

3c



Footpaths



Scale 1: 10 000 at A3






Shoreham
Figure 3.Vegetation and Public Rights of Way

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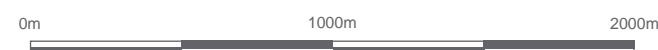


- KEY
-  Site Boundary
 -  Approximate Zone of Visual Influence
 -  Photographic Viewpoint
(See Figure 5 for Photographs)

Shoreham
Figure 4. Zone of Visual Influence
and Viewpoint Locations



Scale 1: 25 000 at A3





Viewpoint 1: View south from Downs Link (Sustrans Regional Cycle Route 79) Coastal Path



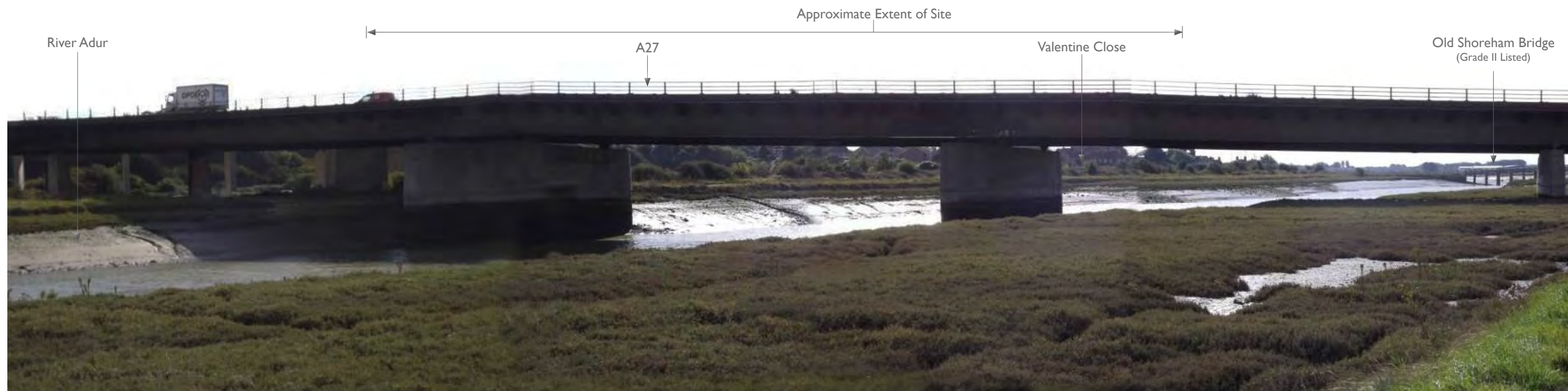
Viewpoint 2: View northwards towards the Site from the entrance to Valentine Close, Steyning Road



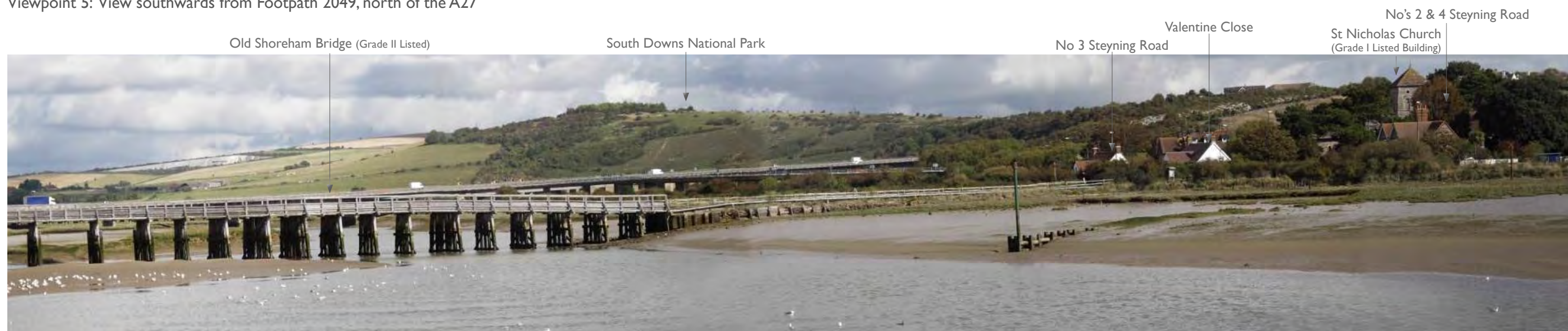
Viewpoint 3: View from the corner of Old Shoreham Bridge and Footpath 2049



Viewpoint 4: View from Old Shoreham Bridge



Viewpoint 5: View southwards from Footpath 2049, north of the A27



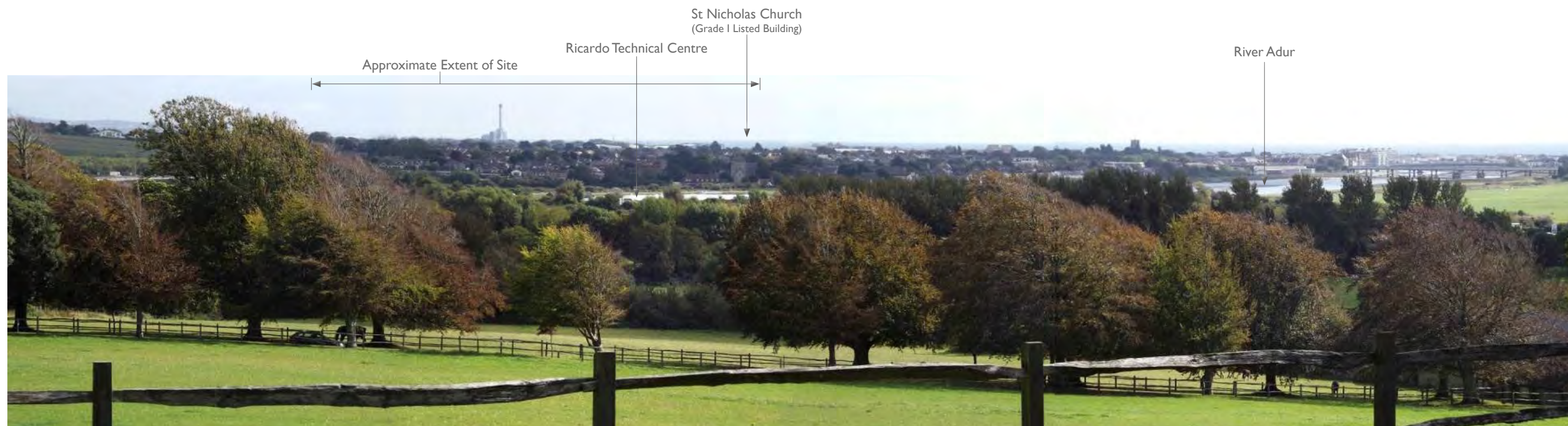
Viewpoint 6: View from Footpath 2048, east of Shoreham Airport airfield looking northwards towards Old Shoreham Bridge



Viewpoint 7: View from the grounds of St Nicholas Church



Viewpoint 8: View from Shoreham Airport Terminal Building



Viewpoint 9: View from the car park in Lancing College



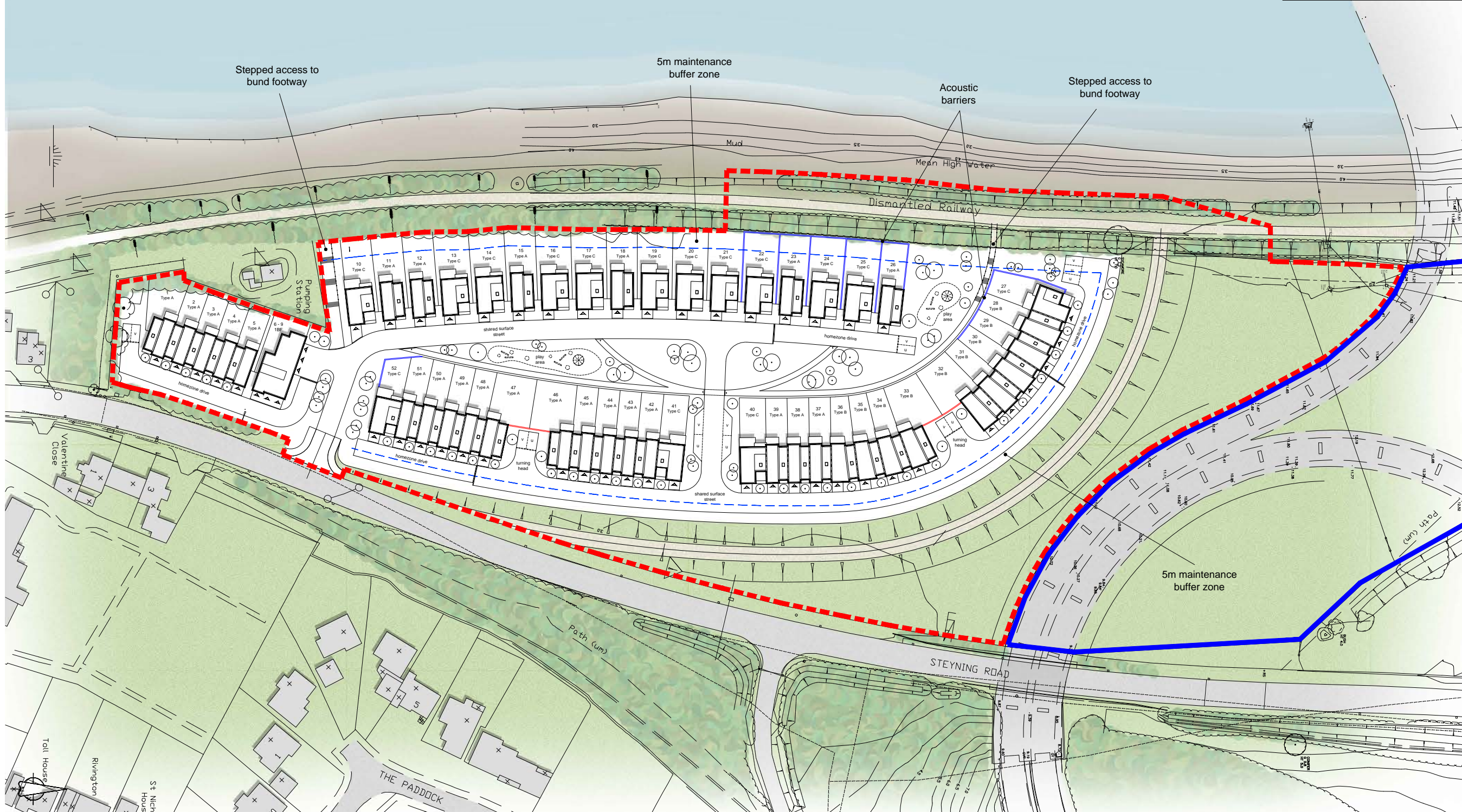
Viewpoint 10: View from Mill Hill, South Downs National Park



Viewpoint 11: View from Mill Hill Road Bridge

For Illustrative Purposes Only

CDM 2015 Health & Safety Information
This information relates only to Significant Hazards identified on this drawing and is to be read in conjunction with the Designer's Risk Assessment Register.



- Site Key -
- Proposed Application Boundary
 - Under Clients Ownership
 - Proposed 3.5m Acoustic Barrier
 - Proposed 2.5m Acoustic Barrier

Client's Name
Cobbetts Developments

Job Title
Steyrning Road

Drawing Title
Proposed Site Layout - Draft

Scale
1:500 @ A1 / 1:1000 @ A3
metres 10 20 30 40

Drawn
LT

Checked
PF

Date
26.10.16

Job No
6393

Drawing No
002

Rev
B

Status

INFORMATION

B 01.12.16 Layout updated to reflect acoustic information LT PF
A 17.11.16 Updated to comments LT PF
Rev Date Revision Details Dr Ch

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CAD Plot date: 11/12/2016 - 10:20:47 6393 site layout.dwg

Shoreham
Figure 6. Proposed Development

NTS at A3

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Guidance

Although an informal assessment at this stage the approach reflects guidance in The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment's (2013) publication – *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition*.

Baseline Data Collection

The assessment was carried out using available OS mapping and a visit to the site and its surrounding area in September 2014 to verify and assess likely effects combined with a review of associated documents. The following documents were of particular relevance and were used to aid the assessment:

The Site boundary plan

The Development Plan documents with particular note of areas of designated landscape and townscape value

Local Landscape Character Assessments

Urban Fringe Study Report (2006)

Shiels Flynn Report (2012) and Updates (2016)

Planning Statement and Scheme Design by ECE Architects

The following exercises have been used to aid the assessment:

The Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) of the Site, assuming low rise residential development, has been assessed to determine the visual envelope within which such development is likely to be significant in views. This is defined using mapping, the site visit and photographs from the site visit and professional judgement. A description of the extent of the ZVI and an explanation of the determining influences which defined it is included in the visual assessment below.

A brief assessment of the likely type, numbers and sensitivity of visual receptors (i.e. people who might be affected by views of the site) within the ZVI.

Photographs from various representative viewpoints. These were taken in September 2014 when deciduous trees are in full leaf. However consideration has been given to the 'worst-case scenario' in terms of potential views of development on the Site during the winter.

Criteria for Defining the 'Sensitivity' of Landscape and Visual Receptors

In defining the Baseline Conditions an assessment of the sensitivity of each of the landscape or townscape features and visual receptors is assessed in order to provide a basis for judging the likely effects. 'Sensitivity' assessment is made up of judgements of the 'susceptibility to change' of the resource or receptor arising from the specific proposal, in this case a residential scheme on the edge of an existing settlement, and the 'value' attached to the resource, receptor or view. The highest value is usually only associated with heritage assets or designated landscapes.

The criteria used are based on policy and designations, the relevant Landscape Character Area(s), the site visit assessment and the type of development change:

High Sensitivity - Landscape/townscape or features of distinctive character in good condition/high quality perceived as being of interest at the regional/national level. A highly valued landscape considered susceptible to even very small changes.

High-Moderate Sensitivity - Landscape/townscape or features of distinctive character, in good condition/high-moderate quality. May be of importance at a local level and susceptible to change.

Moderate Sensitivity - Landscape/townscape or features of moderate strength of character/visual interest, and moderate condition/quality. Considered to be reasonably tolerant to some change.

Low Sensitivity - Landscape/townscape or features in generally poor condition/quality, often including visual detractors such as power lines, industrial or derelict land or inappropriate built forms with low aesthetic value, visual interest or sense of cohesion, and low value and considered potentially tolerant of substantial change.

The criteria used to determine the relative sensitivity of visual receptors are as follows:

High Sensitivity - local residents with direct, close or widespread views and recreational users of the Public Rights of Ways (PROWs) and public open spaces (walkers, cyclists, horse riders etc.) who are orientated towards the Site and likely to be in the location to enjoy the view, particularly in high value/designated landscapes.

Moderate Sensitivity - local residents with oblique and longer distance views and recreational users of the PROWs and public open spaces who are not primarily orientated towards the development.

Low Sensitivity – local residents and recreational users of the PROWs and public open spaces with far views or partially obstructed views in which the Site would form a minor component. Motorists and public transport users generally likely to be travelling for purposes other than to enjoy the view and employees who are usually undertaking activities other than to enjoy views.

Effects and their Magnitude of Change

The landscape and visual effects are considered separately. Landscape effects are created by changes to the character and quality of the landscape and townscape, and visual effects are changes experienced by the receptors of views. As the design and layout of the development is not yet known this informal assessment identifies landscape 'sensitivities' and recommends a range of mitigation measures such as the orientation, scale, mass and height of development in order for it to respect the landscape features and so to relate to its surroundings. Where pertinent (such as in relation to residual effects) a distinction is made between Year 1 of the scheme and Year 15 after implementation of key landscapes and planting to account for a period of growth and maturity.

The magnitude of change on landscape/townscape and visual amenity is classified as follows:

Substantial: total and permanent loss or considerable alteration to key features of the landscape and townscape and introduction of elements entirely incongruous with the surrounding landscape/townscape character; or where the proposed scheme or elements of the scheme would dominate the view.

Moderate: moderate changes to key features of the landscape or townscape, introduction of elements that are prominent but not substantially incongruous with the surrounding character, partial obstruction of important views.

Slight: minor loss or alteration to the landscape, introduction of elements not entirely incongruous with the surrounding townscape; or where the proposed scheme or elements of the scheme would cause only a minor change in the overall view.

Negligible: virtually imperceptible change in landscape and townscape character, or a visual change that is likely to be a very minor element of the view and virtually imperceptible.

The magnitude of changes to landscape character and features depends upon the nature and scale of change. The magnitude of changes to visual amenity depends upon the extent of the view affected, the distance away and the likely level of integration of the development in the view.

Significance of Effects Criteria

Distinction is made between temporary and permanent effects where relevant. The level of significance of effects is determined by correlating the 'sensitivity' with the 'magnitude of change' of the landscape or the visual receptors, as set out below.

Table A1: Effect Significance based upon the Sensitivity of the landscape/receptor and the Magnitude of Change

Importance of Receptor	Magnitude of Change			
	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible
High Sensitivity	Major	Major	Moderate	Negligible
High - Moderate Sensitivity	Major	Major-moderate	Moderate-minor	Negligible
Moderate Sensitivity	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Low Sensitivity	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Neutral

The above table is only a framework to aid consistency of reporting and provide an initial indication of the likely significance of effect arising. Given the criteria represent a continuum or continuous gradation the use of this framework also requires the application of professional judgement and awareness of the relative balance of importance between sensitivity and magnitude.

The landscape and visual significance criteria have been defined as follows using a common terminology consistent with a formal LVIA and/or ES:

Table A2: Effect Significance based on Sensitivity and the Magnitude of Change

Impact Category	Typical Description / example	Significant effect?
Major adverse	A large and detrimental change, likely or apparent exceeding of accepted (often legal) threshold. The proposals may be at complete variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape/townscape and are likely to damage, degrade or destroy characteristic features and their setting; or would cause a very noticeable deterioration in existing views.	Yes
Moderate adverse	A Moderate scale change which, although not beyond an accepted threshold, is still considered to be significant (due to scale, duration etc.). The proposals may be out of scale with the landscape/townscape, or at odds with the local landform or settlement pattern or would cause a noticeable deterioration in the existing view.	Yes
Minor adverse	A small change that, whilst adverse, is not significant and does not exceed legal or guideline standards. The proposals may not quite fit with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape / townscape; or where the scheme would cause a perceptible deterioration in the existing view.	No
Negligible adverse	A very small change that is so small and unimportant that it is considered acceptable to disregard. The proposals fit with the scale, landform and settlement pattern of the landscape/townscape; or would cause a very slight noticeable change in existing views.	No
Neutral	No appreciable or material change.	No
Minor beneficial	A small positive change, but not one that is likely to be a key factor in the overall balance of issues. The proposals fit with the landscape/townscape and may improve the quality of it as a resource; or improve existing views that may currently be influenced by poor townscape / dereliction.	No
Moderate beneficial	A Moderate scale change that is significant in that the baseline conditions are improved to the extent that guideline targets are contributed to. The proposals bring clear benefits to the quality of the landscape/townscape; or clearly improve existing views influenced by poor townscape / dereliction.	Yes
Major beneficial	A large and beneficial change, whereby the improvements to the baseline are significant and previously poor conditions are replaced by new legal compliance or a major contribution is made to national targets. The proposals bring substantial benefits to the quality of the landscape/townscape; or substantially improve existing views influenced by poor townscape / dereliction.	Yes