

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT,
LAND AT CHURCH LANE,
LYDDEN,
DOVER
KENT.

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd has been appointed by Quinn Estates to undertake a landscape and visual impact assessment relating to a 1.95 ha residential development at land south of Church Lane, on the northern side of the village of Lydden, Kent. It is anticipated the development will be an “*Outline proposal for the erection of up to 23 dwellings including affordable housing together with associated parking, infrastructure, and open space; with all matters reserved except access*”. (There after referred to as the ‘Proposed Development’) on land on the northern edge of Lydden (hereafter referred to as the ‘Site’). The location and context of the Site is illustrated on **ASP1** Site Location Plan and **ASP2** Site and Setting Plan.
- 1.2. A detailed appraisal of the surrounding study area has been undertaken using Ordnance Survey data, historical map data, local policy, and published character assessments. This has informed the on-site field analysis to identify key viewpoints, analyze the landscape character and visual environment of the local area, and determine the extent and significance of any potential landscape and visual effects.
- 1.3. The assessment of effects has been derived from guidance provided within GLVIA3 (Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3 Edition) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment in April 2013. The methodology is contained within **Appendix 1** of this document.
- 1.4. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will take the following format:
- Review of landscape related policy – national and local policy context reviewed with any designations identified (Section 2);
 - Baseline assessment – review of the existing landscape character and visual environment (Section 3);
 - Description of the proposals – introducing the Proposed Development and the associated landscape proposals and associated mitigation (Section 4);
 - Assessment of effects – using an established methodology based on the guidance of GLVIA3, the potential effects of the proposals upon the existing landscape character and visual environment will be assessed (Section 5);
 - Conclusions will be drawn (Section 6).

- 1.5. This assessment should be read alongside the other supporting material which accompanies this application.

2. LANDSCAPE RELATED POLICY

- 2.1. The Site is located on the northern extents of the village of Lydden to the south of Church Lane and is situated approximately 7 km north-west of Dover and 16 km south-east of Canterbury. It is covered by the policies of the Dover District Statutory Development Plan, which includes a Core Strategy (Feb 2010), Land Allocation Local Plan (Jan 2015) and saved policies from the Dover District Local Plan (2002). At the time of writing, the New Dover District Local Plan is well advanced, with the consultation completed in March 2023, and the plan scheduled for Adoption in 2024.
- 2.2. The Site is on land outside the development boundary (DM1) of Lydden and on land classed as within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone (DM17). The Site is also located near to housing allocated land off Canterbury Road (St Marys Rise), 120m to the east, and near an SSSI which is 50m to the south. The SSSI consists of steeply sloping woods and open space on chalk which soil supports unusual plants including orchids. This SSSI is within the Kent Hills AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) the boundary of which is located to the west and south of the Site on the opposite side of Lydden Hill and Canterbury Road. The hills to the north, west and east of the Site also contain protect land within the Lydden and Temple Ewell Downs SAC (Special Conservation Area). Several Public Rights of Way are located around the Site with PROW ER116 passing along the Site's eastern boundary. PROW ER117 crosses steeply sloping ground and the SSSI to the south of the Site and PROW ER86 crosses steeply sloping ground to the west of the Site. Several listed buildings are near the Site including The Bell Inn, and Lydden Court Farmhouse and the Church of St Mary both on Church Lane.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

- 2.3. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021. The document sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The document places an emphasis on the promotion of sustainable growth whilst also protecting the environment.

- 2.4. Paragraph 7 states that: ***“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.”***
- 2.5. Paragraph 8 states that: ***“Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (...)”*** including ***“an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”***
- 2.6. Paragraph 11 states that: ***“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.***

For plan-making this means that:

- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;***
- b) strategic plans should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other development, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:***
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type, or distribution of development in the plan area; or***
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.***

For decision-taking this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or***

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”

2.7. Design is dealt with in Chapter 12 which sets out the objectives for achieving “well-designed places”. Para 130 states that: “***Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:***

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and effective landscaping;

c) respond to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”

2.8. Chapter 15 deals with the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment. Para 174 states that: ***“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:***

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality);***
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;***
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it;***
- d) minimising impacts and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;***

preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air quality; and remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate

2.9. The document also highlights the requirement for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment in Chapter 16, with designated heritage assets being afforded a level of protection and conservation commensurate with its level of heritage significance. New development should take into the account the importance of the historic feature, and paragraph 197 states that: ***“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:***

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;***

- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and***
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”***

- 2.10. The NPPF has been of material consideration as part of our assessment of the Site and its setting, and the proposals shall take on board the overall framework guidance and principles contained within the NPPF.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- 2.11. Those categories within the NPPG that are of relevance to landscape and visual matters in relation to this Site are set out below.

Design: Process and Tools

- 2.12. The NPPG states that well-designed places can be achieved by taking a pro-active and collaborative approach at all stages of the planning process. The guidance sets out processes and tools that can be used through the planning system. The guidance is to be read alongside the National Design Guide.
- 2.13. As set out in paragraph 130 of the NPPF, permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, considering any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents.

National Design Guide

- 2.14. The importance of design is a key focus within the guide as is the local and wider context and character of the Site.

Green Infrastructure

- 2.15. The NPPG highlights the multifaceted benefits delivered through Green Infrastructure and recognises how it can be used to reinforce and enhance local landscape character and contribute to a sense of place.

Landscape

- 2.16. Finally, the NPPG refers to the NPPF and the recognition of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the provision of strategic policies to provide the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. Adverse landscape impacts are to be avoided and mitigation measures employed where necessary.

The NPPF and NPPG have been of material consideration as part of our assessment of the Site and its setting, and the proposals shall take on board the overall framework guidance and principles contained within the NPPF.

Local Planning Policy

Adopted Core Strategy (Feb 2010)

- 2.17. The current planning policies for the Dover district are set out in the statutory Development Plan which includes the Core Strategy.

- 2.18. The Core Strategy policies considered of most relevance to the Proposed Development are:

Policy CP1 – Settlement Hierarchy

Policy CP11 – Expansion of Whitfield

- 2.19. Policy CP 1 – Settlement Hierarchy identifies the settlement of Lydden as a 'Village' with development having a '**tertiary focus**' and being suited to a scale that '**would reinforce its role as a provider of services to essentially its home community**'.

- 2.20. Policy CP 11 – Expansion of Whitfield describes the proposed expansion of Whitfield to accommodate 5,750 homes in the field to the west, north and east of the town. Whitfield is located 2km to the east of the Site. The policy lists the requirements for planning permission to be granted and this includes:

Existing hedgerows and tree lines are, wherever possible, retained and enhanced to form the basis of a green infrastructure network that connects with the wider network and also incorporates open spaces for recreational and other purposes, including the provision of facilities to deflect likely

urbanization and recreational pressures arising from the development away from the Lydden and Temple Ewell Downs Special Area of Conservation;

- 2.21. It is likely that a similar requirement will be placed on the Site as it is also near the SAC.

Land Allocations Local Plan Adopted 2015

- 2.22. The Land Allocations Plan contains a section on the development of Lydden and 'it is considered that additional housing will be required **'to help sustain and strengthen Lydden's role in the Settlement hierarchy'**. The plan identifies the land located 120m to the east of the Site off Canterbury Road (St Marys Rise) as suitable for 40 dwellings (Policy LA40).

- 2.23. Policy LA40 describes the requirements for planning permission to be granted as including:

Development proposals are sensitively designed in terms of height and massing in order to ensure the development does not have an adverse impact on the AONB and countryside;

Trees retained and incorporated into the design and layout;

Cycle and footway connections are established to connect to the existing network

A financial contribution is secured to mitigate the impact on the Thanet Coast and sandwich Bay SPA;

Streetlighting is required this should be designed to minimize the impact of light pollution and conserve the dark night skies of the AONB.

- 2.24. It is likely that similar requirements will be placed on the Site due to its proximity to this development.

Dover District Local Plan 2002 - Saved Policies

- 2.25. Most of the policies have been replaced by the Core Strategy and Land Allocations Local Plan. Only a few remain saved and those of relevance to the Site include:
- 2.26. Policy CO8 - Development which would adversely affect a hedgerow will only be permitted if: -
- 1) No practicable alternatives exist.**
 - 2) Suitable native replacement planting is provided; and**
 - 3) Future maintenance is secured through the imposition of conditions or legal agreements.**

Sustainability Appraisal of Draft Local Plan 2010

- 2.27. The Sustainability Appraisal highlights the significant development pressures on the Kent district over the New Local Plan period with a minimum of 11,920 homes to be delivered equating to a 22% increase in the total number of homes in the Dover district. The New (Draft) Local Plan is described as **‘having a strong focus on mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change over the Plan period and requires excellent design sensitive to the district’s natural, built, and historic environment. However, the scale and distribution of the development proposed in the Draft Local Plan also has potential to have significant adverse effects on the district’s natural resources, landscape and townscape, biodiversity, and historic assets.’**
- 2.28. Policy SA11 Landscape and Townscape was found to have a **‘likely significant positive effect’** on DM Policy 39: Landscape Character, Strategic Policy 18: Protecting the District’s Historic Environment, DM Policy 44 Designated and Non-designated Heritage Assets, DM45, Conservation Areas, DM 46: Archaeology, DM 47 Dover Western Heights Fortifications and DM48 Historic Parks and Gardens.
- 2.29. However, Policy SA11 - Landscape and Townscape was found to conflict with DM3 Renewable energy **‘because it encourages the development of renewable and low carbon technologies which in certain circumstances may adversely affect the setting and special character of the district’s sensitive landscapes, townscapes and seascapes.’** It was also found to be conflict with a wide range of

new home policies including Strategic Policy 2 New Homes Growth because **‘many of the site allocations are near to known sensitive landscapes or townscape. Although the allocations generally refer to the need for appropriate landscaping and screening measures, particularly for views into and from the AONB, the wide extent of development and significant loss of openness in certain parts of the district’s countryside means there is still potential to affect the significance of the district’s landscape, townscape, and seascapes.’**

- 2.30. There is also conflict with Strategic Policy 8 - Employment and Local economy policies **‘This is in acknowledgement of the fact that some of the employment allocations are near to known sensitive landscape and townscape assets. Although the allocations are generally in existing employment areas, there is still the potential for additional adverse effects on visual setting or more directly through noise, light, water, and air pollution.’**
- 2.31. Finally, there is conflict with Transport and Infrastructure DM Policy 33 as **‘the policy sets out the circumstances in which open spaces may be lost for development. In certain, albeit rare, circumstances this may result in the potential for the loss of open land which contributes to the setting and special character of the district’s landscapes, townscape, and seascapes.’**
- 2.32. The assessment recommends that Chapter 9 – Landscape, in the New Local Plan, references both the Kent Landscape Assessment and the Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation Report.
- 2.33. At the time of writing, the district is in the process of updating its Landscape Character Assessment and this will inform the New Local Plan.
- 2.34. Overall, Landscape Policy in the New Local Plan will be balanced with the future housing and economic needs of the district.

The Kent Downs AONB Management Plan (2021-2026)

- 2.35. The Site is located close to and in the setting of the Kent Down AONB which is less than 60m away on the western and southern side of Lydden Hill / Canterbury Road.
- 2.36. The plan promotes a mitigation hierarchy with regards to the impacts of development on the setting of the AONB. Firstly, adverse effects should be

avoided, if possible, with alternative solutions which reduce or eliminate impacts applied. Secondly, where adverse impacts are unavoidable, measures to mitigate the impacts should be applied. Finally, where mitigation measures are not possible, compensatory measures should be adopted.

- 2.37. The principles for the Landform and Landscape Character within the AONB are described as:

LLC1 The protection, conservation and enhancement of special characteristics and qualities, natural beauty, and landscape character of the Kent Downs AONB will be supported and pursued.

LLC2 The promotion, management, restoration, and appropriate creation of viewpoints will be supported.

LLC3 The provision of coordinated and high-quality landscape conservation guidance will be pursued, focusing on the special characteristics and qualities, natural beauty, and the landscape character of the Kent Downs AONB.

LLC4 The prevention, detection and enforcement action against illegal and overtly damaging activities which detract from landscape character will be pursued.

LLC5 The revised Kent Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment forms an integral, interconnected part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Draft Management Plan 2021-2026.

LLC6 The improved awareness and appreciation of all the special qualities of the Kent Downs AONB landscape and its conservation to people who influence the future of, live, work in or visit the AONB will be pursued.

LLC7 The development of strategic, long-term, landscape action and enhancement plan for areas of the Kent Downs AONB which present the greatest threats or opportunities or where natural capital enhancement, intended net gain, nature recovery, ELM or climate mitigation investments are proposed, will be pursued.

Kent Downs AONB Design Handbook

2.38. The Kent Downs Design Handbook contains practical guidance on the design principles that should be applied to development around urban edges adjacent to the AONB. These principles include:

- *The presumption should be against AONB edge developments where they impact upon views into and out of the AONB landscape.*
- *Where this is unavoidable ensure that buildings and infrastructure are located to avoid loss of important off-site views towards features such as church towers, fine buildings, or the wider landscape, as well as avoiding intrusion onto sensitive ridgelines, prominent slopes and damage to distinctive landscape settings.*
- *Seek to retain key landscape features on development sites – such as woodland, shaws (narrow belts of woodland), hedgerows, orchards, mature trees, watercourses, and ponds as a basis for the new landscape structure and setting of the site.*
- *Avoid straight lines or regimented buildings on the settlement edge for new development.*
- *Integrate new development in keeping with local character, using open space, and planting to provide a visual link to the countryside and an attractive backdrop/foil to development.*
- *Secure and manage native woodland, shaw, hedgerow and tree planting to integrate and/or screen new and existing developments. (Refer to suggestions for planting species within Landscape Character Areas).*
- *Consider massing, form, height and colour, texture of buildings and structures, taking account of local distinctiveness and characteristics.*
- *Seek the use of appropriate local materials.*

- ***Co-ordinate building colour to secure a complementary effect between buildings and the surrounding landscape (e.g. use of matt neutral colours to minimise reflectivity).***
- ***Ensure site entrances and approaches are designed to fit within the landscape and use discrete signage.***
- ***Consider the need for lighting and where essential seek to minimise its impact in the landscape through choice of light source and control of light spillage. (Refer to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) – Lighting in the Countryside)***
- ***Consider the need for fencing. Where security fencing is required use wooden posts and galvanised wire and screen with thorny hedges of native plants.***
- ***Consider the impact of development on the Public Rights of Way network. Refer to Kent Public Rights of Way Reference***

3. BASELINE ASSESSMENT

- 3.1. The Application Site is on the north-western edge of Lydden, a village located roughly 10km north-west of Dover, and consists of a rectangular plot of open land adjacent to the village edge and farm buildings formerly used for grazing. The Site lies within the parish boundary of Lydden, and its location is shown on Plan **ASP1**.
- 3.2. The Site is adjacent to Church Lane, on its north-western edge, a rural road with hedgerow boundaries, farm buildings, Old Vicarage and St Marys Church. The road defines the northern edge of the village and rises steeply to join the M2 about 1km to the north-east of the Site. To the south of the Site, the main road with the M2, Lydden Hill, passes the Site and becomes Canterbury Road. This road defines the southern edge of the village and is a linear route with housing, the Old Bell pub, garage, and other landmarks along it. The eastern edge of the Site backs onto recently built housing that fronts onto Cambridge Road. This housing is at a higher level than the Site which slopes away to the north-west. Between the eastern Site boundary and this housing, PRoW ER116 passes along the edge of the Site. The Site's northern boundary is presently post and rail fencing with some remnant clumps of hedgerow. This separates the Site from other open fields to the north-east of the Site that are adjacent to the farmyard on Church Lane and the Church of St Marys.
- 3.3. The Site is visually well-contained along its southern and eastern boundary by the village housing on Canterbury Road. On the Site's north-western boundary with Church Lane, the Site can be glimpsed between farm buildings and gaps in the hedgerow. The Site is visible from the north-east from the PRoW ER 116 and ER115 which cross the open fields adjacent to the Site. It can also be seen from the surrounding slopes to the north and the east. From the slopes to the west and south which are within the AONB, view to the Site is more restricted due to intervening buildings and strong boundary vegetation.
- 3.4. There is a village pond at the junction between Church Lane and Lydden Hill located 50m to the west of the Site. Although the Site is located at the base of steep chalk slopes the valley it rests within is dry and is within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone. The Site is illustrated within its immediate setting on Plan **ASP2**.

- 3.5. The chalk slopes that surround the Site are very sensitive landscapes with the elevated ground to the west and south being within the Kent Downs AONB and the Alkham, Lydden and Swingfield Woods SSSI. On the slopes to the north and east of the Site, much of the land is part of the Lydden and Temple Ewell Downs SAC (Special Areas of Conservation). These landscapes are composed of ancient woodlands, chalk grassland and rare plants including orchids.
- 3.6. The Site slope is dished at around 50m AOD rising steeply to 130m AOD before forming a plateau adjacent to the M2 at 135m AOD. The slopes to the west and south within the AONB also rise steeply to reach 135m AOD. The localised and wider topography is illustrated on the OS base on Plan **ASP1**.

Vegetation Cover

- 3.7. The Site consists of an open grass field most recently used for horse or sheep grazing. The southern boundaries of the Site consist of a range of fencing and hedging treatments to the rear of the housing on Canterbury Road. As well as close boarded timber fencing, this includes include Beech and Leylandii hedges. The road edge with Church Lane is bordered by hedgerow species. Where properties and farm buildings edge Church Lane, the rear boundary of these properties has a mix of vegetation that edging Site mostly made up of self -seeded scrub species and remnant hedgerow. In the south-western corner of the Site, adjacent to the gated entrance off Church Lane, some ornamental garden species and fruit tree species have been planted within the Site associated with the property on Church Lane including a birch tree, conifer and several cherry or apple trees.
- 3.8. The northern boundary of the site is characterised by post and wire fencing with small clumps of hedgerow and scattered mature sycamore trees. There are large gaps in this vegetation and clear view through to the fields to the north and east beyond the Site boundary.
- 3.9. On the Site's eastern boundary, adjacent to the PRoW ER116, the Site is edged by a strong boundary of tall trees consisting mainly of mature Sycamore, many of which are overgrown with Ivy and form a strong visual barrier to the northern edge of the village of Lydden. On the Kent County Council Public Rights of Way map, PRoW ER116 is marked as 'Vegetation Clearance' which possibly suggests this routeway has been overgrown and impassable in the recent past. Adjacent to the new

housing on Canterbury Road, many of these trees have been reduced or felled to facilitate views into the countryside. Consequently, this means the new housing is more visually prominent from the north across the Site. The existing components of the Site are illustrated on **Plan ASP2** Site and Setting.

Public Rights of Way

- 3.10. The Public Right of way nearest to the Site is PR116 which passes along the eastern edge of the Site. PRow 116 heads north at the north-eastern corner of the Site, crossing the open field adjacent to the Site, and leading to the church yard of St Mary's Church. PRow PR115 branches from PR116 at the north-eastern corner of the Site and follows the southern boundary of the neighbouring fields to the north-east ending at Stonehall Road located 300m north-east of the Site.
- 3.11. 40m to the north-west of the Site, next to Lydden Court Farm, on the northern side of Church Lane, PRow ER86 heads north across farmland, and up a steep slope. This route crosses through several fields, eventually reaching a ridgeline. Beyond this ridge, the land is more level, with the route eventually reaching the A2. The elevated ground and ridgeline on parts of this PRow, provide clear views back towards the Site.
- 3.12. 50m to the south-east of the Site, off Canterbury Road, and heading up a steep slope into the AONB over MOD land, PRow ER117 provides views of the Site, at its start near to Canterbury Road, but is eventually screened from the Site by the topography as it rises further south.
- 3.13. Finally, PRow ER300 runs from Swanton Lane, along an access road, and then branches towards Garratt Wood within the AONB. The start of this route is located 500m to the west of the Site. There are other PRowS, also in the countryside to the west of the Site and within the AONB, including ER109 located south of Lydden Hill Wood and ER107 located near Round Wood.
- 3.14. The OS base on **Plan ASP1 and ASP2** illustrates the extent of the Public Right of Way network within the wider setting of the Site, and this has informed the visual assessment.

Topography

- 3.15. In terms of topography, the Site is situated on lower lying ground surrounded by undulating steep slopes and ridgelines associated with the surrounding chalkland landscape. The Site is located at approx. 50m AOD with the surrounding slopes to north, south, east, and west rising to approx. 125m – 140m AOD within a 700m circumference of the Site.

3.16. Cultural and Settlement Pattern

- 3.17. The village of Lydden is a linear settlement associated with Canterbury Road which was the main routeway through the area between Dover and Canterbury until the construction of the railway and A2. In the 20th Century, and more recent times, the village has expanded along Stonehall Lane which is located to the south-west of the railway line.

National Landscape Character

- 3.18. A landscape assessment of the local area has been carried out which seeks to identify broadly homogenous zones that can be categorised in terms of quality and character. Natural England have produced a countrywide landscape character assessment resulting in the National Character Areas (NCA's). The Site lies within the 'North Downs' National Character Area (NCA) 119. This NCA runs from the south coast around Dover, along the southern edge of Canterbury, past Faversham, and Rochester, and then west, eventually reaching Guildford. The nationwide map includes large tracks of countryside which have similar characteristics in terms of landform, geology, land use and other landscape elements.

- 3.19. A summary of NCA 119 'North Downs' is as follows:

“The North Downs National Character Area (NCA) forms a chain of chalk hills extending from the Hog’s Back in Surrey and ending dramatically at the internationally renowned White Cliffs of Dover. The settlement pattern is characterised by traditional small, nucleated villages, scattered farms and large houses with timber framing, flint walls and Wealden brick detailing. Twisting sunken lanes, often aligned along ancient drove roads, cut across

the scarp and are a feature of much of the dip slope. The Kent Downs and Surrey Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty designations are testament to the scenic qualities and natural beauty of the area.'

3.20. The key characteristics of NCA 119 shared by the Site include:

- ***Cretaceous Chalk forms the backbone of the North Downs. A distinctive chalk downland ridge rises from the surrounding land, with a steep scarp slope to the south providing extensive views across Kent, Surrey, and Sussex and across the Channel seascape to France.***
- ***The south-facing scarp is incised by several short, bowl-shaped dry valleys, cut by periglacial streams, and often referred to as combes. The undulating topography of the dip slope has also been etched by streams and rivers, today forming dry valleys, some of which carry winterbournes that occasionally flow in the dip slope, depending on the level of the chalk aquifer.***
- ***Woodland is found primarily on the steeper slopes of the scarp, valley sides and areas of the dip slope capped with clay-with-flints. Well wooded hedgerows and shaws are an important component of the field boundaries, contributing to a strongly wooded character. Much of the woodland is ancient.***
- ***Tracts of species-rich chalk grassland and patches of chalk heath are important downland habitats and of international importance.***
- ***Ancient paths, drove roads and trackways, often sunken, cross the landscape and are a distinctive feature of the dip slope. Defensive structures such as castles, hill forts and Second World War installations, and historic parks, buildings and monuments are found throughout.***
- ***Small, nucleated villages and scattered farmsteads including oasts and barns form the settlement pattern, with local flint, chalk and Wealden brick the vernacular materials.***
- ***In the western part of the area, around land to the west of Sevenoaks and into Surrey, there is increased urban development.***

District Landscape Character

Kent Landscape Character Assessment (update 2020)

- 3.21. The updated Kent Landscape Character Assessment (Fionna Fyfe Associates Ltd, 2023) locates the Site within (Landscape Character Type) LCT 1: Chalk Downs and Landscape Character Area LCA 1C: East Kent Downs in Local Character Area: Alkham.
- 3.22. The East Kent Downs Landscape Character Areas (LCA 1C) covers land to the south and west of the Site. An extract is included in **Appendix 5**.
- 3.23. LCA 1C – East Kent Downs Landscape Character Area, is described as '**A remote, peaceful area of downland towards the eastern end of the AONB. Its character is strongly influenced by the underlying chalk geology.**'
- 3.24. The key characteristics of Local Character Area: Alkham of most relevance to the Site and its immediate setting include:
- ***This area is dominated by the long parallel ridges and sometimes isolated valleys which feed into the Dour valley. Near the coast, the ridges become increasingly narrower and the valleys closer.***
 - ***There are fewer woodlands here than in the west, and most occur on the steep valley slopes, where cultivation has been uneconomic. Many, therefore, are very old and of high nature conservation value, but few are actively managed.***
 - ***There are extensive MoD training grounds near Lydden which tend to be cattle-grazed and include bands of conifers used in training exercises.***
- 3.25. The Kent Landscape Character Assessment describes the LCA 1C as '**a landscape with a sense of timelessness, and for much of the area, large-scale or modern development is not apparent. The landscape appears well managed, and its condition is generally good. This area has been the focus of many habitat**

restoration schemes’. However, the area is also under pressure from changing practises in land management that include the loss of orchards and replacement with vines, increasing use of land for equine management, and the introduction of sub-urban style gates and boundary treatments. There has been some decline in parkland / hedgerow trees since 1995 and the dominance of landform within the LCA means that skylines are very sensitive to change across the area. Tree disease is becoming an increasing issue and woodland can not be relied upon to contain views of development in the long term.

3.26. The key characteristics of 1C are described as:

- ***Underlying geology of Cretaceous chalk. In places the surface has weathered to create a layer of clay-with-flints, forming heavy, sticky soils.***
- ***Rounded chalk plateau dissected by a series of parallel narrow dry valleys, becoming increasingly pronounced towards the south.***
- ***Little surface water, but seasonal streams appearing only in winter (Nailbournes) are a distinctive feature.***
- ***Extensive woodland blocks, particularly on ridge tops, and strips of woodland on steep valley sides. Extensive coppice and conifer woodlands. Shaves, copses and hedgerow trees throughout.***
- ***Dominant land use is arable agriculture, but there are also areas of parkland, orchards, vines, woodland, and pasture. Field patterns are variable, but are generally larger on ridges than in valleys, reflecting historic processes of enclosure.***
- ***Semi-natural habitats include woodland, chalk grassland and parkland.***
- ***Scattered historic buildings including churches, manors, country houses, farms, and cottages.***
- ***Relatively sparse settlement of scattered farms and occasional nucleated villages, often of brick and flint construction. Concentration***

of settlement in the Nail Bourne Valley, and notable common-edge settlement of Stelling Minnis.

- ***Dense network of historic roads and tracks, including Prehistoric routeways, Roman roads medieval drove roads and Turnpikes. Sunken single-track lanes are also characteristic.***
- ***A relatively tranquil part of the Kent Downs AONB, with a strongly rural feel. The pattern of ridges and dry valleys gives the landscape a rhythmic feel, particularly in the south of the LCA.***
- ***Views are often linear and channelled by landform. There are long views from high ground, overlooking adjacent valleys.***

3.27. The impact of 'Development' on the LCA is described as:

- ***Linear expansion of valley-floor settlement up the valley sides has occurred in several villages and is noticeable with the landscape.***
- ***Urbanising and urban-fringe influences are most prevalent along the main roads within the area, particularly around larger settlements.***

3.28. The conclusion is that 'these can reduce the rural character, and also introduce elements which are not designed to be locally distinctive'.

3.29. The landscape management recommendations for the area of most relevant to the Site include:

Protect

- ***Protect non-designated historic landscape features such as lanes and field patterns, particularly where they are threatened with highways works or other development.***
- ***Protect the small scale, isolated pattern, and rural character of settlements within this LCA. Avoid ribbon development along roads and large-scale development.***
- ***Protect the isolated nature of farmsteads.***

- ***Protect skylines and consider the impacts of new developments (including communications masts) on open skylines.***
- ***Protect trees and woodlands, particularly where they have a screening function.***
- ***Protect open views and long views along valleys, avoiding the introduction of new developed elements into these views.***
- ***Protect tranquillity, resisting developments which increase levels of noise and movement in the landscape, and maintain the remote, undeveloped qualities of the valleys.***

Manage

- ***Manage hedgerows and shaws and try to link them with woodlands to enhance the habitat network. Reinstate hedgerows lost through intensive agricultural practices. Manage in-field trees and replace and replant to increase their number across the LCA. Promote in-field and roadside trees using existing hedge stock.***
- ***Enhance ecological connectivity in arable areas, for example through provision of field margin strips and re-connecting hedgerows.***
- ***Manage public rights of way, ensuring that popular routes are robust enough to cope with the level of use. Provide new paths where required (e.g. dog-walking circuits near new developments)***

Plan

- ***Promote high design standards for rural developments to ensure that they make a positive contribution to landscape character, for example through careful choice of materials, and an appropriate scale and massing of building. Seek the sympathetic use of local materials – brick, tile, and flint.***

- ***Ensure the application of the Kent Downs AONB Rural Streets and Lanes Design guidance.***
- ***Ensure that impacts on views from the LCA are taken into account when considering development in the vicinity of the AONB***

3.30. In summary, with regards to the proposed development, the access proposals should be sensitive to the character of Church Lane avoiding the introduction of urban features like kerbing and signage. The proposed development should not encroach upon on Lydden Court Farm or the Church of St Mary. Boundary trees along the field edges and PRow 116 should be protected and enhanced with new tree and hedgerow planting. The development should use compatible materials and be of a scale that respects the village setting.

Aspect Landscape Character Assessment

- 3.31. While the NCA and more Localised Character Assessment provide a good assessment and overview of the quality and character of the landscape within which the Site is set, it is considered that they represent a broad-brush approach and do not necessarily reflect the qualities of the Site itself and its immediate localised setting. As such Aspect has undertaken a more localised landscape character assessment of the Site, the settlement edge of Lydden and the immediate surrounding landscape.
- 3.32. The Site and the northern edge of Lydden are located at the foot of a bowl-shaped dry valley of low-lying land surrounded by higher ground on all sides. The Site is well contained from the wider landscape beyond the valley by this topography and by the buildings of the village on its southern and eastern sides.
- 3.33. Heading down Lydden Hill into the village from the A2, the Site is not visible due to intervening topography (VP11) until passing the entrance to Church Lane where glimpsed views into the south-western corner of the Site are possible (VP6). However, the Site is viewed with the context of recent development and new buildings and fencing constructed off Church Lane and at Hope Gardens off Canterbury Road. Passing through the village of Lydden, along Canterbury Road, the Site is mainly obscured by existing buildings along the road edge, but there are

glimpsed views between buildings over gardens and parking bays. Where the Site can be seen, it is with a backdrop of farm buildings located along the edge of Church Lane. These consist of a range of sheds and barn buildings mostly of modern corrugated iron construction. These views are relatively localised and experienced only along the stretch of Canterbury Road between Lydden garage and the crossing point of PRow ER116. Beyond this point, to the east along Canterbury Road, there are no views back towards Site due to intervening buildings including the recent development at Hope Gardens.

- 3.34. Church Lane on the north-western edge of the Site retains a strong rural character and is characterised by a narrow carriageway edged by hedgerow boundaries. There are period buildings along its length including the Church of St Marys, the old vicarage, cottages and Lydden Court farmhouse. Additionally, there are more modern sheds and barns consisting of equipment stores, cattle sheds, grain silos and other outbuildings associated with farming. The open field of the proposed development Site, and other fields to the north-east and east, separate Church Lane and its buildings from the village of Lydden which is associated more with Canterbury Road and Stonehall.
- 3.35. Heading along Church Lane north towards Coldred Hill, there are clear views into the Site adjacent to its proposed entrance point off Church Lane (VP1). The open fields of the western corner of the Site can be seen clearly, but with a backdrop of the new housing at Hope Gardens which sits prominently on the village edge and forms the horizon. Further along Church Lane there are glimpsed views between farm buildings where the Site can be seen as green field between a foreground of stored materials and the new housing on Hope Gardens. In the far distance, the slopes of the AONB are more prominent with mature trees forming a backdrop to the development on Hope Gardens. Continuing along Church Lane to Lydden Court Farm, the Site can be seen with a foreground of grain silos and cattle shed in the foreground, and the housing lining Canterbury Road at the foot of the AONB hills in the background (VP2). The recent developments of new housing within the village are less visually prominent from this location as they are partially hidden by mature trees and have a backdrop of the AONB hills, however, they still draw attention due to their light (white) cladding and un-weathered materials.
- 3.36. Adjacent to the Church of St Marys on Church Lane, the Site is hidden from view by Lydden Court farmhouse and associated red brick farm buildings (VP7). It is

anticipated that the rooflines of the proposed development may be visible above these buildings but will be glimpsed only through vegetation associated with the church yard and garden surrounding the farm building. The existing houses of Lydden are hidden from this location by the mature tree planting on the Site's eastern boundary associated with the field edges and PRoWs ER116 and ER115.

- 3.37. The Site can be seen from the hills surrounding it. To the north, PRoW ER86 rises the steep slope of the valley side adjacent to the Old Vicarage. This routeway provides clear views of the Site (VP12), the edge of the village of Lydden and the surrounding hills of the AONB. The horizon to the south is dominated by woodland located at the top of the AONB slopes. The green field of the Site separates the foothills to the north from the village edge. PRoW ER86 eventually reaches a plateau 300m south of the A2 beyond which the Site can no longer be seen due to the level topography and intervening field boundary vegetation. The Site can not be seen from the A2.
- 3.38. To the South of the Site, PRoW ER117 rises the slope of the AONB on MOD owned land. After 200m, this routeway becomes screened from the Site due to the undulating topography of the valley side. Where the Site can be seen (VP5), near Canterbury Road, the Hope Gardens development is prominent in the foreground with the Site foreshortened and the farm buildings and cottages of Church Lane in the middle ground. Above this are the slopes of the chalk ridge and open countryside which rises to form a plateau that hides the A2 from view.
- 3.39. To the west of the Site, also within the AONB, PRoW ER300 ascends the valley side from Swanton Lane. There are no clear views of the Site due to hedgerow that lines the PRoW route. Further from the Site, on more elevated ground (VP14) the village of Lydden and the Site are hidden from view due to intervening woodlands and mature vegetation on the edges of fields.
- 3.40. Overall, the impact of the proposed development will be local and limited to the valley bottom of Lydden. The Site is surrounded by steep chalk slopes that separate the Site from the wider landscape beyond. However, these slopes are sensitive to change and have a high landscape value. To the west and south, these slopes are AONB with SSSI woodlands and other chalk land habitats. To the north and east, the slopes are part of the Lydden and Temple Ewell Downs SAC (Special Area of Conservation). The Site is also adjacent to Church Lane which has a strong rural character and is characterised by landmark buildings of historic importance

including St Mary's Church. Presently, the open field of the Site separates the village edge of Lydden from this wider countryside. Recent development to the village edge detracts from the Site's setting particularly where the building materials deviates from those traditionally used in the area and where vegetation has been cleared. However, residential development is an established land use in this locality and the Site is adjacent to this on its southern, western, and eastern boundaries.

3.41. To assess the effects on the landscape resource, the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', Third Edition, provides several definitions for landscape susceptibility, landscape value and finally landscape sensitivity, as follows:

- Landscape Susceptibility: *"the ability of a defined landscape to accommodate the specific Proposed Development without undue negative consequences"*;
- Landscape Value: *"the relative value that is attached to different landscape by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons"*; and
- Landscape Sensitivity: *"a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor."*

3.42. In terms of landscape sensitivity, there are several factors that both influence and affect the value of the landscape character of the Site and its setting, and their susceptibility to change. The sensitivity of a particular landscape in relation to new development can be categorised as very high, high, medium, low, or negligible. This considers the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of development proposed and the value attached to different landscapes by society.

Landscape Susceptibility

3.43. In terms of the susceptibility of the landscape resource to accommodate change of the type proposed, it is considered that the presence of surrounding development reduces its susceptibility. Residential development is a well-established land use in the locality with the Hope Gardens development immediately to the south-east, the houses along Canterbury Rd to the south and houses along Church Lane on the western boundary. These reduce the susceptibility of the Site to change resulting

from further residential development. Generally, the village of Lydden is undergoing change from a linear settlement adjacent to Canterbury Road, to a more nucleated settlement with the railway line, Canterbury Road, and Church Lanes as its natural boundaries. The developments at Hope Gardens and St Marys Rise are recent signs of this trend, and the proposed development would be a further progression of this. It is therefore considered that the landscape character of the Site has capacity to accommodate sensitively designed residential development. However, the development will need to retain some areas of openness to separate it from Church Lane, use materials in sympathy with the landscape setting, and include mitigation planting. Overall, assuming a sympathetic development, the susceptibility of the landscape resource to change of the type proposed is **Low**.

Landscape Value

3.44. GLVIA3 sets out at Box 5.1 a range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes. This has been reviewed and updated in the light of the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21 '*Assessing landscape value outside national designations*' (TGN 02/21) and the below considers the updated guidance. These factors include:

- Natural heritage (ecological, geological, geomorphological which contributes positively to landscape).
- Cultural heritage (archaeological, historical, or cultural which contributes positively to landscape).
- Landscape condition (physical condition and intactness of landscape elements / structure).
- Associations (landscape connected with notable people, events or with the arts).
- Distinctiveness (strong landscape character, features, contributing to sense of identity).
- Recreational (offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important).
- Perceptual (Scenic) (visual quality / appeals to the senses).
- Perceptual (Wildness & tranquillity) (perceptual value of landscape, tranquillity, wildness, and remoteness).
- Functional (landscapes performing clearly identifiable functions).

3.1. Table 1 below seeks to assess the value of the Site (including the immediate adjoining localised landscape setting) based on the amended box 5.1 & TGN 02/21 criteria.

3.2. Table 1: Assessment of Landscape Value of the Site and its setting

| Criteria | Assessment of Value |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Natural Heritage | High – There are no internal features of note within the Site's boundaries. However, the Site is near chalk slopes that are AONB, SSSI and SAC. |
| Cultural Heritage | Medium – There are no historic landmark structures, designed landscapes or historic parks and gardens within the Site's boundaries. However, there are several listed buildings along Church Lane and Canterbury Road including St Marys Church, the Bell pub and Old Vicarage. |
| Landscape Condition | Low – The Site consists of an open grass field that is no distinctive features. Internally, it has no trees or hedgerows. The boundary vegetation consists of patchy hedgerow planting on its northern boundary. A mature line of mature trees adjacent to the PRoW on the Site's eastern boundary provides some landscape structure to the setting, but this has been partially felled and damaged adjacent to the Hope Gardens development. On the southern boundary to the rear of property on Canterbury Road is a line of Leylandii trees out of keeping with the rural setting. On the Site's western boundary, farmyard machinery and storage materials spill onto the Site from the yards and outbuildings along Church Lane. The Site is used to store vehicles and is damaged by tyre tracks. |
| Associations | None – There are no known associations with the Site. |
| Distinctiveness | None – The Site itself has no rare or particularly unusual features that contributes to local character or sense of identity. The Site is one of several fields found on the edge of Lydden village. |
| Recreational | Low – The Site is in private ownership and there are no recreational opportunities on the Site itself, but a PRoW ER116 runs in a corridor along the eastern boundary. |
| Perceptual (Scenic) | Medium – The Site consists of open field on the edge of the village of Lydden and is surrounded by chalk hills, woodland, and farmed fields. The field contributes a sense of openness and green to this setting. Recent housing development using unsympathetic materials detract from the appearance of the Site. |
| Perceptual (Wildness & ...) | Low – The Site lies adjacent to development on all sides with the village of Lydden adjacent. The Site is near to a railway line and the A2 passes |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Tranquillity) | to the north. |
| Functional | Low – The Site is no longer used for agriculture like the land on the northern side of Church Lane. The Site itself does not contribute specifically to GI networks although the boundary trees and remnant hedgerows have some potential to link the Site with the wider landscape. |

- 3.3. In terms of value, there are no known historic or literary associations with the Site. The Site is influenced by the presence of existing development to the south along Canterbury Road, to the west along Church Lane and to the east at Hope Gardens. Additionally, there is a main railway line (400m) and the A2 (850m) which detract from the tranquillity of the localised landscape. The Site itself does not include any internal or boundary landscape features of note. However, it is acknowledged that the Site is located near to the Kent Downs AONB, Alkham, Lydden and Swingfield Woods SSSI and Lydden and Temple Ewell Downs SAC. The Site is adjacent to PRoW ER116 and will be open to views along this corridor. Aspect concludes that the landscape value of the Site and its immediate setting is **Medium**.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 3.4. The Site is located on a settlement edge and is influenced by existing agricultural / commercial uses to the north and the A327 bypass road on its western boundary. The Site is not remarkable in terms of its land use, features, and elements with that of the immediate surrounding area and it does not include any features which elevate it above an ordinary landscape. The Site itself is not considered to represent a “valued landscape” in relation to the NPPF. However, the Site is adjacent to an AONB, SSSI and SAC sites and these sensitive elements form part of the setting of a PRoW (ER116) which passes the eastern boundary of the Site. When both value and susceptibility of the landscape resource are considered together, it is considered that the Site would typically be of **Medium to Low** landscape sensitivity.
- 3.5. With regards to the localised and wider rural landscape around the Site and settlement edge, the gently undulating sloping topography of the chalk land fields surrounding the Site are sensitive and positive landscape features. The Site is partially contained by development along Church Lane and the village edge of Lydden but still retains some intervisibility with its wider landscape setting particularly to the north, east and west. Overall, within the localised and wider

landscape setting, it is considered that the landscape has a **Medium to High** landscape sensitivity to development on the Site.

Visual Baseline Assessment

- 3.6. Several viewpoints have been identified to demonstrate the visibility of the Site within the localised and wider setting. The views have been informed by a thorough desk study and field assessment. The views are taken from publicly accessible viewpoints and although are not exhaustive, are considered to provide a fair representation of the visual environment within which the Site is set. The visual analysis seeks to identify the views that will, potentially, experience the greatest degree of change because of the proposals.
- 3.7. The visual assessment is included within **Appendix 2** and the baseline studies have fully considered the various factors required, as detailed in Section 6 of the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', Third Edition (GLVIA3) published in April 2013 by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, and the Landscape Institute Technical Note 06/19.
- 3.8. The photographs were taken in April 2022/3, representing winter views, by Chartered Landscape Architects using a 35mm equivalent digital SLR camera at a 50mm focal length in line with LI Tech Note 06/19. The weather was bright with good visibility. The full assessment of effects upon the visual environment and each viewpoint is detailed in section 5 of this report and the table below provides a summary of the viewpoint assessment. Table 2 below identifies the locations of the identified viewpoints, together with the key receptors and considered sensitivity.

Table 2: Baseline Visual Assessment

| Viewpoint | Location | Distance and Direction from Application Site | Receptors | Sensitivity |
|------------------|---|---|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Church Lane adjacent to proposed entrance to Site looking east towards the Site | 5m, west | Motorists, pedestrians | Medium |
| 2 | Church Lane opposite Lydden Court farmyard looking south towards Site | 40m, north | Motorists, pedestrians | Medium |
| 3 | PRoW ER 116 looking west towards the Site | 5m, east | Residents, Walkers | High |

| | | | | |
|----|--|------------------|--|-----------|
| 4 | PRoW ER 116 on edge of AONB at crossing point on Canterbury Road looking north-west towards the Site | 40m, south-east | Motorists Pedestrians, Walkers | Very High |
| 5 | PRoW ER 117 within the AONB looking north-west towards the Site | 120m, south-east | Residents, Walkers | Very High |
| 6 | Lydden Hill near Bell Farm on edge of AONB looking east towards Site | 200m, west | Motorists, pedestrians, walkers | Very High |
| 7 | St Marys Church yard on PRoW ER 116 looking south-west towards the Site | 150m, north-east | Walkers, Users of PRoW | High |
| 8 | PRoW ER115 looking south-west towards Site | 190m, north-east | Residents, Walkers, Users of PRoW | High |
| 9 | Coldred Hill footpath on edge of SAC looking south-west towards Site | 430m, north-east | Residents, Walkers | High |
| 10 | Warren Lane within the AONB looking north-east towards the Site | 300m, south-west | Motorists, pedestrians | Very High |
| 11 | Lydden Hill on edge of the AONB looking towards the Site | 500m, north-west | Motorists | Very High |
| 12 | PRoW ER86 on Chalk slope looking south towards the Site | 375m, north | Walkers, Users of PRoW | High |
| 13 | PRoW ER86 adjacent to the A2 on Chalk plateau looking south towards the Site | 820m, north | Motorists, Walkers, Users of PRoW | High |
| 14 | PRoW ER109 within AONB south of Lyddenhill Wood looking south-east towards the Site | 1km, north-west | Walkers, Users of PRoW | Very High |

3.9. As an overview, the Site is in a valley bottom surrounded by chalkland hills with elevated ground offering clear views towards Site in some locations. However, the Site is not exposed in all directions due to intervening vegetation, the plateau topography, and the buildings of Lydden village which contain many of the views towards Site, even from elevated ground. These elevated slopes vary in sensitivity depending on whether they are traversed by PRoW or are on designated land like

AONB or SAC. Around the Site's boundaries, intervisibility is limited by existing development on Church Lane, along Canterbury Road and on the eastern edge of the Site associated with Hope Gardens. However, the Site is open to views from PRow 116 and PRow 115 which pass along the Site's eastern boundary.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSALS

- 4.1. It is anticipated that the Proposed Development will consist of 23 dwellings of varied sizes with associated access roads, car parking, open space, landscaping, and associated infrastructure. The sensitively designed proposals will be in keeping with the character and local context of the village of Lydden. It is intended that any built form on the Site would incorporate a simple palette of materials that have been informed by the local setting and vernacular. The development of the Site has been informed by the landscape and visual assessment and the number of units proposed is carefully considered and orientated to ensure an appropriate scale and density compatible with the edge of the village.

Landscape Strategy

- 4.2. The proposed Site is located at the bottom of a dry chalk valley on the edge of an AONB. It is proposed to retain a large proportion of the Site as open space to facilitate drainage, provide an enhanced setting for the development, and to improve the biodiversity of the location. Proposed planting will reinforce the field boundaries of the Site with native hedgerow species, and introduce habitat associated with a dry chalk valley.
- 4.3. A mown circular pathway will be provided within the open space with seating spaced along the route. This open space will consist of mainly wildflower species typical of a chalk valley habitat. Isolated islands of scrub and tree planting will provide shelter for wildlife species.
- 4.4. Boundary planting will consist of typical chalk land species including disease resistant ash, oak, hornbeam, beech, yew, birch, and yew with an understorey of hedgerow species including hawthorn and blackthorn. The existing boundary vegetation will be retained in its entirety as part of the proposals and reinforced as required. The native species selected will complement the existing field boundaries and the protected woodland in the wider area.
- 4.5. New tree planting will also be used through the development as street trees and in car parking areas to break up building outlines and to help integrate the development within the village setting where tree cover is an important element of

the village character. The proposed planting strategy within the development will be to use native species where possible complemented by ornamental shrub species providing year-round interest. Hedges will be used to define front gardens and open space with ornamental shrub species planted to provide seasonal interest.

- 4.6. The proposals seek to provide a robust landscape strategy that will bring structure to the Proposed Development and integrate the scheme with existing vegetation and the planting within the Site's immediate context and setting. This green strategy will not only contribute to the sustainability of the Site, but also assist in creating a high-quality development which sits well within its landscaped context.
- 4.7. Overall, the landscape proposals aim to comply with local policy objectives and ensure that an appropriate and high-quality landscaped setting is achieved.

5. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

- 5.1. To assess the nature of the change because of the proposals, it is appropriate to appraise the impact of the Proposed Development upon the existing landscape character and visual environment within which the Site is situated.
- 5.2. To assess the effect of a development on the receiving environment, it is important to understand the quality and sensitivity of the landscape, the sensitivity of visual receptors, and the magnitude of change.
- 5.3. The assessment of effects has been derived from guidance provided within GLVIA3. The methodology is contained within **Appendix 2** of this document.

Effect upon Landscape Character

Regional Landscape Character Area

- 5.4. It is considered that the proposals can be integrated without significant harm to the character or qualities of the area. Within the context of the regional character assessment, the proposals represent a localised development within one valley area that would not adversely affect the characteristics of the larger scale landscape character area. NCA 119 'North Downs' is influenced by several different components, and the proposals, given their location on the edge of Lydden, would not adversely affect the overall character of the receiving landscape of the NCA.
- 5.5. It is considered that the proposals will give rise to an effect of **None** within the context of the NCA 119 'North Downs'.

District Wide Landscape Character Area

- 5.6. As set out within Section 2, the proposals are located within the Chalk Downs Local Character Type and the 'East Kent Downs - *Alkham*' Landscape Character Area (LCA 1C).
- 5.7. Table 4, below, assesses the likely effects of the proposals upon the key characteristics and landscape / visual sensitivities of the LCAs.

Table 4: Effect upon the LCAs

| Key Characteristics of 'Chalk Downland' LCA 1c | Potential Effect of the Proposals |
|---|--|
| <i>Rounded chalk plateau dissected by a series of parallel narrow dry valleys, becoming increasingly pronounced towards the south.</i> | Minor Adverse – The Site is located at the bottom of a dry chalk valley and will result in the loss of some open land. However, it is proposed to retain the lower ground of the Site as open ground, and this will provide valuable habitat for wildlife and amenity space for residents. |
| <i>Little surface water, but seasonal streams appearing only in winter (Nailbournes) are a distinctive feature.</i> | Minor Adverse – It is proposed to retain the lower ground of the Site as open space to accommodate natural drainage processes as well as provide valuable habitat for wildlife and amenity space for residents. |
| <i>Extensive woodland blocks, particularly on ridge tops, and strips of woodland on steep valley sides. Extensive coppice and conifer woodlands. Shaves, copses and hedgerow trees throughout.</i> | Minor Beneficial – It is proposed to plant the Site boundaries with additional tree and hedgerow planting. Additionally, the open space areas at the valley bottom will be enhanced with wildflower meadow and kept mostly open with a scattering of coppice species and scrub to improve wildlife habitat. |
| <i>Dominant land use is arable agriculture, but there are also areas of parkland, orchards, vines, woodland, and pasture. Field patterns are variable, but are generally larger on ridges than in valleys, reflecting historic processes of enclosure.</i> | Minor Adverse – There will be a localised loss of open land due to development and a change of land use from agriculture to residential. The existing field boundary will be retained and enhanced with additional planting. |
| <i>Semi-natural habitats</i> | Minor Beneficial – The lower portion of the Site will be retained as open space and seeded to establish a chalk |

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>include woodland, chalk grassland and parkland.</i> | grassland. The boundaries of the Site will be hedgerow planted and tree planted to improve enclosure around the Site. |
| <i>Scattered historic buildings including churches, manors, country houses, farms, and cottages.</i> | Minor Adverse – The development will result in the expansion of the village west-wards bringing it into closer proximity with the farm buildings and historic properties along Church Lane. However, the development proposals will retain some separation between the village edge and Church Lane by keeping the lower slopes of the Site as open space. |
| <i>A relatively tranquil part of the Kent Downs AONB, with a strongly rural feel. The pattern of ridges and dry valleys gives the landscape a rhythmic feel, particularly in the south of the LCA.</i> | Minor Adverse – The proposals will result in partial development of a dry valley and reduce perceived tranquillity as the village will increase in size. |
| <i>Views are often linear and channelled by landform. There are long views from high ground, overlooking adjacent valleys.</i> | Minor Adverse – The proposals will result in localised development that will be visible from higher ground and in long views of the valley. However, these views are localised and channelled by the landform. |

- 5.8. In summary, the Site has a strong village edge character influenced by development along Church Lane including farmyards, and development along Canterbury Road including village houses and businesses. The proposals will be contained by the village edge on its southern and eastern sides appearing as a natural extension to the village edge where it can be seen from the north and west. The proposals will have a localised impact as the Site is well contained within a valley bottom and will not have a significant impact upon the wider landscape character or key characteristics of the 'North Downs' NCA 119.
- 5.9. It is proposed that part of the Site will be retained as open space and this land will provide an amenity for residents, habitat for wildlife and maintain the separation between properties on Church Lane and the village edge. The existing field boundary will be retained and enhanced with additional hedgerow and tree species. The proposals would not give rise to any significant adverse effects upon the key

characteristics and sensitivities of the 'East Kent Downs - Alkham' LCA. It is considered that the proposals would give rise to a **low** magnitude of change upon the character of the LCA. As such, it is concluded that the significance of the effect upon the LCA within the immediate context of the Site would be **Minor Adverse** at Year 1 and Year 10. This is not considered notable.

Localised Landscape Character

- 5.10. The land adjacent to the Site contains historic buildings like the Church of St Marys and chalk slopes with PRoW and is characterised by protected land including SSSI and SAC. Therefore, it is considered that the landscape surrounding the Site has a higher sensitivity to change than the Site itself. However, due to intervening vegetation, topography, MOD land ownership, and existing buildings, it was found that clear views of the Site from the AONB are limited. Where there are clear views of the Site, from the north and east, the Site is seen at distance with the backdrop of the village of Lydden adjacent to it. The village has undergone recent change and now accommodates buildings of modern design as well as those of more traditional appearance. It is anticipated that the development will be perceived as an extension of the existing village in the context of this recent change. Consequently, the proposals will have a **Low** magnitude of change upon a **High to Medium** sensitivity landscape. The significance of effect is concluded as being **Moderate Adverse** significance at Year 1. At Year 10, it is considered that the perceived magnitude of change would reduce to **Negligible**, as mitigation planting matures, resulting in a **Moderate to Minor Adverse** significance of effect at Year 10, which is not significant.
- 5.11. With regards to the effect of the proposals upon the Site itself, it is considered that the proposals represent a sustainable and appropriate high-quality development on the edge of Lydden. The Site is self-contained by development on three sides and so has good potential to accommodate the nature of change proposed as residential development is a well-established land use. Proposed landscaping to the field boundaries will ensure that proposed buildings are well integrated into the wider valley landscape. The building layout and landscaping responds to the valley bottom location by retaining open land to provide valuable chalk grassland habitat and amenity space for residents.

- 5.12. It is acknowledged that given the open nature of the Site, there would initially be a high magnitude of change within the Site because of the introduction of new built form and landscape planting. However, where the development can be glimpsed through existing development, it will be perceived within the context of the established village of Lydden and would not be untypical of this village edge situation. It is considered that the proposals would give rise to a **low** magnitude of change upon a **medium to low** sensitivity landscape. The significance of effect is concluded as being **Minor adverse** at Year 1. After year ten, it is considered that the perceived magnitude of change would reduce to **Negligible**, with the significance of the effect within the Site lowering to a **Minor adverse** significance of effect at Year 10, which is not significant.
- 5.13. In summary, it is considered that the proposals would not give rise to any significant long term adverse effects upon the key characteristics of the North Downs NCA 119 or the East Kent Downs - Alkham LCA 1c as identified within the published assessments. It is acknowledged that the proposals would change the character of the Site, as is typical of any residential development. However, the development of the Site would introduce a land use which is characteristic in this localised landscape and immediate village setting. Enhanced field boundaries and open space will be established, with units set back from Church Lane. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposals can be integrated without significant adverse effects upon the Site or its localised landscape setting.

Effect upon the Visual Environment

- 5.14. As noted within Section 2 of this LVIA, several viewpoints have been identified to demonstrate the visibility of the Site within the localised and wider setting. The views have been informed by a thorough desk study and several field assessments. The views are taken from publicly accessible viewpoints and although are not exhaustive, are considered to provide a fair representation of the visual environment within which the Site is set. The visual analysis seeks to identify those views that will, potentially, experience the greatest degree of change because of the proposals. The viewpoints are illustrated on the Viewpoint Location Plan within **Appendix 2**. Table 4 below undertakes an assessment of the effects arising from the proposals upon each of the views.

- 5.15. Due to the diverse topography of the Study area, Zone of Theoretical Visibility models were generated (Refer to **Appendix 3**) to guide viewpoint selection and to help with understanding of the visibility of the Site from the surrounding area. The Bare Earth model (7891/ZTV/BE) shows that, without vegetation, the Site is potentially visible into the AONB to the west, and to the east towards Lydden and Temple Ewell National Nature Reserve. However, once basic vegetation and settlement outlines are factored in, the visibility of the Site from the surrounding area is greatly reduced, particularly to the east which is hidden by the buildings of Lydden village (7891/ZTV/VI). Views into the AONB to the west are also greatly reduced, mainly by existing woodlands including Garratt Wood, Shave Wood, Cannon Wood and Rough Wood as well as field and roadside boundaries. These findings are consistent with the visual survey and the views towards the Site experienced during the site survey work (see below).

Table 4: Effect upon the Visual Environment

| Viewpoint(s) | Location | Sensitivity | Magnitude of Change | Significance of Effect at Year 1 | Significance of Effect at Year 10 |
|---|---|-------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Church Lane adjacent to proposed entrance to Site looking east towards the Site | Medium | Medium | Moderate Adverse | Moderate to Minor Adverse |
| <p>NOTES: Viewpoint is taken from Church Lane looking into the Site adjacent to the proposed entrance point. In the foreground, the Site is edged by a hedgerow which contains views of the lower half of the Site. The upper slopes of the Site, where it is proposed to build new housing, are visible above the hedgerow. In the distance, dominating this viewpoint, are the new houses of Hope Gardens which are finished in light colours. Additionally, the housing to the rear of Canterbury Road is also visible behind a block of coniferous hedging. There is also a house on Church Lane that is visible to the left of the view. In summary, the Site is very much seen in the context of the existing housing that surrounds it from this location. Other man-made features in this view include overhead power lines and boundary fencing.</p> <p>In terms of natural features, the block of conifers to the right of this view dominates with mature trees including a conifer and birch tree adjacent to the Church Lane property. In the distance a strong line of trees can be seen on the eastern boundary of the Site, but these stop before the Hope Gardens properties which are exposed to view. A glimpsed view of the woodland within the AONB to the south of the Site is possible on the right. Overall, the existing site is predominately open with partial enclosure created by boundary trees and hedging.</p> | | | | | |

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| | <p>It is anticipated that the new buildings of the Proposed Development will be seen above the retained hedgerow on Church Lane. It is also anticipated that some of this hedgerow may be cleared to allow access. However, additional tree planting, along the access road, and behind the existing hedgerow, will reduce the impact of views into the Site from this location. There will be a magnitude of change of Medium as the new buildings extend the village edge down the slope. These will be visible above the existing hedgerow. As the boundary vegetation structure matures and the proposed vehicular access and dwellings become established, the perceived magnitude of change will reduce to Low, and continue to decline with time, meaning the significance of effect will change from Moderate Adverse to Moderate / Minor Adverse over the longer term.</p> | | | | |
| 2 | Church Lane opposite Lydden Court farmyard looking south towards Site | Medium | Medium | Moderate Adverse | Moderate to Minor Adverse |
| | <p>NOTES: Viewpoint is taken from Church Lane looking across the farmyard of Lydden Court farm. In the distance the slopes of the AONB and SSSI woodland dominate the horizon with the line of houses associated with Canterbury Road passing along the bottom of the slope. In the mid-ground, the green field of the Site can be seen above the farmyard which dominates the foreground.</p> <p>It is anticipated that due to foreshortening the development will extend the appearance of housing to the edge of the farmyard from this viewpoint. Views of the Proposed Development will initially have a Moderate Adverse impact on this location due to the loss of open space and perceived extension of the village edge towards Church Lane. However, as boundary vegetation and open space vegetation matures, the significance of effect will reduce to Moderate to Minor Adverse.</p> | | | | |
| 3 | PRoW ER 116 looking west towards the Site | High | High | Major Adverse | Major to Moderate Adverse |
| | <p>NOTES: Viewpoint is taken from PRoW ER116 looking across the Site towards Lydden Hill. The foreground of this view is dominated by the open ground of the Site which will change after development. The PRoW is on higher ground with the sloping down towards the house on Church Lane which can be seen in the mid-ground. Also in the mid-ground are the houses and buildings associated with the edge of Lydden village and the farm on Lydden Hill. In the distance forming an attractive back drop are the hills of the AONB and associated woodlands which characterise the top of the slopes.</p> <p>It is anticipated that this view will change significantly with the loss of open ground and construction of housing which will restrict views of the landscape beyond from the PRoW. It is likely that after development some views to the landscape beyond may remain, between houses, but the open field context will be lost, and this viewpoint will be permanently changed.</p> <p>Views of the Proposed Development will initially have a Major Adverse impact on this location due to the loss of green open space adjacent to the AONB. However, as boundary vegetation matures, the significance of his effect will reduce slightly to Moderate to Minor Adverse.</p> | | | | |

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| 4 | PRoW ER 116 on edge of AONB at crossing point on Canterbury Road looking north-west towards the Site | Very High | Negligible | Moderate Adverse | Moderate Adverse |
| | <p>NOTES: Viewpoint is taken from the end of ER116 where it reaches Canterbury Road. PRoW 117 is behind this viewpoint and leads from Canterbury Road into the AONB. From Canterbury Road views of the Site are contained by the buildings along the road edge which consist of traditional flint and brick-built properties and more modern houses with tiled roofs and timber cladding. The topography also means that the Site is at a lower level than Canterbury Road and so hidden from view. Beyond the houses on Canterbury Road, the chalk hills to the north and west of the Site dominate the view. The hills to the left (west) of this view are within the AONB. The hills consist of lightly treed pasture with woodland clumps located on their summits and forming the horizon.</p> <p>It is anticipated that this view will not change significantly due to the containment provided by the existing housing and topography, however, it is possible that roof lines of the proposed buildings may be seen above the existing buildings.</p> <p>This will result in a negligible magnitude of change with a Moderate Adverse impact on this location due to the prominence of the hills behind. This will remain the case in the longer term, although some boundary vegetation may mature to break up the new rooflines, the significance of this effect will remain Moderate Adverse.</p> | | | | |
| 5 | PRoW ER 117 within the AONB looking north-west towards the Site | Very High | Low | Major to Moderate Adverse | Moderate Adverse |
| | <p>NOTES: Viewpoint is taken from ER117 on elevated ground within the AONB. From this location it is possible to see the Site between the buildings of the recent Hope Gardens development which dominates the foreground. In the mid ground of this view are the buildings associated with Church Lane which include the cottages and farm buildings including barns associated with Lydden Court Farm. In the distance the pastoral fields of the chalk slopes can be clearly seen.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the open field of the Site will change to developed land after the proposals and, due to foreshortening, the new housing will appear to extend to the development along Church Lane. The open space retained on the lower parts of the Site is likely to be hidden from view by the new housing. The extent of the village of Lydden will appear to cover the whole valley bottom.</p> <p>This will result in a low magnitude of change with a Major to Moderate Adverse impact on this location due to the context of the hills behind. This will reduce in the longer term, as boundary vegetation and open space vegetation matures to break up the continuous appearance of the developed land, the significance of effect will reduce to Moderate Adverse in the longer term.</p> | | | | |
| 6 | Lydden Hill near Bell Farm on edge of AONB looking east towards Site | Very High | Negligible | Moderate Adverse | Moderate to Minor Adverse |

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| | <p>NOTES: Viewpoint is taken from the edge of the AONB on Lydden Hill travelling into the village from the north and the A2. There are no footpaths in this location, so this view is most likely to be experienced by motorists travelling at speed. It is possible to obtain glimpsed views of the site and the new housing on Hope Gardens is prominent near the horizon contrasting with a backdrop of mature trees that surround it.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the new housing of the proposed development will be visible from this location but will continue to be seen in the context of the open fields in the foreground and the vegetation and mature trees on Church Lane and to the north-east. The new housing will be glimpsed and will read as part of the established village edge.</p> <p>The development will result in a negligible magnitude of change with a Moderate Adverse impact on this location due to the context of the hills behind. This will reduce in the longer term, as boundary vegetation and open space vegetation matures to break up the outline of the new housing, the significance of effect will reduce to Moderate to Minor Adverse in the longer term.</p> | | | | |
| 7 | St Marys Church yard on PRoW ER 116 looking south-west towards the Site | High | Negligible | Moderate to Minor Adverse | Minor Adverse |
| | <p>NOTES: Viewpoint is taken from the churchyard of the church of St Mary which PRoW ER116 passes through before crossing the field to the north-east of the Site. From this location, the Site is mostly screened from view by the buildings of Lydden Court Farm which include stable blocks and more modern storage sheds.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the new housing will be visible to the left (south-east) of this view past the storage shed. This housing will be contained by the hills of the AONB behind which are heavily tree planted and will not break the horizon. It is anticipated that the planting associated with the retained open space on the lower part of the Site will mature to help break up the outlines of the new houses.</p> <p>The development will result in a negligible magnitude of change with a Moderate to Minor Adverse impact on this location due to the context of the hills behind. This will reduce in the longer term, as boundary vegetation and open space vegetation matures to break up the outline of the new housing, the significance of effect will reduce to Minor Adverse in the longer term.</p> | | | | |
| 8 | PRoW ER115 looking south-west towards Site | High | Negligible | Moderate to Minor Adverse | Minor Adverse |
| | <p>NOTES: Viewpoint is taken from PRoW ER115 looking south-west towards the Site with Stonehall Road located 120m behind. This viewpoint looks towards the AONB with the buildings of Lydden Court Farm dominating the middle distance and mostly screening the Site from view. The eastern side of the Site is also screened from view by boundary vegetation on the field edge, along which the PRoW passes, and the topography which slopes from the left (east).</p> <p>It is anticipated that the new housing of the proposed development will be hidden behind the</p> | | | | |

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| | <p>vegetation and the topography in this location. The boundary vegetation and proposed open space planting may increase the vegetation adjacent to Lydden Court farm and further reduce views of its outbuildings. The proposed development will not change the open field in the foreground of this view.</p> <p>The development will result in a negligible magnitude of change with a Moderate Adverse impact on this location as the proposed buildings will be mostly hidden by vegetation and topography. This will reduce further in the longer term, as boundary vegetation and open space vegetation matures, the significance of effect will reduce to Moderate to Minor Adverse in the longer term.</p> | | | | |
| 9 | Coldred Hill footpath on edge of SSSI / SAC looking south-west towards Site | High | Low | Moderate Adverse | Moderate to Moderate / Minor Adverse |
| | <p>NOTES: This viewpoint is taken from an elevated footpath on the edge of the Lydden and Temple Downs SAC. Although this footpath is not technically a PRoW, it is waymarked from Coldred Hill and used by residents.</p> <p>From this viewpoint, the Site can be seen clearly in its valley bottom context with the AONB to the west. The landform dips in the centre of this view where the Site is located rising to the south and north. In the distance, the AONB hills are well wooded especially along field boundaries and on the horizon and higher ground. The foreground of this view is also dominated by open field and tree lined field edges. Overall, this viewpoint is dominated by countryside with the buildings associated with the village of Lydden partially hidden and by tree planting. Only the buildings associated with Church Lane including the Church and Lydden Court farm are highly visible in the mid-ground.</p> <p>It is anticipated that views of the Proposed Development will increase the prominence of the village edge in the mid-ground and increase the number of buildings visible in the valley bottom. In the longer term, the proposed boundary vegetation on the north-eastern boundary of the Site will mature to break up the outlines of the new buildings reducing their visual impact.</p> <p>The development will result in a low magnitude of change with a Moderate Adverse impact on this location as the proposed buildings will initially be visible in the valley bottom. This will reduce further in the longer term, as boundary vegetation and open space vegetation matures, the significance of effect will reduce to Moderate to Minor Adverse in the longer term.</p> | | | | |
| 10 | Warren Lane within the AONB looking north-east towards the Site | Very High | None | None | None |
| | <p>NOTES: This viewpoint is taken from Warren Lane within the AONB. It shows that this route is surrounded hedgerow and trees that prevent views towards site. Additionally, the sloping topography on the right side of this view (south) also blocks views towards the Site. A similar situation was found at Swanton Lane further north of this viewpoint.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the Proposed Development will not be visible from this location due to this existing vegetation and topography which will not change as part of the development, therefore, there will be a magnitude of change of None. In the longer term, the significance of</p> | | | | |

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| | effect will remain None . | | | | |
| 11 | Lydden Hill on edge of the AONB looking towards the Site | Very High | None | None | None |
| | <p>NOTES: This viewpoint is taken from the main route into the village of Lydden from the north off the A2. There is no footpath at this location, so the viewpoint is likely to be experienced by motorists passing at speed. The steep slopes surrounding the village of Lydden mean that the Site is hidden from view by the topography in this location.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the Proposed Development will not be visible from this location due to the topography which will not change as part of the development, therefore, there will be a magnitude of change of None. In the longer term, the significance of effect will remain None.</p> | | | | |
| 12 | PRoW ER86 on Chalk slope looking south towards the Site | High | Low | Moderate Adverse | Moderate to Minor Adverse |
| | <p>NOTES: This viewpoint is taken from elevated ground on PRoW ER86 approaching the Site from the north. The Site is in the centre of this view and consists of an open green field partially surrounded by tree planting on Church Lane and field boundary trees on the route of PRoW ER116. The village of Lydden can be seen clearly following the route of Canterbury Road and the foot of the AONB hills to the south. The housing of the village forms the southern edge of the Site and can be seen clearly in the mid-ground of this view. Also visible to the north of the Site are the barns and buildings associated with Lydden Court Farm. Other open fields behind Canterbury Road can be seen on the left of this view and provide an open and green context to the development Site as does the open farmland in the foreground of this view on the lower slopes.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the proposed buildings of the development will be visible in the centre of this viewpoint where they will add to the village edge of Lydden extending it into the countryside adjacent to PRoW ER116. It is likely that the existing trees on the eastern boundary will help to integrate the new houses into the landscape, but they will remain exposed to views from the north, until proposed mitigation planting starts to mature.</p> <p>The development will result in a low magnitude of change with a Moderate Adverse impact on this location as the proposed buildings will initially be visible in the valley bottom. This will reduce further in the longer term, as boundary vegetation and open space vegetation matures, the significance of effect will reduce to Moderate to Minor Adverse in the longer term.</p> | | | | |
| 13 | PRoW ER86 adjacent to the A2 on Chalk plateau looking south towards the Site | High | None | None | None |

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| | <p>NOTES: Taken from PRoW ER86 near to the A2 this viewpoint shows that there is no intervisibility between the Site and the A2 due to the topography. Adjacent to the A2, the landform is more level forming a plateau that prevents views into the valley beyond. Additionally, field edge vegetation forms the horizon with no views of the Site beyond this.</p> | | | | |
| 14 | PRoW ER109 within AONB south of Lyddenhill Wood looking south-east towards the Site | Very High | None | None | None |
| | <p>NOTES: Taken from within the AONB on PRoW ER109 to the south of Lyddenhill Wood. The Site is hidden from view by field edge vegetation consisting of trees and woodland clumps including Garratt Wood.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the Proposed Development will not be visible from this location due to this existing vegetation and topography which will not change as part of the development, therefore, there will be a magnitude of change of None. In the longer term, the significance of effect will remain None.</p> | | | | |

- 5.16. As identified by the visual assessment and the ZTV plans (refer to **Appendix 3**), views of the Site are localised due to the surrounding topography, field edge vegetation and existing village edge. High ground surrounds the Site to the north, west and east and the village of Lydden forms a southern boundary to the Site with high ground behind this. The Site is contained within the bottom of a dry valley and is only visible from within this valley.
- 5.17. The Site is most exposed to long views from the slopes to the north (VP12) and north-east of the Site (VP9) where clear views of the Site can be seen in its valley and chalk slope context. From these viewpoints, the development will be seen as an expansion of the village into the surrounding countryside, but it will not be isolated development, as the existing buildings on Church Lane and along Canterbury Road are already prominent.
- 5.18. Long views from the AONB to the west and south of the Site were often found to be obstructed by vegetation (VP10, VP14) and topography (VP11). Where the Site could be seen from the AONB (VPP6, VP4, VP5) it is seen in the context of the village of Lydden and recent village edge development.

- 5.19. The Site was found to be most exposed to views from the PRoW ER 116 (VP3) which passes along the Site's eastern boundary. Views through the existing boundary vegetation is possible and the PRoW is on elevated ground. It is also possible to obtain views of the Site from Church Lane (VP1, VP2, VP7) but typically these will be glimpsed between buildings or across farmyards with machinery, waste and materials detracting from the view. The Site is not easily seen from Canterbury Road (VP6, VP4) due intervening buildings and because the Site is mostly on lower ground.
- 5.20. It is considered that the proposals can be integrated within this context and would not give rise to significant long term adverse effects upon the localised or wider visual environment. There was only one exception to this, which is the route of PRoW ER116, adjacent to the eastern boundary of the Site, which will receive significant long-term effects as it changes from a route with views of the wider countryside to one surrounded by housing. However, this impact is limited to 120m of this route where it is adjacent to the Site and the proposals will mitigate this effect by improving planting and vegetation along this eastern boundary.
- 5.21. It is also acknowledged that the proposals would change the visual environment within the immediate context of the Site. However, the proposals have been carefully developed to retain some open space and incorporate additional landscaping on the field boundaries. Importance has been placed on retaining existing vegetation and reinforcing this where necessary. As the planting matures it will create a robust green infrastructure that will soften the built form within the development and help to integrate it with the existing field boundaries. The type of development proposed is not unusual in this landscape context, with recent residential development present at Hope Gardens and St Marys Rise. The proposals will be seen from some surrounding hills with PRoW or footpaths but will be viewed at distance and the development will not harm the public's enjoyment of the local countryside or wider countryside in the longer term once mitigation planting has matured. Views from the AONB were often found to be limited by intervening vegetation, private ownership (e.g., MOD land) or topography.
- 5.22. Overall, it is considered that the proposals can be integrated without significant long term adverse effects to the receiving visual environment or the village environment of Lydden.

Effect upon Landscape Related Policy

- 5.23. Both national and local policy guidance seeks to ensure that Proposed Development should promote good design which responds to the character of the setting ensuring that the proposals are integrated within their context. It is considered that the proposals have been carefully designed with their context in mind and, as such, a sympathetic and appropriate development will be achieved.
- 5.24. The Site is adjacent to the Kent Downs AONB on its western and southern sides with the hills to the north and east of the Site also containing SAC and SSSI designations. However, the Site itself is very closely associated with the village edge environment of Lydden village with recent residential developments along Canterbury Road and established housing and farm buildings along Church Lane rather than the wider countryside.
- 5.25. Furthermore, as set out within Section 2 of this LVIA, it is considered that neither the Site nor its immediate setting represent a “valued landscape” with reference to para 174(a) of the NPPF. It is considered that the high-quality proposals respond positively to the localised landscape and settlement edge setting and respect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- 5.26. It is considered that the Proposed Development complies with all development management policies and therefore impacts / effect are mitigated as far as considered reasonable by policy.
- 5.27. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development unless any harm significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits of the proposals. It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development would result in a degree of change within the immediate context of the Site, specifically along the PRoW ER116 route. However, this is not considered so great as to outweigh the benefits of the scheme significantly or demonstrably. It is therefore considered that the proposals are aligned with the Dover District Statutory Development Plan, which includes a Core Strategy (Feb 2010), Land Allocation Local Plan (Jan 2015) and saved policies from the Dover District Local Plan (2002). Therefore, the Proposed Development can be integrated without significant harm to the character or visual amenities of the receiving landscape.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

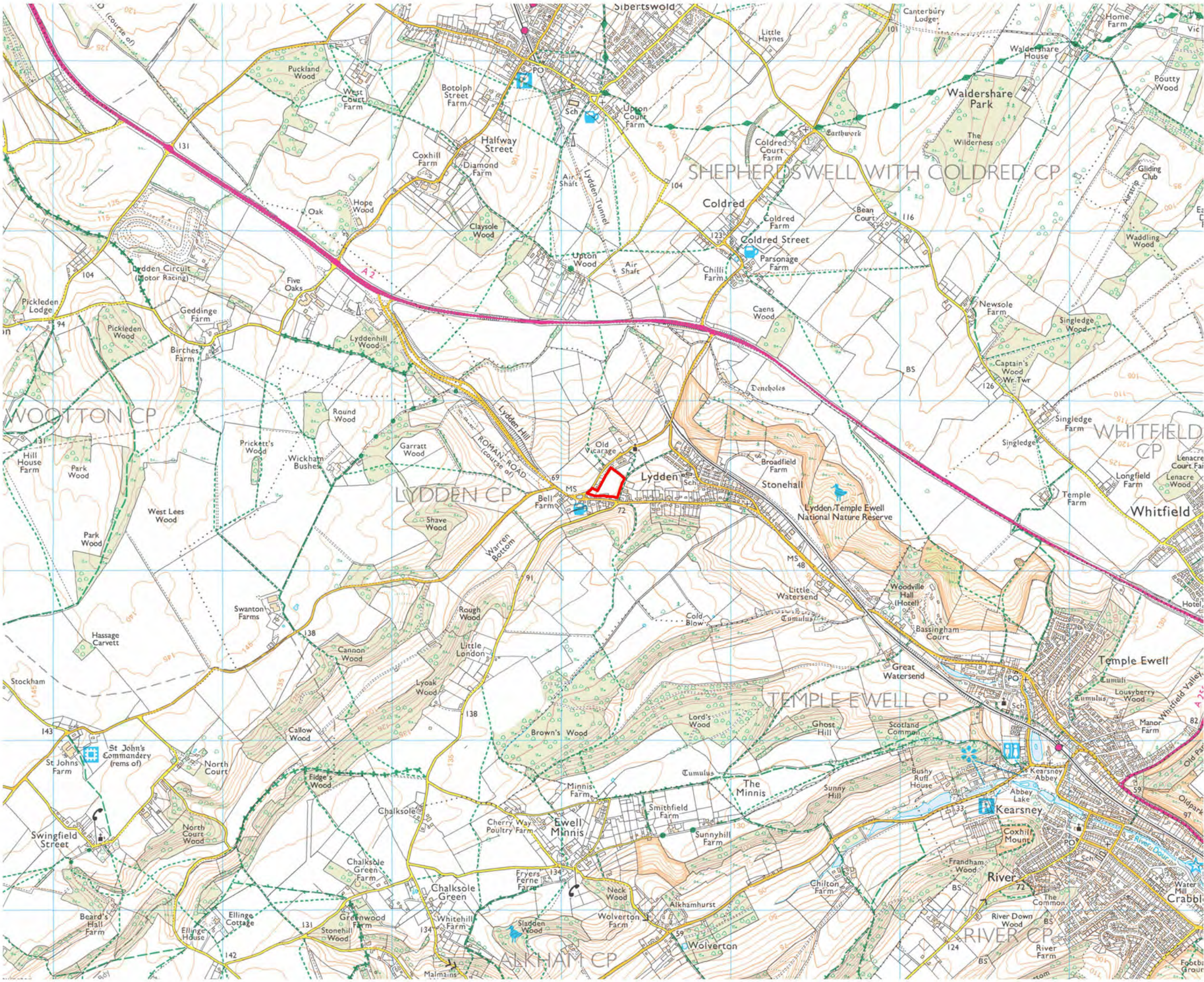
- 6.1. Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd has been appointed by Quinn Estates to undertake a landscape and visual impact assessment relating to a 1.95 ha residential development at land south of Church Lane, on the northern side of the village of Lydden, Kent. It is anticipated the development will be an “*Outline proposal for the erection of up to 23 dwellings including affordable housing together with associated parking, infrastructure, and open space; with all matters reserved except access*”. (There after referred to as the ‘Proposed Development’) on land on the northern edge of Lydden (hereafter referred to as the ‘Site’). The location and context of the Site is illustrated on **ASP1** Site Location Plan and **ASP2** Site and Setting Plan.1+
- 6.2. As set out within Section 2 of this LVIA, it is considered that the Site does not represent a “valued landscape” with reference to para 174(a) of the NPPF. The Site lies in proximity to existing residential and agricultural development on the edge of the village of Lydden. The village is surrounded by designated sites which include SSSI, SAC and the Kent Downs AONB – all features that will be retained by the proposals. The proposed development Site is not on designated land.
- 6.3. In reviewing effects upon the landscape character, it is acknowledged that there will be change to the immediate landscape character of the Site itself, as there would be from any development, as the Site changes from open land into a developed site. However, this would not result in the loss of any important landscape features and would not introduce a land use which is uncharacteristic in this localised landscape setting. The Site’s immediate context has the capacity to accommodate this change as the Site is strongly influenced by existing development including the recent residential developments at Hope Close and along Canterbury Road. Additionally, there are houses on Church Lane and farmyards used for the storage of materials, and as commercial premises, also adjacent to the Site.
- 6.4. The proposals include mitigation that will protect and enhance adjacent landscape elements and integrate the proposed buildings. The Site is edged by mature trees on its eastern boundary adjacent to PRow ER116. The boundary with Church Lane, Lydden Court Farm, and the adjacent field to the north-east is partially hedge rowed with occasional mature trees. This vegetation will be retained and enhanced with additional boundary planting as required. Additionally, it is proposed that the

lower parts of the Site will be retained as open space with planting in this area designed to provide an improved setting for the development. This will include planting to improve the wildlife value of the Site as well as its amenity value. It is anticipated that this planting will also help to integrate the development within its wider setting.

- 6.5. Beyond the Site's immediate vicinity, it is anticipated that the development will have a very limited impact on landscape character as it is well contained within a dry valley adjacent to an established settlement. The development will not be seen beyond this localised valley and will not give rise to any significant long term adverse effects upon the key characteristics of the *North Downs* NCA 119 or the East Kent Downs LCA as identified within the published assessments.
- 6.6. In reviewing the effects upon the visual environment, views of the Site are confined to the Lydden valley with the Site surrounded by higher ground on all sides. Within the Kent Downs AONB to the west and south of the Site there is often intervening vegetation including roadside hedgerow and trees (VP10, VP14), tree belts (locally called shaws) and topography (VP11) that prevent clear views towards the Site. Where the Site can be seen from the AONB, to the south from PRoW ER117, it is seen within the context of the existing village edge which contains old and new development (VP5).
- 6.7. The Site is most clearly viewed from valley sides outside the AONB, to the north and east of the Site (VP12, VP9), where footpaths off Coldred Hill and PRoW (ER 86) provide elevated viewpoints. In these locations, the Site is seen at distance and in the context of both the valley landscape and the village of Lydden. In these situations, the development will be a small element in a much larger landscape and will read as an extension to the village of Lydden. The proposed mitigation which will include boundary planting and new planting throughout the Site will help to integrate the development within the wider landscape. Additionally, visually receding building materials or those used traditionally within the area will be important in integrating the proposed development.
- 6.8. Close to the Site, from Church Lane (VP1, VP2) and Canterbury Road (VP4, VP6), the Site is viewed with a context of recent residential development and established village edge land uses including farming and commercial activities. The setting of the Site has the visual capacity to accommodate the proposed development as it will appear as a natural extension of the established village.

- 6.9. PRoW ER116 which passes the eastern boundary of the Site, presently benefits from views, between the boundary trees, and across the Site, to the landscape beyond. This will change after development, but this change will only affect the 120m of the route adjacent to the Site boundary. Mitigation planting will help to reduce the impact of the development on this localised part of the route.
- 6.10. Overall, it is considered that the proposals can be integrated within this context and would not give rise to significant long term adverse effects upon the localised or wider visual environment. The type of development proposed is not unusual in this landscape context, with the recent residential development at Hope Close present to the east and existing residences of Lydden along Canterbury Road and Church Lane. The proposals would not be prominent over long distances, and with the mitigation proposed, would not harm, or result in very limited and localised harm (in the case of ER116) to the public's visual enjoyment of the countryside or the local and wider PRoW network.
- 6.11. It is considered that the proposals comply with the aims and objectives of the NPPF, adopted local plan policies, and published landscape character assessment. The Site is already characterised by the existing settlement edge with no internal features of note. Design solutions will be included which ensure the high-quality design of the built elements befitting the local character. The proposals comply with all development management policies and therefore impacts / effects are mitigated as far as considered reasonable by policy.
- 6.12. In summary, the Site and receiving environment have the capacity to accommodate the proposals. The proposals would not result in significant harm to the landscape character or visual environment over the longer term and, as such, it is considered that the Proposed Development can be successfully integrated in this location and is supportable from a landscape and visual perspective.

ASPECT PLANS



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0m 200m 400m 1km

Key:
Application Site Boundary

| REV | DATE | NOTE | DRAWN | CHK'D |
|-----|------|------|-------|-------|
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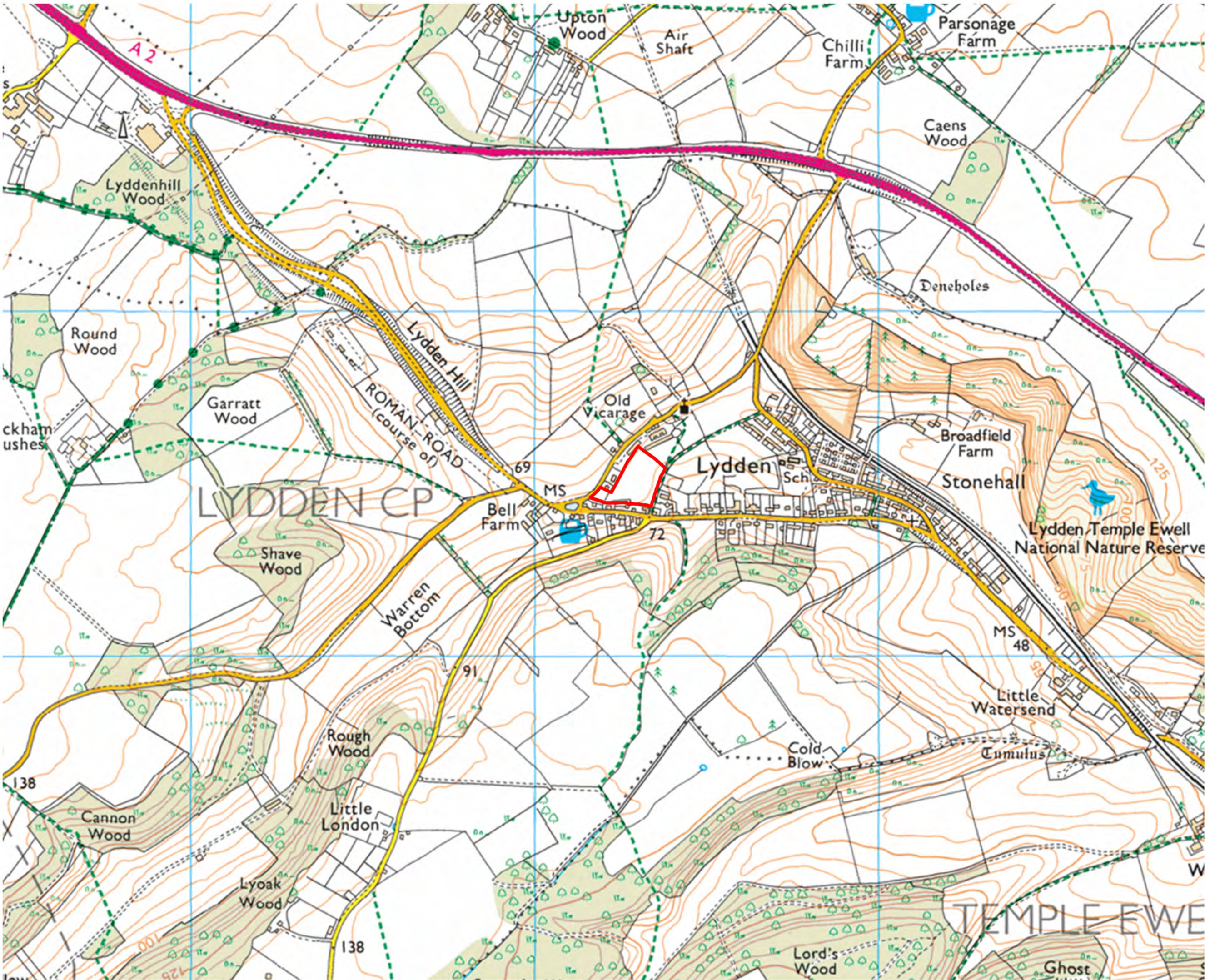
aspect landscape planning

TITLE
Land at Church Lane, Lydden
Site Location Plan - Long Distance

CLIENT
Quinn Estates

| SCALE | DATE | DRAWN | CHK'D |
|-------------|----------|-------|-------|
| 1:20,000@A3 | APR 2022 | BS | CJ |

| DRAWING NUMBER | REVISION |
|-------------------|----------|
| 7891 / ASP1 / SLP | |



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0m 100m 200m 400m

Key:
Application Site Boundary

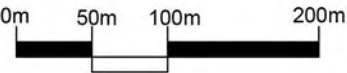
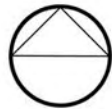
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aspect landscape planning

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|--|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| TITLE Land at Church Lane, Lydden Site Location Plan | | | |
| CLIENT Quinn Estates | | | |
| SCALE 1:10,000@A3 | DATE APR 2022 | DRAWN BS | CHK'D CJ |
| DRAWING NUMBER 7891 / ASP1 / SLP | | REVISION | |



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- Key:
- Application Site Boundary
 - Public Rights of Way
 - Listed Buildings
 - AONB - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

| REV | DATE | NOTE | DRAWN | CHK'D |
|-----|------|------|-------|-------|
| | | | | |

aspect landscape planning

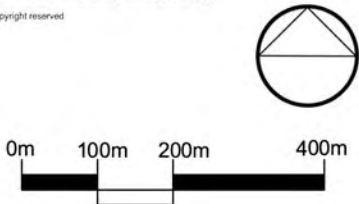
TITLE
Land at Church Lane, Lydden
Site & Setting Plan

CLIENT
Quinn Estates

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| SCALE 1:5000 @ A3 | DATE APR 2022 | DRAWN BS | CHK'D CJ |
| DRAWING NUMBER 7891 / ASP2 / SS | REVISION | | |



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- Key:
- Application Site Boundary
 - Public Rights of Way
 - Listed Buildings
 - Scheduled Monuments
 - AONB - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
 - Woodland
 - Railway Track
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest

| REV | DATE | NOTE | DRAWN | CHK'D |
|-----|------|------|-------|-------|
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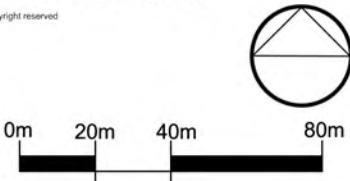
TITLE
Land at Church Lane, Lydden
Landscape Designations Plan

CLIENT
Quinn Estates

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| SCALE 1:10,000 @ A3 | DATE JULY 2023 | DRAWN BS | CHK'D JB |
| DRAWING NUMBER 7891 / ASP3 / LDP | | REVISION | |



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- Key:
- Application Site Boundary
 - Public Rights of Way
 - Existing / Retained Vegetation
 - AONB - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
 - Contours
 - Landscape Buffer
 - Views From Higher Ground
 - Close Range Views
 - Road Corridor
 - Direction of Landfall
- Land Uses around Site
- Commercial
 - Agricultural
 - Residential

| | | | | | |
|-----------|----------|---------------------|------|-------|-------|
| A | 31.07.23 | | | | |
| REV | DATE | Updated to comments | NOTE | AS | JB |
| REVISIONS | | | | DRAWN | CHK'D |

aspect landscape planning

| | | | |
|---|----------|-------|-------|
| TITLE | | | |
| Land at Church Lane, Lydden Opportunities and Constrains Plan | | | |
| CLIENT | | | |
| Quinn Estates | | | |
| SCALE | DATE | DRAWN | CHK'D |
| 1:2000 @ A3 | APR 2022 | EL | CJ |
| DRAWING NUMBER | REVISION | | |
| 7891 / ASP4 / OCP | A | | |

Native Shrub & Hedge Planting

- Acer campestre
- Cornus sanguinea
- Corylus avellana
- Crataegus monogyna
- Ilex aquifolium
- Ligustrum vulgare
- Prunus spinosa
- Rhamnus cathartica
- Rosa canina
- Sambucus nigra
- Viburnum lantana
- Viburnum opulus



Mixed Native Hedgerows

- 10% Cornus sanguinea
- 10% Corylus avellana
- 40% Crataegus monogyna
- 5% Ligustrum vulgare
- 25% Prunus spinosa
- 5% Rosa canina
- 5% Viburnum lantana



Ornamental Shrubs

- Cistus corbariensis, Cornus sanguinea, Euonymus fortunei 'Silver Queen', Fatsia japonica, Hebe 'Nicola's Blush', Hebe rakaiensis, Viburnum davidii



Ornamental Hedge Planting

- Carpinus betulus (Hornbeam)
- Ligustrum ovalifolium (Privet)
- Osmanthus x burkwoodii
- Skimmia spp
- Prunus spp
- Escallonia spp
- Mixed native species hedges to site boundaries

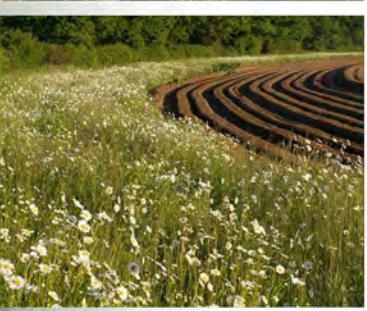


Flint Gabion Wall



Species Rich Wildflower Grass

- Emorsgate EM1 General purpose Meadow Mix, EM6 Meadow Mix for chalk and limestone soils



Open Space & Native Boundary Trees

- Acer campestre
- Alnus glutinosa
- Betula pendula
- Carpinus betulus
- Corylus avellana
- Crataegus monogyna
- Fagus sylvatica
- Malus sylvestris
- Prunus avium
- Quercus robur
- Salix alba
- Sorbus aria
- Sorbus aucuparia
- Tilia cordata

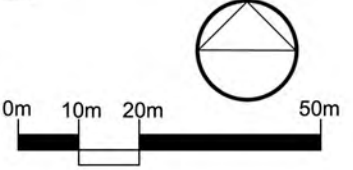


Internal Ornamental & Street Trees

- Acer campestre 'Streetwise'
- Amelanchier arborea 'Robin Hill'
- Betula pendula
- Carpinus betulus 'Lucas'
- Corylus colurna
- Malus trilobata
- Prunus avium 'Plena'
- Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticleer'
- Sorbus aucuparia 'Sheerwater Seedling'
- Tilia cordata 'Rancho'
- Tilia tomentosa 'Brabant'
- Ulmus 'New Horizon'



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Key:

- Site Boundary
- Existing Vegetation to be retained
- Proposed Street Tree Planting
- Proposed Native Tree Planting
- Proposed Orchard Tree Planting
- Proposed Ornamental Shrub Planting
- Proposed Native Shrub Planting
- Proposed Ornamental Hedge Planting
- Proposed Native Hedge Planting
- Proposed Mown Footpath
- Proposed Wildflower Meadow
- Proposed Gabion Walls
- Public Right of Way
- Proposed Swale
- Proposed Seating

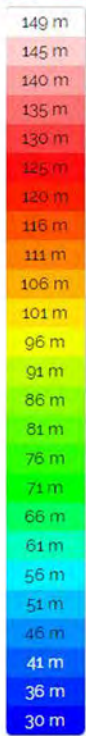
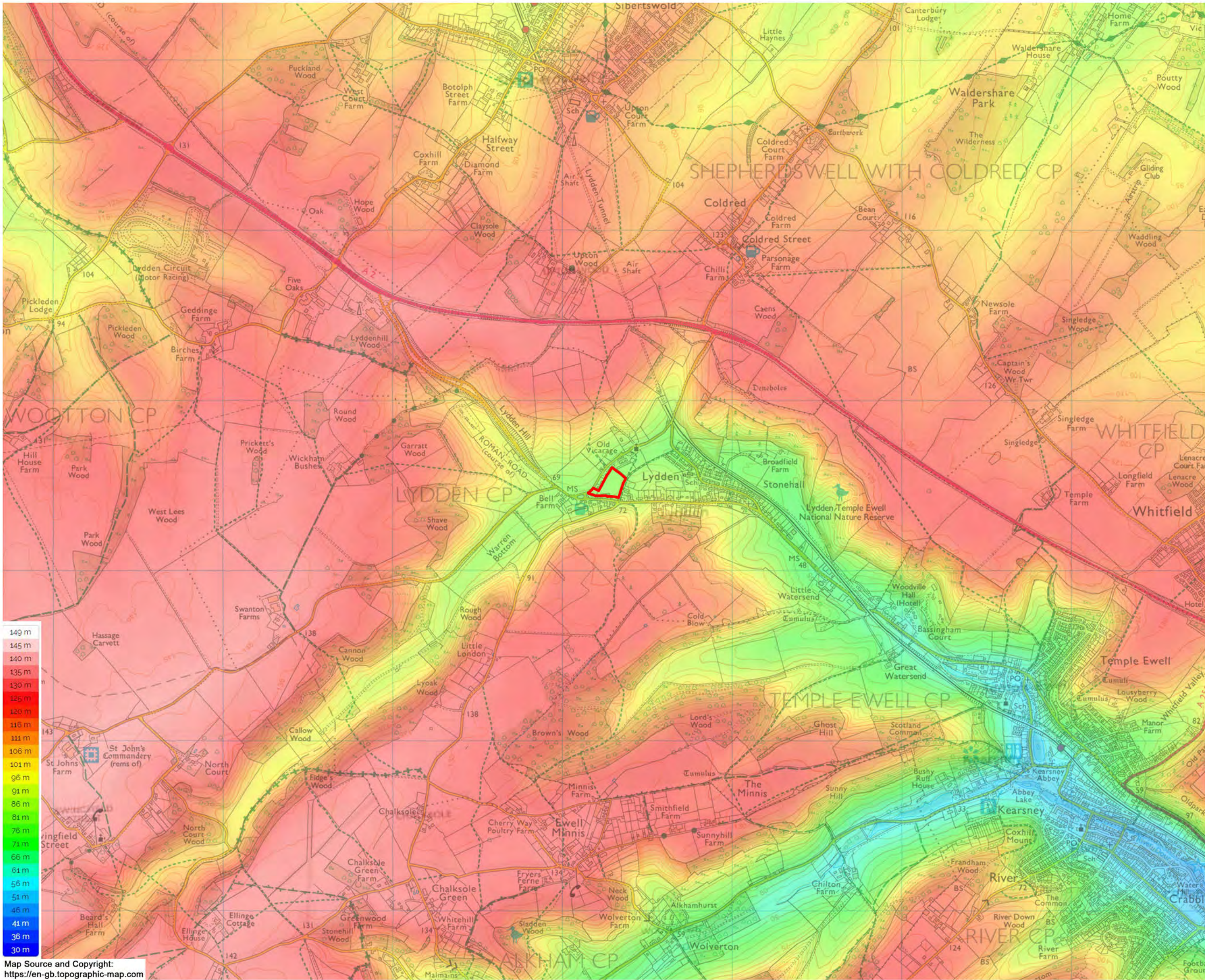
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| C | 01.08.23 | Update to hardstanding & roof colour comment | SB | JB |
| B | 31.07.23 | Updated to latest comments | AS | JB |
| A | 27.07.23 | Updated to latest layout | SB | JB |
| REV | DATE | NOTE | DRAWN | CHK'D |
| REVISIONS | | | | |

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TITLE
Land at Church Lane, Lydden
Landscape Strategy Plan

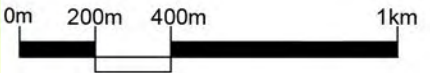
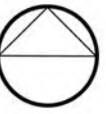
CLIENT
Quinn Estates

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| SCALE 1:1,000 @ A3 | DATE JULY 2023 | DRAWN AS | CHK'D CJ |
| DRAWING NUMBER 7891 / ASP5 / LSP | REVISION C | | |



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Key:
 Application Site Boundary

| REV | DATE | NOTE | DRAWN | CHK'D |
|-----|------|------|-------|-------|
| | | | | |

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| | | | |
|---|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| TITLE Land at Church Lane, Lydden Topography Plan | | | |
| CLIENT Quinn Estates | | | |
| SCALE 1:20,000@ A3 | DATE APR 2022 | DRAWN EL | CHK'D CJ |
| DRAWING NUMBER 7891 / ASP6 / TP | | REVISION | |

APPENDIX 1

ASPECT LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT METHODOLOGY

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

- 1.1. The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment have jointly published Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (2013) that gives guidance on carrying out a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), either as a standalone appraisal or part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This methodology takes on board the above guidance.
- 1.2. When assessing character within an urban context, this methodology can be applied to Townscape Assessments and how the development will affect the elements that make up the townscape and its distinctive character.
- 1.3. The main stages of the LVIA process are outlined below. This process will identify and assess the potential effects of a development on the landscape resource and the visual environment.

1. Baseline study

Landscape

- Define the scope of the assessment.
- Outline the planning policy context, including any landscape designations.
- Establish the landscape baseline through a site visit and an assessment of published Landscape Character Assessments to identify the value and susceptibility of the landscape resource (receptor), at community, local, national or international levels where appropriate.

Visual

- Define the scope of the assessment.
- Identify the extent of visual receptors within the study area, with the use of Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) where appropriate, and establish the number and sensitivity of the representative viewpoint and/or groups of people (receptors) within the study area whose views may be altered as a result of the proposals.

2. Project description

The baseline study highlights clear opportunities and constraints for the integration of the proposals into the receiving environment. The aspects of the scheme at each phase that will potentially give rise to effects on the landscape and visual amenity will need identifying. At this time, the proposals can be modified to ensure that further mitigation measures are incorporated into the design as a response to the local landscape and visual environment.

3. Description of Effects

The level of effect on both landscape and visual receptors should be identified in respect of the different components of the proposed development. In order to assess the significance of the effect on the receiving environment, it is necessary to consider the **magnitude**, i.e. the degree of change, together with the **sensitivity** of the receptor.

This will identify whether the effects are:

Adverse or Beneficial - beneficial effects would typically occur where a development could positively contribute to the landscape character or view. Neutral effects would include changes that neither add nor detract from the quality and character of an area or view. Adverse effects would typically occur where there is loss of landscape elements, or the proposal detracts from the landscape quality and character of an area or view.

Direct or Indirect – A direct effect will be one where a development will affect a view or the character of an area, either beneficially or adversely. An indirect effect will occur as a result of associated development i.e. a development may result in an increase of traffic on a particular route.

Short, Medium or Long Term – this relates to the expected duration and magnitude of a development. Within this assessment the potential effects are assessed during the Construction Phase, then at Years 1 and 10, following completion of the development.

Reversible or Irreversible – can the resulting effect of a development be mitigated or not, and whether the result of the mitigation is beneficial or adverse.

4. Significance of Effects (EIA only)

A final judgment on whether the effect is likely to be significant, as required by the Regulations. The summary should draw out the key issues and outline the scope for reducing any negative / adverse effects. Mitigation measures need to be identified that may reduce the final judgement on the significance of any residual negative effects in the long term.

Assessing effects

Landscape Sensitivity

- 1.4. The sensitivity of a particular landscape in relation to new development is categorised as very high, high, medium, low or negligible. This takes into account the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of development proposed and the value attached to different landscapes by society. The following table explains each threshold and the factors that make up the degree of sensitivity.

Table 1: Landscape Sensitivity Thresholds

| Sensitivity | Definition |
|------------------|--|
| Very High | Landscape resource where there is a very high susceptibility to change. Landscapes would be considered of very high value, have a high degree of intimacy, strong landscape structure, a high sense of intactness and contain features worthy of protection. Townscapes may include a high proportion of historic assets. Typical examples may be Nationally designated e.g. World Heritage Sites, National Parks, Heritage Coasts, AONBs etc. |
| High | Landscape resource where there is a high susceptibility to change. Landscapes would be considered of high value, have a high degree of intimacy, strong landscape structure, relatively intact and contain features worthy of protection. Townscapes may include a high proportion of historic assets. Typical examples may be of Regional or County importance e.g. within the setting of National Parks, AONB's, Conservation Areas etc. |
| Medium | Landscape resource where there is a medium susceptibility to change. Landscapes would be considered of medium value, good landscape structure, with some detracting features or evidence of recent change. Townscapes may include a proportion of historic assets or of cultural value locally. Typical examples may be designated for their value at District level. |
| Low | Landscape resource where there is a low susceptibility to |

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| | change. Landscapes would be considered of low value, and contain evidence of previous landscape change. |
| Negligible | Landscape resource where there is little or no susceptibility to change. Typical landscapes are likely to be degraded, of weak landscape structure, intensive land uses, and require landscape restoration. |

Visual Sensitivity

- 1.5. The sensitivity of the visual receptor will be assessed against the magnitude of visual change, and is categorised as very high, high, medium, low or negligible. Each receptor should be assessed in terms of both their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity and also the value attached to particular views.

Table 2: Visual Sensitivity Thresholds

| Sensitivity | Definition |
|--------------------|---|
| Very High | Viewers on public rights of way whose prime focus is on the high quality of the landscape around, and are often very aware of its value. Examples include viewers within nationally designated landscapes such as National Parks or AONB's. |
| High | Viewers on public rights of way whose prime focus is on the landscape around, or occupiers of residential properties with primary views affected by the development. Examples include viewers within regional/local landscape designations, users of National Trails, Long Distance Routes or Sustrans cycle routes, or the setting of a listed building. |
| Medium | Viewers engaged in outdoor recreation with some appreciation of the landscape, occupiers of residential properties with oblique views affected by the development, and users of rural lanes and roads. Examples include viewers within moderate quality landscapes, local recreation grounds, and outdoor pursuits. |
| Low | Viewers engaged in outdoor sport or recreation whose prime focus is on their activity, or those passing through the area on main transport routes whose attention is focused away from an appreciation of the landscape. |
| Negligible | Viewers whose attention is focused on their work or activity, and not susceptible to changes in the surrounding landscape. |

Effect Magnitude

- 1.6. The magnitude of change relates to the degree in which proposed development alters the fabric of the landscape character or view. This change is categorised as high, medium, low, or negligible.

Table 3: Magnitude of Change

| Magnitude | Effect Definition |
|-------------------|--|
| High | Change resulting in a high degree of deterioration or improvement, or introduction of prominent new elements that are considered to make a major alteration to a landscape or view. |
| Medium | Change resulting in a moderate degree of deterioration or improvement, or constitutes a perceptible change within a landscape or view. |
| Low | Change resulting in a low degree of deterioration or improvement to a landscape or view, or constitutes only a minor component within a landscape or view. |
| Negligible | Change resulting in a barely perceptible degree of deterioration or improvement to a landscape or view. |
| No Change | It is also possible for a landscape or view to experience no change due to being totally compatible with the local character or not visible due to intervening structures or vegetation. |

Significance Threshold

- 1.7. The magnitude of change is then considered against the sensitivity of the landscape resource as a receptor or the existing character of the panorama / view. In formulating the significance of effect, reasoned professional judgement is required which is explained within the assessment. This is carried out both in terms of the predicted effects on landscape character or on visual amenities. The significance thresholds are predicted as Substantial, Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible and None, and can be either beneficial or adverse. Unless otherwise stated, all effects are predicted in the winter months. The extent of mitigation measures should be clearly stated, and in the case of planting proposals, the contribution to reducing adverse effects should be demonstrated at different stages (construction stage, operational stage year 0, and year 10).

Table 4: Significance of Effect

| Significance | Threshold Definition |
|---------------------|---|
| Substantial | A very high magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view of national / international importance that has little or no ability to accommodate change. |
| Major | A high magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view that has limited ability to accommodate change. Positive effects will typically occur in a damaged landscape or view. |
| Moderate | A medium magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view that may have the ability to accommodate change. Positive effects will typically occur in a lower quality landscape or view. |
| Minor | A low magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view that has the ability to accommodate change. Positive effects will typically occur in a lower quality landscape or view. |
| Negligible | A negligible magnitude of change that has little effect on a landscape or view that has the ability to accommodate change. |
| None | It is also possible for a magnitude of change to occur that results in a neutral effect significance due to the change being compatible with local character or not visible. |

- 1.8. The significance of the effect is measured on the ability of a landscape or view to accommodate the change. In assessing the significance of effects, the following matrix will be used to determine the significance thresholds, through determining the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of change.
- 1.9. In terms of assessing whether the effects are significant or otherwise, it is noted that para 5.56 of GLVIA3 states that there are no “hard and fast rules” about what makes a significant effect. For the purposes of this assessment significant landscape or visual effects are those effects considered to be greater than moderate – shaded below in Table 5.

Table 5: Measuring Significance of Effect

| | | Sensitivity of Receptors | | | | |
|---------------------|------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| | | Very High | High | Medium | Low | Negligible |
| Magnitude of Change | High | Substantial | Major | Major/ Moderate | Moderate | Moderate/ Minor |
| | Medium | Major | Major/ Moderate | Moderate | Moderate/ Minor | Minor |
| | Low | Major/ Moderate | Moderate | Moderate/ Minor | Minor | Negligible |
| | Negligible | Moderate | Moderate/ Minor | Minor | Negligible | Negligible/ None |

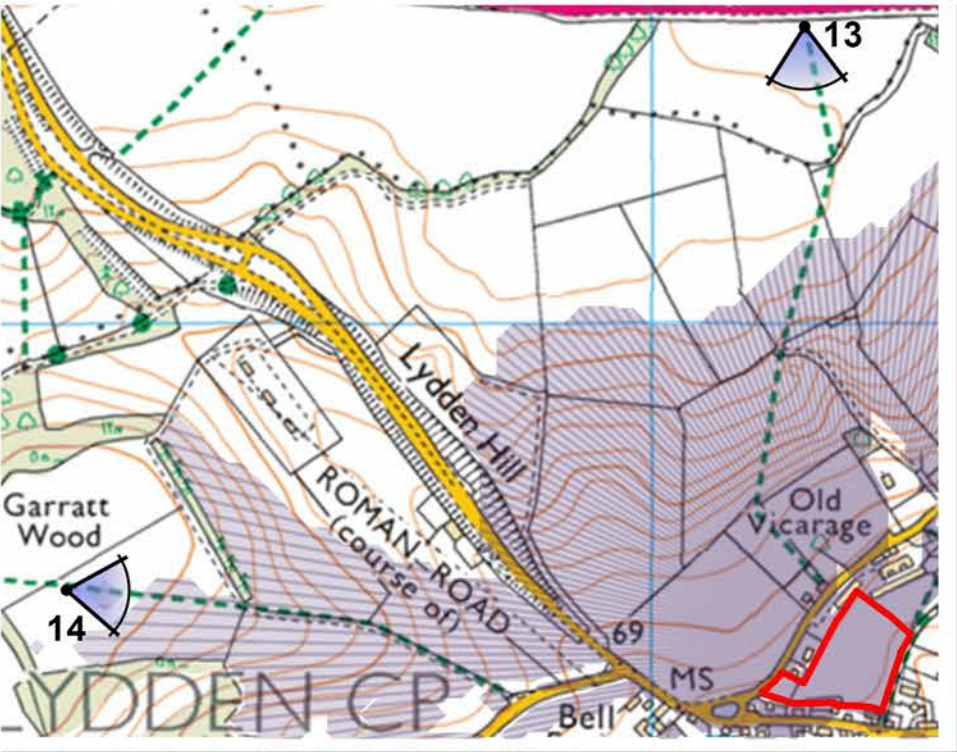
- 1.10. It should be noted that where there is no perceptible change in terms of the effect magnitude regardless of the sensitivity of the receptor, the significance of the effect on a landscape or view will be none.
- 1.11. A written statement summarising the significance of effects is provided, assisted by the tables and matrices. The final judgement relies on professional judgement that is reasonable, based on clear and transparent methods, suitable training and experience, and a detached and dispassionate view of the development in the final assessment.

Assessing cumulative effects

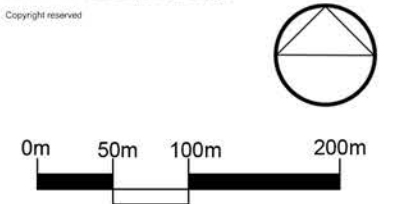
- 1.12. Cumulative effects are additional effects caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other similar developments. This can be cumulative landscape effects on the physical fabric or character of the landscape, or cumulative visual effects caused by two or more developments being visible from one viewpoint and/or sequence of views. The scope of cumulative effects should be agreed at the outset to establish what schemes are relevant to the assessment, and what planning stage is appropriate. It is generally considered that existing and consented developments and those for which planning applications have been submitted but not yet determined should be included.

APPENDIX 2

VISUAL ASSESSMENT



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- Key:
- Application Site Boundary
 - Public Rights of Way
 - AONB - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
 - Viewpoint Location
 - Extent of Theoretical Visibility of Development. Based on maximum development parameters of 9m above existing ground level.

| | | | | | |
|-----------|----------|------|----------------------|----|-------|
| B | 18.07.23 | | ZTV Overlay | BS | JB |
| A | 12.07.23 | REV | Updated photo record | AS | JB |
| | | DATE | NOTE | | DRAWN |
| REVISIONS | | | | | |

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| | | | |
|---|----------|-------|-------|
| TITLE | | | |
| Land at Church Lane, Lydden Viewpoint Location Plan | | | |
| CLIENT | | | |
| Quinn Estates | | | |
| SCALE | DATE | DRAWN | CHK'D |
| 1:5000 @ A3 | APR 2022 | EL | CJ |
| DRAWING NUMBER | REVISION | | |
| 7891 / VLP | B | | |



Viewpoint 1 (Panorama Image for Context Only)



Viewpoint Coordinates: E 626161 N 145465 Date & time of photograph: 13/04/2022 13:03 AOD & Viewing height: c. 68m AOD 1.6m Weather conditions: Clear, good visibility. Viewpoint 1 (Annotated Panorama Image for Context Only)



Viewpoint 1 (Single Frame Image)



Viewpoint 2 (Panorama Image for Context Only)



Viewpoint Coordinates: E 626317 N 145657 Date & time of photograph: 13/04/2022 13:08 AOD & Viewing height: c. 65m AOD 1.6m Weather conditions: Clear, good visibility. Viewpoint 2 (Annotated Panorama Image for Context Only)



Viewpoint 2 (Single Frame Image)



Viewpoint 3 (Panorama Image for Context Only)



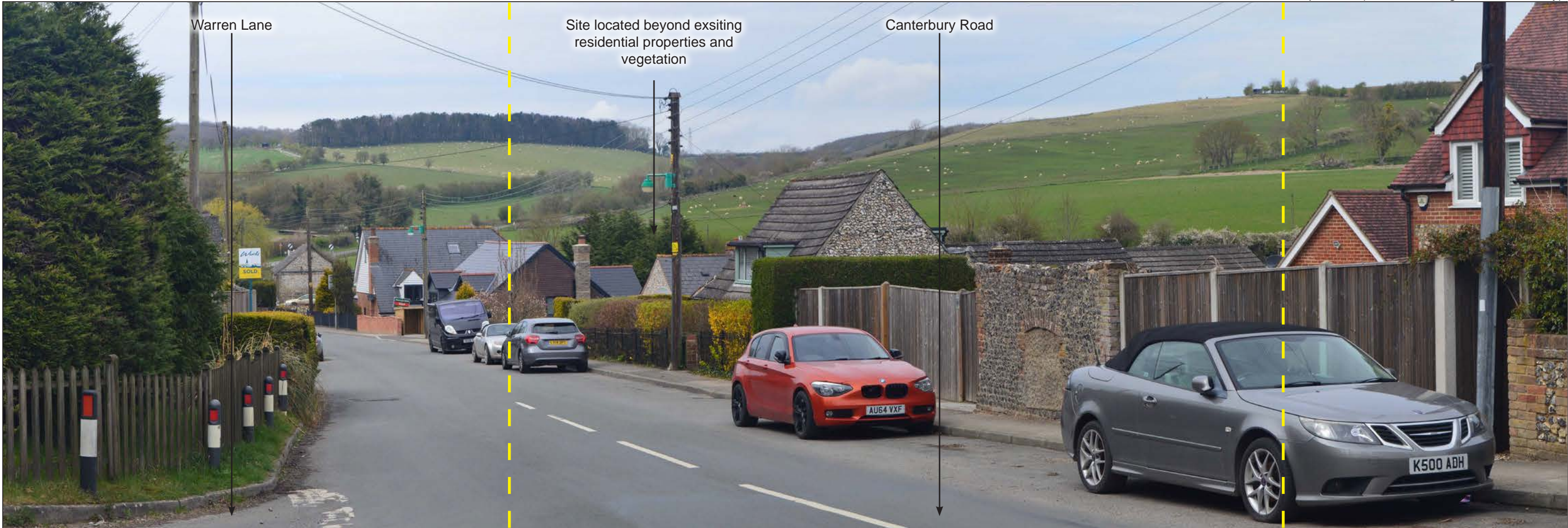
Viewpoint Coordinates: E 626370 N 145501 Date & time of photograph: 13/04/2022 13:17 AOD & Viewing height: c. 71m AOD 1.6m Weather conditions: Clear, good visibility. Viewpoint 3 (Annotated Panorama Image for Context Only)



Viewpoint 3 (Single Frame Image)



Viewpoint 4 (Panorama Image for Context Only)



Viewpoint Coordinates: E 626333 N 145400 Date & time of photograph: 13/04/2022 13:19 AOD & Viewing height: c. 73m AOD 1.6m Weather conditions: Clear, good visibility. Viewpoint 4 (Annotated Panorama Image for Context Only)



Viewpoint 4 (Single Frame Image)



Viewpoint 5 (Panorama Image for Context Only)



Viewpoint Coordinates: E 626392 N 145384

Date & time of photograph: 13/04/2022 13:23

AOD & Viewing height: c. 89m AOD 1.6m

Weather conditions:

Clear, good visibility.

Viewpoint 5 (Annotated Panorama Image for Context Only)



Viewpoint 5 (Single Frame Image)

END OF PART 1 of 2

Refer to Part 2 of 2

landscape planning • ecology • arboriculture

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