

Landscape and Visual Technical Note



**Tyler
Grange**

**Land at Pitt Vale,
Winchester
10th October 2024**

16160_R01_WL

Report No:	Date	Revision	Author	Checked	Approved
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Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1. This Technical Note has been prepared by Tyler Grange Ltd on behalf of Vistry Partnerships to provide high level advice on the landscape and visual matters associated with land to the north of the A3090 on the south-western edge of Winchester, referred to as Land at Pitt Vale (the Site). It is intended to accompany representations for residential development within the Site to the emerging Winchester District Local Plan 2020-2040. The note considers the high-level planning policy context and evidence base, landscape character and visual baseline of the Site, and uses this to set out opportunities and constraints that can be used to inform the best locations for the siting of residential-led development and its implications on landscape character and views. This report is accompanied by a landscape and visual opportunities and constraints plan and should be read in conjunction with the Vision Document.

Site and Context

- 1.2. The Site is situated on the south-western edge of Winchester, to the north of the A3090 Romsey Road, which extends approximately south-west from the city (see Figure 1 below). Enmill Lane extends north-west from Romsey Road near the southern point of the Site by the settlement of Pitt. Sarum Road, an old Roman Road, extends east-west approximately 375m north of the Site. Lanham Lane forms an arc to the north of Sarum Road with the eastern point becoming Kilham Lane east of the Site. Kilham Lane extends north-west to south-east broadly parallel with the Site's eastern boundary, c. 355m to the north-east.



Figure 1: Site Location (extract from Google Earth)



- 1.3. The Site is irregular in shape and comprises a number of different components including a single large arable field, the southern part of a second field and small paddocks and small parts of other arable fields.
- 1.4. The north-eastern boundary comprises a belt of trees, which separates the Site from adjacent residential development on Pitt Road and part of the former grounds of Pitt Manor, the latter accessed off Kilham Lane. The south-eastern boundary is marked by Romsey Road in the west, and property boundaries, including a petrol station, and the old Romsey Road in the east. The south-western boundary is marked by the rear boundaries of residential properties within Pitt, a small settlement focussed around the junction of the A3090 and Enmill Lane. The western boundary is marked by an existing hedgerow with trees and Collis Copse, a triangular woodland copse. The northern boundary is unmarked where it crosses an arable field.
- 1.5. The Site is bordered by existing residential and commercial properties to the east, south-east and south-west and is set within the context of the existing built development (as seen in Figure 2 below).



Figure 2: View south from the Site showing built context to the south-east.

- 1.6. Winchester extends up the sides of the valley of the River Itchen, with the main body of the City to the west (see Figure 3 below). The local landscape comprises a series of incised ridges and valleys which extend into Winchester from the west and south-west. The old Roman Road, Sarum Road, extends along the top of one such incised ridge, with Romsey Road extending along the



valley to the south. The Site is situated between these roads on the southern slope of the ridgeline at between c. 95 and 135m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

- 1.7. Further streams extend south off the ridge, creating a series of ridges and gulleys. The land falls away to the west of the Site into one such gully before rising again to a ridge on which is situated Vale Farm and its associated woodland belts. The top of the ridge, 155m AOD, is situated south of Lanham Lane, with the landform then dropping away to the north, creating visual separation between the land north and south of Sarum Road.
- 1.8. Yew Hill, rising up to 121m AOD is situated c. 1.2km to the south of the Site.

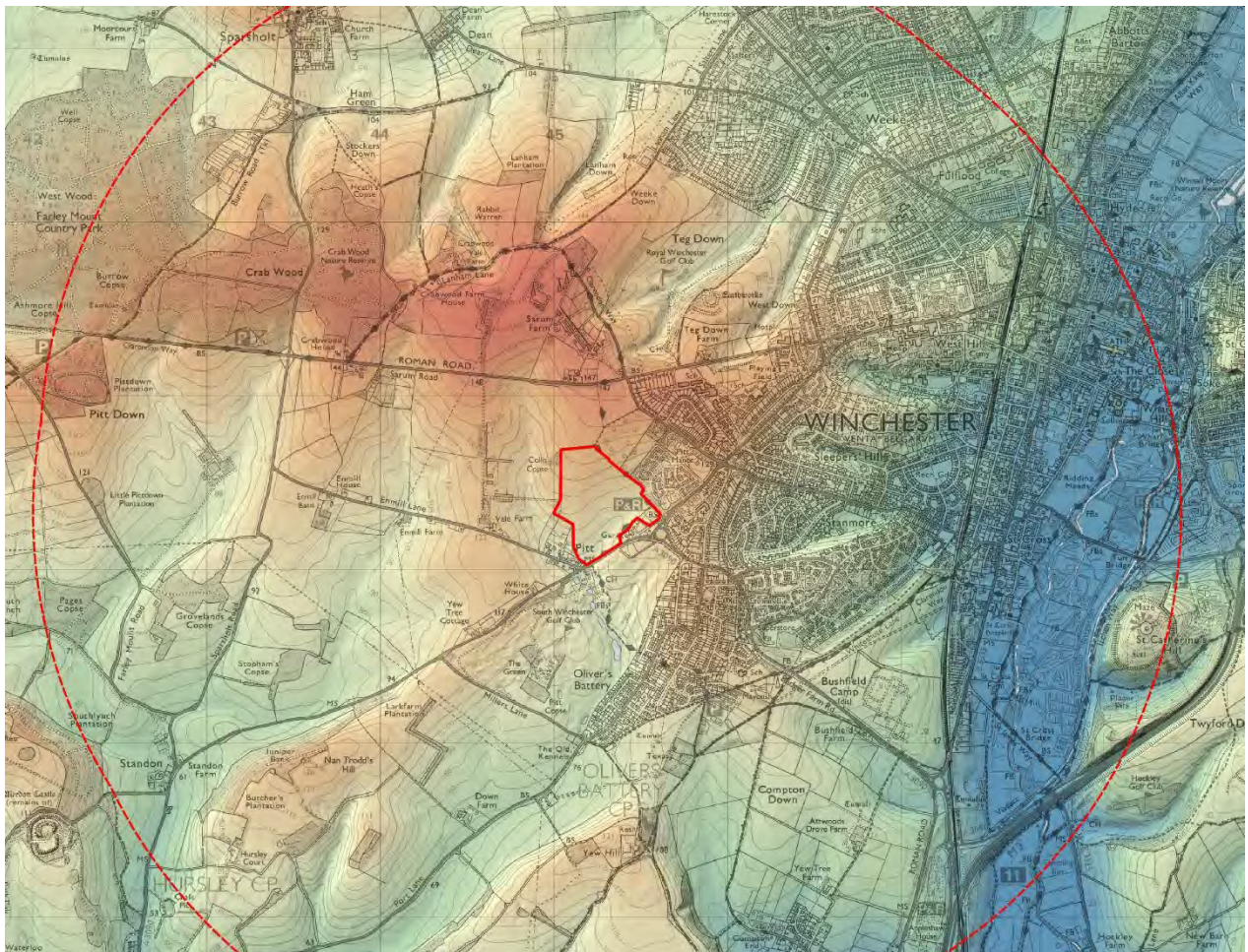


Figure 3: Extract from Plan 2: Topography Map

- 1.9. The land to the north of Sarum Road is well vegetated, with the large West Woods and Farley Mount Country Park 1.3km to the north-west of the Site. The land south of Enmill Lane is also well vegetated, with numerous woodland belts and plantations. The area of the Site and the southern side of the ridge on which it sits is contrastingly poorly vegetated, with north-south tree belts on the sub ridge associated with Vale Farm, the eastern boundary and the triangular Collis Copse at the north-western edge of the Site. As a result, the southern ridge is visually open to the south. The published landscape character assessments (see Section 3 below) described the area as being 'prairie' in character.



- 1.10. There are few Public Rights of Way (PRoW) in the immediate vicinity of the Site, with a larger network to the north of Sarum Road and south-east of Winchester. The Clarendon Way Long Distance Trail extends east along Sarum Road before turning north in an arc along Lanham Lane, rejoining Sarum Road to the north of the Site. The route then extends south and wraps around the eastern and south-eastern boundaries of the Site before turning south-east towards the Itchen Valley (see Figure 4 below).
- 1.11. Footpaths extend along the top of the escarpment of Yew Hill to the south.

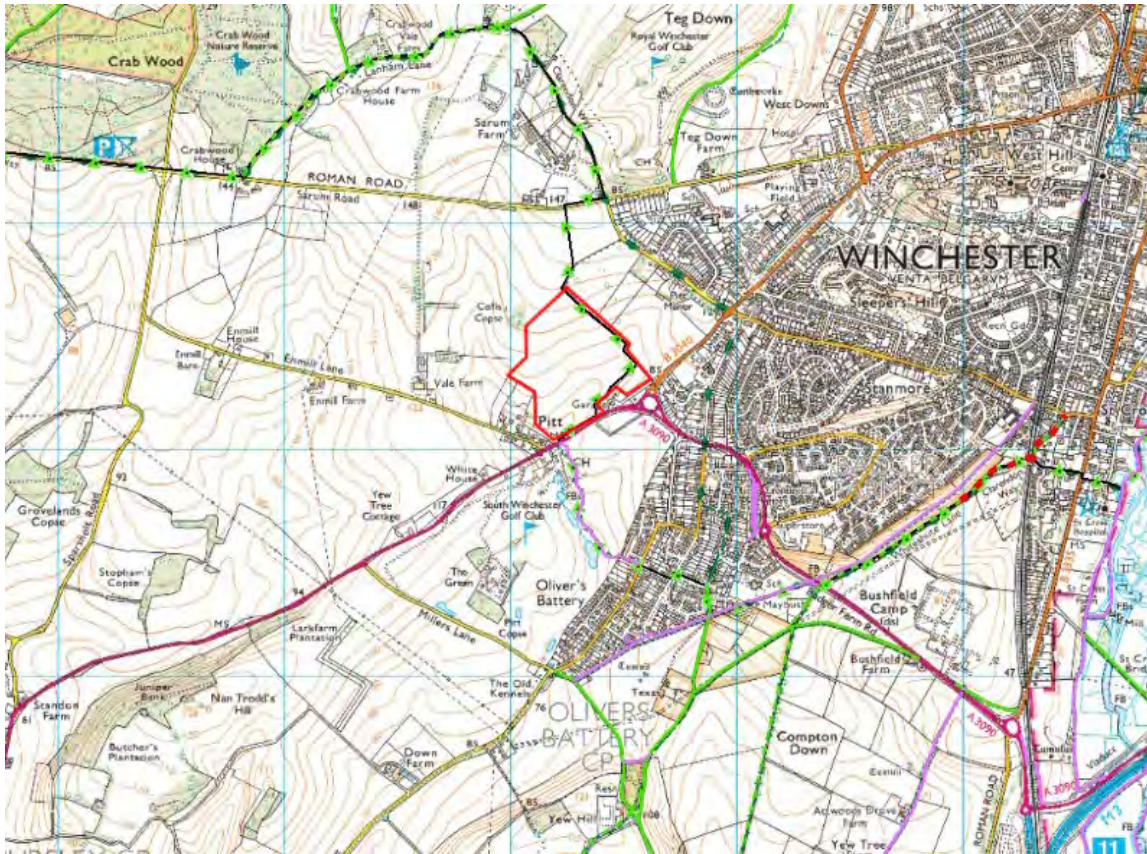


Figure 4: Extract from Hampshire Interactive Rights of Way Map



Section 2: Planning and Policy Context

Designations

- 2.1. There are no national or local designations covering the Site or which have settings that would be affected by the Site. There is no physical or visual relationship to the South Downs National Park (SDNP), situated c. 2.1km to the south-east.

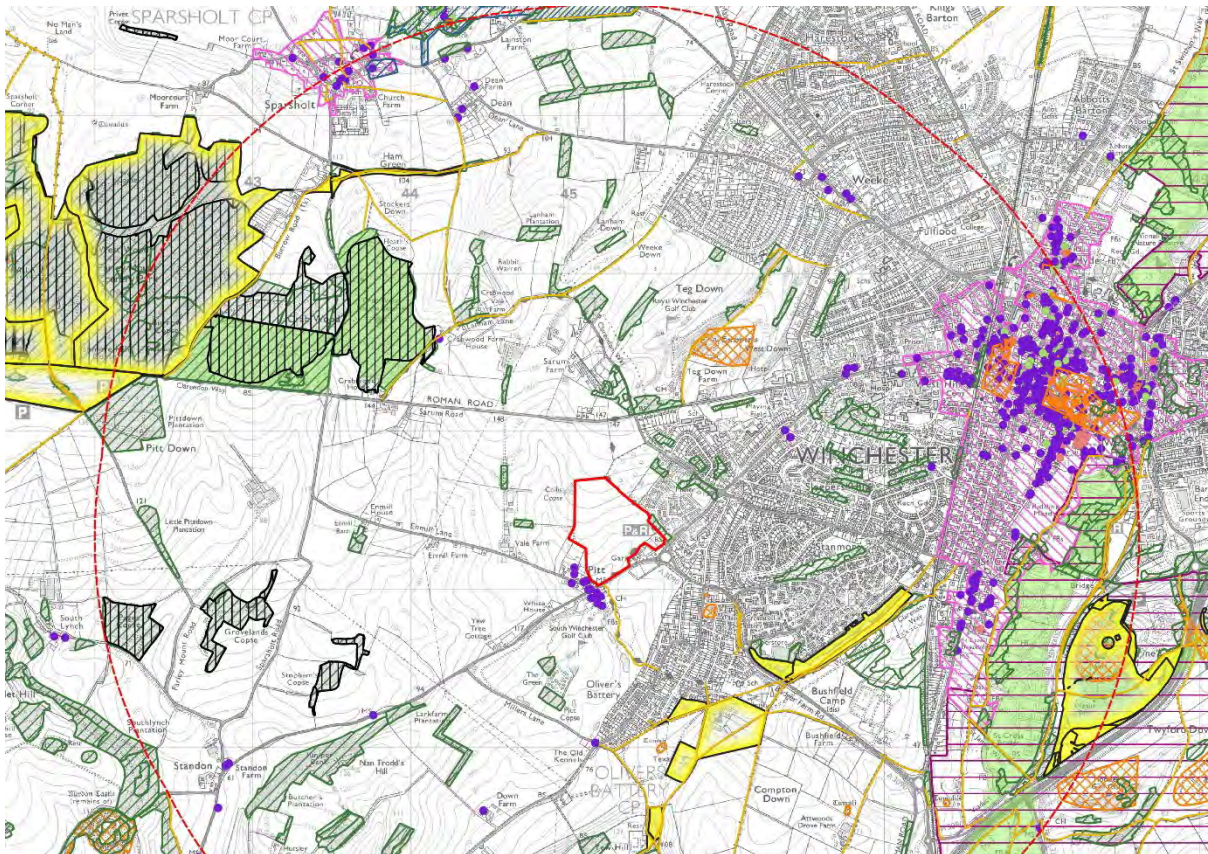


Figure 5: Extract from Plan 1: Designations showing SDNP as horizontal hatch.

Planning Background

- 2.2. The Site was subject to a previous application by Linden Homes in July 2016 (Application Ref. 15/01383/OUT). It was refused for reasons that included prematurity and impact upon views and the countryside (Reason for Refusal 3 of 7). No Committee Report is available on the planning application page of the Council’s website. An Appeal process was commenced but subsequently withdrawn.
- 2.3. The Amended Masterplan (see Figure 6 below) submitted by Linden Homes shows proposed development extending higher up the slope than the existing housing to the east and higher than proposed in the Vistry Plan (see Figure 17 below).





Figure 6: Refused Linden Homes Scheme showing development higher up the slope than adjacent development

- 2.4. As part of the refused application, a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) modelling exercise was undertaken for up to three storey buildings. The ZTV (see Figure 7 below), even with 3-storey development on this higher ground, demonstrates an extremely limited and localised visual envelope. That for the Vistry scheme would be smaller still.



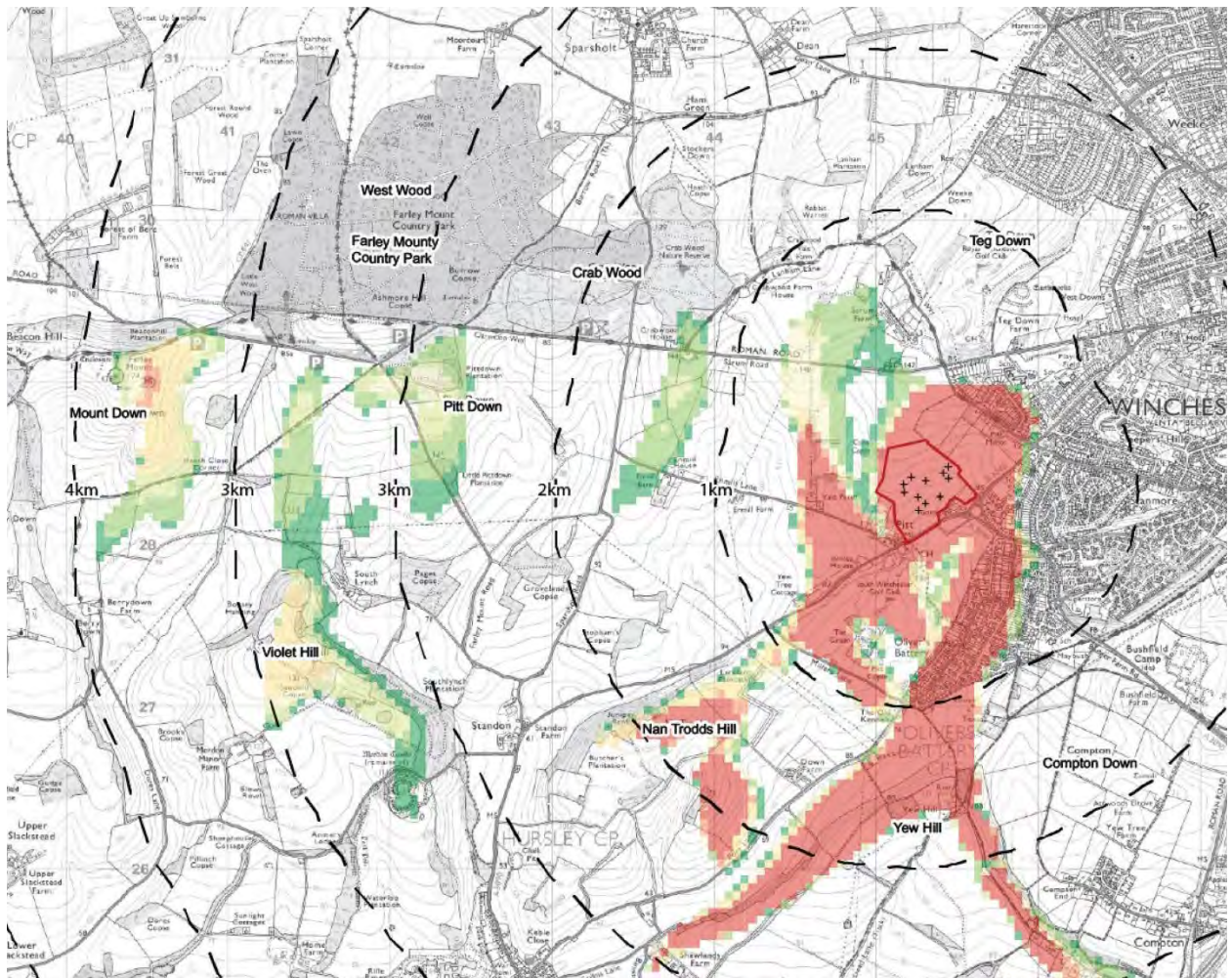


Figure 7: Zone of Theoretical Visibility modelling for refused Linden Homes scheme showing limited and localised impact of 10.5m (three storey buildings)

2.5. The Vision Document submitted alongside this Landscape and Visual Technical Note shows how the development proposed in the Vistry scheme has been altered from the previously refused Linden Homes scheme with the developable area reduced and kept on the lower slopes of the Site.

Planning Policy

2.6. The Site is situated within Winchester City. The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan, the Winchester District Local Plan 2020-2040, and the Regulation 19 draft is currently out for consultation until 13th October 2024. The Site is also within the area of the Hursley Neighbourhood Plan although no plan has been produced as yet.

2.7. Relevant emerging policies for Winchester City Council are summarised below:

- Strategic Policy SP2 part v refers to the creation of Green Infrastructure and part viii refers to the creation of design that is sensitive to local character.



- Strategic Policy CN1 part x refers to nature-based solutions, part xii refers to the planting of trees and part xiii refers to appropriate planting to mitigate against climate change.
- Strategic Policy D1 states that development should respond to its context. Part ii refers to high quality public realm, part iii to connected green blue infrastructure and part v states that the accompanying landscape framework must be developed to enhance the natural landscape and deliver improvements in biodiversity.
- Strategic Policy D5 part ii states that masterplans should respect the character of the landscape.
- Strategic Policy NE1 refers to protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment.
- Policy NE4 refers to green and blue infrastructure (GBI), including setting out that local deficits should be addressed, that it should integrate with existing GBI, create biodiversity links and provide for walking access.
- Policy NE9 refers to Landscape Character and states that development must protect and enhance the distinctive landscape character supported by evidence.
- Policy NE15 refers to the protection of special trees, important hedgerows and ancient woodland.

Evidence Base

SHELAA (2023)

- 2.8. The Site was included in the 2023 SHELAA in the Hursley Area (west of Winchester) as SHELAA site HU03. The Site was assessed as being deliverable and developable with an amber (on a red, amber, green scale) against landscape. No further detail on this point was provided.

Winchester Local Plan 2040 Development Strategy and Site Selection Proposed Submission Plan (July 2024)

- 2.9. A detailed assessment of SHELAA site HU03 is included in Appendix F of the above document. HU03 scored as 'minor uncertain negative' (-?) against Objective IIA10: landscape with the more detailed assessment stating that *"the site has medium or higher overall landscape sensitivity"*.



Section 3: Landscape Character Baseline

- 3.1. The characterisation process is a non-value judgment process; therefore, classifying landscapes into distinct areas does not suggest that one character area is more sensitive than another or valued by people more or less. This document considers the high level local, site-specific character features and context as identified through fieldwork as compared to the local and regional published assessments.

Published Character Context

- 3.2. A Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken by Terrafirma on behalf of Winchester City Council in April 2022.

Landscape Character Assessment (2022)

- 3.3. The Site is situated within Landscape Character Type (LCT) Open Arable (Exposed) and in Landscape Character Area (LCA) 1: Hursley Scarplands.
- 3.4. The Open Arable LCT is divided into the exposed and unexposed areas. The exposed LCT in which the Site is situated is described as being *“very large-scale, arable fields with virtually no structure of hedgerows, trees or woodland”*. As a result, they are visually exposed *“with a sense of elevation and extensive panoramic views”*. The area has suffered from woodland and hedgerow removal, the latter of which is evident from looking at historic mapping.
- 3.5. LCA1 is covered by a number of LCTs, with the northern area, i.e. the southern side of the ridgeline, being the Open Arable (exposed) LCT, with the rest being a mix of chalk and clay farmland, interspersed by scarp downland and parkland.
- 3.6. Identified ‘key characteristics’ are listed as including the following:
- Distinctive topographic variation ranging from an east-west ridge with ridges, scarps and valleys in between, resulting in a topographically complex landscape.
 - Undulating with far ranging views but more visually enclosed in the valleys and woodland. Noted as varying from open fields in the north to more enclosed, treed and undulating landscape to the south.
 - Mainly arable farming with hedgerow loss at Pitt Down resulting in a ‘prairie’ character.
 - Strong landscape structure provided by woodland, tree belts and hedgerows.
 - Numerous historic features including the historic Hursley Park.
 - Narrow, winding and often sunken roads.
 - Settlements concentrated close to main transport routes.
- 3.7. Guidance for the LCA includes the conservation and enhancement of woodlands, as well as replanting, and the restoration and replanting of fragmented hedgerows, acknowledging the historic loss of vegetation in this area.



- 3.8. Strategies for new built form include avoiding the elevated ridges and the planting of indigenous species to minimise visual impacts. New development should use locally appropriate materials and respect local character. The well treed setting of villages should be preserved, and new development should respect the settlement pattern of valleys and along the base of scarps.

Site-Specific Character and Features

- 3.9. The Site comprises two main areas of arable field with smaller pockets of paddock. The area reflects the described character, being an area that has been subject to hedgerow and tree removal on the southern slopes of the east-west ridge, which has resulted in a visually open prairie style character with little vegetation, and which is at odd with the other surrounding areas which are strongly vegetated.



Figure 8: View from Clarendon Way on eastern boundary showing main arable field.



Figure 9: View south from north-eastern boundary showing tree belt to the east of the Site, the two paddocks in the south-east and the boundary between the main two arable fields in the right of the view. Also shows longer view to Yew Hill.



Section 4: Visual Baseline

Visual Context

- 4.1. The Site is situated on the lower slopes on the southern side of an east-west ridge which extends into the centre of Winchester. The lower areas of the Site are visually well enclosed by existing built form and vegetation with the higher areas more exposed to longer distance views.
- 4.2. The Site is well contained from the north by the main ridgeline, along which Sarum Road extends. Strong tree planting along Sarum Road reduces views towards the Site except for short stretches where views through the trees are possible. Views from the Clarendon Way to the north of the Site are obscured by vegetation. Where views towards the Site are possible, the lower areas of the Site are obscured by the intervening fall in the landform, with existing residential development in Winchester visible beyond.



Figure 10: View south-east from Sarum Road with Site partially obscured by Collis Copse (centre) and housing visible beyond

- 4.3. Views from the east are curtailed by the existing built edge of Winchester and the former curtilage of Pitt Manor.
- 4.4. Views from further west than the access track to Vale Farm, both on Sarum Road and Enmill Lane, are prevented by the localised ridge extending south from Sarum Road. This screening effect is enhanced by the north-south tree belt around Vale Farm, which extends along the top of the ridge, and Collis Copse. The Site is, therefore, not visible from the west until reaching the access points to Vale Farm, both from Enmill Lane and Sarum Road. Enmill Lane is also well vegetated along much of its route, preventing views (see Figure 11 below).





Figure 11: Views from Enmill Lane heavily filtered by vegetation.

- 4.5. Views from the south are limited by the higher ground south of Romsey Road and the vegetation within the South Winchester Golf Course. Immediate views from Romsey Road are filtered by the roadside hedgerow, although views towards the more elevated area of the Site are possible from the west going exit from the A3090 Pitt roundabout (see Figure 12 below).



Figure 12: View from A3090 with Site briefly visible beyond the petrol station.

- 4.6. Longer distance views are possible from the top of Yew Hill, where the lower areas of the Site are obscured by intervening topography and built form with the higher areas seen in the context of the existing built form (see Figure 13 below).





Figure 13: View from Yew Hill showing built middle ground and lower part of Site obscured by topography.

- 4.7. Immediate views into the Site are possible from the Clarendon Way as it passes along the Site boundary (see Figure 14 to Figure 16 below). Once inside the Site boundary, these views are generally enclosed by the vegetation beyond the Site, whereas from the path north of the Site and south of Sarum Road, longer distance views to the surrounding higher ground are possible.



Figure 14: View towards the south towards Yew Hill from Clarendon Way north of Site.



Figure 15: View south from northern boundary of Site showing intervisibility with Yew Hill





Figure 16: View west from Clarendon Way on eastern boundary of Site showing greater visual enclosure.

- 4.8. In summary, views towards the lower areas of the Site are limited to immediate views from the Clarendon Way and the short stretch of the A3090 when exiting west from Pitt roundabout. The higher ground is visible from a short stretch of Sarum Road and from Yew Hill, where it is seen in the context of the existing built edge of Winchester.



Section 5: Implications and Recommendations for Mitigation

The Proposed Development

5.1. The Proposed Development and its evolution are set out in the Vision Document. Page 35 shows the design concept (see Figure 17 below). It demonstrates the built form focussed in the eastern area of the Site, where it most closely relates to the existing edge of Winchester whilst being on the lower ground and separated from Pitt. The remaining land, currently arable land described as 'prairie' in the published character assessments, is proposed for new areas of open space, parkland and public access.



Figure 17: Design Concept from the Vision Document

5.2. The above concept provides significant opportunities for the creation of new Green Infrastructure and the restoration of vegetation in the area, in accordance with the guidance set out in the published landscape character assessments and policy. The Clarendon Way will be retained on its existing route, in a green corridor, with alternative routes provided in the west of the Site.



Likely Changes

Landscape Character

- 5.3. Any greenfield development will result in changes to the character of a Site. In this case, the Site will change so that the lower slopes will form an extension to the existing built edge of Winchester, with the higher slopes developed as areas of open space and parkland, with new public access and tree planting. These new areas of open space will reverse some of the historic vegetation loss and the prairie type open landscape that has been created in this area. The proposals accord with guidelines within the published landscape character assessments and policies that seek to restore and enhance landscape infrastructure such as hedgerows and trees.
- 5.4. At a wider scale, the development proposed will not be out of character with its context, forming an extension to the existing built edge of the city, and relating to the existing buildings to the south-east and along the A3090.

Views

- 5.5. The lower slopes of the Site are more visually contained with views being limited to those from the adjacent Clarendon Way and a short stretch of the A3090 to the south-east. The upper slopes are more visible but still have a localised visual envelope, limited to a short stretch of Sarum Road and from Yew Hill to the south, from where the Site is seen in the context of the adjacent built edge of Winchester.
- 5.6. Locating the proposed built form in the lower lying ground means that it will have an extremely limited and localised visual envelope and, where visible, will be seen in the context of the existing built edge of the city. In views from the west, it will be screened behind the ridge on which Vale Farm is located and in views from Sarum Road the majority of the built form will be obscured within the dip in the landform and by Collis Copse. Views from further north than Sarum Road will be obscured by existing vegetation and landform.
- 5.7. The creation of new parkland planting in the north of the Site will reduce impact on views from the north where they exist, creating a strongly defined green edge to the settlement. Views from a short stretch of the Clarendon Way will be changed, with development brought into the foreground. However, retaining the route in a strong green corridor will ensure that a pleasant walking environment is retained. New alternative routes will be created through the new parkland and in the green corridor west of the built form.

Proposed Mitigation

- 5.8. Consideration should be given to the following within any masterplan solution for the Site:
- Consider limiting the extent of development to the lower more visually contained parts of the site.
 - Consider a robust structural landscaping approach to the masterplanning process.
 - Consider the creation of a transitionary edge to the north and west through the use of lower density development and native hedgerow and tree planting.



- Allow for tree planting within the development, such as along roads, to break up the massing of built form in longer distance views.
- Create strong green corridor for route of Clarendon Way and consider creation of alternative route around north and west of Site to preserve views towards the south.
- Create view corridors from the Clarendon Way if and where practicable.
- Ensure development uses locally appropriate materials and tones to reflect local vernacular.
- Seek opportunities to connect existing habitat features, such as the tree belts to the east and Collis Copse to the north-west.



Section 6: Summary and Conclusion

- 6.1. The Site comprises an area of mainly arable farmland on the south-western edge of Winchester City. It is situated on the lower slopes on the southern side of an east-west ridge that extends into the city and over which Winchester has spread.
- 6.2. The Site is situated within the Open Arable (Exposed) LCT, which describes a denuded and prairie style landscape on the southern side of the ridge. This area contrasts strongly with the well wooded landscapes to the north and south.
- 6.3. The Site is visually well contained by the main ridge to the north, with views limited to short stretches of Sarum Road and the northern end of the Clarendon Way between Sarum Road and the Site boundary. It is contained from the west by Collis Copse and the adjacent ridgeline and woodland belt associated with Vale Farm. The lower parts of the Site are visually well contained with isolated viewpoints from the eastern end of the A3090. Longer distance views are possible from Yew Hill to the south, from where the lower areas of the Site are obscured by intervening topography and built form, and the upper slopes are seen in the context of the existing built edge of Winchester. There is no physical or visual relationship to the SDNP, situated c. 2.1km to the south-east.

Conclusion

- 6.4. The development of any greenfield Site will inevitably result in some changes to the character and composition of the landscape and views. However, the Site is situated immediately adjacent to the existing built edge of Winchester and is seen in the context of the adjacent built form within views.
- 6.5. The Open Arable (Exposed) LCT is well named, with vegetation removal resulting in an open landscape with longer views possible, particularly from the higher points of the ridge. However, the Site is well contained to the west by a localised ridge and woodland planting associated with Vale Farm. The lower parts of the Site are visually well contained, providing opportunities to introduce development with limited visual impact. The higher areas of the Site are visible in limited locations from Sarum Road, the Clarendon Way and from Yew Hill, where they are seen in the context of the existing built form of Winchester. These upper areas are most suitable for landscape restoration and the creation of open space and wildlife habitat.
- 6.6. Development within the Site provides the opportunity to connect existing Green Infrastructure features and to reverse some of the historic creation of prairie in an otherwise well vegetated landscape. New areas of parkland will create additional public access and new areas of Green Infrastructure and open space.
- 6.7. Through the retention of development within the lower slopes and the creation of robust Green Infrastructure and parkland areas in the upper areas, the Site is capable of accommodating development in a manner that overcomes the reasons for refusal in relation to landscape and visual impacts. The Site is an appropriate location for residential development in landscape and visual terms and, together with a robust landscape and Green Infrastructure strategy, is capable



of accommodating residential development without undue consequences on landscape and views.



Plans:

Plan 1: Site Location and Designations

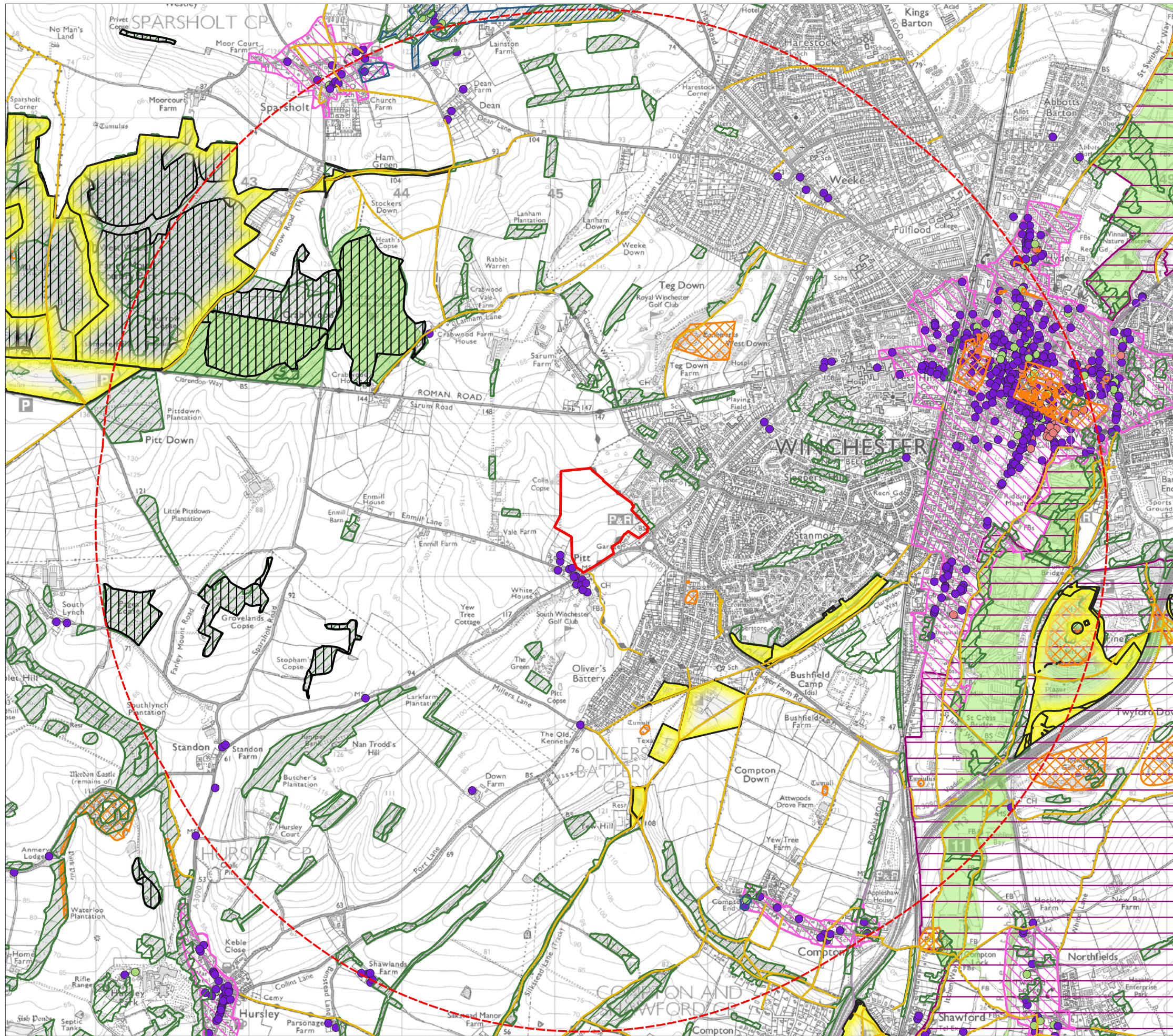
Plan 2: Topography

Plan 3: Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Viewpoint Locations

Plan 4: Opportunities and Constraints

Plan 5: Photosheets





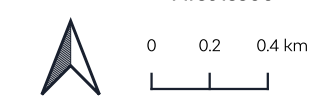
LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- 3km Study Area
- Ancient Woodland
- Access Road
- Conservation Area
- Public Right of Way
- National Forest Inventory - Woodland
- National Cycle Network
- Parks And Gardens
- Scheduled Monuments
- National Park

Listed Buildings

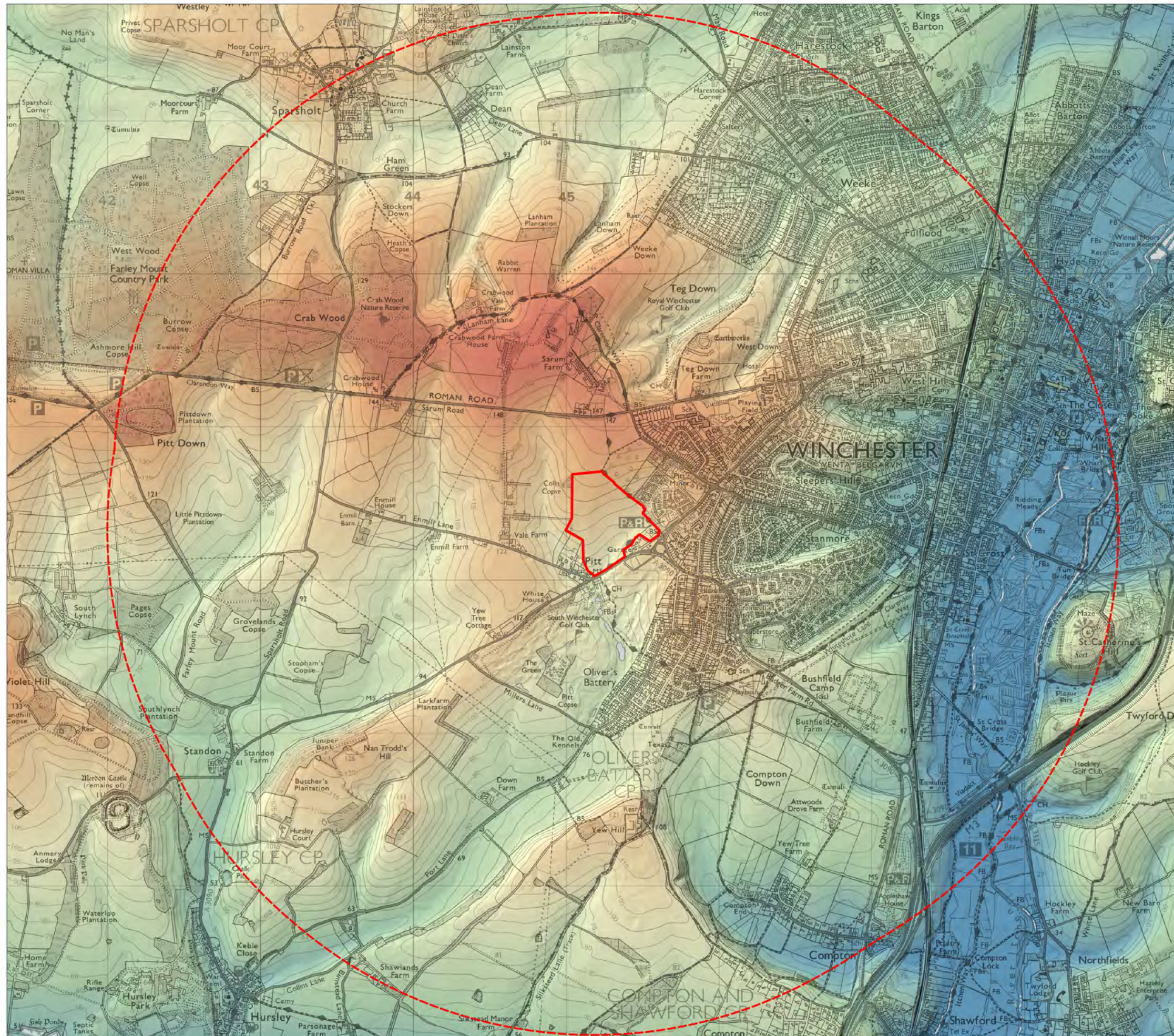
- I
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Revision	Description
-	First Issue





Project	Land at Pitt Vale, Winchester
Title	Plan 1 Designations Plan
Scale	1:26,000 @ A3
Drawing No.	16160_P01
Date	OCT 2024
Drawn	EL





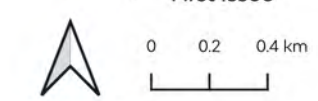
LEGEND

-  Site Boundary
-  3km Study Area

Elevation AOD (m)

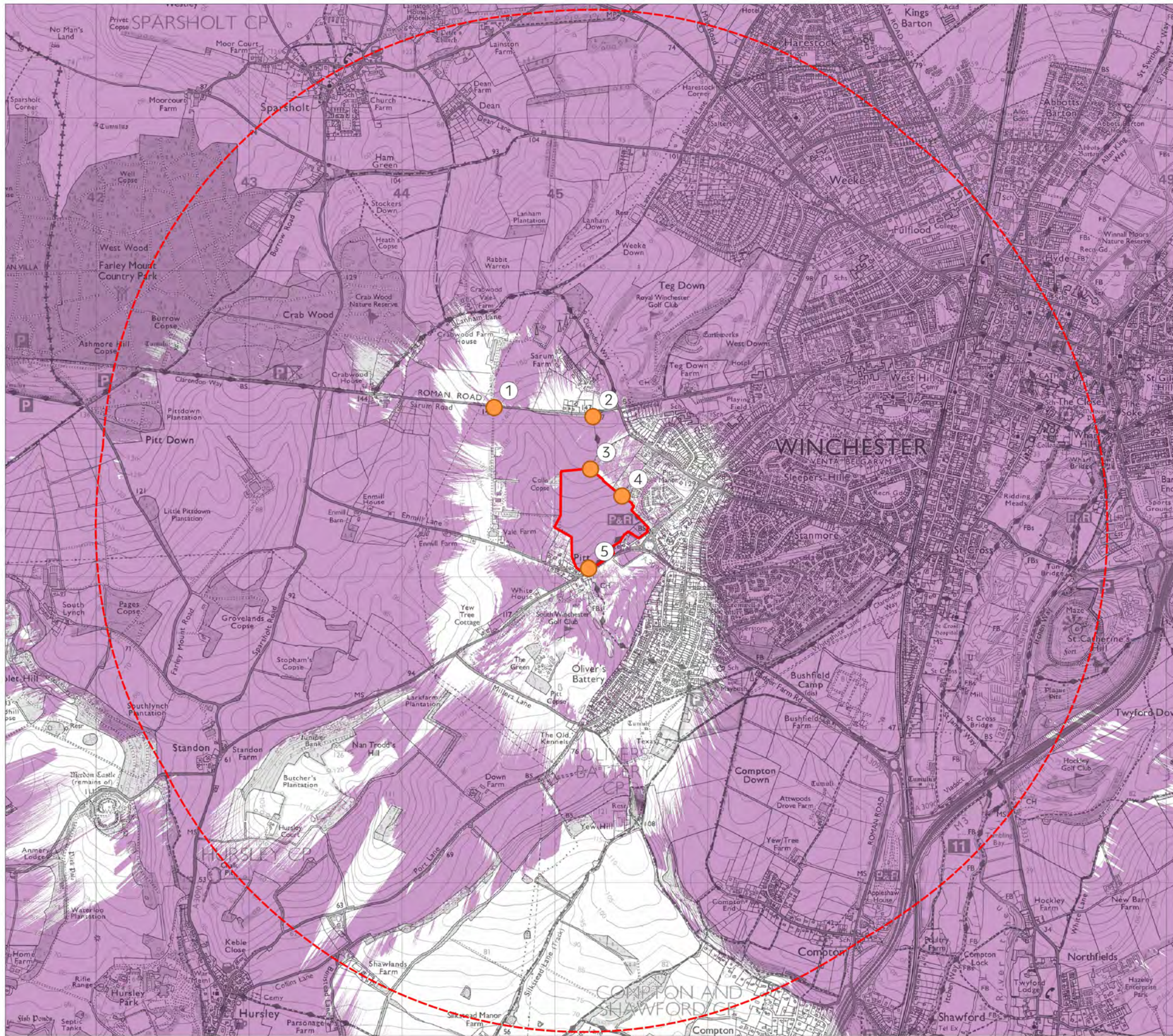


Revision	Description
-	First Issue



Project	Land at Pitt Vale, Winchester
Title	Plan 2 Topography Plan
Scale	1:26,000 @ A3
Drawing No.	16160_P02
Date	SEPT 2024
Drawn	EL





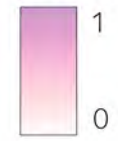
LEGEND

Site Boundary

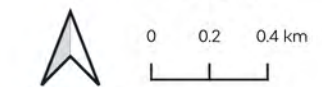
3km Study Area

Viewpoint Locations

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (10.5m)












Revision - Description
First Issue



Project	Land at Pitt Vale, Winchester
Title	Plan 3 Zone of Theoretical Visibility & Viewpoint Locations
Scale	1:26,000 @ A3
Drawing No.	16160_P03
Date	OCT 2024
Drawn	EL





- Key:
-  Site Boundary
 -  Landscape Buffer
 -  Public Right of Way
 -  Contours
 -  Close Range Views
 -  Long Distance Views
 -  Existing Vegetation
 -  Local Ridgelines
 -  No Views from South West and West



Project	Land at Pitt Vale, Winchester
Drawing Title	Plan 4: Landscape Masterplan
Scale	A3: 1:9500
Drawing No	16160/P04
Date	OCT 2024
Drawn	EL



3 Jordan Street, Deansgate, Manchester, M15 4PY
 T: 020 393 494 70 E: info@tylergrange.co.uk W: www.tylergrange.co.uk



Photoviewpoint 1:



Photoviewpoint 2:



Photoviewpoint 3:



Photoviewpoint 4:



Project No:	16160	Date:	24.09.24
Client:	Countryside Partnerships	Project:	Land at Pitt Vale, Winchester
Status:	Planning	Plan:	Photo sheets



Photoviewpoint 5:



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