



Gladman Developments Ltd

**Swanstree Avenue, Sittingbourne**

**LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL**

September 2021

**FPCR Environment and Design Ltd**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been carried out for the proposed residential development at Swanstree Avenue, Sittingbourne by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd (FPCR). The purpose of this LVA study is to provide an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposals detailed in the planning application (Development Framework, 06302-FPCR-ZZ-ZZ-DR-L-0002) and Design and Access Statement (DAS).
- 1.2 FPCR is a multi-disciplinary environmental and design consultancy established over 60 years, with expertise in architecture, landscape, ecology, arboriculture, urban design, masterplanning and environmental impact assessment. The practice is a member of the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and is frequently called upon to provide expert evidence on landscape and visual issues at Public and Local Plan Inquiries.

### **Site Location**

- 1.3 Figures 1 and 2 show the location and context of the site.
- 1.4 The site is located to the south east of Sittingbourne, a town in Kent which is situated on the A2 between Chatham and Canterbury. The site lies to the southeast of Sittingbourne, off Swanstree Avenue and comprises 5.9ha of arable land. The site is broadly rectangular in shape and forms part of a medium sized arable landscape with shelter belt planting to the edges of fields, part of the site is an existing commercial orchard.
- 1.5 The site boundaries are defined by established trees and hedgerow. The north and west of the site is bordered by the existing residential settlement of Sittingbourne, while agricultural farmland is located adjacent to the boundary to the east and commercial orchards to the south. The villages of Rodmersham Green and Highsted lie further to the south and Chilton Manor Farm and housing located off Marjoram Drive are located to the west.

### **Proposed Development**

- 1.6 The proposed development is for a residential development comprising up to 135 dwellings along with associated public open space (POS), play and Green Infrastructure (GI) including attenuation features set within a landscape framework of retained and proposed GI.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 This LVA has been prepared based upon the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, in 2013. The assessment of Landscape Value also takes account of guidance in Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02-21 “Assessing landscape value outside national designations”.

2.2 In summary, the GLVIA3 states:

*“Landscape and Visual impact assessment (LVIA), is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity.”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 1.1.)

2.3 There are two components of LVIA:

- *“Assessment of landscape effects; assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;*
- *Assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 2.21.)

2.4 The GLVIA3 states:

*“LVIA can be carried out either as part of a broader EIA, or as a standalone ‘appraisal’ of the likely landscape and visual effects of a proposed development...”*

- *As a standalone ‘appraisal’ the process is informal and there is more flexibility, but the essence of the approach – specifying the nature of the proposed change or development; describing the existing landscape and the views and visual amenity of the area that may be affected; predicting the effects, although not their likely significance; and considering how those effects might be mitigated – still applies.”* (GLVIA paragraph 3.2)

2.5 The components of this report include: baseline studies; description and details of the landscape proposals and mitigation measures to be adopted as part of the scheme; and identification and description of likely effects arising from the proposed development.

2.6 In terms of baseline studies, the assessment provides an understanding of the landscape that may be affected, its constituent elements, character, condition and value. For the visual baseline, this includes an understanding of the area in which the development may be visible, the people who may experience views, and the nature of views.

### **Assessment of Landscape Effects**

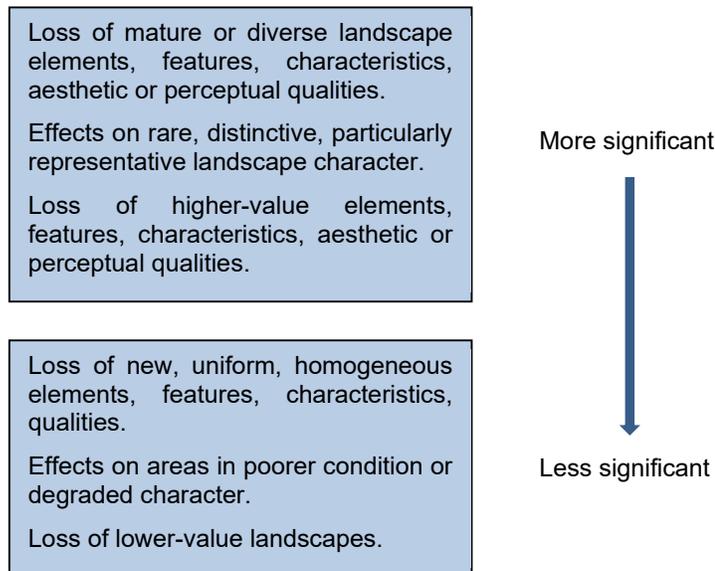
2.7 GLVIA3 states that *“An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 5.1).

2.8 The baseline landscape is described by reference to existing published Landscape Character Assessments and by a description of the site and its context.

2.9 A range of landscape effects can arise through development. These can include:

- Change or loss of elements, features, aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;

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



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

## Assessment of Visual Effects

- 2.15 An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. This appraisal describes the nature of the visual effects and, whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 0 Winter) and longer term (year 15 Summer).
- 2.16 The first stage in the assessment is to identify approximate visibility/ visibility mapping. This is done by either a computerised Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)<sup>1</sup>, or by manual methods using map study and field evaluation. A series of viewpoints are included within the assessment that are representative of views towards the site from surrounding visual receptors. Other views of the site are included where it supports the description and understanding of the site's landscape and visual characteristics.
- 2.17 The views also typically represent what can be seen from a variety of distances from the development and different viewing experiences.
- 2.18 It is important to remember that visual receptors are all people. For each affected viewpoint, the assessment considers both the susceptibility to change in views and the value attached to views.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Overall Landscape and Visual Effects**

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

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

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

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

### 3.0 PLANNING POLICY

#### National Planning Policy

##### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, July 2021)

- 3.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policy and in combination these policies give the Government's vision of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need for well-designed places, promoting healthy and safe communities and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 3.2 Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for the countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives include protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
- 3.3 Paragraph 174 states at part a) that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes and goes on to clarify that this should be in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan. Part b) states that planning policies and decisions should recognise *"the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside"*.
- 3.4 Paragraph 175 advises that:
- "Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries"*.
- 3.5 Paragraph 176 goes on to add:
- "Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues". And*
- "The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas."*
- 3.6 The site is not within or located within the setting of a nationally designated landscape. The site is located within an area identified as an Area of High Landscape Value within the Swale Borough Council Local Plan (2017) under policy DM24 Conserving and Enhancing Valued Landscapes. The character of the site and its immediate context is assessed within this report to help inform decisions regarding *"the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside"*. The potential to enhance green infrastructure networks is also considered.

##### Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

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

## Local Planning Policy

### Swale Borough Council (SBC) Local Plan (2017)

- 3.8 Bearing Fruits 2031, sets out the vision and overall development strategy for the borough for the period from 2014-2031, the Local Plan was adopted in 2017. The Local Plan is currently being reviewed, with consultation now closed (8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021), the review covers the period 2022 to 2038
- 3.9 The following policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the proposed development:
- Policy CP 4 - Requiring good design
  - Policy CP 7 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment - providing for green infrastructure
  - Policy DM 14 - General development criteria
  - Policy DM 24 - Conserving and enhancing valued landscapes (Areas of High Landscape Value - Kent Level)
  - Policy DM 25 - The separation of settlements – (Important Local Countryside Gaps)

## Other Relevant Strategies, Guidelines or Documents

### Swale Important Local Countryside Gaps

- 3.10 The Important Local Countryside Gap Study was commissioned to review the land around the settlements of Faversham and Teynham with the aim of:
- "identifying 'Important Local Countryside Gap' designations to safeguard the open and undeveloped character of the land between settlements and to guard against coalescence."*
- 3.11 The study does not review existing Important Local Gaps (Policy DM 25), which are identified within the adopted Local Plan (2017).

### Swale Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019)

- 3.12 SBC commissioned the landscape sensitivity assessment in September 2018, to assess the land surrounding the main urban areas and larger villages in the borough. The study provides an evidence base and assessment to inform the appropriate scale, form and location of future development to minimise harm to landscape and the setting of settlements
- 3.13 The Landscape Sensitivity Study identifies the site as located within the Assessment Area SE4, landscape sensitivity is indicated in relation to residential and employment areas. Overall, the assessment identifies the area SE4 as having a *moderate-high* sensitivity to potential residential and employment areas.
- 3.14 The Landscape Sensitivity Area SE4 covers a broad area to the south of Sittingbourne, while located in the wider Landscape Character Area 42, Tunstall Farmlands. The appraisal states the following in relation to the sensitivity area location and landscape character;
- "It comprises a combination of arable fields, areas of commercial orchards and horticulture. It includes the small rural villages of Tunstall and Heart's Delight as well as the larger development*

*of the Kent Science Park. The larger village of Borden is in the west of the area. The area includes some variation between the edge of Sittingbourne and the AONB, although the dry valley landform provides continuity.”*

Local Landscape Designation Review (2018)

- 3.15 The Local Landscape Designation Review was commissioned to review local landscape designations across the borough to assist the local planning process, as part of the new Local Plan to be adopted in 2022. The report does not consider local designations such as settlement gaps/green wedges or countryside gaps, which are subject to a different process and assessment. The objectives of the study are to:
- develop appropriate criteria and examine all the existing locally designated landscapes in the borough and their boundaries and make recommendations;
  - assess the result of the Valued Landscapes consultation undertaken by SBC in 2017/2018 and use as part of the evidence to inform the review;
  - consider the designation of new areas, including those recommended in the Interim Review (2014) and others;
  - recommend a refined set and mapped boundaries of proposed LLDs within Swale;
  - describe and evaluate the special qualities and significance of the agreed LLDs through the production of Statements of Significance.
- 3.16 The findings of the Local Landscape Review are outlined in the Statement of Significance, which are based on the evaluations within this report.

Local Landscape Designation Review, Statements of Significance Rodmersham, Milstead and Highsted Dry Valley

- 3.17 Following on from the Local Landscape Designations Review, Statements of Significance for each of the recommended Local Landscape Areas were produced. The site is covered by the Statement of Significance, Kent Downs, Rodmersham, Milstead and Highsted Dry Valley.
- 3.18 The extent of the Kent Downs, Rodmersham, Milstead and Highsted Dry Valley, is covered by a broad area extending from Woodstock Road, Crossways and Swanstree Avenue to the north, to the boundary of the PRoW 0311/ZU34A to the east, encompassing Highsted, Cromer’s Wood and down to the M2 to the south. The boundary extends towards Ruins Barn Road, Broadoak Road, Highsted Wood and the Kent Science Park to the south west.
- 3.19 Within the section on Landscape Quality (condition and intactness) the area is described as follows;
- “...Development includes the linear settlement of Highsted along the lower valley road and more extensive development adjoining the area along Broadoak Road at Kent Science Park. The area on the immediate edge of Sittingbourne also has a more urban fringe character.”*

SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) (2019)

The SHLAA is a high level assessment that provides evidence and identifies future areas of land 'suitable', 'available' and 'achievable' for housing, employment and other uses for the period of the local plan review. *"The primary role of the SHLAA is to identify sites that are suitable and deliverable for development to help address identified development needs for housing, employment and other uses."*

- 3.20 The site is identified with the SHLAA with the reference 18/021, Chilton Manor Farm, Highsted Road. Under the heading Achievability, the SHLAA states:

*"Subject to further consideration of any utility/infrastructure requirements, there is a reasonable prospect that the site could be developed over a certain period of time. The site is considered to be achievable."*

- 3.21 The Assessment Outcome, states that the site is *"Suitable and deliverable."*

Kent Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

- 3.22 This SPD promotes high standards of design and construction through *"promoting a common approach to the main principles which underlie Local Planning Authorities' criteria for assessing planning applications"*.

## 4.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS

### Landscape Character

#### National Character

- 4.1 National Character Area (NCA) profiles have been prepared by Natural England for the 159 NCA's defined across England. These NCA profiles include a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area's characteristics.
- 4.2 **Figure 3** illustrates the NCA's and other defined character areas within the context of the Site. The site is situated within the National Character Area 113 - North Kent Plain. The following key characteristics are relevant:
- A diverse coastline (both in nature and orientation), made up of cliffs, intertidal sand and mud, salt marshes, sand dunes and shingle beaches. Much of the coastal hinterland has been built on, and the coast itself has been modified through the construction of sea walls, harbours and piers.
  - Large arable/horticultural fields with regular patterns and rectangular shapes predominating, and a sparse hedgerow pattern.
  - Orchards and horticultural crops characterise central and eastern areas and are often enclosed by poplar or alder shelterbelts and scattered small woodlands.
  - Woodland occurs on the higher ground around Blean and in smaller blocks to the west, much of it ancient and of high nature conservation interest.
  - The Stour and its tributaries are important features of the eastern part of the NCA, draining eastwards into the North Sea, with associated wetland habitats including areas of grazing marsh, reedbeds, lagoons and gravel pits. The River Medway cuts through the NCA as it flows into the Thames Estuary.
  - Other semi-natural habitats include fragments of neutral, calcareous and acid grassland, and also heathland.
  - The area has rich evidence of human activity from the Palaeolithic period. Key heritage assets include Roman sites at Canterbury, Reculver and Richborough; the Historic Dockyard at Chatham; military remains along the coast; and historic parks and buildings.
  - Large settlements and urban infrastructure (including lines of pylons) are often visually dominant in the landscape, with significant development around Greater London and the Medway Towns, as well as around towns further east and along the coast. Major rail and road links connect the towns with London.
- 4.3 The site is located close to the southern boundary of NCA 113 and is therefore close to the boundary with the adjacent NCA 119: North Downs, although there is a lack on intervisibility with the site from this NCA.

## Regional

### The Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004)

- 4.4 The Landscape Assessment of Kent 2004 carried out for Kent County Council identifies that the site lies within the regional landscape character area 'Fruit Belt'.
- 4.5 Key Characteristics for this character area are as follows:
- Rural/agricultural landscape.
  - Complex fruit, hops, pastoral and arable divided by small woodlands.
  - Small scattered villages and farms. Rolling landscape with distinct valleys.
  - Large pockets of flat, open farmland, especially in coastal areas.
  - The M2 & A2-ribbon development and urban features.

## Local

### Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal (2011)

- 4.6 The Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal was commissioned in 2009 to review the Swale Landscape Character Assessment and the appraisal was adopted in 2011. The purpose of the study was to incorporate landscape and biodiversity elements in to one report. The appraisal states the following;

*“Not all areas within a landscape character area exhibit all the characteristics of that area and it is usual to have some pockets with very few distinctive features. Often this is due to changes in land use that have resulted in the loss of landscape features, or the addition of features not typically associated with that area. The proximity of the built environment often affects the condition of the landscape, particularly on the boundaries where pressures are greatest. The landscape character areas therefore identify common characteristics across an area rather than grouping areas that are identical. Where there are marked changes across an area these are described and, where appropriate, different guidelines provided.”*

- 4.7 The appraisal identifies the site as located within the Landscape Character Area 42. Tunstall Farmlands. The following key characteristics are relevant:
- Gently rising North Downs dip slope overlain with drift deposits of Thanet and Bagshot beds and clay-with-flints.
  - Dry valley to the east with a strong sense of remoteness given the proximity to the urban edge.
  - Landscape around Kent Science Park maintains features characteristic of former parkland.
  - Areas of traditional orchard lost to agricultural intensification. Where present many orchards mature or remnant and grazed.
  - Fragmentation of hedgerows along lanes and internal field boundaries lost with enlargement of field sizes.
  - Narrow winding lanes.
  - Former quarries with nature conservation interest.

- Woodland is ancient and rare.
  - Historic villages and hamlets maintain rural character despite influence of modern development.
  - Strong, well defined urban edge.
  - M2 motorway and pylons detract from rural tranquillity.
- 4.8 The Tunstall Farmlands Landscape Character area is considered to be in moderate condition and an area of high sensitivity, with guidelines to “...*conserve and restore. the distinctive features whilst improving the general landscape within which they are set.*”

### **Designations**

- 4.9 This section considers only the relevant landscape designations and strategies in the context of the landscape and visual issues of the site and the proposed development.
- 4.10 The site is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory landscape designations covering the site such as AONBs or National Parks.

### **Area of High Landscape Value**

- 4.11 The site falls within an Area of High Landscape Value (Kent Level) locally designated within the adopted Local Plan, Policy DM24.
- 4.12 The extent of the Area of High Landscape Value extends from the southern boundary of the disused Highsted Quarries, Swanstree Avenue, Blenheim Road and Longridge to the north, the boundary of the PRoW 0311/ZU34A to the east, encompassing Highsted, Cromer’s Wood and down to the M2 to the south. The boundary extends towards Ruins Barn Road, Broadoak Road, Highsted Wood and the Kent Science Park to the south west.

### **Important Local Countryside Gaps**

- 4.13 The site is located within the “*Sittingbourne and the satellite villages of Bapchild, Rodmersham Green, Tunstall, Borden, Chestnut Street, Bobbing and Iwade*” Important Local Countryside Gap, one of three Important Local Country Gaps as identified within the adopted Local Plan, Policy DM24.

### **Listed Buildings (refer to Figure 4)**

- 4.14 There are no listed buildings within or adjacent to the site. The nearest listed buildings to the application site are as follows:
- Chilton Manor Grade II listed 250m to the north.
  - Fulston Manor Farmhouse grade II 500m to the west.

### Conservation Area

- 4.15 The Conservation Area is located within a linear zone along the High Street which is based on the ancient route of Watling Street. Rodmersham Green Conservation Area is also situated 750m due south of the application site. There is no intervisibility between the application site and Conservation Areas due to topography and built form.

### Public Rights of Way

- 4.16 The following public footpaths traverse the application site:
- PROW ZU31
  - PROW ZU30 (Located adjacent to the site to the east)

### Topography

- 4.17 The following should be read in conjunction with Figure 5.
- 4.18 The site is broadly level, falling from the south east to the north west towards Swanstree Avenue. The site is located at approximately 36m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) to the south east and approximately 29m AOD to the north west.
- 4.19 Immediately adjacent to the site the topography falls towards Muddy Lane (PRoW ZU35) at approximately 25m AOD located off Swanstree Avenue at a distance of approximately 300m AOD to the north east. To the east of the Muddy Lane the topography rises steeply to approximately 50m AOD, approximately 550m from the site boundary.
- 4.20 To the south east of the application site the levels slope up to higher ground on a localised ridge at approximately 55m AOD. This natural feature is characteristic of the North Downs and encloses Sittingbourne's southern settlement edge.
- 4.21 To the south along the plateau created by this scarp lies the village of Rodmersham Green. The village of Highsted adjoins Rodmersham Green, and lies within the valley to the south west of the site. The M2 motorway lies approximately 2.5km to the south of the site and the wider countryside setting between is characterised by undulating pastoral and arable farmland.

### Site and Immediate Context

- 4.22 The site comprises an area of 5.9 ha of agricultural land. The site comprises of small scale fields primarily in use as a commercial fruit orchard, with a number of large polytunnels located in the centre of the site. The southern fields are divided by existing hedgerows which run east to west.
- 4.23 The boundaries of the application site vary in character. The northern boundary adjacent to Swanstree Avenue is defined by a chain link fence with an established hedgerow beyond. The PRoW ZU30 is located adjacent to the site boundary to the east. The route of the PRoW is bordered by a post and wire fence on either side, with arable crops beyond. An existing orchard is located adjacent to the site to the south. The boundary of Chilton Manor Farm is bordered by a post and rail fence along the boundary of the site to the west.
- 4.24 Existing residential development of Highsted, Haysel, Farm Crescent, Harvey Drive and Peregrine Drive back on to Swanstree Avenue, located to the north. Chilton Manor Farm is located to the

west, while the housing located off Marjoram Drive is located beyond Highsted Road further to the west.

- 4.25 The character of Sittingbourne's southern fringe is predominantly residential, with a range of local facilities including shops, schools and public houses. The town centre lies approximately 1 mile to the north west of the site.

### Landscape Value

- 4.26 In terms of "landscape value" it is appropriate to examine the role of the site and its immediate context in terms of the range of local factors set out in LI TGN 02-21, and summarised in the methodology. This considers the landscape in terms of a range of factors as set out below. As a starting point, landscape designations have been considered.
- 4.27 Landscape Designations: The site and its wider landscape context (including its Visual Envelope (VE) (Figure 4) are not subject to any national landscape designations.
- 4.28 The site is located within an Area of High Landscape Value (Kent Level) as identified within the adopted Local Plan.
- 4.29 Natural Heritage: The site contains existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees across the site which form the field parcel boundaries to the arable land and commercial fruit orchard of Chilton Manor Farm.
- 4.30 The Ecological Appraisal submitted to support the application states: *"The Site is dominated by arable habitats and cultivated orchards bordered by treelines and fences. Such habitats comprised common and widespread species and were considered to be of no more than local importance."*
- 4.31 Cultural Heritage: There are no known heritage assets within site or immediate vicinity which might be affected by the development proposals.
- 4.32 Landscape Condition. The PRoW that cross the site are in good accessible condition, while other elements of the landscape are fragmented by a mix of arable land, commercial fruit orchards, and polytunnels. These are divided up across the site by post and wire fencing, gated access points and vehicular farm access off Swanstree Avenue.
- 4.33 The Arboricultural Assessment submitted to support the application states: *"With the exception of one hedgerow which was of moderate quality, the tree stock was of low quality due to inhibiting features and the commercial nature of the orchard stock."*
- 4.34 Associations: The site is not known to have any particular associations with any particular people e.g. artists or writers, or historic events that contribute to perceptions of the natural beauty of the area.
- 4.35 Distinctiveness: The site comprises of a number of small scale arable fields primarily in use as a commercial fruit orchard, with a number of large polytunnels located in the centre of the site. While the site is located adjacent to Swanstree Avenue and the existing residential context of Sittingbourne.
- 4.36 Recreational Value: The site is in private ownership and the majority of the site is not currently publicly accessible, however the PRoW ZU31 crosses the northern extent of the site, accessed off Swanstree Avenue, heading east to west. The PRoW ZU30 runs parallel to the site adjacent to the east. While the PRoW are accessible for recreational use and views across the site are possible

for users of the routes, the routes are enclosed on both sides by post and wire fencing. The Site has no other recreational use.

- 4.37 Perceptual (Scenic): Views are contained within the surrounding context of the site of the commercial orchard, contained by the rising topography to the east and south. Views are further restricted by the commercial orchards and woodland of the disused quarry to the south, while views to the north and west are contained by the adjacent settlement edge of Sittingbourne. The site is not considered to be of particular scenic quality, being influenced by the adjacent urban edge of Sittingbourne and audible nature of Swanstree Avenue and Highsted Road.
- 4.38 Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity): The site is a managed working landscape and located adjacent to the settlement edge of Sittingbourne, while the site is not particularly tranquil or 'wild' due to audible nature of traffic passing Swanstree Avenue and Highsted Road.
- 4.39 Functional aspects: The site is a functioning arable landscape comprising of arable land and commercial fruit orchards.
- 4.40 In conclusion and having appraised the above factors it is judged that the site and the immediate landscape is of **medium** landscape value.

## Visual Baseline

- 4.41 A visual appraisal has been undertaken for the site. This has explored the nature of the existing visual amenity of the area and sought to establish the approximate visibility of the site from surrounding locations and receptors. A series of photo viewpoints have been selected which support this analysis.
- 4.42 Photographs have been taken to illustrate a view from a specific vantage point, or to demonstrate a representative view for those receptors that are moving through the landscape, e.g. rights of way users. The photographs may demonstrate varying degrees of visibility and include both short and long range views. The photographs were taken on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and seasonal differences have been taken into account when determining the visual effects on these receptors.
- 4.43 'Photo Viewpoints', as referred to in this report are 'Type 1 Visualisations' or 'Annotated Viewpoint Photographs', as referred to in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note on 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' (TGN 06/19).

## Photo Viewpoints

- 4.44 An assessment of the likely visual effects of the proposed development upon surrounding receptors is detailed in the subsequent section. Figure 6 details the location of the Photo Viewpoints and Figure 7.1-7.16 illustrates the photo viewpoints. They are briefly described below.

### Viewpoint 1

- 4.45 This viewpoint represents the residential receptors A that back on to Swanstree Avenue and the vehicular receptor K, of Swanstree Avenue located adjacent to the site to the north. The viewpoint also represents users of the PRoW receptors F and G as they join to the footpath along Swanstree Avenue from the north. Swanstree Avenue is bordered by an established native hedgerow on either side of the route, viewing towards the site to the south. Views along Swanstree Avenue can be gained east and west, with views primarily focussed on the vehicular route and boundary hedgerow. Glimpsed views in to the site can be gained through breaks in the hedgerow, where the PRoW access the site.

### Viewpoint 2

- 4.46 This photo viewpoint represents views possible for users of the PRoW (0311/ZU31) receptor G located along the site boundary to the north, viewing across the site to the south east. The PRoW is bordered on either side of the route through the site by a post and wire fence, with areas of grassland and arable land on either side of the route. A tall existing hedgerow is prominent along the north eastern boundary of the site that encloses views within the site, restricting further views to the north east. Views can be gained across the site from this location, allowing for views towards higher ground beyond the site to the east and the polytunnels associated with the adjacent Chilton Manor Farm to the south.

### Viewpoint 3

- 4.47 This photo viewpoint represents views possible for users of the PRoW (0311/ZU31) receptor G located to the east, on the approach to the site to the west. The PRoW is bordered on either side of the route by a post and wire fence with arable land in the foreground on either side of the route.

The tall existing hedgerow located along the north eastern extent of the site is located in the middle ground of the view, directly ahead along the PRoW. The hedgerow restricts views in to the northern extent of the site from this location, while glimpsed views above the hedgerow can be gained of the ridgeline and side elevation of an existing property located off Swanstree Avenue. The topography rises subtly to the south of the PRoW, restricting views to Chilton Manor Farm and the associated polytunnels, views can be gained beyond to the mature trees located along Highsted Road.

#### Viewpoint 4

- 4.48 This viewpoint is located adjacent to the boundary of the site to the east, located along PRoW (0311/ZU30), receptor F and represents views possible for users of the route. The PRoW route is bordered by a post and wire fence and open views can be gained across the site to the north, south and west. In the foreground views across the site consist of arable land and orchards associated with Chilton Manor Farm. Views across arable land, existing hedgerows and higher ground can be gained further to the east. Views can be gained across the site towards the site boundary to the north and west, with glimpsed views of housing located along Swanstree Avenue, the side elevations of properties off Harvey Drive, Farm Crescent, Haysel to the north and Highsted Road to the west. The existing orchard and polytunnels are visible and located within the site to the south.

#### Viewpoint 5 and 6

- 4.49 Viewpoint 5 represents views possible for vehicular users of Highsted Road (Receptor M) and users of the PRoW 0311/ZU30 (Receptor F) as it joins Highsted Road. Views are primarily focussed along the vehicular route that is bordered on either side by mature vegetation. From Highsted Road, glimpsed, fleeting and side on views can be gained to the access point of the PRoW 0311/ZU30 to the east.
- 4.50 Photo viewpoint 6 represents views possible for the vehicular receptors of Highsted Road. Views are primarily focussed along the vehicular route north to south. Views beyond the road boundary vegetation are focussed on orchards located adjacent to the road to the east, while views of the existing properties located along Marjoram Drive are restricted by mature vegetation to the west.

#### Viewpoint 7

- 4.51 Residential receptors of Chilton Manor Farm (D) and the Vehicular receptors of Highsted Road (M) are represented by view point 7. The photo viewpoint is located at the entrance to Chilton Manor Farm, with side on, fleeting but narrow views possible towards the site beyond the farm. Views along Highsted Road are narrow and bordered on either side by mature vegetation.

#### Viewpoint 8

- 4.52 This photo viewpoint is located at the junction of Swanstree Avenue (Receptor K), Brenchley Road and Highsted Road (Receptor M) along with Receptor N, Highsted Grammar School and Fulston Manor School. Views are primarily focussed along the vehicular routes with both routes bordered by mature vegetation. The north west corner of the site is visible, defined by a red brick retaining wall, with a hedge, post and wire fence and signage for Chilton Manor Farm beyond.

Viewpoint 9

- 4.53 This viewpoint represents the residential receptors of Wadham Place, receptor B and views for users of the PRoW 0311/ZU30 receptor (F) located beyond Swanstree Avenue to the north. Views from this section of the PRoW are primarily focussed on the open space associated with the housing located along Wadham Place. Views along the route are enclosed by the existing two storey dwellings that front and or back on to the open space, views out towards the wider area are limited, while any potential views towards the site would be located along the narrow PRoW route, beyond the existing housing in the centre of the view.

Viewpoint 10 and 11.

- 4.54 These views look south west representing views possible for road users, from the junction of Wadham Place and Swanstree Avenue, with residential properties occupying the northern side of Swanstree Avenue with properties facing southwards. A post and wire fence is located along the boundary of Swanstree Avenue to the south, with views across arable land and hedgerow boundaries beyond. The topography is undulating, with Swanstree Avenue rising from Wadham Place towards the site to the west. Distant views can also be gained towards the undulating topography towards Oast Cottages to the south.

Viewpoint 12.

- 4.55 This viewpoint represents views possible for the users of the PRoW (0311/ZU30 and 0311/ZU35), receptors G and H. The viewpoint is located at the junction of the two PRoW 0311/ZU30 heading east-west and 0311/ZU35 heading towards Muddy Lane to the north. The viewpoint sits low in the valley with the topography rising in the centre of the view to the west, with the site located at a distance beyond the ridgeline of the elevated landform. An intervening hedgerow is located halfway up the valley side, with distant glimpsed views beyond to the hedgerow along the north eastern section of the site. Glimpsed views above the hedgerow can be gained of the ridge line and side elevation of an existing property located off Swanstree Avenue.
- 4.56 The PRoW 0311/ZU35 sits low in the shallow valley and is bordered by mature vegetation along the routes western boundary, while the eastern boundary is open with views possible of the rear elevations of the properties located off Blenheim Road, Longridge along with the rising topography across arable land to the east.

Viewpoints 13 and 14

- 4.57 These photo viewpoints represent Receptor G, users of PRoW 0311/ZU31 between approximately 400-600m beyond the east of the site, where the route begins to rise up the valley side towards the Oast Cottages where the PRoW joins the Restricted Byway - 0311/ZU34A. Located in an elevated position at a local high point of approximately 50m AOD views are possible down across the site, to adjacent properties off Swanstree Avenue and Highsted Road and to the wider context of Sittingbourne as you approach the site from the east. The topography begins to fall away beyond the Oast Cottages to the east.

Viewpoint 15 and 16

- 4.58 Viewpoints 15 and 16 represent views from footpath ZU34A at the top of the local ridge to the east of the site and represents views from users of this footpath (Receptor I). Glimpsed views of the site

are visible along the ridge from this footpath, where breaks in the hedgerow and tree line in the foreground appear. In the middle ground views are across arable fields, with the topography falling, before rising towards the site. From this elevated location partial views can be gained of the site, while seen in the adjacent wider context of existing housing located off Swanstree Avenue, Highsted Road and the wider context of Sittingbourne.

#### Viewpoint 17

- 4.59 This viewpoint represents views possible for users of the PRoW 0211/ZR208 located at a distance from the site to the east. Views in the foreground are primarily focussed on the PRoW route across arable lane, with views in the middle ground focussed on mature hedgerows and trees. The gentle undulating topography and intervening vegetation enclose the PRoW route to views directly towards the site to the west, from this location the site is not visible. Distant views can be gained to the north, where the topography falls away allowing for views of Sittingbourne and the wider landscape beyond.

#### Viewpoint 18

- 4.60 Viewpoint 18 represents views from footpath 0211/ZR210, the Oast Cottages are located to the north and Rodmersham Green is located to the south of the footpath route. Heading north of Rodmersham Green the PRoW is located in an elevated position in relation to the surrounding landscape, while on a broadly level plateau. Views are confined to the arable land in the foreground by subtle undulating topography and the hedgerow in the middle of the view, the route of the PRoW sits low in the landscape heading towards the Oast Cottages. Views towards the site and Sittingbourne are not possible along this route due to intervening trees and hedgerows along the ridgeline and the subtle nature of the undulating topography. Distant views can be gained beyond the Oast Cottages to the Swale Way bridge, overhead transmission towers and wind turbines located to the north of Sittingbourne.

#### Viewpoint 19,20 and 21

- 4.61 These represent views through gaps in hedgerows along Stockers Hill, Rodmersham Green, the views look across arable land at the top of a plateau towards the Oast Cottages to the north. Some glimpsed views of housing within Sittingbourne are possible beyond the ridge line in the centre of the view however, due to the existing topography views generally look across Sittingbourne to the estuary and Medway to the north. Views towards the site are not possible, with the site sitting low in the landscape, beyond the ridgeline. The power station on the Isle of Grain is visible within the views along with a number of industrial developments to the north. These viewpoints represent three isolated gaps in the hedgerow along this road, where views to the north of Sittingbourne are possible, and along the remainder of the road views are filtered by the existing mature hedgerow.

#### Viewpoint 22

- 4.62 This viewpoint looks northeast from the junction of Highsted Road, with Stockers Hill and Cromer Road representing vehicular receptors from Highsted Road (Receptor M). The vehicular route heads north, flanked on either side by boundary scrub, individual and groups of trees before passing through woodland located to the south of the site and Sittingbourne. An existing farm building sits in the middle ground of the view, low in the landscape with the topography rising to the north, and steeply to the east and west.

### Viewpoint 23

- 4.63 Viewpoint J represents views possible for the receptors of PRoW 0276/ZR159, located approximately 1.2km-2km to the south of the site and to the south of the village of Highsted. The PRoW rises to an elevated location south of Highsted, before linking to the Kent Science Park to the south. In the foreground the view is focussed on arable land, which the footpath route passes through. The middle ground is dominated by the village of Highsted sitting low in the valley, with the topography rising beyond to the village of Rodmersham located in an elevated position further to the east.
- 4.64 To the centre of the view, views can be gained along the shallow valley that is located to the east of the site. Beyond Highsted, views can be gained across arable land to the existing housing located off Swanstree Avenue along with views to the wider landscape beyond.
- 4.65 Views towards the site are restricted by intervening vegetation located in the middle ground of the view, woodland associated with the disused quarry to the south of Sittingbourne. Distant views can be gained to the left of the woodland with views of housing located within Sittingbourne and more distant views of the Swale Way bridge, overhead transmission towers and wind turbines located to the north of Sittingbourne.

### **Summary of Visual Baseline**

- 4.66 The baseline analysis results in a number of reasoned conclusions which are summarised below:
- The majority of the residential receptors with potential visual effects are located in close proximity to the site, such as housing located along Highsted Rd, Haysel, Farm Crescent, Harvey Drive, Peregrine Drive and Fallowfield. These receptors predominantly back or side on to the site;
  - There is the potential for visual effects on residential receptors located along Wadham Place and Swanstree Avenue for properties that front and or side on to Swanstree Avenue to the east;
  - Potential for visual effects from Chilton Manor Farm located adjacent to the site to the west;
  - Visual effects for residential receptors in the wider landscape to the east and south are restricted by the rising and undulating topography in the local landscape;
  - Visual effects for residential receptors located along Marjoram Drive adjacent to the site to the west are none, due to mature intervening vegetation located along the boundary of Highsted Road.
  - Visual effects for Highsted Grammar School and Fulston Manor School are limited to potential views from playing fields and sports pitches, while the schools are separated from the site by intervening vegetation;
  - For the PRoW 0311/ZU30 there are full to partial views of the site and its boundaries as you pass adjacent to the site.
  - Views from the PRoW 0311/ZU30 towards the site are limited to views in close proximity to the site, when located adjacent to the site access point off Swanstree Avenue. Views are restricted further to the north, due to intervening housing.

- Views towards the site from the PRoW 0311/ZU30 on the approach to the site from the south are restricted, due to intervening existing vegetation along the PRoW route, while the PRoW route is bordered by orchard planting further limiting any potential views.
- For PRoW 0311/ZU31 there are full to partial views towards the site and its boundaries on the approach to the site, as the route passes adjacent and through the site, east to west.
- For PRoW 0311/ZU31 views of the site vary along its route. Full views are possible of the site when located adjacent and passing through the site. While, potential views of the site vary from none to full views as visibility of the site varies due to the undulating and rising topography to the east;
- Views from the PRoW 0311/ZU31 towards the site are limited to views in close proximity to the site, when located adjacent to the site access point off Swanstree Avenue. Any potential views of the site further to the north, are restricted due to intervening housing.
- Views from PRoW receptors to the east are limited to glimpsed views through breaks in boundary along the PRoW - Restricted Byway - 0311/ZU35 route located in an elevated position to the east.
- Views from PRoW receptors in the wider landscape to the east and south are restricted due to distance, intervening vegetation and undulating topography.
- Views from vehicular receptors are limited to roads located in close proximity to the site, such as Swanstree Avenue located adjacent the site to the north and Highsted Road to the west.

## 5.0 LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

### Introduction

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

### Landscape Design and GI Objectives

5.2 The key objectives of the landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are to:

- Conserve all of the Site's perimeter trees and woodland cover where possible.
- Retain existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees and supplement and reinforce by proposed planting across the Site, the proposed planting will tie in to the adjacent existing GI context creating an attractive setting for the development.
- Provide public open space within the Site to provide accessible open space for the new and existing community. The development will be set within a strong green framework which draws upon and enhances what currently exists, to maximise recreational and wildlife value.
- An access point to the site will be provided off Swanstree Avenue.

### Landscape and Green Infrastructure (GI) Proposals

5.3 The landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are detailed in the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application. In summary these proposals include:

- Provide up to 2.09ha of land dedicated to landscape, GI, public open space (POS), play and habitat creation-representing approximately 35% of the total site area;
- Retention of the majority of existing hedgerows across the site, this will be reinforced with new native planting within the POS to strengthen the existing framework;
- New native planting will be used to help inform the public open spaces;
- On plot landscaping, including tree planting where practicable, will help further integrate the built development into its surroundings and soften its overall appearance;
- The focal public open spaces will occupy the central and northern extents of the Site with the proposed residential development occupying the centre of the site. These spaces will include formal play provision;
- Provide new tree planting within the GI such as new POS, landscape buffers along site perimeters in order to mitigate the visual impact of the development, increase the visual amenity and contribute to biodiversity in urban areas.
- Use materials and design details which are in keeping with the local character and complement the local architecture.

- Retain existing PROW and incorporate new routes to provide good connectivity through the site to the adjacent settlement edge;
- Incorporation of an attenuation basin to manage surface water run-off and gives opportunities for biodiversity enhancements.

### **Landscape Management**

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

## 6.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

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

### Landscape Effects

#### Construction

6.2 During the construction phase, some short-term effects upon the landscape would occur. Anticipated effects would primarily be caused by:

- Clearance and set up of the compound area;
- Construction of access road into the site from the northern boundary in order to facilitate site access via Swanstree Avenue;
- Building of new properties and roads; and
- Construction traffic, including HGVs and staff cars travelling to and from the site;

6.3 All construction work would be carried out in full accordance with best practice procedures to minimise and protect, as far as practicable, potentially adverse effects upon the local landscape character. Appropriate methods will be adopted to protect and retain trees and vegetation based upon BS5837.

6.4 The landscape effects during construction are assessed as being of a temporary nature and given that the timescales involved would be relatively short, this is considered to be of limited significance overall. Inevitably there would be some disruption to the site landscape character and its immediate surroundings during the construction phase, however it would be localised and limited in extent. Therefore, the landscape effects during construction are considered to be **moderate adverse** to **minor adverse** for wider landscape areas and **moderate adverse** for local areas and the site.

#### Operation (following Completion)

6.5 The following provides a summary of the landscape effects assessment included in Appendix B.

#### National Character Area

6.6 The site is located within the NCA 113 'North Kent Plain' which covers an extensive area. The proposed development gives opportunities to achieve some of the strategic opportunities identified in the NCA including SE04. *"Plan for the creation of significant new areas of green space and green corridors to provide a framework for new and existing development in urban areas and along major transport routes"*.

6.7 The proposed development will not result in any changes to the overall key characteristics of the NCA. While a number of low-quality commercial orchard trees (refer to Arboricultural Assessment) within the site would be lost, these would be replaced with proposed orchards within the site along with proposed GI and shelterbelts that will tie in to the existing GI network.

- 6.8 The sensitivity and value of the landscape will vary across this large character area and as the site occupies a very small area of this large NCA landscape effects are considered to be **negligible** on completion. The landscape effect at year 15 is assessed to be **negligible**.

The Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004)

- 6.9 At county level the Site lies within 'The Fruit Belt' character area. Similar to the National Character Area, this covers a wide and extensive area.
- 6.10 The proposed development is of a relatively modest scale and nature in the context of the broader LCA. The new development is located on a broadly level plateau adjacent to the existing settlement to the north and west.
- 6.11 Under the heading Landscape Actions the LCA states: *"Use the developing suburban edges of settlement to create new frameworks and enhance the definition of the change in land use with woodland blocks, and shelterbelts where appropriate."*
- 6.12 The proposals contribute to the Landscape Actions identified for the LCA. For instance, creating an urban edge using woodland blocks and shelterbelts along the boundary of the site to the east, integrating the proposals with the surrounding landscape setting.
- 6.13 The landscape effect on the LCA at completion are considered to be **minor adverse**, while the landscape effect at year 15 is assessed as **negligible** as the GI matures to help the development assimilate into its edge of settlement context.

Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal (2011)

- 6.14 At a borough wide level the site is assessed in the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal, while located within the Tunstall Farmlands LCA (no.42). Under Sensitivity the LCA states: *"The well defined urban edge of Sittingbourne is locally visible and here, the integrity and setting of some rural settlements is sensitive."*
- 6.15 The effect of the proposed development upon the character of the landscape at a site wide scale would be localised in its extent, with the primary change arising as a direct result of the replacement of predominately commercial orchards and some arable land with a residential development located adjacent to Sittingbourne to the north and west. the site is broadly level with the adjacent settlement and sits in the context of the adjacent development.
- 6.16 The proposed development will be well related to the existing settlement edge, retaining existing GI features such as hedgerows across the site, while set back beyond proposed GI along the boundary to the east. New planting within areas of POS and along site boundaries will serve to enclose the site from views from the surrounding landscape, while integrating and reinforcing the existing GI network. The proposed GI will integrate the new housing within the landscape at the edge of the existing settlement. The landscape effect on the LCA at completion are considered to be **moderate adverse**, while the landscape effect at year 15 is assessed as **moderate/minor adverse**.
- 6.17 The Rodmersham and Milstead Dry Valley LCA (no.40) to the east of the site as outlined in the LCA is considered to be **minor adverse** on completion and **minor adverse/negligible** at year 15 with the effect of the proposed development upon the character of the landscape at a site wide scale localised in its extent, limited to the northern edge of the LCA, while in the wider context of Sittingbourne.

### Site and Immediate Context

- 6.18 The development proposals are located adjacent to the existing built form to the north and west, characterised by existing roads and residential development, located off Swanstree Avenue to the north and Chilton Manor Farm and Marjoram Drive to the west. The proposed housing is located to the south of Swanstree Avenue, with GI proposed across the site.
- 6.19 The change to the site and the immediate landscape would arise as a result of the replacement of an area of arable land and commercial orchards located at the edge of the settlement with a modest amount of residential development, associated infrastructure and GI.
- 6.20 Whilst the introduction of new built form would inevitably alter the physical fabric and character of the site, the proposals will retain and enhance existing landscape features where feasible. Existing hedgerows along the boundaries of the site and through the site would be retained, with the proposed housing set back from their boundary. The proposed POS will wrap around the development incorporating the existing PRoW to the north and linking to the PRoW network to the east. New shelterbelts, hedgerows, tree and informal planting within areas of POS will serve to enhance biodiversity and habitat value across the site as will the provision of a pond within the POS to the north east of the site.
- 6.21 Overall, the proposals have responded to the constraints of the site including topography, views and existing landscape features and retains the vast majority of boundary vegetation where feasible. The effects upon the site and the immediate landscape arising from the proposals would be no more than **moderate adverse** at completion and **moderate/minor adverse** at year 15.

### **Visual Effects**

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

- 6.22 The VE (Figure 6) of the proposed development identifies the surrounding land from within which views towards any part of the proposed development are likely to be possible. The VE is not however, an indicator of the effect of the proposed development on the view but simply, its visible extent in the surrounding landscape.
- 6.23 A hand drawn VE for the proposed development was initially prepared based upon the local topography context and proposed building heights. This has then been reviewed on site and refined to take account of the visual 'screening' provided by buildings, trees and other features.
- 6.24 These effects are predicted to affect a number of the key visual receptors identified in Figure 6 and are discussed in more detail in the Visual Effects Table at Appendix C which provides a full assessment of predicted visual effects.
- 6.25 The VE of the proposed development extends towards the rear of properties located at Haysel, Farm Crescent, Harvey Drive and Peregrine Drive to the north, Swanstree Avenue and Wadham Place to the north east and the playing fields of Highsted Grammar School and Fulston Manor School to the north west. The VE further to the north is none due to the existing built form of Sittingbourne.
- 6.26 The VE extends towards the PRoW 0311/ZU34A located in an elevated location to the east, while stopping short of the PRoW 0211/ZR210 further to the south east, due to localised changes in topography obscuring views towards the site. Located in an elevated position views towards the site from Rodmersham are restricted by subtle changes in the intervening landform north of

Rodmersham, limiting any potential views down towards the site. From the PRow to the south west of Highsted towards the Kent Science Park, views can be gained towards the existing residential dwellings of Sittingbourne located adjacent to the site to the east. Views of the site are negligible / none due to localised undulating topography and woodland associated with the disused quarry along Highsted Road.

- 6.27 The VE is confined tightly adjacent to the site to the west, buffered by the intervening vegetation located along Highsted Road.

There could be some limited locations (beyond the extent of the VE shown) that could have a potential distant or very limited view to a part of the development. Equally, there could be some locations shown within the VE that would not experience any views to the resultant development.

### Construction

- 6.28 All construction works will be carried out in accordance with best practice procedures to protect and to minimise, as far as practicable, adverse impacts on visual amenity.
- 6.29 During the construction phase, adverse effects upon the local visual resource will occur, however this depends on the actual extent of visibility of the site for receptors. Inevitably visual receptors in closest proximity to the site and its boundaries will experience views of construction activity to include vehicles and associated machinery, site compounds and earthworks/ground modelling.
- 6.30 Overall, the construction phase would be of relatively short duration and consequently, there would be a short-term temporary effect as a result. Construction effects for sensitive receptors such as users of the PRow which lead along the site boundaries within close proximity of the site are therefore considered to be **major/moderate Adverse**. Receptors of lower sensitivity or those located at a greater distance to the site are assessed as **minor adverse/negligible** effects.

### Operation (following Completion)

- 6.31 The following provides a summary of the visual effects assessment included at Appendix C.
- 6.32 Include also details of the longer term effects arising as the landscape/planting matures under the headings below

### Residential Properties and Settlement

- 6.33 The nearest residential receptors are the properties located at Chilton Manor Farm (Receptor D), located adjacent to the site to the west. There are two properties which are one and half and two storeys in height, with the potential for views primarily from the rear ground and first storey windows. Views from these properties will change from views over arable land and orchards to close range views of residential development and GI that will back on to the boundary of the farm. Proposed GI located along the site boundary in the form of boundary native hedgerow and tree planting, will provide a level of screening and filter views of new housing within the site. The visual effect at the outset for these residential receptors is assessed as **major/moderate adverse** at completion and **moderate adverse** at year 15.
- 6.34 There are a number of residential receptors located off Highsted Rd, Haysel, Farm Crescent, Harvey Drive, Peregrine Drive and Fallowfield adjacent to the north of Swanstree Avenue. While these residential receptors are located adjacent to the site, they back on or side on to Swanstree Avenue. Properties are predominately two storeys in height with the potential for any views

glimpsed primarily from the rear ground and first storey windows, beyond the established and mature vegetation located along Swanstree Avenue. Proposed GI located along the northern site boundary in the form of boundary native hedgerow and woodland planting, with open space beyond will provide a level of screening and separation of views of new housing within the site. Visual effects on these residential receptors are assessed as **moderate/minor adverse** at completion and **negligible/none** at year 15.

- 6.35 Views from residential receptors that front on to Wadham Place and Swanstree Avenue to the north east are located at a distance between 135m-350m to the north east. While the properties face towards the site to the south, the orientation of the properties, Intervening vegetation and changes in topography restrict views and visual effects are assessed as **negligible** at completion and **negligible/none** at year 15.
- 6.36 Views from residential receptors from Marjoram Dive are located at a distance between 40-135m to the west. These properties side or back on to the Highsted Road, while set back beyond a mature boundary of intervening vegetation located along the boundary of Highsted Road. Intervening vegetation restrict views and visual effects are assessed as **negligible/none** at completion and **negligible/none** at year 15.

#### Public Rights of Way (PROW) and Other Footpaths etc

- 6.37 Located to the north of the site and north of Swanstree Avenue the PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU30 is located along a narrow footpath to the rear of the housing located along Dalewood and through the open space adjacent to the housing along Wadham Place. Views towards the site along this section of the route are restricted by the intervening built form. Where the PRoW connects with Swanstree Avenue, views of the site boundary are possible, while views would be focussed on the existing mature vegetation along the site boundary. As the PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU31 passes adjacent to the site to the east, views would be focussed on the proposed planting along the length of the site. As the proposed planting matures along the site boundary this will reinforce the existing hedgerow network and help to assimilate the development into the surrounding context. On the approach to the site from the south views along the PRoW route are restricted, due to the confined nature of the route along a wooded corridor with orchards located to the east and west. Visual effects for users of the PRoW are assessed as **major/moderate adverse** at completion and **moderate adverse** at year 15.
- 6.38 Located to the north of the site and north of Swanstree Avenue the PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU31 passes through housing along Peregrine Drive. On the approach to the site along the PRoW to the north, views towards the site are restricted by the intervening built form. Where the PRoW connects with Swanstree Avenue, views of the site boundary would be eligible, while views would be focussed on the existing mature vegetation along the site boundary. As the PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU31 passes through the site it would be located through the proposed open space and adjacent to the proposed residential area.
- 6.39 The PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU31 continues out in to the wider landscape to the south east. On the approach to the site from the south east, views along the PRoW route vary. Adjacent and in close proximity to the site (viewpoint 3) full and partial views towards the site can be gained, with the PRoW located broadly level to the site. As the PRoW route heads east (approximately 180m from the site boundary) the topography begins to fall away and views towards the site decrease (Viewpoint 12). When the topography along the route begins to rise (approximately 500-660m from

the site, viewpoints 13 & 14), distant while elevated partial and full views towards the site can be gained. While views towards the site can be gained from this elevated section of the PRow route, views of the site are also seen within the wider residential context of Sittingbourne.

- 6.40 Proposed hedgerow native planting will reinforce the existing mature hedgerow along the site boundary to the north, while views along the PRow route within the site would be through open space seen in the context of the proposed residential development. A belt of structural native planting is proposed along the boundary of the site to the east. As the proposed planting matures along the site boundaries and within the site, this will reinforce the existing hedgerow network and help to assimilate the development into the surrounding context. Visual effects for users of the PRow are assessed as **moderate adverse** at completion as a result of the close range changes in view, reducing to **moderate/minor adverse** at year 15 as the proposed boundary vegetation matures and softens views of the new houses.
- 6.41 Located to the east of the site in an elevated position (40m-55m AOD) is the PRow Restricted Byway - 0311/ZU34A, located at a distance of approximately 550-725m from the site. While the route is in an elevated location, subtle changes in localised topography restrict views along the route towards the site and Sittingbourne. Views towards the site are side on, glimpsed, and through breaks in the boundary hedgerow along the length of the route. A belt of structural native planting is proposed along the boundary of the site to the east. As the proposed planting matures along the site boundary and within the site, this will reinforce the existing hedgerow network and help to assimilate the development into the surrounding context. Visual effects for users of the PRow are assessed as **moderate/minor adverse** at completion and **minor adverse** at year 15.
- 6.42 Located at a distance from the site is the PRow Footpath - 0276/ZR159, approximately 1.2km-2km to the south. The PRow is located in an elevated position crossing an arable field to the south of Highsted. From this elevated location, views can be gained towards Highsted sitting low in the valley with distant views of housing located within Sittingbourne and more distant views of the Swale Way bridge, overhead transmission towers and wind turbines located to the north of Sittingbourne. While distant views can be gained towards the existing housing located along Swanstree Avenue and the undulating topography located adjacent to the site to the east, any views towards the site and the proposed development would be beyond the intervening vegetation located in the middle ground of the view and woodland associated with the disused Highsted quarry to the south of Sittingbourne. Glimpsed, while distant views would increase during winter months with reduced leaf cover of the intervening vegetation. Visual effects for users of the PRow are assessed as **negligible/none** at completion and **negligible/none** at year 15.

#### Roads & Transport Users

- 6.43 It is likely that views of the proposals will be restricted to users travelling along the local road network adjacent to the site, particularly for users of Swanstree Avenue to the north. The extent of any views will be short, fleeting and transient, while set back beyond the existing boundary vegetation and proposed planting along the boundary of the site. Where the site access is proposed off Swanstree Avenue short, fleeting and transient views will be possible into the site along the primary access road where there is a break in the boundary planting. Visual effects for this vehicular receptor are assessed as **moderate/minor adverse** at completion and **minor adverse** at year 15.
- 6.44 Views from Highsted Road located adjacent to the site to the west would be restricted due to intervening vegetation, intervening built form, localised changes in topography and distance. Visual

effects for this vehicular receptor are assessed as **negligible** at completion and **negligible** at year 15.

#### Other Visual Receptors

- 6.45 Highsted Grammar School/ Fulston Manor School is located to the north west of the site. Visitors/users of the school are considered to be of low sensitivity as focus is generally on the school activity and not on the surrounding landscape setting. It is unlikely that the proposed development will be visible from within the school, although some glimpsed views of new roofs on completion are likely to be possible. This would soften over time as a result of maturing boundary vegetation. Visual effects for this receptor are assessed as **negligible** at completion and **negligible/none** at year 15.

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

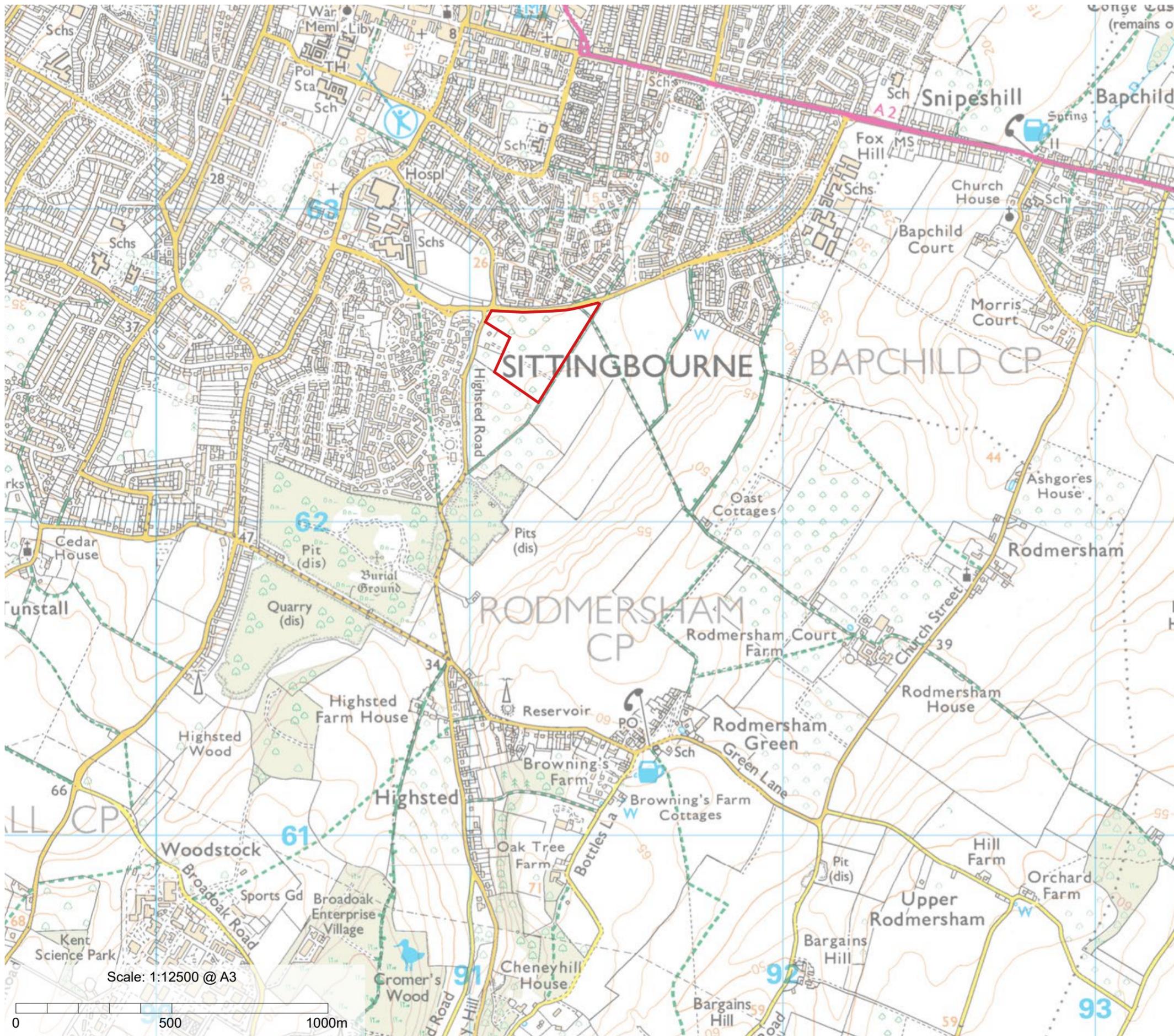
- 6.46 The project will follow the latest best practice guidance on lighting installations to minimise lighting emissions and pollution on the surrounding landscape and on the night time skies. Given an appropriate mitigating lighting strategy, the lighting effects on the night-time skies are considered to result in only a limited increase in lighting levels from that already provided by the settlement of Sittingbourne to the north and west.

## 7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The site is located to the south east of Sittingbourne, to the south of Swanstree Avenue and comprises 5.9ha of arable land. The site boundaries are defined by established trees and hedgerow. The north and west of the site is bordered by the existing residential settlement of Sittingbourne, while agricultural farmland is located adjacent to the boundary to the east and orchards to the south. Chilton Manor Farm and the housing located off Marjoram Drive is located to the west.
- 7.2 The site lies to the southeast of Sittingbourne, off Swanstree Avenue. The villages of Rodmersham Green and Highsted lie further to the south. The site is broadly rectangular in shape and forms part of a medium sized arable landscape with shelter belt planting to the edges of fields, part of the site to the west is an orchard.
- 7.3 The site is not covered by national statutory or non-statutory landscape designations covering the site such as AONBs or National Parks. The site falls within an Area of High Landscape Value (Kent Level) locally designated within the adopted Local Plan, Policy DM24.
- 7.4 The site is located within the “*Sittingbourne and the satellite villages of Bapchild, Rodmersham Green, Tunstall, Borden, Chestnut Street, Bobbing and Iwade*” Important Local Countryside Gap, one of three Important Local Country Gaps as identified within the adopted Local Plan, Policy DM24.
- 7.5 The site is identified with the SHLAA (2019) with the reference 18/021, Chilton Manor Farm, Highsted Road. Under the heading Achievability, the SHLAA states: “*Subject to further consideration of any utility/infrastructure requirements, there is a reasonable prospect that the site could be developed over a certain period of time. The site is considered to be achievable.*” The SHLAA Assessment Outcome, states that the site is “*Suitable and deliverable.*”
- 7.6 Having appraised the factors of designations, natural and cultural heritage, landscape condition, associations, distinctiveness, recreation, perceptual and functional aspect, it is judged that the site and its immediate landscape context are of **medium** landscape value.
- 7.7 At a national level the site is located within the NCA 113 ‘North Kent Plain’ which covers an extensive area, landscape effects at year 15 is assessed as **negligible**. At county level the Site lies within ‘The Fruit Belt’ character area, within the Landscape Assessment of Kent. The landscape effect on the LCA at year 15 is assessed as **negligible**.
- 7.8 At a borough wide level the site is assessed in the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal (2011). The site is located within the Tunstall Farmlands LCA (no.42), with the landscape effect on the LCA at year 15 is assessed as **moderate/minor adverse**. The northern extent of the Rodmersham and Milstead Dry Valley LCA (no.40) is located to the east, with the landscape effect on the LCA at year 15 is assessed as **minor adverse/negligible**.
- 7.9 The effects upon the site and the immediate landscape arising from the proposals would be no more than **moderate/minor adverse** at year 15.
- 7.10 The nearest residential receptors are the properties located at Chilton Manor Farm, located adjacent to the site to the west. The visual effect at year 15 is assessed as **moderate adverse**.
- 7.11 There are a number of residential receptors located off Highsted Rd, Haysel, Farm Crescent, Harvey Drive, Peregrine Drive and Fallowfield adjacent to the north of Swanstree Avenue. While these residential receptors are located adjacent to the site, they back on or side on established

and mature vegetation located along Swanstree Avenue. The visual effect at year 15 is assessed as **negligible/none** at year 15.

- 7.12 Visual effects for users of the PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU30 receptor located adjacent to the east would be **moderate adverse** at year 15. Visual effects for users of the PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU31 receptor located through the site and to the south east would be **moderate/minor adverse** at year 15. Located to the east of the site in an elevated position (40m-55m AOD) is the PRoW Restricted Byway - 0311/ZU34A. Visual effects for users of this PRoW receptor would be **minor adverse** at year 15. Located at a distance of approximately 1.2km-2km to the south is the PRoW - 0276/ZR159, visual effects for users of this PRoW receptor would be **negligible/none** at year 15
- 7.13 It is likely that views of the proposals will be restricted to users travelling along the local road network adjacent to the site, particularly for users of Swanstree Avenue to the north. The visual effects at year 15 is assessed as **minor adverse**.
- 7.14 Visual effects from other receptors within the landscape surrounding the site and within the wider area are unlikely, such as Highsted Grammar School/ Fulston Manor School to the north west. Visual effects for this receptor would be **negligible/none** at year 15.
- 7.15 Overall, it is considered the development proposals demonstrate a well-considered approach to the landscape and context of the site and appropriate development of the site has the potential to successfully integrate into the local surroundings without any unacceptable landscape or visual effects.



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 Site Boundary

client  
 Gladman Developments Ltd

project  
 Swanstree Avenue,  
 Sittingbourne

drawing title  
**SITE LOCATION**

scale  
 1:12,500 @ A3

drawn  
 MPS

issue date  
 29 September 2021

rev



**Figure 1**



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Aerial imagery © 2019 Bluesky, DigitalGlobe, Getmapping plc, Infoterra Ltd and Bluesky. Map data © 2019 Google



Site Boundary

Scale: 1:10000 @ A3



client  
Gladman Developments Ltd  
project  
Swanstree Avenue,  
Sittingbourne  
drawing title  
AERIAL

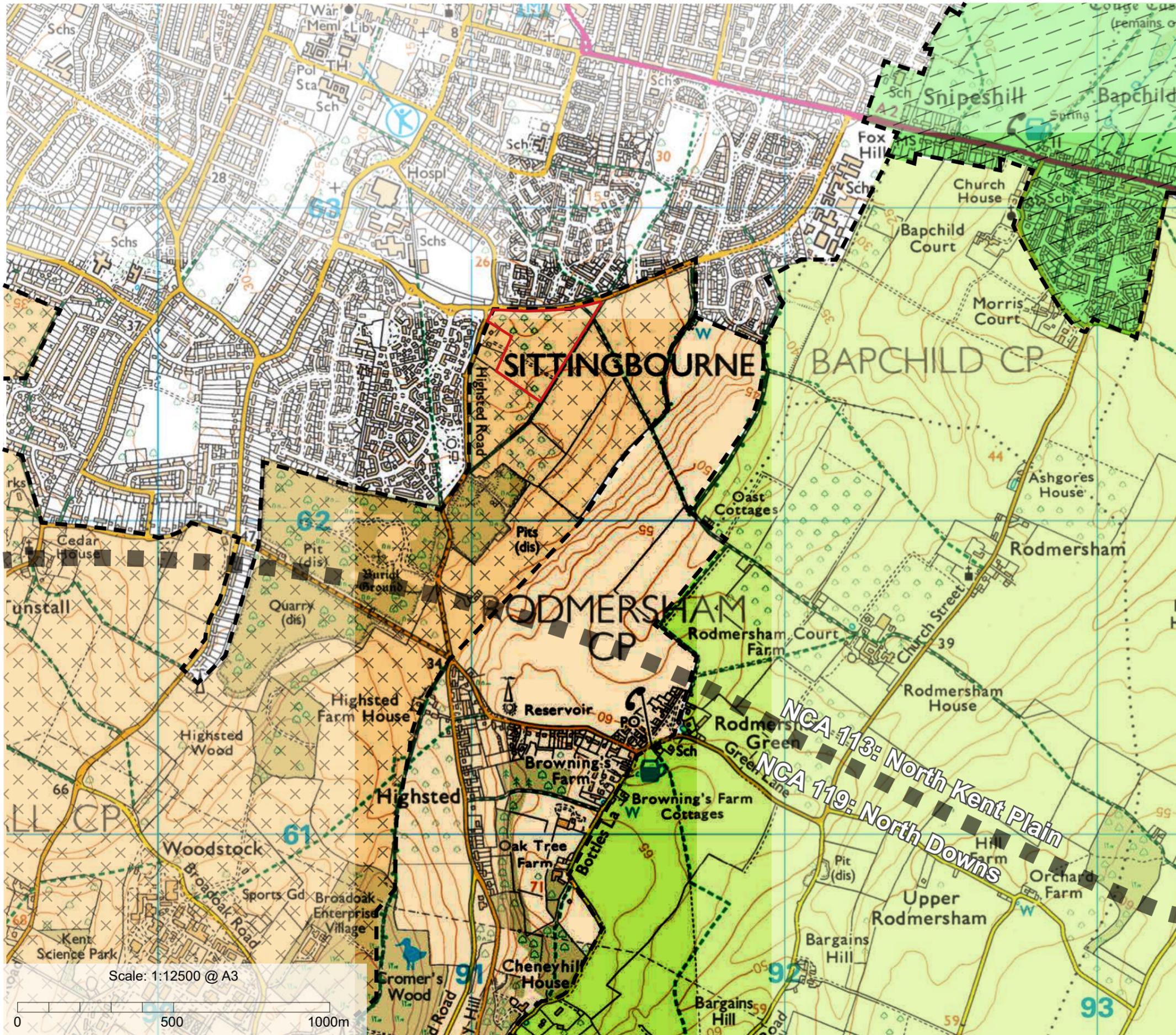


scale  
1:10,000 @ A3  
drawing / figure number

drawn  
MPS

issue date  
29 September 2021  
rev

# Figure 2



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-  Site Boundary
-  National Character Area (NCA) Boundary (Natural England)

Swale Borough Council Landscape Character Framework, Swale Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019)

-  29. Rodmersham Mixed Farmlands
-  31. Teynham Fruit Belt
-  40. Rodmersham and Milstead Dry Valley
-  42. Tunstall Farmlands

NB - The entire site is within the regional character area of Fruit Belt, Landscape Assessment of Kent, October 2004.

client  
Gladman Developments Ltd

project  
Swanstone Avenue,  
Sittingbourne

drawing title  
**CHARACTER AREAS**

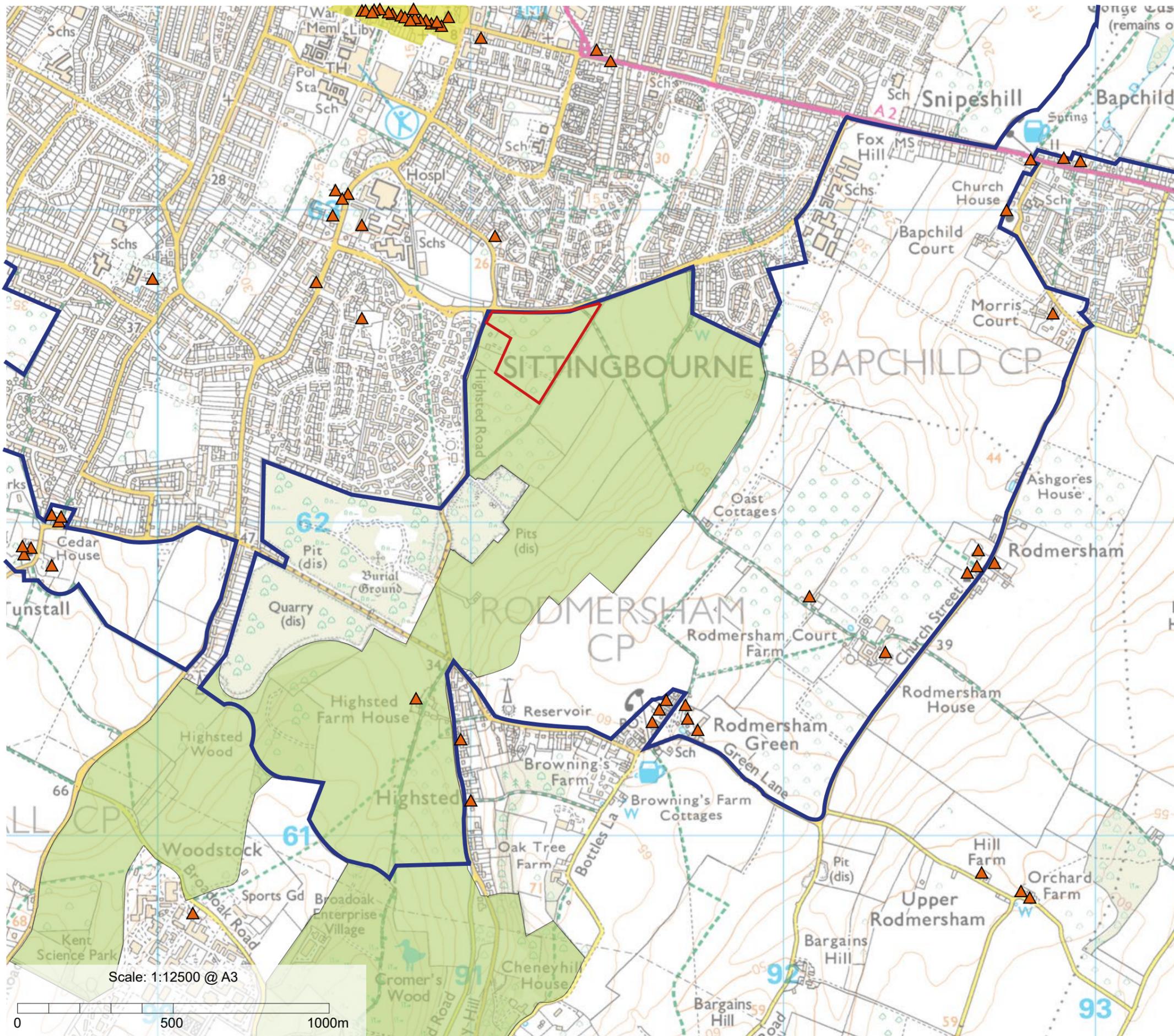
scale  
1:12,500 @ A3

drawn  
MPS

issue date  
29 September 2021

rev

**Figure 3**



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-  Site Boundary
- Swale Borough Council  
Local Plan 'Bearing Fruits' (2014-2031)**
-  Conservation Area - Sittingbourne (Policy E15)
-  Listed Buildings (Policy E14)
-  Area of High Landscape Value (Kent Level) Policy DM24
-  Important Local Countryside Gaps Policy DM25

client  
Gladman Developments Ltd

project  
Swanstreet Avenue,  
Sittingbourne

drawing title  
**DESIGNATIONS**

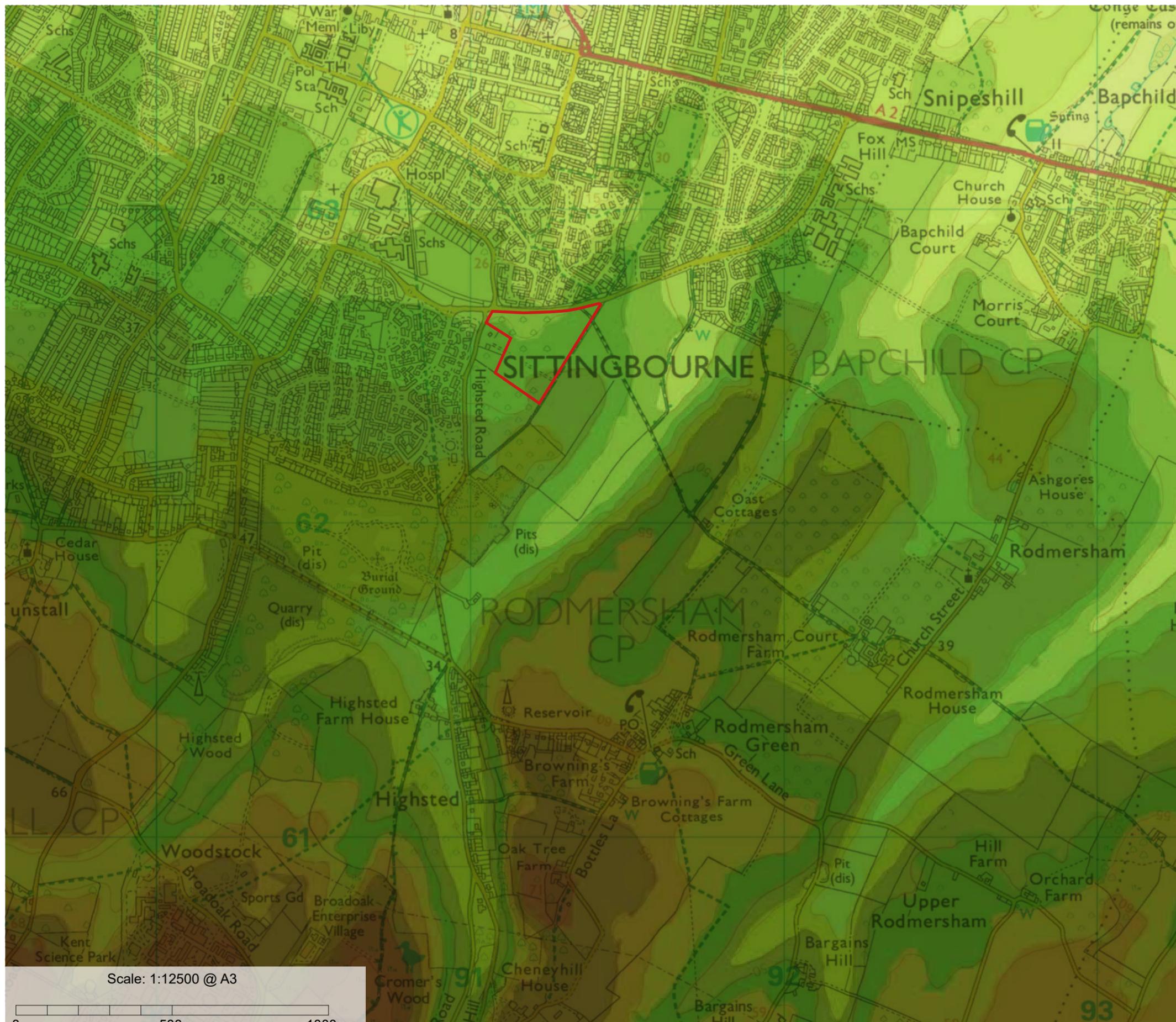
scale  
1:12,500 @ A3

drawn  
MPS

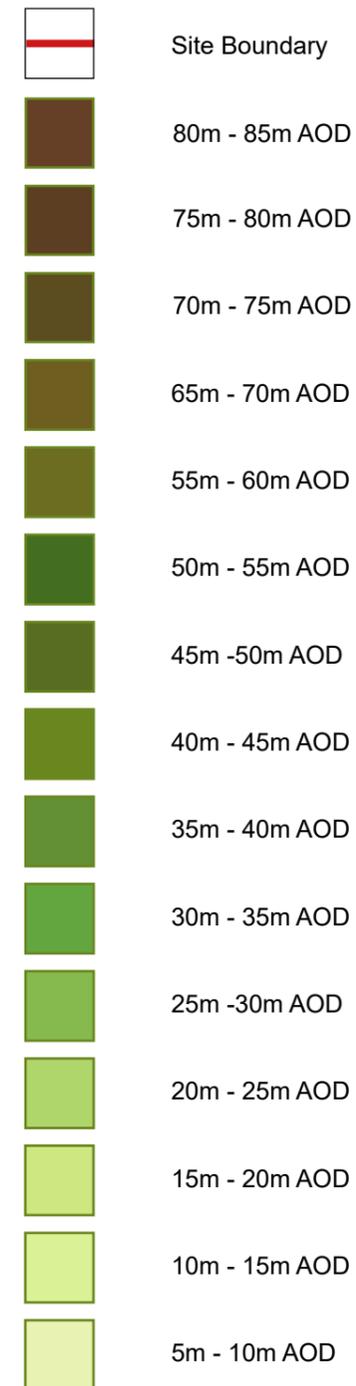
issue date  
29 September 2021

rev

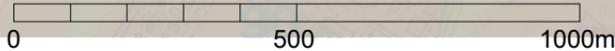
**Figure 4**



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Scale: 1:12500 @ A3



client  
Gladman Developments Ltd

project  
Swanstreet Avenue,  
Sittingbourne

drawing title  
**TOPOGRAPHY**

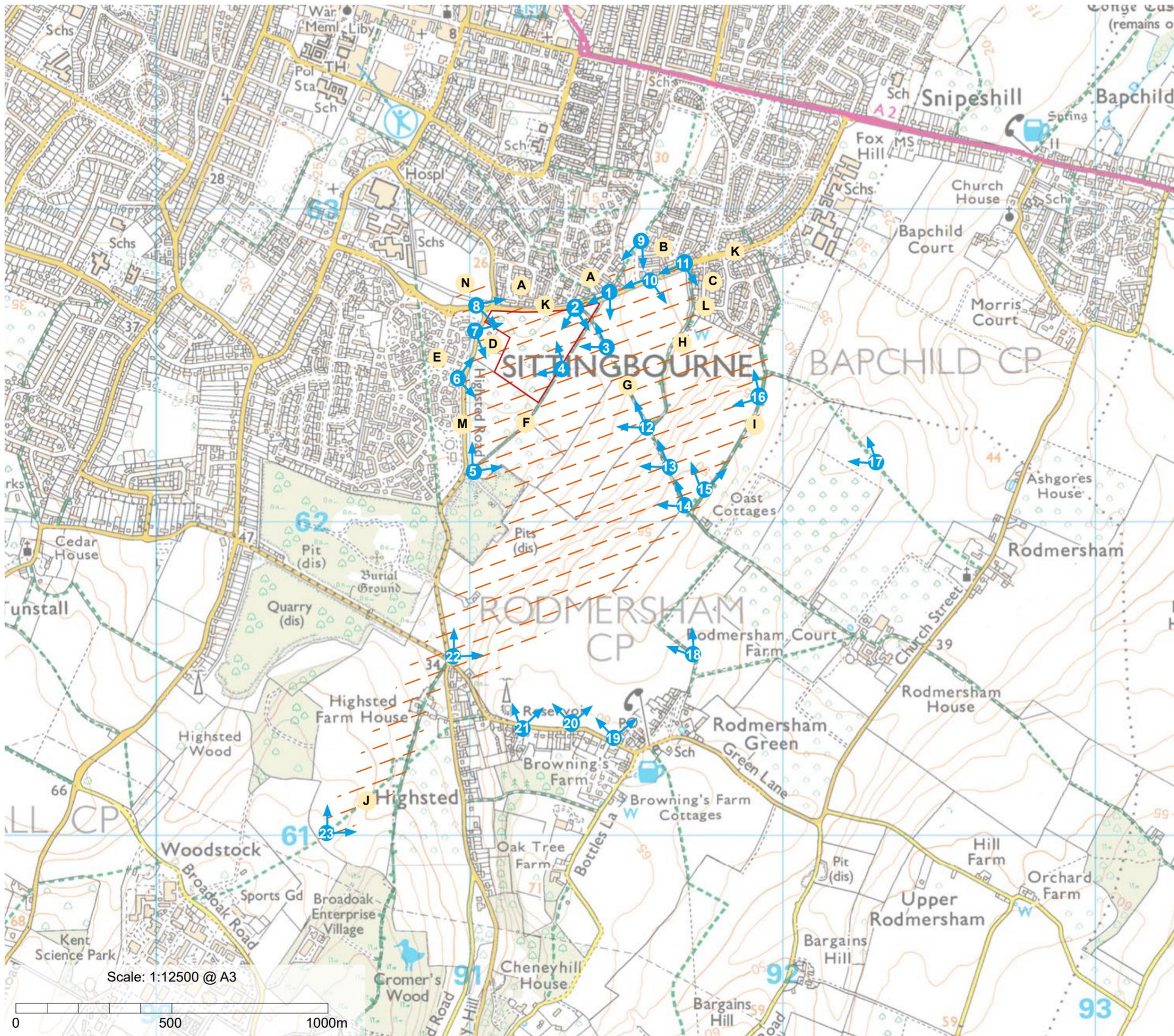
scale  
1:12,500 @ A3

drawn  
MPS

issue date  
29 September 2021

rev

**Figure 5**



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-  Site Boundary
-  Photo Viewpoint Location
-  Visual Receptors
-  Approximate Extent of Visual Envelope

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

**Visual Receptor List**

- Residential**
- A - Highsted Rd, Haysel, Farm Crescent, Harvey Drive, Peregrine Drive and Fallowfield (North)
  - B - Wadham Place and Swanstree Avenue (North East)
  - C - Muddy Lane and Blenheim Road (East)
  - D - Chilton Manor Farm (West)
  - E - Marjoram Drive (West)
- PRoWs**
- F - PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU30 (North, Adjacent, South)
  - G - PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU31 (North, Adjacent, East)
  - H - PRoW - Restricted Byway - 0311/ZU35 (East)
  - I - PRoW - Restricted Byway - 0311/ZU34A (East)
  - J - PRoW - Footpath - 0276/ZR159 (South)
- Road**
- K - Swanstree Avenue (Adjacent, North)
  - L - Muddy Lane (North East)
  - M - Highsted Road (South)
- Other**
- N - Highsted Grammar School/ Fulston Manor School (North West)

client  
Gladman Developments Ltd

project  
Swanstree Avenue,  
Sittingbourne

drawing title  
**VISUAL APPRAISAL**

scale  
1:12,500 @ A3

drawn  
MPS

issue date  
28 September 2021

rev

**Figure 6**



CONTINUED BELOW

**Photo Viewpoint 1:** View from Swanstree Avenue looking south at the site from the entrance to PRoW 0311/ZU31



J:\360000\LANDS\W463025\_LF107.jpg



**Photo Viewpoint 1**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 12:00  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 169°  
 Direction of View: 180°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.  
 Visualisation Type: Type 1  
 Projection: Cylindrical  
 Enlargement factor: 100%

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**Photo Viewpoint 2:** View adjacent to Swanstree Avenue from the entrance of PRoW 0311/ZU31 looking east.



**Photo Viewpoint 2**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 09:45  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 169°  
 Direction of View: 135°, bearing from North

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

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

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Photo Viewpoint 3: View west towards the site from PRoW 0211/ZU31



**Photo Viewpoint 3**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 0955  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 165°  
 Direction of View: 270°, bearing from North

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

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

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CONTINUED BELOW

**Photo Viewpoint 4:** View north towards the site from PRoW 0211/ZU30



**Photo Viewpoint 4**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 10:05  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 169°  
 Direction of View: 315°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.  
 Visualisation Type: Type 1  
 Projection: Cylindrical  
 Enlargement factor: 100%

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client Gladman Developments Ltd  
 project Swanstree Avenue,  
 Sittingbourne  
 drawing title PHOTO VIEWPOINT 4  
 fpcr  
 drawn by IDR / MPS issue date 29 September 2021  
 drawing / figure number Figure 7.4



**Photo Viewpoint 5:** View north towards the site from Highsted Road at entrance to PRoW 0311/ZU30



**Photo Viewpoint 6:** View east towards the site from Highsted Road



**Photo Viewpoint 5**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 10:10  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 5°, bearing from North



**Photo Viewpoint 6**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 10:10  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 90°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.  
 Visualisation Type: Type 1  
 Projection: Cylindrical  
 Enlargement factor: 100%

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CONTINUED BELOW

Photo Viewpoint 7: View east towards the site from Highsted Road



**Photo Viewpoint 7**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 10:20  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 127°  
 Direction of View: 95°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.  
 Visualisation Type: Type 1  
 Projection: Cylindrical  
 Enlargement factor: 100%

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CONTINUED BELOW

**Photo Viewpoint 8:** View east from Swanstree Avenue at the junction with Highsted Road



**Photo Viewpoint 8**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 10:25  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 140°  
 Direction of View: 90°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.  
 Visualisation Type: Type 1  
 Projection: Cylindrical  
 Enlargement factor: 100%

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**Photo Viewpoint 9:** View south from Wadham Place traversing south along PRoW 0311/ZU30



**Photo Viewpoint 10:** View southwest looking towards the site from Swanstree Avenue near the junction with Wadham Place



**Photo Viewpoint 9**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 10:40  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 225°, bearing from North



**Photo Viewpoint 10**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 10:50  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 245°, bearing from North

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

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

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Approximate  
location of site

Swanstree Avenue

Photo Viewpoint 11: View south west looking towards the site from Swanstree Avenue



**Photo Viewpoint 11**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 1055  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 71°  
 Direction of View: 245°, bearing from North

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

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

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CONTINUED BELOW

**Photo Viewpoint 12:** View west towards site from PRoW 0311/ZU31



**Photo Viewpoint 12**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 11:15  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 167°  
 Direction of View: 280°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.  
 Visualisation Type: Type 1  
 Projection: Cylindrical  
 Enlargement factor: 100%

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client  
 Gladman Developments Ltd  
 project  
 Swanstree Avenue,  
 Sittingbourne  
 drawing title  
**PHOTO VIEWPOINT 12**  
 drawn  
 IDR / MPS  
 issue date  
 29 September 2021  
 drawing / figure number  
**Figure 7.10**



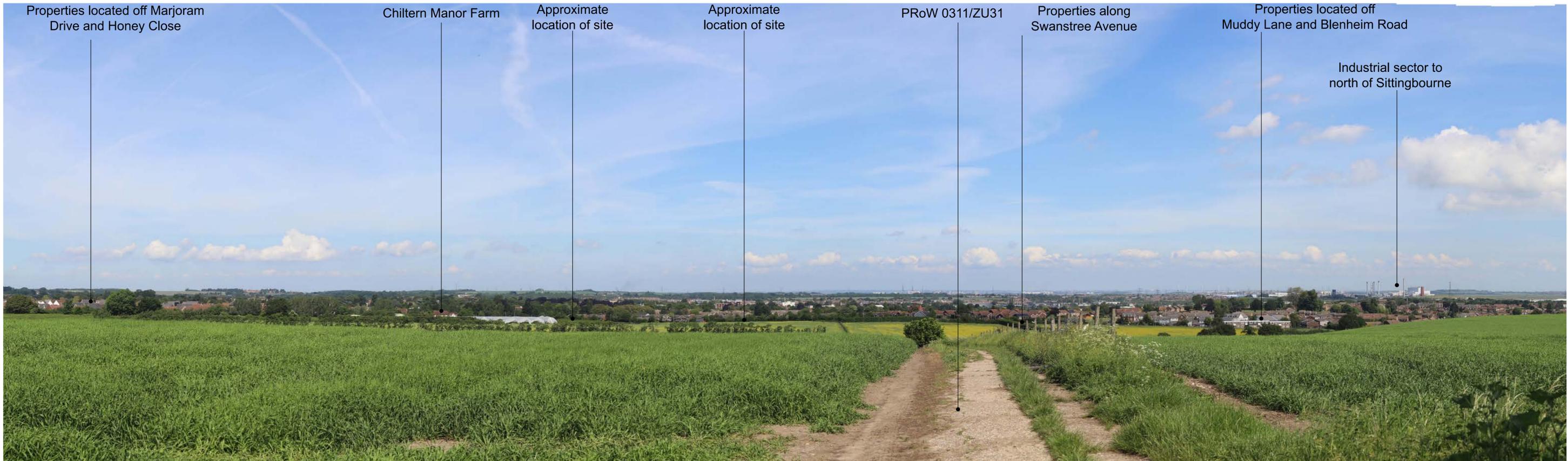
Photo Viewpoint 13: View west towards site from PRoW 0311/ZU31



**Photo Viewpoint 13**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 11:25  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 132°  
 Direction of View: 280°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.  
 Visualisation Type: Type 1  
 Projection: Cylindrical  
 Enlargement factor: 100%

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Properties located off Marjoram Drive and Honey Close

Chiltern Manor Farm

Approximate location of site

Approximate location of site

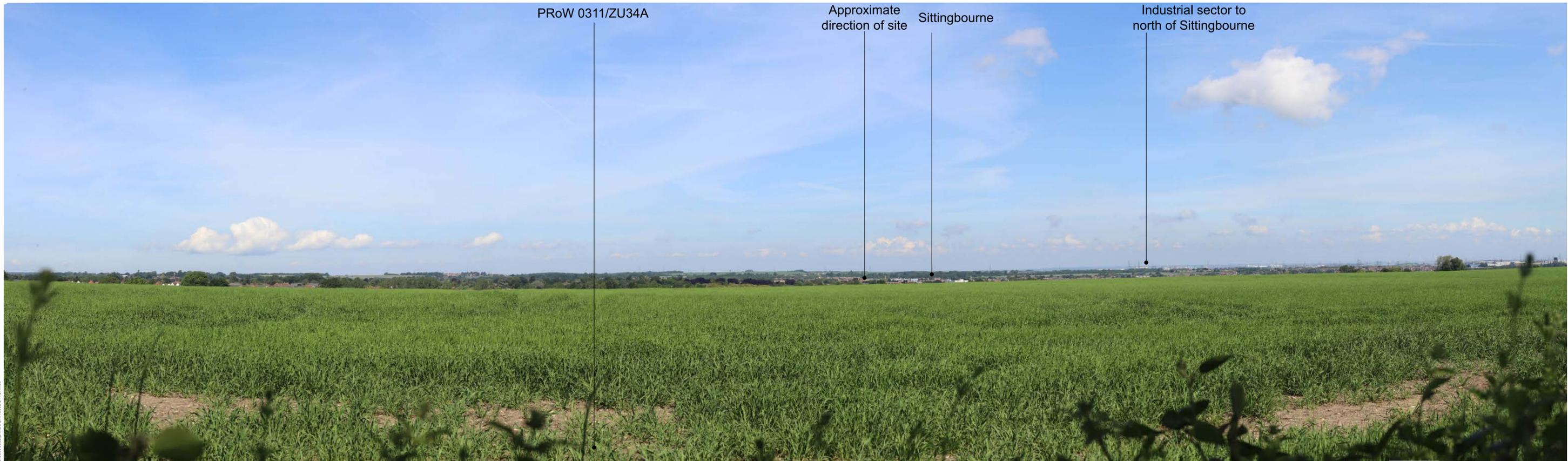
PRoW 0311/ZU31

Properties along Swanstree Avenue

Properties located off Muddy Lane and Blenheim Road

Industrial sector to north of Sittingbourne

Photo Viewpoint 14: View west towards site from PRoW 0311/ZU31



PRoW 0311/ZU34A

Approximate direction of site

Sittingbourne

Industrial sector to north of Sittingbourne

Photo Viewpoint 15: View north west looking towards the site from Restricted Byway - 0311/ZU34A



**Photo Viewpoint 14**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 11:35  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 280°, bearing from North



**Photo Viewpoint 15**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 11:40  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 280°, bearing from North

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

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

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PRoW 0311/ZU34A

Properties located off Muddy Lane and Blenheim Road

Chiltern Manor Farm

Approximate location of site

Properties along Swanstree Avenue

Photo Viewpoint 16: View north west towards the site from Restricted Byway - 0311/ZU34A



Approximate direction of site

PRoW 0211/ZR208

Industrial sector to north of Sittingbourne

Photo Viewpoint 17: View west towards the site from PRoW 0211/ZR208



**Photo Viewpoint 16**  
Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 11:45  
Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
Direction of View: 280°, bearing from North

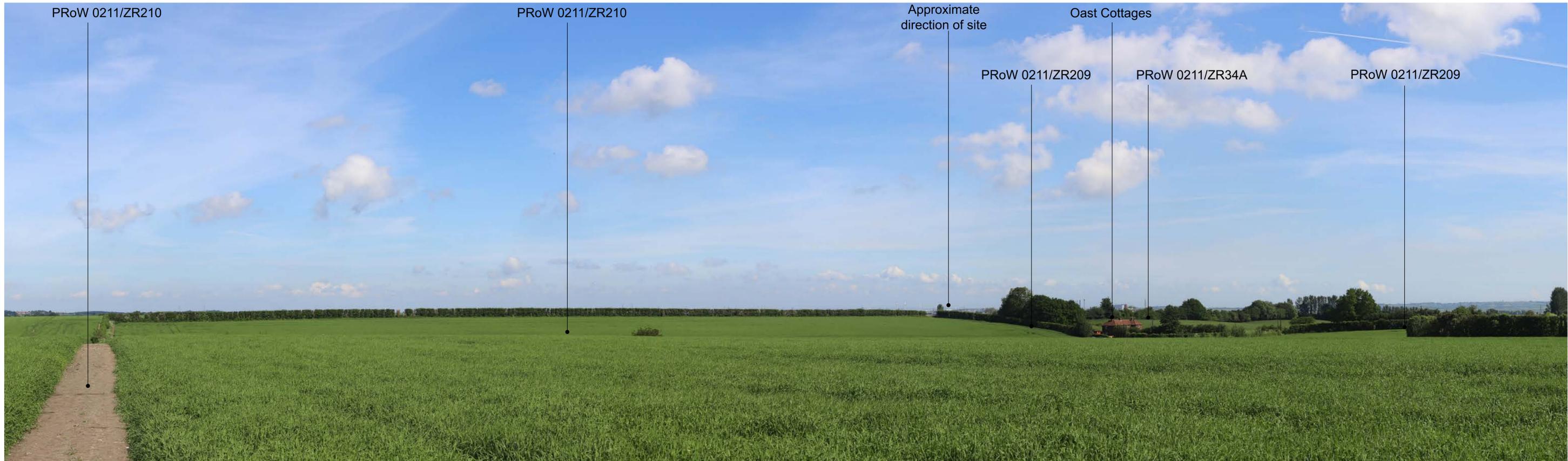


**Photo Viewpoint 17**  
Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 11:55  
Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
Direction of View: 315°, bearing from North

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

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

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**Photo Viewpoint 18:** View north west towards the site from PRow 0211/ZR210 north of Rodmersham Green



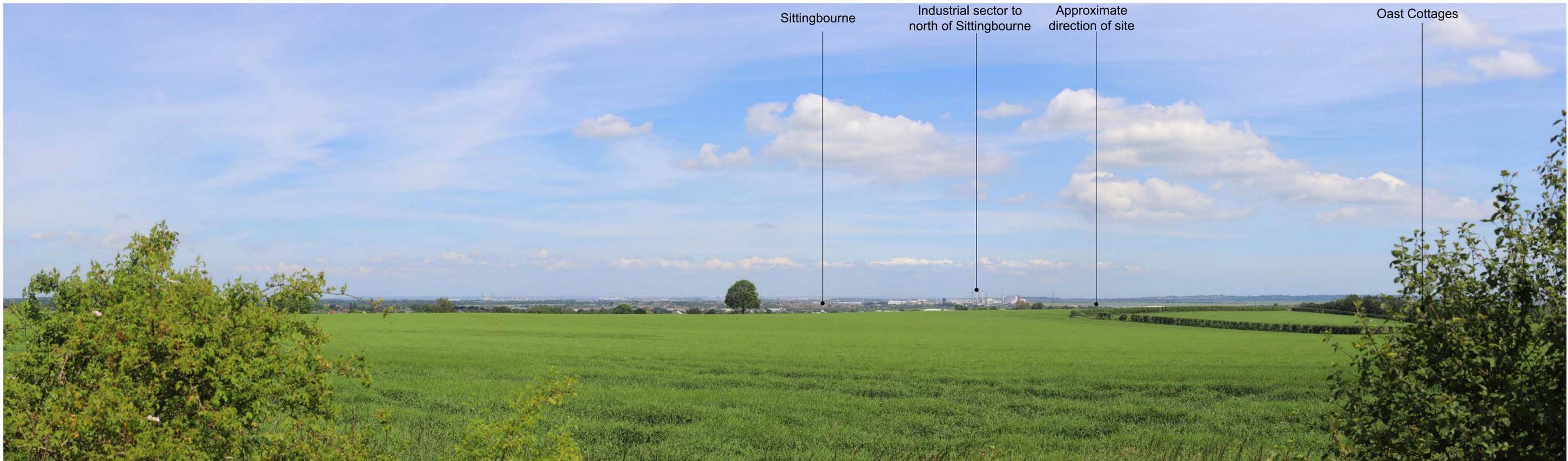
**Photo Viewpoint 19:** View north towards the site from Stockers Lane at Rodmersham Green

**Photo Viewpoint 18**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 12:05  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 330°, bearing from North

**Photo Viewpoint 19**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 12:15  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 355°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.  
 Visualisation Type: Type 1  
 Projection: Cylindrical  
 Enlargement factor: 100%

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Sittingbourne

Industrial sector to north of Sittingbourne

Approximate direction of site

Oast Cottages

**Photo Viewpoint 20:** View north towards the site from Stockers Lane at Rodmersham Green



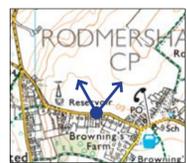
Sittingbourne

Industrial sector to north of Sittingbourne

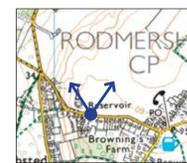
Approximate direction of site

Oast Cottages

**Photo Viewpoint 21:** View north towards the site from Stockers Lane at Rodmersham Green



**Photo Viewpoint 20**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 12:20  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 355°, bearing from North



**Photo Viewpoint 21**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 12:25  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format:  
 Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 355°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.  
 Visualisation Type: Type 1  
 Projection: Cylindrical  
 Enlargement factor: 100%

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**Photo Viewpoint 22:** View north towards the site from the junction cross roads of Stockers Lane and Highsted Road at Rodmersham Green



**Photo Viewpoint 23:** View north towards the site from PRoW 0276/ZR159 traversing towards Rodmersham Green from the southwest

**Photo Viewpoint 22**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 12:30  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format: Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 360°, bearing from North

**Photo Viewpoint 23**  
 Date & time of photo: 8th June 2021, 12:45  
 Camera make & model, & sensor format: Canon EOS 6D, FFS  
 Horizontal Field of View: 87°  
 Direction of View: 360°, bearing from North

Printing note: To give the correct viewing distance the sheet should be printed at a scale of 1:1 on A1. To be viewed at comfortable arms length.  
 Visualisation Type: Type 1  
 Projection: Cylindrical  
 Enlargement factor: 100%

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## **Appendix A**

## **Appendix A**

### **Landscape and Visual Appraisal – Methodology and Assessment Criteria**

#### **Introduction**

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

#### **Landscape**

##### **Landscape Sensitivity**

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

##### Landscape Value

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

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

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

#### Landscape Susceptibility to Change

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

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

#### **Magnitude of Landscape Effects**

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

### Scale or Size of the Degree of Landscape Change

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

### Geographical Extent

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

### Duration

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

### Reversibility

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

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

## Visual

### Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

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

#### Visual Susceptibility to Change

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

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

#### Value of Views

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

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

### **Magnitude of Visual Effects**

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

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

### **Level of Effect**

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

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

## **Appendix B**

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
<b>National Landscape Character</b>									
<b>Natural England, National Character Area Profile (NCA)</b>  113: North Kent Plain	There is a varied Susceptibility to Change throughout this extensive NCA.	There is a varied Landscape Value throughout this extensive NCA.	There is a varied overall Sensitivity throughout this extensive NCA.	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Negligible	No	The Kent Plain NCA character area covers a large tract of land, which spreads from Dartford in the west, to Margate in the east. The proposed development gives opportunities to achieve some of the strategic opportunities identified in the NCA including SE04. <i>“Plan for the creation of significant new areas of green space and green corridors to provide a framework for new and existing development in urban areas and along major transport routes”.</i>  One of the key characteristics of the NCA is orchards and horticultural crops within the area, the NCA states; <i>“Orchards and horticultural crops characterise central and eastern areas, and are often enclosed by poplar or alder shelterbelts and scattered small woodlands.”</i>  The proposed development will not result in any changes to the overall key characteristics of the NCA. While a number of low-quality commercial orchard trees (refer to Arboricultural Assessment) within the site would be lost, these would be replaced with proposed orchards within the site along with proposed GI and shelterbelts that will tie in to the existing GI network.	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
<b>Landscape Character Assessment (LCA): County</b>									
The Landscape Assessment of Kent 2004 Thames Gateway 'The Fruit Belt'	There is a varied Susceptibility to Change throughout this extensive LCA.	There is a varied Landscape Value throughout this extensive LCA.	There is a varied overall Sensitivity throughout this extensive LCA.	Construction: Low Completion: Low Year 10: Negligible	No	<p>The proposed development is of a relatively modest scale and nature in the context of the broader LCA. The new development is located on a broadly level plateau adjacent to the existing settlement to the north and west.</p> <p>The LCA states: <i>"The complexity of this land use mix varies across the area, however, and some areas (notably to the northwest and south-west of Sittingbourne) are now more typically open arable farmland In contrast to areas further south, woodlands are not a significant landcover element, but small blocks occur in a scattered distribution across the area. Small settlements and farm complexes add to the varied landcover. The extensive urban area of Sittingbourne, transport corridors and associated ribbon development and suburban land uses have a distinctly localised influence on the generally rural character of the area."</i></p> <p>Under the heading Landscape Actions the LCA states: <i>"Use the developing suburban edges of settlement to create new frameworks and enhance the definition of the change in land use with woodland blocks, and shelterbelts where appropriate."</i></p> <p>The proposals contribute to the Landscape Actions identified for the LCA. For instance, creating an urban edge using woodland blocks and shelterbelts along the boundary of the site to the east, integrating the proposals with the surrounding landscape setting.</p> <p>The proposals will result in the replacement of a small to medium parcel of arable land at the edge of the existing settlement with a modest amount of built development consistent with Sittingbourne to the north and west.</p>	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
Landscape Character Assessment (LCA): Borough									
Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal (2011) <i>Tunstall Farmlands (LCA no.42)</i> (SITE LOCATED WITHIN)	Medium	High/Medium	High/Medium	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium Year 10: Medium/Low	No	<p>The appraisal assesses the Tunstall Farmlands LCA as having a <i>Moderate</i> condition and a <i>High</i> Sensitivity with recommendations to conserve and restore.</p> <p>Under Sensitivity the LCA states: “<i>The well defined urban edge of Sittingbourne is locally visible and here, the integrity and setting of some rural settlements is sensitive.</i>”</p> <p>The effect of the proposed development upon the character of the landscape at a site wide scale would be localised in its extent, with the primary change arising as a direct result of the replacement of predominately arable land with a residential development located adjacent to Sittingbourne to the north and west. The site is broadly level with the adjacent settlement and sits in the context of the adjacent development.</p> <p>The proposed development will be well related to the existing settlement edge, retaining existing GI features such as hedgerows across the site, while set back beyond proposed GI along the boundary to the east. New planting within areas of POS and along site boundaries will serve to enclose the site from views from the surrounding landscape, while integrating and reinforcing the existing GI network. The proposed GI will integrate the new housing within the landscape at the edge of the existing settlement.</p>	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate/ Minor Adverse

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal (2011) <u>Rodmersham and Milstead Dry Valley (LCA no.40)</u>	Medium	Medium	Medium	Construction: Low Completion: Low Year 10: Low/ Negligible	No	<p>Although the site is located outside of the Rodmersham and Milstead Dry Valley LCA, the northern extent of the LCA is located on the valley side directly to the east resulting in some limited intervisibility on the edge of the LCA.</p> <p>The appraisal assesses the <i>Rodmersham and Milstead Dry Valley</i> LCA as having a <i>Moderate</i> condition and a <i>Moderate</i> Sensitivity with recommendations to conserve and restore.</p> <p>Under the heading Condition, the LCA states: “<i>Settlements are in good condition and modern housing has had a moderate impact on the traditional character of the area, since properties tend to be set back from the road and are generally well screened.</i>”</p> <p>The effect of the proposed development upon the character of the landscape at a site wide scale would be localised in its extent, limited to the northern extent of the LCA, while in the wider context of Sittingbourne.</p> <p>The proposed development will be well related to the existing settlement edge, retaining existing GI features such as hedgerows across the site, while set back beyond proposed GI along the boundary to the east. New planting within areas of POS and along site boundaries will serve to enclose the site from views from the surrounding landscape, while integrating and reinforcing the existing GI network. The proposed GI will integrate the new housing within the landscape at the edge of the existing settlement.</p>	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse / Negligible

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape			Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Overall Sensitivity	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/ integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
<b>Landscape Character: Site and Immediate Context</b>									
Site and Immediate Context	High/Medium	Medium	High/Medium	Construction: High/Medium Completion: Medium Year 10: Medium/Low	No	<p>The development proposals are located adjacent to the existing built form to the north and west, characterised by existing roads and residential development, located off Swanstree Avenue to the north and Chilton Manor Farm and Marjoram Drive to the west. The proposed housing is located to the south of Swanstree Avenue, with GI proposed across the site.</p> <p>The change to the site and the immediate landscape would arise as a result of the replacement of an area of arable land and commercial orchards located at the edge of the settlement with a modest amount of residential development, associated infrastructure and GI.</p> <p>Whilst the introduction of new built form would inevitably alter the physical fabric and character of the site, the proposals will retain and enhance existing landscape features where feasible. Existing hedgerows along the boundaries of the site and through the site would be retained, with the proposed housing set back from their boundary. The proposed POS will wrap around the development incorporating the existing PRow to the north and linking to the PRow network to the east. New shelterbelts, hedgerows, tree and informal planting within areas of POS will serve to enhance biodiversity and habitat value across the site as will the provision of a pond within the POS to the north east of the site.</p> <p>Overall, the proposals have responded to the constraints of the site including topography, views and existing landscape features and retains the vast majority of boundary vegetation where feasible.</p>	Major/Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate /Minor Adverse

## **Appendix C**

APPENDIX C: VISUAL EFFECTS TABLE (VET)												
Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs <small>(including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)</small>	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion (Winter)	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion (Summer)
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) <small>(approx. m/km)</small>	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
A	<b>Residential</b> Highsted Rd, Haysel, Farm Crescent, Harvey Drive, Peregrine Drive and Fallowfield (North)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Adjacent (North of Swanstree Avenue)	Glimpse/None	Permanent	Construction: Low Completion: Low Year 15: Negligible/None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While these residential receptors are located adjacent to the site, they back on or side on to Swanstree Avenue.</li> <li>Properties are predominately two storeys in height with the potential for any views glimpsed primarily from the rear ground and first storey windows, beyond the established and mature vegetation located along Swanstree Avenue.</li> <li>Proposed GI located along the northern site boundary in the form of boundary native hedgerow and woodland planting, with open space beyond will provide a level of screening and separation of views of new housing within the site.</li> <li>Where visible, the new development will be glimpsed through the trees, with visibility increasing during the winter months due to leaf loss.</li> </ul>	Moderate/Minor adverse	Moderate/Minor adverse	Negligible / None
B	<b>Residential</b> Wadham Place and Swanstree Avenue (North East)	High	Medium	High/Medium	135m – 350m (North East)	Glimpse/None	Permanent	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Negligible/None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any potential views from these residential receptors would be restricted due to the orientation of the properties, intervening vegetation and localised changes in topography.</li> <li>Where visible, the new development will be glimpsed through the trees, with visibility increasing during the winter months due to leaf loss.</li> </ul>	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible / None
C	<b>Residential</b> Muddy Lane and Blenheim Road (East)	High/Medium	Medium	High/Medium	275m-305m (North East)	Glimpse/None	Permanent	Construction: Negligible/None Completion: Negligible/None Year 15: None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While these residential are located to the north east of the site, they back on to Muddy Lane.</li> <li>While the receptor is located on the edge of the VE, it sits low in the valley, backing on to the narrow PRoW 0311/ZU35 corridor bordered by mature dense vegetation obscuring views along the route towards the site to the west.</li> <li>Any potential views from these residential receptors would be restricted due to intervening vegetation and localised changes in topography.</li> </ul>	Negligible / None	Negligible / None	None

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Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs (including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion (Winter)	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion (Summer)
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) (approx. m/km)	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None  Adverse or Beneficial	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None  Adverse or Beneficial	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None  Adverse or Beneficial
									<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where visible, the new development will be glimpsed through the trees, with visibility increasing during the winter months due to leaf loss.</li> </ul>			
D	<b>Residential</b>  Properties at Chilton Manor Farm (West)	High	Medium	High	Adjacent (West)	Full/ Partial	Permanent	Construction: High Completion: High/ Medium Year 15: Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are two properties which are one and half and two storeys in height, with the potential for views primarily from the rear ground and first storey windows.</li> <li>Views from these properties will change from views over arable land and orchards to close range views of residential development and GI that will back on to the boundary of the farm.</li> <li>Proposed GI located along the site boundary in the form of boundary native hedgerow tree planting within the development, will provide a level of screening and filter views of new housing within the site.</li> <li>Visibility would increase during winter months with reduced leaf cover.</li> </ul>	Major Adverse	Major/Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse
E	<b>Residential</b>  Marjoram Drive (West)	High	Medium	High/ Medium	40-135m (West)	Glimpse/ None	Permanent	Construction: Negligible/None Completion: Negligible/None Year 15: Negligible / None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any potential views from these residential receptors would be restricted due to intervening vegetation located along the boundary of Highsted Road and localised changes in topography.</li> <li>Visibility would increase during winter months with reduced leaf cover.</li> </ul>	Negligible / None	Negligible / None	Negligible / None
F	<b>PRoW</b>  PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU30	High	Medium	High	Adjacent - 315m (South)	Full/ Partial	Permanent	Construction: High Completion: High/Medium Year 15: Medium/Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where the PRoW connects with Swanstree Avenue, views of the site boundary would be eligible, while views would be focussed on the existing mature vegetation along the site boundary.</li> <li>As the PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU30 passes adjacent to the site to the east, views increase along the centre of the PRoW route.</li> <li>Construction activity would be visible, when adjacent to the site along the PRoW route.</li> </ul>	Major Adverse	Major/Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse

APPENDIX C: VISUAL EFFECTS TABLE (VET)												
Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs <small>(including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)</small>	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion (Winter)	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion (Summer)
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) <small>(approx. m/km)</small>	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
									<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On completion as the PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU30 passes adjacent to the site to the east, views would be focussed on the proposed planting along the length of the site.</li> <li>As the proposed planting matures along the site boundary this will reinforce the existing hedgerow network and help to assimilate the development into the surrounding context</li> <li>On the approach to the site from the south views along the PRoW route are restricted, due to the confined nature of the route along a wooded corridor with orchards located to the east and west.</li> <li>Where visible, the new development will be glimpsed through the trees, with visibility increasing during the winter months due to leaf loss.</li> </ul>			
G	<p><b>PRoW</b></p> <p>PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU31</p>	High	Medium	High	Adjacent – Located within Site, 660m (South East)	Full/ Partial/	Permanent	Construction: High/Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Medium/Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where the PRoW connects with Swanstree Avenue, views of the site boundary would be eligible, while views would be focussed on the existing mature vegetation along the site boundary.</li> <li>Adjacent and in close proximity to the site full and partial views towards the site can be gained, with the PRoW located broadly level to the site.</li> <li>Construction activity would be visible, when located adjacent, within, and on the approach towards the site along the PRoW route.</li> <li>On completion as the PRoW - Footpath - 0311/ZU31 views would be focussed on the proposed planting along the length of the site boundary to the east.</li> <li>The PRoW continues out in to the wider landscape to the south east. While views towards the site can be gained from elevated sections of the PRoW route, views of the site are also seen within the wider residential context of Sittingbourne. A belt of structural native planting is would be located along the boundary of the site to the east.</li> </ul>	Major/Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate / Minor Adverse

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Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs (including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion (Winter)	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion (Summer)
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) (approx. m/km)	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
									<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the proposed planting matures along the site boundaries and within the site, this will reinforce the existing hedgerow network and help to assimilate the development into the surrounding context.</li> <li>Where visible, the new development will be glimpsed through the trees, with visibility increasing during the winter months due to leaf loss.</li> </ul>			
H	<p><b>PRoW</b></p> <p>PRoW - Restricted Byway - 0311/ZU35</p>	High	Medium	High	300m-390m (East)	None	Permanent	Construction: None Completion: None Year 15: None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any potential views from this PRoW receptor would be none due to intervening vegetation and localised changes in topography.</li> <li>While the receptor is located within the VE, it sits low in the valley, located along a narrow corridor bordered by mature dense vegetation obscuring views along the route towards the site to the west.</li> </ul>	None	None	None
I	<p><b>PRoW</b></p> <p>PRoW - Restricted Byway - 0311/ZU34A</p>	High	Medium	High	550m-725m (East)	Partial/ Glimpse/ None	Permanent	Construction: Medium/Low Completion: Medium/Low Year 15: Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While the route is in an elevated location, subtle changes in localised topography restrict views along the route towards the site and Sittingbourne.</li> <li>Any views towards the site would be side on, glimpsed and through breaks in the boundary hedgerow along the length of the route.</li> <li>A belt of structural native planting is proposed along the boundary of the site to the east.</li> <li>As the proposed planting matures along the site boundary and within the site, this will reinforce the existing hedgerow network and help to assimilate the development into the surrounding context.</li> <li>Where visible, the new development will be glimpsed through the trees, with visibility increasing during the winter months due to leaf loss.</li> </ul>	Moderate/Minor Adverse	Moderate/Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse

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Ref	Receptor Type, Location and photographs <small>(including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)</small>	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor			Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect Upon Completion (Winter)	Overall Effect at 15 Years Post Completion (Summer)
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) <small>(approx. m/km)</small>	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
J	<b>PRoW</b>  Footpath - 0276/ZR159	High	Medium	High	1.2km-2km (South)	Glimpse/None	Permanent	Construction: Low/Negligible Completion: Negligible/None Year 15: Negligible/None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The PRoW is located in an elevated position crossing an arable field to the south of Highsted.</li> <li>From this elevated location of the PRoW views can be gained towards Highsted siting low in the valley with distant views of housing located within Sittingbourne and more distant views of the Swale Way bridge, overhead transmission towers and wind turbines located to the north of Sittingbourne.</li> <li>While distant views can be gained across towards the existing housing located along Swanstree Avenue and the undulating topography located adjacent to the site to the east, any potential views towards the site are glimpsed/none due to intervening vegetation located in the middle ground of the view and woodland associated with the disused quarry to the south of Sittingbourne.</li> <li>Visibility would increase during winter months with reduced leaf cover.</li> </ul>	Minor Adverse/Negligible	Negligible/None	Negligible/None
K	<b>Road</b> Swanstree Avenue	Medium	Medium	Medium	Adjacent (North)	Full/Partial/Glimpse/None	Permanent	Construction: Medium/Low Completion: Medium/Low Year 15: Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is likely that views of the proposals will be restricted to users travelling along the local road network adjacent to the site, particularly for users of Swanstree Avenue.</li> <li>Construction activity would be visible adjacent to the site, while views would be short, fleeting and transient, while set back beyond the existing boundary vegetation</li> <li>The extent of any views will be short, fleeting and transient, while set back beyond the existing boundary vegetation and proposed planting along the boundary of the site.</li> <li>Where the site access is proposed off Swanstree Avenue short, fleeting and transient views will be possible along the primary access road in to the site where there is a break in the boundary planting.</li> <li>Where visible, the new development will be glimpsed through the trees, with visibility increasing during the winter months due to leaf loss.</li> </ul>	Moderate/Minor Adverse	Moderate/Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse

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		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Overall Sensitivity	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) <small>(approx. m/km)</small>	Nature of View	Is the View Temporary or permanent?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
L	<u>Road</u>  Muddy Lane	Medium	Medium	Medium	275m (North East)	None	Permanent	Construction: None Completion: None Year 15: None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any potential views from this road receptor would be none due to intervening vegetation and localised changes in topography.</li> <li>While the receptor is located within the VE, it sits low in the valley, located along a narrow corridor at the beginning of the PRoW 0311/ZU35 route bordered by mature dense vegetation obscuring views along the route towards the site to the west</li> </ul>	None	None	None
M	<u>Road</u>  Highsted Road	Medium	Medium	Medium	Adjacent – 620m (South)	Glimpse	Permanent	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Views from Highsted Road located adjacent to the site to the west would be restricted due to intervening vegetation, intervening built form, localised changes in topography and distance.</li> <li>Fleeting glimpsed views, where visible, the new development will be glimpsed through the trees, with visibility increasing during the winter months due to leaf loss.</li> </ul>	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
N	<u>Other</u>  Highsted Grammar School/ Fulston Manor School	Low	Medium	Low	Adjacent (North West)	Glimpse/ None	Permanent	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Negligible/None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Views would be fleeting and glimpsed from the school grounds, with the focus on school activities</li> <li>It is unlikely that the proposed development is visible from this receptor owing to intervening built form and vegetation.</li> </ul>	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible/ None